

# Historian Report

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May 28, 2021

To

John Lawrence  
Town Supervisor  
Afton, NY

Janice Nickerson  
Mayor  
Afton, NY

Dear John and Janice,

The following is a report of my activities for May 2021.

- Office hours: 16 hours
- Museum hours: 7.5 hours
- **New activities:**
  - Spoke with Rich Morey. Mormon homes have re-opened for the summer season. Dropped off brochures for the Museum and Library.
  - Prepared flyer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> run of my book, "Sand Hill Cemetery" to be included with a fundraiser letter for the cemetery. Orders are beginning to arrive. Will reorder in June.
  - Met Carol Roberts, from local DAR chapter, to accept a donation of Afton DAR items.
  - Met Tom Vail at the Afton Firehouse for tour and to photograph old photos and Fire Dept. items.
  - Met Sarah Eames, reporter for Daily Star, at the Museum for a tour in preparation for article on the Museum. Article appeared in Daily Star on Saturday, May 15, 2021. (see attached) Thank you note sent to her.
  - Began a birthday (my 65<sup>th</sup>) fundraiser to benefit the Afton Museum. Have already raised close to \$800 which will be applied to helping with painting the Museum.
  - Research done for Kelsey descendant; Eastside book questions from Sharon Donahe; Austin Chase descendant; property information for house on 41.
  - Updated Afton Historical Society website.
  - Placed flags on veterans' graves in Chestnut Hill cemetery.
  - Revised brochures and printed for the Museum; designed and printed a self-guided tour brochure for Museum.
  - Visited the Unadilla Museum for research in to my next 2 books. (2hrs)
  - Cleaned three gravestones in Oneonta Plains Cemetery for a local family.
  - Contacted by North Afton Cemetery Association to reset a number of gravestones that have fallen.
  - Have begun to write Book #2 on Chestnut Hill Cemetery; research begun on Book #3 St. Matthew's Cemetery.
- **Continuing:**



- To maintain the website for the Historical Society & Facebook pages for Afton Town Historian, Afton Historical Society, Otsego Co. Genealogy & Evergreen Hill Cemetery.
- Afton cemetery spreadsheet – continuing to update with obituaries.
- Spreadsheet on the Afton vital records held by the Town Clerk. This sheet will eventually enable her ease of access to these old record books. Have completed through 2020 (births and deaths) and 1989 (marriages) thus far.
- East Side Cemetery information is being assembled for upcoming book.
- Finished cleaning gravestones and completed transcription and photographing in Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Unadilla. (6.5 hours)
- Deep cleaning and reorganizing displays at the Museum.
- Historical Society Mug sales continue.
- Did revisions for an article on Ansco and Afton that will appear in the upcoming CCHS Journal.
- **Research:**
  - 4 email requests for information
  - 8 FB requests for information - stemming from my FB page posts.
  - 1 Face to Face meetings in Office
  - 1 Phone calls for information.
- **Attended:**
  - Webinars, Northeast IN Jewish Genealogical Society, "One Step Websites and Searching the 1950 census", May 2, 2021.
  - Afton Historical Society Meeting, May 5, 2021.
  - Evergreen Hill Cemetery Clean-up, May 8, 2021.

Kathy Ouimet  
Town/Village Historian  
[aftonnyhistorian@gmail.com](mailto:aftonnyhistorian@gmail.com)



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## Nursing homes lose staffing, admissions

By JOE MAHONEY  
H.I. State Reporter

— New York's long term care facilities have found themselves with significant shortages while facing a sharp decline in admissions as the pandemic hit more families to choose for caring for frail relatives. The pandemic that reached New York in 2020, the occupancy rate at more than 600 state-regulated facilities stood at about 93%. It is a 10% drop, industry executives say. In other words, that means the vacancies approximately tripled in 16

months. The situation is so dire for some facilities that operators are expected to face losses by closing homes. Anthony Albanese, director of a trade association, said operators have seen a total of 2.5% in reduced state's Medicaid reimbursements leading into the pandemic. "It comes now face an expected labor costs after lawmakers' 'safe staffing' measure that nursing homes offer a minimum of direct care daily to resi-

the measure argued it will cut costs already left financially

Gustavo Rivera, D-the Bronx, said the Senate Health Committee's mandate is overdue. "It's three and a half hours where the care that are professionals' nurses aides or licensed usually take care of individuals did in promoting the bill. 'We think this is necessary.'



SARAH EAMES

Afton historian Kathy Ouimet shows the war room, one of several recently remodeled rooms at the Afton Museum, on Thursday.

## Afton historians use downtime to upgrade museum

By SARAH EAMES  
Staff Writer

Members of the Afton Historical Association took advantage of the many long, slow months of the coronavirus pandemic to make some much-needed upgrades and improvements on the Afton Museum, which reopens to the public after more than a year-long closure Memorial Day weekend. The museum has been housed at 116 Main St. since 1985, according to Afton historian Kathy Ouimet. Built in 1866, the house was named for its most recent occupant, Isabelle Seely Jennings, an Afton resident known for her extensive collections of dolls and elephant figurines.

"A lot of places I know don't have an actual, dedicated museum," Ouimet said. "We're fortunate that we have this house and that we own it. It was donated to us, so we don't have to pay rent on it at all."

The downstairs features exhibits on the town's many doctors, dentists and druggists, many of whom are featured in the Historical Society's 2021 calendar, one of its primary fundraising efforts, Ouimet said.

During a pandemic deep-clean of Dr. Philateus Hayes' secretary-style drop-desk, Ouimet said she found a patient logbook, long believed to have been lost, hidden in a drawer. The book details many

of the home births Hayes attended, providing a valuable tool for genealogists and residents interested in tracing their local ancestry.

The upstairs rooms of the museum now contain the war room, with artifacts dating back to the country's earliest conflicts, Ouimet said. A special exhibit details the life of Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, a resident who served in the Union Army from 1862 to 1864 disguised as a soldier by the name of Lyon. Her secret was not discovered until her death from disease in Louisiana, where she is buried.



See MUS