



Relics & Recollections

Tioga County Historical Society Newsletter

Winter 2024

What a Wonderful World – O’ Tannenbaum 2024



“It’s the most wonderful time of the year...” begins a familiar Christmas tune. There is something magical about the Christmas holiday season. It brings families closer together, and neighbors seem to be friendlier to each other. It is that feeling that we wish we could bottle and use throughout the rest of the year.

For us, at the Tioga County Historical Society museum in Owego, we look forward to this season. Not just for the feelings mentioned above, but for the knowledge that we are about to embark in the controlled mayhem that is O’ Tannenbaum.

This is the 22nd Annual O’ Tannenbaum. It is a wonderful event for those of you who have never visited the museum and or haven’t been in a while. It brings together

individuals, businesses and organizations from around Tioga County who donate trees, wreaths, and items — all to be part of our silent auction where visitors can obtain a number and bid on items. They all hope to win!! You can literally win a tree and everything on it — or two trees, or more. All of the money raised goes to benefit the museum.

This year we have over 100 items up for bid. Imagine the huge number of trees — four and six foot, decorated from top to bottom in whatever theme each donor has selected. Book trees, card trees, M & M trees, Mickey Mouse trees — we have them all. There are beautiful wreaths, and baskets full of all types of items. There is art work, and toys, and gifts of all kinds.

If you like a raffle, we have two this year. There is the lottery tree with a \$150 of scratch off lottery tickets for \$5.00 a chance, you could become a millionaire! We also have a 1970s vintage classic large dollhouse, complete with furnishings, and a framed painting to go with it that is worth hundreds of dollars! Santa and Mrs. Claus make a visit every Saturday from 12:00—2:00. On Saturdays we have entertainment scheduled which you can find the complete list later in this newsletter.

On the lower level of our museum is our Gift Shop which is adorned with hundreds of gift ideas, all tastefully decorated by Pat Hanson, whose skills were honed though decades of running Hand of Man shop in Owego. It truly is a wonder to behold.

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Curator

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Museum Assistant

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From the Director



Well, I can now say that I have experienced my first installation and opening of our annual fundraiser, O' Tannenbaum.

I was warned that it was organized mayhem — and it is just that. But in a good way. It truly is a wonderful community effort fueled by countless volunteers and donors.

What a wonder to watch as those decorating trees have such imaginations that they raise the level of skill to the highest. I decorated one tree and compared it to those around it. For me, it was a bit like seeing Charlie Brown's tree next to the one at Rockefeller Center. Yet, everyone was kind and said it looked fine.

It gives me great pleasure to watch those of all ages look in wonder when Santa and Mrs. Claus are in attendance, or to hear the music pouring out of the main gallery and filling the museum. Our Grand Opening was wonderful with many thanks to the staff and owners of the Cellar Restaurant and for the musical talent of Chloe Solan.

Even though we deal in history, this time of year, the place is alive with the spirit of this community. It is a great way for me to cap off my first year as Executive Director. As I enter my second year, there are so many things on my Christmas wish list for this museum. Some will come to pass as we will work to get enough funds to recarpet the upper level and move the library. We will open three wonderful exhibits. We will work together to find a way to build our additions to move our collection above the flood level. Plus, a new year of programs and events, plus this newsletter.

Stop by, join, volunteer, donate funds. We truly are the repository for this history and heritage of Tioga County.

Happy Holidays, Everyone!

Gerry Smith—Executive Director

O' Tannenbaum runs Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:00-4:00 until December 14 at 7:00 PM. Then the bell rings, and the doors are locked. No more bids. We determine the winners of each items. Some may even be in the room at the time. On Sunday, December 15 we start calling each winner. You see, it costs nothing to come to the museum, nothing to get a number to bid. It only costs if you win. But all that money will help us preserve and interpret the history of Tioga County for future generations.



OUR CHRISTMAS WISHLIST —

A NEW CARPET

It is not romantic or sexy. It will not play music or do a dance. Yet, you can play music and dance upon it. You can walk all over it, and it will not care. You can probably guess from the title, that I am talking about new carpeting for the museum.

Our upper level carpeting has reached the end of its nearly 25-year-old life. It is worn with holes, stains, and lots of ridges that can trip up our visitors. Before we can relocate our library back to its original 1960 space to protect its collections, we must recarpet that space.

Our goal is to recarpet the whole level at the same time. We are working to raise the funds to do just that. We now have the money required for the library space, but we need an additional \$28,000 to complete the goal.

I am pleased to announce that the Tioga Downs Foundation has chosen the Tioga County Historical Society to receive a \$5,000 grant towards this goal, and we will be receiving those funds on December 3, 2024. Thank you Tioga Downs Foundation.

We are waiting to hear back from three granting sources, but we are now appealing to our members, and the members of this community. If you as an individuals or business, receive a donation

letter from us during the month of December, please consider helping out the museum reach this goal. If you do not receive one of those letters, but wish to help us out, please consider making a donation to the Tioga County Historical Society and put carpet in the memo line.

All donations may be mailed or dropped off the museum located at 110 Front Street, Owego, NY 13827. Remember that all donations are tax deductible.

The new carpet will be carpet squares with enough replacement squares to last about 30 years. It will be high quality carpeting installed by Ahwaga Floor Coverings and Paint in Owego.. Three complementary colors will be used to denote space. One for the library, one for our Green Gallery, and one for the Main Gallery and hallway around it.

If the funding is received. Work would begin toward the end of January, as we ready the library and before the installation of our three exhibits for 2025.

Help make our Christmas Wish come true with new carpet for the upper level. It may not be sexy or romantic, but it is needed.



**FROM THE TIOGA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TO ALL OF YOU,
WE WISH YOU THE HAPPIEST OF HOLIDAYS
AND A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR**



TIOGA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

O' TANNENBAUM SCHEDULE

Tuesday, November 5, 2024 – Soft opening 10:00 -4:00

Friday, November 8, 2024 – Grand Opening from 6:00 – 8:00
with Chloe Solan, piano and drink and food provided by
the Cellar Restaurant

Saturday, November 9, 2024 – Rick Pedro, piano 12:00-2:00
and Meredith Bocek, harp 2:00-3:30

Saturday, November 16, 2024 - Roger Westgate presents a Christmas woodcarving
demonstration 10:00 – 11:30
Andy Jaye, piano 12:00 – 2:00
Santa & Mrs. Claus 12:00 – 2:00

Saturday, November 23, 2024 - Marv Williams, guitar 10:00 -12:00
Nino, guitar 12:00 – 2:00
Santa & Mrs. Claus 12:00 – 2:00

Saturday, November 30, 2024 - Jennifer Cutter, recorder/flute 10:00-11:30
Dove family musicians 12:00 – 2:00
Santa & Mrs. Claus 12:00 -2:00

Friday, December 6, 2024 - Museum stays open for Lights on the River 10:00 -8:30

Saturday, December 7, 2024 - Bassoon Monsoon, 10:00-11:30
Vanessa LaDue, piano 12:00 – 2:00
Santa & Mrs. Claus, 12:00 -2:00

Saturday, December 14, 2024 - Owego Free Academy Chorus, 12:00 -2:00
Santa & Mrs. Claus 12:00—2:00
The museum closes doors and ends auction at 7:00 PM
to end O' Tannenbaum 2024



The Tioga History Museum

110 Front Street Owego, NY 13827 | 607.687.2460 | museum@tiogahistory.org | www.tiogahistory.org

Membership Form

Student	\$10	Corporate	\$200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Waiver of On-site Research Center Usage Fees ◆ Discounted Copying Fees ◆ Invitation to Annual Meeting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Recognition in Newsletter and Annual Report ◆ Advertisement on Museum Webpage <i>and More...</i> 	
Individual	\$25	Supporter	\$250
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Student Benefits ◆ Quarterly Newsletter ◆ 10% Off Gift Shop Purchases ◆ Invitation to Annual Members-Only Event 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Recognition in Museum Newsletters ◆ \$25 Gift Certificate to Gift Shop 	
Family	\$50	Patron	\$500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Behind-the-Scenes Tour ◆ Invitation to all Children's Events 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Recognition in Newsletter and Annual Report ◆ \$50 Gift Certificate to Gift Shop <i>and More...</i> 	
Donor/Small Business	\$100	Gold	\$1,000 and Over
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Recognition in Newsletter and on Website ◆ Personal Invitations to Exhibit Openings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All the Individual Benefits ◆ Featured on Museum Webpage ◆ Recognition in Newsletter and Annual Report ◆ Free Admission to Paid Events <i>and More...</i> 	

The Membership Year runs from July 1 to June 30 of each year. All memberships will end on June 30, regardless of enrollment date.

How Your Membership Supports Our Mission

We must raise 96% of our operating expenses through donations, memberships, and fundraisers. Your generosity allows TCHS to provide exhibits, programming, research, and educational opportunities to the public and allows us to keep admission to our museum free of charge.

We need your support to operate!



Detach Form Below and Mail

NAME(s) _____ NEW MEMBERSHIP RENEWED MEMBERSHIP

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

I WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION* IN THE AMOUNT OF: \$ _____

MY EMPLOYER PARTICIPATES IN A MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAM (FORM ENCLOSED)

MEMBERSHIP AMOUNT: \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

MASTERCARD

CARD NUMBER _____

VISA

EXPIRATION DATE _____ CVV # _____

DISCOVER

SIGNATURE _____

CASH CHECK # _____

*Contributions you make in addition to your membership may be tax deductible.

Tioga County Historical Society
110 Front Street
Owego, NY 13827

