



An Unforgiving Land

Illustrated Talk and
Book Signing

May 31, 4 PM, CHS

Cragsmoor's early history has been in the limelight ever since last summer, when Cragsmoor Consultants Wendy Harris and Arnold Pickman began their archeological research at the site of the former Peter Brown house on the corner of Henry and Schuyler Roads. That project plunged them deeper into Cragsmoor's misty past than they might have expected. It has, in fact, led to an in-depth exploration of its beginnings, which they have compiled into three articles, the first of which we are proud to offer as the focus of this issue of the *Journal*.

Our hamlet, however, was not the only ridge-top community on the Shawangunks that struggled to sustain itself in this harsh environment. The Trapps settlement, in a hollow between Minnewaska and Mohonk, grew to a community of fifty families. *An Unforgiving Land: Hardscrabble Life in the Trapps, a Vanished Shawangunk Mountain Hamlet* is the story of the people, their way of life and their fight for survival for 150 years.

Meticulously researched, vividly narrated and accompanied by numerous period photographs, the book, by authors Bob Larsen and Robi Josephson, has captured the essence of life on the ridge, which in many ways was similar to that of our community in its earliest days. Larsen, Mohonk Preserve cultural historian and veteran ranger, became interested in the Trapps hamlet when he came to the area as a young man with a group of adventurous climbers. His research, interviews and documentation led to the listing of the hamlet as the only subsistence community in New York State on the National Register of Historic Places. Josephson brought her scholarly skills as a writer and historian to the project, and together they have created not only a volume of historical significance to the region, but one that is also a delight to read.

The CHS will host an illustrated talk and book signing by the authors on Saturday, May 31, at 4 PM. A percentage of the book sales will benefit the CHS. Refreshments will be served and donations gratefully accepted.

More information at www.cragsmoor.info,
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