

History Advisory Committee
Jan. 31st, 2026

Attendance: Don Westmore, Hank Himelright, Tony Albino, Yvonne Crawford, Rich Coons, Alvin Sheffer, Tom Shannon

- Rezoning Committee's plan: We went over some of the concerns expressed by the Town Board about the demolition permit procedure and historic overlay districts in the proposed rezoning plan. Tom will draft a letter for the History Advisory Committee's review, and submission to the Town Board, based on the discussion we had today.
- The Pomeroy Foundation granted a Historic Transportation marker for Cheviot Park. This is a relatively new program. It will be the first marker of its kind in Columbia County. The text of the sign, improved from Tom's original by Pomeroy's historians, is below:

CHEVIOT LANDING
BY 1851, HUDSON RIVER RR RAN
THROUGH EAST CAMP LANDING. HUB
OF COMMERCE & TRAVEL, RENAMED
CHEVIOT 1886. REMNANTS OF 1911
DOCK VISIBLE AT LOW TIDE.

- A graduate student from UAlbany's Information Science program has expressed interest in completing a required archiving project at the Germantown History Department. She will visit the Parsonage on Saturday, Feb. 7th.
- Our application for archival funding to the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York was turned down.
- We received shipment of 13 five-gallon buckets of gravestone cleaner on Thursday. This is part of the 2025 Hover Foundation grant award. It is earmarked for Viewmonte Cemetery come spring.
- The other two items requested in the 2025 Hover grant were a historic marker for the 1778 Loyalist Raid and an updated one for the first public school in Germantown. Tom will place an order to the foundry for the Loyalist raid sign. The first public school sign requires more research, probably including a trip to the NYS Archives.

- Tom broached the subject of applying to the Hudson River Bank and Trust Foundation to fund a program where municipal historians from around Columbia County could receive gravestone cleaning supplies upon request. Alvin would like to see it more focused on the three towns of Livingston, Clermont, and Germantown. We will refine the particulars before the February FOHG meeting and pitch the idea there. HRBT accepts applications on a rolling basis.
- Sue and Bill Droege have expressed interest in donating funds to FOHG for the purpose of a Revolutionary War monument in Germantown. Tom's drafts are attached along with these minutes. We discussed possible locations for the monument to recommend to the Town Board, but did not come to a decision yet.
- Tom discussed the plan to automate the History Department library and build an OPAC (online public access catalog) for it. Libraria seems like the most promising free program to use. The Town/Village of Greene, NY Historian recently built an OPAC for his library with it. Most other options require an annual fee.
- The committee discussed the possibility of having a float in the 2026 Flag Day parade in Hudson. Hank suggested bringing Clermont and Livingston into the fold for this. Others suggested pulling in other community groups to help if they are interested. Tom will put in an application and the rest of the committee will brainstorm ideas.
- The committee will build a priority list of veterans to suggest to FOHG for the Hometown Heroes banner program.
- Events:
 - Feb. 22nd at 2 PM. Tom will lecture about the Revolutionary War in southern Columbia County using the memoirs of William Smith, Jr. as the primary source material. Hosted by the Columbia County Historical Society at the Hudson Area Library.
 - March 21st at 10:30 AM. Tom will give a history of the 1767 Parsonage to the Germantown Garden Club. This will be held in the Hover Room at the Germantown Library.