



how to give



# our history

Arcola Mills preserves the history and tells the story of what built Minnesota in its early era. To learn more about the past, present and future of Arcola, take in one of our historic tours.

## lumber era

In the 1840s, John and Martin Mower moved to the St. Croix Valley to take advantage of the logging boom and quickly built a small and prosperous lumbering village, known today as Arcola Mills. With a flourishing business, the Mowers added the grand Greek Revival Home to the village in 1847. Reported to be the third oldest and largest timber-frame house in Minnesota, it's listed on the National Register of Historic Places along with the original Arcola sawmill chimney. The Mowers played a crucial role in the growth of the lumber business in the Stillwater area, lumber said to help develop areas up and down the Mississippi. John was a statesman serving in both the territorial and Minnesota legislature with Mower County, Minnesota named after him. Martin was an entrepreneur running the sawmill with a special interest in boat building and was majority shareholder in the St Croix Boom Company.

## Van Meier era

By the 1930's, long after the lumbering bonanza went bust and the sawmill closed, the Mower family home and surrounding village sat empty and in despair. When newlyweds Katherine and Dr. Henry Van Meier stumbled upon the property while out hunting ferns, they knew they had to make it their own. They purchased the house and its surrounding 50+ acres on the St. Croix River. Shortly after taking ownership, the first restoration of the property was carried out under the careful eye of Katharine Van Meier. Her attention to detail and preservation of the home is what allows it to be enjoyed today. Arcola Mills was the summer home of the Van Meier's up until his death in 1979.

*a place... where you can enjoy the freedom of physical, emotional and spiritual expression -Katharine Van Meier*

## restoration era

The Arcola Mills Historic Foundation was established in 1999 per the wishes of Katharine Van Meier. The Historic house went through its second restoration during this time, taking seven years to complete but vividly showcases the original character of the Minnesota's lumber pioneers.

Today, Arcola Mills is not only a historic site and environmental asset, but a location with thousands of years of habitation history by Native Americans. Through archeological findings on the property, it is believed Arcola Mills served as seasonal camps for the Native Americans while traveling the St Croix. Arcola Mills general store was a known trading spot for the Native Americans.

The original lumber mill remains situated along the riverfront and is targeted for future restoration. This spirit of stewardship and preservation continues to unfold at Arcola Mills. Your generosity is essential to fulfill its potential.



ARCOLA MILLS

*"educate, preserve and renew through an emphasis on the arts, history, environment and the human spirit"*

arcolamills.org

BY CHECK please make checks payable to: Arcola Mills Historic Foundation

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$250    other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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ONLINE [www.arcolamills.org](http://www.arcolamills.org)





## educate. preserve. renew.

Nestled in 52-acres of breathtaking preserved wilderness along the majestic St. Croix River, Arcola Mills truly is a meeting space for renewal and celebration. We welcome you to step away from the hectic day-to-day and immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and stories of this charming historic establishment, built in 1847.

We encourage you to explore the natural wonder that surrounds one of the most spectacular and story-filled residences in the Midwest. Take a journey on the hiking trails that twist and turn around 11 natural springs and creeks, and be sure to pack a camera to capture the beauty of native plants, wildflowers, trees and wildlife — images of memories you will be able to reflect on for years to come. Whether you are a local or a visitor, a fishing enthusiast or an avid hiker, the sheer tranquility of this property is sure to consume you and leave you with a heightened sense of serenity. Begin planning your unforgettable trip or get involved by visiting [arcolamills.org](http://arcolamills.org) today.

EXPERIENCE ARCOLA

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As the Foundation continues to maintain and restore Arcola's buildings and grounds they are also working to build programming. Seasonal offerings (May-October) can be found online at [arcolamills.org](http://arcolamills.org).

The Arcola Mills Foundation is committed to protecting and restoring the natural and built environments of Arcola Mills for future generations. Your support is essential to make this mission a reality.

## contribute to the preservation

**volunteers** are crucial at Arcola Mills. Everything that happens is the result of volunteer efforts. Email [info@arcolamills.org](mailto:info@arcolamills.org) if you are interested in becoming an Arcola Day Host or assisting with opening, closing and other day-to-day operations of the property.



ARCOLA MILLS

*Thank you*