



Newsletter

Historical Society of Shawangunk & Gardiner

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A SEASON TO GIVE THANKS

By Libby Ross

In the middle of one of the darkest periods in recent American history, the Historical Society is thrilled to announce a major gift from Board member Cornelius (Kees) Verhulp to memorialize his wife Ann Verhulp-Watson who died recently. Kees and Ann were long-time members of the Historical Society and never missed a program. The \$30,000 gift is earmarked to establish a **Restoration Fund** for the benefit of permanent additions to the Andries DuBois House. The Restoration Fund will enable the Historical Society, among other things, to purchase water-tight bins, shelving, and software to manage its collection, and will allow for major repairs of the Archive room and the DuBois building itself.

The heart of the Andries DuBois House Museum is its extensive collection of artifacts that have been contributed over the years by long-time residents of Wallkill and its environs, items from family collections that have historic interest to our community and sustain the long-term memory of its past; this collection will now bear the name: **The Ann Verhulp-Watson Archive**. Additionally, Kees has generously supported the restoration of the floor of the one-room schoolhouse display in the DuBois House



On behalf of the Historical Society of Shawangunk and Gardiner, and the larger community that will benefit from this gift, the Board extends its heartfelt thanks to Kees and Ann Verhulp.

Here is the history of Ann Verhulp-Watson and Cornelius (Kees) Verhulp; it is a love story:

It is highly unlikely that Ann and Kees were ever destined to meet, and ultimately to retire to Pine Bush, NY for Ann's last 10 years. Ann was born in Blaydon-on-Tyne, a small town in NE England, near Newcastle. Her idyllic early years were perhaps capped by her performance of Irish and Scottish dances before the Queen of England!

By a fluke of fate, Ann's youngest brother had a pen pal Kees Verhulp in the Netherlands who came to visit after his graduation from high school. Six years later, when Ann was 19, she and Kees married in England; they settled in Holland where Kees was studying for his master's degree in physics; his career was in international engineering and construction.

They chose to settle in Holland where Ann mastered the famously difficult Dutch language in 4 months and established a traditional family "where the man provides, and the lady makes the home." Ann's life was characterized by devotion to her two daughters and charity work in The Netherlands, East Germany, Argentina, Singapore, Malaysia, and the United States, accompanying Kees in his international work. The couple were together for 52 happy years.

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RESTORATION OF THE ANDRIES DUBOIS SCHOOLROOM EXHIBIT

In an earlier issue of the Historical Society Newsletter, when the Historical Society members attended the Museum Association of NY meeting in Cooperstown several years ago, we learned about guidelines for conservation and exhibition. We have put the learning into practice! During this difficult time of isolation and blackout of public events, work at the DuBois house has continued; a faithful team of Board members has focused on the schoolroom exhibit which has been dramatically restored.

Here’s a list of what we have done:

- removed and boxed contents of the room (pictures, paintings, books, globes, fabrics)
- removed all furniture
- removed the lowered ceiling to expose the beams
- removed modern lighting fixtures and exposed wiring
- stripped wallpaper
- replastered and repainted the walls
- repaired windows and windowsills
- repainted windowsills, baseboards, doorframes, doors
- removed pipes in the closet
- restored closet shelving
- removed paint, dirt, oiled the wooden floor
- removed inappropriate furniture
- polished and repositioned schoolroom desks
- positioned schoolroom content
- hung pictures, certificates, donor plaques

The list goes on!



COMING UP

On December 18th between 11 AM and 2 PM, the Historical Society is opening the Andries DuBois House to the public with a **WALK-THROUGH EXHIBITION** of the Schoolroom, the Kitchen, and the renovated Hall. You are invited to attend!

To keep everyone safe, you will need to show proof of vaccination and wear a mask before entering the Andries DuBois House. Thank you for your understanding.

* * * *

Preparation for the opening meeting of our spring season on May 4th at the Historical Society Meeting Hall at 5 Main Street is underway. Plans to highlight the new gallery of pictures representing the early history of Wallkill will be the highlight of the newly decorated meeting room. The Wallkill Federal Savings and Loan generously supported our efforts to frame these historic pictures and they will be in attendance and publicly thanked for their contribution.

Work on the side porch, wheelchair accessibility to the building and restoration of the upstairs Lodge kitchen for display as part of the Knight's story is still ongoing.

* * * *

Thank you for your continuing membership in the Historical Society of Shawangunk and Gardiner. We appreciate your continued interest. Please remember to pay your annual dues; we depend upon your support. The Historical Society is committed to sustaining the two buildings in our charge, the 1769 Andries DuBois House Museum and the Historical Society Meeting Hall (formerly The Knights of Pythias building) at 5 Main Street which is used to preserve our files and as the site for community meetings. Like everyone we know, we keep our fingers crossed that at some point we will be able to resume community activities. We all miss our connections!

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Letter from the President

Dear Members and Friends:

It has been a difficult two years, but the HSSG Board has continued to make progress. With a gracious donation by **Kees Verhulp**, we repaired and sealed the DuBois house roof. We are completing work on the schoolroom exhibit and hall in preparation for an open house in December. Many thanks to **John & Libby Ross, Karen Dale, Bob Mooney, Hal Van Aken, Freda Fenn, and Jim Malloy** for their hard work. After Board discussion and conversations with experts, we decided to tear down the old garage on the edge of the DuBois property. Thanks to **Adam Selig, Hal VanAken, Jim Malloy, and Bob Mooney** for safely tearing the shed down and carting away the debris, and to **Libby Ross** for documenting it. Some of the wood has been repurposed into bookcases and shelving in the schoolroom.

At the Historical Society Meeting Hall, the peeling paint in the upstairs kitchen was scraped and will be repainted next spring. The side porch has been power washed, paint removed, and will be painted in the spring. Thanks to **Parker Wolff** for helping with these projects. **Bob Mooney** has almost completed the display of framed pictures in the meeting room at the Meeting Hall (See article, p. 2). Finally, files and artifacts have been moved into the Historical Society office space to be organized and inventoried over the next year. Contact us if you have old minutes, agendas, program flyers or other artifacts from the Historical Society so we may add them to our collection.

I thank everyone for their hard work, suggestions, contributions, and well wishes these past two years. It has been tough, but Historical Society continues to thrive. When I remember how both houses looked when I first joined, I am amazed at the progress. On Wednesday, December 29th, the Historical Society board will have its annual strategic planning meeting. If you have ideas or concerns, please let us know. This is a member-driven organization, and we encourage your input!

Sincerely,

Debra Wolff, President

Historical Society of Shawangunk & Gardiner Mission Statement

In one of the oldest settled townships in the U.S., The Historical Society of Shawangunk & Gardiner preserves historic buildings, stories, records, and artifacts. We share them with the community through absorbing and inspiring programs, strengthening a shared understanding of local history.

Historical Society of Shawangunk & Gardiner
PO Box 570
Walkill, NY 12589-0570

Stamp

Last Dues

December 18, 2021, 11 to 2 -DuBois Open House at 75 Walkill Ave. Walkthrough newly renovated School House and Kitchen and Entrance Hall.

Dues are due on January 1, 2022.

**\$20 Individual
\$30 Family
\$50 Supporting or Business
\$100 Patron
\$250 Benefactor**

May 4, 2022, 6 PM – Spring meeting at the Historical Society Meeting Hall at 5 Main Street. Presentation of framed pictures of local buildings and locations

Dues can be paid to:
<http://WalkillHistory.com>

HSSG
PO Box 570
Walkill, NY 12589



The Garage next to the DuBois House has been demolished, beams and boards saved, and the rest taken to the dump