

# AL LORENZ COUNTY PARK

## *A place to play and relax for generations*

From the 1830s to the 1930s, what is now Al Lorenz Park was part of the private Murray Hill estate. The families who lived here ice skated, sledged, and rode horses on the grounds.



After the state TB hospital was built, the greenspace was developed as a retreat for hospital staff, with gazebos, bridges, and additional ponds. Doctors and nurses, some of whom who lived at Murray Hill, spent free time relaxing in the park.



The Pattison family built the log cabin in the park as a rustic retreat in the early 1900s.

In 1974, after acquiring Murray Hill, Livingston County opened Al Lorenz Park as the first county park. Over the last



50 years, playgrounds, sports fields, picnic shelters, restrooms, and a network of trails have been added.

The park was named for park superintendent Al Lorenz (1908-1985), who helped develop and popularize the greenspace we enjoy today.

### Livingston County Campus, Then & Now

Building 1	Main TB hospital	Department of Social Services
Building 2	Children's TB hospital	Department of Health
Building 3	Nurses' dormitories	Cornell Cooperative Extension and Office for the Aging
Building 4	Doctors' apartments	Genesee Valley Council on the Arts and New Deal Museum
Building 5	Head doctor's home	County Historian's Office
Building 6	Laundry and power plant for TB hospital	Records Management and Central Services
Building 7	Duplex for doctors	Veteran Services Agency and Social Services Visit House

*Have questions about Murray Hill or other local history?*



*We are here to help!*

Holly Watson, County Historian  
 Madeline Friedler, Deputy Historian  
 5 Murray Hill Drive  
 Mt. Morris, NY 14510  
 (585) 243-7955  
[historian@co.livingston.ny.us](mailto:historian@co.livingston.ny.us)

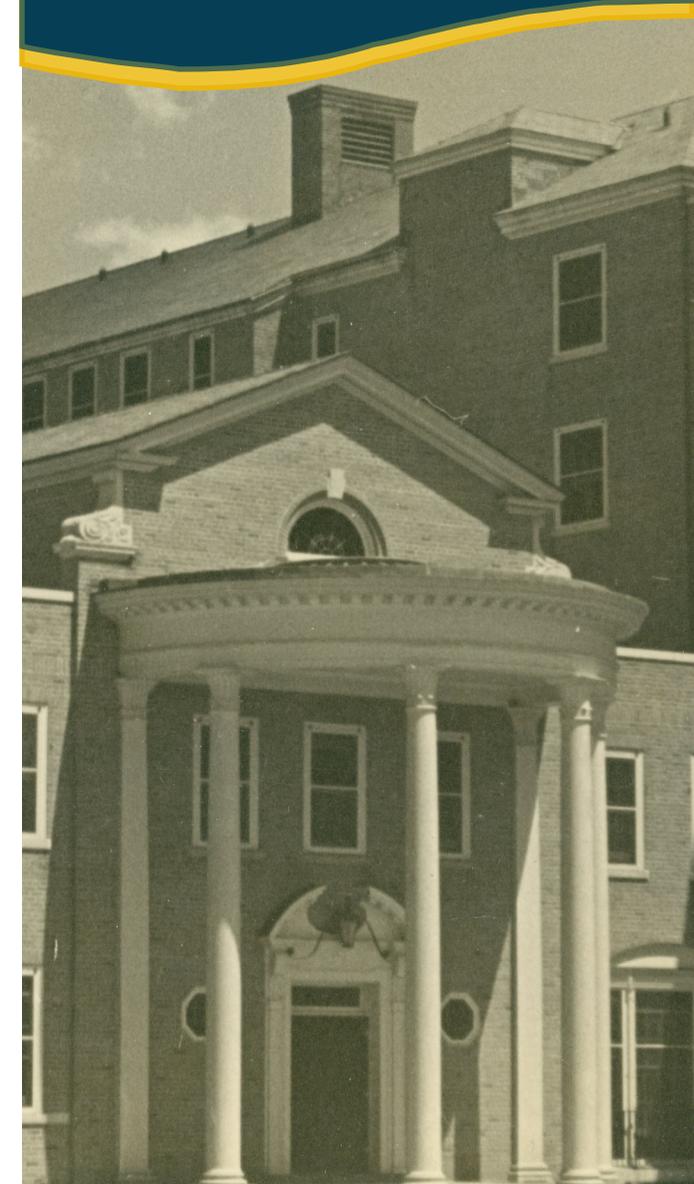


**Office hours:**  
 Monday–Friday, 1:00–4:30 PM  
 Appointments highly encouraged  
 Mornings by appointment only  
 Closed on legal holidays

**Visit our website:**  
[www.LivingstonCountyNY.gov/historian.php](http://www.LivingstonCountyNY.gov/historian.php)

# MURRAY HILL

*From Private Estate  
 to Public Services*



Produced 2024 by the  
 Livingston County Historian's Office  
 Mount Morris, NY

## SENECA HOMELAND

Murray Hill is part of the ancestral homeland of the Seneca Nation. Before 1797, native people, including leader William Tallchief, resided on Murray Hill. Tallchief was later buried at the nearby Mt. Morris Cemetery.



Replica Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) longhouse.  
Photo by Dmadeo, 2007, on Wikimedia Commons.

## PRIVATE ESTATE

1839 – John R. Murray, Jr. and Anna V. (Olyphant) Murray built a large residence on the hill, overlooking the Genesee River. The spot became known as Murray Hill and was home to several families over the years.



1862 – Anson D. and Laura (Page) Smith moved to Murray Hill. Anson died in 1866, and Laura became owner and president of Smith's Bank of Perry, making her one of the earliest woman bank presidents in the US.



## THE MANSIONS

1882 – The Murray Hill mansion was completely destroyed by fire. Charles O. Shepard, the owner at the time, built a smaller residence to replace it and expanded the stables for horses and livestock.



The first mansion, built in 1839, burned in 1882.



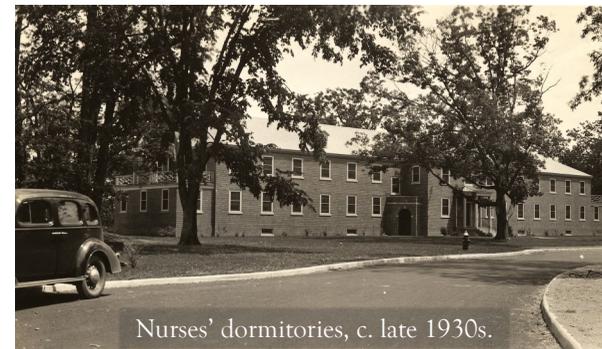
The second house on Murray Hill, built in 1882, was torn down in 1935 during TB hospital construction.  
Photo of Pattison family in front of the house, 1921.

## STATE TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL

Tuberculosis, or TB, was a major public health concern by the early 1900s. In the 1930s, New York State built three tuberculosis hospitals across the state, including one on Murray Hill. The site was chosen for its clean air, convenient location, and water infrastructure.

Gov. Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt briefly visited Murray Hill as a possible hospital site, and Eleanor commented that it was “beautiful.” This led to a local myth that she influenced the choice of the TB hospital location. In fact, the decision was based on the findings of state inspectors.

1932 – The state purchased Murray Hill from the Pattison family, the owners at the time. The hospital complex opened in 1936, and included housing for staff, a greenhouse, and a power plant.



Nurses' dormitories, c. late 1930s.

1971 – Preventative efforts and advances in the use of antibiotics impacted the spread of tuberculosis, resulting in the closing of the hospital.

1972 – Livingston County acquired Murray Hill from New York State. The hospital buildings were renovated to house multiple county departments and affiliated agencies.



State TB hospital at Murray Hill, c. 1940s.

## ART FOR HEALING

During the Great Depression, as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the state commissioned hundreds of paintings, as well as several murals and statues, for the TB hospital.

The art was intended to brighten the hospital rooms during patients' treatment and recovery.



From the New Deal Museum, operated by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts.

Today, the New Deal Museum, at 4 Murray Hill Drive, preserves and exhibits about 230 of these paintings, one of the largest collections of WPA art in the country.

Several original animal sculptures also remain on display on the campus grounds.