

Historic Farmsteads of Pittstown



For several years, the Pittstown Historical Society (PHS) has been documenting the town's historic farmsteads. These farmsteads, with their multiple agricultural buildings and large tracts of farmland, are the town's most significant asset. Because these farmsteads have remained intact, they provide important information about the history of agricultural.

In 2008, the PHS received a Preserve NY grant to complete a Cultural Resource Survey of 26 historic farmsteads in Pittstown. The Preserve NY Grant program partners with the Preservation League of NYS and the NY State Council on the Arts. Additional funds for the farmstead study were awarded to the PHS by the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The Town of Pittstown, The Persistence Foundation and the Rensselaer County Legislature also participated in the project.

The intensive survey of the 26 farmsteads was conducted by preservation consultant, Jessie Ravage of Cooperstown, NY.

The farmsteads were chosen because they contained multiple (generally four or more) intact historic outbuildings in addition to the farmhouse. The agricultural structures included threshing barns, sheep barns, silos, dairy sheds, hen houses, icehouses and other buildings. The survey documents the forms and functions of these structures and how they relate to each other on each farmstead. It also includes the history of the ownership of the farms and the use of the land.

In September, 2010, the PHS was awarded a second grant under the Preserve NY program. This grant will fund a Multiple Property Documentation Form involving the 26 historic farmsteads of Pittstown. The new project builds on the work that has already been completed (the surveys of the 26 historic farmsteads). It will enable the PHS to assist the farmstead owners in applying to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Pittstown's farmsteads represent the agricultural heritage of Pittstown and the surrounding area. Listing these properties on the National Register will help ensure their preservation as historic resources. With multiple farmsteads in Pittstown listed on the

National Register, the significance of Pittstown's agricultural heritage will be recognized nationally.

This year the Preserve New York grant program panel selected 17 projects in 14 counties around the state to share \$109,149 in funding," said Erin Tobin, the Preservation League's Regional Director of Technical and Grant Programs in western New York. "As always, the competition for these funds was intense. The Preservation League is delighted to help advance the preservation efforts of the Pittstown Historical Society with this grant," said Tobin. For more information on the Preserve New York Grant Program, call 518-462-5658 or visit the League's website at www.preservenys.org

Copies of the Cultural Resource Survey are available for review by appointment. Please contact us at: pittstownhs@gmail.com

The following articles have been published relating to the PHS farmstead study:
Preserving the Rural Past, Times Union, Albany, NY, by Bob Gardinier, published October 29, 2008

Pittstown Strives to Protect Farmland, Times Union, Albany, NY, by Kenneth C. Crowe II, published Feb. 6, 2009

Pittstown Historical Society Awarded Two Grants for the Study of 25 Historic Farmsteads in Pittstown, Pittstown Historical Society Newsletter, [Issue XV](#), Spring, 2009

Historic Farmstead Study Progressing, Pittstown Historical Society Newsletter, [Issue XVI](#), Fall, 2009

Pittstown Historical Society Receives Grant, Eastwick Press, Hoosick Falls, NY, by Bea Peterson, published November 19, 2010
<http://eastwickpress.com/news/2010/11/pittstown-historical-society-receives-grant-for-national-register-farmstead-documentation/>

Closer to Earth, Closer to Reality, Times Union, Albany, NY,
by Bob Gardinier, published November 25, 2010
<http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Closer-to-earth-closer-to-reality-831514.php>