

FRIENDS of Pruyn House

June 2019

Volume 30 • Issue 2

A COMMUNITY
CULTURAL CENTER

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President's Message

The flowers are blooming, the birds are singing, and we finally will have the onset of summer, sun and all things warm. It is a perfect time to visit the Pruy House complex. As you are aware, the complex serves as the educational, historical, and cultural center of the Town. I often realize how fortunate we are to have such a beautiful resource available to all.



For those of you who are ready to celebrate summer, please mark your calendar and plan on joining us on Wednesday evenings starting July 10 through August 7 for the Pruy House Concerts in the Barn. Concerts start at 6:30, but come early to walk through our beautiful gardens, grab dinner or snacks from one of our vendors, tour our beautiful buildings, and soak up the ambience. As I have been doing for almost two decades, I will be at the concerts selling 50/50 tickets! Thank you to the Concert Committee for all their hard work and dedication.

Our Board Committees have been busy as bees preparing for the upcoming season; our Education Committee has been working on several new interpretive programs for younger visitors, the Building and Grounds Committee has been working tirelessly with the Town of Colonie on our historic structures and new exterior lighting for the site.

I am very fortunate to be able to volunteer with some incredible people at the Pruy House; from my fellow board members and volunteers, to the hardworking, talented staff. I am humbled by their commitment to the Pruy House and the organization's mission. A SHOUT OUT to my former Shaker High School art teacher (35 years ago), Libby Lee for being recognized as the 2019 Pruy House Outstanding Volunteer. Well deserved!

— Diane Conroy-LaCivita, President

Friends of Pruy House

(518) 783-1435

www.pruynhouse.org

pruynhouse@colonie.org

FRIENDS OF PRUYN HOUSE

The Friends of Pruy 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 Pruy House was established to oversee the Pruy House Historic and Cultural Center, 207 Old Niskayuna Road, Loudon NY 12110. The mission of the Friends of Pruy House, in partnership with the Town of Colonie, is to conserve and preserve the Pruy House complex as an educational, cultural and social center. The Friends of Pruy 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.



Concert Underwriting

The Friends of Pruyn House would like to thank generous community members who have made donations to help fund this summer's Concerts in the Barn:

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

The Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust

MVP Health Care

National Grid

The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region

Cohoes Savings Foundation

David and Candace Weir Foundation

Norm & Micki Massry

Nicole's Restaurant

Rosenblum Development Corporation

Bernard F. Conners Foundation

Stewart's Shops

Toedt Insurance Agency

Albany Marriott

Roma Foods

Thomas & Laurie Baldwin

Michael M. Hoblock, Esq.

Would You Like To Donate To Our Concerts?

Sponsorship Categories:

\$1000 Buhrmaster Patron

- Name displayed on Barn
- Concert Program listing
- Recognition in Newsletter
- 8 free concert tickets
- One-year free membership

\$500 Verbooy Schoolhouse Sponsor

- Concert Program listing
- Recognition in Newsletter
- 6 free concert tickets

\$250 Horst Pogge Friend

- Concert Program listing
- 4 free concert tickets

\$100 Henkes Family Supporter

- Concert Program listing
- 2 free concert tickets

\$25 Pruyn House Friend

- Concert Program listing

We need your help to keep the Concerts in the Barn going! They are a main source of funds allowing us to continue the restoration and preservation work done at the Pruyn House Complex.

Tear off and return:

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

To be properly listed in the Programs, please complete this form and mail it by **June 29, 2019** to:

Friends of Pruyn House
P.O. Box 1254
Latham, NY 12110

If you have any questions, please call Diane Morgan, Pruyn House Curator, at 518-783-1435 or email morgand@colonie.org.

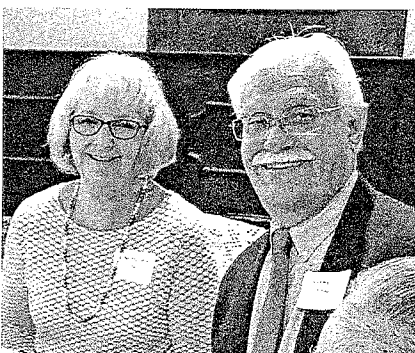
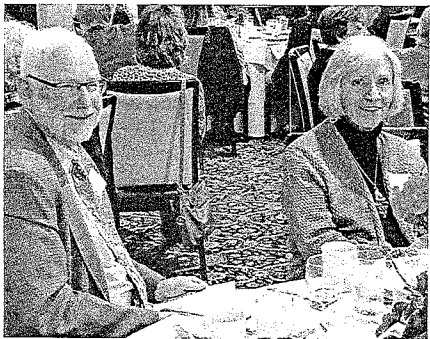
36th Annual Dinner

It was wonderful to have so many friends join us for our Annual Dinner Meeting at the Century House on May 1st.

Our guest speaker was Paula Lemire, the Curator and Historian at the Albany Rural Cemetery. She provided us with some of the history of the cemetery and monuments as well as impressive before and after pictures of current cleanings of monuments.

Libby Lee was selected as Volunteer of the Year and recognized for her artwork. Her lovely images of Pruyn House buildings have appeared on our letterhead and promotional brochures for many years. We were happy to see so many friends and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

— Nancy O'Connor & Mary Ellen O'Brien, Co-Chairs



Top row: Artist and Volunteer of the Year Libby Lee and Diane Conroy-LaCivita; Paula Lemire and Tyler Kattrein of Albany Rural Cemetery; photo by Mary Ellen O'Brien
Center row: guests Tony and Mary Brankman; Courtney and Marc Antonucci,
Bottom row: Carol and Dennis Fitzgerald; Mary Ellen and Joe O'Brien

Capital Improvement

Al Armstrong
Joan Beach
Estate of Margaret Charron
Anne Christman
Herb Dahlem
Girl Scout Troop 1
Karen Jones
James La Coppola
Kathy LeRoux
Tom & Sue Lyons
Kevin & Cynde McCoy
Kathleen Mioducki
Don & Ann Morton
Jim & Nancy O'Connor
Ruth Pelton
Carolyn Pruyn-Hudson
Harry Sagar
Alfred & Lois Siegel
Chip & Ilene Stein
Stewart's Shops

Annual Appeal Donations

John and Marcia Keefe
Linda Murphy
Fred Miller

New Members

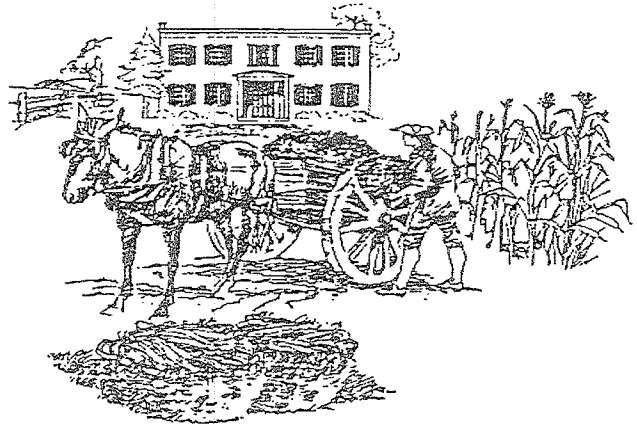
June Beyer
Elizabeth Dwyer
Joseph and Marie Erkes
John and Joan Hitt
Susan Hodges
Rector McIntire
Michael & Wilma Polhemus
Diane Ryan
Kathleen Wiley

36th Annual Old Fashioned Sunday

September 8, 2019

Come join us for a great afternoon of family fun!

Please come and join us for this wonderful community celebration. You will enjoy: Lively music from the Colonie Town Bands, hamburgers and hot dogs by Latham Kiwanis, artwork from Colonie Art League, desserts from our plentiful Harvest Table, mums and more from George's Market, antiques from the American Italian Heritage Association, dried floral arrangements from Blue Creek Garden Club, flowers from Fort Orange Garden Club, maple syrup from Mort's Maples, honey from Bee Hollow Honey, delicious home-made jam from Claudia Russell, caricatures drawn by Mark Brennan, popcorn by Latham Rotary, home-made ice cream by Emack & Bolio's, clothing and more from Martha's Treasures, tole paintings from the Capitolors, home-made goat-milk soap from Sweet Rama, and for the kids — face painting, pony rides, a magician, a wizard, and a historic re-enactment in the Verdoy Schoolhouse to learn what it was like to go to school in the olden days! We will also feature demonstrations from our sheep shearer and blacksmith.



Buildings & Grounds

The Pruyn House will be undergoing many exciting changes this year. The Town of Colonie has awarded the contract for the restoration of the exterior of the building. The work will take over 18 months to complete at a cost of nearly \$700,000. In addition, our exterior site lighting needs to be upgraded and quotes were solicited from contractors. After reviewing proposals, the Board of the Friends of Pruyn House and the Town Board have voted to award Ambrose Electric the work. The exterior site lighting will be upgraded over the course of two to three years. This new lighting will aid in the future longevity of the site and enhance the night time functions held on the property.

As the exterior work commences, we ask visitors and members to be patient as this important work takes place. The preservation and rehabilitation plan will take some time, but will provide future generations the ability to enjoy the historical grounds and buildings of The Pruyn House for many years to come.

— James W. Easton Project Engineer and Trustee

Volunteers

Friends of Pruyn House thanks our dedicated and spirited volunteers for all they do!



Fort Orange Garden Club Plant Sale

It's that time of year! The Fort Orange Garden Club hosted their annual Spring Plant Sale on Saturday, May 11. The sale featured a beautiful array of annuals and perennials for home gardens as well as pre-arranged baskets and pots for outdoor display. A variety of heirloom



photo by Carol Fitzgerald

tomato plants, vegetable and herb plants were also available for purchase. Garden club members were on hand to answer questions and give "growing advice" to shoppers.

At the same time, the club held a tag sale featuring gently used pots, planters, tools and garden items in the Verdooy Schoolhouse. Proceeds from the plant and tag sales support the club's mission activities as well as their maintenance of the Pruyn House gardens. During the summer months, members of the club also cut and arrange weekly floral displays to decorate rooms of the Pruyn House.

Established in 1923, Fort Orange Garden Club was one of the earliest member clubs of Garden Club of America (GCA). Today, they are one of 200 member clubs of GCA throughout 40 states in the country. Their shared mission is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to share the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications, and to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.

In its nearly 100 years of existence, Fort Orange Garden Club has contributed to countless Capital Region gardens and civic improvement projects, including Fort Crailo, Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany Rural Cemetery, Arbor Hill Elementary School, Ten Broeck Mansion, the City of Albany, and many more. For more information on the Fort Orange Garden Club, please visit their Facebook page or their website at www.fortorangegardenclub.org

— Susan Brown, Fort Orange Garden Club



Fort Orange Garden Club New Member Tea

The Fort Orange Garden Club also hosted a Tea in the Pruyn House dining room to welcome prospective new members.

Photo by Carol Fitzgerald



Warren Sieme Folk Concert

On Sunday, March 10, Friends of Pruyn House and friends spent a lovely afternoon listening to American folk music sung by local musician Warren Sieme. He treated us to songs by James Taylor, Stephen Foster, Tom Waits, John Mayer and some of his own original compositions!

We had a wonderful time and hope Warren will join us again soon. Photo by Tami Sherry

Mrs. Pruyn's Kitchen

Typical of upscale homes of the early to mid-19th century, the Pruyn House kitchen is at the back of the house and on the bottom floor, away from the public spaces of the home. Its location spared the family from "disagreeable" smells like butchering, cooking, and cleaning. Below ground kitchens had several advantages, including easy access to the back yard for doing dishes, laundry, and receiving deliveries. Everything from vegetables, grains, meats, salt, sugar, and more came in rough form or in bulk and had to be reduced to a useable form for household use. Cooks had to know how to grind grains to make flour, cure or smoke meats for preservation, and grind and pound herbs and spices.

Few, if any, countertops or cabinets were included in early American kitchens. Dishes and bowls were kept on open shelving. Foodstuffs were kept in other areas of the house; herbs were dried and stored in the warm attic, flour and vegetables were kept in a cool root cellar, so food preparation often began by assembling ingredients from various parts of the house and brought to the kitchen. The large table in the center of the kitchen was the work area for meal preparation, as well as the servants' dining table.

Where's the sink? Most early American kitchens didn't have one. Water was brought in and washing was done in a large wooden barrel. On good days, dishes and laundry were washed outside. The kitchen features a typical open hearth with a side oven for bread baking with a long-handled peel, or paddle, for putting the bread into the oven. More affluent families like the Pruyns had a separate oven, while poorer families baked their breads in the fireplace ashes.

In the fireplace itself, heavy cast iron cauldrons hang on a crane for cooking stews, meats, and puddings. On the hearth floor, you'll note a cast iron pan with little feet and long handle called a spider and a Dutch oven with legs, which were meant to sit in the embers to cook food. Cooking and baking in the mid-1800s was arduous work; imagine hauling a heavy cast-iron cauldron full of stew from the table to the hot fireplace!

Elegant ladies of the house sometimes had their own collection of recipes they would direct their cook to prepare for the family. Cookbooks were just becoming popular in the mid-19th century, so Mrs. Pruyn might also have begun a collection of her own. From the *New England Cookbook* of 1835, here is a typical recipe for a fish dinner Mrs. Pruyn might have asked her cook to prepare for her family.

Please come in and take a moment to visit Mrs. Pruyn's kitchen, compare it with yours, and imagine yourself as mistress of the house or —the cook!

— Joanne Razzano—Volunteer

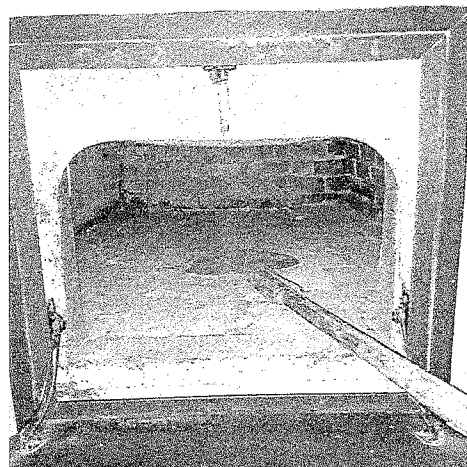


71. *Stuffed and Baked Fish.*

Soak bread in cold water, till soft, then squeeze out all the water, mash it and mix it with a piece of butter, of the size of a hen's egg, a little salt, pepper, cloves, and mace, a couple of raw eggs, makes the dressing cut smoother. Fill the fish with this dressing, and sew it up. Put a tea cup of water in a bake pan, and a small piece of butter, lay in the fish; bake it about an hour. Fresh cod, bass, and shad, are suitable fish for baking.

Above: The fireplace hearth and recipe from the *New England Cookbook*, 1835. Below: the Beehive oven.

Photos by Joanne Razzano





- Dennis and Carol Fitzgerald donated two boat trailers that were inventively converted to picnic table movers.
- Lowes Home Improvement donated a power washer, a post hole digger, split rail fence posts and rails, mulch, paint, stain, brushes, rollers and plants. They also painted the garage and built the split rail fence by the bathrooms.
- Barbara Cardinelli donated a set of pewter plates, serving bowls and goblets, a white crocheted bedspread, and several tablecloths.
- Judith Daniels donated a Lincoln rocking chair with caned seat and back.

Collections Donations

The Friends of Pruyn House Board of Trustees would like to thank the following generous community members who have recently donated to our Collections.

- Gary Thompson donated a rosewood book rack and twelve books for our well-tended Library. Historical Society of the Town of Colonie donated a book for our Library—The Course of Time. Jane Oswald donated a ladies slipper rocking chair with caned seat and back.
- Sandra & Jeffrey Mans donated a pair of petite, pale golden goblets.
- Jan Despart donated a Japanese style tea set.
- Cheryl J. Gowie donated seven books on teaching to our Verdoy Schoolhouse library as well as a framed collection of Girl Scout badges.
- Herb Dahlem donated six antique tools and a butter churn.
- Fred Miller donated four cobblestones to complete our retaining wall.
- Barbara Arakelian donated a peach-colored French damask tablecloth.
- Mary Moxon donated a hand-embroidered doily.

Pewter set (above) donated by Barbara Cardinelli and Dining Table donated by Nancy Looby.
photos by Tami Sherry

- Fred Gonsowski donated fourteen matted fine art original prints.
- Mary Lansing donated a tea wagon.
- Daniel Bertrand donated an 1850 musket.
- Dot Mortenson donated a wooden mortar and pestle.
- Wally Stock donated a wooden cheese box from the Albany Packing Company.
- The Parry family donated Patricia Parry Pogge's taffeta and lace wedding dress from 1949.
- Sheila Glaude donated various antique tools.



2019 Concerts in the Barn

July 10

- **JADE**

Bring your dancing shoes for music of the 50's & 60's

July 17

- **Todd Meredith and THE RAVE-ONS**

All the way from New York City, bringing Buddy Holly music!

July 24

- **GERMAN NIGHT with THE MOUNTAIN BRAUHAUS BAND**

July 31

- **IRISH NIGHT with GET UP JACK**

August 7

- **STUDIO TWO — the BEATLES BEFORE AMERICA**

Music: 6:30 – 8:30pm

Admission: \$5 Adults, Children 12 and under free



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

FRIENDS
Pruyn House

DATED MATERIAL

207 Old Niskayuna Road
P.O. Box 1254
Latham, NY 12110-8574

(518) 783-1435
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