



# LIVINGSTON COUNTY HISTORIAN'S OFFICE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

No. 1—Vol. 11

**PRINTING.**  
 PAPER, PRINTING, BINDING, &c.  
 BY RIPLEY & COULBERT,  
 In the Masonic Printing-Office

**Ladies' School.**  
 THE School for Young Ladies, kept by the Miss Haymonds, will, in the course of a few days be removed to apartments in the new Academy, where a number more scholars can be accommodated.  
 Board for young ladies can be procured in several respectable families in this village, at two dollars per week.  
 Moscow, 20th December, 1817.

**Ashes, Ahoy!**  
 THE subscriber's Ashery is now completed, so that he is ready to receive ORDERS, for which he will pay one shilling per bushel for good clean horse-dung, and two shillings for proportionable quality.  
 He also wishes to purchase BLACK SLATS, for which he will pay a reasonable price, and a part by cash.  
 A few Caskets, Kettles and Iron-pots, suitable for making salts, for sale.  
 William Robb.  
 Moscow, Jan. 21, 1818. 51

**J. W. Follitt**  
 INFORMS the public that he has taken a shop, opposite Messrs. Agnew & Co.'s store, in the village of Moscow, where he intends to carry on the BOOT AND SHOE-MAKING BUSINESS, in all its various branches. Such persons as are desirous of procuring good work in this line, and on reasonable terms, are invited to call.  
 Jan. 21, 1818.—3m45

**FELIX TRACY**  
 Attorney and Counsellor at Law,  
 AND  
 MASTER IN CHANCERY;  
 Has opened an Office in the VILLAGE OF MOSCOW.  
 Oct. 8, 1817. 307

**Save your Ashes!**  
 THE subscriber, being about to erect an ashery in this village, will, if possible, be enabled to receive good effluvia from or field ashes, for which he will give the current prices,—but, in order to save trouble or disappointment, he will not give any price for dirty ashes or those that are partly leached.  
 LATELY RECEIVED,  
 In addition to his former assortment, a new supply of  
**GOODS,**  
 among which are,  
 Factory Shirtings, India Muslin, Superfine and common Blue Cloth, Flannels, Brass Kettles, Genuine double-bottle Powder, School Books, American Steel, English and Swedes Iron, and Hollow Ware—  
 Together with many other articles, which render his assortment as good as that in country stores generally, and he will dispose of them on moderate terms, for cash, or on a short credit and receive produce in payment at such prices, as ways wishing it to be particularly understood that he will insist on payment when due.

Also for sale,  
 1 pack large dark colors of  
**BUFFALO SKINS,**  
 and  
 A FEW BIRNELS OF S.I.L.T.  
 Wm. Robb.  
 Moscow, Dec. 23d, 1817. 47H

**New Goods!!**  
 Olmsted & Bissell,  
 HAVE just received from New-York, a general assortment of

**Rochester**

**S**UCH, at this day, is the political world, and so many are publications of this kind, that it is as unnecessary to be concerned, the present is an unfortunate time for the establishment of a newspaper. But in every other respect, the prospect is favorable for our purpose.  
 Although we cannot gratify our readers with a treat gathered from fields of battle and countries deluged with blood; with accounts of national disasters and national victories; still the passions of the earth exist, and their concerns, as greatly changed, are worthy of interest. The politician is still interested in the proceedings of senates and the regulations of states, and the Christian is still interested in the arrests of profaney labour, and the spread of the gospel.  
 With more party politics, national and considerable men have become disgusted. It shall be our fixed aim to contribute and illuminate.  
 But, though we do not pledge ourselves to support any system of politics, we will not pledge ourselves to cast them entirely. As editors of a free country, we have a right to ascertain our own opinions of men and measures, and if the public good can be at all promoted, we shall freely and honestly express that opinion without loss of affectation.  
 We profess ourselves the friends of good order, and shall spare no exertions to promote the welfare and happiness of humanity. We invite the assistance and respect the patronage of those who are actuated by the same motives, and who wish for the attainment of this object.  
 To subscribers, we would mention that no pains shall be spared in the mechanical execution of the paper, and to our advertising patrons, we express our hope of its extensive circulation.  
 Rochester, Jan. 1, 1818.

**Scott's Family**  
 SUBSCRIPTIONS for this volume of the monthly...  
 the...

...of his object school...  
 ...the weight...  
 ...on his mind...  
 ...of his object school...  
 ...similar situation, and in a...  
 ...the neighbours were called...  
 ...the school transformed into a...  
 ...gious conference; and...  
 ...they until night, when the instructor...  
 ...for the first time dismissed his school...  
 ...with prayer. For some time after...  
 ...this one day returned, which bro't...  
 ...not the joyful tidings that some one...  
 ...was exhibited, or some one made...  
 ...happy beneath the smiles of a recon-...  
 ...ciled Saviour.  
 In the first mentioned school, religious books were substituted exclusively, and religious instruction the sole business for weeks. The school-house became a Bethel, where God was worshipped morning, noon, and night. But a few weeks elapsed before the major part were enabled to sing of mercy, and when morning what God had wrought for them, were lost in wonder, love and praise. The work appeared to be genuine and every instance; and all this publicly confessed.  
 Jesus Christ as a...  
 agreeable...  
 direct...  
 time...  
 ...for...  
 ...ous in...  
 ...those who an...  
 ...selves to the true...  
 ...Saviour! Surely, the...  
 ...gives the importance of...  
 ...diffusions in teachers, beyond...  
 ...doubt.  
 May God add his blessing to this humble attempt to publish his unspeakable goodness, and thus fresh sinners to the glory which, ere long, will be every tongue.  
 PHILIP...  
 Account...



## LETTER FROM THE HISTORIAN

**Dear Livingston County Board of Supervisors, Administrator, and residents:**

It is a privilege to submit my third annual report as County Historian. Each day I am humbled to be the eighth county historian in a lineage reaching back to 1933.

This year, the County Historian's Office completed several signature projects while simultaneously providing prompt and friendly customer service, and continuing daily mission-based activities.

The office's accomplishments included surpassing 2023's number of public presentations, writing two articles on the fishing heritage of Cal-Mum for *Dark Skies Fly-Fishing* magazine, creating a brochure about Murray Hill, and strengthening partnerships with county departments, local historians, and other entities.

Deputy Historian Madeline Friedler, who marked two years with the county this summer, has continued growing in her role and has become proficient in office operations and assisting patrons. She manages the research room, responds to daily queries, and goes the extra mile for patrons. It is a joy to work together as an efficient team and learn every day.

Over the summer, the historian's office hosted Ethan Shaw, a Gardiner Foundation Fellow through SUNY Geneseo. He indexed and digitized naturalization records and organized several collections. Weekly volunteers Jane and Ron transcribed diaries and indexed hundreds of obituaries and Civil War records. Thanks to our volunteers' time, our valuable collections are more accessible to the public via the online Records Index.

As in past years, office statistics on visitors and research requests reveal a continual shift that aligns with global trends. As more information is made available online, the public's expectation for virtual access has skyrocketed. This decisive trend directs and informs the office's focus on increasing accessibility of information and excellent customer service.

In the coming year, I plan to develop additional programming and enhance resources, undertake further digitization of our community newspapers, and continue utilizing technology to improve access to the archival collections.

My sincere thanks and appreciation goes to the Board of Supervisors and the county administration for their continued support of the County Historian's Office. The department is proud to grow, learn, and continue to offer unparalleled access to historical information. Thank you!



**HOLLY WATSON**

*Livingston County Historian*



## MISSION

The mission of the County Historian's Office is to collect, preserve, and interpret the County's documentary heritage and manage historical records for the public.

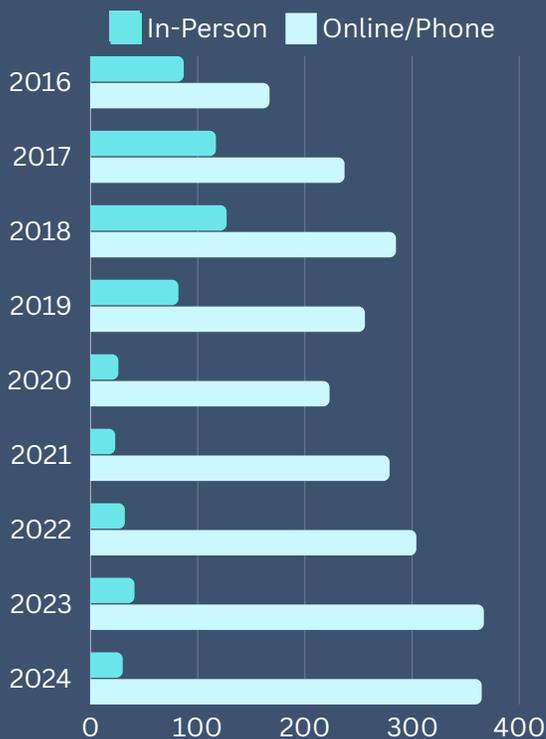
## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Collecting, preserving, and interpreting historical information
- Assisting county departments and the general public with research
- Offering displays and programming on topics of historical significance
- Providing guidance to the 17 town historians of Livingston County
- Attending events

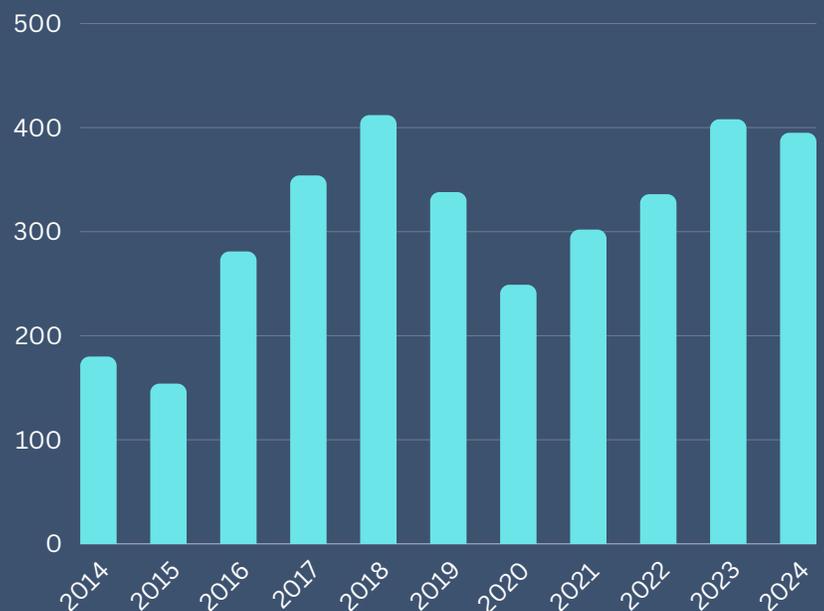
## PUBLIC RESEARCH ROOM AND ARCHIVES

In 2024, the Historian's Office received 365 research requests online or by phone, just below last year's record. The continued movement toward remote information-seeking is undeniable. This strong trend directs the office's focus on making information readily available online and providing excellent customer service.

### IN-PERSON VS. REMOTE REQUESTS



### TOTAL RESEARCH REQUESTS, 2014-2024





## 1

### NEWSPAPER ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT

Thanks to a fully-funded RRLC Collections and Access Grant, over 75,600 pages of local newspapers were rescanned and are now available to search and browse on NYS Historic Newspapers. This supports the Historian’s Office’s mission to preserve documentary history and provide free patron access to information.

The Historian’s Office is already planning another round of newspapers to scan and share via the statewide initiative in 2025.



## POORHOUSE CEMETERY KIOSKS

## 2

Through partnerships with the Highway Department Sign Shop and Central Services, the Historian’s Office installed kiosks and interpretive panels in each of the two county-owned poorhouse cemeteries in Geneseo. The signs and available brochures provide context for the sites, helping visitors understand what the poorhouse was and who might have lived and died there.

Additionally, Central Services began resetting toppling stones to continue preserving and dignifying the cemeteries.

## 3

### ECLIPSE DOCUMENTATION

The Historian’s Office organized volunteers across the county to help document the 2024 total solar eclipse. Although the day was cloudy, numerous events across the county and region celebrated the phenomenon.

Through on-the-ground photography and videography, donated materials, and archiving collected images, the Historian’s Office accumulated about 370 items documenting this historic event.





## WEBPAGE AND ONLINE RESOURCES

- The County Historian’s Office webpage was updated throughout the year to reflect new resources, links, and announcements.
- A new subpage about Craig Colony and locating institutional records was added.

## RECORDS INDEX

Lucidea Technologies has hosted the County Historian’s Records Index, a core public offering, for over two years. This has been an excellent success.

The database **expanded by almost 30,000 new entries** this year, thanks in part to additional volunteer and intern work.

During 2024, **more than 2,000 users performed over 15,500 searches**, reflecting an increase over last year.



## FLICKR PHOTO GALLERY

The historian’s Flickr photostream is an easy way to share a sampling of archival images with patrons. Several photos have thousands of views, and the gallery has logged over 93,400 views since its launch in 2022. Several new photos were uploaded and tagged for easy, free discoverability online.



**13**  
ALBUMS

**255**  
PHOTOGRAPHS

**93,400+**  
VIEWS SINCE  
INCEPTION





# HISTORICAL RECORDS PRESERVATION AND ACCESS



**1,400+**  
ITEMS DONATED

- Donated items were appraised, arranged, and described. Physical items were housed in archival-quality storage containers and digital items were stored on the secure county server.
- Accepted donations included church records, directories, photographs, newspapers, and record books, all related to people, organization, places, and local events.



**95,000+**  
PAGES DIGITIZED

- Tens of thousands of documents, photographs, and newspapers were digitized, including church registers, early municipal records, Craig Colony photographs, and naturalizations. Digitization is vital in the preservation, retrieval, and sharing of information.



**4**  
SCANNING  
PROJECTS  
FACILITATED

- Organizations and town historians often wish to have items digitized but do not have the proper equipment. The Historian's Office undertook or facilitated several scanning projects for local churches, historians, and historical societies, resulting in thousands of digital images that are now backed up and accessible.



**19,700+**  
NEW INDEX ENTRIES

- Thousands of entries from obituaries, business ledgers, tax rolls, Civil War records, and church records were typed up for the County Historian's online Record Index.
- Hundreds of obituaries from local papers were indexed.
- 218% more entries were added to the Record Index than last year.



**425**  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

- Jane Oakes – Transcription of James B. Harrison diaries (Jan.-Dec.)
- Ron Browne – Indexing historical records and obituaries (Jan.-Dec.)
- Ethan Shaw – Indexing wills and naturalizations, digitizing naturalizations, and organizing collections (May-Jul.)



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY



**18**  
PRESENTATIONS



**480**  
IN-PERSON  
ATTENDEES



**900+**  
POORHOUSE  
BROCHURES  
DISTRIBUTED



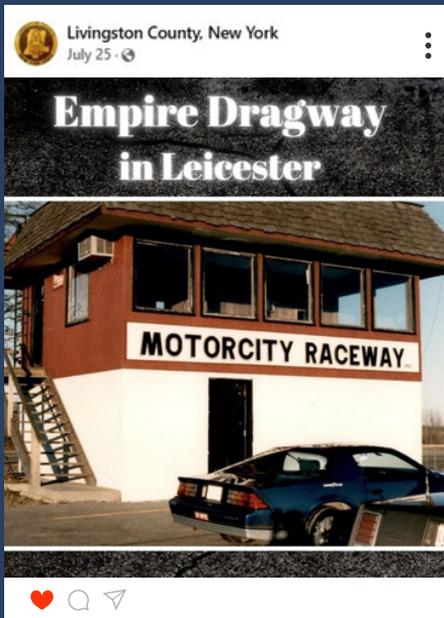
**38**  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
POSTS



**3,300+**  
ENGAGEMENTS  
ON ALL POSTS



**50+**  
MURRAY HILL  
BROCHURES  
DISTRIBUTED



The year's top Facebook post reached over 35,000 accounts, gathering 640 reactions and 40 comments, and was shared over 120 times.



The historian visited two groups of second-graders at Geneseo Central School for a career-day presentation. A highlight was looking at old maps and locating features like the river, roads, and the kids' neighborhoods.



## COMMITTEE AND ORGANIZATION INVOLVEMENT

### County Historian Holly Watson

- Served as secretary for GAHWNY (Government-Appointed Historians of Western NY); handled all communications, processed meeting registrations, updated social media and built new website; assisted with planning of annual conference.
- Elected president of GAHWNY for 2025-2026.
- Served on county SHAPE Advisory Board.
- Served as ex-officio member of Livingston County Information Governance Board.

### Deputy County Historian Madeline Friedler

- Served on Al Lorenz Family Fest planning committee and participated in Family Fest.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



**37**  
EVENTS  
ATTENDED

- Staff attended in-person and online conferences and trainings related to archives, historical topics, business processes, and emergency preparedness.
- Attended networking and commemorative events, including Nunda Historical Society ribbon-cutting, Dansville Library anniversary event, Inverness Cemetery tour, and Ontario County Records and Archives open house.



## PATRON COMMENTS

“I really enjoyed your talk! Also I want to commend you for doing such a great job of organizing all the information on the county website! I’ve been following from afar for many years and I’m impressed by the changes. You are performing a valuable service.”

“Through your recommendation, we FINALLY found my grandmother’s death certificate. We are very thankful...You have truly helped our family.”

“Thanks so much for taking the time to give the extra help and advice rather than just answering the direct question. I really appreciate it!”

“I’ve reached out to a number of ...other official government and historical websites, and you all have been the most responsive and helpful by far.. So bravo to the county of Livingston and to you all for the important work you do!!!”

“Thank you so much. Historians keep the world a better place.”





# 2025 GOALS



**Prioritizing** security, efficiency, and access to records through implementation of a professional asset management system.



**Completing** another round of microfilm digitization, using ARPA funds, to preserve and share important local newspapers.



**Publishing** the book on the history of Murray Hill with former County Historian Amie Alden.



# LIVINGSTON COUNTY HISTORIAN'S OFFICE



**Holly Watson, County Historian**  
**Madeline Friedler, Deputy Historian**



[livingstoncounty.gov/162/county-historian](http://livingstoncounty.gov/162/county-historian)



[historian@co.livingston.ny.us](mailto:historian@co.livingston.ny.us)  
[mfriedler@co.livingston.ny.us](mailto:mfriedler@co.livingston.ny.us)



5 Murray Hill Drive  
Mount Morris, New York 14510



(585) 243-7955



Monday-Friday, 1:00pm-4:30pm  
Closed legal holidays  
Appointments encouraged

