

History Advisory Committee

February 26th, 2022

In attendance: Tony Albino, Donald Dubac, Rich Coons, Alvin Sheffer, Tom Shannon

- Update on Hank Jones collection: Almost all of the books are cataloged now. Will work on periodicals next. Germantown Library will do a press release and schedule an open house in the next few weeks.
- Pomeroy Foundation deadline for NYS historic marker grants is in September. Start thinking about ideas for these. The waterfront parks, Diell Rockefeller's mill site, historic houses, etc.
- Path Through History weekends: are June 18-19 and October 8-10. Thinking of doing a canoe/kayak tour of the waterfront with a stop at ice house landing for June. Maybe a walking tour for October?
- Ideas for the Semiquincentennial: Working on a written history of Germantown to be ready for 2026. One set of books we may pursue republishing are the four volume Rockefeller Family Association books. We have all 4 volumes but they are falling apart and full sets are rare. We'll discuss more ideas for 2026 in the coming months.
- Columbia County Historical Society re-grant program: Application should be arriving in the mail soon. Program grants up to \$500. We need to fund Google and OneDrive subscriptions, archive boxes, archive paper, a new open flag, bookshelves.
- Hover Grant update: Roe Jan kiosk is complete, just needs to be built when the weather breaks. Palatine Park kiosks are in production, with Ethan helping with the Maple Ave focused one. Reformed Cemetery monument design mock-up was sent back for corrections. Will take 6-8 weeks once that is complete. The project is significantly under budget so we'll ask the Hover Foundation if we can use the remainder for some of the items mentioned in the preceding bullet point.
- Recent donations: The day book (ledger) from Edmund Rockefeller's store for the years 1856-57, donated by Greg Fingar; Photos of the burned-out shell of the Disher house on Disher Lane, previously a Miller family house, donated by Bill and Sue Droege; Copies of photos of the Nov. 1971 train wreck at Lower Main Street, donated by Denis Crawford via Yvonne Crawford; Photos of the 1997 partial collapse and later demolition of Germantown Cold Storage, donated by Martin and Kathy Overington; about 100 local history books that belonged to Helen Henderson, donated by Rich Coons.

- YouTube channel: Been working on getting the old audio file interviews in our collection converted and uploaded to YouTube. Interviews available now include former Town Supervisor Jay Moore; electrician, founder of Taconic, and State Electrician Dow B. Hover; and longtime GCS school teacher Margaret Lasher. More to come.
- Events: Notable Palatine Descendants Zoom talk rescheduled to March 15th at 6:30 PM; Roe Jan history Zoom talk is still April 28th at 6:30 PM; Germantown Library will hold an open house for the Hank Jones collection sometime in March or April, details coming soon; the Saturday after Earth Day, April 23rd, there will be a volunteer gardening/landscaping effort on the Parsonage grounds led by the Garden Club and CSC Task Force; We will co-sponsor a gravestone cleaning event held by Friends of Rhinebeck Cemetery in late May/early June; NYS Palatines to America annual meeting will be held at Germantown Library on June 4th, highlighting the Hank Jones collection; We will take part in the town-wide autumn event with a campfire and other outdoor activities at the Parsonage.
- RIP: Rita Rifenburgh passed away on February 15th, at the age of 104. She lived all but the last few of those years in Cheviot. She did at least four interviews over the years, three of them are on Germantown History Department's YouTube channel.