

Town of Horicon Historical Society – September 11, 2023, Monthly Meeting Minutes

The Town of Horicon Historical Society September 11, 2023, Monthly Meeting was held at the Horicon Community Center, Horicon Town Hall and was called to order by President, Sylvia Smith at 6:00 PM. Board members present were Barbara LaFond, Diane Loika, Mary Ann Hill and John Caruso. Other members present were Barbara Blum, Camille Dougan, Bob Smith, Jacob Smith, Jaden Smith, Janet Early, Jim Ventura, Margaret and Paul Holmes, Town of Horicon Historian Colleen Murtagh, and new member, Tom Lapointe. Town of Hague Historian Sally Rypkema also attended.

Sylvia Smith thanked all the volunteers who staffed the Museums, tours, the events, and Food Truck Fridays (FTF) throughout the summer. This resulted in about 500 Museum visitors, well-attended “Don’t Get Ticked” lecture, the very popular FTF table with scrapbooks and the farm equipment demo – all of which raised the profile of the HHS and the Museums. Special kudos to Elna Meader for bringing many friends and family members to the Museums over the summer.

Minutes: Minutes from the August 14th monthly meeting had been emailed previously. John Caruso motioned to accept the minutes and Barbara LaFond seconded and the motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: A copy of the Treasurer’s Report for the month of August was distributed to the attendees and summarized by Sylvia Smith. Diane Loika motioned to accept the report and John Caruso seconded and the motion carried. Sylvia Smith mentioned that the main section of the Military Monument is now full of pavers, and the sides will start being used.

Town Supervisor’s Report: Sylvia Smith provided the Supervisor’s update, in Mike Geraci’s absence. Becky Ross has been appointed Deputy Supervisor, and Sylvia has been appointed to the Town Board through the end of this year.

Historical Society President’s Report: Matt Simpson, NY State Assemblymember for the 114th district (including Town of Horicon), will be touring the Museum at 2 pm on Tuesday, September 12th. Sylvia requested that all volunteers be present at the Museum, with their museum shirts, to help with the tour and with photo ops. Sylvia asked if Margaret could be available for a photo shoot.

The North Warren and Essex Historical Societies are meeting this fall on Saturday, September 23rd in Minerva, at the Minerva Community Center from 10 am to 1:30 pm for a tour of their historical buildings, a planning session and light lunch. Please let Sylvia know if you can attend this event.

Sylvia asked that a committee be formed to plan a Civil War themed event in the Spring, 2024, through the assistance/direction of Tom Lapointe. Barbara Blum was asked to participate. The target audience will be both kids and adults. The committee will coordinate with the school.

The Sunshine Committee has sent out cards to Jean Olsen, Vicki Jones Monthony, Joe Bradley, and Tom Johansen.

The water will be turned off in the Museums around October 10th so all clean-ups should be done before then.

Sylvia has not received confirmation that the 4th grade tours to the Museum will take place this fall.

The County-wide first Letter Box campaign is ending in December, with the second Letter Box campaign still active. Both have proved to be very popular, drawing kids and adults to the Museums. A third campaign is being planned which will focus on bike tours.

Sylvia received a letter from the Brant Lake Association thanking the Historical Society for their contributions to the BrantLaker, and requesting a new article for the Winter edition. October 15th is the deadline for this article. An article on the planned 2024 Spring Civil War event should be included in the Spring edition of the BrantLaker.

Historian Report: Colleen Murtagh reported that she had 234 people sign in at the Heintzelman Library during FTFs this year – the same number as last year! She has been doing research on deeds and family histories for seven families in the area, as well as answering questions on Bean Rd., Briarcliff, and Camp Gibbons properties. And she is researching the origins of the Battle Hill and Brant Lake names, so far with little success.

Website: Janet Early and Margaret Holmes previewed the Horicon Historical Society website for the group. There are still a few corrections to be made, but it should go live shortly. Anyone interested in doing a more thorough review of the site should email Janet (janet.early.je@gmail.com) and she will send the log in information to them. Mary Ann Hill requested that the name for the Adirondack Annex include “1881” because it has proved to be a good attraction to the Museum. Colleen Murtagh requested that her contact information be included on the Heintzelman Library page.

Historical Snippet: New member Tom Lapointe introduced himself and brought Civil War era artifacts to share with the group. He grew up in Ticonderoga and became interested in the Civil War about 15 years ago after participating in a Civil War re-enactment in Elizabethtown, where he portrayed Joseph Hastings. Joseph was a Town of Horicon resident who served from 1862 – 1865 in the 118th NY Infantry, Adirondack Regiment of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). After extensive research, Tom discovered he was related to Joseph, intensifying his interest in Civil War history. He participates with a group of 50 other Civil War enthusiasts with events throughout the state to bring this history alive to kids and adults alike. Their next event will be the Harvest Fest and Civil War Living History at Almanzo and Laura Ingalls Wilder Homestead on September 23rd – 24th in Burke, NY.

Tom shared many Civil War artifacts he brought, some of which will be on loan for display in the museum. The artifacts included a sword, bayonet, original belt buckle, original sash of a member of the Schroon Lake J.D. Platt family who died at Gettysburg, glass photos which were often carried by soldiers in war, Confederate money, a breach loader carbine, and a scrapbook of lithographs dating from 1886. He also shared a World War II cloth on which artwork was drawn by a soldier, and a siren.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Mary Ann Hill, seconded by Barbara LaFond. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 23, in the Horicon Community Center at 6 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Early (in Kathy Hill's absence)