



[www.groomstavern.org](http://www.groomstavern.org)

**Friends of  
Historic Grooms Tavern**  
P.O. Box 1166  
Clifton Park, NY 12065



# GROOMS TAVERN GAZETTE

Summer-2006

## Friends of Historic Grooms Tavern

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**Don't Miss  
Farm Fest Weekend!  
September 16th & 17th**



The Town of Clifton Park continues to move forward with the restoration of Historic Grooms Tavern. A municipal water line has been brought into the basement of the Tavern. In addition a natural gas line has been installed by Niagara Mohawk and will be the fuel source for heating the Tavern. The installation of a new electric service line was completed early in May. Two old heating furnaces, one hot air and the other a hot water unit, which had been in the building at least 50 years have been removed from the Tavern basement. At the same time asbestos, which was used to insulate hot water pipes in years past, was removed by a local environmental firm.

Last, but not least, the installation of a new heating boiler with piping, wiring and related duct work.

*By Patricia Haffner*

### **Looking for Help...**

*By Dan Moran*

These days so much of the funding for not-for-profit organizations is done by granting agencies. Grant writers help public or private groups apply for grant money that funds or supplements programs they operate.

Writing grant applications can be a challenging, but fruitful and satisfying endeavor. If you, or anyone you know, has had experience with grant writing and is interested in assisting the Friends, please call any member of the board of directors to let them know. This contribution will assist in preserving the Tavern.

### **Letter from the President Isabel Prescott**

Actively supporting the renovation and the preservation of the Grooms Tavern is a personal passion of mine. Having grown up on the farm on Riverview Road, only a few fields and some woods away from the Tavern, I would hate to see it torn down and a mini mart built in its place. Sometimes people look at historic preservation as being less important than other charitable endeavors such as health care, helping the poor, or eliminating world hunger. Of course, no one could ever argue that these are not significant undertakings, but at the same time, there's important meaning in preserving, recording, and studying our local past. Not only can it be fascinating and enjoyable, but it is also the best teacher for our future.

The Grooms Tavern is not only about the building, but about the people who founded it, and those who have lived in our community during the last 175 years. In my lifetime I've seen the Town of Clifton Park grow by leaps and bounds, from a very rural character to one with well over 30,000 residents. During it all, I believe we have maintained a very desirable quality of life, respect for individual rights and freedoms, prosperity, civic pride, and best of all, caring for each other. And it all started right here in the Grooms Tavern which saw the first town board meeting in 1828. And as our town continues to grow, this building will stand as part of it, involved in community affairs, and as a tribute to those who have made our community what it is today. Thank you members of the Friends of Historic Grooms Tavern, and to the members of our community, all of whom have made this possible.

**A Special Thanks** goes to Supervisor Phil Barrett and the Clifton Park Town Board for their continued support in actively assisting the renovation and preservation of the Grooms Tavern for generations to come.



### **Save this date:**

**Monday,  
October 16, 2006**

Friends of Historic  
Grooms Tavern  
**Annual Membership  
Meeting.**

The meeting will be  
at the Clifton Park  
Town Hall, 7 p.m.  
(unless the plumbing  
is done at the Tavern  
by then).

## *Important New Historical Donations*

The Town of Clifton Park has recently acquired two very important historical collections. Bob Van Vranken of Burnt Hills has donated a large collection of 19th century Van Vranken family photographs that had descended in the family of his cousin, William Van Vranken, late of Concord, New Hampshire. Included in this remarkable collection is a photograph of John Whitbeck Van Vranken (1820-1869), Supervisor of Clifton Park in 1850. Most all members of the large Van Vranken family are represented in this collection as well as photographs of their wives' families including the Fort, Craiger, and Peters families. It is a treasure trove of early photographs that puts a face on some of our early town residents.

Alan and Barbara Maddaus of Vischer Ferry have donated a collection of early manuscripts associated with the Van Vranken family. These early wills and deeds were acquired by Alan and Barbara in about 1970 when they purchased their house from Van DesForges, a Van Vranken descendant through his mother. The rare manuscripts feature original wills and deeds dating back to 1688. They refer to the original land holdings along the Mohawk River of our town's earliest settlers, Ryck, Maus, and Everet Van Vranken. The collection of papers covers the period 1688 to 1900 and includes wills and deeds of every generation.



## *New Library to Incorporate Historical Artifacts*

The new Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library will have a touch of history. The architects will be using recycled historical artifacts from the area to decorate the interior and add a sense of the past. Among the artifacts being used are some architectural elements from the old McLane Hotel in Rexford that were donated to the Town of Clifton Park last year by Clark and Chris Wilson.

Clark's grandfather, John McLane, built the McLane Hotel in 1897. It was a landmark on Route 146 by the Mohawk River and Erie Canal in Rexford, until it was demolished for the new bridge in 1964. Among the items that were salvaged are: banisters from the porch railing, double doors that separated the lobby from the bar, and the original double front doors to the hotel. These items will all be incorporated into the interior design of the library, and framed photographs of the hotel will complement the artifacts.

Also being used in the Library is a large 19th century pot bellied stove salvaged from the transfer station several years ago. This will be the focal point of the children's area in the library. Library tables and bookcases from the old State Library in the 1912 Education Building will also be used to help create a unique space in the new library.

Thanks to the imaginative design of the architects, the new library will reflect our past and preserve historical material that might otherwise be discarded.



## *E-Flashes* *By Andy Heffner*

In this age of technology, there is a faster and less expensive way of getting the word out other than by regular mail. From now on, we will publish printed newsletters twice a year, while at the same time emailing E-Flashes on the latest developments at the Grooms Tavern.

Please be sure to send us your email address if you would like to receive the latest information.

Our email address is:

**[groomstavern.eflash@yahoo.com](mailto:groomstavern.eflash@yahoo.com)**

# Who Are the Board Members?

**Isabel Barrett Prescott** has lived on Riverview Road her whole life. She remembers the Grooms Tavern when it was Klingbeil's Store and she stopped there twice a day with the school bus to pick up and drop off Ed Klingbeil's step-daughter. They traveled to school, first to Alplaus prior to 1953, then to Round Lake in 1953 and 1954, and finally to the new Shenendehowa Central School, which was much smaller than it is today. Isabel runs Riverview Orchards and is active in community affairs. She loves heritage and feels that the Grooms Tavern is well worth preserving.

**Kathleen Fleming** together with her husband Walt and their two children have lived in Clifton Park for 30 yrs. She has always had a great interest in early American History and Antiques. She has been a member of the Charlton Historical Society, Rexford Historical Society and the Schenectady Historical Society. She has been involved with many other organizations in the Town of Clifton Park, and is looking forward to working with fellow board members to help complete the restoration project, and looking forward to making this an excellent resource center for our town's history.

**Ernie Haffner** has been a resident of Clifton Park for approximately 50 years - during that time he has been involved in the community in many ways: Past President Vischer Ferry Association, Vischer Ferry Fire District Treasurer - 30+ years, Treasurer Vischer Ferry Association, Charter member Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve Committee, Vischer Ferry Fire Department, and many other community groups, and volunteer committees.

**Patricia M. Haffner** has lived in Clifton Park for 36 years and was born in Schenectady, NY. Patricia recently retired from Town of Clifton Park as Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Affairs. While working at the Town she worked with the Town Historian on various history tours and programs to further develop interest and knowledge of town's wonderful historic assets. She feels the Historic Grooms Tavern will one day be a great resource for history education and cultural activities as well as a great community meeting place.

**Andy Heffner** is originally from Northport, NY on LI. He moved to the area in December of 2002 after living in Las Vegas for 12-13 years. Andy became interested in the Historic Grooms Tavern while listening as Isabel told stories about the Grange Hall and Klingbeil's store that were once at the site. He decided to join the board in February while looking for a way to contribute and become more connected to the community through volunteerism.

All members are welcome, and encouraged to come to the monthly Board meetings...

**Kristie Heffner** loves to visualize the people of the late 1800's socializing in the Grooms Tavern! What were they wearing? What did they talk about? What were their social and economic concerns? How did they entertain themselves? Who were those lovebirds that had their wedding dates recorded on the barn walls? Kristie is happy to do anything she can to keep this important part of Clifton Park's history alive!

**Brian F. McGlinchey** is a member of the Historic Preservation Commission for the Town of Clifton Park, and Vice President of the board for the Friends of the Historic Grooms Tavern. Mr. McGlinchey is a Vice President and the Director of New York Branch Business Banking for Citizens Bank, N.A., and lives in Rexford, N.Y. with his wife Lin.

**Daniel Moran** is a charter member and has been on the Board of the Friends of Historic Grooms Tavern since 2000. Dan is also the Historian of the Jonesville United Methodist Church. The Friends of the Historic Grooms Tavern has been a great opportunity to meet people with the same passionate interest he has in understanding and passing on the importance of the history of our area.

**John Scherer** graduated from the New York State University at Albany with a BA in history. He later graduated from the Cooperstown Graduate Program with an MA in Museum Studies and American Folk life. John has been Curator of Decorative Arts at the New York State Museum in Albany since 1967. He represents the Commissioner of Education on the New York State Board for Historic Preservation. John Scherer has also been Town Historian for the Town of Clifton Park, since 1978.

**Alex Verrigni** is an attorney who returned to Rexford in 1992 after attending law school at the University of Maine, School of Law in Portland, Maine. Her law practice concerns family and matrimonial law, estate planning, together with some general practice matters. She moved to Rexford from Ballston Spa at about ten years old where both sets of grandparents originally settled in the late 1800 and early 1900s. Alex has a longstanding interest in the arts, having received her masters from NYU in painting, arts administration and art education. She worked in art galleries, for an art historian/writer, and haunted museums, well before entertaining the thought of being a lawyer!

**Dan Cole** became interested in the Grooms Tavern by way of his mother Doris Cole. The Cole's have been down the road from the Tavern since the 1950's, and it has always been one of Doris's favorite art and photography subjects. Dan is no longer an active board member, although he still produces the newsletter and the website, [www.groomstavern.org](http://www.groomstavern.org). If you have any Tavern photos, stories, please send them to Dan, at: [rivercliff@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rivercliff@nycap.rr.com), or call Dan at 399-4338.

The Friends of Historic Grooms Tavern Board of Directors meet the first Monday of each month at the Clifton Park Town Hall, 7 pm,  
All members are welcome... Please check [www.GroomsTavern.org](http://www.GroomsTavern.org) for updates.