Town of Salem

Historian’s Report – 2022

* 2022 proved to be a busy year for the Historian’s office and Town Archives after the pause resulting from the COVID pandemic.
* Responded to numerous internet inquiries mainly genealogy questions and research
* Revised and updated the Town History, Revolutionary War Cemetery and Historic Preservation Commission information on the Town of Salem website via Karen Hicklend
* Collaborated with Tom McMorris and Kyle West of Fort Salem Theater to expand upon the “Voices from the Grave” project at the Revolutionary War Cemetery. 3 new “Voices” have been added with plans for adding more in the spring of 2023.
* WTEN’s Cassie Hudson filmed a segment in October at the cemetery, which featured the “Voices from the Grave” and the use of QR codes allowing Salem’s important historic characters to come “alive”. We’re hearing positive reports from the parents of young children who are interested and eager to hear the stories being told.
* Researched and submitted the political, economic and historical information on Salem from its founding to the present for a research project undertaken by graduate students from the University of Pennsylvania. Emphasis was placed on the recycling and reuse programs that are in place in the town.
* Over $10,000 was spent in 2022 on restorative efforts in the Revolutionary War Cemetery. “Leaners” were reset and repairs were made to over 24 historic headstones at the site. Plans are for more restorative work to continue by Joe Ferrannini of Grave Stone Matters in the spring of 2023.
* Al Cormier’s book, “The Heart of Salem” was released and warmly received. The first edition has nearly sold out with proceeds earmarked for cemetery restoration.
* “Historic Washington County” by Elizabeth Cockey and me is being sold by the Courthouse. Its proceeds augment programs at the community center.

**Historic Preservation Commission** - Chris Preble, John Clark, Michele Bardwell, Kay Crank and Judy Flagg, chair.

\_ Projects that were reviewed and acted upon during 2022 include:

* Central House renovation plans
* On a Limb exterior updates and renovations; new signage
* Jacko’s - outdoor seating
* OnDaWa building - new roof
* Community Fellowship – new signage
* Memorial & Veterans Park - new signage

A complete photographic inventory of the homes and buildings in the Historic District was performed by Tom McMorris. These photos will be used as a part of an Architectural History and Identification project planned for the spring. Bill Krattinger, NYS Division of Historic Preservation, will assist me in presenting architectural features of several of Salem’s historic structures as a key to dating and identifying the homes within the district. A program will be presented for the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Flagg, Historian