

GREATER ONEONTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Preserving the Past for Oneonta's Future
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019-2020*

Exhibitions & Displays

- "The Oneonta 49ers' related the stories of the six Oneontans, including Collis Huntington & Carleton Watkins, who left Oneonta together for the California Gold Rush.
- There was a show of the thirty paintings of old Oneonta by artist Julia Allidi.
- "The Oneonta Collects History" series featured displays on Found Objects, World War II in Popular Culture, Native American artifacts, and the Woodlands Museum.
- In March there was a display on the history of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters.
- In September "Building Blocks of a City: 100 Years of Oneonta Architecture, 1880-1980" opened, a collaborative effort of GOHS & the Cooperstown Graduate Program.

Programs and Events

- Carleton Watkins scholar Weston Naef, curator emeritus at the J. Paul Getty Museum, spoke on the life of the Oneonta native & photographer of the West.
- Three films in S.S. Van Dine's Philo Vance detective series were shown at the History Center in October
- More than 900 children & families stopped at the Center during Trick or Treat on Halloween 2019.
- Also in October, storyteller Sandy Schuman entertained children and adults with "Strange & Surprising Stories".
- Dr. E. Howard Ashford of SUNY Oneonta spoke on Afro-American Genealogy in January.
- In February Harry Bradshaw Matthews of Hartwick College spoke on "The Underground Railroad Along the Susquehanna".
- The Children & Youth Programming Committee's activities included a series of craft programs & a summer Architectural Scavenger Hunt for children and their families.

Awards Presented

- 2018 Eduard Hofbauer Outstanding Service Awards to Deb Bruce & Corinne Bresee Smith
- 2018 Albert E. Morris Award to Wayne Wright

Fund Raising Drives & Events

- GOHS' 4th annual Hops for History featured food pairings at six downtown eateries with beers from Northern Eagle Beverages
- GOHS Mini-Auction in September and Benefit Auction in November, both exclusively online, raised more than \$12,000
- The 2019 Annual Appeal raised more than \$15,000
- GOHS' raised \$750+ at the 2019 Grand & Glorious Garage Sale
- Along with generous donations from members and friends, GOHS received funding from the Bertuzzi Family Foundation, Dewar Foundation, Future for Oneonta Foundation, the Jackson H. Fenner Foundation, & the Preston Fund.
- Alice Siegfried donated \$75,000 to name the third floor ballroom.

Building

- The last of the five murals – of Wilber National Bank - along the Dietz Street wall of the History Center was completed.
- GOHS continues to work with the Grants Gateway and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) on moving ahead with the legislative grant for \$250,000 for completion of the third floor and exterior brick and tile restoration.

Collaborative Activities

- In both Fall & Spring Semesters, SUNY Oneonta's new international students visited the History Center to learn more about Oneonta and its history.
- The Hartwick College First Year Seminar on Collectors and Collections visited the Center during the Spring Semester
- Bresee's reindeer and elves returned to Main Street for the first time in decades. The animatronic figures were in the Center's windows for two weeks during the winter holidays, thanks to the generosity of St. James Manor.
- SUNY Oneonta students Cheyenne Aney (Spring) & Cliff Sweezey (Summer) held internships at GOHS.
- Job Corps Director Chris Kuhn & Bob Brzozowski hosted Hartwick's J Term Rural Health class on the former campus of the Homer Folks Tuberculosis Hospital.
- Also in January Bob Brzozowski & Andrew Kendall hosted Prof. Karl Seeley's class on The Economics of Sustainability. And Brzozowski & Children & Youth Programs Committee's Celeste Leone hosted OHS History Club members & their teachers. In February Bob Brzozowski hosted SUNY Oneonta Prof. Achim Koeddermann & his Philosophy of Art students.
- GOHS joined with Hanford Mills Museum, the Yager Museum, Oneonta World of Learning, & the Science Discovery Center to provide children's activities during February vacation for the Oneonta School District. Hanford Mills' Kajsa Harley & Luke Murphy offered two program options for families at the Center.
- GOHS contributed photos to the Farmers Museum's virtual 4th of July Parade

Collections

- GOHS began collecting Oneonta-related archival materials on COVID-19 & social justice movements.

Media

- GOHS now has an Instagram account, with Trustee Kim Back as administrator.
- 3D tours of the Oneonta 49ers & of the Building Blocks of a City exhibitions are available on the GOHS website, and a photo essay of the show of Julia Allidi's paintings was made.
- The City of Oneonta contracted with GOHS to document the Depression-era grandstand at Damaschke Field before its demolition in Fall 2019. The video essay can be found at the GOHS website.

Capacity Building

- With the support of the New York Council of Non-Profits, the Board of Trustees and staff completed a Strategic Plan for 2020-2022.

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COVID-19 Pandemic

- The History Center closed on March 21, with staff working from home. All events were cancelled. A Zoom account was set up to allow for meetings to continue. GOHS participated in the city's Survive

Then Thrive initiative and SupportOneonta.com and SupportOtsego.com. Staff returned to the Center on May 15, and on July 10 the Center reopened to the public, following NYS safety guidelines.



*Be up-to-date at www.OneontaHistory.org, www.facebook.com/OneontaHistory,
www.instagram.com/OneontaHistoricalSociety*

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*1 October 2019– 30 September 2020

RJB/28 Nov 2020