

O.K.

Exhibition Guide

by Christopher Kline

April 19 - June 1, 2014

GRIMMUSEUM, BERLIN

A Note about this publication:

Compiling and preserving small village and town histories are almost always an 'inside job' left to local governments or at best local amateur historians who generally work on a volunteer basis. In some ways this project is no exception as it is doubtful that anyone who isn't from Kinderhook and who doesn't hold a good deal of affection for it would ever devote so much time and energy to researching and exhibiting its history and lore.

That said, I am also somewhat of an outsider at this point, having lived almost half of my life away from the town I grew up in. This distance has made Kinderhook surreal for me, and though aspects of anyone's hometown might lead to an inclination towards nostalgia, I've attempted to avoid this sentiment quite strictly when dealing with this presentation. This approach has led me to present things I hadn't known about until embarking on this project, and to dig further into many of the stories (and misinformation) I had vaguely remembered from growing up.

I consistently noticed in the written histories of Kinderhook, Valatie, Stuyvesant and Columbia County as a whole, a gross tendency towards superlatives, if not outright sugar-coating. For example, the general approach towards the American Indians of the region are that they were a kind and great people who just sort of gradually left the region as the Dutch bought their land piece by piece, leaving only caches of arrow heads. And the general take on the region's history of slavery is that, yes, there was some human slavery, but it really wasn't *THAT* bad compared to other regions in the country. In fact New York State once had more slaves than Georgia. One historian even went as far as saying that after slavery ended it was actually a *good* thing that blacks weren't allowed jobs in the local mills because it decreased racial tension in the area. Perhaps this was true, but the general approach has been to make our area's population throughout history sound like a shining example of humanity.

This booklet and project is meant to crack open a few of the obscure doors of Kinderhook and Columbia County's history for locals and non-locals alike. By doing this in an art context I hope to open up an intuitive method of preserving and interpreting Kinderhook's history, as its traits and quirks may perhaps translate and correspond to small-town cultures all over the world.

For this iteration an express emphasis was placed on 'the arts' including literature, painting, architecture, craft, theatre, film and music. As an ongoing project, which I plan to build over several exhibitions, publications and performances, I hope to chip away at my many omissions and continue to round out a rich image of the region in its own words, makings and aesthetics, all done with an even, critical, yet loving hand.

O.K.

The GRIMMUSEUM presents *O.K.*, the first manifestation of an ongoing project by Christopher Kline. Kline was born in 1982 in Kinderhook, NY, a small town in the Hudson River Valley, about 200 km upstate from New York City. The village and surrounding rural communities of Kinderhook are home to 8,498 residents today.

The term “O.K.” has become one of the most universally used and understood words in the world. Its rise to prominence can be traced back to Martin Van Buren’s failed U.S. Presidential reelection campaign of 1840, for which the abbreviation of his hometown nickname “Old Kinderhook” was the rallying cry of his supporters.

Oriented around the propagation of “O.K.” as a metaphor for the subtle permeation of small-town American idiosyncrasies into broader cultural forms, Kline’s project explores early cultural exports and anomalies originating in Van Buren’s (and Kline’s) birthplace as well as recent local developments there since post-industrialization. *O.K.* synthesizes and expands on Kinderhook’s lore and attempts to construct a fresh overview of local history through the exposition of historical documents, videos, replicas, interpretive research, and collaborations with local students, craftspeople, filmmakers, and other community members.

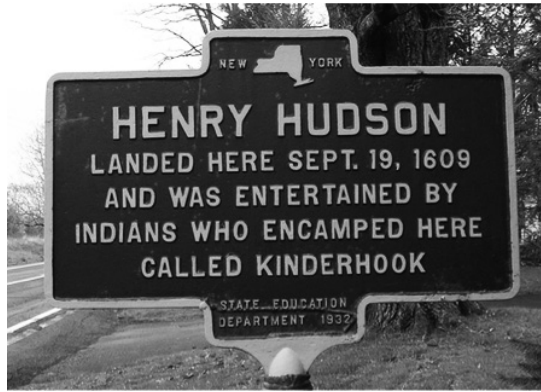
The period of Van Buren’s political rise and fall, starting as a NY Senator in 1812, presidency from 1837-1841 and ending in his final failed presidential bid in 1848, was also a time of great historical activity and source of legend in the area around Kinderhook itself. These were the glory days of Old Kinderhook. Writer Washington Irving published *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in 1819 whose protagonist Ichabod Crane was based on a local school teacher whom Irving met while living briefly in Kinderhook. Irving was a key figure in the burgeoning field of American literature, which was gaining legitimacy across the Atlantic. Irving’s tenuous relationship with Kinderhook has become an added source of local pride for the town, who named their incorporated public school system Ichabod Crane Central in 1954. The school’s logo and sports team mascot is either the figure of Ichabod Crane on his galloping horse, or the terrifying figure of the pumpkin-wielding Headless Horseman chasing him.

In the years of Van Buren's presidency and later failures, the local Shakers at Mount Lebanon were going through their "Era of Manifestations" (1837-53), a high-point for the celibate and hard-working sect famous for their pioneering of gender equality, conscientious objection, and fine furniture design. Meanwhile nearby, landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church was becoming one of the first widely-celebrated American artists as the foremost member of the Hudson River School. But as years passed, the mills around Columbia County began to close down, and as the physical exports slowed, so did the cultural exports, both leading to stagnated growth until its rise as a 'bedroom community' for Albany, New York's capital. Since the 1970s rural upstate NY has become a permanent destination for those wanting to escape the hustle of New York City, attracting artists such as Ellsworth Kelly and famous whistle-blower Frank Serpico, as well as less inspiring rich weekenders locally referred to as "cidiots".

While Kinderhook's history is unique, it is not atypical of other small towns in the northeastern U.S., or perhaps small towns all over the world that relish their small claims to fame and brushes with greatness. Van Buren remains a troubled source of pride for the town, and despite his not being a particularly admirable president (he set up the first political machines, lead the country further into financial crisis, was against the abolition of slavery, intervened controversially in the Amistad incident, and executed the Indian Removal Act which lead to the Trail of Tears, amongst other crimes against humanity), he is something of a local hero. And so it is perhaps not ironic that the town's most propagated cultural export is a word synonymous with 'alright', 'fine', 'enough', 'unremarkable', 'mediocre', a word to signify acknowledgement, assent, or acquiescence. O.K.

1

NEW YORK STATE HISTORIC MARKERS



Most New York State historic markers were erected between 1926 and 1936 under a program to commemorate the “150th Anniversary of the American Revolution”. Funding for the project ran out as early as 1939. They are a frequent sight in upstate New York, though there is little official oversight and no inventory of the markers anymore. There are many markers erected by local governments, individuals or organizations without any state involvement. They are identical in appearance and function to those funded by the early state program, leading to a large variety in the relevance and phrasing of the signs, and in effect generating an organic and locally subjective legacy.

Increasingly, as public recollection fades, these markers are often the only remnant of the local history they represent, particularly where archeological sites are involved. Over the past decades more than once a significant archeological site has been saved from inadvertant damage during public construction and development because a marker announced its existence where no other evidence of it remained.

Responsible residents wishing to restore a marker may do so themselves following certain guidelines. “Repainting is usually all that is required for restoration purposes. When restoring the blue and gold state colors, you may use standard Rustoleum® colors for gloss finishes on exterior metals as follows: “#7727 Royal Blue” and “#7747 Sunburst Yellow”. You may also use other commercial rustproofing paints in colors that match or approximate the original state colors on the sign.”

2

HISTORIC COLUMBIA COUNTY



The Columbia County Museum and Historic Society, Kinderhook

3

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW (ICHABOD CRANE AND THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN)



the back of an Ichabod Crane Central baseball dugout. photo by Elaine Kline

Writer Washington Irving lived in Kinderhook for a mere eight weeks in 1809, and based several characters in his famous story “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” on friends of his from the village. His tale’s anti-hero, the lanky and frightened Ichabod Crane was based on school teacher Jesse Merwin, and the object of his affection Katrina Van Tassel was based on Katrina Van Alen, daughter of a prominent local farmer.

Though the short-story explicitly takes place in Tarrytown, another town about 150km towards New York City, Kinderhook has latched on to its tenuous connection, naming its new centralized school system “Ichabod Crane Central” in 1954. The Headless Horseman logo has been a familiar sight since then on school apparel and sports team logos.

Here is a recreation of the Headless Horseman carrying his pumpkin head, popularly represented as a jack-o-lantern since Disney’s 1949 cartoon remake of the story, although the original only makes an allusion that a pumpkin was hurled at Crane when smashed bits of one are found near his horse’s tracks the next morning. This sculpture has been upholstered with domestic fabric largely provided by Traditions Linens in Claverack, a nod to the local craftspeople who also frequent the ‘remanent loft’ there.

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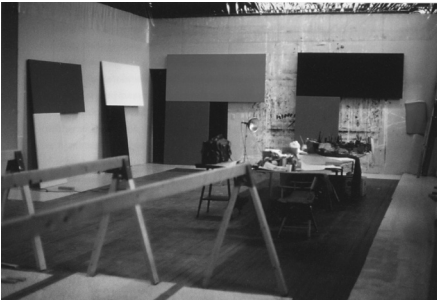
ELLSWORTH KELLY'S CHATHAM SERIES

Fearing that the hustle of New York City was affecting his work, minimalist painter Ellsworth Kelly moved upstate to Spencertown in 1970. He found a former theatre on Main Street in Chatham for a studio and began to create his widely celebrated 'Chatham Series' soon after.



Kelly crossing Main Street in Chatham in front of his studio

The 14 paintings which compose the series all consist of two monochromatic panels attached to form a flipped L-shape. One of the paintings, coincidentally or not, is red and black, the school colors of Chatham High.



Interior of Kelly's studio circa 1971



Chatham High cheerleaders prepare a team banner before a football game

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JASON NASTKE



In 1999 a Village Trustee was thrown through the Valatie Village Hall's plate glass window by the Assistant Fire Chief over a heated disagreement on how to update Valatie's water infrastructure. This dramatic event led 19 year old Jason Nastke to run for mayor in an effort to bring a fresh approach to local politics. He won handily as the Republican candidate and became the youngest sitting mayor in the country, leading to appearances on The Late Show with David Letterman, CSPAN and countless national media outlets.

Valatie, historically a working-class mill town with a mixed population of English, German, Dutch and later Irish and Italian immigrants, was for many years a bitter rival to the more middle- and upper-class Dutch farmer village of Kinderhook with occasional brawls and some residents refusing to work in the other village. The rivalry was mostly dissipated when the area's school district was centralized as Ichabod Crane in the 1950s, yet Main Street maintained some of its rough charm. The "Valatie Cut Crew" was a short-lived teenage gang in the 1990s.

6

SERPICO

Frank Serpico was a New York City police officer who was the first to testify against wide-spread police corruption. During his attempts to report illegal police activity such as organized shakedowns and systematic bribery, he was shot in the face while on a drug bust. It was widely supposed that he was set-up by fellow officers who left him bleeding in the hallway. He survived despite the ill-wishes of the hatemail he received from anonymous officers while recovering in the hospital.

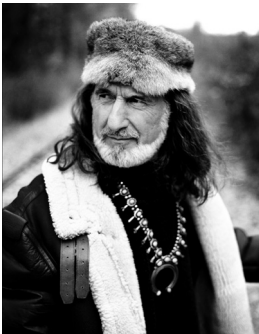
Serpico moved upstate to Stuyvesant in the early 70s, just as a major Hollywood movie starring Al Pacino was being made about him. He has been a charismatic local fixture since then, often frequenting the Kinderhook Memorial Library to check his email. A true lamp-lighter (a term he prefers to ‘whistle-blower’), Serpico continues to support officers wishing to report corruption as well as other civil liberty causes.



Serpico in 1971 testifying in front of the Knapp Commission



Serpico in 2013 showing where developer Frank Palladino allegedly cut down 12 of his trees



left:
Serpico still
eccentrically dressed
(by Todd France for
People magazine)

right:
Serpico as portrayed
by Al Pacino



My name is Matthew Latiolais and I was 31 years old when I was working in a lumber mill on Nov. 19, 2009 and a board got stuck in the machine. I jumped up to free it and then fell 3 feet, hitting my left temple against a control panel, and fracturing my skull. Now I have a Traumatic Brain Injury.

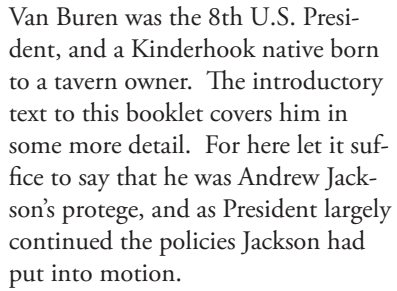
In an instant, I lost the ability to speak, eat, and to use my right side. After my first emergency surgery, the doctors said I might never walk or talk again. I had to start from scratch and relearn everything. Four years ago I was in a wheelchair – then after much therapy, I was using a walker, then a cane, and now nothing!

The things I struggle with the most are my aphasia, which is difficulty with expressive communication, and the inability to use my right arm. With these two stumbling blocks, I was having a really hard time figuring out what I can do with my new life. I came to the conclusion that I could no longer dream about operating the tree farm where we lived in Vermont so we moved to Kinderhook, NY where my family has a farm. In my previous life, I had done some hobby woodworking, and I realized that I could adapt my tools and using many clamps, could still build things in my woodshop. I made a few cardholders for friends in my aphasia class (who also lost the use of their right hands) and they told me that I should make this a business. Thus was started Northend Woodworking, a way for me to work and be productive while providing adaptive items like bookholders and cardholders.



Visit www.northendwoodworking.com to view Matthew's line of adapted book- and playing card- holders for others with use of only one hand.

MARTIN VAN BUREN



A black and white photograph of a bronze statue of a man with a beard, wearing a long coat and boots, sitting on a bench. He is holding a book in his lap and a walking stick in his right hand. The statue is set outdoors against a white fence and some foliage.



The Little Magician
The Red Fox
Old Kinderhook
The American Talleyrand
The Careful Dutchman
The Enchanter
The Great Manager
The Master Spirit
Martin Van Ruin
The Mistletoe Politician

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THE MAHICANS

As all land in the Americas, Columbia County was once populated by “Indians”, namely the Wiekagjoc, a part of the Mahican confederacy which were a sub-group of Eastern Algonquian tribes. Not to be confused with the nearby Mohawks, with whom the Mahicans were not friendly, or the Mohegans, another Algonquian tribe from eastern Connecticut (all of these names actually stem from Dutch or English appropriations), the Mahicans were supposedly welcoming to the first colonists. They lived in wigwams, unlike the Western New York Iroquois who lived in longhouses.

After gradually being coerced or forced from their land for several generations since the Dutch first arrived, by the 1780s the tribes native to the Kinderhook area were largely settled in Stockbridge, Massachusetts after siding with the losing British during the Revolutionary War. The U.S. government’s policy of ethnic cleansing called “The Indian Removal Act of 1830” sent them from Stockbridge to a shared Wisconsin reservation. The Munsee-Stockbridge community still exists there with a population of 1,565 people, though the last speaker of the Mahican language died in 1933. Today only one Mahican descendent lives in their historic territory of the Hudson River Valley.



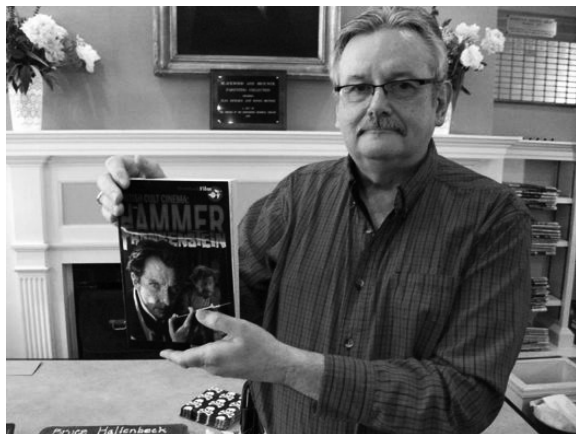
The sheet music included and performed in the exhibition is of a song called “Eagle Feather” by an unknown “Whitney”. It was taught in elementary schools to help students learn the names of the Iroquois nations. It was mailed to me by my 3rd and 4th grade music teacher Beth Antonio.

Etow Oh Koam of the Turtle Clan, mistakenly labeled in this portrait as Emperor of the Six Nations. Though the Algonquian-speaking Mohican people were not part of the Iroquois Confederacy, Etow Oh Koam traveled with three Mohawk chiefs to England, where they were received as diplomats. They went requesting military aid against the French.

painted by Jan Verelst, 1710

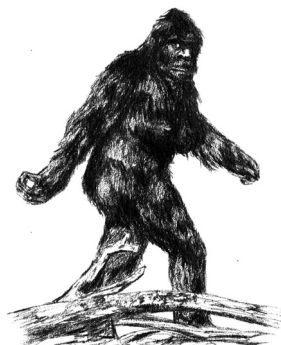
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BRUCE G. HALLENBECK



Bruce G. Hallenbeck is an author, actor and filmmaker born, raised, and based in Kinderhook, NY. A leading expert on Hammer Films and other areas of cult horror and sci-fi, Hallenbeck is also known for his long-standing interest and research in cryptozoology on which he continues to lecture and publish.

The trailer for *Cannibal Church* was made in the early 80s as a way to acquire funding for the feature film. It was played at film festivals, but never got off the ground and so the trailer is all that exists of it.



Hallenbeck acting in *Shadow Tracker: Vampire Hunter*, 1999

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BALLOON MEADOWS



photo: Barb Mayer



photo: Barb Mayer

Hot air balloons were a common sight in the skies around Valatie and Kinderhook due to Balloon Meadows, a take-off site, being located across the street from Ichabod Crane High School. These photos are of specific balloons that flew in the area in the late 80s-early 90s.



photo: Phil Boucher



photo: Chris and Joe Cain

'O.K. – THE MUSICAL' POSTER PROJECT
AND 'O.K. BLANKETS'

The O.K. Poster Project includes poster designs by over 50 Ichabod Crane students from the 4th and 5th grade. Students were asked to research local history and use their findings to create a poster for an imaginary musical called *O.K.–The Musical*.

O.K. Blankets is an idea for a charity fundraising organization which does fun, local research-based drawing projects with students at Ichabod Crane and then has the posters woven into limited art edition blankets. Proceeds from sales of the editions will go to the student artist's choice of local charities including the Valatie Ecumenical Food Pantry, The Marion Stegmann Fund, The Valatie Rescue Squad, and the local volunteer fire departments.

A-4 The Register-Star Hudson, N.Y. Friday, May 8, 1981



School art show

Fourth and fifth graders of the Martin H. Glynn School, Valatie, hosted their annual art show Thursday night in the auditorium, displaying projects completed throughout the year under the supervision of the school's art teacher Joan Barker. Terrence Maul works on a sculpture as classmates gathered around him. (tn) (Register-Star photo by Tony Nero)

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MUSICAL THEATRE

“The Great American Musical” has long been a mainstay of the arts in Columbia County. No other art form engages the largely rural public like a musical with several musical-oriented theatres in the area and many high schools staging yearly productions.

In 2004 the Valatie Community Theatre reopened its doors after being closed for over 30 years due to Valatie’s economic downturn. The theatre continues to undergo heavy renovations, attempting to reclaim its old title “The Jewel of Main Street”.



Crane Acting Troupe performing “Peter Pan Jr.”



cast and crew of the Crane Acting Troupe’s 2010 production of “The Wizard of Oz”



performance of *9 to 5* at The Mac-Haydn Theatre, a local venue expressly dedicated to musicals.



Picture pose

Five Ichabod Crane fifth graders pose as the subjects and artist of Paul Cezanne's "The Card Cheater" at an art show Thursday night at the Martin H. Glynn school in Valatie. Outside the painting, Chris Laurie is dressed as the 19th century painter. Inside, from left, are Joe Stetz, Tom Armstrong, David Callahan and Steven Bawlow. (js)/(Register-Star photo by Jerry Silverman)



'Living Painting'

From left, Martin Van Buren third graders Heather Main, Seth Gladstone and Mindy Russo pose for the last "Living Painting" in their class' presentation of Master Piece Theatre. The trio's tableau is that of Winslow Homer's "Crack the Whip". Each third grade class presented a living painting. They studied the lives and painting styles of five artists, including Pierre Renoir, Mary Cassatt and Vincent Van Gogh. Overseeing the project were: Jane Miller, librarian; Joan Barker, art teacher, and Beth Antonio, music teacher. (Photo by Linda Hallenbeck)

KINDERKRAFTERS

In 1946, we were the Kinderhook Home Demonstration Unit, which was an extension of the New York State Federation of Home Bureaus. Our chairman then was Mary Dunham. We even had a Homemaker's Creed. Most of the programs were home oriented; sewing, baking, clothes care, nutrition, child care, etc.

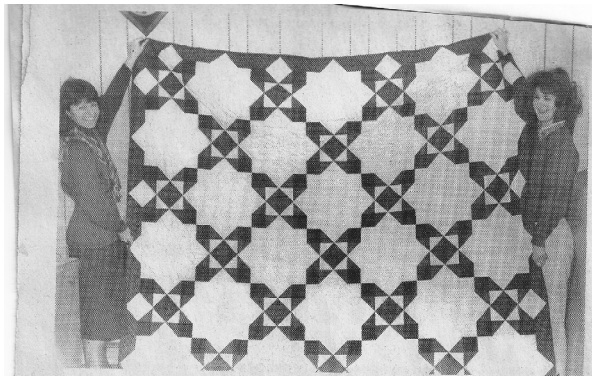
Then in March, 1967, the extension program was changed. A new plan and a new name, KinderKrafters, was adopted starting July 1, 1967. Programs started to change slowly from the home to crafts. Even an Achievement Night was introduced in May, 1968. Crafts were displayed and demonstrated with refreshments served and entertainment provided for the community. The dutch theme of using the colors blue and white was also started then.

In May, 1976, Kinderkrafters held their 1st Craft Fair in conjunction with the Kinderhook Dutch Heritage Celebration. Since then we have held our craft festival every year in the Kinderhook Village Square. The tulip motif was adopted as our "emblem" in the dutch blue and white. Also the combined efforts of all the members making a quilt or afgan to be raffled at the fair has continued. In 1977 we raffled an afgan; in 1978 a cathedral window quilt; in 1979 an applique tulip quilt and a crocheted daisy afgan; in 1980 an applique apple quilt; in 1981 an applique dresden plate quilt; and in 1982 an applique maple leaf quilt. *

In 1979, we established our Constitution and By-Laws, and became an incorporated organization for the protection of our officers and members. We are legally known as the Columbia County Kinderkrafters, Inc. We also received our Federal and State Exempt Tax Certification through the resourceful efforts of Betty Barrows, Christine Frederick, Andrea Rutherford, and Pat Catalina.

Through our programs now, we try to inform and educate our members about quality arts and crafts, such as stained glass, calligraphy, scrimshaw, pine needle baskets, etc. By reintroducing our heritage crafts, such as stenciling, quilting, tole painting, pysanky, we learn a little about our area and ancestors.

Kinderkrafters can be informative, educational, and above all enjoyable!



Quilters ready for craft fair

Kinderkrafters Karen Tomashosky, left, and Deborah Scalzo say the club's red, white and green quilt is ready to be raffled at the Kinderhook Village Craft Fair May 20. Scalzo said the Kinderkrafters will donate the money raised from the quilt to the Volatile Rescue Squad for a defibrillator.

16

THE SCHODACK, STUYVESANT, KINDERHOOK AND CHATHAM SOCIETY FOR THE DETECTION OF HORSE THIEVES

The Society was formed in 1823 with 27 original signers, at the home of Mathias Hulst in Schodack.

Some of the notable amendments to the Society's bylaws include:

In 1831, widows of deceased members were allowed to become members as long as they remained unmarried but "did not have to attend the annual meetings".

In 1839 the Society added cows and oxen as protected animals.

In 1884 membership was increased from \$1 to \$3/ year.

In 1909 the radius of search for the riders was increased to 100 miles

In 1915 members from Chatham were added to the Society as was payment of cigars for the annual meeting

In 1917 was the last time the group tried to recover a stolen horse

In the 1930s a mule went missing, but came back by itself

In 1946 a resolution was soundly defeated to add cars as protected assets

In 1949 Oyster stew was added to the menu from a recipe of chef Brock

In 1950 Clam Chowder added

In 1962 the Bylaws were changed to permit gatherings at any site in Columbia or Rensselaer counties. Previous meetings had to be held in the Town of Schodack.

In the 1980s two horses were stolen from a local breeding farm, but the police didn't call on the society for help.



2014 meeting with Kinderhook resident and actor Stephen Lang as guest speaker. He brought a real human skull in a round box to show the group as they prepared to eat Minced Ham Salad Sandwiches.



Another society for the apprehension of horse thieves in New Jersey annually brings in a horse to identify the 'thief' on trial before 'hanging' them, usually a local person being honored for their civic service.

The Valatie Santa Claus Club was founded in 1946 by Bill Farrell and other friends who had just returned from service in World War II and were inspired by a terminally ill girl's wish to see Santa.

Their continued objective is to provide Christmas gifts, in costume, to all of the children of the village. Each year on Christmas Eve Santa rides into town on a fire truck with Gene Autrey's "Here Comes Santa Claus" playing loudly from the engine's speakers, just as it was the very first time in 1946.



Bill Farrell, founder of the Valatie Santa Claus Club and also its first Santa.



Santa arrives by the Val-Kin via helicopter some time in the 1970s.

KINDERHOOK SPORTSMANS CLUB (sic)
AND OTHER LOCAL GUN CLUBS

Local sportsmen's clubs generally revolve around facilitating hunting and fishing trips as well as providing grounds for trap and target shooting for members. Traditionally geared towards men, recently a new type of gun-owner advocacy group has sprung up in the area called WCC (Women's Concealed Carry). Founded by Trish Cutler in 2012, the group focuses on making firearm ownership and carrying less daunting for women. Their main work is hosting an annual fashion show accompanied by presentations on women's self-defense and situational awareness.

Trish says:

"The idea for the Women's Concealed Carry Fashion Show began on January 24, 2012 after my third attempt to shop for a holster at the local gun stores failed. My quest to conquer this dilemma prompted me to find another way. I decided to invite some of my gun gal pals to my home for nacho night and to go online and discuss and demonstrate concealed carry with my friends. I asked them to bring as many holsters as they could beg, borrow or steal for the evening. Having actual holster fittings in a comfortable, non-intimidating atmosphere saved us the embarrassment of asking the male store clerks for their opinions and definitions of IWB, OWB, AFBH, etc. and allowed us to try on and figure out how to wear these foreign objects instead of "trial and error purchasing" a.k.a. "cash and trash".

"For the fashion show, the ladies of all shapes, sizes and ages wore holsters with different attire including everyday casual, athletic clothing, evening-wear, and career wardrobes. They modeled to demonstrate the draw and re-holstering using training guns for each particular type of carry. This runway presentation made decision making about the ultimate fashion accessory fun and easy."



sign for the Kinderhook Sportsmen's Club



Trish Cutler

The Kinderhook Elks Lodge 2530 is a fraternal and social organization which hosts dinners, dances, pancake breakfasts, and does various community and charity-based activities. It also runs the area's summer youth soccer program. Though a strong proponent of "Americanism" and patriotic ideals, the group is generally politically neutral and locally viewed as good-natured, or as their name suggests, 'benevolent'.

However in 2013 Eric J. Feight, an engineer and high-standing member of the lodge was charged with "conspiracy to assist terrorists" and sentenced to 15 years in prison after he conspired with a Ku Klux Klan member to build a silent, portable device which could deliver lethal doses of ionizing radiation. The pair had planned to use it to target Muslims and Muslim organizations who they deemed are "contributing to the demise of the United States".

In a meeting on Nov. 14, 2012, Glendon Scott Crawford (the plot's mastermind) and Feight met in an Albany area coffee shop with two undercover FBI agents who were posing as KKK-friendly businessmen. Crawford had allegedly referred to Feight as his "software guy."



Kinderhook Lodge's "Leading Knight" Eric J. Feight (bottom left)

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CUB SCOUTS and BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

The Boy Scouts of America are not unique to Kinderhook, but there are many troops in the area, especially of Cub Scouts (boys aged 7-11) as most scouts don't continue into the proper Boy Scouts. Scouts focus on developing trustworthiness, good citizenship, and outdoors skills, and are able to earn merit badges by taking part in or initiating activities or public services in the guide book.

The "Indian Lore" merit badge is achieved by going through a long list of requirements involving research, craft, and contemplative essay writing about the history and situation of American Indians.

This section of the scout guide begins:

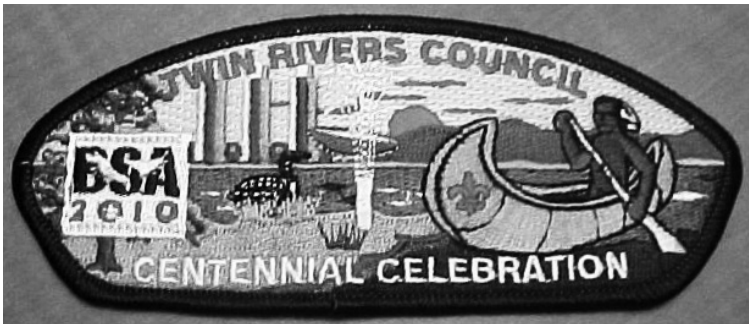
"Far different from the stereotypes or common images that are portrayed on film, on television, and in many books and stories, American Indians have many different cultures, languages, religions, styles of dress, and ways of life. To learn about these different groups is to take an exciting journey of discovery in which you will meet some of America's most fascinating peoples."



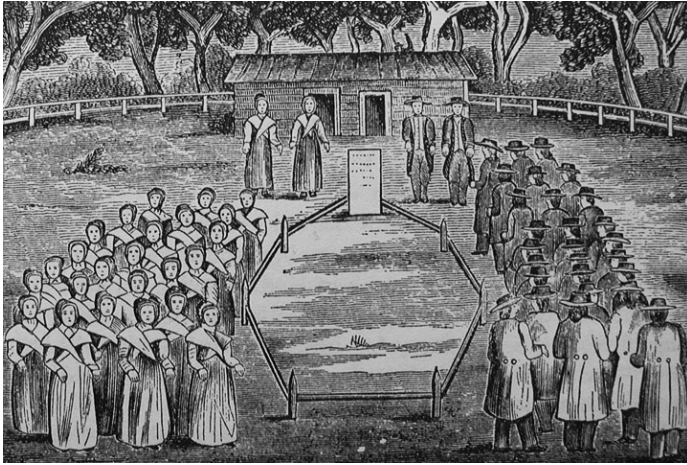
Scouts at the 'Golden Arrow' ceremony



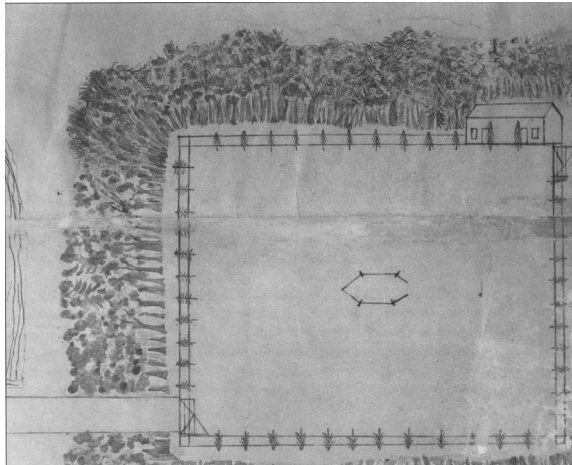
The "Indian Lore" Merit Badge

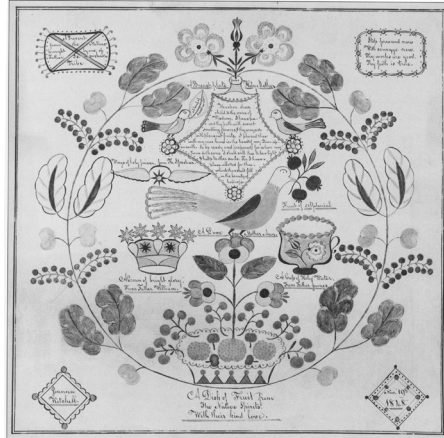


Scout patch for regional council picturing a rowing Indian with Albany's Empire State Plaza in the background.

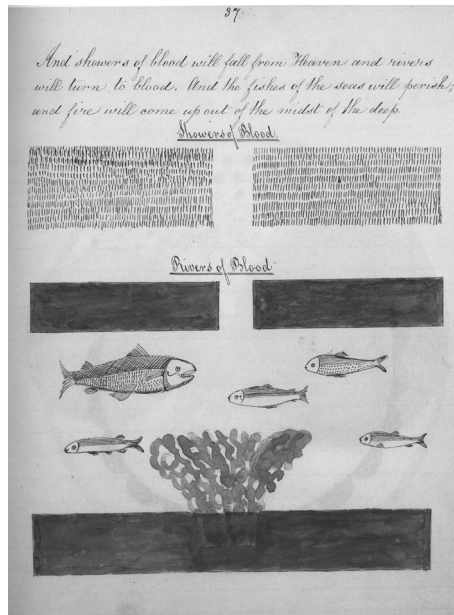


The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, better known as "The Shakers" once held a strong presence in Columbia County. Their celibate lifestyle made their legacy difficult with only 3 members living today. Their history is rich, unusual, and complex. Here pictured are two diagrams of the layout of their 'Mountain Meetings', a ritual regularly practiced in the mid-late 1800s. The focal point is a "visionary fountain whose waters could be seen rising to the very heaven of heavens by those with spiritual eyes."





Shaker Gift Drawings appeared in Mount Lebanon during the Era of Manifestations (roughly 1837-1855) when many “gifts” came directly to members of the community. Somewhat like automatic writing, the drawings were made as visions from God. One day there came a “gift” telling that there wouldn’t be any more gift drawings, and they stopped being produced.



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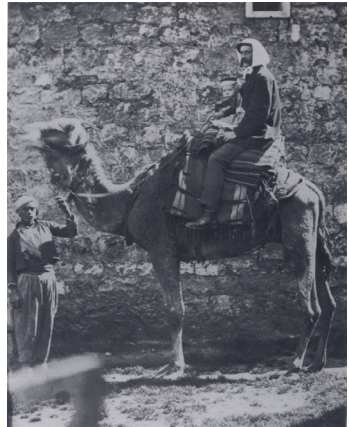
OLANA

Frederic Edwin Church was a landscape painter and, for a time, the foremost member of the Hudson River School, one of the first American art movements to receive international acclaim. Church built “Olana” outside of Hudson, New York in a conglomerate of styles he observed on his extensive travels. Between 1870 and 1891 he constructed the house and heavily altered grounds in order to create a “center of the world”, and achieve a perfect harmony between man and nature.

The quilt in the exhibition is based on one side of the tower roof of Olana.



Catskill Mountains from the Home of the Artist, 1871



Church and his son in Beirut, 1868



The tower roof of Olana

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would firstly like to thank my family Elaine, Dan, and Emily Kline and my wife Sol Calero for their ongoing help and support with this project.

I'd like to thank Enrico Centonze, Solvej Helweg Ovesen and Grimmuseum for working so hard to help realize this exhibition.

Many aspects of this show involve solely the work of others, and I am very happy to have been able to showcase their creations. This includes Bruce G. Hallenbeck, Sarah Cain, Matthew Latiolais (Northend Woodworking), Alice Hallenbeck and all of the former Kinderkrafters who donated their craft works to the project, and the 4th and 5th grade students at Ichabod Crane who made O.K. poster designs. Thank you also to the teachers who took the time from their busy schedule to incorporate this project into their curriculum.

Thank you to Barb Mayer, Sue Jermain, Karen Hummel, Chris Cain, Beth Antonio, Jane Miller, and Joan Barker for their assistance with my research. Coincidentally or not, all of them were school teachers of mine.

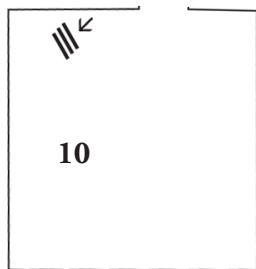
Thanks to Ethan Hayes-Chute, Jan Pfeiffer and Suzanne Quesney for lending their spirited vocals to the preliminary recordings of *O.K. – The Musical*. Thanks also to Ethan for helping digitize Sarah Cain's old American VHS Balloon landing video tape. And thank you to John McCusker for his help in craftily recreating the New York State Historical Markers down to the letter.

Thanks to Shari and Pam Kline for their generous provisions of fabric remnants from Traditions Linens in Claverack.

A very huge thanks is in order for Annabel Debaenst and Tea Palmelund whose skills, ideas, patience, and persistence lead to the realization of many of these works.

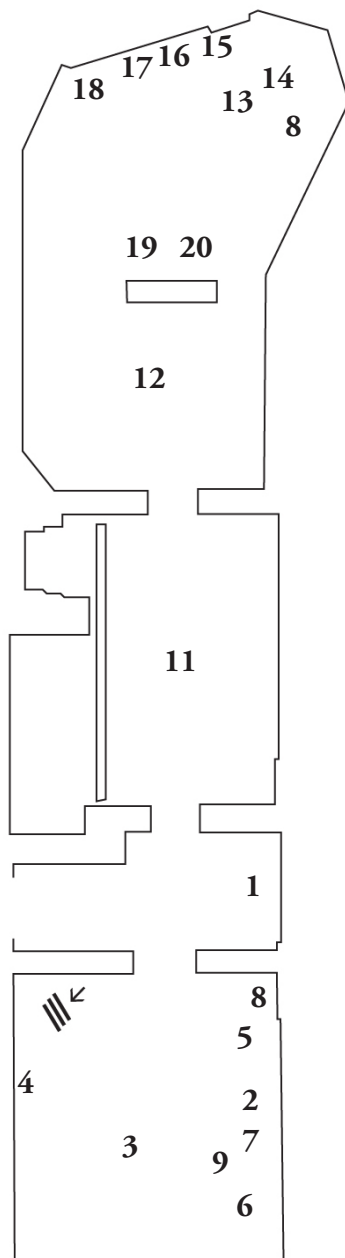
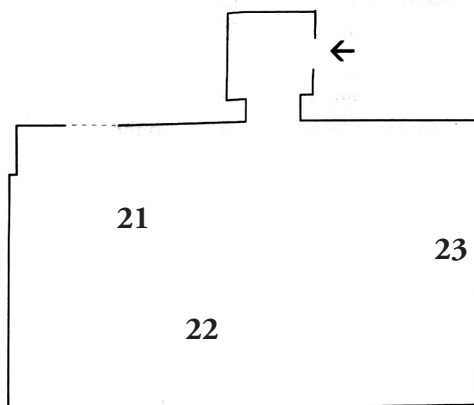
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EXHIBITION MAP



BASEMENT

SOUTH WING
(Greater Columbia County)



NORTH WING