

GREECE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**Sharing Our Town's Story
Since 1969**





Greece Historical Society P.O. Box 16249 Greece, NY 14616 (585)225-7221

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GREECE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

By definition, a historical society is an organization dedicated to preserving, collecting, researching, and interpreting historical information or items. Unlike many other states, which recognize cultural agencies as nonprofit private businesses, New York State sees them as educational organizations. Chartered historical societies in New York like the Greece Historical Society are a significant part of our educational system, are incorporated under Education Law, are subject to the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, and have the recognition of being a member of the University of the State of New York.

The Greece Historical Society (GHS) was organized in 1969 by Greece Town Historian Virginia Tomkiewicz, with the encouragement of Town Supervisor Fred J. Eckert who became a charter member. The Society received its absolute charter from the New York State Department of Education Board of Regents as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation on November 21, 1974.

With the retirement of the Town Historian Virginia Tomkiewicz in 1995 the Town of Greece contracted with the Greece Historical Society to provide the space and services of the Town Historian. In 2016 the contract ended and the Town Historian's office was moved to the Greece Public Library.

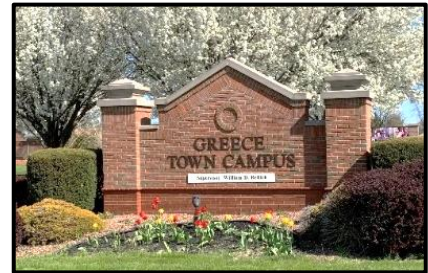
The all-volunteer Society's purpose is to preserve, collect, research, and share local history with the community. Concerned and interested community volunteers of various backgrounds and education lend their talents to govern the organization as the Board of Trustees. We strive to provide the community with an awareness of the past, an appreciation of the present, and a vision for the future, giving a sense of "roots" and a greater feeling of belonging.

To accomplish its purpose the Society offers:

- a historic house and museum with rotating exhibits
- a website and Facebook page
- print and digital articles and publications about local history
- public programs and special events
- docent led tours of our museum
- a reference library at our History Center
- presentations on various history subjects, sites, and architecture
- a museum shop with a selection of local history books and items
- help with personal research

Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Greece Historical Society shared space with the Town of Greece Historian in a Town-owned house on English Road. In 1988, with the encouragement of then Town Supervisor Don Riley, the former home of Gordon Howe, Greece Town Supervisor for 26 years and former Monroe County Manager, was donated to the Society and moved by Wegmans to its present site for our use and the office of the Town Historian.

The circa 1855 farm house was restored by the Society and sits on a 1.25- acre (300'x182') parcel of land leased from the Town of Greece on the **Greece Town Campus**. It was the first building on the campus, which now includes the Town Hall, Town Justice Court, Public Library, Community & Senior Center, Police Headquarters, and many recreational amenities.



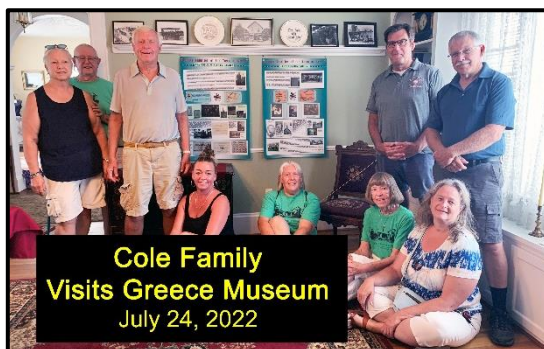
The house, which is owned and maintained by the Society, contains the Society's administrative offices, research library, museum shop, and an exhibit hall wing that opened in 1998. The Society is not part of the Town government and receives no funds from the Town of Greece. As per the lease agreement, the Town continues to cut the grass and plow the driveway.

Docent led tours of the museum are held Sunday afternoons from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. (March through December) or by appointment. Office hours are Monday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon, or by appointment. Special events, exhibits, lectures and programs are held throughout the year.

The following is a summary of the activities of the Greece Historical Society for 2022.

MUSEUM VISITORS

During 2022, approximately 375 visitors signed our museum guest book (about half of pre-COVID numbers). We are sure that many of the visitors did not sign in, so it can be assumed that we had many more. Due to a town construction project our driveway and parking lot were inaccessible for most of the year. Although visitors could park on our lawn, we are sure attendance was affected because of the parking situation. We did welcome a few school groups, a church group, a group from the Town's Community Center, the Athena Middle School History Club and many descendants of pioneer families.



EXHIBITS

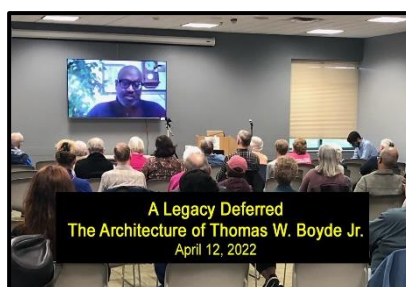
In addition to the permanent and changing exhibits in our museum exhibit hall, in March we hosted an *Immigration to New York* traveling exhibit, courtesy of the Rochester Regional Library Council, and in September and October we hosted an exhibit on square dancing. Beginning in the spring we featured storyboard posters on pioneer families of Greece. A total of 35 different families were featured throughout the year.



SOCIETY LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

Our eight monthly Tuesday evening lectures featured local historians, authors, and humanities scholars. Our presentations have again proven to be very popular with the community, although slightly less than pre-Covid. During 2022 we averaged 50 guests per evening. Our programs have earned a reputation throughout the region for providing high quality, professional, and entertaining history lessons. Besides Greece residents, our guests regularly come from nearby towns and the City of Rochester. Of special note, our January program was the first time we provided an ASL interpreter and our April program included an out of state speaker via Zoom. The monthly lectures are held at the Greece Public Library. We would like to thank Library Director, Catherine Henderson and the library staff for being so supportive and accommodating to our needs.

We also held one Sunday afternoon program at our museum titled "Grandfather Stories"



BICENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

To celebrate the Bicentennial of the Town of Greece, the Society, beginning in March, has produced a weekly multimedia podcast called “Bicentennial Snapshots.” Each Snapshot gives a brief look at a particular aspect of Greece history. Over the course of this year, we covered people and events that comprise the vibrant history of Greece from its earliest days to the present.



These Bicentennial Snapshots are researched, written, and narrated by GHS volunteer **Maureen Whalen** and assembled and produced by **Pat Worboys**, another GHS volunteer. Many other volunteers contributed ideas, information, and photographs.

PUBLIC LECTURES, OUTREACH & PRESENTATIONS



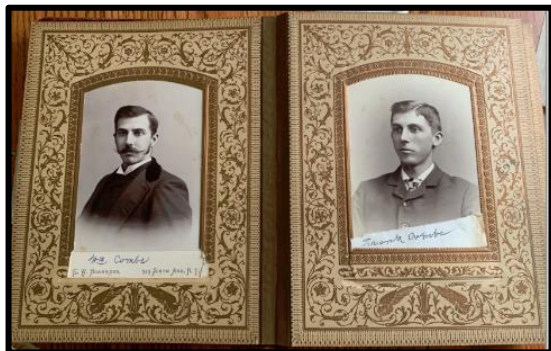
Two programs were presented to the Kiwanis Club of Greece in 2022: **Jo Ann Ward Snyder** presented a program on the process of preparing the book *Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece*, and **Maureen Whalen, Pat Worboys, and Bill Sauers** discussed our Bicentennial Snapshots. There were several other programs and outreach presented by our volunteers in 2022 at: Northwest AARP, St Johns Senior Living in Brighton, Apple View Apartments, Shops on the Ridge, Greece Schools Family Fest, and the Honeoye Falls Historical Society via Zoom.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

In mid-April, with the help of a grant from the New York Council on the Arts, **Bill Sauers** was able to attend and represent the Greece Historical Society at the Museum Association of New York (MANY) conference held at the Corning Glass Museum. Conferences like this are a good chance for the Greece Historical Society to learn from and network with other museum and historical society colleagues



COLLECTING & DOCUMENTING OUR HISTORY



During the past few years, we have made a serious effort to only collect items and artifacts that meet our mission of telling the story of Greece and for which we have adequate space or a proper way to store them. In 2022 a large photo album of a pioneer family was donated to the Society and before closing, the Dutch Mill Restaurant, donated two original paintings of the Dewey Stone neighborhood. **Marie Poinan** and **Jo Ann Ward Snyder** continue to collect information and documentation for an upcoming volume 2 of *Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece*.

SHARING WITH OTHERS

Occasionally our Society acquires or is offered items that do not meet our mission or that we cannot properly care for. With storage space at a premium and keeping in mind the cost of caring for these items, we insist that any object or document we acquire will help to tell the story of Greece. This past year we coordinated finding the best "homes" for several items.

In 2022 we transferred two recently donated clocks to the Hoffman Clock Museum in Newark, before accessioning them. Several miscellaneous items that were duplicates or had no connection to the Town of Greece were transferred to the Gates Historical Society, Avon Historical Society, Parma Hilton Historical Society, and the Charlotte Genesee Lighthouse.



Of special note was a 1950s era West Point uniform jacket found in our collection that had nothing to do with the Town of Greece. After extensive research, volunteer **Deborah Cole Myers** hand delivered the jacket to the original owner's daughter in Vienna, Maryland.

Other items that we have collected and accessioned over the years that we determined no longer fit our mission or were duplicates were de-accessioned.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS & NETWORKING

It is imperative that the Greece Historical Society maintains a working relationship with other historians and professional, educational, and community organizations.

The Society is a member of the Association for Public Historians of New York State, Greece Regional Chamber of Commerce, Landmark Society of Western New York, Museum Association of New York, and the Rochester Regional Library Council.



The Society also has a close relationship with the Greece Central School District, the Greece Public Library, the NYS Historian, and the NYS Archival Partnership Trust along with other local historical societies, especially the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse and the Hilton Parma Historical Society. Several GHS volunteers also meet regularly with local historians and are members of other historical and genealogical societies and professional organizations.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

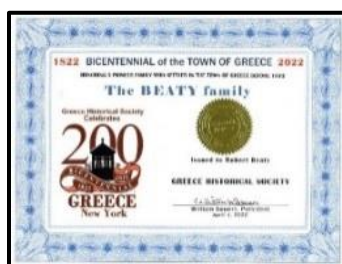
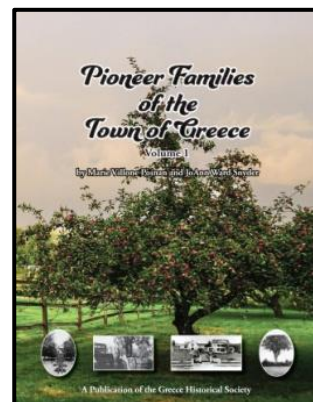
In the Town of Greece, Historic Preservation falls under the purview of the Town Planning Board. While not part of the Town of Greece government, GHS still continues to monitor local preservation issues. One of our volunteers has a master's degree in Historic Preservation and GHS is a member of the Landmark Society of Western New York.

Greece Post Newspapers: To preserve local history and make it available to everyone, the Greece Historical Society secured a technology grant from the **Rochester Regional Library Council** to digitize a collection of *Greece Post* newspapers (1995-2009) that is owned by the Rochester Public Library. This project involved coordinating with Gatehouse Media, Gannett Corporation, the Rochester Regional Library Council, the Northern New York Library Network, the Local History & Genealogy Division of the Rochester Public Library, and the New York Historic Newspaper project. With the grants this collection of newspapers will be preserved digitally and be easily available to anyone, free of charge, on <https://www.newspapers.com/>. The project is expected to be completed by the middle of 2023 and will complete a project started in 2021 to digitize the collection of *Greece Post* newspapers that are available (1967-2009).



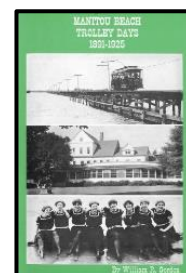
PUBLICATIONS

In celebration of the Bicentennial of the Town of Greece in 2022, the Greece Historical Society published *Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece*, a 150-page book honoring 40 families who settled in the area before 1872. This new book contains vignettes and photos that highlight each family's contribution to the town and was written by volunteers **Marie Villone Poinan** and **Jo Ann Ward Snyder** with input from descendants of each of these families. Although the book was published in December 2021 it was not stocked in our museum shop until January. The book was published via Amazon's Kindle Direct. During 2022 work has commenced and is progressing on volume 2 of the book.



In conjunction with celebrating pioneer families, 176 individual custom made and sealed pioneer certificates were delivered to descendants of the families featured in the volume 1 of the *Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece* book.

In 2022 the Greece Historical Society contracted with a local printer and had copies of a 1957 book, *Manitou Beach Trolley Days*, re-printed and is now available in our museum shop.



In 2021, GHS hosted a group of western Monroe County museum volunteers with a goal of developing a network of representatives from historical societies and museums throughout the area, to discuss items of common interest, to improve our organizations, and to brainstorm ideas that would be of mutual benefit to all of us. Ultimately a brochure listing local museums was produced in the Spring of 2022, collaboratively promoting twelve museums in Monroe County. The brochure can now be found at each of the museums and a number of 'Visit ROC' tourists brochure racks around town.

RESEARCH PROJECTS



In 2020, the Greece Historical Society received two grants totaling \$30,000 from the Preservation League of New York State/New York Council on the Arts and the Rochester Area Community Foundation (RACF) to fund a Cultural Resource Survey of Rochester's first African American architect, Thomas W. Boyde, Jr. At least six residences in the Town of Greece were designed by Mr. Boyde.

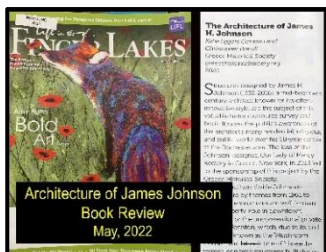
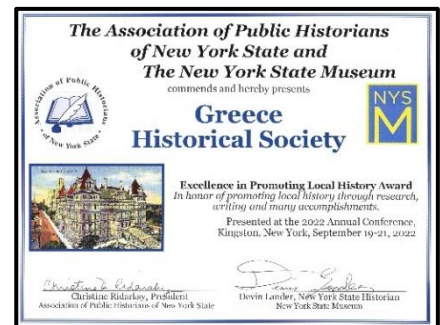
Work began on the project in late 2020 and has continued through this year. Over the past two years, the project has continued to expand and grow beyond its original scope. As a result, this past spring another grant (\$5,000) was secured from RACF and online fundraising brought in \$1,000 to assist with the additional work. Two interns were also brought into the project from SUNY Geneseo through a partnership with the Town of Brighton Historian's Office and Syracuse University's School of Architecture. To date, drawings from over 700 architectural projects designed by Boyde have been reviewed; interviews of Boyde's family and colleagues have been conducted and transcribed; additional archival interviews from the 1990s of family and colleagues no longer living were discovered and transcribed; and hundreds of Boyde designs have been photographed. The project team gave a presentation to the Greece community during our April monthly meeting. A survey of some of Boyde's most significant properties was created in the New York State Historic Preservation Office's Cultural Resource Information System, and writing has begun on the project's final report. The project team hopes to wrap up the survey in early 2023.

Extensive research was conducted in preparation of the weekly Bicentennial Snapshots and research continues while preparing volume 2 of *Pioneer Families of The Town of Greece*. Additionally, volunteers at the Greece Historical Society helped several individuals this past year with research involving individual history questions. With our network of other historians and organizations we were able to assist others in finding the information they needed that was outside the Greece area.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION

We are proud and honored that on September 20, the Association of Public Historians of New York, along with the New York State Museum, presented the Greece Historical Society its 2022 Award for **Excellence in Promoting Local History**, citing "the promotion of local history through research, writing, and other related accomplishments."

The Association of Public Historians of New York State is the professional organization that represents the 1,600+ government-appointed historians in the state.



In May the *Life in the Finger Lakes* Magazine highlighted our book *The Architecture of James H. Johnson* that we published in 2019. Also, in May, author and historian **Peter Feinman**, president of the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education, used our story about the closing of the Dutch Mill to introduce an article about the fate of non-traditional historic places in his blog, "*State of New York State History*"

New York State Senator **Jeremy Cooney** used the Greece Historical Society on the cover of a promotional brochure highlighting his support for the Town of Greece.



EVENTS/CELEBRATIONS

In March we hung a custom banner on our building celebrating the Town's bicentennial. On June 20 we held our first community strawberry festival in two years. Because of adjacent Town construction encroaching on our leased area, the town offered us the use of the pavilion on the town campus. The event was a huge success with over 500 attending. In October a Mother of Sorrows Cemetery tour was organized and conducted by volunteers **Maureen Whalen** and **Joe Vitello**. More than 70 attended the tour.



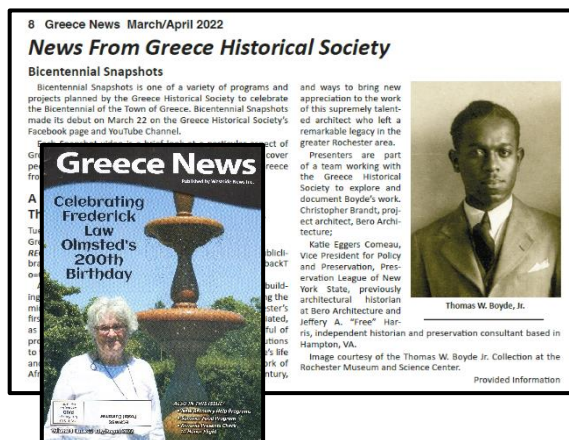
COMMUNITY SERVICE



In March we hosted an outdoor Girl Scout cookie sale. We also gave them the opportunity to sell drinks and cookies at our annual strawberry festival. Our strawberry festival also invited community groups to set up information tables. The groups included: Honor Flight, Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Veterans Outreach Center, Kiwanis Club of Greece, Charlotte Genesee Lighthouse, Greece Food Shelf and Greece Clothing Closet, and the Greece Public Library.

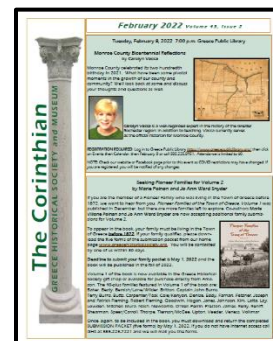
COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

Public Media - Unfortunately, local print news has become almost nonexistent and we depend more and more on social media. One local monthly magazine, the *Greece News*, does regularly feature stories about GHS and our programs.



Social Media - We regularly add content to our Facebook page, which has more than 1,540 “followers.” A monthly email blast is sent to over 800 individuals and organizations. GHS also has an active website which includes current news, a calendar of events, an archive of past newsletters, historical articles, and a collection of videos of past programs <http://www.greecehistoricalsociety.org>.

Society Newsletter - In 2022 the Greece Historical Society's newsletter *The Corinthian* was published monthly except for a combined July/August edition. Each issue, with 6 to 8 pages, contained society information, photographs about events and activities, and a local history story. It was mailed to all members and courtesy copies were emailed to local elected officials and other historical societies. It is also available on our website and distributed at the museum.



BUILDING & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Like any property, there is always something to fix, update, or replace. In 2022 we had our cupola sign and front porch professionally painted and in October we had our gutters professionally cleaned and we purchased and had installed an air-conditioner that will be used to cool the house part of our building.



TOWN OF GREECE BICENTENNIAL

Our primary Town of Greece bicentennial projects this year were: *The Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece* book, the weekly Bicentennial Snapshots, and the focus on pioneer families with 35 storyboards featured in our museum throughout the year. The book and research for these projects will be available to all for years to come.

Our GHS Bicentennial logo* has been used on stationary throughout 2022, as well as on tee shirts and other items and is on our Facebook page. It was also prominently displayed on the front of our building.



** As stated earlier, we are not part of the Town government and therefore did not have permission to use the bicentennial logo developed by the Town that was used solely for official Town programs and publications.*

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a necessary part of every non-profit organization. Our income comes from fundraising events, membership dues, donations, an occasional grant, and sales in our museum shop. We receive no monetary funds from the Town of Greece.

Bicentennial Items Available Online - In March we contracted with a local on-line merchandise vendor to sell and print, on-demand, various products with the GHS bicentennial logo celebrating our Town's Bicentennial. These items are available only online; we do not carry them in our museum gift shop. This initiative was marginally successful.



Pasta Dinner - On September 18 we held a Pasta Dinner fundraiser, at the Barnard Restaurant and Party House. More than 100 of our friends and neighbors enjoyed the evening which included a silent auction and a 50/50 raffle.

Craft Sale - On November 19, the Greece Historical Society hosted our annual craft sale with 8 vendors selling their handmade crafts. Each vendor paid us a fee to display their wares. Approximately 85 people came during a five-hour period and purchased goods from the vendors and our museum shop.



Museum Shop - Our museum gift shop continues to sell local history books and other items to museum visitors. A selection of our books was also offered for sale on our website.

Popcorn Sale – Between November 18 & 22 we held an on-line pop-up popcorn sale. Volunteers solicited sales from members and friends resulting in a 50% profit from the sales.





Roc the Day - On November 29, GHS participated in "Roc the Day," Rochester's United Way "Giving Tuesday," event.

Donations - GHS received a large amount of memorial donations in 2022 and a \$500 gift from Canandaigua National Bank & Trust as part of their community giving program

Sale of Ad Space - For the eighth consecutive year, we have sold ad space in our newsletter, the "*Corinthian*" to help offset the cost of printing while illustrating community support for the Greece Historical Society from local businesses.

TREASURER'S REPORT 2022

We had a very successful year financially. Revenue for 2022 was \$40,223 and expenses were \$35,916, excluding depreciation, endowment fund, and capital improvements. Donation revenue exceeded expectations due to a \$6,615 contribution from Lexington Federal Credit Union members. We sold 219 copies of *Pioneer Families of the Town of Greece* books between the Amazon online sales and the GHS gift shop. We received additional revenue from the sale of 200th anniversary merchandise through the online store. The society held its annual fund-raising events, netting \$7,918 after expenses. Capital expenses for 2022 include \$8,000 for the computer server upgrade, which was partly funded by a \$5,000 New York State grant received in 2021 and \$6,600 to air-condition the house. Work on the Boyde Study continued in 2022. The cost of the study has been revised from \$30,000 to \$43,000 due to discovery of additional material to be included. We have received an additional grant of \$5,000 plus donations of \$1,137 to continue the study. However, despite the additional grant and donations, we still need an additional \$7,100 to complete the study. The search for additional funds continues, but the GHS board has approved funds from internal sources up to \$7,500 to complete the study. GHS restricted funds have been drawn down by \$16,500 this year to support the Boyde Study work. The Society also received a bequest from the estate of a member. The bequest was invested in the endowment account. A statement of financial position and/or the revenue/expense summary for 2022 is available to our members on request to the treasurer at email greecehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.

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Volunteer of the Year: Pat Worboys



During the volunteer holiday open house on December 18, longtime volunteer **Pat Worboys** was awarded our 2022 Volunteer of the Year. Pat's enthusiasm along with his computer skills have resulted in the production of program videos, the installation of a new computer server, upgrade of our internet provider, Wi-Fi throughout our museum and the production of weekly Bicentennial Podcasts along with blog posts.

Paula Smith

Unfortunately, this past year, we were saddened to learn of the passing of several of our long-time members and supporters, especially the sudden loss of our trustee Paula Smith on September 18, 2022. Paula was a wealth of knowledge and a delight to be around, as well as being such an asset to the Society. She was always willing to help whenever the occasion arose. We will miss Paula.



Thank You! - We depend on many volunteers to run our organization. Some may loan or donate to us a treasured heirloom, repair a broken light fixture, help with a single event, conduct research, or guide visitors through our museum. Still others of our loyal volunteers spend hundreds of hours during the year to keep the place going. With so many it is impossible to list everyone by name, but be assured we truly appreciate all the great work they do for the Society. We also can't forget the **Lakeview** and **Lake Shore** Garden Clubs, who maintain our gardens, and the local businesses who sponsor our events and advertise in our newsletter.



Thank you to our supporters from the business community, our volunteers, our members, the elected officials who encourage us, and to all our friends for your continued commitment to preserving the past for the future! Whether it is through publications, programs, exhibits, or online content, we strive to tell the story of our Town of Greece. To keep sharing these stories we rely heavily on the support from community members like you. With your support, the Greece Historical Society will continue to seek innovative ways to preserve and share the history of our town.

**If you are not a member of the Greece Historical Society,
we encourage you to join and help support your town's
historical society. Membership information is available on
our website at**

<http://greecehistoricalsociety.org/join-us/membership/>

Vital to any not-for-profit organization is the tireless dedication, energy and support of its volunteer board of trustees. Our nominating committee is always on the lookout to fill vacant positions with individuals interested in joining this dedicated team.

2022 GHS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William M. Sauers (*President*)
Bridget O'Toole, Esq. (*Vice President*)
Gretchen Kozlowski (*Secretary*)
Bill Peeck (*Treasurer*)
Cynthia Shevlin (*Newsletter Editor*)
Paula Smith (*deceased*)
Ruth Curchoe
David Richardson
Gregg Redmond, Esq.
Pam O'Sullivan, MLS
Sandy Peck
Deborah Whitt, CLU, ChFC
Robert Cunningham, MLS



William M. Sauers
President

**Greece Historical Society
Celebrates**



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