

Museum of Rhinebeck History
Celebrating Rhinebeck's Rich Heritage
Summer 2017 Issue

President's Message

The Museum opened for the summer season on Saturday, June 17 with a big turnout of visitors interested in Rhinebeck's agricultural past.

In line with our agricultural display, we are featuring an article on the Rhinebeck Garden Club in this issue and invite you to check out the Garden Club's display at the Starr Library. As always, we ask that you support the Museum through donation of materials, attendance at one of our events and through membership.

You will also notice some changes in our newsletter, we have gone partially digital for those who have shared their email address. We have done this to devote more of our funds and efforts to our collection. Please send us a note if you would prefer a hardcopy.

We have also become a member of AmazonSmile. Each time you shop at Amazon, a pop up window appears asking you to select a charity, you can now select the Collection of Rhinebeck History and Amazon will donate 5% of your purchase to us at no cost to you. Visit AmazonSmile's website (<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/14-1772002>) to select us as your charity of choice. So the next time you shop on Amazon, think of us.

We hope you will join us in preserving Rhinebeck's past!

Rhinebeck Garden Club History

At the home of Mrs. Gabriel Farrell in 1927, a small group consisting of Mrs. Vincent Astor (later Mrs. Lytle Hull), Mrs. Frank Asher, Mrs. Pierre Cookingham, Mrs. William Ostrom and Mrs. Jacob Strong met and put forth the founding of a Rhinebeck Garden Club.



Helen Huntington Astor Hull (Mrs. Vincent) in her garden, Photo- New York Social Diary

On April 12, 1927, the first official meeting of the Rhinebeck Garden Club was held when eleven women met at the home of Mrs. Frank Asher to organize a garden club whose object was "to promote the art of gardening, to aid in conserving the natural flora and in the protection of birds, and to cooperate in beautifying public grounds". Officers were elected and included Mrs. Farrell, President; Mrs. Asher, Vice President; Mrs. Cookingham, Secretary and Mrs. Irving Staley, Treasurer. Afternoon meetings at which tea was served were held initially in members' homes and later, at the Starr Institute Building and Town Hall.

The Federated Years 1931-2006

The Rhinebeck Garden Club joined the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State and under their umbrella began many years of rigorous exhibition, display and competition. Frequent flower shows, often run as benefits, offered the members opportunities to showcase their floral specimens, arrangements and table designs which were created following the guidelines of the National Council of State Garden Clubs. The entries were evaluated by certified judges and ribbons or seals presented to the winners. All members were expected to participate in some way. A Junior Garden Club was expected to be maintained and also took part in the flower show competitions. The club was an active participant in the Dutchess County Fair in both a club capacity in the horticulture display, and individually in arrangement, floral and vegetable specimen categories.

New members had to be nominated by 2 current members, evaluated by the membership and were voted on for admission or rejection. *Now* members need only a desire to join and willingness to participate. The rigorous show and competition aspect has evolved into a more inclusive and relaxed atmosphere where knowledge and enthusiasm for gardening and ecology can be shared. Please call Club President Steven Mann at 845-876-6892 for information.

Promoting the Art of Gardening

Educational activities such as guest speakers and trips have always been a crucial part of the Rhinebeck Garden Club mission. Speakers have included notables such as Harvey Fite in 1930, known today as the creator of Opus 40, then a Bard sculpture professor who spoke on "Garden Sculpture"; Montague Free, head of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens; Paul Frese, editor of *Popular Gardening*; and Joseph B. Reardon, chief horticulturist for the Astor Estate.

Excursions to the Philadelphia Flower Show, Albany Tulip Festival, Montgomery Place, Innisfree, Stonecrop Gardens, Blithewood, the Climbery, a “Tea Garden in Tivoli”, and the Kane Farm, among many others over the years, have served to increase members’ knowledge and interest in gardening and ecology.

Civic Engagement

Community involvement and philanthropy have been hallmarks of the Rhinebeck Garden Club from its inception through today. Mrs. Astor initiated a program of Garden prizes (\$25 first, \$15 second and \$10 third- a tidy sum in those days), overseen by the Garden Club, for front and side yard village gardens in the late 1920’s. This was then augmented by Garden Club prizes for backyard gardens of \$10 and \$5. *Those who employed gardeners were not eligible and the use of red salvia, cannas and foliage plants prohibited.*

Later years saw the club continuing their civic work through tree planting, flower arrangement and wreath making for the hospital, flower shows to benefit organizations such as the local Red Cross, tree and shrub planting at the Legion Park (Crystal Lake) in 1950 and creation of a wildflower garden there. They collaborated with the PTA to plant trees at Rhinebeck Central School and involved wood shop students in the creation of the signs for the wildflower garden.



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PO Box 816

Rhinebeck, NY 12572

Recent club photo at Victoria Gardens, courtesy of Brenda Brockett, Rhinebeck Garden Club

The Club has sponsored holiday doorway/store decorating contests, worked with plantings at Starr Library, the Town Hall, Post Office, Wilderstein, Ferncliff, The Baptist Home and Thompson House, and run workshops at local nursing homes. The Rhinebeck Garden Club currently cares for the Doughboy Park, is planting at the Legion Park and creates holiday wreaths for the benefit of the Starr Library, and supports The Garden Conservancy and 4H clubs as some of its activities.

Calendar of Events

Sunday, August 6, 2017: **History Revealed.** We store many objects from Rhinebeck’s past in boxes and these items rarely are seen. We invite you to join us to open a few of these boxes, view the contents and discuss their history. This event will be 1-3pm at the Local History Room on the first floor of the Starr Library.

Saturday evening, September 29 – Sunday evening, October 1, 2017: Special Exhibit -- **Olin Dows: Artist and Native Son** at the Delamater Inn Conference Room, Montgomery Street, Rhinebeck.

Saturday, October 21, 2017: **Annual Autumn Auction** at Rhinebeck Town Hall, E. Market St., Rhinebeck. Silent Auction followed by Live Auction. Benefits Museum and Chancellor Livingston Chapter, N.S.D.A.R. Donated items are welcomed, contact us by email or telephone. Donations are tax-deductible. If you own a business, consider donating an item, a service, or a gift certificate. New participants are always welcomed and encouraged! It’s a great way to support local historic preservation.



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MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY SUPPORTERSHIP FORM

PO Box 816, RHINEBECK, NY 12572

<http://rhinebeckmuseum.com>

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Phone: 845-554-6331

DUES INVOICE FOR THE PERIOD January 1 through December 31, 2017

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP

Phone _____

Email _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible check in the amount of \$ _____

Make checks payable to MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY and mail to the Museum at the address above. Thank you!

Please enclose your employer’s form if your employer has a matching grant program (e.g. IBM).

Please apply my payment for the year 2017 as follows:

Lifetime.....\$1,000 _____ Lifetime option \$250 x 4 years _____

Individual.....\$10 _____ Family.....\$15 _____

Sponsor.....\$100 _____ Business/Patron.....\$50 _____

Added Donation.....\$ _____

NOTE: If you have artifacts related to Rhinebeck’s history that you wish to donate to us, please check below and someone from the Museum will be in touch with you. _____