



Chester barn lives on at new L.L. Bean outlet store

BY RYAN EDWARDS

SEPTEMBER 25, 2015 8:00 AM

LAKE GEORGE — Thanks to a local company, wood from what was a nearly collapsed nineteenth century barn lives on inside the recently opened L.L. Bean factory outlet store in Lake George.

The barn, erected in the 1830s, was located on Vanguilder Road in Chester, just 20 miles from the outlet store. When its owners began to fear the building would collapse this summer, they called a Lake George family-owned and-operated recycler of aging barns called StoriedBoards to come and take it down.

But the StoriedBoards team doesn't stop there.

Founded in 2012 on the principal that history should not be lost when materials are reclaimed from their original source, the company not only disassembles these structures, but grants the old boards new life by ensuring their stories follow them to their new homes, from private residences to businesses like L.L. Bean.

In this particular case, accompanying the boards on an interior wall of the store is a photo of the barn and a blown-up postcard from 1910 showing its location relative to Loon Lake, framed with wood from the barn and offering details about its owners.

"People love it because it feels like L.L. Bean. It's outdoorsy," store manager Stephanie Calcutti said. "It's nice when people ask about the wood and you can tell them about the history and the family that owned it."

Joan (Vanguilder) Stevens, whose parents and grandparents used the barn to house cows and chickens and store hay, said she was sad to see all those memories come down – but equally excited to see the boards reused on the L.L. Bean store walls.

"It was like, 'hey, I know those boards,'" she said about her store visit. "It was kind of emotional, but it's nice to see the barn is living on. It's still got a story to tell."

StoriedBoards has dismantled 13 barns to date, and wood products from these structures have been used in more than 100 projects this year. The company's work has been featured in lavish homes and high-end restaurants including Gabriel Kreuther in Manhattan and The Back 40 Kitchen in Greenwich, CT.

L.L. Bean announced in March that it planned to triple its number of stores, and StoriedBoards' owners Tyler, Whitney and Garrett Russell are hopeful the company will call again.

L.L. Bean Corporate Spokesman Mac McKeever said he couldn't say whether that will happen, but he praised the company and its products.

"We chose to use reclaimed barn boards from StoriedBoards for a few reasons: they were an environmentally sound option, they are a local provider and their gorgeous wood tells a unique story, has incredible character, a rich history and heritage and is a great match for our brand."



Wood from a nineteenth century Chester barn was given new life at the recently opened L.L. Bean outlet store in Lake George, thanks to StoriedBoards, a Lake George company which dismantles aging barns and provides detailed back-stories to its costumers to ensure the buildings' legacies live on wherever their boards end up.