

Fresh eyes

Filmmaker documenting St. Mary's history

By CASEY MOHL
For Ballston Spa Life

BALLSTON SPA — Gregory Hitchcock's first experience as a filmmaker took place during art class at Colonie's Shaker High School.

Gregory Hitchcock manned the camera and starred in his six-minute film.

"That was the first film I ever made," said Hitchcock, a Ballston Lake resident. "It was all improvisational, but I realized how much I liked working behind the camera."

Hitchcock, who is a weekly newspaper reporter, has always been interested in filmmaking but has no professional experience in the industry.

This summer, Hitchcock took a risk, deciding to make a documentary about a subject that intrigued him, St. Mary's Church in the village.

"I joined the choir at St. Mary's in January; it hit me that this place was something special," Hitchcock said. "I needed to show people how beautiful this place was."

Hitchcock was enamored by the stainless glass windows and the historic significance of the more than 100-year-old church.

"This church was built in the late 19th century and at the time the community came together so willingly," Hitchcock said. "People held fundraisers and made sure



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Claire Daly awaits setup as budding filmmaker and documentarian Greg Hitchcock, above and below, readies his camera.



the church was constructed."

Sister Nancy Schmidt, CSJ, who has worked at the church for six years, appreci-

ates Hitchcock's interest in St. Mary's parish.

"I met Greg after one of our Sunday masses and he told me his plan," Schmidt said. "It sounded like a great idea. He's such an energetic and charismatic person."

Schmidt hopes the church community will support the work and Hitchcock, who hopes to have the film completed by early October.

Hitchcock admits he is still learning on the job. He edits the footage on his home computer and if he struggles, he asks vol-

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