

Johnsburg Historical Markers — “A Path Through History”

The Gore Region's rich and diverse history is evident throughout the area. Educating visitors and locals alike about the Gore Region's past is a passion for many museums, small businesses, non-profits, and even local individuals. An easy way to learn about the region while driving or walking through is to stop and read the historical markers! We've highlighted some of them for you here.

Mathew B. Brady



Erected by [Johnsburg Historical Society](#) on January 17, 2017, this historical marker honors the prolific Civil War photographer Mathew B. Brady. The marker is placed near where his childhood once home stood in Johnsburg of what is today called Pasco Road. When traveling South on NY 28, the marker can be seen on the side of the road.

Mathew B. Brady was born of Irish immigrant parents and grew up in Johnsburg, and possibly even was born here. Brady studied photography under Samuel B. Morse who, at the time, was promoting the daguerreotype, an early photographic process using iodine-sensitized silvered plates and mercury vapor. This process would create an image of the subject that had an almost mirror-like quality and would last for centuries if cared for properly.

Brady went on to open his own photography studio in New York City in 1844. This is where he would photograph distinguished subjects such as Generals Grant, Lee, Custer, Burnside, and Jackson; John Quincy Adams, Walt Whitman, Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary Todd-Lincoln, among others.

President Lincoln ultimately gave Brady permission to enter the Civil War battlefield to expose the gruesome brutalities of the conflict and expose them to the general public. It's this bravery and determination to capture the truth that coined him the name, "The Father of Journalism."

Brady expected the United States government to buy his photographs when the war ended. When the government refused to do so, he was forced to sell his New York City studio and go into bankruptcy. Brady died on January 15, 1896, in the charity ward of Presbyterian Hospital following complications from a streetcar accident. He is buried in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington D.C.

Elm Hill



Financed by the [William C. Pomeroy Foundation](#) and erected by [Johnsburg Historical Society](#) in 2014 is the historical marker dedicated to Elm Hill, the home of John Thurman. The marker can be seen at 1547 South Johnsburg Road.

Thurman is known for bringing industry and farming to the Adirondack region. He started off by purchasing 25,000 acres of land in 1788 which quickly grew to more

than 100,000 acres in the Adirondacks, comprising most of Warren County and parts of Washington, Essex, Clinton, and Montgomery counties. His sprawling property on Elm Hill in Johnsbury was home to a grist mill, sawmill, potash factory, distillery, and a carding mill which prepared wool for spinning.

The rise of these industries brought an economic boom to the Gore Region and the Adirondacks as a whole. Factories and mills sprouted up all along the Hudson River and base of Gore Mountain. People flocked north for work and to buy land for their families.

The acreage was eventually divided into a number of towns in 1792, including the town of Thurman. Later, the town of Thurman was divided into Bolton, Chester, Caldwell, and Warrensburg. Established in 1805, Johnsbury was also named after John Thurman.

Thurman tragically died on September 27, 1809, at the age of 40 after being gored by a bull in Bolton Landing. He is buried at Wevertown Cemetery in Wevertown, New York.

North Creek Turntable



Photo by Howard C. Ohlhous

This historical marker for the North Creek Turntable is located at [North Creek Depot Museum](#) in Johnsbury. The marker was financed by a grant from nearby [Barton Mines](#). The turntable itself was completely restored with a New York State Historic Preservation Grant in 2003. The turntable is visible in the background of the above photo.

A train can't do a U-turn. If a train needs to go back in the direction it came, a turntable is used to gently rotate the locomotive so it faces the opposite direction. The railroad's change from steam to diesel locomotives led to the installation of the

present 90-foot turntable in 1944. Turntables of the past were only 60 feet and were operated by manual labor but thankfully, they now utilize a motor.

Today, turntables are rarely used by freight railroads. However, they have not completely disappeared as several have found a second life turning the many restored steam locomotives still in service on railroad museums and tourist railroads.

We've just touched on a few of the historic and informative markers throughout Johnsburg. The Gore Region is full of history at every turn. We can't wait for you to come visit and see how we keep history alive!

For more information on the Johnsburg Historical Society please visit their website:
<https://sites.google.com/site/johnsburghhistoricalsociety/home>