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WATERTOWN
HISTORY MUSEUM

The Westbury

Preserving the History of Watertown and Oakville since 1945

Hours: Wednesday & Saturday 10am - 2pm

401 Main Street, Watertown CT

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From the Watertown History Museum Family to Your Family



President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

My vision for the upcoming year is to continue making improvements to our beautiful historic museum. Here are just a few things on our ever growing wish-

list to keep our museum looking its best for years to come:

- Some windows on the first floor are in desperate need of replacement due to distortion and cracked windowpanes.
- Refurbishment of our second floor, including painting and upgrading lighting to prepare for more exhibit space.
- Additional landscaping behind the museum to prepare the area for future non-archival storage space.

All of these improvements are possible with the support of my fellow board members working successfully together to accomplish the mission of preserving Watertown and Oakville's history.

If you possess the skills needed to help, please consider becoming a volunteer. The more hands we have helping the more projects we can complete. We have small jobs like removing wallpaper, prepping walls to be painted, and small repair work; outside we have light landscaping and yard work.

Thank you for your continued support and may the upcoming year be full of new achievements that bring the museum huge success!

Happy New Year!
Ivan Cyr
President

Curator's Corner

Meet Our New Curator

Being the new curator at The Watertown History Museum begins a new chapter in my life. When discussing this with our former curator I mentioned that it seems to be a fitting new challenge for me. My past lives include a 32 year career as a teacher here in Watertown, 25 years as an art teacher and 8 years as a Library Media Specialist teaching research skills, and, over 20 years of experience as an antiques business owner.

I began at the museum as a volunteer in 2019, gradually learning more and more about the inner workings of the museum and putting my previous work

skills to use documenting records, researching and coordinating new volunteers. The rest is history!

My hopes for the coming year are to apply for new grants, continue updating records, work with the President and the Board to make improvements to our building, team with the Exhibits Committee to create a new exhibit on the 2nd floor and to acquire new volunteers. Let's hope that good health and the economy cooperate.

Happy New Year!

Joann Barthelmess, Curator

Coming Soon - New Exhibits!

At the tail end of 2022, our members were the first to view our brand new exhibit "A View of Watertown: Maps & Signs." This exhibit showcases a collection of maps of Watertown from different decades, paired with vintage signs from some of your favorite local businesses.

In 2023, we will be hard at work in hopes of completing a multitude of new exhibits on our second floor, as well as giving our first floor exhibits a refresh! Of all of the exhibits the museum has coming down the line, the two we are currently working on are a textile based exhibit to tell the story of Heminway & Bartlett (maybe in a new way), as well as an exhibit celebrating our beloved Main Street!

New Year, New Hobby?

Was your New Years Resolution to start a new hobby or activity? Or are you looking for a way to give back to your community? The Watertown History Museum is the perfect place to do just that. Our volunteers give their time to help our mission: preserve the history of Watertown and Oakville and educate the public about it. We have volunteers of all ages and backgrounds and would love for you to join us. Even if you can only volunteer for an hour a month; every little bit will help us reach our goals.

As our President stated above, working in a museum doesn't mean you have to

give tours. We have plenty of behind the scenes projects that need completing as well, including woodworking, electrical work, interior painting, and more! There are also plenty of research based projects that need finishing to help the community learn more about our history.

If you do enjoy giving tours and talking with the public, we really need your help too! The Watertown History Museum has been offering group tours to Girl Scout troops and private lectures to many community organizations. In order to expand those offerings, we need your help!

If volunteering sounds of interest to you, or you want to learn more about what is involved before making a decision, please feel free to call us at (860) 274-1050, or email us at volunteers@watertownhistorymuseum.org.

New Year, New Ways to Support the Museum!

To our current Members...Thank you! Your membership ensures that the story of who we are and where we come from will be preserved and shared with our community for years to come.

Why is the history of Watertown and Oakville important? History helps us understand ourselves and the world around us. It shows us how the various parts of our community - individuals, families, businesses, government, and even our town as a whole - worked in the past to help us understand the way things are now.

With our members' help, the Museum is able to:

- Safeguard donated items and the stories about each artifact,
- Ensure that each and every object is catalogued in a special museum database and properly protected from damaging elements with the latest archival techniques,
- Create and display exhibits that showcase our towns' history and its role in shaping our state and country,
- Offer research services pertaining to Watertown and Oakville to assist members with all manner of genealogical and scholarly research projects.

If you're reading this newsletter and are not yet a member, please consider supporting the Museum by joining today. The membership year runs from

6/1/2022 to 5/31/2023.

We have 2 new membership levels starting this year!

- Students (\$10): For high school and college students; capped at age 22.
- Senior Couple (\$30): Two seniors 65+ living in the same house

The remainder of our membership levels have remained the same and range from \$15 for Individual Seniors to up to \$2,000 for Corporate Sponsors.

An annual membership includes 10% discount in the gift shop, free research requests pertaining to Watertown and Oakville, and free/reduced admission to programs/events.

As an added bonus, Heminway Circle, Skilton Circle, Lifetime and Corporate memberships will receive one of the following gifts:

- *What This Old Hand Knows* by nationally recognized poet-essayist, Alma Roberts Giordan
- *Images of America - Watertown* by historian, Florence T. Crowell

You can easily find more membership information at our website:

www.watertownhistorymuseum.org/membership.

And, because we're a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your membership is tax deductible!



Due to the issues surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, we know many of you do not have the funds to support the museum financially this year. That is completely ok and we understand, which is why this year we are offering a FREE way for you to support!

Our "Cling to History" campaign is a fun way for you to show your support for the museum to the rest of the community and beyond (and possibly win a prize too)!

Here is how to participate:

Step 1: Take a selfie with you, your friends or family in Watertown or Oakville that includes our *Cling to History* decal displayed:

- On your car
- In a window of your home
- On a store window

*****Decals went out with our Annual Appeal mailing, but can also be picked up at the museum.**

Step 2: Post your picture on Facebook with the hashtag #ClingToHistory and follow Watertown History Museum. (Only one photo per month.)

Step 3: Encourage your friends and family to vote for your picture by “liking” the photo.

Step 4: Check to see if you are chosen as a monthly winner on **1/2/23** and **2/1/23**. If you have not been chosen, you can submit a new photo in a future month.

Museum Volunteers will choose one selfie per month and publicize the winner online. You will be notified via a Facebook message if your selfie is chosen.

Marlene Warren, Membership Chair

More Ways to Show your Support



Save your LaBonne's receipts and place them in a ziplock bag. Drop them off in the mailbox at the Museum (401 Main Street). Through their “Cash for Charities” programs, LaBonne's donates to the Watertown History Museum based on the total of the receipts we submit. Thank them by your continued purchases at our local markets.

If you shop on Amazon, use the Amazon Smile program to select the **Watertown Historical Society, Inc.** as your designated charity. One-half percent (0.5%) of your purchase will be



forwarded to our organization. Use this [link](#) to get started. Help us spread the word!

NEW - Friday Fun Nights!

Starting in February, the Watertown History Museum will be offering different events once a month as part of our Friday Fun Nights programming.

We will be offering lectures, workshops, trivia nights, tours, and more! Enjoy a Friday night with friends and learn about our history along the way. Exact dates, times, and themes will be announced in later emails and on our social media pages...so be on the lookout if your looking for fun times in this new year!

If you have any ideas for future programs, please feel free to email our Programs Coordinator, Chelsea Marti, at programs@watertownhistorymuseum.org.



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