

Museum of Rhinebeck History

Celebrating Rhinebeck's Rich Heritage

Issue

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year and we hope that you had a lovely holiday season. For 2020, the Museum will be starting to put together our new exhibit entitled "Transformations," which will trace the changes of different buildings in Rhinebeck over the years. We focus on major landmarks on East Market, Mill and Montgomery Streets and will be expanding it next year. If you have any photographs of major landmarks or your own home, please let us know, we would love to display these to chart a place's journey over the years. Our exhibit on the "Women of Rhinebeck" will remain up in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment. While women in New York State received the vote in 1917, this was a monumental victory for women across the country. As part of this exhibit, we have a fictional story about a woman from Rhinebeck's distant past, Anne "Nancy" Shippen, who married into the Livingston family.

Please check out our events calendar for the year and our website for updates. We are holding a tag sale for the Museum's opening, if you would like to be a vendor, please let us know. We hope to see you at these events.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Clarke, President

A STORY OF ANNE "NANCY" SHIPPEN, WIFE OF COLONEL HENRY BEEKMAN LIVINGSTON

This is historical fiction by Keith Damien Mulhern



Anne Nancy Shippen (1763-1841), painted 1796 by Benjamin Trott

October 25th, 1782 Old Post Rd.

The past and future had a way of pressing so hard on Nancy Shippen's soul that rarely was there time for the serenity of the present moment. However, for a brief instance on the carriage ride from Clermont, Nancy would inhale the type of autumn crispness and soft orange light found only on the eastern banks of Mr. Hudson's River.



RM.1996.0322.11 Kipsbergen/Heermance House, no longer standing

The old Post Road from The Livingston family Manor, Clermont, to Nancy's home with Livingston at Kipsbergen was a safe yet lengthy journey, but it became particularly treacherous at the approach to the Dutch village on Mr. Beekman's Property, not far from Mr. Traphagen's Tavern.

Through mud puddles thick and thin Nancy's Jamaican driver, Nevis, would push the horses collecting dirt and dust along the way then with a roll and hop and an unstable pop, the carriage gyrated and abruptly stopped.

"Nevis...what happened?!" Nancy shouted. "Ma'am please stay in the cab this is no site for a lady," Nevis said sternly. Leaning forward to peer out the window Nancy could see Nevis standing over a native. "Is he dead?" asked Nancy. "I'm afraid he is Ma'am," said Nevis. He then dragged the body to the side of the lane and covered it with the burlap bag that he had been using as a seat cushion. "I'll let Mr. Livingston know Ma'am, he can call the constable Radcliff," said Nevis, and he climbed back up to the driver's seat and started the horses.

As the carriage began to move and her window passed the deceased she recognized something quite odd. The deceased's garments were clearly Mohawk - but in these parts? This was Iroquois territory and Sepasco at that. Several Livingstons had been Ministers of Indian affairs and Nancy knew a bit about these people, these savage,

violent, French sympathizers. A jagged rock next to him had a carving in the stone where the dead body had been, a symbol of a horned man. "Peculiar?" Nancy said to herself. Where had she seen that symbol before? Further off Nancy could see a white egret at the edge of the woods in a nearby cove. It leaped up, spread its giant wings and soared towards the river.

In the distance, Nancy could see the chimney smoke curling up from her Estate and Kips' sheep in the fading light. Her mind should have been immersed with the dead Indian in the road or at least in the annual Harvest Ball at the Hermitage, home to Chancellor Robert Livingston. The Patroon families she would need to dazzle, the oysters and wine, apple stuffed pheasant, polite conversation and the Quatrain, but her mind drifted again. She longed for the days at her childhood home in Philadelphia. The rainy day Sundays with Marquis Otto when the wind would whip the blurred glass. She would grab a Chinese pillow and curl up on the fainting chaise lounge, while Otto would recite Chaucer and Voltaire as she fell into one of those melting-of-the-heart moments, which she now so longed for. His French accent wrapped in chenille.



Louis-Guillaume Otto, Comte de Mosloy

That was then and now pleasure and romance were too infrequent, Livingston was to blame and his treatment of his hunting dogs was better than that to Nancy.

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The carriage rolled up to The Manor house and Nevis helped Nancy out of the carriage and onto the veranda. Miss Tammy emerged from the kitchen. "Hungry Miss?" Tammy asked in her Caribbean accent. "No, thank you," said Nancy. Tammy announced, "Mr. Livingston is still in Westchester. How's Miss Margaret?" "She is well," said Nancy. "Oh dat's wonderful, such a fine lady," then noticing Nancy's fatigue, "Wud that be all den' miss Nancy?" Tammy asked. "Yes thank you Tammy." Nancy made her way to the back porch, collapsed into a chair, and in the final rays of the day, which made a silhouette of the Catskills. Nancy pondered her heart, her history, her future, the horned man symbol, and with a bit of envy the dead Mohican on the road from Clermont.

To learn more about Nancy, check out her letters and journal here:

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89098876056>

EVENTS CALENDAR

June 13, 2020: Museum Opening and Tag Sale. Quitman House, 7015 Route 9. We are looking for vendors, please contact us by email to sign up, \$20 for a 10x10 space. Rain Date: June 20

April 19, 2020: History Revealed, 1-3pm, Location To Be Determined

August 9, 2020: History Revealed, 1-3pm, Location: To Be Determined

More to come soon.



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MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY SUPPORTERSHIP FORM

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<http://rhinebeckmuseum.com>

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DUES INVOICE FOR THE PERIOD January 1 through December 31, 2020

Name _____

Address _____

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Enclosed is my tax-deductible check in the amount of \$ _____

Make checks payable to MUSEUM OF RHINEBECK HISTORY and mail to the Museum at the address above. Thank you!

Please enclose your employer’s form if your employer has a matching grant program (e.g. IBM).

Please apply my payment for the year 2020 as follows:

Lifetime.....\$1,000 _____ Lifetime option \$250 x 4 years _____

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If you have already paid your supportership dues for the year, please disregard this form. Contact us if you are unsure about whether you have paid.

NOTE: If you have artifacts related to Rhinebeck’s history that you wish to donate to us, please check below and someone from the Museum will be in touch with you. _____