

The

Orangetown Crier

News from the Orangetown Historical Museum and Archives

SUMMER 2021

A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

Dutch Merchant Wearing a Falling Lace Collar
Dated 1672. Attributed to Michiel Nouts (Dutch, 1628-1693)
Donated by Anonymous Donors & The Friends of the
Orangetown Museum. In Memory of Maria J. Knight, 2020

The Friends of the Orangetown Museum is a group that has been supporting the efforts of the Orangetown Museum since 1992. Expertly headed by Chairman Peter Wade, (who lends his expertise in the field of art & antiquities) this board has recently seen some changes. It has welcomed new members Eileen O'Brien and Janine Clark with the retirement of Marilyn Schauder and Marie Manning along with acknowledging the passing of our dear friend Rosemarie Fornario.



The Dutchman prepares for conservation at the Staten Island Noble Maritime Museum. From left: Ciro Galeno, Jr., Executive Director, Elizabeth Skrabonja, OHMA Curator, Megan Beck, Noble Museum Curator, Halina McCormack, Conservator

It was thanks to the tenacious fortitude of the *Friends* board that our museum was able to acquire its most significant artifact. In August of 2020 the Skinner Auction House of Boston, Massachusetts was offering selections from the collection of the late George Way. Included in this auction was the magnificent painting **Dutch Merchant Wearing a Falling Lace Collar** that our museum had exhibited in 2015's *From Holland to Here* exhibit. Dressed for success, the painting reveals several clues regarding the social standing of the sitter – he was an individual of means at the apex of his life. Having a portrait painted – and one of such scale and detail – was an important rite of passage for a Dutch merchant in the 1670's, (our painting is dated 1672). There are several clues in the painting that speak to the sitter's status and occupation. This painting created a furor when it was exhibited here; when the possibility of its acquisition became available forces convened to make this a reality.

The purchase was motivated in memory of Maria Knight, (sister of curator Elizabeth Skrabonja who died of cancer in July of 2020). Two generous donors that have chosen to remain anonymous joined *The Friends of the Orangetown Museum* as a lively online auction ensued. Chairman Peter Wade representing the museum held fast to his goal and won the prize by the end of the

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History & Heritage Awards

AT THE DePew House



Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick inaugurating the first 'History & Heritage' award to our Museum Director & Town Historian, Mary Cardenas

On July 31st Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick chose the Orangetown Museum to inaugurate the first ever New York State Senate 'Heritage & History Awards' at the DePew House. Six distinguished individuals were chosen for recognition for their dedication and achievement preserving the cultural heritage and history of the people of Rockland and Westchester counties. As the Senator said "Our local history and heritage shape who we are, and help us to understand the future by knowing our past" – this sentiment was without a doubt the credo of the honorees, who were:

Mary Cardenas, Orangetown Town Historian & Orangetown Museum Director was recognized for her 28 years of service in these positions and her success in saving numerous historic sandstone homes from as early as the 1700's. "It's not easy to save old houses – and it also is very expensive", she said "but it saves a part of that community's history, and in turning these houses into a museum, it gives back to that community".

Joyce Sharrock Cole, Ossining Village Historian was recognized for her work in creating the Ossining COVID project, which documents the lived experience of the COVID pandemic. In accepting she said "It's so important to know where we came from, to know where we're at, to know where we're going. To see yourself in history makes you really appreciate where you are, and where you have been".

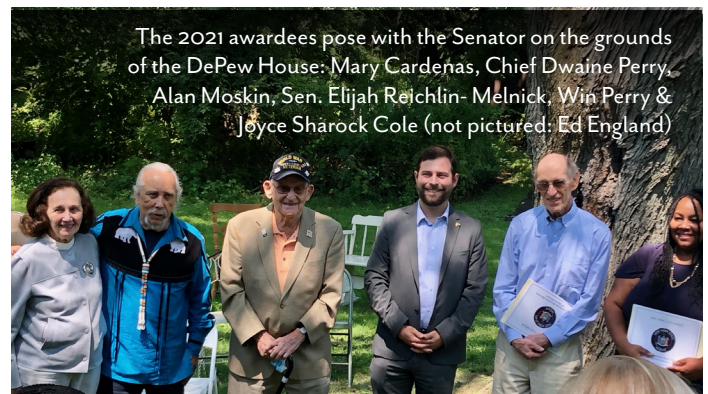
Ed England, President of the Friends of Mount Moor Cemetery was recognized for his work leading the organization in their mission to ensure the hallowed grounds of the historic Black cemetery in the shadow of the Palisades mall are properly maintained and restored. Under Mr. England's leadership, significant restoration of the cemetery has taken place, including 10 new headstones as well as the repair and refurbishment of markers previously forgotten.

Alan Moskin, Holocaust Liberator and WWII Veteran was recognized as a dedicated speaker about and witness to his experience as a member of the greatest generation, one who served actively in WWII to defeat Nazism and liberate those held in German concentration camps. He served in combat through France, Germany and Austria where he participated in the liberation of the Gunskirchen Concentration Camp.

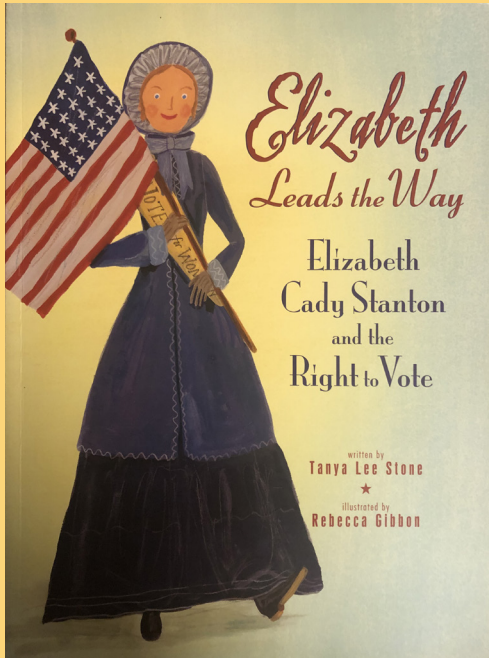
Chief Dwaine Perry, Chief of the Ramapough Lenape Nation was honored for his leadership fighting for human rights and specifically the rights of indigenous people. Chief Perry has worked to establish the Split Rock SweetWater Prayer Camp in Northern New Jersey, The First Embassy in Rockland representing the Sovereign Indigenous Nations of the Western Hemisphere and the Ramapough Munsee Museum – giving voice through art & antiquities to those who have remained without a voice. "It's no small thing to persevere in the vortex of muzzled reality" said the Chief.

Win Perry, John Green Preservation Coalition was honored for his 55- year career in architecture designing and preserving many local community buildings, his nearly 50 years of service as the Upper Nyack Village Historian, and his role as President of the Historical Society of the Nyacks and of the John Greene Preservation Coalition, where he is working to restore the last surviving Dutch style stone house in Nyack.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Museum Director Mary Cardenas presented Senator Reichlin-Melnick with a copy of Rev. David Cole's *History of Rockland County*. First published in 1884 it was a fitting look back while honoring our 21st century historians who live by the motto: know the past – find the future. ■



The 2021 awardees pose with the Senator on the grounds of the DePew House: Mary Cardenas, Chief Dwaine Perry, Alan Moskin, Sen. Elijah Reichlin-Melnick, Win Perry & Joyce Sharrock Cole (not pictured: Ed England)



Girls Just Want to Have Fun!

Celebrating Women's Suffrage with the Orangeburg Library

A good book always makes the day better. On Friday, August 20th a group of younger visitors from the Orangeburg Library enjoyed a reading of *Elizabeth Leads the Way- Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote* by Tanya Lee Stone while enjoying our current exhibit- 'Orangetown Suffragist'. A tour and a craft were another part of a beautiful summer day celebrating local history. ■



We Are So Happy Together

The ABD (Association of Blauvelt Descendants) Consider the Legacy of the Griffiths Quilt



Griffiths Friendship Quilt square, 1852.

The accompanying stanza:

"Then there are two dear little birds / By Mary E. Cooper that have these words / We are so happy together / Sing on and may nothing sever"

At the beginning of the summer representatives of the ABD, (Association of Blauvelt Descendants) stopped by for research and inspiration as they prepare for the Association's anniversary celebrations; they were not disappointed. What caught their attention was an artifact tied to the Blauvelt family legacy – that has presented a surprising opportunity for the future.

The Griffiths Friendship Quilt is an extraordinary object created in 1852 by a group of dear friends of the distant Blauvelt relation – Mrs. Elizabeth Griffiths. Crafted of muslin and cotton with silk embroidery threads it features a variety of applied motifs, floral, biblical and whimsical bordered with a red and green applied garland bow design. Each square was created by a unique

seamstress and among the Blauvelts at the time participating were Lucretia, Ann, Maria and Margaret as well as a few Demarest, Van Houten, and Ackerman cousins. A poem was written to accompany the gift by Mrs. Eliza Cooper; each square is described by a stanza.

What the modern Blauvelt team took away was a plan to re-create a contemporary version with a new quilt – calling out to Blauvelt descendants to join the new 'makers movement' and create an heirloom for the future. We wish them the best of luck. ■

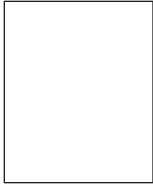
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night. The Orangetown Museum had acquired its first significant 17th century artwork recalling full circle the journey our earliest Dutch descendants made from their homeland to New Netherland to the verdant shores of what came to be known as Orangetown.

Funding was acquired from within the museum's budget for restoration of the Dutchman. A generous arrangement to host the painting in the conservation studio of the Noble Maritime Museum of Staten Island, (not far from the home of the late George Way) was offered by Executive Director, Ciro Galeno, Jr. with work executed by master conservator, Halina McCormack. Conservation has revealed a more authentic treatment of the canvas with the removal of conservation efforts from over 40 years ago, evidenced by paint and treatment analysis. A dramatic reveal of the painting will occur as the centerpiece of our upcoming exhibit – *The Orangetown Memory Project*. With regard to the power of memory and a little help from our friends, this has all been made possible. ■ EKS



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www.orangetownmuseum.com



PLEASE VISIT US WITH A FACE MASK.

at The DePew House
196 Chief Bill Harris Way
Orangeburg, New York
Office, Archives by Appointment
(845) 398-1302

ORANGETOWN Suffragist

Open Tuesday & Friday 10-2,
Sunday 1-4pm
Admission is Free;
Donations accepted

Email us at
friendsofohma@gmail.com
to get our eblasts!

at The Salyer House
213 Blue Hill Road
Pearl River, New York

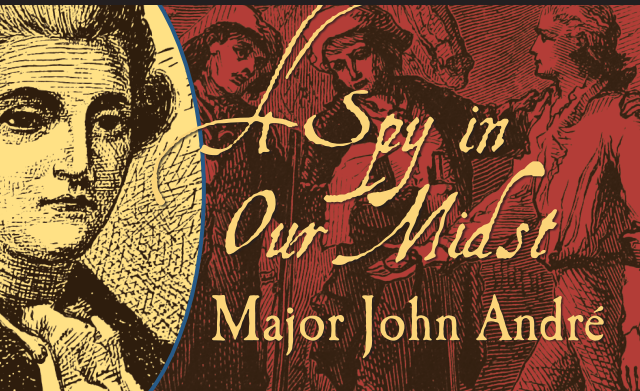
*A Spy in Our Midst,
Our Dutch
Sandstone Houses
&
At Home
in Orangetown
by Appointment*

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VIRTUAL GALLERY TOUR

WHEN: Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2021, 3:00 PM • Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021, 7:00 PM



On September 21, 1780, General Benedict Arnold supplied Major John André, a top aid to British Commander Sir Henry Clinton with a map of West Point and George Washington's war council minutes from September 6. As André was returning to British lines two days later carrying the plans, he was stopped, searched and the plans were found; André was taken to Tappan and tried as a spy.

Join us for a virtual tour of the newly refurbished exhibition *A Spy in our Midst* with Museum Director and Orangetown Historian Mary Cardenas at the Historic Salyer House. *A Spy in our Midst* examines the conflicted history of treason and betrayal that resulted in the execution of John André, a

gentlemen soldier who faced death bravely and left many to reflect on the tragedy of war. It is a story of a remarkable episode of the American Revolution, from the meeting of the two men on the Hudson River's shore at Haverstraw to the ultimate hanging of André at Tappan on October 2, 1780.

This program is co-produced by the Historical Society of Rockland County and the Orangetown Historical Museum & Archives. Donations are welcome and benefit both organizations.

To reserve a place please email the historical society at info@rocklandhistory.org or call: (845) 634-9629

WHERE: ZOOM – Online – (Zoom link provided with your confirmed reservation) **ADMISSION:** FREE or \$10.00 (It's your choice)

THE ORANGETOWN HISTORICAL MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Mary Cardenas, MUSEUM DIRECTOR • Elizabeth Skrabonja, CURATOR FOR EXHIBITIONS
Steve Schwinn, BUILDINGS MANAGER

The Orangetown Historical Museum & Archives was founded in 1992 to acquire, preserve and exhibit objects which reflect primarily the history of the Town of Orangetown. The Museum's additional, but not lesser mission is to document, research, promote and publicize the town's rich, historical heritage of the town for the people of Orangetown.



TOWN OF ORANGETOWN

Teresa Kenny, SUPERVISOR
Jerry Bottari, Thomas Diviny, Denis Troy and Paul Valentine, COUNCILMEN

FRIENDS OF THE ORANGETOWN MUSEUM

Your membership in the Friends of the Orangetown Museum helps to collect and preserve the history of Orangetown. Members will receive notices of programs and events as well as free admission to the Museum's special exhibits and events. The Museum is a 501 (C) (3) organization and all donations are tax deductible.

STUDENT/SENIOR \$10 SINGLE \$15 FAMILY \$20
LIFE MEMBER \$100 CORPORATE \$250