

## **Wheatland Historical Association awarded \$10,000 by the New York State Council on the Arts to Support Production of Independent Documentary Showcasing Barns Built by Wheatland Natives J.T. Wells & Sons**

**(Scottsville, New York) January 12, 2022** - The Wheatland Historical Association announced today a grant award totaling \$10,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to support the recovery of the nonprofit arts and culture sector.

"The arts have long been a critical sector in our economy, and as we continue to rebuild a stronger New York, it's essential we do all we can help this industry thrive once again," **Governor Hochul said.** "These awardees represent the best of what New York's vibrant communities have to offer and with this funding in hand, they will be able to not only continue their creative and inspiring work, but help spur revitalization in their own backyard as well."

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.

Strategically highlighting the history, heritage, and present-day plight of Western New York's agriculturally and architecturally significant Wells barns, this television documentary, produced by Churchbell Creative's Owners Katie Andres and Jillian Kuchman, 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.

"NYSCA applauds Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature for their responsive investment of \$105 million for the nonprofit arts and culture sector. 2022 will continue to bring change and the Wheatland Historical Association with Churchbell Creative will play a vital role in the renewal of our state's economy and creative ecosystem," **said Mara Manus, Executive Director, NYSCA.** "On behalf of the entire NYSCA Team, we wish to extend our sincere congratulations on your award."

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

