

# The Preservationist

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all! We made it through this past year. 2020 was a particularly difficult year for all especially the society. Having no programs and activities was a very distressing situation. Then the water damage happened at the Rich-Twinn Octagon House. Although a terrible situation, it was fortunate to have it happen during a "quiet" year.

The lack of activities resulted in fewer fundraisers, although the Amish quilt raffle and the "Pick a Pie" raffle did very well. Our members came through for us! Many members felt our pain and made generous donations to the society during our time of need. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to convey our deepest appreciation to all who contributed to the society last year.

Moving on to this year. This year will be Erie County's Bicentennial. The Bicentennial Committee has been working on activities and they will be posted soon. The website [www.erie.gov/EC200](http://www.erie.gov/EC200) should be a source of information. Don Holmes and I have been working with Lancaster, Clarence and Alden society representatives on a passport to be used to visit museums in all the towns of Erie County. We are hopeful the passport will be available by April 18 when the Knight-Sutton Museum opens. Families will receive the passport at the initial museum that is visited. You will be encouraged to visit as many museums as possible during the year to see what other towns offer, and to discover some new interesting history.

If you are wondering about the Rich-Twinn Octagon House, we are hopeful it will open for the Fourth of July. At the present time, it is difficult to put a definite date on the re-opening. There will be extensive publicity as the time for the community to re-visit the Victorian Lady nears.

The 2021 programs and activities brochure is included in this newsletter. The society is very fortunate to host the same presenters that were lined up for last year's programs. At the time of this printing, the seating capacity at the Town Hall will be set at twenty-five (25) attendees. Mark Saglian's March 11<sup>th</sup> presentation on "The Richardson Complex" may also be viewed on zoom. See details later in the newsletter.

On the back of the brochure, you will notice some new email addresses. The board hopes these emails will improve communication with directors and the society in general.

Best wishes for an interesting year. Stay well.

Pat Pearce

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## MARCH PROGRAM

March 11<sup>th</sup> will be the first membership program for this year. Mark, a docent at the Richardson Complex, will present an interesting program on its 149-year-old history. It is designated as a National Historic Landmark, which as we know today is being adaptively used as a hospitality venue and cultural amenity for Buffalo.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the program will be presented in a different format. It will be held at the Town Hall at 7pm. Twenty-five (25) will be allowed to be present for the program. If you are interested in attending, please call 716-542-7022 or 716-542-4191 and leave a message with your name and phone number. You will be contacted if the limit has been reached. Reservations will be required along with mask wearing. No food will be served.

The program will be zoomed also. If you have a device that will connect to a zoom app, you will need to call or email in order to be given the connection information. You may call 542-7022 or 542-4191 and again leave a name and phone number and an email address. The better method will be to email ([info@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org)) and leave a message. I will email back with the zoom information.

Future programs will be decided according to COVID-19 guidelines. Please watch for details in the *Akron Bugle*, the NHS website or Facebook.

## AKRON THROUGH THE YEARS

The 2021 Knight-Sutton Museum (KSM) exhibit has been waiting a full year to showcase the history of Akron. It promises to include something for everyone. It will be a bit of a walkthrough timeline of our Akron-Newstead history beginning with our earliest residents, the Native Americans and on through the years. It will also include information on agriculture, railroads, the cement and gypsum industries, the KKK, the real truth behind the name "Murder Creek," mineral baths, the mushroom industry, the Akron Race Track, information on past residents, Main Street businesses, the Park Theater, some history of local businesses, and so much more. Plan on attending and get that new "passport" stamped.

**NOTE:** The planned opening is Sunday, April 18, 2021. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, a limited number of people will be allowed in the museum at one time. Please consider making a reservation by calling 542-7022 or 542-41941.

## Cleaners Needed

Once the reconstruction is finished at the Octagon House, a major cleaning will be required. If you are willing to give a few hours of housecleaning, please call Pat Pearce (542-4191) or email at [peacreps@aol.com](mailto:peacreps@aol.com). Date and time are not yet known.

## Memorial Gifts

A memorial gift to the NHS provides a special way to recognize a person that enriched our community. Please consider making a memorial donation or a legacy gift in your will.



## Rich-Twinn Octagon House

Kate Stapleton Parzych

My first memory of working on the Octagon House is helping to measure the width of the second floor and determining how much the center of the house had sunk. After many years of helping my Dad, Jim Stapleton with some of the reconstruction as well as my position as docent, to nearly as many years away, I am honored to be back, now as Director, and am looking forward to restoring the House to its true glory as an historical building for people to visit, admire, and learn about life in the mid-nineteenth century.

The NHS is very fortunate to have Picone Construction helping with all the repairs and reconstruction to the Rich-Twinn. Their award winning experience in working on other historical buildings such as the Market Arcade in Downtown Buffalo made Picone the best choice in understanding our needs for keeping the work authentic to the era when the Octagon was built.

The ceilings that collapsed have now been restored using the same technique that was used for all the plasterwork previously done in the early 1990s. Additionally, all the drilled holes that were required to help remove any excess moisture in the walls were filled, and a couple of small repairs were taken care of as well.

The plaster will need to cure for two weeks before the next steps can be taken - fresh paint where it is needed and priming for new wallpaper. To be sure, this is a very time-based process and steps cannot be rushed. Please follow us on Facebook @Newstead Historical Society and watch for articles in the Akron Bugle offering updates on the Octagon.

## Museum Director Update

Kimberley Burg

Planning for 2021 is underway amid COVID limitations. I work with Pat Rodrigues (Knight-Sutton Director) and Kate Stapleton Parzych (Rich-Twinn Director) as well as Jannette Potera (Collections Manager) and the Exhibit Research and Design Team to coordinate programs and educational opportunities. I also act as liaison to the Buildings and Grounds Committee as they keep our historic buildings maintained. Several small repairs at both museums are underway, even as the restoration of Rich-Twinn continues.

As we look forward to opening our buildings and resuming programs. There will be many volunteer opportunities available: hosting guests at our museums; gardening and landscaping; assisting with local history research; working with school programs; creating and implementing special events and fundraisers; the opportunities are endless. If any of these are interesting to you, please contact [info@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org). Next month I will begin soliciting emails and building a database of volunteers for committees and activities. You'll be excited to see what we have planned for you.

## KNIGHT-SUTTON MOMENTS AND MEMORIES

Pat Rodrigues  
Director

Director\_KSM@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org

This is my first column as the new director, and I wanted to share some interesting items I've found in the archives as I familiarize myself with the collection. As you see by the photograph in the upper right, the museum was originally a home. In fact, it is a Century home, circa 1854. The photograph is unfortunately undated, but you can easily recognize some of the architectural features that still exist today.

The museum was established in 1997 and after the renovations were done it was time to move the desk into the upstairs office. The staircase is both narrow and crooked. Apparently, going in through the window was easier.

Since 2006 NHS has been devoted to sharing the Akron-Newstead area's rich history with the public through well-researched and well-presented exhibits at KSM.

Last year's exhibit, whose presentation was halted due to the pandemic, we hope to premiere April 18th, following appropriate guidelines and protocol due to the pandemic. It is entitled "Akron Through the Years" and is a timeline of Akron history. It is a great exhibit and was worth the wait. Come join us - we have missed you!

Meanwhile, behind the scenes much work is being done at the museum. The ceilings are being painted in three of the upstairs rooms and the stairs are being painted and new treads are being installed. Like any house, the more space you have the more you fill it up. That is certainly the case with the Knight-Sutton Museum. Since last fall Annette Komroy, Janette Potera and myself have been steadfastly working on further preservation and organization of the collection.

We have a vast collection (three cabinets full) of business logs from early Akron businesses, early schoolbooks and a host of



other antique books, now all covered in archival paper book covers. All the Akron Bugles from its inception in 1981 are now archivally sleeved.

With the help of President Pat Pearce and the Newstead Public Library we have sent a complete collection of Akron High School yearbooks out to be digitized. Jannette Potera, the Collections Manager is photographing artifacts, then computerizing and updating the catalogue of our entire collection, which as we say we hope we can get done before we die!

Throughout Marybeth Whiting's tenure as director she painstakingly created spiral notebooks as companions to each exhibit covering a wide variety of topics. Most recently we have added to this collection with a group of notebooks of support materials to each of these topics and some new ones as well. We are now up to 60 notebooks covering everything from the cement industry to the centennial, Akron's school system, Post Office, cemeteries, service organizations and the Native Americans of the Tonawanda Indian Reservation as well as military history and a host of other topics.

It is a vast library and it is my long-range goal to create a downstairs reading and research room available to the public, in addition to the ongoing exhibits we traditionally present.

History belongs to all of us and we can't wait to share it with you!





ABOVE: Photo of work being done at the Knight-Sutton Museum, 123 Main St., Akron

## Covid-19

Pat Rodrigues

So often we live in the moment and forget that we are making history now. Here we are and have been in a world-wide pandemic for over a year and how has it affected our lives? Were you suddenly thrust into the position of being your child's teacher - (and how did that go)? Have you learned how to Zoom? Do you now own a mask to go with every outfit? When was the last time you were able to hug your grandchildren? Been to any good restaurants lately?

We want to know - what have you hated, what have you learned, how have you kept calm and carried on? Please share your experiences and any photos you may have - (did you have a socially distanced Super Bowl party, for instance)? They can be emailed to the Collections Manager at [collections@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:collections@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org) or mailed to P.O. Box 222, Akron, N.Y. 14001. It is our hope to not only preserve them for posterity, but potentially use them in a future exhibit. Thank you!

## Membership

Linda Capan

**Sympathy:** We are saddened to report the recent passing of honorary member Claire Roesch on November 13, 2020. We extend our sincerest condolences to his family and friends. Also passing on December 20, 2020 was member Richard Komroy. Dick was Chairperson of Buildings & Grounds Committee and has dedicated many volunteer hours to the NHS. He will be greatly missed. Our sympathy goes out to Annette and family.

**WELCOME** to the following **NEW** life members: Cortland C. Kopp, Nathan & Christina Witkowski, and Richard Packman who received his Life membership as a gift from James & Brenda Packman

**Thank you for the following MEMORIAL DONATIONS given**

- Ellsworth & Gladys Brown by Charles & Mary Brown
- Douglas & Milicent Burg by Adam, Heather & Blair Burg
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- Ronald P. Konieczny by Nancy Konieczny
- Richard Komroy by Michele Asmus, Bill Asmus, Joe & Linda Capan, Harold & Carolyn Finger, Mary Hanley, Jeff & Laurel Jones, Kate Parzych, Patricia Pearce, Brian & Jayne Perry, John & Jannette Potera, Patricia Rodrigues & Tommy Dose, Colleen & Marty Salmon, Dave Wakeman, and Mike & Marybeth Whiting
- Sally Lippert by Robert & Barbara Tinney
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***THANK YOU FOR DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM:***

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Memorials and donations to the Society are always appreciated and can be mailed to: Newstead Historical Society, PO Box 222, Akron, NY 14001. If you have any questions, please email Linda Capan at: [membership@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:membership@newsteadhistoricalsociety.org).



## RECIPE CORNER

Jannette Potera

Here's a recipe from *The Akron Cook Book* by the Ladies Aid Society of the First Methodist Episcopal Church dated 1921. This is titled "POT PIE-That never fails to be light" submitted by Mrs. F. M. Stage. When I think of pot pie, I think of meat and vegetables in a gravy in a pie crust or what my family called "slippery" pot pie, which was meat in a gravy with homemade noodles. This recipe seems to be more like a dumpling than either of the pot pie recipes I am familiar with. If you give it a try let us know what you think of the recipe.

### POT PIE-That never fails to be light

2 eggs

8 tablespoons sweet milk

2 tablespoons melted butter

2 cups flour

2 teaspoons Royal Baking Powder

a little salt



Drop small spoonful in the boiling liquid. Cover and cook 8 or 10 minutes.

Disclaimer: I have not tested the recipes submitted for the Recipe Corner. They are given exactly as they appear in the cookbook in which they were originally published.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

It's not too early to be thinking about the annual NHS Scholarship. The scholarship is available for qualifying high school seniors who live in the Akron/Newstead area. The criteria for the \$300 scholarship is the following: "Senior with an interest in history, a track record of community service, and a need for financial assistance." The information will be given to seniors at their school in the next few months.

### 2021 NHS Executive Board

President	Patricia Pearce 542-4191
Vice President	Adam Burg 570-0633
Treasurer	Annette Komroy 542-4714
Recording Secretary	Kimberley Burg 907-2720
Membership Secretary	Linda Capan 542-5300

### Trustees

<u>Trustees: 2019-2021</u>	<u>Trustees: 2020-2022</u>	<u>Trustees: 2021-2023</u>
Kate Stapleton Parzych	David Wakeman	Mark Saglian
Jannette Potera	Mary Sellers Hanley	David Webster
David Hofmeier	Marlene Gehl	Dusty Blasko

### Directors and Committees

Museum Coordinator	Kimberley Burg
Rich-Twinn Octagon House Director	Kate Stapleton Parzych
Knight-Sutton Museum Director	Pat Rodrigues
Collections Manager	Jannette Potera
Research & Design Team	Laurel Jones & Marybeth Whiting
Publicity	Michele Asmus
Website	Colleen Salmon/Patty Buckley
Sales	
Century Homes & Landmarks	Pat Rodrigues
Newsletter	Donald Holmes/Julie Brady
Town and Village Historian	Donald Holmes

NHS Website provides information about the society and a gallery of pictures about the Octagon House, Knight-Sutton displays, and Century Homes. Check it out at [www.newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.newsteadhistoricalsociety.org)



Don't forget that you can donate your refund when you return cans to the Bottle & Can Retrieval Centers at 52 Cedar St. Akron. Just tell them when you drop off your cans.

Thank you!



If you would like to receive notifications and information by e-mail, please email Linda Capan with **NHS** in the subject line to [lcapan@hotmail.com](mailto:lcapan@hotmail.com). Rest assured - You will *not* receive numerous messages; this is meant to be a convenience for those who would like it.

Newstead Historical Society  
P.O. Box 222

Akron, New York 14001

Office Phone: 716-542-7022

Visit us on the Web:

[www.newsteadhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.newsteadhistoricalsociety.org)



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The Newstead Historical Society deeply appreciates the support of the County of Erie, the Town of Newstead, our members and the community at large.





