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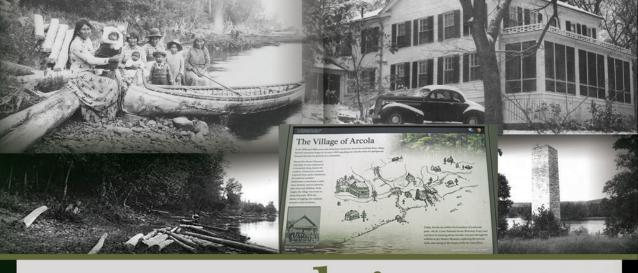
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history

Arcola Mills preserves the history and tells the story of what built Minnesota in its early era. To learn more about the past, present and future of Arcola, take in one of our historic tours.

lumber era

In the 1840s, John and Martin Mower moved to the St. Croix Valley to take advantage of the logging boom and quickly built a small and prosperous lumbering village, known today as Arcola Mills. With a flourishing business, the Mowers added the grand Greek Revival Home to the village in 1847. Reported to be the third oldest and largest timber-frame house in Minnesota, it's listed on the National Register of Historic Places along with the original Arcola sawmill chimney. The Mowers played a crucial role in the growth of the lumber business in the Stillwater area, lumber said to help develop areas up and down the Mississippi. John was a statesman serving in both the territorial and Minnesota legislature with Mower County, Minnesota named after him. Martin was an entrepreneur running the sawmill with a special interest in boat building and was majority shareholder in the St Croix Boom Company.

Van Meier era

By the 1930's, long after the lumbering bonanza went bust and the sawmill closed, the Mower family home and surrounding village sat empty and in despair. When newlyweds Katherine and Dr. Henry Van Meier stumbled upon the property while out hunting ferns, they knew they had to make it their own. They purchased the house and its surrounding 50+ acres on the St. Croix River. Shortly after taking ownership, the first restoration of the property was carried out under the careful eye of Katharine Van Meier. Her attention to detail and preservation of the home is what allows it to be enjoyed today. Arcola Mills was the summer home of the Van Meier's up until his death in 1979.

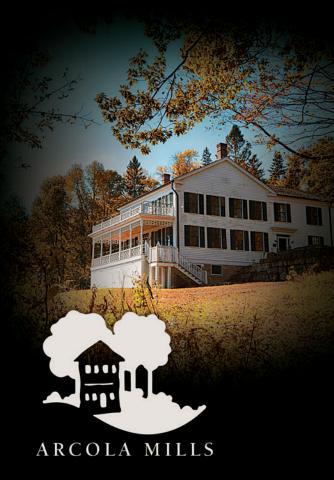
a place... where you can enjoy the freedom of physical, emotional and spiritual expression -Katharine Van Meier

restoration era

The Arcola Mills Historic Foundation was established in 1999 per the wishes of Katharine Van Meier. The Historic house went through its second restoration during this time, taking seven years to complete but vividly showcases the original character of the Minnesota's lumber pioneers.

Today, Arcola Mills is not only a historic site and environmental asset, but a location with thousands of years of habitation history by Native Americans. Through archeological findings on the property, it is believed Arcola Mills served as seasonal camps for the Native Americans while traveling the St Croix. Arcola Mills general store was a known trading spot for the Native Americans.

The original lumber mill remains situated along the riverfront and is targeted for future restoration. This spirit of stewardship and preservation continues to unfold at Arcola Mills. Your generosity is essential to fulfill its potential



"educate, preserve and renew through an emphasis on the arts, history, environment and the human spirit"

arcolamills.org

As the Foundation continues to maintain ar estore Arcola's buildings and grounds they are also working to build programming. Seasonal offerings (May-October) can be ound online at arcolamills.org.

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ARCOLA MILLS

VOLUBLE CETS are crucial at Arcola Mills. Everythi happens is the result of volunteer efforts. Email info@arcolamills if you are interested in becoming an Arcola Day Host or assisting opening, closing and other day-to-day operations of the property