



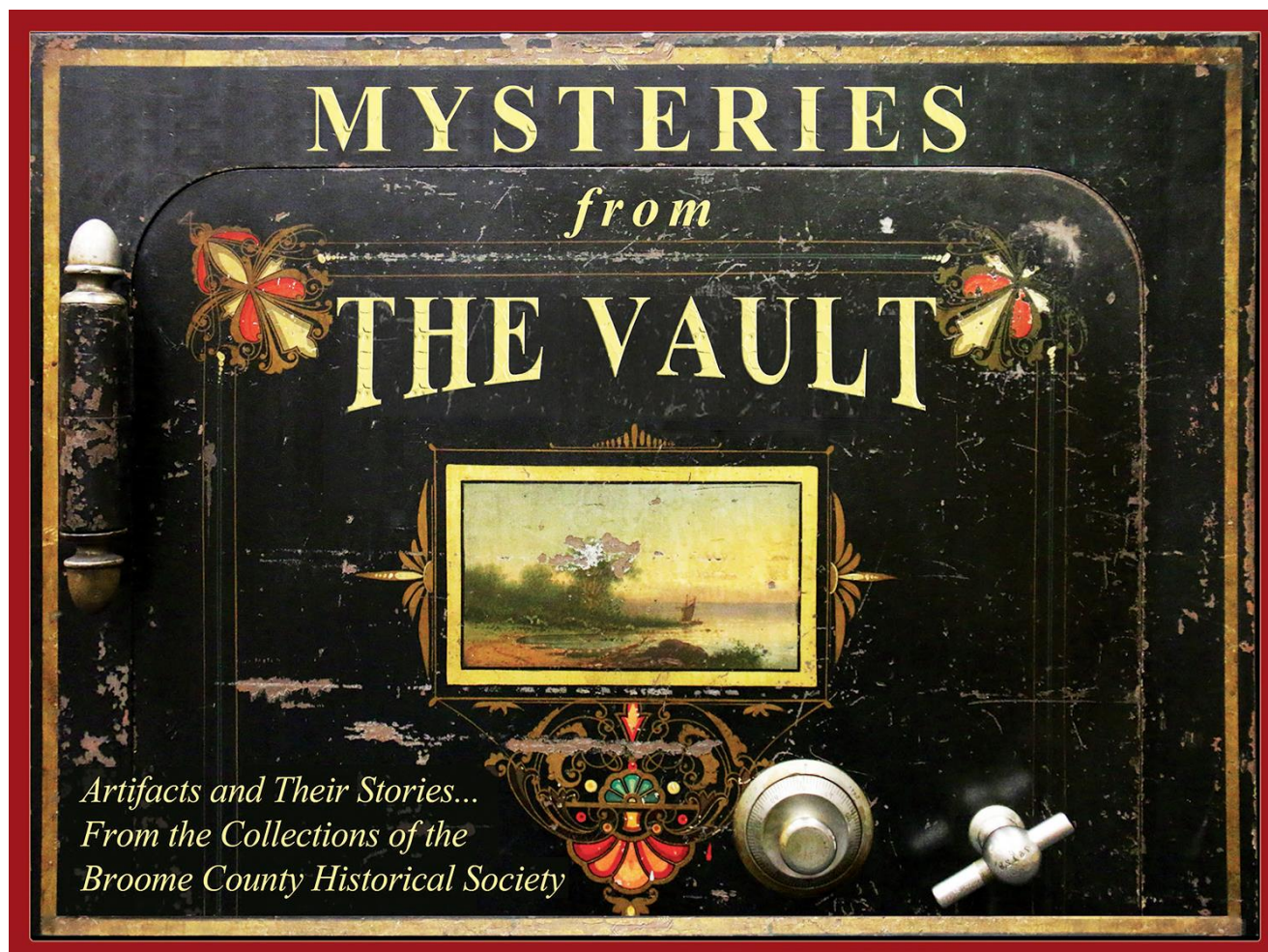
Broome County History

BULLETIN

SPRING 2019

BROOME COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 19 NO. 1



COLLECTING, PRESERVING, INTERPRETING, AND NOW EXHIBITING BROOME COUNTY HISTORY

In the summer of 1919, in the back room of a clothing store on Court Street, the Broome County Historical Society was born. From the very beginning its mission has been to collect, preserve and interpret the history of Broome County. Today the Society's collection of artifacts includes thousands of items, all carefully preserved and secured in climate-controlled vaults. Now, in celebration of the society's 100th anniversary, several items from the collections are being featured throughout the year. Selected artifacts are on display in the Exhibit Room of the Broome County Library from April through December; a photo book, *Mysteries From The Vault*, is scheduled for release in late summer; the society's monthly program for September will take the form of an open house exhibition at Roberson Museum and Science Center; and throughout the year, artifacts will be featured in public broadcasting video spots on WSKG TV.

A Few "Mysteries from The Vault"



Whips manufactured in Windsor, New York



Native American artifacts



Rifles manufactured at Chenango Point



18th century powder horn



New York State Inebriate Asylum documentation



Victory Restaurant stained-glass transoms



Wall sconces from local theater



Washington Street Armory time capsule

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

In 1969, the 50th anniversary of the Broome County Historical Society, an article appeared in the *Bulletin* detailing the history of the organization. As reported by then Board member, Dr. Clement G. Bowers, “the Broome County Historical Society, Inc., was organized during the summer of 1919 and subsequently incorporated. Its membership did not consist of over twenty-five or thirty men. The first meeting was held in the store of Alfred Lord on Court Street in Binghamton.” A.A. Lord & Son was a men’s clothing shop at 99 Court Street.

As stated in the certificate of incorporation, the purpose of the society was to maintain and furnish a reading room, books, papers and magazines “and clean entertainment,” and to study the history of Broome County and preserve stories, legends, etc., of local interest.

Several years later the primary “purposes and powers of the corporation” were formally identified as follows:

- To promote and encourage original historical research in Broome County and vicinity.
- To disseminate a greater knowledge of the history of Broome County and vicinity by means of lectures, meetings, addresses and the publication and distribution of literature on historical subjects.
- To gather, own and hold books, manuscripts, maps, pictures and relics relating to the history of Broome County and vicinity, and to maintain a library and museum for their preservation.

Since the beginning, the Broome County Historical Society has observed these guiding principles. Historical research of Broome County is promoted, encouraged and performed on a daily basis. Literally thousands of “lectures, meetings, addresses and publications” have been produced and there are currently over 200,000 “books, manuscripts, maps, pictures and relics” in the society’s collections.

Membership in the society has grown from “25 or 30 men” to well over 500 individuals, families and businesses. Online followers number in the thousands.

Now in 2019, as the Broome County Historical Society enters into its second century the organization is stronger and more effective than ever. Through its ongoing efforts, the study of Broome County history is promoted and encouraged to more people on a daily basis than the original founders could ever have imagined.

Join us this year as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Broome County Historical Society – with new programs, books, and of course, “clean entertainment.”

BROOMEHISTORY.ORG

A Fresh New Website, and a New Look for the Historical Society

Over recent years the BCHS website, broomehistory.org, has served the Society well. Even so, the site was showing its age, it was not entirely user-friendly and ongoing updates and maintenance had become difficult.

Early this year it was decided to create an entirely new website. The new site was launched in February and is accessed from the same address as before:

www.broomehistory.org. Visitors will find the new site much easier to navigate. It provides information on upcoming programs and other events. BCHS publications may be ordered and purchased at the site and questions and comments may be submitted. The site also includes an up-to-the-minute post of the BCHS Facebook page.



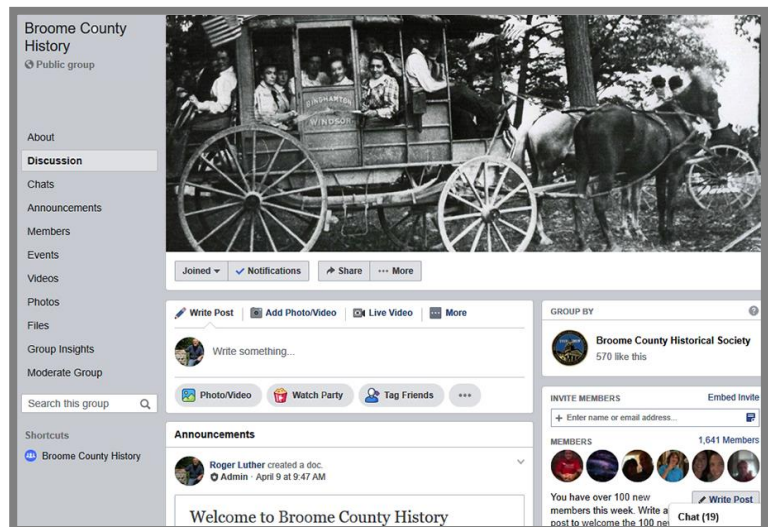
BROOME COUNTY HISTORY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A New Local History Resource

On March 11, 2019, a new online resource for Broome County historical information was launched. "Broome County History" is an open-format group on Facebook that provides an ever-increasing knowledge base of factual historical information. It is open to all who share a passion for this area's rich history.

The group is administered by some of the most knowledgeable history authorities in the area with access to rare collections of historical photographs and documentation. Daily postings include questions, comments, vintage articles and photographs concerning events, people and locations throughout Broome County history.

Within days of its launch over 1,000 members had joined the group and membership continues to grow daily.



BROOME COUNTY HISTORIAN

Messages from the Outgoing and Incoming Historians



Gerald Smith, former Broome County Historian

A long time in office, a long time coming. In January 2019, I retired as County Historian after 31 years, as City Historian after 35 years, and left the Broome County Public Library after 40 years and 10 months there.

It was not an easy decision, but the right one. Through the years, I worked to improve the importance of the County Historian – from a small office in the basement of the Courthouse, and then the Library, to overseeing the operations of the Local History & Genealogy Center. I worked with dedicated staff and volunteers to increase our attendance from about 800 each year to about 15,000 each year.

I have given nearly 700 programs to every type of group. I helped create and served as president of the Association of Public Historians of New York State representing the 1600+ appointed historians in our state. I have served on countless boards and committees – including the county's Bicentennial Committee and the All Wars Memorial Committee.

I am most proud of the work at the Local History Center and with the Broome County Historical Society – watching both improve in membership and use. I will continue teaching, writing for the newspaper, and doing my radio show, but now it's time for Roger Luther to take the reins and for me to enjoy a little rest.



Roger Luther, Broome County Historian

On June 6, 1938, a small notice appeared in the Binghamton Press: "William E. Flook was appointed as county historian." Flook was the first to fill the new position and over the next 80 years he would be followed by just six others. Each one was driven by a passion for local history and as the torch passed from one to the next, each was certainly a tough act to follow.

Of all the acts, none could be tougher to follow than that of Gerald R. Smith. As a researcher, writer, speaker and general authority on local history, Gerry's record is second to none. He will be missed.

As the newly appointed county historian, I look forward to continuing the work of Broome County's prior historians, and at the same time hope to bring fresh new ideas to the position – to work with and learn from our municipal historians, to develop relationships and work in collaboration with our schools and related organizations, and to increase public appreciation for local history through new programs, exhibitions and publications. Finally, by making full use of online media we hope to introduce a spark of curiosity and a passion for local history to an entirely new generation.

It is truly an honor to have joined the list of Broome County Historians. I look forward to the challenge!

THANK YOU REXFORD COLE AND SHIRLEY SPALIK

Our long-time friend and member of the Broome County Board of Trustees recently retired from the Board. Rexford Cole served many years as a Trustee, and over that time both he and his wife, Garnita, contributed much to the success of the organization. We'll miss his participation and involvement on the Programs Committee, and we wish him all the best on his retirement.

It is with similar regret that we recognize the retirement of Shirley Spalik, who has volunteered her services for the Historical Society and the Local History and Genealogy Center for two decades. Over that time Shirley's genealogical research has helped countless individuals learn more about their family history. Shirley will be greatly missed.

Call for Volunteers – Shirley is one of several people that have volunteered their services at the Local History Center where there is an ongoing need for filing, genealogical and collections research, digitizing photos and documents, and data entry. If you or someone you know might be interested in getting involved, please contact the History Center by phone at 607-778-3572, or through the Historical Society website: www.broomehistory.org.

THE BCHS CENTENNIAL LOGO

You may have noticed the new look on the cover of this newsletter. In light of the 100th anniversary of the society, a special logo has been developed. The centennial logo now shows up on announcements and promotional literature and is also available in the form of a high-quality cloisonné lapel pin.

While the supply lasts, pins may be purchased for \$5 at any BCHS program or by visiting the Local History Center in the Broome County Public Library.



Broome County Historical Society Board of Trustees

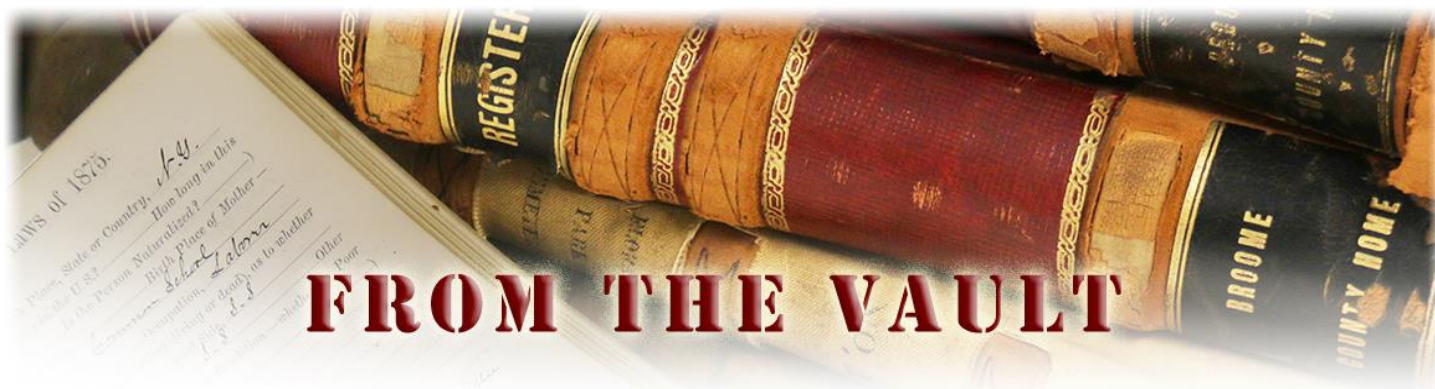
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Editor Roger Luther rluther@nysLandmarks.com



FROM THE VAULT

A previous "From the Vault" article described five elaborate embroideries, created by a former patient at Binghamton State Hospital referred to as Joseph Roth in 1910 to 1920. The subsequent online post caught the attention of a woman living in Dansville, New York, while researching the man's work.

In early March the Historical Society received a phone call from Norma Maltby of Dansville. She described three embroideries in her possession, all by the same individual and of very similar appearance to those in the BCHS collection. Arrangements were made to meet her and her daughter at her home to view and photograph the pieces.



Norma Maltby and daughter Kathleen with embroideries.

While meeting with Ms. Maltby and discussing the items, she offered the three embroideries to the Historical Society. Thanks to her very generous donation, the BCHS now has eight of these magnificent pieces in its collection.



Two embroideries by Joseph Roth depicting Broadmoor Hall, where he resided while at Binghamton State Hospital.





Springtime 1919, the Armistice had been signed, the worst of the great Spanish Influenza pandemic had passed, and although Binghamton was now “bone dry,” things were looking up.

A TIME TO CELEBRATE AND HONOR OUR WAR HEROES

“Binghamton is to dress herself up in style for the reception of Binghamton’s soldiers and sailors and it is to be done at once. Tonight an ordinance will be introduced in the Common Council authorizing the appropriation of \$600 for the purpose of decorating all city buildings and the streets of the city in honor of the home-coming troops. It is planned to make Binghamton the most gala decorated city in the Southern Tier.” When the big day arrived, “Fifteen thousand Binghamtonians – it may have been more – turned out last night to welcome home the heroes of Battery C, 104th Field Artillery. Whistles were blown and bells rung and the city went nearly as wild as on armistice day.”

Due to the overwhelming success of a Liberty Loan Drive, Johnson City was honored by having a ship named after it. Thousands of local residents travelled to New Jersey to witness the christening and launch of the 5,000-ton merchant liner “Johnson City.”

GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Local companies were reporting significant growth, such as International Time Recorder, Endicott-Johnson, Larrabee-Deyo, Hires, Ansco, the 1900 Washer Company and all the cigar manufacturers.

Construction of the new Strand Theater on Chenango Street was begun and a new tuberculosis sanatorium was built at Chenango Bridge.

New construction continued on an unprecedented scale. “In various parts of the village of Endicott houses and large groups of houses are being built, and their completion can’t come too quickly to satisfy a line of would be tenants.”

In April, Broome County boasted of one car for every thirteen residents, and just over 9,000 telephones were in service in Binghamton.

With a growing population came complaints, crime and the need for tighter regulations. “All hog killing inside the city limits must cease, according to a decree issued by the officials of the bureau of health. Of late many complaints have been made that pig sties in various parts of the city had become unsanitary and a menace to health.” Later, goats were included to the ban, and chicken thievery continued to be a serious problem throughout the area.

Some of Binghamton’s laws at that time included: “The curfew law forbids persons under sixteen years of age being upon the streets after 8 o’clock at this season of the year unless accompanied by parents or guardians. No dog can go unmuzzled from June to September without laying the owner liable to a \$10 fine. Any male person caught flirting on Binghamton streets is liable to a fine of \$10 for each flirt.”

BINGHAMTON NEWS – 100 YEARS AGO... *Continued*

CELEBRITIES

Visitors of note during the spring of 1919 included world-famous prize-fighter Jack Dempsey, actor Ethel Barrymore, musicians Jascha Heifetz and John McCormack, and American flying ace Captain Eddie Rickenbacker.

Mr. Willis Sharpe Kilmer's thoroughbred horse Exterminator, winner of the 1918 Kentucky Derby, continued his winning streak through the spring with decisive victories around the country.

MOVIES AND BASEBALL

A resolution was passed by the Johnson City Board of Trustees permitting Sunday baseball and moving pictures. At the same time, the proposal was brought before Binghamton's Common Council where it met fierce opposition.

Binghamton's baseball team was in search of a new name. "The Binghamton team for some time past has been known as the 'Bings' or 'Bingos.' Many of the baseball fans in this city, Endicott, Union and Johnson City believe "Bingos" or "Bings" is by far too inappropriate and they are demanding a new name for the Binghamton team. The Binghamton Press offers a season ticket for the best nickname submitted."

LOCAL NAACP BRANCH ESTABLISHED

"A permanent organization which has for its purpose the uplift and betterment of the negro race, was effected at a mass meeting of the city's negro citizens, held in the A.M.E. Church, Sherman Place, last night. The organization will be a branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, with headquarters in New York City. Among the alleged discriminations which the national association proposes to eliminate, are: 'To abolish legal injustice against negroes; to stamp out race discrimination; to prevent lynchings, burnings and torturings of black people; to assure to every citizen of color the common rights of American citizenship; to compel equal accommodations in railroad travel, irrespective of color; to secure for colored children an equal opportunity to public school education through a fair apportionment of public education funds.'"

FIRE

In the early morning of April 21, fire erupted at the Masonic Temple at 9-17 Chenango Street causing much destruction. As a result, plans were developed for constructing a new Masonic Temple on Main Street.

LIQUOR IN A DRY TOWN

Arrests of boot-leggers and raids on local establishments were reported often, and there was some concern about the fate of the contraband: "A portion of the liquors, wines and beer and other intoxicants held by the police as the result of recent excise raids will be dumped into the Susquehanna river. Liquors to be destroyed total approximately 100 cases of lager beer, twenty gallons of whiskey and a small quantity of wines and other intoxicants."

"100 Years Ago Today" by Roger Luther is a daily feature in the Facebook Group "Broome County History."

BCHS Programs

APRIL 17, 2019

*Interesting Items from the Broome County
Historical Society Collections*

Gerry Smith, Brian Frey and Roger Luther

MAY 15

*From Bars to Boutiques: the History of
Clinton Street in Binghamton*

Gerry Smith

*Note: This program will be held at St.
Michael's Church Recreation Center, 298
Clinton Street, Binghamton*

JUNE 19

Early Settlers in Western Broome County

Phil Childs, Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

SEPTEMBER 18

*OPEN HOUSE: 100th Anniversary of the
Broome County Historical Society*

Broome County Historical Society in
collaboration with Roberson Museum and
Science Center

*NOTE: This program will be held as an open
house exhibition at Roberson Museum and
Science Center, 30 Front Street, Binghamton.*

Refreshments at 6:30PM
Program 6:45-8:00PM in the Decker Room,
Broome County Library unless otherwise
specified.

All Programs are Free and Open to
the Public

Stay tuned... Exciting new programs for 2020
are in the works.

Check www.broomehistory.org
and the Broome County Historical Society
Facebook page for future programs.

Local Historical Societies

Town of Binghamton Historical Society

Meets at Fellowship Hall, Old Hawleyton
Methodist Church, Binghamton, 1st Tuesdays at
1:30PM, April through October.

Binghamton Civil War Historical Society

Meets at Hillcrest American Legion near
Chenango Bridge exit off Rt. I-88
3rd Tuesday at 7PM except June – August.

Town of Colesville

Historian's Advisory Committee

Historian: Val LaClair, lacl49rings@aol.com
Meets at Colesville Town Hall,
2nd Monday, March through November at 7PM.

Deposit Historical Society

Museum open year-round Tuesday 9:30 to
noon for research, Thursday & Sunday 2-4PM.
Memorial Day – Columbus Day for exhibits.
Information: www.deposithistoricalsociety.org

Kirkwood Historical Society

Meets at historic Kirkwood Schoolhouse,
2nd Tuesday, April through December at 1PM.

Iroquois Studies

Contact: Dolores Elliott, 729-0016
For information visit www.otsiningo.com.

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

President: Phil Childs
Meets 3rd Tuesday, 7PM.
Museum open Sunday afternoon thru Sept 24.

Old Onaquaga Historical Society/ Colesville-Windsor Museum

President: Eileen Ruggiero, 775-1190
Meets at St. Luke's Church Museum in
Harpursville, 3rd Monday at 7PM, May to
October. Museum is open 2nd Sunday, 2-5PM,
May through November.

Old Village of Union Historical Society

Historian: Ted Warner, 727-2503
Meets at 40 Washington Avenue, Endicott,
2nd Monday of each month at 7PM.

Vestal Historical Society and Museum

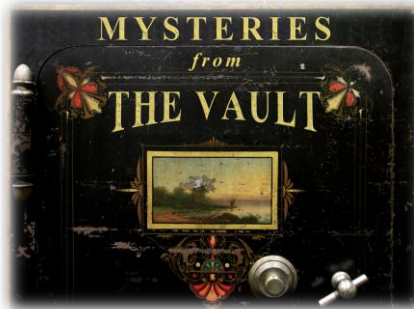
Historian: Margaret Hadsell
Museum Director: Chereese Rosales
Museum Co-Presidents: Gordon Allen, Tim
Rhodes

SPONSORSHIP

A Great Way to Show Your Support

Mysteries from the Vault book and Public Television series.

In celebration of the Broome County Historical Society's 100th anniversary, a PBS video series and companion book will be produced to highlight selections from the thousands of artifacts in the historical society's collection.



Sponsorship Levels

- \$5,000** Full page ad in book along with logo and letter from CEO. Also logo and voice over thank you on TV spots.
- \$2,500** Full page ad in book and logo with voice over on TV spots.
- \$1,000** Half page ad in book and name listed on TV spots.
- \$250** A quarter page ad in book.
- \$100** Name listed in thank you notes in book.

+ WSKG Public Television series.

20 one minute history videos titled: *Mysteries from the Vault* will be produced by WSKG Public Television to air throughout the centennial celebration year.

A mission of historical preservation

Since its inception in 1919 the Broome County Historical Society has been guided by a mission to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Broome County. The Society has a collection of over 200,000 items, including 80,000 photographs, countless documents, and thousands of three-dimensional items held in the archival vault at the Broome County Local History & Genealogy Center in the Broome County Library, and in the

Roberson Museum and Science Center. Many of the artifacts remain hidden from public view. However, through the Society's series of programs, dozens of books, and other publications, the Broome County Historical Society has been able to preserve, present and promote the often forgotten stories and events that have helped shape the incredibly rich and varied history of our communities.

Contact: The Broome County Historical Society.
607-778-2076
Broomehistorical@gmail.com



BROOME COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Roberson Museum and Science Center
30 Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13905

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S.Postage Paid
Permit No. 82
Binghamton, NY

MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of the Broome County Historical Society (BCHS), fill out the form below and check one of the following:

- ___ \$25 Individual
- ___ \$50 Sustaining Individual
- ___ \$35 Family
- ___ \$75 Sustaining Family
- ___ \$10 Student (K-12)
- ___ \$100+ Corporate
- ___ \$100-\$499 Patron
- ___ \$500-\$999 Benefactor
- ___ \$1000+ Memorial

Please Consider
JOINT MEMBERSHIP

To join both the Broome County Historical Society *and* the Roberson Museum and Science Center, add \$40 to your selected category.

Name

Address

email

Please mail this form with payment to Broome County History & Genealogy Center
185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY 13901