

Town of Horicon Historical Society (HHS) – September 14, 2026, Monthly Meeting Minutes

The Town of Horicon Historical Society September 14, 2026, monthly meeting was held at the Horicon Town Center and was called to order by President, Sylvia Smith at 6:00 pm. Board members present were Mary Ann Hill, Janet Early, John Caruso and Bill Ommerborn. Other members present were Bob Smith, Jim Ventura, Melanie Fuerst, Margaret and Paul Holmes, Barbara LaFond, Teri Schuerlein, Karli Wood, Mary Jo Hebert, Andy Smith and Carre Smith.

Minutes:

- Minutes from August 10, 2026, monthly meeting were provided to everyone by email prior to the meeting. John Caruso motioned to accept the minutes as received and Bill Ommerborn seconded, the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

- Bill Ommerborn presented the Treasurer's report for the month of August 2026. Bill noted that there were errors in the report that need to be corrected (July deposits should be August deposits; June checks should be August checks; and the bank made an error on the donations - \$100 should be \$102, plus a check was incorrectly credited to HHS). Mary Ann Hill made a motion to accept the report as received with the noted adjustments made to the report, John Caruso seconded and the motion carried.

Mail:

- Joe Millington sent a Thank you card for the Horicon Historical Society's hosting of the Sing-Along program on August 16, with a generous donation.
- A bill was received from the Post Office for the Historical Society's post office box.

Historian's Report:

- A Historian's Report was not received this month because Colleen Murtagh is on vacation.

Sunshine Committee:

- A Sunshine Committee report was not received this month because Barbara Blum is on vacation. A card will be sent to Kathy Hill due to her mother's illness.

Public Outreach Committee:

- See the attached report. In summary, Mary Jo said that greatest response is with Facebook, not Instagram. Work is needed to build up the Instagram following. She encouraged everyone with a Facebook account to be a follower of the HHS Facebook and to react (e.g., "like") to the postings. She said the summer showed great responses due to all of the HHS events and postings. Work will need to be done to maintain some level of activity through the winter months, even without events. Sylvia thanked Mary Jo, Diane and Margaret for the work put into this committee and the great results that they have achieved.

Supervisor's Report:

- Wayne could not attend the meeting due to dental procedures but submitted the following report. The Heinzelman Library grant has been formally closed. He encouraged everyone to attend the Town Board's monthly meeting this Thursday, September 17 at 6PM. He has received very positive comments on the Brant Lake Farmer's Market doing fund-raising throughout the summer for the Horicon Historical Society (resulting in a significant donation for the Watering Tub historical plaque), the Horicon Fire Department and the Horicon Food Pantry.

President's Report:

- Sylvia Smith met with Michael Gates of Gates Memorials and signed the order for the Historical Marker for the Watering Tub. Once the plaque is made and the Town moves the boulder in place, the plaque can be mounted on the boulder. Thanks again for the Gore Mountain Fund grant and the Brant Lake Farmer's Market donation – both of which enabled this project to be completed.
- Sylvia and Bill reviewed the Treasurer's Report and updated the membership list.
- The NWVS History Club cannot meet off the school premises so a visit to the Brant Lake Museum is not possible. Sylvia suggested that an alternate program be developed that the Historical Society can take to a future meeting of the History Club.
- Regarding Margaret Holmes upcoming taping of the second floor of the Museum, Jaden Smith is preparing for a taping of School Room and Karli Wood for the Fashion Room. Sylvia will discuss with Barbara Blum about recording the Sewing Room. The Kids' Room hasn't been assigned yet. Sylvia is also thinking that the first floor bedroom should also be taped because it would be difficult for a wheelchair to maneuver into that room.
- A recap was done on the September 11 NWCS 4th grade Tour. (See "Comments from the Floor" for more feedback). Many people received very favorable feedback from the day, and most volunteers were very positive on the event. 21 HHS volunteers is a great showing! All volunteers serving as docents, tour guides and activity leaders were very professional, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and welcoming to the students. Especially impressive were the newer members, who had not worked in the Brant Lake Museum but who had quickly become "experts" and were very effective in their roles during the tour.
- The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner is September 30. Kate and Christine from the Farmer's Market will be attending. Vicki and Rob from the Town staff were invited for all of their contributions and work at the Museums. The group responsible for the "Sing-Along" event were invited. Laurence Meltzer, Joe Millington, and Greta Heilman will be attending. A thumb drive of the event will be presented to Laurence. Anyone who wishes to attend must notify Sylvia Smith as soon as possible – rsvp's were due on September 14. Sylvia will get back to everyone with details on the dinner within a week, including if any prep work is needed at Sunset Mountain Lodge prior to the event.
- A motion to give Horicon Historical Society lifetime memberships to Kate and Christine from the Brant Lake Farmer's Market was made by Bill Ommerborn and seconded by Mary Ann Hill and the motion carried. The memberships will be presented at the Appreciation Dinner.

Accession Activity:

- A motion was made by Mary Ann Hill and seconded by John Caruso, and the motion passed to accept the following items being donated to the Museum:
 - A cedar chest, to be used for storage on the second floor of the Carriage House, donated by Barbara Blum.
 - A Town of Horicon Fireman's shirt, at least 50 years old, donated by Karli Wood.
 - An old Brant Lake Post Office sign, donated by Teri Schuerlein.
 - An 1888 piano, made in Albany, that was in the Schultz Island home since it was built in 1888, donated by Richard and Laura Schultz. It will be placed in the entry room of the main house of the Museum. (As a note, tuning and repair of this piano and the Museum's current piano will be investigated so both pianos can be used for functions in the future).
 - A commode built as a chair (date not yet known), also from the Schultz Island home, donated by Richard and Laura Schultz. It will likely be used in the first-floor bedroom of main house.

- 10 chamber pots, dishes and pitchers, also from the Schultz Island home, donated by Richard and Laura Schultz. These artifacts will be used in both the Brant Lake and Adirondack Museums.

Old Business:

- Steve Ehlers left his notebook of ESSLA history at the Museum for copying. John Caruso will scan the notebook. Once the scanning is completed, Janet can print the copies so that an ESSLA History Album can be made for each Museum.
- Sylvia reminded the Nominating Committee that December Elections were approaching, and work was needed to create and finalize the nominating slate. The Committee members are Barbara LaFond, Mary Ann Hill and Wayne Butler.

New Business:

- Mary Ann Hill reported that the Adirondack Museum had a successful summer. Sylvia said that she and Mary Ann will assess what needs to be done to close-up both Museums and will call for volunteers if additional help is needed. Water will be turned off in first half of October.
- Because the next HHS monthly meeting falls on a holiday, Columbus Day, the meeting is being cancelled and replaced with a Brainstorming/Planning meeting. It is scheduled for Monday, October 5 from 5 – 7 PM at the Community Room at the Brant Lake Town Hall. Pizza will be provided. All are welcome to participate. On the agenda are: programs, special displays, historical plaques, building needs, and other items. Come prepared with your thoughts and ideas.
- Monday, November 9 is the next regularly scheduled HHS meeting at the Community Center of the Brant Lake Town Hall.
- The HHS article for the BrantLaker is due by October 15. The editor, Dave Burke, has allocated 2 pages for the article. Mary Jo Hebert and Sylvia Smith will work on the article.
- The 2026 membership drive letter was very successful when mailed out in January 2026. The plan is to repeat that for 2027 with a mid-January mailing of the HHS Newsletter.
- The photo kit that was used at the 4th grade school tour proved very successful. It was suggested that the Historical Society purchase this technology and it can be used both with visitors in the Museum and for special events. It was priced at about \$250, plus special paper and other supplies would be needed. Teri Schuerlein generously offered to provide a donation to cover the cost of this equipment, in celebration of the sale closing of the Lazy Moose this week. The timing of the purchase and the exact equipment that will be purchased will be decided by Diane Loika and Mary Jo Hebert.
- Because of Barbara LaFond's move, it will be more difficult for her to attend regularly scheduled night meetings.
- (NOTE: Although not mentioned at the meeting, Sylvia has reported that this year's Museum and event attendance to-date is 583, exceeding last year's milestone of 500. Everyone should be quite proud of this accomplishment!).

Comments from the Floor:

- The following suggestions were made on improving next year's 4th grade tour:
 - Give a 5-minute warning before a session switch;
 - Each station should be numbered;
 - 15 minutes is a good length of time for each session;
 - The ice cream making activity was a big success;
 - Consider scheduling the event a little later in the school season so that local history can be put in context;
 - The afternoon sessions were not as orderly as the morning sessions;
 - Hands-on activities were very popular;

- Allowing kids to touch and hold some of the artifacts is a big plus for the Museum but establishing the boundaries at each station is important;
- The boys especially loved the quilting activity;
- Kids asked some very good questions indicating they were paying attention throughout the day;
- Name tags for teachers and volunteers would be helpful;
- The mystery items were popular and should be expanded at each station next year.

Adjournment:

- Bill Ommerborn motioned and John Caruso seconded and the motion carried to adjourn the meeting.

Next Meetings:

- A Brainstorming Meeting is scheduled for October 5 from 5 to 7 in the Community Room of the Brant Lake Town Hall. Pizza will be provided.
- The normal October monthly meeting on October 12 has been cancelled due to the Columbus Day holiday.
- Monday, November 9 is the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 6PM in the Community Room of the Brant Lake Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Early (in lieu of absence of Kathy Hill, Secretary)