

ARTPARK: Here's to 50 more!



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Town of Lewiston Supervisor Steve Broderick said, "Artpark & Company is a big part of the Lewiston community and what makes it so special, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish them a happy 50th anniversary season."

Bill Geiben, a former Village of Lewiston trustee and mayor, Town of Lewiston councilman, and Artpark team member,

shared, "Myself and many Lewiston residents watched Artpark construction back in the 1970s. Many of us anxiously awaited opening night July 25, 1974, to hear and see Ethel Merman who was the headliner. The place was packed to the rafters. I'm sure it was more than a sellout. That night was the first time I was officially connected to Artpark, as I was hired to sell lawn tickets out of a little freestanding booth.

Tickets were \$2 each and there was no limit. I stopped selling tickets when Ethel Merman started to sing, and went up on the lawn with thousands of others. An awesome experience.

"Over the years, I had many positions at Artpark, from selling lawn tickets to being the volunteer coordinator and assistant box office treasurer. The job I most enjoyed was being a park ranger, assisting Artpark visitors and driving the old tram. Between jobs, I also volunteer as an usher in the Mainstage Theater.

"Besides working at Artpark, I also served about 12 years as a Lewiston village trustee, which led me to become a watchdog

toward Artpark and its impact on the village. Some local residents call Artpark an 'attractive nuisance.' They loved the cultural aspect of Artpark, but sometimes complained about the crowds, the traffic and the noise, which were 'the sounds of summer.'

"My two daughters loved Artpark especially ART (Artpark Repertory Theater); activities on, beneath and around the Art EL. And of course, climbing on the big rock pile. I'm sure my kids would have had a great life growing up in Lewiston without Artpark, but also sure that Artpark enhanced their quality of life with great activities and experiences, both indoors and outdoors.

"Thank you, Artpark, for 50 years of entertainment, and bringing so many visitors to the Village of Lewiston."

More about Artpark & Company

Established in 1974 as a collaboration between New York State Parks and the nonprofit Artpark & Company, Artpark welcomes artists to enjoy and be inspired by the dramatic scenery and rich history of the Niagara River Gorge, and welcomes visitors and locals to enjoy the art and experiences created on its 150 acres.

Over the decades, Artpark has hosted tens of thousands of groundbreaking visual artists; cutting-edge theater, dance and cirque arts performers; beloved bands and musicians representing a multitude of genres; festivals featuring local, national and international artists, poets and writers and more – earning a worldwide reputation as a special place for people of all ages and walks of life to make and experience art.

This living cultural legacy weaves into the area's history and present-day significance to Western New York's Indigenous population and the Niagara River and Gorge's extraordinary natural beauty, accessible to visitors through forested trails, sculpture gardens, and outdoor recreation areas.

Artpark is all this and more. Come experience it for yourself.

Discover more of Artpark's storied history online at <https://www.artpark.net/about-artpark>.

Artpark is located at 450 S. Fourth St., Lewiston. Visit www.artpark.net.

Courtesy of Artpark

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