

The Historical Society of Rockland County Annual Report 2010/2011



2010/2011 Annual Membership Meeting of
The Historical Society of Rockland County
April 12, 2011

2011 Annual Membership Meeting of
The Historical Society of Rockland County

April 12, 2011
6:00pm

Call to Order	Marianne B. Leese
Pledge of Allegiance	Veronica Boesch
DVD Presentation – The Blauvelt House	Dorice Madronero
Prior Year Meeting Minutes	Marianne B. Leese
President’s Report	Marianne B. Leese
Interim Director’s Report	Clare B. Sheridan
Publications Committee Report	Marianne B. Leese
Collections Committee Report	Caroline Tapley
Buildings and Grounds Committee Report	Winston C. Perry, Jr.
Finance Committee Report	Clare B. Sheridan
Endowment Committee Report	Donald Karlewicz
Historic Sites & Historic Markers Comm. Report	Marianne B. Leese
Report of Nominating Committee Election of Trustees and Officers	Marianne B. Leese
Old Business	
New Business	
Adjourn	

President's Report, 2010-2011

Last year at this time, the future of the Historical Society of Rockland County was uncertain. The Historical Society was faced with a deficit, dwindling membership, poor attendance at exhibitions, and a diminishing revenue stream. We managed to pull through this past fiscal year without an executive director or a curator of collections, both necessary for overseeing the operation of our four-acre site and care of our vast collection of artifacts.

We were blessed to have Trustee Clare Sheridan serving as acting director, with her only compensation being the pure joy of serving the Historical Society. Trustees and volunteers stepped forward to develop and work on an array of programs, exhibits and events to bring in funds, attract visitors to our site, and inform people of our mission. Office Manager Joanne Potanovic, Bookkeeper Patty Brenner, and Acting Public Relations Coordinator Dan Dwyer enthusiastically did their jobs and at the same time stepped in to volunteer their time in various ways. Through it all we learned that we really care about our history, we care about our historic house and outbuildings, and we care about our History Center building.

Currently our Endowment Fund is healthy, our Operating Fund has grown, and we have a Capital Fund that has allowed trustees to make necessary repairs, but we are not out of the woods yet. We have still to take in sufficient income on a sustainable basis to hire back the fulltime staff that we had. After many years of deferred maintenance, the Blauvelt House and the History Center building need significant work. Recently the trustees had the property appraised. That appraisal is now being studied to help us determine what is in the best interest of the Historical Society as the trustees continue to plan for the future.

In planning the Historical Society's future, we need to focus our efforts. Granting agencies and the New York State Council on the Arts have told us that we try to do too much, that we are too ambitious, that we lack focus. How can our Blauvelt House be put to better use, and how can it and our vast collection be better joined together as tools to tell the story of Rockland's people? This is the challenge we face, but the bottom line, as a friend with long experience in the museum world told me, it's all about people. It's about opening the eyes of children to the rich history that is their inheritance. It's about people who care for our gardens, who research and write about Rockland's past, who serve as a docent at the Historical House Tour. It's about all of us wanting to keep history alive.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne B. Leese, President

Interim Director's Report 2010 - 2011

During the fiscal year 2010-2011 the work of the Historical Society's Board of Trustees and staff was guided by the difficult financial realities that continue to face the Historical Society. We are among many not-for-profit entities in the region that have struggled with funding challenges. Despite this challenging climate, many interesting and important events and programs occurred, primarily due to the hard work of a small but committed paid staff and an extremely hard working group of volunteers.

The trend continues for historical societies and museums all over America continue to struggle with reduced funding. In addition, funding organizations, such as NYSCA, are sustaining further cuts. Since HSRC depends on these sources for operating and project funds, we are ever more dependant on our membership for individual support. Like last year, we worked with an austerity budget and I am happy to report that we have been successful in running HSRC without a deficit in 2010. Once again, our budget for the 2011/2012 fiscal year projects another year of "living within our means." This budget includes funds to hire a museum professional on a part-time basis. The Board of Trustees recognizes that the lack of paid museum professionals is unsustainable.

This past year, the Board of Trustees worked very hard reviewing our current mission, analyzing the contents of our collection as well as our collections policies and procedures. In addition, each of our committee chairs led a comprehensive review of programs and events to determine the best and most cost effective plan for the future. We continue to create a tiered organizational plan that will allow us to adapt to the ongoing sustainable income that we are able to raise. Sustainable revenue is the key to our long-term survival.

This year, we did an in-depth review of our membership database. We are happy to report that we have 600 paid members. Our efforts resulted in the highest membership revenue since 2007, almost doubling last year's total membership revenue. However, in order to thrive, HSRC must continue to recruit new supporters, further revitalize our existing member base and continue to retool our programs. By doing all of these important steps, we are hopeful that we will be able to create an ongoing, sustainable revenue stream from our supporters, allowing us to continue and thrive. In short, we will hope for the best, but continue to be fiscally prudent so that we are prepared for what the future may bring.

Our members came through for us this year in a big way by helping us create wonderful and interesting exhibitions. Many of them did this as an in-kind donation which allowed us to have our doors open with stimulating exhibitions at little or no cost to the Society. For this, we are truly grateful.

The 35th annual dollhouse and miniatures show was, once again, a success. The exhibition was curated by our own staff member Joanne Potanovic who compiled a unique and superb group of exhibitors. Illustrations, quilts as well as room scenes and full doll houses were all on view to the delight of viewers. This year the exhibition also included model airplanes, hanging from the ceiling, which were a delight to our visitors.

Our 2011 Annual Dinner took place in March at The View in Piermont. The HSRC award for Lifetime Service was presented to The Beckerle Family. The Dinner Committee, with the staff, produced a splendid event with music and silent and live auctions. For the first time, we included an informative video presentation about the honorees which was a terrific addition to the evening's program. All of this helped to create an event that allowed us to exceed our fundraising goals.

Other interesting events such as the Historical House Tour, entitled "Piermont Places" were a terrific success. We did fundraiser in partnership with the Piermont Historical Society. Our bus tours to places such as the D&H Canal Museum continue to be popular. This year we began a new outreach through the local radio station WRKR 1300am. "Crossroads of Rockland History" airs on the third Monday of each month and explores the interesting history of our county. In 2011, we renewed our membership with the RBA (Rockland Business Association) and have been involved in activities with them as another way to reach out to the business community of Rockland. Our programming was also enhanced with joint events with the New City Library, The Rockland Audubon Society and the Clarkstown Garden Club.

Staff members who work to keep our varied programs and daily operations on course include Joanne Potanovic of Stony Point, membership and office manager; Patrice Brenner of New City, bookkeeper; Robert Carrol of New City, caretaker, and Marianne Leese of Montebello, historian.

Volunteers are a truly vital of our operations. Our board of Trustees has stepped into the shoes of vacancies in our staffing. Dan Dwyer, after finishing his appointment through Americorps has stayed on as a volunteer helping us with our media outreach and press releases. Joyce DeSousa is a mainstay of our on-site educational programs, Donna DeSousa and Caroline Tapley are master gardeners at work in the HSRC's gardens and Lisa Levin and Betty Perry assist in the collections and library. Office volunteers include Marie Lombardo and Joyce Voce. Loyal Blauvelt House docents include Ruth Begany and Stephanie Patteris. Adele and Bob Schnell, Dorothe Flieger, Bernie Smith are all people we count on! Richard Anderson and the Friday Work Crew, have been busy doing many things to improve our buildings and grounds. There are so many more and the great news is that we continue to work on an active recruitment campaign with the help of Penny Leonard, and Patricia Cropsey. This has resulted and will continue to result in new help which we so desperately need. We are

indebted to the volunteers who work in all areas of our Historical Society.
Thank you all!

There were some grant awards received during 2010-'11. We seek to cover broad support from towns, county, state and national sources, with varying results each year. From the New York State Council on the Arts we received funds for folk arts programming. County funding for 2010 was received, although it was less than the prior year. We received town funding for our radio program from the Town of Ramapo and we were delighted to have "Rockland Voices" underwritten by The Provident Bank Charitable Foundation. We will be preserving this exhibition on DVD so that it can be available even when these objects are not on view at the History Center.

We received significant private anonymous donations this past year that were critical to our financial success. We challenged our membership to match these contributions and we had modest success. These individual contributions and bequests, grand and modest, received or utilized in 2010 were the lifeblood of our existence. The individuals who made them thought it important to contribute to the continuance of the society's work, and we are grateful and strengthened by their insight and support. Our thanks go also to those members who generously gave to the annual appeal. All of these donors have challenged us to be better and hopefully they will inspire the rest of our membership and history lovers throughout Rockland to give generously to keep history alive at The Historical Society of Rockland County. We look forward to our members' continued participation in our journey to best serve the people of Rockland, to work together with like-minded organizations and extend the HSRC's reputation in the Rockland community.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare Sheridan, 1st Vice President

Publications Report 2010-2011

A Catch of Grandmothers: A Poem by Firth Haring Fabend went into its third printing this past year. Thanks to donations from the author and two Historical Society members, we were able to cover the cost of printing 1,000 copies.

The Society's best-selling publication, Rockland County: Century of History, edited by Linda Zimmermann, is nearly out of print. Quotes for reprints of the hard cover and the soft cover have been requested. Funding for the reprint will need to be pursued.

Another publication that has gone out of print is Frank Bertangue Green's 1886 The History of Rockland County. The Society first reprinted the original 1886 edition in 1989 with a name index added.

All proceeds from our publications go into the Operating Fund. There is no publications fund; therefore, an author who wants the Historical Society to publish his or her work must come up with a funding plan. Funding for reprints must also be raised.

The South of the Mountains has entered its 55th year of publication under the editorship of Marjorie H. Johnson. Receipt of the history quarterly is a valued benefit of membership.

At this time there is no active Publications Committee. Anyone who is interested in reactivating this committee is welcome to speak to me. Needed is to bring our publications program into the digital age.

Sadly, this past year we lost a member who had been active on the committee: Jules Loh, a retired award-winning AP reporter, who died in August 2010. An expert editor and proofreader, he assisted with editing True Stories from Mine Hole, written by Leonard C. Cooke and Audrey S. Lawson, and had fun doing it!

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne B. Leese

Collections Committee Report 2010 -2011

Over the past year, the charge for the Collections Committee has been to start to give the Society's collections a sharper focus and in the process necessarily reduce their bulk.

The Committee feels that, to be part of the collection, an object should above all have a clear relationship to the County of Rockland and to the Society's mission. It should also be original, have been correctly accessioned and be in acceptable condition. These criteria obtain for the archival collection in the Library and the Vault. They obtain also for the thousands upon thousands of artifacts presently housed in the Collections Storage Room, in the Blauvelt House, and in the Barn – everything from ploughshares to pinafores, from toys to typewriters, from wigs to weathervanes.

Meeting weekly, the Collections Committee has started with the archival materials: family papers, letters, diaries, business records, maps, photographs, postcards, the printed records of the activities of political parties and debating clubs.

Much of this material had been properly accessioned: when the Committee determined such material should be removed from the collection, trustee approval was required and proper procedures had to be followed. Other things were drop-off donations, which presented problems of their own. We have removed duplicates, mildewed material, photocopies, and reams and reams of printed material with no connection to the County. We have also effected transfer of archival material to other institutions -- for example, the Scott Webber collection to the Orangetown Historical Museum and Archives which is consolidating material related to Camp Shanks, and copies of Lederle's in-house magazine to the Pearl River Library.

Before she left in last spring, Jessica Kuhnen, Collections Curator, had begun digitizing the collection and had made considerable progress. We are hoping that Senator Morahan's 2010 member item grant (frozen in Albany at present) might be used to enable further digitization, either by employing an outside agency, or possibly by buying a scanner and paying an intern to do the actual work.

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline Tapley, Collections Committee

Building and Grounds Committee 2010-2011

During the fiscal year just ended, the Building and grounds Committee, like the rest of the Society worked very hard to minimize expenses and do what we could with volunteer labor. The committee consists of Clare Sheridan, Liz Barhydt, Marianne Leese, Joseph Holland, David Scharf, Pat and Jim Cropsey, and myself. Richard Anderson has joined the committee recently, and Arthur Gunther has been an active helper.

We had a tree service remove and prune trees that were a danger to people or buildings, and spray our hemlocks to keep them from dying. We also cut up fallen trees and cleared dead limbs ourselves.

We hired ADT to replace the old heat detectors in the Jacob Blauvelt house with smoke detectors which will give an earlier warning of smoke or fire. The existing wiring was used, resulting in a great savings over a complete new system.

We established a Friday Morning Work Crew that did a variety of jobs in all of our buildings and on the grounds.

We replaced most of our incandescent light bulbs with more efficient compact fluorescent and halogen bulbs.

We reorganized and inventoried the contents of the Carriage House, Shed and Barn following the dislocation that was necessary for the restoration work done in these buildings over the prior two years.

We rebuilt and restored the small first floor bathroom in the Jacob Blauvelt House after finding a rotted floor under the toilet. Richard Anderson undertook the completion of the project as a personal contribution, installing a new floor and repainting the room. Arthur Gunther installed a new toilet which he and his wife Lillian donated to the Society. Rich was on the job and detected a drip from a pipe in the kitchen above. He and Joanne Potanovic got a plumber to come and repair it before any serious damage was done.

Art tested all the electrical outlets in the Jacob Blauvelt House to verify that they are properly wired and grounded.

We studied options for the repair or replacement of a broken air conditioning system serving the east half of the museum building, obtained proposals, reviewed them, and made a recommendation to the Board for the purchase of a new system.

We reluctantly deferred for another year a New York State Environmental Defense Fund grant for work on the Jacob Blauvelt House because of our

inability this year to raise sufficient funds to match it. We hope that the economy may improve sufficiently for us to do so next year.

We have prioritized lists in preparation for work that should be done on the Jacob Blauvelt House and the Museum building next year and in following years. With the barn in great shape, it is time to turn more attention to deferred maintenance in our main buildings..

Respectfully submitted,
Win Perry

Finance Committee

	2010-2011 Actuals	Plan	2009-2010	2008-2009
Income	\$ 314,000	\$ 217,000	\$ 370,000	\$ 258,000
Expense	179,000	223,000	374,000	379,000
Net Income	\$ 135,000	\$ (6,000)	\$ (4,000)	\$ (121,000)

Income by Source - 2010-2011

Fundraising	\$ 71,000	23%	
Special/One-Time	65,000	21%	Challenge Grants and Atlas Sale
Government	64,000	20%	
5% of Endowment	45,000	14%	
Membership	25,000	8%	
Admission/Rental/Other	15,000	5%	
Individual Donations	12,000	4%	
Museum Sales/Research			
Revenue	13,000	4%	
Corporate/Foundations	4,000	1%	
	\$ 314,000		

This year's favorable outcome was due to strong membership renewals, higher than planned special events income, together with special individual one-time contributions and the sale of The Tanner Atlas. In addition, savings were achieved by not filling planned staff and consulting positions. These savings were offset slightly by audit expenses, building maintenance and program expenses that were higher than anticipated.

Balance Sheet Summary

Capital Account	\$48,000
Endowment Account	1,020,000
Operating Account	244,000
Grand Total	\$ 1,312,000

Respectfully Submitted, Clare Sheridan

Endowment Committee Report 2010/2011

The Endowment Fund of the Historical Society of Rockland County grew from \$974,000 to \$1,020,000 during the most recent fiscal year.

This increase is after disbursing five per cent (5%) of the portfolio value to the Society to cover its normal operating expenses.

The portfolio is invested in a combination of income producing securities, growth stocks and mutual funds.

A portion of the portfolio is managed by Maribeth Holland of Sutton Place Capital Management and a portion of the portfolio is invested in a select group of Admiral Class Mutual Funds at Vanguard.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Karlewicz, Treasurer

Historic Sites and Historical Markers Report, 2010-2011

Our Jacob J. Blauvelt House marker was redone, thanks to the generosity of Marjorie Hornblower Johnson, sponsor of the marker. The old one, erected 1980, had incorrect information on it; and its post had been damaged. The new marker corrects the text and gives additional history about the site. It was installed this past summer on the south lawn of the Jacob J. Blauvelt House where visitors to the site can easily read it.

In the works is a marker recognizing Betty Friedan's contribution to the feminist movement with her best-selling book *The Feminine Mystique*, written and published when she was living in Grand View in the 1960s. The marker, when completed, will be installed in front of Village Hall in Grand View. It is being sponsored by the National Organization for Women, Rockland Chapter. Sculptor Cristina Biaggi of Palisades has created a bas relief of Ms. Friedan that will be fused to the marker.

Concerns for several historic properties in Rockland County came to the attention of the Historical Society. Efforts were made to find a nonprofit to rent and occupy the 18th-century Dutch sandstone house at 312 Strawtown Road, West Nyack, owned by United Water New York. The house has been unoccupied for several years and is in need of extensive repair. In February the Clarkstown Historic Review Board voted to disapprove a petition by United Water to demolish the house.

Concerted last-minute efforts were made by concerned citizens and Historical Society members to save the historic 1860s Malloy building in Stony Point, owned by the State of New York. It was recently demolished so that Route 9W can be widened and a park created.

The Historical Society was contacted in regard to the 19th-century Bardon store/post office/railway station at Route 304 and Bardonia Road, Bardonia. The Bardonia Civic Association is keeping a close eye on the potential demolition of the building and development of a QuickChek on the site.

The Historical Society is interested in preserving historical sites and informing people of their options, such as pursuing nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. It is difficult to convince property owners not to destroy a historic site or make unsympathetic alterations. Often the only way to save a site is to purchase it, but too often the resources are not available. Another alternative is to work with local municipalities to create historic preservation laws, which the Village of Montebello, the Town of Orangetown and the Town of Clarkstown already have in place.

Respectfully submitted, Marianne B. Leese

2010-2011 Special Events and Programs Submitted by Clare Sheridan

Exhibition: Rockland Voices: This **semi-permanent** exhibition was made possible by generous support from Provident Bank Charitable Foundation. It related early history through historic objects and documents. Stories of the people, buildings and sites were told using highlights from Historical Society's varied collections. For example, through **Tunis Smith's diary**, the exhibition looked at observations from a farmer's diary in the lower Hudson --ordinary, extraordinary, and vivid details of farming as a way of life and the relationship farmers had to the landscape, weather, crop production and sales. With the help of items such as **Elizabeth Van Houten's Sampler**, the exhibition explored childhood in that period of time and information about her and her family.

Exhibition: Why Archives Matter: a traveling exhibition developed by the Upstate History Alliance, was shown in the back gallery of the museum from March 21 through May 9. The exhibition explored the meaning, use and preservation of archives and historical records using visuals from repositories throughout Upstate New York, including photographs, maps. **Why Archives Matters**, featured items from the Historical Society's permanent collection and included Civil War diaries; WWI exemption letters; a 1775 Stony Point Deed, WWII era cards, Woman's Suffrage handbills; cotton horse thief poster from Clarkstown circa 1890 and an 1877 Ramapo tax ledger.

Exhibition: Images of Rockland in Photographs and Words Arthur Gunther, III

The retired editorial page editor, columnist and staff photographer of The Journal-News in Rockland County, worked with our own Joanne Potanovic to create a beautiful exhibition of photographs to compliment some of the essays from The Column Rule. The book Gunther created in 2006. Gunther served with the Journal News for 42 years. He wrote more than 6,000 pieces for the newspaper, including about 2,500 weekly columns. In May 2010, Gunther was awarded the Arts Council of Rockland (ACOR) County Executive's Arts Award for Visual Artist of the Year.

Exhibition: Rockland History: Through Your Eyes – Images that define our sense of place & time.

Curated by George Potanovic

We asked 39 artists for images that define their sense of place and time in Rockland County history. The exhibition had an exciting feature... guests were encouraged to download the mp3 audio tour into i-tunes and then they listened to it on their i-pod at the exhibit. The audio tour was also available on a CD player with headphones available from the front desk.

The following artists had artwork included in Rockland History: Through Your Eyes:

Rosemary Aiello - Barbara Algert - Edward Brophy
Bob Burghardt - Ruth Ellen Carlsen - Manonce Celestine
Heather Leigh Douglas - Diane Drescher - Andrea Egert
Timothy Englert - Mariel Myra Farlow - Collette Fournier
Susan Freiman - Ellen Galinsky - Arthur Patrick Gilmore
Arthur Gunther III - Janice Hardy - Jane Herman
Harriet Hyams - Lynne Furst Kalish - Eric David Laxman
Paula Madawick - Jorge Madrigal - Dorice Arden Madronero
Jeanie Neyer - Danielle O'Brien - George Potanovic, Jr.
Joan Ellen Quinn - Natasha Rabin - Carl Rattner - Lee Ross
Sally Savage - William Sayles - Ursula Schneider - Murray
Schwimmer
Erwin Sityar - Susan Stava - Paul Tappenden
Dyana Van Campen - Helena Walsh - Joy Yagdid

Exhibition: Following in their Footsteps

Photographs, by George Potanovic, of local scenes from the exact place where the photographer, made the original photograph up to 100 years earlier graced the historic Jacob Blaauvelt House.

This project was made possible, in part, with funds from the Individual Artist Grant program of the Arts Council of Rockland and the Decentralization Program of the New York State Council on the Arts.

Exhibition: Snapshots in Time:

The Palisades Mall is our newest venue. "A Snapshot in Time – Pictorial Moments in Rockland History" opened at the Palisades Center mall in West Nyack, and will be on display throughout 2011. The multi-photo exhibit depicts various aspects of life in the area from the year 1880 through the 1960s. HSRC provided the photos, the mall donated the space, KDF Reprographics prepared the images for display and served as artistic director. Liz Barhydt was instrumental in making this long-term exhibition happen.

Exhibition: Miniature and Doll House Show

Our 35th annual doll house and miniatures show was titled: A Celebration. This year's exhibition showcased the work of miniature artist Sandra Mirque. Sandra, originally from Rockland County, now resides in Orange County, NY. Sandra has been exhibiting at the HSRC for many years now. Each of her detailed room boxes tells a story and are very appealing to those of us who are young at heart.

Sandra also graciously created a hand-made Tuscan-themed room box which she donated to the HSRC for the raffle. All proceeds from the raffle will be donated to the HSRC.

We were pleased to be exhibiting pieces by collage artist Elizabeth Parsons of Monroe, NY -- this was Elizabeth's first time exhibiting at the HSRC. We also showed beautiful art dolls and dollhouses by West Nyack artist &

children's book author & illustrator Barbara Soloff Levy.

As part of this exhibition's curator's celebration, we were very proud to have many other talented contributors to this show, including well-known Rockland artists:

- ceramic artist Rosemary Aiello
 - children's book illustrator & author Elizabeth Sayles
 - illustrator William Sayles
 - the beautiful quilts made by Mary Jane Sexton
 - miniaturist Carolyn McErlean
 - miniaturist Zsuzsa Neff
 - glass artist Stephanie Maddelena
- and regional contributors, including:
- miniaturist Gladys Vasquez
 - miniaturist Tamara Greeman
 - dollhouse creator Hallie Horning

In addition, we were very happy to have part of the miniature set for New York State's popular 'NY Lottery Sweet Million Cute Carnival Bunnies' commercial created by Timothy Rossiter... sans bunnies.

The County Executive's Historic Preservation Merit Awards
Our special celebration included an achievement award for Craig H. Long.

In addition, to celebrating the **20th year** of the Preservation Merit Awards Program we promoted historic preservation by inviting all like minded institutions in the county to come together to celebrate one another's achievements, successes and the great importance of history in our Preserve America County. We opened up our back gallery to historical societies and historical museums throughout Rockland County to display items that represent each organization and that relate to historic preservation. Highlights of the day were having a chance to see the newly restored Tappan Patent and hearing keynote addresses from Waddell Stillman from Historic Hudson Valley and J. Winthrop Aldrich.

Rockland County Old-Fashioned Summer Day Camp

A refreshingly unique camp was held for children ages 7 to 11 from August 2 to August 13.

Special Guest Speakers:

April 17, 2010 – The County Archive – with Peter Scheibner

July 21, 2010 - Armchair Walking Tour: The King's Highway with Bob Goldberg

August 4, 2010 - Rockland Reminiscing with Arthur H. Gunther, III

August 18, 2010 - Rockland Lake: with Robert Maher.

December 8, 2010 - Tuxedo Park with Christian Sonne

March 20, 2011 – A Tribute to Dr. MacGuffie with Lynne Manzione (in conjunction with the New City Library).

HSRC performed outreach to Senior Citizen clubs, Libraries and Rotaries with Tappan Zee Brige presentations. Travis Jackson and Clare Sheridan spearheaded these efforts

The New City Street Fair

Many friends visited our booth at this annual street fair on September 19th. We sold books and maps.

Fall Family Festival

On Sunday, October 3, 2010 guests stepped back in time at our Old-Fashioned Fall Festival Day. The 1832 Jacob J. Blauvelt House was brought to life with demonstrations of period activities. A large crowd gathered to watch and participate as demonstrators made winter preparations such as Wool Carding and candle dipping. Children created masks and stencils on the grounds of the Jacob Blauvelt House and in the History Center. Dickie Ellis entertained while a blacksmith worked in front of the barn. In addition, Colette Gilbert, a.k.a. Naut Kaniff, once again, took guests on an eerie trip to places where the original inhabitants still haven't realized they have passed from this realm. Guests heard stories of the strange and unexplained, and just plain spooky. A Folklife presentation entitled: The Fiddler's Summit was presented to a delighted crowd. Chinese, Klezmer and Irish traditional Fiddle music was played individually and together creating a unique Rockland experience.

House Tour

On Saturday, October 16th, the Historical Society hosted its annual house tour "Piermont Places". We embarked on this joint venture with The Piermont Historical Society and many historic Houses, and public buildings through Piermont were featured.

Museum Open House Day On October 30th, Congers Civic Association, Camp Shanks Museum, Edward Hopper House joined us for a free open museum day.

St. Nicholas Day On December 5th, we held three performances attended by children and adults who listened to traditional Dutch stories and met St. Nick and his horse. A large team of volunteers helped prepare the Blauvelt House for guests: bringing out all of the traditional Dutch decorations. Thanks to some generous volunteers, a delicious snack of home-made ginger creams and hot cider were enjoyed by all!

Folklife Presentations

Fiddler's Summit – October 3rd

Stitched Together - a comparative presentation of some of Rockland's ethnic needlework/textile traditions. February 27, 2011

These programs were hosted by consulting folklorist Eileen Condon. Support for these programs were provided to the Historical Society of Rockland County by public funds from the Folk Arts program of the New York State Council on the Arts, a New York State agency.

Annual Dinner

Our 2011 Annual Dinner was celebrated at The View in Piermont on Sunday, March 13th and honored The Beckerle Family. A silent auction, delicious dinner and Herb Gardner's music led up to a Jessica Sklar on the violin followed by a festive live auction led by Maarten TenHolder of Sotheby's.

Trips

- **May 8, 2010 – Historic Kingston and Delaware & Hudson Canal**
- **July 10, 2010 – Kutztown Folk Festival**
- **October 23, 2010 - Hops and History on the Hudson**
- **November 19, 2010 - Mashantucket Pequot Museum**

School Programs

October 1, 2010 – Rockland School Superintendents visited HSRC to view The Tappan Zee Bridge DVD. Travis Jackson followed up to ensure that as many history department heads received the DVD and Teachers' Guides.

November 4, 2010 – Cornerstone Christian – 30 Students

November 18, 2010 – Jesse Kaplan – 8 Special Needs Children

November 30 – December 3, 2010 – El Dorado School – 120 students

December 7, 2010 – Little Tor Elementary – 60 students

December 9 – 10, 2010 – Liberty Elementary – 90 students

December 13 – 14, 2010 – Hempstead Elementary – 120 students

History on the Radio

"Crossroads of Rockland History" airs on the third Monday of each month at 10:05 am on [WRCR](http://www.wrcr.com) radio 1300AM. Past guests have included Orangetown Town Historian Mary Cardenas speaking about Sandstone Houses, Scott Webber and Jerry Donnellan speaking about the importance of Camp Shanks in Rockland's history, Jamila Braithwaite of the CEJJES institute discussing the history of enslaved peoples of Rockland and Carole Perry of Hopper House speaking on the excitement of the 40th anniversary of Hopper House being celebrated in 2011. The program may be streamed www.wrcr.com

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Historical Society of Rockland County will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at the Museum, 20 Zukor Road, New City, New York at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room. All members of the public are invited.

The Nominating Committee (Veronica DeMeo Boesch, Cathy Quinn, Clare Sheridan, Patricia Cropsey and Craig Long) offers the names of the following
Historical Society members:

Trustees for a three-year term, Term 2014:

Clare B. Sheridan, Tappan
Winston C. Perry, Jr., Upper Nyack
Patricia Cropsey, New City
Penny Leonard, Congers
Michael Davidson, Piermont

Trustees for a one-year term, Term 2012:

James W. Cropsey, New City (filling unexpired term of Lisa Levin, Montebello)

Officers nominated for a one-year term:

President - Marianne B. Leese, Suffern
1st Vice President - Clare Bowes Sheridan, Tappan
2nd Vice President - Veronica DeMeo Boesch, Airmont
Treasurer - Donald R. Karlewicz, Chestnut Ridge
Secretary - Caroline R. Tapley, Piermont

Trustees continuing in office Term 2013:

Veronica DeMeo Boesch, Airmont
Joseph R. Holland, New City
Jeffrey Keahon, Pearl River
Catherine M. Quinn, New City
Caroline R. Tapley, Piermont

Trustees continuing in office Term 2012:

Lawrence A. Codispoti, Airmont
Donald R. Karlewicz, Chestnut Ridge
Marianne B. Leese, Suffern
Dorice Madronero, Montebello

The Historical Society of Rockland County

The Board of Trustees

Marianne B. Leese

Marianne Leese moved to Rockland County in 1976 and within a few months was volunteering for the Historical Society of Rockland County. She was present for the dedication of the new museum in 1977 and helped install its first exhibit. For ten years she was editor of *South of the Mountains* before Marjorie Johnson take over the position in 1996. Ms. Leese is currently contributing editor. She enjoys being a part of the Historical Society's historical marker program and keeps a record of all the markers. As a member of the Publications Committee, she has been involved in the editing and proofreading of several of the Society's publications. Marianne has been a trustee since 2008, became president in 2009, and has served as historian for the Society for several years. She lives within the Village of Montebello with her husband Richard and works as the administrative assistant of her church, the United Church of Spring Valley.

Caroline Tapley

Born and educated in England, Ms. Tapley has been a Rockland County resident (Palisades, Piermont) since 1960. She is a mother of three; grandmother of six. Before her retirement, she was a writer (young adult fiction), an editor (consumer-oriented medical journals and magazine, health-care encyclopedia entries, etc.) and most recently a real estate agent. Ms. Tapley is a three-term HSRC Trustee and a two-term Secretary. She serves on several committees: Collections, Historic Preservation Awards, Historical House Tour. She is also a master Gardner and works tirelessly to maintain the ornamental gardens at HSRC.

Winston C. Perry Jr.

A lifetime resident of Rockland County, Mr. Perry is a descendant of the Blauvelts, Tallmans, Harings and other early European settlers as well as some more recent Irish immigrants. He is a graduate of Nyack High School and has degrees in American Studies from Yale and Architecture from the University of California. Returning from Berkeley with a new wife and the first of four children, he began what will this June be a 50-year career in architecture. After working for several years for Skidmore, Perry and Merrill he joined a local firm where he was instrumental in the design of buildings for Rockland Community College, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Pace University, and other educational, corporate and institutional clients as well as private owners. Early in his career he designed the History Center building for the Historical Society of Rockland County. Other notable works include the renovation of Simpson Hall at Nyack College, the Central Nyack Community Center, the adaptive re-use of a former church to serve the Nyack Center, and several homes near the Hudson River. In recent years he is focusing increasingly on architecture for historic preservation.

Mr. Perry is a hiker, downhill skier and a sailor of small boats. He maintains a hiking trail and advocates for open space preservation, trail design, and the appreciation of historic buildings. He served for 25 years on his village planning board and is a member of the Rockland County Board for Historic Preservation. He is an Eagle Scout and a former naval reserve officer.

Lawrence A. Codispoti

Mr. Codispoti is a Partner in the Law firm of Mandel Katz and Brosnan LLP. He is head of the firm's wealth management practice. Mr. Codispoti's practice focuses on sophisticated estate planning, business succession planning and estate and trust administration for high net worth individuals. Mr. Codispoti specializes in the use of various tax minimization and wealth preservation strategies customized to each client's unique circumstances. Mr. Codispoti also provides advice regarding the proper use of living wills/health care proxies and durable general powers of attorney as part of a

comprehensive estate plan. Mr. Codispoti has been active in the estate planning and administration field since 1987.

In addition to MK&B's wealth management practice, Mr. Codispoti also works in the secondary loan trading markets. He regularly advises banks, hedge funds and other financial institutions on the legal issues relating to the purchase and sale of distressed assets.

Prior to joining MK&B, Mr. Codispoti was a partner at Coral, Ortenberg, Zeck & Codispoti, P.C.

Education: Washington & Lee University School of Law, J.D., 1986; Colgate University, A.B. in History and Economics, 1983

Professional/Community Involvement: Rockland County Bar Association, Treasurer, Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation, Planned Giving Committee, Rockland Community Foundation Board Member, Estate Planning Council of Rockland, Inc., Historical Society of Rockland County, Past President, Ramapo Valley Rotary Club, Past President, Columbian Lawyers Association of Rockland County, Business Network International, Connections Chapter.

Clare Sheridan:

Mrs. Sheridan is a relative newcomer to Rockland County moving to Tappan in 2004. Prior to that she lived in New York City for 17 years. She was born in Denver, Colorado and received her BA Degree in Art History from the Colorado College. She was a Senior Vice President and Department Director for Sotheby's until 2004 when she took a leave of absence to be a full-time mom. She was the acting director of HSRC as a volunteer and in 2010-2011 while a Trustee as well. She is also the President of the Board of Friends of Montessori Foundation, an advisory board member of the Women's Rights Information Center, a member of the Friends of Bergen Family Center and a member of the gala committee for WFUV 90.7FM. She is a fly-fisher, a skier and a tennis player and loves to visit Colorado and Wyoming every chance she gets with her wonderful husband Bill and her two daughters!

Catherine M. Quinn

Ms. Quinn is a Rockland resident interested in local history. She is an Environmental Engineer employed by the county since 1981 with work centered on maintaining clean water and soils for county residents. Ms. Quinn was part of Saint Augustine Parish school's first graduating class, then attended Albertus Magnus High School, and then went on to The College of Mount Saint Vincent, Manhattan College. A native of Rockland, Ms. Quinn's mother's family (Beckerle) have been in Rockland since 1859. Ms. Quinn was asked by neighbors Pat and Jim Cropsey to join the Board in 2007 and has served ever since.

Joseph R. Holland

Joe Holland has spent most of his career as a dedicated public servant, and has been elected to public office nine times. He held the position of the Commissioner of Social Services and prior to that Mr. Holland served as New York State Senator for the 38th District from 1991 to 1999, and from 1989 to 1990 he represented the 92nd district in the NY State Assembly.

Mr. Holland became Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature in 1970, and was a small business owner for several years. He became Deputy County Clerk in 1977 and was elected as Rockland County Clerk from 1979 to 1988 before going to the Assembly.

Throughout his career, Mr. Holland held many legislative positions and was a member of many committees: Banking, Committee on Aging, Veterans and Military Affairs and many others. He was also vice-chair (1993) and Chairman (1994) of the Human Services Committee, National Conference of State Legislatures, and Vice-Chair (1994) of the Assembly on State Issues.

Mr. Holland is the Founder and Chairman emeritus of the Rockland County Sports Hall of Fame and served as its first President from 1973 – 1975. He has served in various capacities with the New York State Association of County Clerks, United Way, Boy Scouts, New City Jaycees, American Heart Association and others. He is past President of the Downtown New City Corp. and the New City Rotary Club.

He joined the US Marine Corps Reserves while in high school in 1953 and served until 1960, rising to the rank of Sergeant. He then was selected for the platoon Leaders class while at the University of Maryland, served as First Lieutenant from 1960 – 1963. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration from the University of Maryland in 1960 and later attended continuing education classes at Rockland Community College. He was appointed a Lieutenant Colonel in the New York State Guard in 1994, and a Colonel in 1998, from which he retired in June, 2004.

Veronica DeMeo Boesch

Ms. Boesch has been a member of Board of Trustees of HSRC since 2006. She has held the position of Second Vice President since 2008. Ms. Boesch is also the Chair of the Nominating Committee. She currently serves on the Personnel Committee, the House Tour Committee, the Annual Dinner Committee, the Tappan Zee Bridge Project, the Annual Ice Festival Committee and she was the past Chair of The Program and Events Committee. Ms. Boesch is a retired Social Studies teacher from North Rockland High School and she is a Trustee of the Village of Airmont and has held this position since 2007. Ms. Boesch is married and has two children.

Donald Karlewicz

Don Karlewicz is a certified public accountant licensed by the State of New York. A graduate of the Leadership Rockland Program, Don is a founding partner of Goldstein, Karlewicz & Goldstein, LLP, a certified public accounting firm with offices in Rockland, Orange and Dutchess counties. He has provided consulting to individuals and business clients over the course of his twenty five years of public accounting career. Don's areas of expertise include school bus companies, construction contractors, professional service firms and distributors. Don has also managed the financial operations for a large construction management firm where he was involved in setting up the asset management, treasury and financial reporting systems. Having graduated with an accounting degree from Pace University's Lubin School of Business, Don is a member of both the New York State Society and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Don has volunteered his time both on the field and on the board of local Youth Soccer and Little League programs. He remains active in local civic, historical, sports and not-for-profit organizations. He is presently a member of Orange County's United Way Allocation Committee and Treasurer and Chairman of the Endowment Fund Committee of the Historical Society of Rockland County. Don is married and has a son, a daughter, and two granddaughters.

Dorice Madronero

Ms. Madronero is a graduate of North Rockland High School and Manhattanville College. Her career has been in insurance underwriting and now works as a consultant. She served on the board of the Rockland County Conservation Association and was a member of Congressman Benjamin A. Gilman's Highlands Preservation Initiative Working Group that led to the passage of the Highland's Conservation Act. She is involved in initiatives to promote conservation and protection of natural resources through smart growth practices.

Ms. Madronero is a photographer who enjoys creating images that capture the beauty of the Hudson Valley.

Patricia Cropsey

Mrs. Cropsey grew up in historic Bergen County, after graduating from the School of Agriculture at the University of Vermont majoring in Clothing and Textiles, worked for a buying office in the NYC dress market. After meeting a farmer from Rockland County, they married and she quit her job to become bookkeeper for what was to eventually become Cropsey Farm Inc. Over the years, the business which started with a table at the end of the driveway developed into four businesses which they eventually sold about 10 years ago and the farm was sold to the State, County and Town about five years ago for Open Space.

During those years she served as president of the Rockland County Home Economics Association, Rockland County Cornell Cooperative Extension, New City American Association of University Women and the Historical Society of Rockland County. Since they live in a house which was built in 1769. they have always been concerned about preservation and look forward to returning to the Board.

James Cropsey

A lifelong resident of New City, Mr. Cropsey's family came to Rockland in 1893 from New Utrecht, Brooklyn. He went to Chestnut Grove Grammar School and the old Spring Valley High School, graduated from Cornell University and served in the Air Force as a Lieutenant during the Korean War and farmed at the Cropsey Farm from 1955 thru 2002. He has been the past president of New City Chamber of Commerce, Rockland County Farm Bureau and New City Rotary. He has been a life-long history buff and still a dedicated vegetable gardener.

Penny Ohmeis Leonard

Being a third-generation native of Rockland County, Mrs. Leonard has resided in Congers for virtually all of her life. She is a graduate of Clarkstown Schools and Empire State College. She is married to George F. Leonard, and they have two grown sons and four grandchildren.

Volunteering has always been important to Mrs. Leonard, and she has a long record of service to various community organizations. It was in the late 1970's, however, that she became a civic activist fighting to stop the further subdivision of residential lots in her neighborhood of turn-of-the-century homes. Realizing that there is power in numbers, she became one of the founders of the Congers Civic Association, Inc. After making considerable progress toward zoning reform, she was appointed to the Clarkstown Zoning Board of Appeals in 1984. Two years later, she became the assistant to newly elected Town Supervisor Charles Holbrook. Subsequently, she was promoted to the position of Director of Finance, and in 1997 she was appointed as the first female Deputy Supervisor of the Town of Clarkstown. After retiring from the town in mid 2004, she worked part time for the Historical Society of Rockland County. Later she held the position of chief of staff in the office of NYS Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski for several years.

Now fully retired, Mrs. Leonard and her husband finally have more time to spend at their beach condo in Belmar, NJ. Nevertheless, she remains active in local politics and civic affairs, and she is enthusiastically looking forward to serving as a trustee of the Historical Society of Rockland County.

Michael Davidson

A resident of Piermont, New York, Michael Davidson is the Corporate Real Estate Executive responsible for the Global Investment Banking Real Estate Portfolio at JP Morgan Chase, responsible for the strategy for 6 Million square feet Globally, with an Annual Budget of \$700 Million.

Prior to this, he held positions at Bank of America and Morgan Stanley with posts in many international locations.

Mr. Davidson graduated Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Fordham University in 1994 with a Dual BA Degree in Economics and Philosophy, Cumulative GPA of 3.77 and was the first in his family to earn a College Degree. He is currently enrolled in the TRUIM Global Executive MBA Program Class of 2012, attending the NYU Stern School of Business, London School of Economics and Political Science and HEC School of Management in Paris.

Mr. Davidson has completed Eleven Marathons, one on each of the Seven Continents, including New York, Athens, Tokyo, Sydney, Cape Town, Easter Island, Ushuaia and Antarctica, and in so doing has raised \$100,000 in personal fundraising for Children with HIV, the Epilepsy Foundation on behalf of his mother, Children in Hyderabad, India and St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City.

Mr. Davidson has established a self-funded Endowed Scholarship at Fordham University for graduating Seniors that demonstrate Academic excellence with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher, and intend to commit her/his life and career toward community service for the benefit of others.

Mr. Davidson is a member of the Fordham University President's Council, Chairman of The Fordham College Dean's Board of Advisors, Palisades Parks Conservancy Board of Directors, CoreNet Global - NYC Chapter Board of Directors, New York Cares, Torch Foundation, St. Francis Capuchin Food Pantries and Shelters and is a media & liturgical minister in his community Parish.

-NOTES-



The Historical Society of Rockland County Presents...

the Ghost Army

www.GhostArmy.org



...or how a bunch of artists used
deception, art & ingenuity to help win World War II

In 1944 a battalion of artists & actors were sent to Europe with rubber tanks, phony artillery and a cache of sound effects. Their mission was to deceive and divert the enemy. They also packed their sketchbooks. While impersonating many different army units, they painted and sketched their way across war-torn Europe. Their story is one of "smoke & mirrors." Their artwork is a unique glimpse into Europe during the war.



May 1 - October 16, 2011

Opening Reception May 1 at 2 pm

Historical Society of Rockland County

20 Zukor Road, New City, NY 10956

(845) 634-9629 | info@rocklandhistory.org | www.rocklandhistory.org

Regular Exhibit Hours: Wed - Sun 12 - 4 pm

Visit www.rocklandhistory.org for special exhibit hours & events

Members: free | Non-members: adults \$7, children (under 12) \$3

Illustrations by Ghost Army Veterans: Ned Harris & Bill Sayles
To find out more about the Ghost Army visit www.GhostArmy.org