



WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY NEW YEAR

~Carol Schweizer

As I am reviewing our program schedule, it seems amazing that we are half way through the GPS year.

The December program was presented by Chris Carola who spoke about Saratoga County Soldiers of WW II. Chris had a wealth of information about veterans from our county and our town. He highlighted several of the Galway citizens who went to war and two who did not return, Dighton Polan and Alexander Shoutis. Both of these men were friends of my parents, Ed and June Michelfelder, so I have memories of hearing about both of them when I was growing up. We should never forget what veterans have done for the good of us all.

We are hoping for the weather to cooperate for our next meeting on January 8, 2024. The program will be a video prepared by local historian, David Brooks. His subject is entitled "Iron-Hearted Regiment" about Civil War soldiers from upstate New York. If you are not able to get to the meeting, you may watch the video on Zoom.

At this time I would like to take this opportunity to thank one of our program committee members, David Waite. David has been a member of GPS for only a few years. He has a strong interest in researching and recording local history. Through his contacts, he has arranged several of our programs for this year. Keep them coming, David, and thank you! We have a strong program committee, and each member has provided at least one of the other speakers for the year. Thank you all.

One more word to all members. Please consider writing any memories you have of earlier times of our area. Others would enjoy reading your stories in future GPS Journals!

If you have not renewed your membership, this will be your last issue of the Journal. It is not too late. Send you check for \$10 to Galway Preservation Society, PO Box 276, Galway, NY 12074.

Liberty Flag Event

~ Bonnie Donnan

Schenectady County Historical Society has announced their first event in the local commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of America. They have invited all to join them January 12 at noon to raise the Liberty Flag in Schenectady.

The event will assemble at the Schenectady Historical Museum, 32 Washington Avenue in Schenectady, and then walk to the corner of Church and Union Streets to relive the raising of the Liberty Flag. A flagpole will be put up, and a replica flag will be raised. A few brief remarks on the importance of liberty will be followed by a move inside the First Reformed Church for refreshments, and an invitation to sign a “liberty board” with discussions of what liberty means. Since this is a largely outdoor event in January, dress with the weather in mind.

This event marks the action of January 12th, 1774, when an angry group of about 50 people gathered in what was then the center of town to raise a square, dark blue silk flag, homemade, with the stitched-on word “LIBERTY.” The local opinion of the demonstrators ranged from patriots to rioters. This early division, before the historic Revolution and the formation of our country, invites us to ponder what liberty is, and the conflict of the present day.

Schenectady County Historical Society owns the only surviving “Liberty” flag from the Revolutionary War. The flag has been proudly exhibited at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, along with a photograph of Nicholas Veeder, sitting outside his home in Scotia. Veeder was known as the last surviving veteran of the Revolution, living until age 100 in 1862. The photo shows what looks to be the Liberty Flag behind him.

Gettysburg Flag Company has information on the origins of the Schenectady Liberty Flag, and will happily sell you a reproduction. Their information adds that a conflict in Schenectady motivating the development of the flag was the original Dutch settlers belief that the more recently arrived English did not have property rights within the area.

Information for this was gathered from the event post on Facebook by Schenectady County Historical Society, online posts of the Museum of the American Revolution, The Gazette, and the Gettysburg Flag Company.