

# The Rensselaerville Press

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE RENSSELAERVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Today is Tomorrow's History"

Fall 2020



## The Art Show

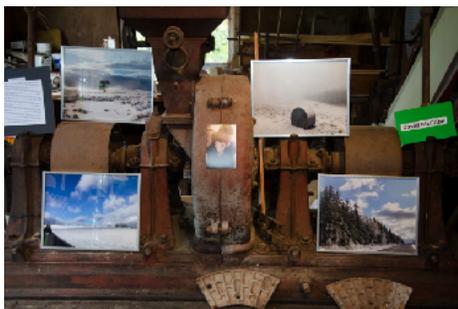
The 2020 Rensselaerville Historical Society's annual art show was a HUGE success! With more artists displaying their works, the largest number of viewers ever and generous contributions financially, this was one of our most successful shows. Our talented Rensselaerville area artists displayed a wide variety of works which included button art, acrylics, watercolors, photographs, sculptures, quilts, furniture, collages, weavings and more. Our artists ranged in ages from 11 to

posthumous. Our show was dedicated to Janet Haseley, a dedicated RHS member who not only supported the show through her encouragement and participation but reported on it each year as the editor of the *The Rensselaerville Press*.

Special thanks to the RHS volunteers for working the show hours, Geoffrey Hall for help hanging and lighting the show, Joyce Chase and Karen Haseley for organizing and especially Rosie Kuhar for her tireless efforts contacting the artists, obtaining bios and pictures and making sure everything ran smoothly.

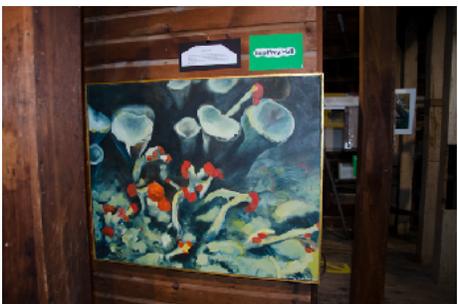
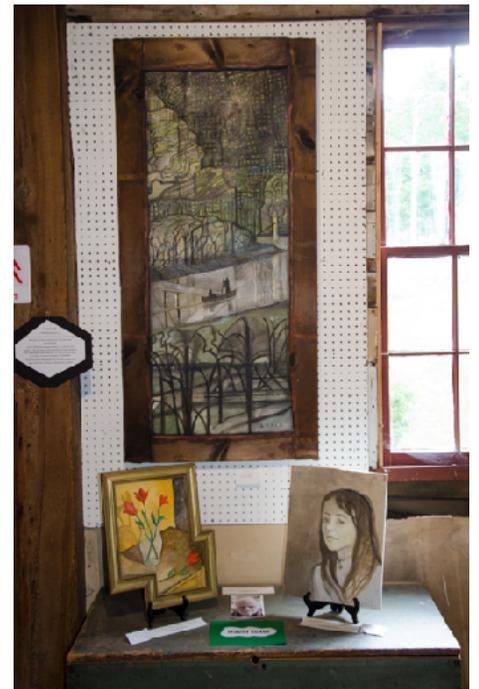
Please contact either Rosie or myself if you have an interest in participating in our 2021 show next summer.

Doug Riter - Curator [driter77@yahoo.com](mailto:driter77@yahoo.com)



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## Hay Devil



On Monday, July 5, 2020 at about 2:45 in the afternoon an unusual phenomenon happened outside the village of Rensselaerville. I was sitting in my hammock swing just enjoying the

view to the east. Not a cloud in the crystal blue sky, when I noticed what I thought was a large flock of black birds, possibly crows, attacking a hawk. No! I was wrong. It was not birds, but large swirling pieces of hay located very high in the sky. As it started to slowly swirl a little closer to land the village fire company whistle blew. Oh no, my brother Barry must have hay on fire. But as the first pieces of hay hit the lawn, house roof and trees it was obvious that the hay was not on fire. There were long dry pieces. After a quick check on my phone the fire alarm was for a car accident by Triangle Lake, not a hay fire. But what was happening? Hay kept raining down in a counter clockwise swirl and lasted several minutes as it slowly drifted south dropping hay on County Route 351. There were at least three other persons that witnessed the raining of hay, what I would call a hay tornado. My brother Barry told me we saw a large Hay Devil which are common but are usually located near the ground not high in the sky. He had cut a neighbor's hay field which was high above my home on a hill so he was sure that is where it started. After he checked the newly cut field there was a small area where the hay was gone.

How can it rain hay? There wasn't even a breeze that day. After a little investigation I located the answer on the internet. Whirlwinds can occur in calm, very sunny conditions



Photo by Rose Kuhar

when a fast rising column of warm air begins to rotate as it passes through cooler air from above whipping the hay into a tunnel. Dust devils are much more common. That day I felt a little like I lived in Kansas, maybe a neighbor of Dorothy from the *Wizard of Oz*.

Rose Kuhar

## Display Room at the Grist Mill

The lower room attached to the mill was used as a laundry during the 1920s by the Huyck family. Nellie Bell ran the laundry. During the 1980s the Historical Society ran a store in this room that specialized in hand crafted items made by local artists. A variety of unique and one of a kind items were sold there. The room is now the historical society's display room that includes historic photos, large portraits and early deeds from Stephen Van Rensselaer. Along one wall is a large cabinet that holds sale items which includes a variety of historical books related to Rensselaerville history. After a much needed cleaning by the Trustees this summer the Art Show was able to spread out their displays by hanging some in the lower room. Even though only a few visitors came in the mill for self guided tours this summer many visitors were able to see two new exhibits in our display cases during the two weeks the Art Show was open.

A big thanks to Ian Stettner, a high school senior, who shared his unusual hobby of metal detecting with



Photo by Rose Kuhar

a display of some of the items he had carefully dug up throughout the Township of Rensselaerville. Ian and his dad, Adam Stettner, shared their love of discovering American history through this hobby. Locating and digging up artifacts is only one part of the adventure. The next step was carefully replacing soil and grass over the small hole they have made. Now the items needed to be cleaned of dirt without compromising the finish. Finally the hard work begins to do detailed research to figure out what they have discovered. As they find the answers they are really discovering parts of Rensselaerville history. What were some of the items they share with the visitors?

- 1884 Blaine and Logan Republican Campaign Token – James G. Blaine the Speaker of the House from state of Maine, John A. Logan was a US Senator from Illinois. Blaine and Logan were defeated in a close presidential race to Governor Grover Cleveland of New York

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# Remembering Janet Haseley



*Photo from Haseley Family*

For many members of the Rensselaerville Historical Society, the coming of spring was not marked by the arrival of the robin, but by the arrival of Janet Haseley. Similarly, winter was signaled by her departure to her other home in North Carolina. This past summer, our friend and neighbor left us behind - and not for the first time. She was so often ahead of us in her work for the Society.

For over 25 years, Janet was a dedicated volunteer - always (always!!) thinking and working to make the Historical Society a better and more active ingredient in the Rensselaerville community. She was constantly among the first to recognize and advocate for the Society to take on new ideas and adopt new technologies to its work. Truth be told, her enthusiasms didn't always get a receptive audience. But that didn't slow her down, let alone stop her. She plowed ahead, like a ship cutting through gentle ocean swells, not to be bothered by negative thoughts. She was excited by the possibilities and ambitious for ways that the Society could be a better part of the community.

What a legacy - to be a change agent for a historical society! Janet's enthusiasm got the Society through some lean times and thankfully, helped to pull some new local historians along in her wake. This summer was quiet for many reasons, not least because Janet wasn't with us. But since we're a historical society, we know how to remember.

We'll remember Janet well. It will just be a little harder to know when it is spring.

*Ken Storms*

Janet Long Haseley passed away peacefully at her beloved home in Rensselaerville on May 26, 2020, at the age of 88. Janet was born in Kansas City, MO. on June 21, 1931, to the late Frances and John Long. She spent her childhood in Douglaston on Long Island. She attended college at Miami of Ohio and graduated with a political science degree. She moved to Grifton, N.C. to raise her family with her husband Ed Haseley, whom she met in college. She was the research chair of the Rensselaerville Historical Society for many years, editing the quarterly newsletter and writing grants. Janet also found a love and community in contra dancing, which she said changed her life. She met scores of people of all ages with a wide variety of interests from all across the country; and she spent many weekends at dance events.

She is survived by her children, Sue Miller (Stuart) of New Hartford, N.Y., Lynne Davenport of New Bern, N.C., Karen Haseley (Jeffrey) of Columbia, MD., and Allan Haseley (Kelly) of Charlotte, N.C.; and many beloved nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The 2020 Rensselaerville Historical Society Art Show was dedicated to the memory of Janet Haseley.

Donations may be made in Janet's memory to the  
Rensselaerville Historical Society, P.O. Box 8, Rensselaerville, NY, 12147

## **Two Suicides “The Rensselaerville Press” Spring 2020. A Response from the Rice Family**

The published article on the suicide of our ancestor, William F. Smith, in the Spring 2020 issue of *The Rensselaerville Press* was, in the words of Rice family members: shocking, inaccurate and left all questioning the purpose of the article.

Are we embarrassed that a relative committed suicide? No. Are we concerned about the purpose of the article? Yes. Will writing about suicide make someone attempt suicide? No. There is, however, a need for information about how to deal with suicide if you or someone you care about is thinking of suicide.

First, let's add to and address the accuracy of genealogy information:

William F Smith - b 1834 England, d 17 Feb 1919, married 1856, to Dorothy Klein - b in contested area of Alsace-Lorraine 1835, d 21 Feb 1925. Their children were: Caroline (Carrie) Smith - b 1858, d 15 Jun 1891 at age 33 yrs. Anna (Fannie) Smith 1860-1933 and Francis Smith - 1864-1876 died age 12yrs.

The Rice family connection to this story is Carrie Smith, who married Frank Rice on 14 Jun 1882. Their children were: William F Rice Sr. - b 6 Sep 1884 d 23 Nov 1965. Stanley Smith Rice - b 14 Sept 1886 d 25 May 1954, Edward Young Rice - b 14 Sep 1888 d 29 Sep 1947. Carrie Smith Rice died at age 33 due to complications with pregnancy, leaving Frank Rice with three young boys to raise: William Francis - age 7, Stanley Smith - age 5, and Edward Young - age 2. We know that in 1899, Edward, age 11, was living with his grandparents, William and Dorothy Smith. We believe that at some point, Stanley also lived with the Smith's. Frank Rice's mother, Sarah Young Rice, also helped raise William F., Stanley and Edward.

We know it was William F. Rice's desire to become a lawyer, however he decided to go to business college, stayed home to help his father run John L Rice & Son general store and worked to raise enough money to send his brothers to college, Stanley to New York State Normal College and Edward to RPI. Stanley became a principal and superintendent at area schools. Edward became an electrical engineer and eventually moved to Hartford Conn. with his wife, Bertha M Golden.

At the time of William F Smith's suicide, Dorothy's health was declining, Edward had moved to Hartford, Stanley was principal at Ravena High School. Influenza was striking many East Coast cities, and the Albany area was no exception with >7,000 cases being reported in Albany, in addition to concerns about pneumonia and smallpox. As with Covid-19 now, in October 1918, all schools, churches, theaters, movie houses and libraries were ordered closed, and indoor public gatherings suspended. (Albany NY and the 1918-1919 Influenza Epidemic, <https://www.influenzaarchive.org/cities/city-albany.html#> ) Smith's daughter Carrie and son Francis had been dead for decades.

When William Smith did not return home for dinner on February 16, 1919, his wife asked their grandson, William F Rice Sr., general storekeeper and Supervisor for the Town of Rensselaerville at that time, to find his grandfather. He had to force open the door of the old shoe maker's shop, where he found William Smith had attempted to take his own life, dying the next day due to blood loss.

William F Rice Sr. became the executor of the estate of William F Smith, selling the house after the death of his grandmother Dorothy, to Myron & Elizabeth Rivenburg in 1927.

We will never know why William Francis Smith killed himself. Currently, suicide is on the rise and there is a need for information and crisis intervention. If anyone you know is thinking about suicide, do not be afraid to ask questions such as, "are you so upset that you are thinking of taking your own life?" Caring statements may be just what the person who may be at risk needs. There are places you can call to get confidential emotional support, intervention and suicide risk assessment.

Crisis intervention services are available for people who are in danger of hurting themselves. If you are not assured of a person's safety - call for help.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

Psychiatric Crisis Services available 24/7 at 518-549-6500. Ask for Mobile Crisis Team.

Google [albanycounty.com](http://albanycounty.com) Go to Albany County Community Resource Directory for Mental Health Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to add more information to this tragic story.

Kind regards to all,  
Suzanne Rice Loetterle  
Jeannette Patton Rice and William Stanley Rice

### Display Room... *Continued from Page 3*

- 1860 Lincoln & Hamilton Republican Campaign Token – gold plated exterior with ferrotype image of presidential ticket Abraham Lincoln & Hannibal Hamlin in the center
- Buttons – Colonial Coat button circa 18<sup>th</sup> century, Golden Plated Coat buttons circa 1840, New York Militia Button circa 1820
- Coins – United States large coin turned into button (1816-1839), United States cents dating 1802-1853
- Copper Doorknob
- Crotal Bell – 18<sup>th</sup> century (were used on horse drawn vehicles)
- Continental Revolutionary War Scabbard Tip
- Civil War tokens from Albany Stores – 1863
- Silver Plated Shoe Buckle 1760s
- Belgium Boot Pistol gun-barrel 1840-1860



*Photos by Rose Kuhar*



In the other display case was a tribute to the women of Rensselaerville in the late 1900s. A strong and diverse group of women met in each other's homes and at Conkling Hall to learn a new homemaker's skill. The group was a member of the Myosotis Home Bureau. Home Bureau was formed in 1918 by Cornell Cooperative Extension. The concept of the organization was "homemakers to pool their practical experiences with mutual benefit to all". Each year a list of classes was presented to Home Bureau groups and if there was any interest they sent an individual to a training session and then that person came back to teach the group. When the Myosotis group was formed is unknown but they were very active 1960s-1980s. Samples of Anna and Susan Kuhar's work were on display this summer. Items included acid etched trays, reverse painting on glass, variety of Christmas items including Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus, angel tree topper and ornaments, embroidery and other needle work, plus much more. Home bureau brought together many ladies of communities to share crafts, cooking and sewing and fellowship.

## Honoring 99 Years of Life

The village of Rensselaerville lost a person who moved here at the age of two and never left. Her roots were intertwined with many a Rensselaerville resident who knew her as Aunt Kate. Katherine S. Baitsholts passed away on November 2, 2020. She was born in Berne, New York, June 11, 1921, to Katherine and Jacob Kropp. Her siblings were Jacob, Peter (Mabel), John (Goldie), Mary Maslowski (William) and Helen Gifford (Clinton). Kate married John P. Baitsholts in 1941. She is survived by her son, Paul, and his wife, Helena Goldberger who made it possible for Kate to remain in her home until a few days before her death. Kate had a large extended family including several foster children, step children and many nephews and nieces. Kate was a lifelong learner who read the daily newspaper and always had a book near her chair. Her skills covered a wide range from hunting to gardening, chef and baker to seamstress. Her biggest passion was history and she wanted to know all she could about the local history of the hilltowns. She played a key role in the production of the Historical Society book *People Made it Happen Here*. Katherine was a dairy farmer and lived in a small house on Gifford Hollow Road, after she retired the farm was sold and a new house was built just up the road. In 2013 Rose Kuhar got a call from her. She was very concerned that there was a cemetery located behind the farm house and it needed to be documented. Joyce Chase and Rose wandered across a hayfield and over a knoll to see a stone wall in the middle of the woods with grave stones sticking out. They spent several hours documenting the information on the stones and were surprised to find a new Veteran's flag on James S. Rider's grave, a Civil War Soldier. Kate was so pleased that the cemetery was now documented and it wasn't forgotten because someone still visited it and put the flag on the grave. In the last two years two individuals have requested directions to the cemetery and the Historical Society is happy to send them to the location. Memorial contributions in Katherine's name may be made to the Rensselaerville Historical Society.

## Annual Report of the Rensselaerville Historical Society

This was an unusual year for the Historical Society. The board of trustees held its monthly meetings outdoors throughout the summer. On September 20 the RHS held its annual business meeting at the outdoor pavilion behind the Medusa firehouse. For safety reasons it was decided not to have a formal program or potluck dinner in conjunction with the meeting. The meeting including voting on officers and trustees. The only change was that Laura Ventura replaced Janet Nelson as membership secretary. A motion was made and passed to change the fiscal and membership year from July through June to the calendar year, making record-keeping much easier. Our spring fundraiser was cancelled: no bake or plant sale. The trustees never opened the mill for guided tours. It was decided to wait to paint the creek side of the mill. To finish painting the back of the mill about \$6,000 more will be needed to reach our goal of \$8,000. The back of the mill is about four stories high and scaffolding will need to be rented to be able to reach those heights safely.

Two big projects did take place during the summer. With a lot of careful planning and following safety protocols we were able to hold our art show the last weekend in July and first weekend in August. Twenty-eight artists participated and we had a constant but spread out flow of visitors who enjoyed the show. This was the largest number of participants and visitors the RHS has had since we



*Photos by Rose Kuhar*

started our annual art show. Many of the visitors were very generous, dropping donations into our donation basket. The other project was the careful restoration of the Rensselaerville historical markers located throughout the town. Some of the hubs of the signs needed to be dropped off at Catskill Casting for major repairs. The board decided to change the sign colors to make them more readable. The dark background color is Raisin Torte with Bone White a lighter lettering coloring. After wire brushing the signs, both sides were primed then painted with two base coats of paint and



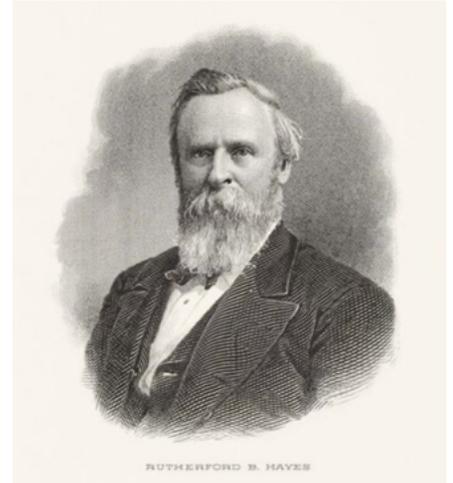
after thoroughly drying, the letters were detailed. To replace the signs, first the sign poles had to be cleaned and painted. A team of volunteers worked on this project with Tony Campo doing a majority of the work. As cooler weather came, 10 signs have slowly been replaced throughout the town with a few more to go up in the spring. Hope you have been able to spy some of the signs. One of the signs is on the lawn of the Rensselaerville town building so look for it next time you stop in at the town offices or recycling center.

The research group didn't meet from March through June but Joyce Chase and Rose Kuhar worked independently from their homes. Diane Santus worked throughout the winter cataloging the hundreds of small receipt-size documents dating from the late 1700s and early 1800s that belonged to lawyer and village resident Jonathan Jenkins. In July the group finally returned to the mill and met on Wednesdays trying to catching up with work they couldn't do from home. Several members have expressed that they would like to join the research group and we are hoping it will be safer to have people in close contact next spring. Some new volunteers have stopped in for an hour or two assisting

**Annual Report** *Continued from Page 7*

with ongoing projects. We were happy to welcome Karen Haseley, Nancy Repkema, Linda Mormile and Glenn Yelich. The research group moved into the library in November using the downstairs meeting room on Wednesdays until spring. Hopefully, Dianne Rizzo and Sue Shufelt can join us as soon as we move back into the mill. Just email us if you would like to join us too.

The number of requests for family and house genealogy exploded this year and many weeks the research group couldn't keep up with the requests. Joyce and Rose put in tireless hours tracking down information and corresponding with individuals. Two of the most interesting families researched this spring were George Benn of Medusa, a Revolutionary soldier, and Joseph Birchard of Preston Hollow and his connection to President Rutherford B. (Birchard) Hayes. The RHS had 16 requests for family genealogy, five requests for houses and land information and someone looking for Baptist Church records. One gentleman was fascinated with our beautiful stone walls and wanted to know their history. Rose has been with the Saugerties historian who is writing a book about the soldiers of Saugerties and the first chapter is about Captain Jeremiah Snyder from Rensselaerville. As items are sorted and organized in the mill, several ledgers or papers that were the history of other towns and cities were discovered and RHS mailed them to the proper owners. Several times during the year items, ledgers and letters were donated to the Historical Society and each item was carefully accessioned into our collection by a volunteer. Even though the public's exposure to the mill was limited we had a very busy year. It gave the trustees time to clean out some more of our accumulated clutter.



*Rose Kuhar, Research Chair, Rensselaerville Historical Society*

## **Bates Hollow Christmas Service**

It saddens the residents of Bates Hollow and Potters Hollow to let you know that the evening Christmas service/program has been cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was scheduled for the evening of December 5. Safety comes first but they wish you all a Merry Christmas and will see you in December 2021.



*Photo by Dennis Murphy*

## **New Project Update**

A year ago the RHS started collecting veterans' names, ranks and military history. The numbers collected so far are below and the Civil War number was surprising. If you know a veteran please share their name and information with us. They only need to have lived in the Town of Rensselaerville some part of their life.



Revolutionary War 1775-1783	74 Soldiers
War of 1812	10 Soldiers
Civil War – 1861-1865	203 Soldiers
World War I - 1914-1918	29 Soldiers
World War II - 1939-1945	161 Soldiers
Korean War 1950	29 Soldiers
Vietnam War 1955-1975	37 Veterans
Other Veterans	48 Veterans

## Reflections on 2020: Year of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Like all of the country, the Covid-19 pandemic took Rensselaerville by surprise. New York State was the earliest and hardest hit state and the governor issued an executive order to stay at home in mid-March. Rensselaerville



*All Photos in this article by Rose Kuhar*

residents responded by hunkering down in their homes and only traveling for groceries and to necessary appointments. No one was leaving their homes. If you didn't want to cook your only choices were takeout from Kuhar Family Farm Café or the Shell Inn. The school districts shut down and students finished the year learning remotely from home. Colleges closed and students finished the semester at their parents' homes. Businesses closed and work at home became a new norm. Adult children lost their internships and moved in with mom and dad.

One of the first observations in the hilltowns was how in February any home with lights on in the evening meant that it was occupied by a year-round resident. By the third week in March an unusual phenomenon happened: one dark house after another had lights. Our weekend and seasonal residents fled their city apartments hoping to leave the virus downstate. How could our lives change so quickly? What was our normal routine ended suddenly. Governor Andrew Cuomo gave daily updates on television and our friends who winter in the south were glued to their televisions just like we were as the death totals rose. New York City became a ghost town without cars or people on the streets.

There were very limited live television shows; it became a norm to watch our favorite reporters and talk shows filmed via Zoom from their living rooms. One of the more bizarre happenings was the hoarding of toilet paper and cleaning supplies. Many aisles of the grocery store had to limit items as panic shopping took place. You couldn't buy a freezer or even order one.

Dentist offices closed and doctors went to telemedicine. Church doors closed as clergy tried to find ways to reach their congregations. Zoom became a lifeline connecting families and colleagues. Colleges cancelled graduations. Teachers were overwhelmed trying to connect with students and parents plus create lessons and packets to keep children engaged and learning. Parents realized for the first time how difficult it is to teach kids and keep them focused.

The weather in March and April matched our mood: gloomy, cloudy, windy, rainy and cold. Where was spring? As we were readjusting our lives banks closed and if you were lucky you found a short line at the drive-through teller. Conkling Hall was closed, which meant no in-person yoga classes. The Village Voices were quiet. All the local musicians had no place to share their music. No live music meant no concerts and live theaters were shut down. Shopping switched to online only. We couldn't even depend on watching sports on TV as the Olympics were cancelled and no opening day for the Yankees or Mets.

May finally brought us some sun and folks left their homes to sit in the fresh air and felt relieved that they were not trapped in high-rise apartments with several children. Time to take a walk—nature never looked so good. All of a sudden you could not find a place to park in the village of Rensselaerville. Where were all these cars coming from? The Capital Region had discovered the hiking trails in the Huyck Preserve.

### Reflections on 2020... *Continued from Page 9*

Many families were waiting for warmer weather so they could bury loved ones in local cemeteries. The traditional funerals and memorial services were not allowed and only immediate families could honor their loved ones. Three of our oldest residents passed away during this troubling year: my mom, Anna Kuhar, died at age 91, Janet Haseley at age 88 and Katherine (Kate) Baitsholts, age 99. Dealing with death is hard and worrying about whether family and friends might get the Covid-19 virus and die alone is so scary. Families are feeling the stress of being disconnected from each other. Many hospitals and nursing homes have had a ban on visitors and loved ones are becoming very despondent. Nursing staff have become surrogate families and have taught many residents how to use Zoom, FaceTime and other social media outlets. Keeping in touch has become extremely important. Birthday celebrations without parties are a norm and many milestones were acknowledged with drive-through parades.

How did the hamlet of Rensselaerville come together as a community to help out during the many months of shutdown and self-quarantining? Gail Haynes shares what a group did to step up to help. "A small, local group calling themselves Hilltown Community Conversations moved to take action during March 2020 in response to the Covid shutdown. They set up a phone answering machine through Conkling Hall where people could call in and leave their requests. At the same time they put out a request for volunteers in the area to help respond to requests coming in. Over 30 volunteers offered their help, from delivering meals, making shopping trips, driving to appointments, assisting with physical therapy and checking on folks to simply delivering puzzles to help pass the time." One of the places that shut its doors for months was our public library. We



were so used to having it as our community gathering place. It was not able to hold its spring cocktail party, which is a major fundraiser. Finally in late spring it opened the porch for pickup of books and videos, which was greatly appreciated. By late summer a few patrons were finally allowed inside the building to browse the stacks for an item. As the summer ended, its second large fundraiser, the annual lawn party, was also cancelled.

The Easter egg hunt at the firehouse was transformed into a drive-through with the Easter Bunny showing up at children's homes on the firetruck. The Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company had cancelled its spring BBQ, Garage Sale Day and Father's Day breakfast but felt it needed to do something to raise the community's spirits. Within a few days it organized a town-wide food drive for the Hilltowns Community Resource



**Reflections on 2020...** *Continued from Page 10*

be held on May 16. The response from the fire companies from Tri-Village, Medusa and Coeymans Hollow plus the Teen Challenge in Ravena was fantastic. They all brought boxes and pallets of food to the Rensselaerville firehouse drop off. The Kuhar Family Farm collected food all morning while during the afternoon the Albany County Sheriff's Department handed out hand sanitizer and masks at the fire house. A boot drive was held and all proceeds went to the resource center. The community came together for others and it was estimated that 8,000 pounds of food was delivered to the resource center on that day plus earlier in the spring, about \$3,000 was donated by the board of trustees of the Carey Institute for Global Good to the resource center. In late August the fire company held a fundraiser by having a Brooks chicken BBQ at the park, which sold out quickly. In mid-October the Rensselaerville fire company organized a second food drive and the community stepped up again with the assistance of Kuhar Family Farm and the Medusa and Tri-Village fire companies. During November the fire company continued its outreach with a toy drive for local children.

To add to the overwhelming anxiety, the country was feeling shock from the death of George Floyd. Out of this horrific death people took to the streets demanding change and the Black Lives Matter movement took over the country, from large cities to small villages. On June 18 over 100 individuals marched for racial equality in



Rensselaerville. Lawrence Tompkins wrote a letter to the editor of *The Altamont Enterprise* that expressed the march eloquently: "That this group of people, in a largely white Albany County Hilltown could get together, march, and express our collective outrage about the state of the nation and how it treats people of color is something to be very proud of. Nothing about 'Black Lives Matter' is saying black lives matter more than others; it's simply that they matter as much."

As June came to a close high school seniors were hit with the realization that their senior year was stolen from them: no proms, senior skip day, Regent exams, traditional graduations or even a graduation party to celebrate their accomplishments. Students of all ages had a long summer ahead of them. Dance recitals didn't happen, Little League baseball season was cancelled,

summer camps were closed, tennis lessons, soccer and basketball summer programs and travel clubs were cancelled. The Huyck Preserve did not hold nature study programs and Lake Myosotis was closed for part of the season even though we had one of the hottest summers on record. Two events that had become very popular in Rensselaerville — and not just to adults but the youths too — didn't happen. The June Trail Ramble, a walk/run on the preserve trails, co-sponsored by the library and the preserve, and the late summer/early fall biking event Rensselaerville Ride: From Hill to Hollow, sponsored by the Carey Institute for Global Good, were both cancelled.

The Carey Institute shut down in early March, shortening its Logan Nonfiction Program and helping the writers and filmmakers make arrangements to get home safely. All weddings and conferences were cancelled and staff was laid off. Its taproom closed. The annual Fourth of July fireworks that was looked forward to each year was another celebration that didn't take place.



**Reflections on 2020...** *Continued from Page 11*

The village of Rensselaerville is a unique community with many chances to socialize but not this year. As November creeps towards December we are all feeling relieved that the presidential election is behind us as we continue coping with pandemic fatigue. We all follow the three W's of the pandemic: Wear a mask! Walk six feet apart! Wash your hands!

**Not just New York but  
Rensselaerville fits the mantra  
RENSSELAERVILLE TOUGH!**

*The Rensselaerville Press*  *The Rensselaerville Press*  *The Rensselaerville Press*  *The Rensselaerville Press*  *The Rensselaerville*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street or PO Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Mailing Address and when to use this if you are a  
“seasonal” resident (the post office will not forward our  
newsletter or other 3rd class mail): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street or PO Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership (new or renewal)  
Check off what you are sending

Individual Membership \$10.00

Family Membership 15.00

Sponsorship Membership 30.00

Life Membership 150.00

Donation to Paint the Mill \_\_\_\_\_.

Other Donation \_\_\_\_\_.

Gift Membership \_\_\_\_\_.

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_.

◆ **Officers** ◆

President Matt Mulholland  
Vice President Ken Storms  
Secretary Joyce Chase  
Treasurer Tony Campo  
Membership Secretary Laura Ventura

◆ **Trustees** ◆

Tony Campo (20) Tom Snyder (21)  
Barry Kuhar (22) David Suter (20)  
Micah Kuhar (22) Laura Ventura (22)  
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The Rensselaerville Press is published  
quarterly by  
The Rensselaerville Historical Society  
P.O. Box 8,  
Rensselaerville, NY 12147

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Write & Editor Rose Kuhar  
Proofing & Editor Karen Haseley  
Graphics Dennis Murphy

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Headquarters at the  
Rensselaerville Grist Mill,  
Rensselaerville