

**GREENE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**FOR THE YEAR 2020**

**Prepared by Society President Robert C. Hallock**

The Greene County Historical Society operates the Bronck Museum, the Vedder Research Library, and the Greene County Historical Register. In 2020 the Society received \$3,847 from the County. The funds helped to defray the costs of providing an office for the County Historian and support staff for the Historian, and to help pay for housing and assistance in accessing the County's Surrogate Court records from 1800 to 1930.

The Society had a COVID year in 2020. The Bronck Museum was closed when the COVID pandemic started spreading in March 2020 and the Vedder Research Library was closed to visitors from March until July. With the help of a Payroll Protection Loan we kept staff on payroll throughout the year. IN July the Museum and Lib.rary reopened on a limited basis. Patronage at the Library was limited to two researchers in the morning and two in the afternoon by reservation only. The Museum opened on Thursdays and Fridays from 10 to 4 with a limit of six visitors per tour and two tours per day. COVID protocols of masks and social distancing were requirements.

All school programs, education (lecture) programs, and special events such as the Tour of Homes, Association Day, Tavern Night, and Chill Willy Winter's Eve tour were cancelled. The Society's Heritage Craft Fair was held in October with 14 vendors, a band, and about 350-400 visitors. COVID protocols of masks and social distancing of attendees and vendors were strictly observed.

Despite the COVID Pandemic we continued to add to our collections of items relating to the Couny's history both objects and ephemera. Volunteers went to Connecticut with two vans to pick up a large numdo ber of items from the Miller family of New Baltimore for the Bronck Museum. Several donations of family papers and memorabilia were donated to the Vedder Research Library, adding to our collections of family papers.

The Museum Curator worked on exhibits planned for the Bronck Barrack as well as other administrative work relating to our collection items. The Librarian Archivist continued his work of cataloging items just donated as well as re-cataloging items already in the collection. In addition the Librarian Archivist continues to add to the website's list of finding aids to enable people from across the country and the world to be able to determine that the Library has information on a given family or area of research.

So while the COVID pandemic took away a large number of site visitors to the Museum/Library complex it gave staff the opportunity to do a lot of administrative work that normally is simply fitted in as the opportunity comes.

The Society also hired a photographer to do a 360 degree virtual tour of the Bronck Museum buildings and is in the process of developing a virtual tour that can be accessed on our website. In addition, the Society is working on providing schools and other interested parties access to special program videos to be used in offsite programming. Among the programs being considered are "The Stones in the Bronck House – What they can tell us" and "An Early Dutch Funeral – with a procession to the graveyard".

We look forward to 2021 with hope we can re-open with some sense of normalcy, but also with an eye to being able to keep history alive by developing new ways using technology to tell the story of the History of Greene County.