



COLUMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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County Historical Society Receives Generous Bequest, With a Twist

(KINDERHOOK, NY) APRIL 21, 2023 -- The Columbia County Historical Society has announced the arrival of a generous donation — and a unique fundraising challenge — for the c. 1820 James Vanderpoel House, also long known as Kinderhook's "House of History."

Richard "Rick" Ryan, a longtime Kinderhook weekend resident and former CCHS trustee who died last November, has left a bequest of \$250,000 to the Historical Society, designating it for the preservation of the James Vanderpoel House, which CCHS owns and operates.

However, it's a bequest with a twist. "To receive Rick's gift, CCHS must raise a matching \$250,000 by October 2024. Otherwise, we lose the gift," said CCHS Executive Director Lisa Weilbacker.

"Conserving an historic building like the James Vanderpoel House requires constant care and the ability to meet unforeseen challenges," she continued. "Unlocking these funds will afford us the opportunity to be better stewards for the long term."

Ryan served on the CCHS Board of Trustees from 1996 until 2006 and was active on numerous committees, including Fundraising & Exhibits, Collections, and Special Events & Benefits. A celebrated interior designer who operated a design firm for decades in New York City, Ryan also lent the organization his artistic talents. "Rick had a special fondness for the 'House of History,' and for years he created its beautiful seasonal decorations," said Alexandra Anderson, President of the CCHS Board of Trustees.

A celebration of Ryan's life will be held for family and friends at the James Vanderpoel House in June. For more information about the celebration, or if you are interested in contributing to the donation match, please contact Lisa Weilbacker at director@cchsny.org.

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ABOUT CCHS

Columbia County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) cultural education organization founded in 1916 and chartered by the NYS Department of Education Board of Regents to collect, preserve, interpret and present the history, heritage and culture of Columbia County, New York, for its residents and visitors. CCHS serves residents of all eighteen towns and the City of Hudson. In addition to a research library and a permanent collection of more than 15,000 objects, CCHS owns and maintains the CCHS Museum & Library and three additional historic properties: the National Historic Landmark Luykas Van Alen House (1737); James Vanderpoel 'House of History' (c. 1820); and Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse (c. 1850).

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