

HUDSON HIGHLANDS

PUTNAM

HISTORY

MUSEUM

WEST POINT FOUNDRY

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2023

The mission of the Putnam History Museum is to collect, preserve, interpret, and present the history of Putnam County, Philipstown, the West Point Foundry, and the Hudson Highlands. Through exhibitions, programs, and events, the museum uses its collection to engage the community with the vibrant history of our region--and to foster greater understanding of the role it has played in the growth of our nation.



2023 SUMMARY

For over 118 years, the Putnam History Museum (PHM) has diligently served the residents, visitors, and historical researchers of Putnam County. Thanks to the generous support from Putnam County, alongside the dedication of our members, friends, and visitors, we have sustained our world-class special collections library and archive, preserved the historical West Point Foundry schoolhouse as our museum headquarters, and offered countless public programs, exhibitions, and publications.

In 2023, we achieved significant milestones with the help of both public and private support:

- Presented a variety of exhibitions, including the award-winning *Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County* exhibition, showcasing our commitment to preserving and highlighting Putnam County's diverse history.
- Engaged the community with educational programs on key themes such as Native Americans, the Colonial Period, the American Revolution, Women's History, and more.
- Hosted 12 lectures covering a wide range of subjects to further engage with the community.
- Dedicated more than 400 research hours to over 50 public research requests.
- Hosted, co-hosted, or collaborated on over 45 public programs, enhancing historical curiosity and appreciation within the mid-Hudson region.
- Participated in new projects such as the Stanton-Anthony Symposium and launched a new Native American Heritage Weekend.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are excited to embark on several key projects focused on financial sustainability, infrastructure improvements, program expansion, digitization, and strategic planning. With a full-time Education & Public Programming Manager now in place, we are poised to offer even more enriching and engaging educational content and public programs.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Putnam County and all our supporters for their continued trust and support. Your contributions significantly impact the Putnam History Museum, enabling us to preserve our shared heritage and inspire future generations.



POPULATION SERVED

The Putnam History Museum serves a socioeconomically diverse audience of students, adults, and seniors. Our primary audience resides in Putnam County and throughout Mid-Hudson Valley region. Our secondary audience includes weekend visitors from New York City, Westchester, Connecticut, and beyond. Our weekend visitors represent a large urban population.

STAFF



CASSIE WARD
Executive Director



KARA MATTSSEN
Education Manager
Funded through
December 2024.



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The PHM does not anticipate any new or impending changes to staff in 2024.

SOURCES OF REVENUE & CURRENT TRENDS IN COST OF SERVICE

- **Financial Report:**

- 2023 Income \$240,510.12
- 2023 Expenses \$293,761.94
- 2023 Investments (end-of-year balance) \$1,080,005.00
- Income and expense figures are tentative and have not been adjusted by our accountant to reflect depreciation and investments. Final figures will be reported on PHM's 2023 form 990 and are available upon request.

- **Current Trends in Cost of Service:**

- Utilities costs continue to rise, having increased \$2,000 since 2022
- Insurance costs have also increased \$4,000 since 2022
- Costly HVAC and boiler repairs/replacement due to age of system
- All other operational expenses, including payroll, are stable

- **Major Funding:**

- A cornerstone gift from Marion & Pat Dugan provides sustaining annual support
- County of Putnam

- **Additional Funding:**

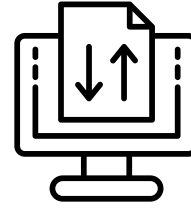
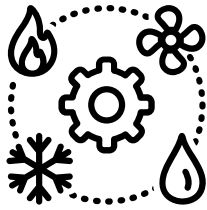
- Town of Philipstown

- **2023 Grants:**

- Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley
- Hudson River Valley Greenway
- Museum Association of New York
- William G. Pomeroy Foundation
- American Historical Association



NEW & UPCOMING PROJECTS



- **Initiatives for the next fiscal year:**

- **Financial Sustainability**

- Develop a robust multi-year financial plan to ensure the museum's financial stability, including fundraising initiatives, grant applications, and exploring potential revenue streams.

- **Sustainability and Infrastructure**

- A major goal is to secure funding and resources to address the need to replace the aging furnace and HVAC as ensuring the long-term sustainability of the museum's physical facilities is crucial.

- **Program Expansion**

- Building on the success of recent programs and events, our goal is to expand the museum's educational and public programming further, especially with the addition of the new full-time Education & Public Programming Manager. This will involve introducing new lecture series, hikes, workshops, and community engagement events.

- **Digitization and Online Presence**

- Continuing to digitize our historic collection and expanding the museum's online presence.

- **Strategic Planning**

- The museum's current Strategic Plan runs through the end of 2024. Throughout 2024, the PHM Board of Trustees and Staff will work to develop a Strategic Plan for 2025-2028. This plan will provide a roadmap for growth and sustainability.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Research

The PHM offers comprehensive research services, catering to a wide range of inquiries related to Putnam County history and culture. Our research team handles various topics, including genealogy, house histories, local landmarks, historical events, and cultural heritage. In 2023, we responded to over 50 public research queries, dedicating more than 400 hours to research activities.

Exhibitions & Collections Management

At the heart of our institution lies a commitment to preserving and showcasing Putnam County's robust history. We maintain an extensive collection of artifacts and documents, spanning hundreds of years of Putnam County and Hudson Highland's history. Our team focuses on collection care and accessibility, both in physical and digital formats. We consistently plan for the long-term management of our collections.

Additionally, the PHM creates rotating exhibitions, both indoors and outdoors, to provide visitors with an accessible and relevant historical experience. Our permanent Foundry exhibition serves as a gateway to the West Point Foundry and Preserve, a National Historic Landmark. In 2023, we presented a variety of exhibitions, including the award-winning *Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County* exhibition, and *Messages from the Hudson*, featuring postcards from Barry C. and Mary Jean (MJ) Ross Hudson River Postcard Collection.

Education Outreach

Our educational programs aim to engage and inspire the community about Putnam County's local history and heritage. We organize an array of programs that evolve and expand annually. Key themes for our educational offerings include Native Americans, Colonial Period, American Revolution, Industrial Revolution, Civil War, BIPOC Histories, Women's History, Environmental History, and local history of the 19th and 20th centuries.



SERVICES PROVIDED, CONTINUED.

Lecture Series

Our long-running lecture series covers a wide range of subjects, including subjects such as art, architecture, maritime history, military history, and genealogy. Since 2020, we have adapted the series into various formats, offering virtual, hybrid, and in-person lectures to accommodate diverse audiences. In 2023, we hosted 12 lectures.

Field Trips

We collaborate with Putnam County schools and homeschool groups to design field trips that align with curricula standards and provide students with engaging experiences. These field trips often involve guided tours of the museum and the West Point Foundry and Foundry Cove. In 2023, we welcomed the entire Haldane 4th Grade for an Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County field trip.

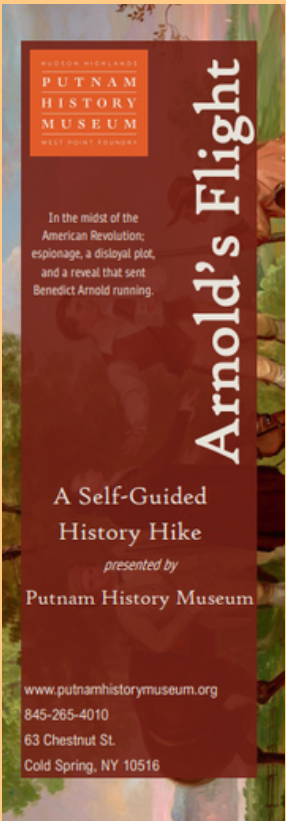
History Hikes & Group Tours

We offer tours for groups, which may include curator-led tours of exhibitions or guided tours of historical sites located all throughout Putnam County. These popular hikes started during the pandemic but are now an annual offering at the PHM.

Other Services & Activities

Beyond our core signature services, the PHM actively engages with the community through special events, collaborations, publications, and social media platforms. In 2023, we hosted and participated in various community events, fostering a sense of historical appreciation and connection within Putnam County. In total, we hosted, co-hosted, or collaborated on over 45 public programs in 2023.

Furthermore, we continued to create an array of print publications, many of which are **available digitally**, to further promote the exploration and discovery of local history. These resources cater to diverse interests and age groups, making historical information accessible to all.



RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2023 Lecture Series:

- "A Fight to Rule Indigenous Land: The French and Indian War" (Virtual - January 2023)
- "The Great Fire of New York in 1776" (Virtual - February 2023)
- "The Power of Native Women" (Virtual - March 2023)
- Women's History Trivia Night at PHM (Hybrid - March 2023)
- "The Wappingers of the Hudson Highlands" (Hybrid - April 2023)
- "The Sinking of the Steamboat Lexington" (Virtual - April 2023)
- "The Battle of Fort Montgomery" (Hybrid - May 2023)
- "Painting With Sunlight: Imagery of Poughkeepsie & Its People by S.L. Walker, Daguerriest" (Hybrid-June 2023)
- "Anna Warner and Her Horticultural Legacy" (Hybrid-July 2023)
- "From Founders to Farmers: Archaeology in the Hudson Valley, 17th to early 20th Century" (Hybrid-September 2023)
- "Dutchess & Putnam County in the Hudson Valley Land Wars" by James Merrell (Hybrid-November 2023)
- "Lt. Lemuel Snow: Patriot and Pioneer" (Hybrid-December 2023)

Guided History Hikes:

- Cornish Estate Historical Hike (May 2023)
- West Point Foundry Hikes (May & June 2023)
- Benedict Arnold's Flight Historical Hike in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension Putnam County (July 2023)
- Stone Chambers of Mead Farm (October 2023)
- Revolutionary War Redoubt Hike (November 2023)
- Guided Stroll: "Julia L. Butterfield's Life and Legacy" (December 2023)



RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Annual Community Programs:

- "Cold Spring in Bloom," a village-wide event (April 2023)
- Annual MeKeel's Corner Chapel 4th of July Celebration, organized by PHM
- "Cold Spring Aglow" (December 2023)

New projects/programs for 2023:

- "The Stanton-Anthony Symposium: Influential Women of the Hudson Valley" (March 2023)
- Installation of the *Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County* exhibition in consultation with the Stockbridge Munsee (May 2023).
- Installation of the *Messages from the Hudson Postcard* exhibition (September 2023)
- "Tempestry Workshop," with the nation-wide Tempestry Project (May 2023)
- "Drawing at Northgate," a two-part workshop conducting plein-air drawing classes at the Cornish Estate Ruins (Northgate) (September 2023)
- "Native American Heritage Weekend," featuring history hikes with the Cornell Cooperative Extension, film screenings, live discussions with the sculptor and videographer of "Making the Daniel Nimham Statue," a performance by the Nimham Mountain Singers, and a history hike of Foundry Cove (Grant-funded, October 2023)
- "Julia L. Butterfield Bicentennial Celebration" in collaboration with the Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library, including a Commemorative Planting & Ceremony, Cemetery Walk, Outdoor Exhibition, Trivia Night, Birthday Party, and Guided Stroll, (Fall 2023)
- Panel Discussion and Guided Tours: "Stone Chambers of Putnam County" (October 2023)



RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

New and updated publications:

- American Revolutionary War in Putnam County History Crawl (County-wide)
- Black History in Putnam County Pamphlet (County-wide)
- Hudson Valley Corridor of Commerce History Hunt (County-wide), August 2023
- Revolutionary War North and South Redoubt History Hike Self-guided Brochure
- Mountain Avenue Cemetery Self-guided Brochure
- Sybil Ludington Take & Go Museum Activity Kit Bags (County-wide)



RECENT MILESTONES & 2023 POINTS OF PRIDE

- PHM received the Greater Hudson Heritage Network Excellence Award for the *Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County* exhibition.
- PHM Education & Public Programming Manager Kara Mattsen was honored with the Exemplary Work in Public History Award at the Putnam County Day Awards.
- Receipt of grant funding to support the creation of the Native American Heritage Weekend.



LOOKING AHEAD

2024 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- February 13th: Black History Month Storytime and Crafts
- March: Inaugural PHM History-A-Thon: Fundraiser & Challenge
- March 1st: American Revolution Trivia Night
- March 13th: Women's History Storytime for Young Children with the Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library
- March 14th: Women's History Lunch & Learn with PHM Executive Director Cassie Ward
- April 7th: PHM's 118th Annual Meeting, featuring Putnam County Historian Jennifer Cassidy
- April 20th: West Point Foundry History Hike (tentative)
- May 18th: Denny Mine History Hike (tentative)
- May 9th: "Taking our Water for the City: The Archeology of New York City's Watershed Communities"
- June 1st: PHM's Annual Lawn Party
- June 26th: Oh, Freedom! Quilting Workshop
- June 28th & July 6th: Benedict Arnold's Flight History Hike
- August: Annual County-wide History Hunt Launch
- September: Northgate Ruins Lecture & Art Workshop
- September 20th: Mappy Hour
- October 4th & 12th: Guided Twilight Cemetery Tours
- October 10th: Lecture, Matthew Weigman Historic Plants
- November 2nd: Native American Heritage Weekend
- November 24th: PHM Annual Gala

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CONTACT:

Putnam History Museum
63 Chestnut Street
Cold Spring, NY 10516

director@putnamhistorymuseum.org

845-265-4010

www.putnamhistorymuseum.org

