

FRIENDS *Pruyn House*

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A COMMUNITY
CULTURAL CENTER

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Friends of Pruy House

(518) 783-1435

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President's Message

Happy Fall!

There is just something fun and festive about fall; orange pumpkins and magnificent foliage, bountiful harvest and crisp evenings, bright skies and memorable hayrides. It is a perfect time of year to reflect on the lazy, relaxing days of summer that have passed while getting organized and prepared for the upcoming seasons and holidays.

We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful cultural and educational public resource available in our municipality. If you have driven by or visited the Pruy House complex recently, you would have seen all the work going on both to the Pruy House, as well as, the grounds. The Pruy House is going through many preservative and restorative changes.

Built between 1825 and 1830 in the "high style" of Federal and Greek Revival architecture, the Pruy House, which is listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places, has served its owners and the community well. In 2017, the Friends of Pruy House invested approximately \$25,000 to have a complete architectural review of the House performed by Susan Lawson from Environmental Design and Research. Based on the findings of the review, in addition to numerous meetings and discussions, the Town of Colonie agreed the House needed some well-deserved attention and is investing approximately \$700,000 towards the stabilization and restoration of the façade of Pruy House. The work was awarded to VMJR Companies of Glens Falls. The structure is being restored and preserved so that it will be available for many generations to come. The entire structure has been cleaned to remove the many, many layers of white paint that had been applied to the original bricks over the years. Damaged bricks and mortar are being repaired and replaced. A white wash will be applied to be reflective of the white we are all accustomed to seeing while allowing the bricks to breathe. After all the facade work is complete, new "historic" shutters will be installed. Stay tuned, it will look beautiful!

Two other major restoration projects to the grounds are in process; the restoration of the brick walkways and the replacement of the exterior lamp posts throughout the property. The Town of Colonie is funding the repair and restoration of the brickwork while the Friends are funding a majority of the electrical lamppost work. The exterior site lighting is being upgraded over the course of the next two to three years and will most certainly aid in the longevity of the site and enhancement of nighttime functions. Phase I of the lampposts has been completed by Ambrose Electrical and the new lampposts along the brick walkway look stunning!

Historical homes have numerous benefits. They are aesthetically pleasing with unmatched architecture. By preserving the Pruy House complex we are able to hold onto a piece of our town's history. The temporary inconveniences are well worth the final outcome. I hope to see many of you in the upcoming months when the site is prepared to accept visitors again.

Last but not least, our cherished Curator Diane Morgan is on the mend and we hope to see her soon back at the Pruy House!

— Diane Conroy-LaCivita, President

2019 Summer Concerts In The Barn



What a year! For five consecutive Wednesdays this summer, Friends of Pruyn House held its annual Concerts in The Barn series. Tremendous entertainment, lots of new and old faces, great food and libations as well as raffle prizes. Even a bit of rain did not deter a great evening out at the Pruyn House. Thank you to all our incredible volunteers who contributed to make the series a success and to all who came to listen (and possibly dance) to some top rated performers. *Until next year...*

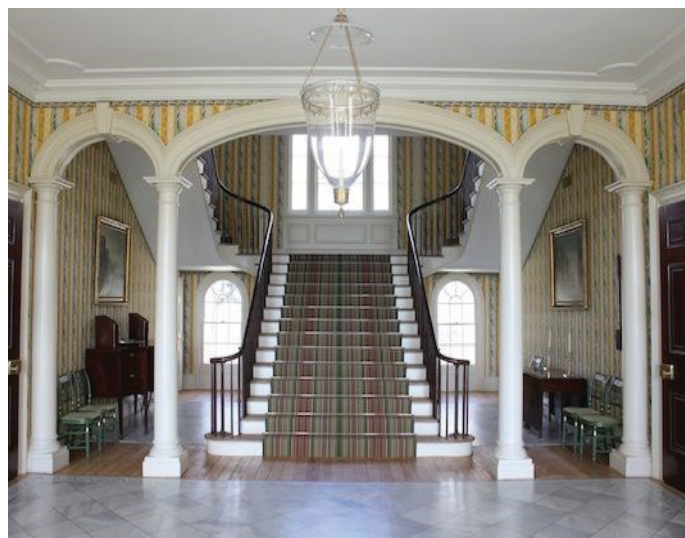


Above top — Studio Two brought the Beatles to the Barn!
Photo by Tami Sherry
Above middle — Jade singing their famous Mickey Mouse Farewell.
Left — New volunteers Debbie & Peter Close
Photos by Diane Conroy-LaCivita

June & October Trips

The Friends of Pruyn House had a terrific trip to historic Boscobel, the Francis Lehman Loeb Art Gallery and a three-course delicious luncheon at Shadows on the Hudson in June. In October, we viewed the Park-McCullough House, the Robert Frost Stone House Museum, several covered bridges, the Old First Church, Bennington Monument, and dined in style at the Publyck House. These trips are so much fun!

Boscobel & the Francis Lehman Loeb Art Gallery



The grand foyer at Boscobel, which was most impressive!

Park-McCullough House & the Robert Frost Stone House Museum



A beautifully appointed bedroom at the Park-McCullough House
Photos by Tami Sherry



Bethany Meyers and Kalen Lezak
Photo by Angela Mia Photography

Summer Weddings

Friends of Pruyn House are delighted to provide the venue for weddings, showers, luncheons, church picnics and more. We hosted twenty joyous wedding celebrations this summer. Interested in having your celebration or event at the Pruyn House next year? Call us at (518) 783-1435.

Thanks to all of our amazing Program Aides who helped us this summer: Nancy Macy, Seth Michel, Joanne Razzano, and Tom Servetas.



Caroline Cunningham and Zachary Powers,
First Dance
Photo by Mitch Wojnarowicz Photography

CHILDREN'S CONCERT

Hosted by the Town Library and Friends of Pruyn House



The William K. Sanford Town Library and the Friends of Pruyn House hosted a Children's Concert this summer, featuring Seth & the Moody Melix. As you can see, the children were dancing and singing along!

Photo by Tami Sherry

Colonie Art League Summer Art Camp

In July 2019, the Colonie Art League offered three days of children's art classes at the Pruyn House. The classes, offered to upper grade school students, were a smashing success with record attendance. The students were taught by volunteers from the League and the community and explored a wide variety of techniques and materials. Shaker High School students from the Art Explorers program also volunteered their time and talent as camp assistants. Anyone interested in the 2020 camp should email a request for information to the Colonie Art League at calartcamp@gmail.com



Above left — Sketching in the House, photo by Russ Ward

Above right — photography in the garden, photo by Tami Sherry

Welcome New Friends!

Thank You for Joining!

Through 9/19...

Ellen Chernoff
Linda Colonno
Mary Craven
Cynthia & William Davies
Patrick Dillon
Carol Esposito
Kathy & Mike Foley
Kathy Goodman
Eva Graziano
Jean Hill
Sharon Hodges
Patricia Ilnicki
Marion Jaffarian
Nancy Koltko
Ruth Lyons
Jacob Mishell & Kim Clash
Reeva Nowitz
Mary Lou Paulli
Maureen Toohey
Peg Tucker
Richard Rowlands
Diane Ryan
Judy Supley
Sharon Wesley
Kathleen Wiley



Thank You Concert Sponsors and Donors!

CONCERTS IN THE BARN - DONORS **Buhrmaster Barn Patrons (\$1,000+)**

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Jerry & Patricia Frank
Diane Conroy-LaCivita
Pat Paley
Carol Hebert
Betty Canape
Virginia Dollar
Diane Pruyn Freer
Babe Messina & Darlene Newman

In-Kind Contributions

Price Chopper in Kimberly Square
Greenbush Tape & Label
Starbucks
Hoffman Car Wash
Fred Gonsowski

First Annual Fairy House Contest



Fairy Houses. Photos by Russell Ward

Thank you to all the creative, artistic, fascinating friends who made Fairy Houses for our first annual Fairy Garden Contest! As you can clearly see, our friends and community members really put their hearts and souls into their creations. We had 27 entries — Fairy Houses, Gnome Homes, Troll Holes and Mini-Worlds. Won't you join us next summer? Look for details in the Spring.

— Tami Sherry, Assistant Curator

Thoughtful Donation

Friends of Pruyn House would like to thank Earl B. Feiden Electronics for the incredibly generous donation of a new refrigerator! This will get used very often and came in handy during both our Fairy House Contest and Old Fashioned Sunday.

Thank you for this very thoughtful donation!

Photo by Tami Sherry



FRIENDS OF PRUYN HOUSE

The Friends of Pruyn House was established as a 501(c)(3) and chartered in 1983 through the New York State Board of Regents as an educational corporation. The Friends of Pruyn House was established to oversee the Pruyn House Historic and Cultural Center, 207 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham NY 12110. The mission of the Friends of Pruyn House, in partnership with the Town of Colonie, is to conserve and preserve the Pruyn House complex as an educational, cultural and social center. The Friends of Pruyn House, assisted by a staff provided by the Town, manage the site pursuant to an agreement with the Town. The site has been designated by the Town as its Historic and Cultural Center.



19th Century Use Of Artificial Light For Reading

1800-1850: Families relied upon natural daylight to do daily tasks. Domestic artificial lighting had made little progress since ancient times. The fireplace was important for heat and light. Reading was done by the window during the day and by fireplace, candle, or simple lamp at night (Illustrations 1, 2). Even wealthier families used simple tallow and beeswax candles, supplemented by whale and camphene oil lamps for dining and parlor activities. Most American families could afford only three hours of lighting per evening.

During the 1820's and 1830's, in larger American cities, gas lighting was first used for street lights, theatres, and stores. It became more popular in middle class homes in the 1840's, for lighting parlors, hallways, and dining rooms. The gas connections were made through the ceiling or walls.

For most of the 19th century, people remained leery of "unpleasant and painful effects of the naked flame" of a candle, lamp, or gas-burner. Candles and oil lamps required constant maintenance and care by families and servants and were expensive. Natural gas had the dangers of explosions and harmful fumes.

1830-1860: Over 500 U.S. patents for burners, reservoirs, and lamps improved the efficiency of artificial lighting (Illustration 3). Major advances in lighting came in the 1850's with the introduction of paraffin candles and kerosene lamps with chimneys and shades. Improvements in glass and brass candlesticks and table lamps facilitated reading (Illustration 4). Later, rubber tubes were developed for connecting gas lines to table lamps. In the 1850's, as the price of lighting dropped dramatically and the safety match became commercially available, the cost of lighting homes became less expensive and life became much easier.

***1825-1846:** Casparus Pruyn and family lived in the House and had a myriad of lighting devices. The 1846 inventory included brass and tin candlesticks, a glass lantern and candle snuffers used in the front parlor, dining room, and kitchen; pewter, astral table and mantle oil lamps from hall, back parlor, and basement. In 1845 the first natural gas company was chartered in Albany.

1880-1900: Gas and electric lighting competed for the domestic market for general lighting of rooms and halls, while families still used candles and oil lamps for portability. Electric lighting finally brought reliable and enhanced lighting to doing close work like sewing and reading. In 1900 families relied upon five hours of artificial lighting per evening. In 1912 only 16% of U.S. households had electricity.

— Gary Thompson

Illustrations: 1: Girl reading by candlelight; 2: Women reading with window light and glowing heater; 3: Children doing close work around astral oil lamp; 4: Family reading using a kerosene lamp.

Old Fashioned Sunday



It was great to have so many families and friends visiting the beautiful grounds and enjoying the numerous festivities on Old Fashioned Sunday. The day was filled with sunshine, music, children's activities, exhibitors and lovely arts and crafts. Please let us know if you'd like to receive information about other upcoming family and children's events by calling 518-783-1435 or by emailing us at pruynhouse@colonie.org.

Thank you to all the extraordinary volunteers for making Old Fashioned Sunday such a success!

— Nancy O'Connor, Old Fashioned Sunday Chairperson

Old Fashioned Sunday photos: Band and Garden by Russell Ward, Sheep Shearing and Wizard Workshop by Gail Welter, Schoolmarm, Magician, Child with wand and Blacksmith by Tami Sherry

Upcoming Events

Thursday – Sunday, November 21-24

Hudson Mohawk Weavers Show & Sale; Thurs 2-9pm,
Fri 11am-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 12-4pm
Fashion Shows; Thurs & Fri 7pm, Sat & Sun 2pm

Thursday, December 5

Fort Orange Garden Club Green Sale • Preview 2-6pm
Schoolhouse — Wreaths & more, \$5 donation with
purchase

Friday, December 6 – Saturday, December 7

Fort Orange Garden Club Green Sale
Schoolhouse — Free admission
Fri 9am-5pm; Saturday 9am-1pm

Friday, December 6 – Saturday, December 7

Blue Creek Garden Club Holiday Boutique
Pruyn House Basement; Friday & Saturday 10am-4pm

Friends of Pruyn House Open House; 10am-4pm
House Decorated by BCGC — Festive Holiday Trees

Saturday, December 7

Friends of Pruyn House Open House, Free admission
American Recorders Perform; 12-3pm
Children's Holiday Workshop, meet Sinterklaas and
learn about Old Fashioned Musical Instruments;
3-4pm

Wednesday December 11

Holiday Members Party; 6-8:30 pm
Champagne, hors-d'oeuvres, desserts, music

Tuesday December 17

Holiday Concert; 7:00pm; Free Admission



FRIENDS
Pruyn of House

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