



NEWSLETTER

**Raise the Bicentennial Flag!
Tour rarely open houses,
barns, churches;
Come one, come all!**

We take great pride in marking the official start of the 1812 – 2012 Red Hook Bicentennial, sponsored by your Historical Society. It is particularly gratifying that this once-in-a-lifetime celebration has brought together hundreds of volunteers from every corner of the township and beyond. Preparations have consumed countless hours over the last year, generating tons of good will and strengthening the bonds of community that make Red Hook so special.

Shortly you will receive a handsome Bicentennial Calendar of Events detailing all of the wonderful activities, programs and

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*Bicentennial Heritage Tour highlight --Edgewater mansion.
Courtesy Richard Hampton Jenrette, Photo by John Hall*

April and May Bicentennial “Musts!”

Be sure to mark your calendars now

Sunday, April 15 -- “Wings Over Red Hook: Cole Palen’s Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome,” with Jim Hare; 3:00 p.m. at the Elmendorph Inn. Previews July 1 Aerodrome Open House.

Saturday, May 12 -- Bicentennial Opening Ceremony, Apple Blossom Day, with music and speechifying; 1:00 p.m. in the Red Hook Village parking lot.

Saturday, May 19 -- Heritage House & Barn Tour, with check in from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Elmendorph Inn; Tour 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Reception 4:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m. Tickets \$25. Reservations: www.redhook200.org, rhbicentennial@earthlinknet.net or 845-758-1920.

Wednesday, May 23 -- EBHS Annual Meeting and 1812 Dinner, with Culinary Institute of America chefs; 6:30 p.m., at the Elmendorph Inn. Reservations: Page 5

President's Letter

Claudine Klose

How wonderful to be involved with the Historical Society in this our Bicentennial year! Despite the daffodils jumping the gun, we are eagerly anticipating a fabulous spring and summer of memorable events.

And as we pay special attention to Red Hook's rich heritage, I hope you've been seeing some of the interesting articles that we have been contributing regularly to the local media. For example, *About Town* featured Wint Aldrich's insightful history of the official separation of Red Hook from Rhinebeck in 1812, followed by Robin Cherry's recounting of the era's typical food and drink.

The monthly *Mercantile* magazine is showcasing a Bicentennial series of articles (to be found at www.hvmercantile.com under 'Community') and will publish a Bicentennial Commemorative Keepsake Magazine in time for the May 12 Apple Blossom Day official Bicentennial opening. Not to be outdone, *Northern Dutchess News* and our newest local (!) newspaper, the *Red Hook Observer*, are carrying monthly photo-feature columns by Chris Klose called, respectively, "Red Hook Reflects" and "Red Hook Then & Now."

The Archives Room has seen a bustle of board members, volunteers and Bard College interns digging up the documents and photos that back up our programs and Bicentennial outreach. To acquire important items of local historical impact that might not otherwise be available to the Society, we have started a Bicentennial Acquisition Fund. We have also upgraded our technical capabilities by purchasing a new computer and scanner/copier/printer, permitting scanning and digital storage of images. Volunteer Sheryl Griffith, formerly a librarian with the National Archives, is helping set up a new collections management database. And I'd like to thank her especially for organizing

and preserving our collection of fragile leather-bound books in acid-free covers.

I am particularly pleased that our monthly "Sundays at 3" series of programs and illustrated talks are enjoying healthy attendance. Many thanks to Brian Reid for his lively January 22 photo-talk on ice-boating on the Hudson – we could almost feel the cold wind whistling!

Also earning a special "Thank You!" are EBHS Board members Carol Annas and Carolyn Taylor for their tasty, over-the-top "themed" refreshments after Brian's presentation and my Valentine's Day reprise on the Chocolate Factory. Similar kudos go to Bard student Aviva Skye for filming the chocolate talk, which she is editing for broadcast on PANDA and presentation on Bicentennial Community Day. I'd be remiss not to note – and thank – Beth Pagano for helping me present a fun glimpse into the history of Red Hook's hospitality industry on March 18 and Robin Cherry for the tavern fare refreshments.

Timed to take your mind off taxes, you won't want to miss our next "Sundays at 3" program! On Sunday, April 15, Jim Hare will present "Wings Over Red Hook: Cole Palen's Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome." This is a "must"

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Board of Trustees

2011-2012

Claudine Klose, President
Christopher Klose, Vice-President
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Notes from the Archives

The Ups, Downs and Ups(!) of Newspapering in Red Hook

By Claudine and Christopher Klose

In a 1994 profile for the Village of Red Hook Centennial, *Gazette Advertiser* reporter Sangita Kasturi confidently wrote that her paper simply was a “recent addition to the long list of newspapers that had evolved in the Red Hook-Rhinebeck area since the 1800s.” Sadly and without warning, one bleak February day in 2009, the *Gazette Advertiser* ceased publication, a victim of print publishing in the age of the Internet.

Would Red Hook ever again enjoy that most basic – and necessary – of democratic institutions, an official newspaper of record?

Fortunately, fate has come to our rescue in the guise of Kristofer Munn, whose *Red Hook Observer* has begun appearing, free, in every mailbox throughout Red Hook and Milan. Filled with timely local coverage, insightful opinion and interesting photo-features, this new bi-weekly tabloid fills the bill once again for Red Hook.

We are indebted to Munn for also nourishing the public record with the online newspaper Red Hook Today (www.redhooktoday.com), which he created and has edited and produced for the last year.

The *Observer* follows in the tradition of local journalism that our town has depended on

for news and neighborly enlightenment since the 19th century. Our first paper of record was the *Red Hook Weekly Journal*, published by Levi Peister beginning in 1859. Albert Peister (relationship unknown) purchased the *Weekly Journal* in 1866, and published it as the *Red Hook Journal* for another 51 years. In 1917, he



Kristofer Munn's new bi-weekly tabloid for Red Hook and Milan.

merged it with the *Tivoli Times* to form the *Times Journal*.

Two years later, the *Times Journal* became the *Red Hook Times*, under Herman Dean. And in turn, the *Red Hook Times* was absorbed in 1923 by the *Rhinebeck Gazette*, which carried a Red Hook Department ostensibly covering our town's news and events. The *Red Hook Advertiser* of our late lament came along in the 1920s, published every Thursday, with Alise Cotter (later, Norton) as editor and general manager.

In the 1960s, she sold the paper to Mike Strong, whose family had earlier acquired the *Rhinebeck Gazette*. Strong merged the two village's newspapers into the *Gazette Advertiser*. The paper subsequently changed hands several times until finally being acquired by Taconic Press, which silenced it and its six

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Bicentennial, contd. from Page 1

presentations to come, beginning on Apple Blossom Day, May 12, and culminating with the interment of the Red Hook Bicentennial Time Capsule, on October 13, in front of the Elmendorph Inn.

The first big event is the Heritage House and Barn Tour on May 19, a self-driven tour of ten sites spanning more than 250 years of Red Hook's architectural heritage. Among them is the Heermance Farm, with its practically intact, early 18th Century stone farmhouse and the inspiration for our lovely EBHS logo-sketch. Another

rarely open building will be Tivoli's Red Church, probably the oldest intact religious building in the county. You will also see a church, a barn, and a former grist mill imaginatively adapted for modern living, a Dutch farmstead, and a meticulously renovated Greek Revival farmhouse.

We are extremely fortunate to be able to include the beautifully restored Edgewater, Barrytown's magnificent Classical Revival mansion on the Hudson River. The closing reception will be at Maizeland, circa 1795, built by Revolutionary War General David Van Ness, one of Red Hook's earliest developers.

Letter, contd. from Page 2

for anyone interested in one of Red Hook's (not Rhinebeck!) most popular local attractions, especially if you are planning to attend the Aerodrome's free-to-Red Hook residents Bicentennial Open House July 1.

Then at 6:30 on Wednesday evening, May 23, we hope you will step back in time with us for our Annual Meeting and 1812 Dinner at the Elmendorph Inn to experience how our ancestors might have dined 200 years ago. Look for details on the last page of this newsletter. Then reserve your seats!

News, contd. from Page 3

other local Northern Dutchess newspapers in the fateful February coup of 2009.

Another venerable local organ, famous for its lively, opinionated coverage of controversial topics, profiles of interesting characters and some area news, was the monthly *Barrytown Explorer*. Founded in 1958 by Helen and Chanler Chapman, the *Explorer* was dedicated to providing "All the News That's Wit to Print." And under its witty, eccentric editor/publisher, Chanler, it did that and more with great gusto until its passing in 1982. Long may we adhere to its whimsical banner admonishment: "When you Can't Smile, Quit."

Following in the *Explorer's* print feats, we now enjoy the periodic, online Barrytown Gazette newsletter, edited and published by EBHS board member Henry Christopher. To receive this newest coverage from Red Hook's smallest, perhaps quirkiest enclave, call or

email Henry at: 845-633-3264 or c47henry@gmail.com

Courtesy of local and state libraries, many of the early newspapers are available on microfilm. Unless you have a specific date in mind, the medium is awkward to use. Thankfully for those interested in the warp and weft of yesteryear, local history buff *nonpareil* Maynard Ham has lovingly brought the *Red Hook Journal* back to life.

He chooses interesting stories, illustrations, ads and tidbits from original *Journals*, retypes them in a font close to the original, reformats them in an easy-to-read tabloid style, copies and distributes them – at his own expense! Maynard's fascinating slices of Red Hook life in the years 1898 through 1909 are on file in the Archives Room and are made available at monthly EBHS programs. We would be happy to mail photocopies upon request for \$1 a copy or \$10 for an annual subscription.

ANNUAL MEETING AND 1812 GALA DINNER

The EBHS Annual Meeting and 1812 Gala Dinner will take place **Wednesday, May 23, 2012** at the Elmendorph Inn.

6:30 p.m. Hors D'Oeuvres

7:00 p.m. Dinner

8:00 p.m. Annual Meeting

In honor of our Bicentennial, Ryan Stutzbach and Jessica Simone, 2012 graduates of the Culinary Institute of America, and partners in EDUX eats, a catering company serving unadulterated, scrumptious food to the Hudson Valley, will prepare an authentic 1812 meal and share their culinary insights with us after dinner. Period dress welcome.

DINNER RESERVATIONS AND MEETING PROXY

Please make your dinner reservations or submit your proxy by mailing the form below to: Carol Annas, 51 Aspinwall Road, Red Hook, NY 12571 (845-758-8154). All reservations must be received by May 14.

PROXY

I will NOT attend the Annual Meeting of the Egbert Benson Historical Society. In my absence, I hereby appoint the President, her deputy, or to act as my proxy to vote on all matters that come before the membership on May 23, 2012.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

1812 GALA DINNER

Hearty Rye Rolls and Homestyle Cornbread
Hard Cider, Pickled Spring Vegetables
Leek and Cheddar Hand Pies, Apple Chutney
Rabbit Stew and one other entree
Thyme and Garlic Wedge Potatoes
Ham Hock Collards/Kale/Farm Greens
Molasses Gingerbread Pudding, Maple Cream
\$25 per person RSVP by May 14.

I would like to reserve a place at the EBHS 1812 Gala Dinner, Wed, May 23, 2012

Name (s) _____

Amount enclosed _____ Make check payable to Egbert Benson Historical Society

____ I would like a vegetarian dinner.

____ I would like to reserve a table for six (include names).

Membership Form 2012

The Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook

P.O. Box 397 Red Hook, New York, 12571

www.redhookhistory.com, 845-758-1920

Name(s) (please print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Telephone Number (with area code): _____

____ I would like to receive my newsletter via e-mail rather than by regular mail.

____ I would like to become more involved. Area (s) of interest _____

Dues ____ Individual \$15, ____ Family \$25, ____ Student (under 18) \$5, ____ Contributing \$50,

____ Sustaining \$100, ____ Life(Individual) \$200

Benefits of membership: Newsletter subscription - Advance notice of monthly programs -
Satisfaction that you support the collection, preservation and dissemination of the Town of
Red Hook's rich history.

Egbert Benson Historical Society of Red Hook
P.O. Box 397
Red Hook, N.Y. 12571

