

Ten Broeck Mansion • Erected 1798 • Albany, NY

June 12, 2015

Dear Neighbors & Friends:

In April, *Times Union* columnist Chris Churchill offered seven easy steps towards a better Albany. He then asked Capital Region readers for their ideas. Can you guess how they responded? More Starbucks? Fewer potholes? A major league sports franchise? Much to our delight, readers proposed that Albany “needs to do more to promote its rich history the way Boston and some other cities do.”

Churchill’s report may not seem like news to you. We know that you value the diversity of historical resources in Albany County -the libraries, museums, historic homes and historic parks. You know that such sites enrich our communities and make the Capital Region a better place to live and work. You also know that maintaining, promoting and keeping these resources open and available to the public requires serious commitment from ordinary citizens. It seems that in their responses to Churchill’s call for suggestions, many readers expressed disappointment with the recent decision to sell the *Half Moon*, a replica of Henry Hudson’s 1609 ship, and move it from Albany to its new home in the Netherlands.

We must confess that this news of Albany’s newfound affection for local history is music to our ears here at the Albany County Historical Association. We also want to make sure that the good people of Albany County know that the ACHA offers exactly what they want; engaging, thoughtful, and entertaining history and arts programming in the exquisite Ten Broeck Mansion and Gardens!

For example, last summer we hosted a local theater troupe’s performance of Shakespeare’s “*The Tempest*” in our stunning gardens. A rousing success, we offered several performances including a free show to help engage our neighbors and bring community members to our grounds for the first time.

Surrounded by snow and just in time for the Holiday House season our downstairs orientation room was made over into a Victorian Dining Room. We are currently in the process of reinterpreting two rooms on the second floor of the Mansion.

The King’s Place Gallery showcased a number of exhibits, most notably, “*The Brothers: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights.*” The exhibit tells the oft-forgotten story of Albany’s own 1960s civil rights group. The Brothers ran candidates for public office, organized large-scale protests, and demanded a voice for the city’s Black Community.

Last month we kicked off our summer season with Living History Day, a free event filled with re-enactors, hands on demonstrations, music, and fun for the whole family. The weather was perfect and the crowd was our largest to date.

In addition to offering original programming at Ten Broeck Mansion, we are also taking the initiative in promoting Albany history. We have forged the Albany County History

ALBANY COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

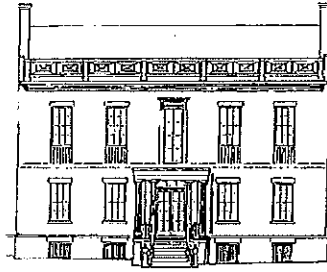
CELEBRATING ALBANY’S HERITAGE

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Collaborative, an innovative partnership through which historical organizations of Albany County work cohesively to promote and improve our collective work in local history.

If you haven't already done so, please follow the work of the Collaborative on Facebook. Also, keep a look out for our new website, www.albanycountyhistory.org, which will go live next month. And do remember to check out the redesigned Albany County Historical Association website where you will find a very full calendar of summer activities. We also continue to work closely with our neighbors in the Swan Street Work Group (the Albany Barn, Albany Housing Authority, Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region among others) and local civic leaders to make our neighborhood a welcoming, safe, and culturally-rich experience for residents and visitors alike.

We are delighted that others have recognized some of our achievements. This year we have earned grants in the amount of \$14,000 to underwrite improvements to the Mansion and forward the work of the Collaborative. We think this funding is an important milestone for the organization and hope to see more of it in the near future.

Executive Director Jillian Altenburg and Assistant Administrator Anna O'Meara continue to amaze us with their talent, dedication, and enthusiasm for their work. We are pleased to welcome our summer Research and Evaluation intern, Andrew Lang, who will be interviewing and conversing with our visitors on tours in order to make informed suggestions for better tours in the future.

We are proud of our good work, but we also know it is only possible because of your generous support. Thank you for the time, talent, and treasure that you have shared with us over the past year. We hope that you see the results of your investment every time you come to the Mansion or read about our programming in the *Times Union* or *All Over Albany*. We also hope that you will continue to support our programming and initiatives by making a generous, and fully tax deductible, contribution to the ACHA. We encourage you to write a check or log onto our website www.tenbroeckmansion.org and donate to the annual appeal online.

Thank you for doing your part to make a better Albany.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dorsey, Ph.D.
President

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