



DEBAR LODGE

AN ADIRONACK TREASURE



Early History

Debar Pond Lodge is located on the end of an 1,100 acre pond named after John Debar, a Canadian trapper who discovered it on a hunting trip in 1817.

Robert Schroeder, the son of a German brewer, began acquiring land around the pond in the 1880s and eventually amassed more than 2,100 acres.

He planted more than 300 acres of his holdings in hops, an essential ingredient in the manufacture of beer, making Debar one of the largest hop plantations in the world at the time.

The first buildings

- Schroeder built a small cottage, which burned less than 2 years after being built.
- He then built 2 buildings, a castle and a lodge
- Schroeder squandered his funds and then lost his investments when the price of his stocks crashed, lost the property and both he and his wife died penniless.

After the Schroeders

- The castle was deserted for 5 years
- Berton and Herbert Reynolds and Clarence Briggs of Malone purchased the property. They raised silver foxes, a failed venture.
- By 1924 the property was in disrepair and all its contents had been looted.

History

- Debar Pond Lodge was built for the Arthur Wheeler family of Palm Beach FL in 1939.
- He demolished the castle and built a seventeen room log cabin, which is the Debar Lodge as it exists today.

The next owners-1959

- WW II Navy Fighter pilot Farwell T. Perry took over and flew into the Debar Pond in his seaplane.
- He also built an airstrip which is still there today.

State ownership

- In 1979, Mr. Perry sold the land to NY state reserving a 25 year use lease by Barry Silverstein on the buildings and 20 acres of the property.
- In 2004, the lease was up and DEC assumed the responsibility of the property and then planned to demolish them.

Duane mobilizes to fight for Debar

- Multiple resolutions by county, towns and AARCH.
- Proposal was sent to the NY Governor, DEC Commissioner, Senators and Assemblymen, NY State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Since 2004, Town Supervisor Ned Lemieux has led the battle to save Debar.

Debar Lodge is added to State and National Registers of Historic Places

- On Sept. 17, 2014, Debar was one of 22 properties recommended for this designation. Although at that time, no further plans for the Lodge were underway, the magnificent property is now included in the historic registers.

Debar Lodge -- next steps

- The latest attempt to save Debar Lodge resulted in the creation of the Debar Pond Institute in 2020.
- A plan for a Land Exchange with the State of New York is the path being pursued.
- The Town has signed a resolution to support the Institute; a Constitutional Amendment will be necessary for a Land Exchange to take place.
- It will likely take two years for the amendment to be ratified.