

Grant Award Supports Production of Independent Documentary Showcasing Barns Built By Wheatland Natives J.T. Wells & Sons

Independent Documentary Receives Support from the Rochester Area Community Foundation

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(Scottsville, NY) September 1, 2021 - In its integral role as steward of charitable funds and endowments committed to strengthening our region's vitality, Rochester Area Community Foundation recently awarded a \$20,000 Preserving Historical Assets Vitality grant to the Wheatland Historical Association.

Committed to protecting, preserving, and promoting the history of Wheatland, New York, the Wheatland Historical Association formally agreed to fiscally sponsor Churchbell Creative LLC., an independent media production company, with the intent of securing production funding for a television documentary showcasing a unique regional subset of barns designed and constructed by Wheatland native John Talcott Wells, Sr. and his sons.

Breaking away from post and beam construction, John Talcott Wells, Sr. defied barn-building tradition to create an ingenious truss system - patented trusses (1889) specifically designed to balance outward and inward forces while creating soaring, open interior storage spaces for hay and grain.

Churchbell Creative's Co-owners Katie Andres and Jillian Kuchman, two founding members of a grassroots volunteer organization known as the Wells Barn Legacy Team, have combined their professional production-related expertise to raise community awareness about Western New York's Wells barns through the vehicle of an independent television documentary.

Strategically highlighting the history, heritage, and present-day plight of Western New York's agriculturally and architecturally significant Wells barns, this television documentary will creatively explore ways that remaining barns can regain their relevance through adaptive reuse while fostering community engagement in their preservation before these barns disappear from the landscape entirely due to development, decay, and obsolescence.

WXXI Public Media has agreed to broadcast the documentary, which will premiere on WXXI-TV in Spring, 2023.

The Preserving Historical Assets Vitality Grant is supported by the Lloyd E. Klos Historical Fund and the Elizabeth Holahan Fund for Historical Preservation at the Community Foundation.

