

Highlighting our heritage during Historic Preservation Month

May is Historic Preservation Month. Established in 1973 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Month is co-sponsored by local preservation groups, State historical societies, business and civic organizations across the country; its aim is to encourage events and programs designed to promote historic places and to remind us why preservation matters.

In Pittsford, our commitment to historic preservation is long-held and evident all around us. Embracing nationally designated historic areas like our Village center and the Erie Canal, and local treasures like Hopkins Farm, the Phoenix Building, and Pittsford Farms Dairy, our community has worked diligently to preserve and highlight those structures and places that embody our heritage. Currently, the Town has over 80 individually designated historic properties and nearly 20 more within the Milepost/Stonetown Town Historic District. These unique places are complimented by over 500 properties encompassed by the Pittsford Village Historic District.

More than just a place rich in history, Pittsford is a place whose residents work together to support our historic resources. The Town’s Design Review and Historic Preservation Board, made up of volunteers with experience in architecture, preservation and design, is responsible for keeping an inventory of historically significant structures, considering landmark designations, and promoting historic preservation.

The board often works and shares information with Historic Pittsford, a local non-profit that works to preserve Pittsford’s history and historic resources through community education and advocacy. Historic Pittsford’s Little House Museum at 18 Monroe Avenue offers a glimpse into Pittsford’s past. So do their educational programs. Historic Pittsford will sponsor two public programs during Historic Preservation Month.

On Sunday, May 15 at 2PM Pittsford Town and Village Historian Audrey Maxfield Johnson and Vicki Masters Profitt, author of the blog “Illuminated History,” will speak at the Pittsford Community Library (35 State Street) about our community’s heritage based on their book, “Pittsford.” The event is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required. Register online via the Town of Pittsford website’s Library page www.townofpittsford.org/home-library or call the Library at (585) 249-5481.

On Saturday, May 21 at 10AM Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Profitt will conduct a walking tour of Pittsford Cemetery, discussing the cemetery’s history and early residents of the Town interred there. No advance registration is required; participants may meet at the cemetery flagpole. Pittsford Cemetery is located on North Main Street/East Avenue, just north of the intersection of North Main Street and French Road. You can also enter from Washington Road.

The richness of Pittsford’s history contributes to the quality of our community life. During this Historic Preservation Month, make time to enjoy a Historic Pittsford program, visit a landmark or take a walk along our historic canalfront. You can learn more about Pittsford’s heritage at www.historicpittsford.com and at the history pages of the Town and Village websites, www.townofpittsford.org/home-history and www.villageofpittsford.org/history/. As ever, if you have comments or questions about this or any other topic, please stop by my office in Town Hall, call me at 248-6220 or send a message to bsmith@townofpittsford.org.