

# Museum of Rhinebeck History

Celebrating Rhinebeck's Rich Heritage

Volume XVII, No. 1

March 2010

## President's Message

The Museum's mission is to celebrate Rhinebeck's rich heritage. It's a goal that seems fairly easy to achieve—the assumption is that individuals who own artifacts important to our local history are lining up on the steps of the Museum to turn over their valuable items to us, and that our only concern should be to find a spot for those items in an exhibit case. In a few rare cases, it does happen that way. More often potential donors spend as much time checking us out as we do verifying that the potential donations will enhance our ability to interpret the history of Rhinebeck.

Donors quite rightly expect us to treat their donations with the utmost respect. They expect we will always use



Board members Steven Mann, Lida Traver-Landy (in back), & Ada Harrison fund raising at August 15<sup>th</sup> Museum Yard Sale

appropriate materials and store or exhibit the items where heat, light, and humidity will be at levels that best assure the availability of the items to future generations. To assure donors we can meet these expectations, the Curatorial Committee, under the leadership of Ada Harrison, devotes much time to careful documentation of every donation, and to making sure that each artifact receives archivally appropriate protection.

Textiles require one kind of storage, books another, photos yet another—investing in the right storage media costs a lot, and the space we rent is not free.

Because we have very skilled and experienced volunteers and don't pay any employees, we are able to keep our costs much lower than they would be otherwise.

To properly preserve our collections requires constant investment, which is why our Board members spend as much time organizing fund-raising events as preparing exhibits. The Museum yard sales in August and October were quite successful, as was a holiday auction held jointly with the DAR at the Town Hall in November. Our thanks to all of you who donated items and to the many who brought friends and helped us raise some much-needed revenue.

Some of those fund raisers also serve as an opportunity to recognize local citizens who have helped in significant ways to save our heritage. Many of our members met at the Legion Hall May 17<sup>th</sup> to help us recognize Alan Coon for his outstanding work preserving the history of our military veterans. Our House & Garden Tour in June gave us the opportunity to showcase a few outstanding homes and gardens. Our annual Progressive Dinner in mid-September allowed our members to enjoy two important sites on the Hudson River. The funds we raised at each of these events allow us to better assure potential donors that we are able to maintain and even improve the conditions in which we preserve the treasures entrusted to the Museum. And most of these events also allowed us to focus the public's attention on some aspect of our local history that might not otherwise be adequately appreciated. Celebrating Rhinebeck's rich heritage is what we are all about. Support from all of you is what continues to make that possible.

Mike Frazier

## **Bowne-Sands-Schuyler Collection**

by Steven Mann

An email from Idaho and a mysterious box arriving on my doorstep turned out to be an important gift for the Museum's permanent collection.

The mysterious box turned out to be an important collection of small survey maps, deeds, and family letters from the Schuyler-Bowne-Sands-Suckley family, donated by an auction attendee out West. The letters and documents date as far back as the 1790s and include correspondence among the Bowne-Sands family members in New York and their country home in Rhinebeck. Some of the letters were written by members of the Suckley family, and one includes an invitation to a Suckley funeral in Rhinebeck. Several of the documents give the Sands and Bowne residences as New York City and Brooklyn, New York.

Among the deeds and bonds is a small collection of papers related to Andrew Pray from Philip J. Schuyler. Andrew Pray owned Stone Abbey, an 18th century stone house in Clove Valley, Dutchess County. Pray had purchased some of his land from Philip Schuyler, who lived at The Grove (Schuyler House on Miller Road) in Rhinebeck. The Pray homestead was inhabited by members of his family from around the time of the Revolution until the 1980s when Mary Ward Hoag died and her children sold it to settle her estate. The Hoags were Quakers from the Oblong, and the Wards are descendants of Andrew Ward, one of the original settlers of Fairfield, Connecticut.

The papers do have multiple connections to several current Rhinebeck and Dutchess County residents. Two direct descendants of the old Sands and Bowne families currently

living in Rhinebeck are Jermyn Keator and Joan Hull. Daisy Suckley and her siblings of Wilderstein were also Bowne-Sands descendants as was the late Rhinebeck resident Montgomery Anderson and his mother, Margaret, who resided on the Robert Sands estate.

It is the goal of the donor to have time to study these papers and somehow correlate them with documents in Wilderstein's permanent collection. The Bowne-Sands-Schuyler papers will be accessible and made a permanent part of the Museum's collection.

## **Alan Coon Honored**



On May 17<sup>th</sup>, Museum President Mike Frazier (at left above) presented the Museum's annual award to Alan Coon for his many efforts in support of local history. Alan's books include *A History of Armstrong Post No 104*, *Grand Army of the Republic*; *A History of Montgomery Post No 429*; and *Rhinebeck's Veterans of All Wars*. Alan served a few years ago as a trustee of the Museum. Alan had organized the re-dedication of the Civil War monument at the Rhinebeck Cemetery, and it was also Alan who undertook the 8-year long project to restore the Doughboy Statue that now stands across from the Village Hall. When he

speaks of the Doughboy effort, Alan is quick to credit the many other people who helped, and takes little credit for it himself. Despite such admirable modesty, our memory of those from our community who have served our country is much clearer today because of the untiring efforts of this one remarkable individual.

## Pre-Civil War Gun Donated



The Museum is pleased to report a recent donation by Ada Harrison of a pre-Civil War hunting gun. Made by A. W. Spiers, the gun remains in immaculate condition. It is a percussion weapon, dating from about 1850. Although we haven't tried to fire it, at 54 inches in length, and quite heavy, it would have required two strong, steady arms and a very good eye to fire it effectively.

## Progressive Dinner

Museum members enjoyed a wonderful Progressive Dinner Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. Our thanks to Gina and Andrew Packard, owners of the Andrew Kip House, and Robert and Emma Tourtelot, owners of the site of parsonage of the Rhinecliff Episcopal Church. Jim and Sarah Donnelly, donors of the 1709 Kip deed, came up from Maryland for the occasion—and all enjoyed being able

to view the oldest document in Rhinebeck on display in the oldest house in Rhinebeck. Dessert followed in front of the Tourtelots' riverside home--a most beautiful site overlooking the Hudson on an evening when the sunset over the Catskills could not have been more magnificent. It was the perfect way to celebrate the Henry Hudson Quadricentennial.

## Wish List

We are most appreciative to Marie Wager for responding to our most recent wish list by donating \$1,000 to allow us to purchase a top-of-the-line scanner. It will add significantly to our ability to do our work. And now, here is our current wish list:

1. New Filing Cabinet (2 or 4-drawer in good condition and fireproof)
2. Yard and Bake Sale items
3. New items for November holiday auction (perfumes, wines, baskets, new kitchen items, etc.)
4. Volunteers we can train to help work on special projects
5. Two new board members to fill vacancies and be active volunteers
6. Family artifacts
7. Civil War Union uniform (to be used in exhibits)
8. Partial bolts of plain colored material (to be used as background for exhibits)
9. Mannequins (boy, girl, man, woman) to exhibit textiles
10. Folding card tables
11. And dollars are always welcome

**Our website is**

**[www.RhinebeckMuseum.com](http://www.RhinebeckMuseum.com)**

**To reach us via email, write to**

**[SMann2@hvc.rr.com](mailto:SMann2@hvc.rr.com), or to**

**[MichaelFrazier@earthlink.net](mailto:MichaelFrazier@earthlink.net).**

**By phone, 845-871-1798 or 845-876-7462.**

**By mail write to**

**MRH, PO Box 816, Rhinebeck, NY 12572**

## A Medieval Guillotine?



We are saddened to report that the circumstances that resulted in this donation were in some ways like an execution, namely the death of Rhinebeck's second oldest business, E. A. Coon Florist. Amid the trauma of shutting down, Jim Reardon, the owner, took the time to rescue this artifact. No, it is neither a miniature guillotine nor a battle axe. In fact, this served E. A. Coon for many years as a violet stem cutter. It was made by The Rogers Iron Company in Springfield, Ohio, and the blade remains extremely sharp.

## Frost & Carroll Descendants Visit to Research Rhinebeck Roots

by Steven Mann

This past spring and summer we had the pleasure of hosting Tom Frost, Jr., and Judith Van Scriver while they visited their native town and the Museum to do family research. The grandson of Alvah Frost, a farmer and insurance agent from Wurtemberg, Tom is trying to find more information on Alvah's ancestor, the Quaker Benjamin Frost of the Town of Clinton who was born at Crum Elbow. He follows cousin Barbara Frost's footsteps as a Frost family genealogist. Judith is descended from the Carrolls who were funeral directors and furniture makers, and was able to view a

wonderful exhibit at the Museum of Carroll family textiles, toys, photographs and documents, mostly donated by Judith when she first came to the Museum several years ago, with additions by other Museum members.

Working with Rhinebeck families is an important part of the Museum's education outreach. We regularly receive genealogy requests and emails from families wanting to donate their family's archives and collection to the Museum so that future generations of Rhinebeck residents and researchers can learn more about our town's history. Should you have an object, photograph, or information to donate about your family, please email us at [smann2@hvc.rr.com](mailto:smann2@hvc.rr.com) -- we would love to hear from you.

## Museum Calendar April to November 2010

### 5:30 PM Sunday April 25, 2010

American Legion Hall, Rhinebeck  
Dinner to honor Brenda Klapproth  
Details last page of newsletter

### 6:00 – 8:00 PM Saturday, June 5, 2010

Museum opening

### Saturday, June 12, 2010

(Rain Date—Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>)  
House and Garden Tour with DAR  
\$20 if paid by June 8; call 876-2436

### 2:00 – 4:00 June 19 to October 31, 2010

Museum open all Saturdays and Sundays

### Dates TBA—Summer & Fall

Museum Yard & Bake Sales at the  
Quitman House

### Sunday, September 12, 2010

Progressive Dinner with QRC

### Saturday, November 20, 2010

Holiday auction at Town Hall

MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY MEMBERSHIP FORM

PO Box 816, RHINEBECK, NY 12572

Phone: 845-871-1798

DUES INVOICE FOR THE PERIOD January 1 through December 31, 2010

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductible check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose your employer's form if your employer has a matching grant program (e.g. IBM).

**Please apply my payment for the year 2010 as follows:**

Lifetime.....\$1,000_____	Family.....\$15_____
Lifetime option \$250 x 4 years_____	Individual.....\$10_____
Sponsor.....\$100_____	Student.....\$5_____
Business.....\$50_____	Other.....\$_____
Patron.....\$50_____	Added Donation.....\$_____

TOTAL.....\$\_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY and mail to the Museum at the address above. Thank you!**

**NOTE: If you have family archives that you wish to donate to us, please check below and someone from the Museum will be in touch with you. \_\_\_\_\_**

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**It's Time for All to Renew Memberships for 2010!**

Memberships are used to pay the Museum's operating expenses—mainly electricity, rent, curatorial supplies, printing costs for our newsletters and brochures. Because memberships pay only a portion of those expenses, the Museum continues to increase its fundraising efforts—refer to the President's Message for more detail. These efforts raised a considerable amount of money, and help keep dues lower than they might otherwise need to be to allow us to meet our continuing obligations. After considerable discussion at our September board meeting, the Board has decided to keep dues unchanged, despite increased costs. We want to keep costs to our faithful members as reasonable as possible, and to make up the difference through increased fund-raising.

Members eager to further support the Museum's growing efforts can participate in the fundraising events noted above. Those wanting to go above and beyond can leave a gift to the Museum. As a 501(c)3 incorporated organization, we can accept willed gifts through your estate. Please consult your attorney or estate advisor regarding such a gift. A gift can also be artifacts with which your name will be associated in perpetuity.

## **Needed: Oral History Volunteers**

We need your help. The Museum has recorded and transcribed numerous oral histories over the past 15 years, and the CD's we have produced of these interviews are among our most popular items. We need help to do more of this work, both in the recording and transcribing aspects of this oral history work. An interest in local history, delight in working with other people, and a willingness to tolerate occasional technical glitches are the 3 prerequisites. Age is not a factor. Skill in distinguishing between the record and erase buttons is preferred.

Leave us a message at the Museum office at 871-1798 if you might be interested in helping out and want to know more about what this volunteer work might entail. Please give us your name, telephone number, and time that you are best reached.

## **Museum to Honor Brenda Klaproth**

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**. That evening, at 5:30 PM, we will be honoring Brenda Klaproth at the American Legion Hall. Brenda once served as Museum trustee and continues to serve as a very important advisor. Her untiring efforts to organize events benefiting the Museum and the DAR, her work establishing the archives at Southlands, and her legacy of leadership at the Rhinebeck Historical Society are some of her accomplishments. We encourage our members to join us and to invite your friends. We're all looking forward to this opportunity to recognize Brenda's achievements.

Dinner tickets are \$25. There will be a cash bar. Checks payable to **MRH** should be mailed by April 19<sup>th</sup> to MRH, PO Box 816, Rhinebeck NY 12572, or call Mike Frazier at 876-7462.

**Museum of Rhinebeck History**  
**P.O. Box 816**  
**Rhinebeck, NY 12572**

### **2010 Board of Trustees & Advisors**

President--Mike Frazier  
V. Pres--Ellen S. Hubbert  
Rec Secy—Steven A. Mann  
Corr Secy—Janice Stickle  
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Advisor—Brenda J. Klaproth  
Advisor—Marilyn Hatch

