



**Name of Property:** Stepping Stones (Bill and Lois Wilson House)  
**City, State:** Katonah, New York  
**Period of Significance:** 1941-1988  
**NHL Criteria:** 1 and 2, Exception 8  
**NPS Theme:** I. Peopling Places  
2. Health, Nutrition and Disease  
II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements  
2. Reform Movements  
**Previous Recognition:** 2004 National Register of Historic Places  
**National Historic Context:** XXXI. Social and Humanitarian Movements  
B. Temperance and Prohibition

**NHL Significance:**

- Stepping Stones is the home of Bill and Lois Wilson, respective co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Al-Anon Family Groups. During the 47 years that Bill and/or Lois Wilson lived here, A.A. grew exponentially, spreading within and outside of the United States, with Bill Wilson serving as the leader of the movement. It was Bill and Lois' primary workspace and where they achieved most of their accomplishments.
- It is the location where Bill Wilson wrote most of his significant works including *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, *A.A. Comes of Age*, *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, and hundreds of articles.
- Lois Wilson created the Central Clearing House at Stepping Stones. The Central Clearing House provided assistance, information, and materials for family members of alcoholics eventually becoming known as Al-Anon Family Groups.
- In 1957 Lois organized Alateen for the children of alcoholic parents. Like Al-Anon and AA, Alateen also grew to include chapters around the world. Today, Al-Anon/Alateen has 24,000 groups in over 130 countries.
- With the creation of the Stepping Stones Foundation in 1979, Lois Wilson recognized the value the house would have as an historic house museum on the history of AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen. Reflecting her understanding that the house would eventually be used as a



museum, Lois spent the last eight years of her life compiling a gallery filled with AA and Al-Anon archival material. Objects from the Wilsons' previous residences, which include significant archives on AA history, came with them to Stepping Stones.

**Integrity:**

- The six buildings and contents of Stepping Stones are *entirely* intact from their period of significance and contain the original furnishings belonging to Bill and Lois Wilson in the exact place they left them.
- A recent renovation of the garage into a Welcome Center retained the character of the outside of the building while the inside, which was previously unusable, now offers visitors greater access to the site's history. For the renovation project Stepping Stones used historic materials and retained the original style of workmanship.
- Although suburbs have grown around Stepping Stones, the property retains the serene and peaceful character that was so important to Bill and Lois Wilson.

**Owner of Property:** The Stepping Stones Foundation

**Acreage of Property:** 8.1 acres

**Origins of Nomination:** Owner prepared nomination.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- Designation as an NHL will bring recognition to a solution for one of society's most pressing health issues—alcoholism, as well recognition of two of the most influential individuals in that organization.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known.

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** Designation. Dr. Murtagh moved, Dr. Seale seconded; unanimous approval.

**Public Comments Favoring Designation:**

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**