

Dutchess County Historical Society Annual Awards Monday, October 28, 2019

5:30 drinks, 6:00 dinner, 8:00 finish ~ Locust Grove, 2683 South Rd. Poughkeepsie 12602
\$135 per person · Table accommodates eight
RSVP to Bill Jeffway by October 15 · cell: 845-293-7711 · bill.jeffway@dchsnyc.org
DCHS · PO Box 88 · Poughkeepsie, NY 12602



Hosted By Denise Doring VanBuren
President General, National Society of
the Daughters of the American Revolution

No one is better suited to help us recognize achievement in local history than “our own” Denise Doring VanBuren. At the end of this year she will retire from her executive position at Central Hudson after 26 years of service. In an extraordinary shift of emphasis, having been elected the 45th President General of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in June, VanBuren will devote her full time and energy to the 3-year term. Her Dutchess patriotic roots are deep. Her ancestor, Simon Freer, was among those who signed the Articles of Association in 1775 in a very public commitment to the independence of the United States. Her longtime support of DCHS, including being President, allows us to confidently say that her characteristic energy and focus will ensure that the DAR will be vibrant and effective in passing its one millionth member since its founding in 1890. The DAR is open to women who can show they are descended from someone who helped the revolutionary cause between the Battle of Lexington in 1775 and the withdrawal of British troops in 1783. “Helping the cause” could include military service, civil service to the new provisional government, or patriotic service such as donating supplies or giving medical aid. We are grateful for her hosting our event.

**Helen Wilkinson Reynolds Award recognizing
the necessary and accurate search for historical truth
Myra Young Armstead, Ph.D.**

VP for Academic Inclusive Excellence · Lyford Paterson Edwards
& Helen Gray Edwards Prof. of Historical Studies, Bard College



Myra Young Armstead, Ph.D., joined Bard College in 1985 and currently serves as Vice President for Academic Inclusive Excellence and is the Lyford Paterson Edwards and Helen Gray Edwards Professor of Historical Studies. The Organization of American Historians recently named her Primary Researcher on a new project with the National Park Service, which will investigate slavery and slaveholding in Saratoga National Park at the Philip Schuyler Estate from 1702 to 1837.

DCHS was delighted to be invited to participate in one of her most recent collaborations, the exhibition, series of talks, and summary monograph, *Alexander Gilson: From Property to Property Owner*, supported by a grant from the Lumina Foundation. Armstead engaged a wide and varied community by involving her Bard students, Bard’s Montgomery Place Campus, Historic Red Hook, and the Dutchess County Historical Society. The arc of Alexander Gilson’s story reflects his birth in Red Hook in the age of slaveholding in New York, and his subsequent joining and rise to property manager at Montgomery Place, a large slave-owning family before 1827 state abolition. The June 1876 *American Agriculturist* referred to him as “famous” because of his success in breeding double-blossom Begonias, a plant that remains formally named in his honor: *Achyranthes Gilsoni*. His story continues to gain attention.

In the “search for historical truth” in her 2012 book, *Freedom's Gardener: James F. Brown, Horticulture, and the Hudson Valley in Antebellum America*, Armstead transforms the quotidian lines of a diary into a powerful personal story in Dutchess County, in the context of larger influences. The *New York Times*, in reference to the book wrote, “[Armstead] argues, convincingly, that since horticulture was regarded as a craft, Brown should be considered an artisan rather than a common laborer. It was his occupation that allowed him to climb the social ladder, making him part of an informal network that crossed racial, class and gender lines.” Prof. Armstead was editor and contributor to, “Mighty Change, Tall Within: Black Identity in the Hudson Valley.” Authored “Lord, Please Don’t Take Me in August”: African Americans in Newport and Saratoga Springs, 1870 to 1930. She was Participant and Lecturer, Advisory Board for Historic Hudson Valley, for 2019 NEH Teachers’ Summer Institute on “Slavery in the Colonial North.” She serves as *Executive Board Member*, New York Academy of History (since 2007). She serves as *Board Member*, Hudson River Valley Institute, Marist College (since 2006).

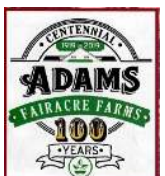
Board of Directors

Lou Lewis, President
Chris Altavilla, Vice President
Jack Cina, Treasurer
Christine Crawford-
Oppenheimer, Secretary
Michael Boden
Rob Doyle
Eileen Hayden
Tom Lawrence
Candace Lewis
Antonia Mauro
James Nelson
Melodye Moore
Elizabeth Strauss
Janna Whearty
Elizabeth Wolf
Ex-Officio: William P. Tatum, III

Advisory Board

Steven Efron
Brad Kendall
Steve Lant
Dr. James Merrell
Dr. Dennis Murray
Al & Julia Rosenblatt
Fred Schaeffer
Dr. Paul Sparrow
Denise Doring VanBuren
Mary Kay Vrba

2019 Sponsors





**Helen Wilkinson Reynolds Award recognizing
the necessary and accurate search for historical truth
Thomas S. Wermuth, Ph.D.**

VP for Academic Affairs
Associate Professor of History, Marist College

Thomas S. Wermuth, Ph.D., joined the Marist College faculty as an Assistant Professor of History in 1992, was appointed Dean of the School of Liberal Arts in 2001 and Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2007. In 2002, Thom co-founded the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) and serves as its Director, overseeing the Institute's development into one of the nation's leading regional history programs.

A Dutchess County native, Wermuth earned a degree in History from Marist College, an MA from SUNY Albany, and a Ph.D from Binghamton University. In 2001, he received the Board of Trustees' Faculty Award for Distinguished Teaching at Marist. For his contributions to New York history, Thom has been inducted into the New York Academy of History.

Wermuth's research and teaching focuses on the social and economic history of the Hudson River Valley. He is the author of *Rip Van Winkle's Neighbors: The Transformation of Rural Society in the Hudson River Valley, 1720-1850* (2002) and co-editor of *America's First River: The History and Culture of the Hudson River Valley* (2009). As Publisher of *The Hudson River Valley Review*, Thom contributes to and reviews articles, and is responsible for having elevated the journal to peer-reviewed status. He also edits the book series "The Hudson River: An American Region" from SUNY Press.

Under Wermuth's direction, HRVI presents two annual lectures, the Handel-Krom and Cunneen-Hackett Lectures in Hudson River Valley History, and he played a key role in securing the support and recognition of the National Endowment for the Humanities for HRVI. In summer of 2019, Thom led HRVI's efforts for the conference "1969: When Woodstock Changed the World", a two-day Marist event in partnership with the Museum at Bethel Woods, and the New York State Museum, Office of State History.

Dutchess Award, Edward E. Downey, Esq.

Founding partner of the law firm
Downey, Haab and Murphy, PLLC in Millerton
President of the North East Historical Society



Edward E. Downey, Esq. is a founding partner of the law firm Downey, Haab and Murphy, PLLC, in Millerton. He has been a Director of the North East Historical Society (NEHS) since 2008, and its President since 2012. In that role, he follows the footsteps of his mother, Leola (Lee) Downey, who taught history at Webutuck School including the curriculum devoted to local history. She was a member of the NEHS and served as its President. This Dutchess Award honors exceptional contributions by a county resident to the Dutchess County community, and beyond, in the areas of preservation, history, and/or education.

There is no better example than Ed Downey, who has taken a very broad and inclusive embrace of the community that includes the Millerton Fire Department, the Northeast-Millerton Library, the American Legion, the elementary schools, and businesses. The creation of the *Dine Out For History* program with 5 Millerton restaurants has helped gain additional funding that has allowed the NEHS to move to vastly improved apartment space in their library. Ed's collaborative approach involving DCHS and the Dutchess County Historian with the local American Legion allowed for a very powerful, onsite talk and exhibition. And that collaboration continues. Ed is a lifelong resident of Millerton, leaving only for college, military service (Army 1968 to 1970) and law school. His wife, Meg, is a prior winner of the Dutchess Award, making a historic first for a married couple to each win the award, separately. Congratulations!



**Business of Historical Distinction
Adams Fairacre Farms**

Celebrating 100 years of family business
Pat & Steve Adams

In 1919 Ralph A. Adams and his wife, Mary Rogers Adams, purchased 50 acres of farmland on Dutchess Turnpike in Poughkeepsie, New York, having borrowed \$500. They worked the land, selling fresh produce to area retailers. By 1932 they had four children—Diana, Dorothy, Ralph and Donald—and a successful farmstand. Adams Fairacre Farms was born.

At first they were just selling fruits and vegetables, but soon people were asking for more. "Once you sell the produce, they want cheese, then meats, then a deli. It was a slow, natural progression," said founders' son Donald. "And as we had supplies for the farm, people wanted fertilizer or plants from us, so we added the garden center."

After the passing of the senior Ralph in 1957, sons Ralph and Donald took over the farm. In 1959 Ralph and Donald opened the first Adams store in Poughkeepsie, Today the family tradition of providing customers with quality products and first rate service has grown to four locations: Poughkeepsie, Wappinger, Newburgh and Kingston.

We regret to say that Donald P. Adams passed away just over a month ago, on August 20, 2019. Today the business is still family owned; with sons Pat and Steve serving as CEO and COO respectively and daughter Kathy as Sweet Shop Manager. Pat and Steve will accept the award on behalf of the family and business.



Local Vice Presidents

Amenia, Julian Strauss
Beacon, Diane Lapis
Beekman, vacant
Clinton, Craig Marshall
Dover, Caroline Reichenberg & Valerie LaRobardier
East Fishkill, Rick Soedler
Fishkill, Joey Cavacinni
Hyde Park, Shannon Butler
LaGrange, vacant
Milan, Vicky Lobrutto
Washington/Millbrook, Jim Inglis
North East & Millerton, Ed Downey & Jane Rossman
Pawling, vacant
Pine Plains, Dyan Wapnick
Pleasant Valley, Marilyn Bradford
Poughkeepsie, Michael Dolan
Red Hook, Claudine & Chris Klose
Rhinebeck Michael Frazier & David Miller
Stanford, Kathy Spiers
Union Vale, Fran Wallin
Wappinger, Joey Cavacinni

Publications Committee

Candace Lewis, Chair
Roger Donway
David Dengel
Dennis Dengel
John Desmond
Eileen Hayden
Bill Jeffway
Melodye Moore
William P. Tatum, III