

WCHS 78th Annual Membership Meeting

WCHS will hold our 78th Annual Membership meeting on **Saturday, October 27, 2018** at Proudfit Hall in Salem, NY. The day starts at 10 a.m. with a coffee/social time, followed by our business meeting at 10:30 a.m. (no charge). At 12:00 noon, the group will enjoy a luncheon (cost \$13 per person for lunch) catered by Brooklyn Marie's Restaurant. Our program for the afternoon will begin at 1 p.m. at the Old Burying Ground in Salem.

Please make your reservations by calling WCHS at (518) 747-9108 or by email at wchsbookshop@yahoo.com or return the registration form on the website with your check. Any questions, feel free to contact the Historical Society.

At 1:00 p.m., our program will be held at the Old Burying Ground (approx. 4 blocks south of Proudfit Hall on Rt. 22). Salem historian Al Cormier will portray General John Williams and as such will introduce many of the notable people from Salem's past who are buried in the cemetery including the members of his family, Margaret Tilford (accused witch), St. John Honeywood (Yale graduate, poet, artist and teacher), Dr. Abram Allen (famous "Old Head Allen"), Colonel Joseph McCracken (Salem's best Revolutionary War soldier), Joshua and Dinah Dick Conkey (first settlers), and Alexander McNish (Revolutionary War veteran and sheep farmer). Al is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and Cornell University. He has been Salem Town historian since 1984 and has written numerous books and newspaper articles on local history. Al is a retired high school principal from Salem Washington Academy.



The group in Fort Anne in 2017: Brian Companion, Mike Skelly, Mary Skelly, Bradley Allen, Lt. Mike Companion

Mary and Mike Skelly, re-enactors with the 2nd Continental Artillery Regiment will be firing their cannon "Bella" at the program. The gun pictured left is "Cricket" which was part of their unit when they joined. Their gun Bella (photo below) is a sister gun with an identical 30" barrel from Hern Ironworks foundry in Idaho. These cannon barrels are 30 inches long and weigh 90 pounds. Their 1.75 inch bore would accommodate a one and half pound iron cannon ball. They are the type of cannons that would be common on boats plying both Lake George and Lake Champlain during the Revolutionary War. Identical guns from the same foundry were featured in films *Master and Commander*, and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. These are the smallest of the unit's five guns.

Mary and Mike are alumni of Hartford Central School (class of 1987) and live in Hebron, NY. They have been reenacting since 2007 and joined the 2nd Continental Artillery in 2014. The 2nd Continental was founded for the bicentennial celebrations of 1976 and is headquartered in Fort Edward, NY. About half the current members are Washington County residents. They are scheduled for 26 events in 2018 throughout New York State and Vermont, including school programs, scouting events, historical reenactments, participation in parades, at museums, forts, and battlefields. They also serve as color guards for the Sons of the American Revolution and Daughters of the American Revolution. The unit has been featured in the *I Love New York* tourism campaign (you can find them on posters at every Thruway rest stop!), and have participated in television programs and feature films. One of their favorite events is an annual artillery demonstration for Mary's 4th grade class at Salem Central School. If anyone is interested in contacting the group for future events, please contact them or to reach out on their Facebook group "2nd Continental Artillery".

