

TO: Town Supervisor and Council
FROM: Donna Herendeen, Town Historian
Re: 2020 Annual Report

THE TOWN HISTORIAN COLLECTS, PRESERVES AND INTERPRETS FARMINGTON HISTORY. GENERAL CATEGORIES FOR THE HISTORIAN'S ACTIVITIES ARE PRESERVATION, EDUCATION, ORGANIZATION AND RESEARCH.

First, my apologies for the lateness of this report. Unfortunately, my time during the months of January through May 2021 was unfortunately spent on health issues.

As we all know, the Covid virus took over our lives in 2021! As a town historian, I understood that this was going to be an event that required my attention. From March until the end of 2021 I was absorbed with documenting how the shutdown affected Farmington. On March 12, 2021, I began writing in a digital journal and continue to do so today. Correspondence, articles, and photos (including a copy of my vaccination card) all referencing the Covid virus have been placed together as a collection.

Zoom offered the ability to continue attendance to the meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee and Historic Preservation Commission where I am a member. I took full advantage of the webinars that were made available by NYS Archives.

The project I am most proud of playing a part in- is the completion of the historic Hathaway house history room. The Lyons National Bank had purchased the property to erect a new bank. When they discovered that the existing house was allegedly the second oldest structure in Ontario County, they decided to turn the house into a history room and annex the new bank to it. As town historian, I researched data to help write the history of the Hathaway family for the story boards displayed in the building. Numerous artifacts, original to the house, were gifted to the town by the descendants of their ancestor Isaac Hathaway. These artifacts have been inventoried and are on display in the history room with many items on loan from the Ontario County Museum. The plan is to "rotate" the artifacts annually. The room is open to the public. This project was very unique and much credit goes to the officers of LNB who respected the historical value of the structure, found a way to make it work for our Town and their business while preserving it for generations to come.

Many genealogical requests were completed and documenting 21st century town happenings continued. I remain as Treasurer of the South Farmington Friends Cemetery Foundation. The Foundation is working on preserving a historic 1895 chapel building which has direct ties to the temperance movement. I also continue my work with the Historic Preservation Commission where we are actively working on restoring headstones in three of our four inactive cemeteries. Two local Boy Scout packs have assisted in cleanup of the cemeteries and laying out flags on the veterans graves each year.

I mentored two boy scouts working on their Eagle Scout badges. Each completed his project successfully.

As always, the accomplish of any work I do is made possible with the support from Farmington's town board, the Planning department, the Highway department and volunteers from our community.

Cc: Preston Pierce, Ontario County Historian
Devin Landers, NYS Historian