

# HISTORIC RED HOOK

## 2017 Annual Report

As customary, we begin the New Year with a heartfelt “Thank You!” to our many enthusiastic, hard-working Trustees, volunteers and the greater Red Hook community for helping to make 2017 another great year for Historic Red Hook.

### Public Programs

Trustee Emily Majer began our Sunday afternoon lecture series with a standing-room only presentation on February 26 about “Ward Manor: Progressive Paradise,” the former country seat in Annandale that served as a ‘haven for the aged’ and summer camp for more than 40 years before being acquired by Bard College. Next came Gretta Trich Roman, Bard College Digital History Lab coordinator and her students, on March 2, with their crowd-sourced 1798 digital map project and again, on April 21, with an introduction to “Hudson Valley Apples,” a dynamic website (drawn heavily from Historic Red Hook’s Fraleigh Collection) about apple-growing in Red Hook and the genealogies of local apple-grower families. Emily Majer rounded out the year’s series with ‘Uncovering Your House’s History,’ a “how to” primer featuring her study of Echo Valley Farm.

On Saturday, June 10, Historic Red Hook hosted its third annual House & Barn Preservation Exposition highlighting the traditions, skills and knowledge that undergird successful local preservation. Some 75 visitors enjoyed live music and tasty barbecue while mingling with our preservation experts and watching various craft demonstrations.

We collaborated with the Office of the Dutchess County Historian on Sunday, May 21, to offer a ‘Decoding the Past’ program called ‘Living a Wholesome, Healthy Life in Red Hook,’ and again, on Friday, September 8, on a “spirited” evening get-together of about 60 attendees at the Elmendorph (a “stop” on the 2017 Dutchess County Historic Tavern Trail series) featuring tastings of locally distilled spirits and lively accounts of Prohibition in the county by Emily Majer and Dutchess County Historian Will Tatum.

### Community Outreach

As part of our community outreach, Historic Red Hook took enthusiastic part in Red Hook’s major seasonal events. Our Open House community events are only as successful as they are due to the help of longtime volunteers Mary Kelly, Dee Karpel and Ellen Phelan, who also serves as Innkeeper.

On Hardscrabble Day, September 21, people of all ages gathered in the Elmendorph's rooms and on the front lawn to sample our ever-popular homemade apple pie and ice cream, pet the assembled sheep, goats and llamas, and test their skill at old-time 'apple-bobbing.'

On Red Hook's annual Chocolate Festival, November 4, chocolate lovers headed to the Elmendorph for chocolate-dipped fruit kabobs, entertaining musicians and an informative table-top exhibit of archival photos and objects detailing the history of Red Hook's own W.H. Baker Co., producers of chocolate.

As usual, our annual Dutch Christmas Open House, on December 3, was thronged with visitors enjoying the best in holiday music from Red Hook Central School students and other local musicians, hot mulled cider, homemade cookies, and fresh-baked treats straight from the wood-fired beehive oven courtesy of Tivoli Bakery's Mike Gonnella.

On Saturday afternoon, December 9, a family crowd of more than a hundred Tivolians enjoyed a delightful production of Dickens's 'A Christmas Carol' by Theater on the Road, sponsored by Historic Red Hook, the Village of Tivoli, and the Tivoli Free Library.

Right on schedule, Red Hook Central School fourth graders hustled and bustled into the Elmendorph on June 6 for their annual field trip to learn about early Red Hook from 'Cornelius Elmendorph' and tour the inn.

### Oral Histories

The October 5 Annual Meeting was highlighted by Seth Kramer's moving video interview "Waiting on Red Hook," honoring Margaret Doty and her dedicated service to Red Hook, first at the Red Hook Hotel and then as Town Clerk for more than thirty years. And Board member Bill Jeffway treated everyone to a lively video he produced capturing Historic Red Hook's mission.

In collaboration with Red Hook Post 7765 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and working with Bard College's Mobile History Van, on Memorial Day we launched 'Stories of Service,' an oral history project to record local veterans' recollections of their military service. In September and October, we partnered with Bard's Mobile History Van to record the stories of local residents visiting the Elmendorph. Also, we were instrumental in helping to identify longtime Red Hook residents for Red Hook High School's Video History Project.

### Fundraising

Our winter 'Tavern' nights featured Soup Night, on January 23, with music by Maggie Rothwell, and Chili Night, on February 25, with music by Dan Budd and his GrassFed band. Friends, neighbors and visitors filled the Elmendorph with great good cheer. The year's principal fundraiser, the November 19 Gala Auction and Dinner featuring auctioneer 'Cornelius Elmendorph,' topped all previous records.

## Collections

On a special note, we would like to thank Bobbie Thompson, our longtime archivist and “go to” source for much local history, for her dedicated volunteer service to Historic Red Hook and our predecessor organizations. She retired in December.

The Archives room was filled most Tuesdays with visitors, researchers and volunteers, especially Nancy Bendiner, Elliott Bristol, Sheryl Griffith and Alva Kramer, who are helping to organize and catalog the collections. In 2017 we digitized several existing photo collections to facilitate easier access for researchers and the public.

Lastly, we conserved the large Edward L. Mooney portrait of his sister, Ann Marie Pier, and the 1858 Dutchess County Map, that hang in the South Room.

## Administration

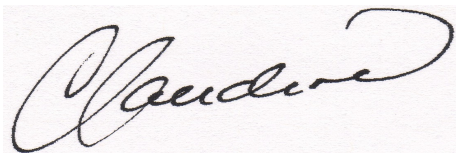
Operationally, we maintained our database of collections, memberships and contacts. At this writing, we count 250 active members and 372 subscribers to our e-bulletin. Again, our sincere thanks to Ellen Phelan, who manages the membership database.

At our Annual Meeting we were delighted to welcome new board member Gretta Tritch Roman, of Bard College’s Experimental Humanities Initiative, and we thanked former Trustee Seth Kramer for his outstanding service. Later in October, officers were approved for the coming year: Claudine Klose, president, Emily Majer, vice-president, Beth Jones, treasurer and Thea Burgess, secretary. Trustees Amanda Bodian, Elliott Bristol, Thea Burgess, Susan Ezrati, Jen Huber, Bill Jeffway, Christopher Klose and Doug Strawinski round out the Board.

As we mark the progress of our fourth year, it is a privilege to thank all of our loyal members, volunteers, supporters, friends and collaborators for your continuing passion for the history of Red Hook and your unstinting support of Historic Red Hook.

Here’s to an exciting and rewarding 2018!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claudine", written in a cursive style on a light-colored background.

Claudine Klose  
President, Historic Red Hook