Media Release

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Contact: Amy Catania, Executive Director
HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE
518-891-4606
amy@historicsaranaclake.org

HISTORIC SARANAC LAKE OPENS NEW MUSEUM CAMPUS IN AUGUST

Saranac Lake, NY, AUGUST 18, 2026 **—** Historic Saranac Lake's expanded museum campus is opening this month with two major events.

All members of Historic Saranac Lake (HSL) and those who contributed to the museum expansion project were invited to the Ribbon Cutting on August 15. Honorary Chair of the campaign, Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau was the guest of honor. Trudeau's great-grandfather, grandfather, and father all practiced medicine in the new museum building at 118 Main Street.

Numerous local leaders and project sponsors attended the ceremony, which was followed by self-guided tours of the exhibits and refreshments in the John Black Room of the Saranac Laboratory Museum.

A number of major state grants supported the museum expansion project. New York State Homes and Community Renewal granted a total of $825,000 through New York Main Street and the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner RuthAnne Visnauskas said, "HCR's mission is not just to create and preserve affordable housing, but to support main streets and business districts across New York so that they can thrive. The $825,000 granted to Historic Saranac Lake to refurbish the Trudeau Building has allowed an important piece of New York history to be preserved, while encouraging tourism and education in this picturesque Adirondack village. Thank you to all the public and private partners that have made the Historic Saranac Lake museum's expansion possible."

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) supported the building restoration with a FY2023 Capital Project Fund grant. NYSCA also has provided longtime general operating support for Historic Saranac Lake's museum programs. Executive Director Erica Mallin said, "The Trudeau Building was home to critical breakthroughs that improved global health and wellbeing. With its renovation, Historic Saranac Lake has preserved this important part of New York's history and made it more accessible for everyone. A proud supporter of HSL for nearly forty years, NYSCA congratulates the entire team on this remarkable achievement."

A Community Open House will take place on Saturday, August 22, with free admission for all community members from 10am to 5pm. Complimentary ice cream, courtesy of Stewart's Shops, will be served from noon until 2pm, while supplies last.

After the August 22 Community Open House, the expanded museum campus will be open to the public with regular hours: Tuesday—Saturday from 10am to 5pm, year-round. Visitors will enter the campus through the front door of the red Trudeau Building on the corner of Church and Main streets. After exploring the Trudeau Building, visitors will make their way over to the Saranac Laboratory to learn about Saranac Lake's science history.

Going forward, the admission cost to see exhibits in both buildings will be $12/person general admission, $10 for students and seniors. Children under 8 are free of charge. "We have set the ticket price at a rate that we feel is very reasonable given the comprehensive and interactive exhibits offered," said Executive Director Amy Catania. "It is extremely important to us that all community members feel welcome, and we are planning more free community days in the future.

"The August 22 Open House is an opportunity for community members to see the museum and find out about membership," stated Catania. "Our members matter more than ever now that the campus is opening, and we are excited to welcome more folks to join us!" Members of Historic Saranac Lake are entitled to free admission to the museum and other benefits.

A key feature of the restored Trudeau Building is the new research room and collections storage. Archivist/Curator Chessie Monks-Kelly explained, "We are thrilled to make the collections available to the public in this beautiful space, made possible by support from the Pecora family in memory of Dr. David V. Pecora." The public is welcome to make an appointment to explore resources in the research room during regular museum hours.

Exhibits exploring the history of the Saranac Lake region are spread through eight rooms on both floors of the building. "We are really excited about new, interactive, child-friendly exhibits." stated Program Manager Alex Krach. We are grateful to the Stewart's Dake Family Foundation for supporting these exhibits.

Both the Trudeau Building and the laboratory are intimately connected to Saranac Lake's unique history as a center for tuberculosis research and patient care, but the story of Saranac Lake extends beyond the borders of the village and stories of tuberculosis. Visitors will explore the rich history of the Saranac Lake region, encompassed by the boundaries of the Saranac Lake school district. On the first floor, visitors will learn about hunting, logging, guiding, great camps, grand hotels, the railroad, and the Adirondack Park. History of Indigenous peoples will be introduced in collaboration with David Kanietakeron Fadden, director of the Six Nations Iroquois Cultural Center in Onchiota.

Exhibit design has been led by the Exhibits Department, a team of award-winning experts who are deeply involved in the exhibits field. "The exhibit team has been terrific to work with," Catania said. "We are grateful for the input from our museum committee of area experts — David Fadden, Caroline Welsh, Ted Comstock, and Kevan Moss." HSL selected Apogee, fabricator of museum and trade show exhibits in upstate New York, to bring the new exhibits to fruition.

Board President Lisa Lauroesch underlined HSL's excitement about the August events, saying, "We can't wait to open the doors of the new museum this summer. It's an opportunity to invite the whole community to come be a part of Historic Saranac Lake. There is something in the new museum to interest everyone. Now more than ever, this is the community's museum."

Founded in 1980, Historic Saranac Lake is a not-for-profit architectural preservation organization that preserves and presents area history and architecture to build a stronger community.

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Images, courtesy of Historic Saranac Lake:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fF-mSjPtTx7ziu0yCoJjcCvs5eW0zNUU?usp=sharing