



Summer 2019 Newsletter

Volume XXIX #2

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New membership and renewals are being accepted now! See the back page of this edition for the form or contact the Historical Society to renew or join today. Become a new member, or renew your membership with WCHS—see form on back page.

Membership Summer Picnic — Join Us!

The Fort Edward Historical Association and the Washington County Historical Society will co-host a buffet-style old-fashioned picnic on **Thursday, July 18** at the Old Fort House at 29 Broadway in Fort Edward. The meal will consist of picnic fare from Ye Old Fort Diner and the Anvil Inn.

The event will start at 4:00 p.m. Visitors can walk the grounds and tour the museum. There will be a special new exhibit, “A Century of Collecting: Treasures from the Old Fort House” which will be open for everyone to enjoy as part of the festivities.

As dessert is served, re-enactor Paul Stillman from Fort William Henry will portray Teddy Roosevelt. In the 38 years he has been doing historical interpretations, Stillman has talked to more than one million students from kindergarten through college.

He said he is considered one of the best Teddy Roosevelt's in the country and he speaks eight languages: Japanese, English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Seneca, Mohawk, and German. (*Post-Star, May 18, 2018*).

We hope you will consider joining us for what promises to be a fun and informative evening. The event will go on rain or shine. Tickets are \$17.00 and include the picnic, admission to the Old Fort House and entertainment. Pre-registration is required. Please send your completed form in before July 15.

For more information or for last minute reservations, please call (518) 747-9600.

Please complete the following form and send it with your payment before July 15:

Name _____

Address _____

Town/City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

How many will be attending? _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____

 Please make checks payable to the Fort Edward Historical Association and send to FEHA, P.O. Box 106, Fort Edward, NY 12828

Greetings From Your President

Washington County Historical Society Mission Statement

The Washington County Historical Society is an educational organization dedicated to engaging diverse audiences in the study and application of the collective heritage of Washington County, New York, and its environs.

- Rev. October 2005

WCHS has a constantly growing collection of information, original documents, and other items of interest about Washington County and its inhabitants, past and present. We encourage you to stop by and take a look!

If you would like to find out more about volunteering to help with the Heritage Research Library, please contact the Historical Society and let us know.



Heritage Research Library Hours:

Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Newsletter Editor:
Kelly Mead

How To Contact Us:



Phone: (518) 747-9108
Fax: (518) 746-1655



Address: 167 Broadway,
Fort Edward, NY 12828



Web: www.wchs-ny.org
Email: wchs@wchs-ny.org

Hello Everyone:

Summer is finally here and everything is very green from the seemingly endless rain in May and early June!

It was a busy spring for WCHS. We co-sponsored a talk on Grandma Moses (who was born in Easton) with the Greenwich-Easton Historical Association. We are trying to share events with other historical societies from time to time to help with expenses and also to get to know members of the other groups. We also had the 2019 event in the second Cronkhite lecture series on historic preservation. This second series, which consisted of three programs, culminated May 16 with the third program and the WCHS Historic Preservation Committee's annual awards ceremony at the Bottskill Baptist Church. Area resident Scott Thetford was honored for his outstanding work in the restoration of the church. Justin Rushinski received a certificate of merit for his help in the project. The Bottskill Baptist Church received an award as well. Read more on page 3.

This summer we are looking forward to co-hosting an old-fashioned picnic on July 18 with the Fort Edward Historical Association and, of course, later in the summer, we will have our display and bookshop in the County Bounty Building at the Washington County Fair as well as the Caboose exhibit. If you would like to volunteer to work at the Fair, please contact the Society to let us know. Volunteering is a great way to meet interesting people from Washington County as well as from outside our area. Also, we have a number of opportunities for volunteers to help out with our many events, including helping to provide refreshments for the social time at the end of each of our many programs.

Mark your calendars for the Washington County Historical Society's History Fair which will take place at Hartford Central School on September 28, 2019 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. It will be a full day of programs, exhibits, and a lunch-time concert of Adirondack folk music. Here again is another opportunity to volunteer. Folks are needed to help out as greeters and to help with introducing our many speakers. It promises to be a fun and informative day.

There are separate articles throughout the newsletter on all the previously mentioned events and more! Also, please remember if you have not renewed your membership in WCHS for 2019, it is not too late. Take a moment and return the form located on the back page of this Newsletter.

I hope you spend at least part of your summer enjoying the beauty and history of our county. If you do not live here, perhaps you can read a book about one or more of the historic events that happened right here in our own backyards!

Happy Summer!
Debi Craig, President

Bottskill Baptist Church Recognized for Historic Preservation

The Bottskill Baptist Church is one of three brick churches on the east side of the village of Greenwich. The church congregation recently received an award for preservation work involving the building. Below is an excerpt from an article written by Evan Lawrence that appeared in the *Glens Falls Post Star* on June 6, 2019.

The congregation of a Greenwich church that saved its landmark building received a historic preservation award recently from the Washington County Historical Society. Pat Niles, past president of the historical society and a member of its preservation committee, presented a plaque and certificate to the Bottskill Baptist Church as the final event in its spring Cronkite Lecture series on May 23. Metalsmith Scott Thetford received the Keystone Award for designing and fabricating metal gussets to repair the church's damaged rafters. Justin Rushinski, the general contractor, received a certificate of merit.



Sandy Spaulding and Debi Craig

"We knew a few weeks before the award," said Sandra Spaulding, Bottskill Baptist Church pastor. "The congregation was thrilled." In March 2017, the congregation discovered that the rafters of the 1866 building had deteriorated to the point the building had to be closed. In July, the congregation voted to repair the church and raise \$231,000 for roof repairs, plus another \$19,000 to complete other renovations that were underway. The campaign exceeded its goal through a combination of grants, individual and corporate donations, and fundraisers.

Rushinski, who had worked on the building previously, collaborated with engineers and Thetford to stabilize the building, repair the rafters and repair the interior. Rushinski is a roofer, carpenter and mason; Thetford is a silversmith, blacksmith and general metalsmith with a workshop in Salem.

Washington County and the historical society used to give out plaques for exceptional historic preservation projects, but the program was dropped in 2007, Niles said. The historical society revived it last year, recognizing South Dominion Vineyard in Jackson for building preservation and Tom Litwin of Eagle Bridge for craftsmanship. "We're hoping to do this again next year," Niles said. "We want nominations of buildings and craftsmen across Washington County for 2020."

After a year and a half of holding services at Centenary United Methodist Church, just down the street, the Bottskill Baptists returned to their sanctuary in September. The congregation hasn't yet decided where it will display the plaque, Spaulding said. Work continues in the fellowship hall, which was under renovation and was damaged during the work upstairs. "That will be done in a few weeks," Spaulding said. "Groups are calling about when they can come back. That's a really great thing — that's what we wanted."



L-R: Scott Thetford, Justin Rushinski, Sandy Spaulding, Pat Niles, WCHS President Debi Craig, Steve Mueller



L-R: Justin Rushinski, Debi Craig and Scott Thetford

Help Give Our County Historic Markers A Facelift



A newly painted sign in Fort Ann.

Most of us are familiar with the blue and gold historic markers dotting the Washington County countryside (I believe I counted 66). They were originally placed by the New York State Education Department. The years have taken their toll on these signs. Some are in desperate need of new paint. Eagle Scout candidate Casey Bush from Fort Ann recently completed his historic marker painting project in the Town of Fort Ann. Four of the signs have a new coat of paint. What a difference. The newly painted signs are eye catching as one drives through the Fort Ann community. Thank you, Casey!

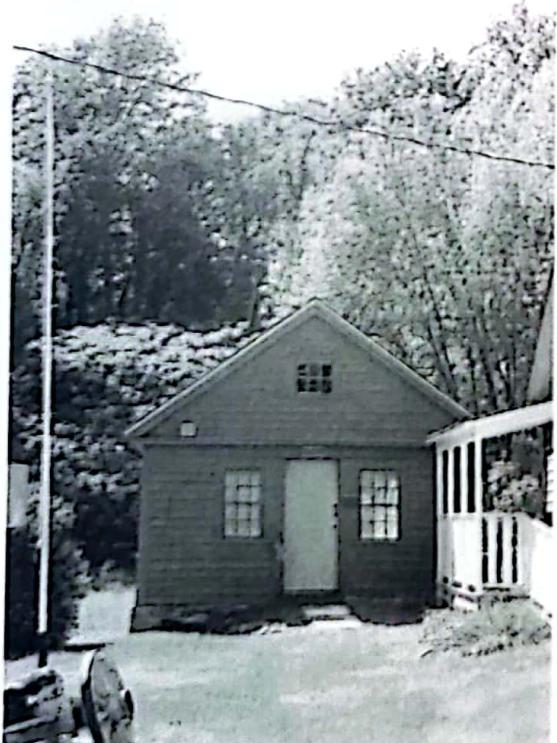
There are a number of other signs around the county which need to be painted and/or straightened. Paint for painting the historic markers may be obtained from either the NYS Department of Transportation or the Canal System.

If you know a young person who is an Eagle Scout candidate or someone in your community who is seeking a project (it could also be a great job for retirees looking for a project for which to volunteer), please have them contact the Historical Society at the Wing-Northup house in Fort Edward at 518-747-9108 Wednesday or Friday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Ask to speak to our administrator Steve Lapham and leave a message along with the best phone number for President Debi Craig to reach you.



An example of one of many signs needing new paint — this one is at WCHS.

Hartford Enlistment Center Receives Grant



123rd Regiment Enlistment Center, Hartford, NY.
The Enlistment Center will get a new foundation, thanks to a DASNY grant

The Hartford Enlistment Center (for the 123rd Regiment of the Civil War) is the recipient of a DASNY (Dormitory Authority of the State of New York) grant. Much of the research for the grant application was prepared by Hartford historian, Mike Armstrong and Pete Swano of the Hartford Historical Group.

The grant is for the restoration of the enlistment center and replacing the foundation to stabilize the building. The work will begin in September 2019 after the close of the museum. It will probably prevent allowing Mike and Pete to have the enlistment center and the Hartford Museum open on the day of the History Fair as they did two years ago. It is expected to be completed before the 2020 season.

The Hartford Museum has also been given the gift of a new flag and flagpole by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). The new flag flies in front of the enlistment center when it is open and on most patriotic holidays.

The photo at left shows the building with the new flagpole.

Walking Tour of Greenwich—Get The App!

In 2017, Michael Casey, nephew of WCHS president Debi Craig and high school student, created a cell phone walking tour in the Village of Greenwich for his Eagle Scout project. The object was to create an awareness of Underground Railroad history that took place in the village in the mid-1800s.



QR code on Greenwich Underground Railraod walking tour

Michael had chosen that topic when he was only 12. He was supported and assisted by many people from the Greenwich community. He featured Greenwich residents from the past who played an important role in the abolition movement or the Underground Railroad by relating their own stories on a YouTube channel he created with the help of David Doonan, the former mayor of Greenwich.

Current local residents donned period costumes to portray these citizens and relate how they were involved in the abolition story. Some of the characters portrayed included Angelina Mowry who, with her husband William, was very active in the abolition movement; Dr. Hiram Corliss, a known “conductor” on the Underground Railroad and one of the founders of the American Medical Association and former business partner with Daniel Anthony, Susan B. Anthony’s father; and Leonard Gibbs, a local lawyer who grew up in North Granville, but retired to Greenwich. Gibbs was involved in the “Jerry Rescue” in Syracuse during the Liberty Party convention in 1851 as well as were other abolitionists from Union Village (as Greenwich used to be known).

After the completion of his Eagle Scout project, Michael turned the walking tour over to the Greenwich-Easton Historical Association. Photos here show some of the QR code signage along the tour route.

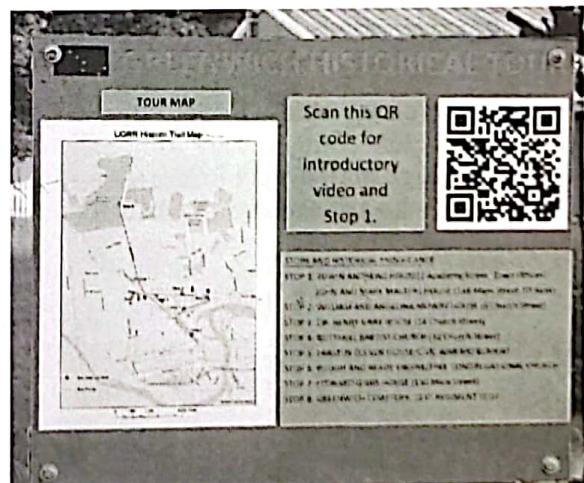
It is a great way to spend a morning (or afternoon). The walk takes 2-2 ½ hours and can also be done by car. The walk starts at the first marker in front of the Information Booth to the left of the Village Offices on Academy Street, not far from the Greenwich Free Library.

At least one person walking the route should have the app “QR Lightning” or similar app downloaded into their cell phone. Walkers can pick up a map inside the information booth. The map will identify the locations of the other sites on the tour.

When ready to start the tour, hold the cell phone up to the QR code on the first sign. The cell phone will read the code and the YouTube channel will pop up with Michael talking about the tour.

There are eight stops on the tour which ends in the Greenwich Cemetery. There is a drop box in which to leave the map. It is also possible for Scouts to earn a patch upon completion of the walking tour.

Please contact WCHS President, Debi Craig directly at draig547312@gmail.com for more information. The walking tour is child friendly!



The sign for stop #1 on the tour.

Announcing New Tour for 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment

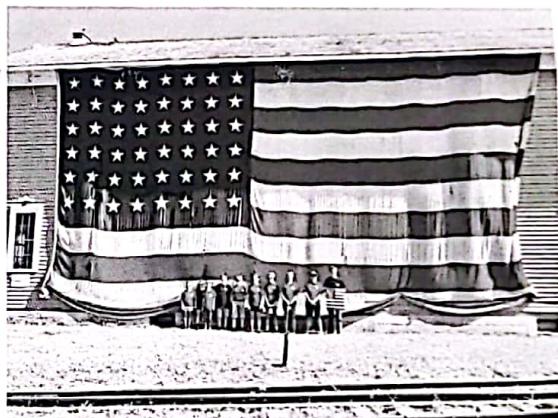
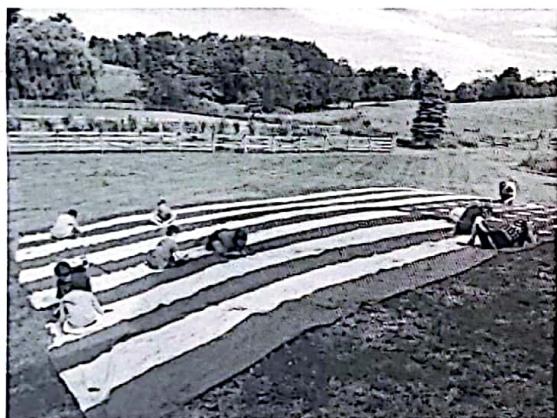
WCHS will be introducing a new bus tour in 2020, co-sponsored by the NorthStar Historical Project. WCHS President Debi Craig created the bus tour in 2007 as part the NorthStar's Underground Railroad Conference. It is called "Through Susan's Eyes" and will take attendees to different sites in Easton, Greenwich, Jackson, and Cambridge that were directly related to Susan B. Anthony and her family's life in this area. Many people do not know she lived here for at least 19 years and taught in a number of area one-room schoolhouses. Debi thought her long-time friend Barb Skiff would be perfect to portray Susan. Barb agreed and she has once again agreed to portray Susan in 2020. Barb was one of three singers in "Only the Message Mattered", Bob Warren's song cycle about Susan which was created with a grant from the NorthStar Historical Project (also written by Debi Craig and Claudia Blackler).



New to the tour this year will be stops related to the Easton Political Equality Club which will take attendees to Easton, Barkers Grove and Burton Hall where Helen Brownell and Mary Jane Connor will have a display of memorabilia from the Political Equality Club. The Political Equality Club consisted of quite a few Easton farm wives who along with their husbands felt that women deserved the right to vote. Susan B Anthony's sister, Mary Anthony, was involved with this organization. The Fort Edward Historical Association Suffrage Exhibit created by R. Paul McCarty, director of the Old Fort House Museum, will be on display.

Follow our webpage and our Facebook page for more information as well as a date and time announcement. We are hoping for May 2020. It should be an interesting and informative tour!

4-H Helps Repair Salem Flags



I read an interesting article in the Post-Star last week about 4-Hers repairing two large 90-year-old flags in Salem. The 4-Hers doing this are from Salem and some are from Poultney, Vermont. The flags are 120 square feet; 30 feet high and 40 feet long and are owned by Liz Donaldson of Salem. They had been owned by her father-in-law who had obtained them at auction; the previous owners being a Long Island shipping company.

The first flag was repaired last year by a group of 4-Hers with Donaldson's help. After the flag was repaired, it was hung on the Braymer Fuel building in Salem as part of the Salem 4th of July Art and Plow Parade and Fest.

The second flag will be mended on Donaldson's front lawn at her Shushan farm. This flag will also be hung for the 2019 Art and Plow Parade on July 4. Both flags are quite fragile so they can not be hung up for too long.

It is nice to hear that 4-Hers in our area are still active in this type of project. I was a 4-Her for ten years and had many great team building experiences such as this. Kudos to the 4-Hers and to Liz for working with them!

Submitted by WCHS President, Debi Craig

Historic Program at the Knickerbocker Mansion held on June 15



Paul Stillman sitting left;
Cliff Oliver sitting right

Cronkhite award recipient, Claudia Blackler contacted Debi Craig and they attended a program and dinner at the Knickerbocker Mansion near Schaghticoke on June 15.

The program was entitled "An Evening with the Old Lions" and featured President Teddy Roosevelt (played by Paul Stillman who will be doing the program for our WCHS July 18th picnic mentioned on page 1) and Booker T. Washington (portrayed by Cliff Oliver from Greenwich who frequently portrays Solomon Northup). The two men were reminiscing about their controversial 1901 meeting at the White House.

What a treat! Tours of the mansion were given starting at 5 p.m. The mansion is considered the most significant historic building in upper Rensselaer County. It is in an area of the Hoosic River Valley known as the Vale of Peace. It was built

by Johannes and Elizabeth Knickerbocker in the 1780s. Near the mansion are the remains of the Witenagemot Oak Peace Tree which was planted in 1676 to commemorate a peace treaty between the Native Americans and the European settlers.



The Knickerbocker Mansion

The event was a fund raiser to help with the many needed repairs that still need to be done at the mansion. The Knickerbocker Historical Society has built a lovely new pavilion in memory of Stana Iseman of Cambridge, who was related to the Knickerbockers. Stana passed away several years ago.

The dinner was served in the pavilion (pictured left). There is a large industrial kitchen at the rear of the pavilion. Members of the Historical Society prepared the dinner on-site. The two man program was also held in the pavilion. I enjoyed it very much. If you can possibly attend the picnic we are sharing with the Fort Edward Historical Association on July 18th, you are in for a real treat. Paul Stillman "is" Teddy Roosevelt!



The new pavilion building.

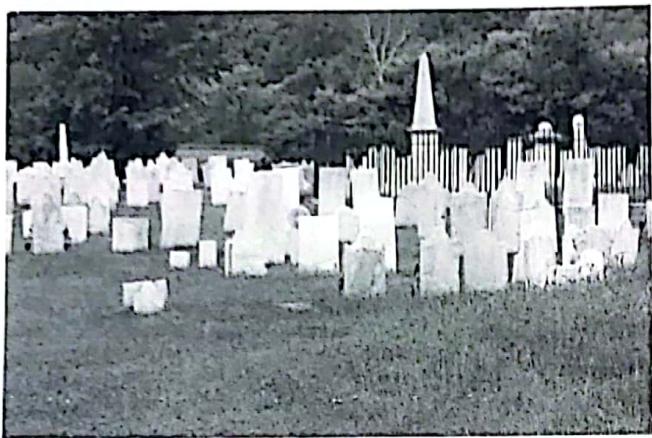
If you haven't visited the mansion, they offer tours every Sunday from May-October from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. For more activities and programs at the mansion, please visit their website: www.knickmansion.com. The house is at 132 Knickerbocker Rd, not far from SR 67 between Schaghticoke and Mechanicville.

WMHT Video Series — *She Inspires: Grandma Moses*

If you enjoyed the program co-sponsored by WCHS and the Greenwich-Easton Historical Association featuring Deana Mallory from the Bennington Museum several months ago, you are sure to enjoy this short video series on WMHT, *She Inspires*. The series celebrates influential women from our history who have made an impact on our region and beyond, from scientists to artists to outstanding athletes. *She Inspires* can be seen anytime online, and throughout the week on WMHT-TV. The next offering in their series is Anna Mary Robertson Moses who was born in 1860 in Easton, NY. (In spite of what you might have read, she was born in the town of Easton off County Route 74. There is a historic marker there.) Having started as a child, she began painting in earnest in her late 70s. Popularly known as Grandma Moses, the artist was self-taught and described her nostalgic work as "old-timey". With a love for the arts and having painted more than 1,000 pictures, Grandma Moses is an example that it is never too late to do something you love. You can watch this video short and many more anytime online at www.wmht.org/sheinspires.

The Old Burying Ground in Salem by Debi Craig

I have always been fascinated by cemeteries and old gravestones. A cemetery is virtually a history book to a community or in my case to my family. When we were children, my sister and I were loaded into the car on Memorial Day to take lilacs to our grandparents' graves in both the New Hebron Cemetery and the North Hebron Cemetery. We didn't really pay any attention to who else was buried there.



Gravestones cleaned by the Salem Rotary Club in the Old Burying Ground.

I had never been all that interested in genealogy when I was younger. It wasn't until after we buried our Dad in 2008 that I had lots of regrets for things I hadn't asked him. I did remember going with him to the old Hebron Cemetery where he pointed out the graves of our great great grandparents on our Mom's father's side of the family. He cautioned me to remember where they were buried. I told him I would and didn't think about the graves again until after Dad passed away. I decided I would go down and locate the graves again, but when I arrived at the cemetery and walked in the gate, I couldn't find them! I walked all over but had no luck. I went home annoyed with myself. Several nights later, I was going through boxes of photos left to my Mom by her cousin and came across a newer photo of the Old Hebron Cemetery which showed an iron gate with an arrow drawn with a Sharpie marker to two gravestones. I studied the photo and laughed to myself.

I now knew what I had done wrong. I had entered the incorrect gate, I was too far to the right to find the graves of Philip and Eleanor Jenkins and their son, Salmon. Dad hadn't trusted my memory!

I am focusing on two cemeteries in Salem in this article starting with the one known as "The Old Burying Ground" or the Revolutionary War Cemetery in the southern part of the village on State Route 22. When I was a child, I was told about this cemetery by several elementary teachers, but it was not cared for at the time and I was also told that it was loaded with poison ivy so I chose not to wander about exploring.

Years passed and fairly recently, articles appeared in the *Greenwich Journal-Salem Press* about how the stone wall surrounding the cemetery was being repaired. Salem historian, Al Cormier was raising money to repair the crumbling stone wall surrounding the old cemetery. The old cemetery has a much different look to it now. The wall is repaired and the Salem Rotary Club had undertaken the job of cleaning all the grave markers, many of which are now sparkling white marble stones. I decided to learn more about this peaceful cemetery which I had been told as a child holds the graves of more Revolutionary War soldiers than any other graveyard in the county (105) as well as five from the War of 1812 and two from the French and Indian War. The Cemetery was founded in 1767 and the first burial was a Native American in an unmarked grave. More than 1,040 burials were recorded in the space of a little more than one hundred years. Almost all the head stones are facing east, the rows are north and south. Many graves originally had foot stones, but quite a few are now stored along the south wall while some are still in place. There are also 11 family vaults covered with sod.

According to historian Al Cormier, the earliest graves are on the north side. A number of stones were carved by Zerubbable Collins. The rest were carved by four other stone carvers. Collins developed his own carving style which "consists of a large prominent jawed, deeply incised face with small wings arising from the face in an elaborate curving and twisting scroll like floral designs". His earliest stone is that of 18-year old Abram Savage who died in 1769. Three other members of the Savage family also have gravestones carved by Collins. However they were moved from the Old Burying Ground to the newer Evergreen Cemetery which was opened a century after the Revolutionary Cemetery.



Grave of the wife of John Savage also carved by Zerubbable Collins.

Update on the 2019 WCHS History Fair

The sixth Washington County History Fair will be held at Hartford Central School on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The location has been a wonderful place to hold the event, and the second one we have held in Hartford. The school is easily accessible and centrally located in the picturesque rolling hills of Hartford. In 2017, we had over two hundred attendees at that History Fair—we'd love to top that this fall!

It will be an exciting day with exhibits about our historic county, 12 programs for all ages, a cannon firing, and a concert of Adirondack folk music by Dave Ruch.

Stewarts will be on-site with coffee and doughnuts in the morning and sandwiches, beverages and chips at lunch time—so attendees can eat their lunch during the concert without having to leave the school. Attendees are also welcome to bring their own lunch if they so desire.

Our programs will cover a wide variety of topics: Colonial Games for Children; Historic Mills on the Batten Kill; A Visit from Susan B. Anthony; Washington County's Unknown or Forgotten Civil War History; Locals Who Modeled for Norman Rockwell; The Days of Belcher – 200 years and 9 generations; Genealogical Proof Standard: Maintaining Focus Amid the Welter of Resources; Sammy Doughboy Remembers; Music of the Civil War; Canals of Eastern New York and One-Room Schoolhouses in Easton.

We have displays planned from the following organizations and historians: Argyle historian; Whitehall historians; Easton historian; Hebron Preservation Society; the Warren County Historical Society; Dr. Asa Fitch Society; Gill Room at the Greenwich Free Library; White Creek historian; Willard's Mountain DAR; Greenwich-Easton Historical Association; Hampton, Kingsbury and Hudson Falls historian; the Fort Edward Historical Association; Walloomsac SAR; Washington County historian; Hartford historian; Hartford Historical Group; Pember Museum and the Slate Valley Museum.

Mike and Mary Skelly have graciously offered to bring and fire their cannon "Bella" on the soccer field behind the school again this year (the cannon firing will not take place if it is raining).

As noted above (see inset), we welcome Dave Ruch, a folk singer from Buffalo, NY, presenting his program of Adirondack folk music during the lunch hour (12:30-1:30 p.m.) and is suitable for all ages. Please come and bring guests to enjoy the event—children, grandchildren, or anyone interested! The entire event is for all ages and is free and open to the public. Free-will donations will be gladly accepted to help defray expenses. This event goes on rain or shine. Please come and learn about history in your own backyard!

Dave Ruch To Play at History Fair



Dave Ruch

The Historical Society is the recipient of a Community Arts grant through the NYSCA (NYS Council on the Arts) administered locally by the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council (LARAC). The grant was written by WCHS President Debi Craig along with Claudia Blackler, Cronkhite Award recipient 2017 and former librarian at the Greenwich Free Library. Between NorthStar Historical Project of Greenwich and WCHS, Craig and Blackler have received seven Community Arts grants which they co-authored. Craig received the check for the grant at an awards ceremony at the LARAC headquarters in Glens Falls on May 25.

This year's grant will fund a concert of Adirondack folk music by singer Dave Ruch at the Washington County History Fair at Hartford Central School on Saturday, September 28, 2019. The concert will be held during the lunch hour at 12:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

For more information on this event and the History Fair, please see the related article in this *Newsletter*. To learn more about Dave Ruch and his music, please visit his website at www.daveruch.com.

This performance is made possible with funds from the Decentralization Program, a re-grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council.

In Memorium

James Thomas Durler (1947-2018)

Jim Durler of Fort Edward, NY and more recently Arlington, VT, died November 3, 2018, age 71.

He was a 1965 graduate of Fort Edward high school. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1967 and served two tours as a RVN Radar/Fire Control in Vietnam, honorably discharged as a sergeant with secret clearance in 1971. He earned a B.S. in business administration from ACC and SUNY Albany becoming a Plant Cost Accountant / Plant Comptroller of American Home Products in Argyle from 1975 to 1996.

Jim went back to SUNY Adirondack and SUNY Plattsburgh to earn his MA in education. He taught at SUNY Adirondack as an adjunct professor of American history. Jim was a member of the Washington County Historical Society and active in the Fort Edward Historical Association as a trustee. He was also an active member of the Washington County Advisory Council of Historic Preservation. Members have fond memories of Jim and his wife, Melinda, preparing delicious food in their outdoor bake oven at picnics in Fort Edward. He volunteered his time at the Fort Ticonderoga Friends Association, Adirondack Museum, NYS Forest Owners Association, Cornell Cooperative Extension as Master Gardner and Master Forest Owner and he was a life member of the National Rifle Association.

Jim was an avid conservationist, master storyteller and a natural teacher/mentor stemming from a lifelong thirst for knowledge. As recently as May 25, 2019 Jim Durler was honored posthumously by the Battenkill Conservancy with the 2019 Battenkill Community Citizen Award accepted by his wife and family. The award was created in 2012 to recognize area residents for their service and contributions to civic, non-profit and educational projects and organizations resulting in positive change within the Battenkill watershed community.

The Society sends heartfelt condolences to Jim's family, especially to his wife Melinda Reid Durler and their daughter, Dublin and son, Daniel. His enthusiasm and knowledge for all of his varied interests will be greatly missed.

Questions? The WCHS Heritage Research Library is here to help!

If you are interested in genealogy, we have materials that may be the answer to your research questions. About 95% of the questions we receive are about genealogy. The other 10% are about history, school buildings, house histories, and the like. We have a sizable library of about 5,000 books—many with limited publication numbers and distribution. We have thousands of other documents in our vertical files and storage, including original manuscripts, deeds, general correspondence, and Civil War letters. We have microfilm of some local newspapers, from the 1800s.

We collect primarily materials about Washington County, but we do include nearby areas in Vermont and many adjacent counties. Some of the most utilized volumes we have are cemetery books, which the Society now publishes. So e-mail (librarian@wchs-ny.org), write us a letter, call, or come visit us. There will be a Librarian ready to assist you!



News From Our "Neighbors"

Saratoga County

The Ulysses S. Grant Cottage State Historic site opened for the year on May 25. The site is located at 1000 Mt. McGregor Road, Wilton, NY 12831. Guided tours of the cottage are available and new exhibits are on display.

The visitor center will display an exhibit titled "Grant Becomes a Cancer Patient 1884 to 1885". It explores the general's final months. The story of Grant's cancer diagnosis, treatment and diet on Mount McGregor is interpreted.

A new artifact has been installed in the office room at the cottage. It is a note written by Grant to his physician Dr. John Douglas following a medical assessment. It was written at the time Grant was racing to finish his memoirs.

The cottage is open from 10-4 Wednesday to Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Cottage tours are \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors and \$5 for students from 6-18. The suggested donation for programs is \$5 per person.

For more information, visit www.grantcottage.org or call 518/584-4553.

From Vermont

The Rupert Historical Society is working on a new project "The Cobbler House".

Visitors will see the former home and shop of Royal Watrous and his family. They will see many of the tools and materials used by a 19th century cobbler, harness maker, and occasional repairer of farm wagons, buggies, and other farm tools. Many items shown in the other downstairs rooms have been donated by local people and show what may have been used by the early occupants in their daily life.

The upstairs has yet to be decorated. The outside entrances (front and back) are not yet finished, but are scheduled for completion later this summer.

Upcoming programs:

August 11 — Old Home Day

Museum and Cobbler Shop House open Saturday from 1-4 p.m.
Program Talk by Teddy Harrington and daughter Cindy
Memories and Memorabilia from Sheldon's Store
2 p.m. Rupert Congregational Church

September 29

Paul Wainwright presents "Old Meetinghouses of New England"
Vermont Humanities Program
2 p.m. Rupert Congregational Church

2019 Board of Directors

OFFICERS

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Vice President	Vance Bateman
Treasurer	Dale Grinnell
Secretary	Kelly Mead

TRUSTEES—2019

Nancy Jo Davidsen
Patrick Niles
James Parillo
Krista Rupe

TRUSTEES—2020

Justin Culligan
Nat Huntington
Millie Mizerak

TRUSTEES—2021

Kathy Huntington
D. Keith Truesdale

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Building—Sally Brillon
Finance—Kay Tomasi
Nominations—John Mead

TRUSTEES EMERITI

Joan Handy

WCHS HISTORIAN

John A. Mead