



MOUNT BEACON
INCLINE RAILWAY
SINCE 1902

For Immediate Release

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Incline Society Celebrates Addition of Mount Beacon Fire Tower to National Register of Historic Places

(Beacon, NY) — Thanks to the efforts of a restoration committee sponsored by the Mount Beacon Incline Railway Restoration Society, the Mount Beacon Fire Tower has been listed as both a New York State and National Historic Register property. The timing is particularly appropriate, as 2009 marks the centennial of fire towers in New York. A short ceremony marking the occasion will be held at 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, July 28, 2009 in the Gateway to Mount Beacon Park; several dignitaries are scheduled to attend. The ceremony is open to the public. Directions to the park are at <http://www.inclinerailway.org/visit.htm>.

The sixty-foot tall tower stands on South Beacon Mountain at an elevation of 1,650 feet. It was built in 1931 on the site of an earlier structure and was used by the State of New York to spot fires for over five decades. Over the years, it has become a treasured hiking destination because of the spectacular views it affords visitors. The Fire Tower had previously been listed on the National Historic Lookout Register.

With its latest historic designation, the Fire Tower joins the Mount Beacon Incline Railway and its powerhouse as National Historic Register properties on Mount Beacon. “Our long range plan has always called for more than just the restoration of the railway,” said Anne Lynch, the Incline Society’s President and CEO. “In common with Scenic Hudson, our principal partner, we believe that our natural environment is an irreplaceable source of spiritual and artistic vitality that must be preserved. But we also hope that the restored Railway, Fire Tower and other historic mountaintop sites will allow the public to take in the beauty of the Hudson Valley while learning about the ingenuity and sacrifice of those who came before us.”

Dave Rocco, a member of the Incline Society, has helped spearhead the Fire Tower restoration effort. Along with his fellow committee members, he has worked to raise capital and make much needed physical repairs. According to Rocco, while New York State Senator Steve Saland was instrumental in securing the initial funds for the

restoration project, the committee has also taken some innovative approaches to the project—to reduce costs and to accelerate progress on the restoration. Chief among these was the use of materials from the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge (now known as Walkway Over the Hudson). Durable steel gratings from the historic bridge’s maintenance walkways were used to reconstruct the Fire Tower’s platforms and landings. The reuse of historic materials is a signature feature of both the Fire Tower and Incline Railway restoration efforts, not merely to remain faithful to the past, but also because it is an environmentally friendly way to complete these projects.

Rocco believes the restoration of the tower will be completed this year, allowing the Incline Society to shift its restoration efforts to other mountaintop structures, including the Railway powerhouse on North Beacon Mountain and the former ranger’s home near the Fire Tower. For those wishing to learn more about these ongoing restoration efforts, please visit www.inclinerailway.org or www.beaconfiretower.org.

About The Incline Society: The Mount Beacon Incline Railway Restoration Society, headquartered in the City of Beacon in Dutchess County, New York, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Historical Society registered with the New York State Education Department. It also holds a Provisional Charter issued by the New York State Board of Regents.

The Society’s mission is to restore, operate and maintain the Incline Railway on North Beacon Mountain, in the City of Beacon, New York and the Town of Fishkill, New York. The Railway is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is an important part of American industrial, engineering, transportation and leisure history. It will serve as a living museum and centerpiece asset in the restoration of the Mount Beacon summit as a scenic, historic and recreational resource. Press kits are available at: www.inclinerailway.org/news_press_kit.htm