



Matthewis Persen House Museum & Cultural Heritage Center

74 John Street, Kingston, NY

Keeping Ulster County's
History Alive!



2022

August Schedule & Special Events

Presented by the
Ulster County Clerk's Office

clerk.ulstercountyny.gov/archives/persen-house



About the House



The Matthewis Persen House is one of Ulster County's oldest, most significant buildings. Named after its longest residing owner, Matthewis Persen (1739-1810), the House is located within Kingston's Stockade National Historic District. Its earliest portions date from c. 1661 and it is one of four landmark buildings on each corner of John and Crown Streets. Each house at this intersection pre-dates the Revolutionary War.

The Persen House has been the home of doctors, tailors, innkeepers, druggists, grocers, and Ulster County government. It was burned at least twice, saw wars and revolution, and survived to tell its tale. To walk through this remarkable building, is to walk through Ulster County's rich local history!

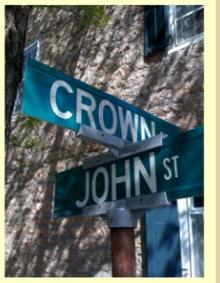
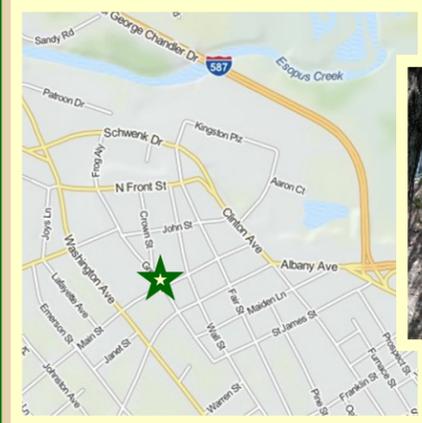
Restoration of the Persen house began in 1999. During the restoration, the historic significance of the structure was uncovered. The house has been left unfinished to highlight the architectural significance of the different phases.

The Persen House functions as Ulster County's Heritage Gateway. Cultural Heritage Groups from throughout the county Guest Host at the House and share their treasure troves of history & culture with visitors. We look forward to a fun and educational season!

2022 Hours of Operation

May 28 – September 3:
Thursdays & Fridays 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
& Saturdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
September 10—October 29:
Saturdays Only 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
or by appointment

74 John Street
Kingston, New York 12401



Conveniently located minutes from the NYS Thruway on the corner of John & Crown Streets in uptown Kingston's Stockade National Historic District.

Parking: Metered parking lots and on-street parking are available throughout uptown Kingston. The Ulster County Courthouse on Wall Street and the Ulster County Office Building on the corner of Main & Fair Streets both offer free weekend parking. There is also free parking at the Kingston Plaza every day, less than a half mile walk from the house.

Group Tours & Field Trips

The Persen House welcomes group tours and school field trips! Tours can be tailored to your group's interests or curriculum. Topics we have covered in the past include colonial life, architecture, archaeology, local history, Dutch heritage, and the Revolutionary War.

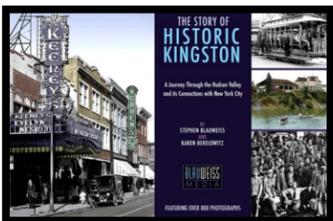
Please contact us at (845) 340-3415 or archives@co.ulster.ny.us to schedule a field trip or special group tour!

Guest Host Presentations & Events in August

Open Thursdays and Fridays 9:00 am to 4:30 pm & Saturdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Saturday, August 6 and Saturday, August 13, 11:00 am—2:00 pm

The Story of Historic Kingston Book Preview & Mini Exhibition with Stephen Blauweiss



With a background in filmmaking, graphic design, historical research, and writing, the creative team of Stephen Blauweiss and Karen Berelowitz bring you their second book that uniquely combines a stunning visual presentation with concise and informative text about the vibrant 400-year history of the mid-Hudson Valley region. The full-color, hardcover book features 950 photographs, postcards, maps, art, and graphics, many never before published and all professionally restored. After four years of research using a variety of public and private archives, books, publications, and personal interviews, the 500-page book covers hundreds of topics. Stop by for a preview of this informative new book and chat with co-author Stephen Blauweiss.



Saturday, August 13, 10:00 am—4:00 pm

"World War II & the Home Front" Presentation with Hank Yost, WWII Reenactor



World War II saw an unprecedented number of young Americans serving in the Armed Forces. This led to a shortage of workers on the home front, the migration of families to industrial areas for work, challenging work conditions, and nationwide rationing. Join reenactor Hank Yost for a presentation and informal discussions throughout the day on the challenges faced at home and abroad during WWII.



Saturday, August 20, 10:00 am—2:00 pm

Ulster County Handspinners Guild Spinning Demonstration



Gina Martin-Woodruff, member of the Ulster County Handspinners Guild and Art Educator, will demonstrate wool spinning on a traditional spinning wheel and explain the process of wool textile-making from raw wool to the finished product of a garment. She will also spin wool using various hand spindles which date back thousands of years. Sheep wool, angora rabbit and goat hair will be exhibited. The Ulster County Handspinners Guild is a group devoted to the teaching, promotion and encouragement of the art of handspinning. The Guild participates in workshops, spin-ins, county fairs and fleeces to shawl competitions.



Saturday, August 27, 10:00 am—2:00 pm

Don Terpening, Revolutionary War Medical Re-enactor



Professor Emeritus of Biology, Don Terpening will present various medicines, implements, and techniques that were used by physicians during the Revolutionary War, as well as discuss the role that doctors played and their social standing during this period.



Exhibits

Gysbert's Inventory: A Reflection of 1665 Dutch Life

All Season

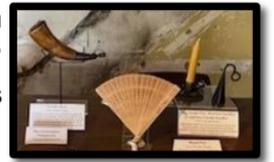


The legacy of the Dutch settlers of Wiltwyck lives on at the Matthewis Persen House. The house was originally owned by Gysbert Van Imbroch, a barber-surgeon. An inventory listing Gysbert's possessions at the time of his death in 1665 is brought to life through illustrations of clothing, kitchen items, medical supplies, books and other articles used in 17th century daily life. Step back in time with *Gysbert's Inventory*. This exhibit was made possible through a grant awarded to the Ulster County Clerk's Office from the New York State Archives.

History At Your Fingertips

All Season

Enjoy a new experience at the Persen House in 2022! Visitors can see and touch high-quality reproductions of items found in Gysbert Van Imbroch's 1665 inventory. What does a powder horn actually look like? What is a cravat and how is used? Answer these questions and more in this first installment of "History At Your Fingertips" at the Matthewis Persen House this season. Stay tuned for further additions of artifact displays and period clothing throughout the house!



A Perpetual Memory: Artifacts of the Native Americans and Dutch Settlers

All Season

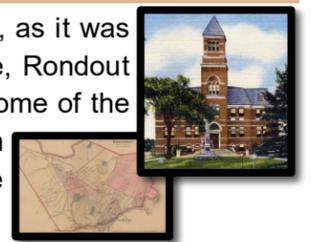


In 1665, English Governor Richard Nicolls along with the Esopus sachems (chiefs) signed a treaty to help establish an everlasting peace between the two cultures. The Richard Nicolls Treaty stated that the natives and settlers "engage to come once every year and bring some of their young people...that it may be kept in perpetual memory." In commemorating this document, and to continue the tradition of keeping the treaty in perpetual memory, this exhibit presents artifacts from both the native and European settlers of the area. Many of the Native American artifacts in this exhibit are being shown for the first time in public.

Better Together Exhibit Sampler: Celebrating the City of Kingston's 150th Anniversary

All Season

How does a rural farming village become a city? Settled by Europeans in the 1650s, the Village of Kingston (or Wiltwyck, as it was known) was a successful and prominent farming village from its time of settlement to the Revolutionary War. Meanwhile, Rondout was a small agrarian village which functioned mainly as a port of entry to get to Kingston. This exhibit aims to illustrate some of the major changes that took place in both villages from the 1650's up to their merger in 1872. We hope that this sampling from the larger exhibit gives the viewer a better idea of how and why Kingston became a city, as well as showing some of the benefits that joining together to solve problems collaboratively can have.



Earthday Everyday Eco-Collage Mural

All Season



Local photographer and eco workshop facilitator Star Nigro has developed a traveling, mural project with help from the talented youth of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's RAPP (Relatives As Parents) 4-H program. The participating artists created the mural concept, and a quote to represent their gift to the community; "No matter our differences, we always have something in common." ***Earthday Everyday*** was created using everyday objects and recycled materials. Each artist was given a panel made of recycled pallet wood to decorate in their own style. When placed together, the individual panels create a unified image. ***Earthday Everyday*** won first place at the Ulster County Fair, along with a ribbon for outstanding exhibit at the New York State Fair in Syracuse.

MyKingstonKids Photography Now! Student Exhibition

July 7—August 27

MyKingstonKids presents a student photo exhibition from "Photography Now!" a program led by local photographer Star Nigro. Photography Now teaches students the history of photography and artistic and technical applications of the medium. They learn to work with equipment from professional DSLR cameras to cellphones and the functions of each. Join these talented students on July 9 for their exhibition opening or stop in and view their photos on display through the last Saturday in August. You won't want to miss this unique perspective!



Historical Profile Series: Gale Brownlee, Dauntless Aviatrix

August 4—27



"Gale Brownlee – Dauntless Aviatrix" is the third in a series of historical profiles from the Ulster County Clerk's Office. Gale (Feeley) Brownlee was born and raised in Woodstock, New York, the granddaughter of renowned Woodstock physician Dr. Mortimer B. Downer. Throughout her career, she worked as a model, fashion designer, photographer, pilot, real estate broker, environmentalist, and activist. She was instrumental in creating the heliport at the former Benedictine Hospital and bringing the first Hospice program to Kingston. She advocated for environmental protection in and around Ulster County, flew fire watch in the Catskills and spear-headed fundraising for many important community programs. In celebration of National Aviation Day on August 19 and Women's Equality Day on August 26, this historical profile will be on display at the Persen House for the month of August.

Four Corners Historic Marker & Stockade National Historic District



This Historic Marker was made possible through a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation® awarded to the Ulster County Clerk's Office. The grant provided funding for the manufacturing of an historic marker which is placed at the "Four Corners" intersection. Each stone house at the intersection of Crown and John Streets pre-dates the Revolutionary War. The County Clerk's Archives provided primary source documents for each stone house verifying their origins were prior to the Revolutionary War. The historic houses at this intersection are the Matthewis Persen House built in 1661, the Kingston Academy built pre-1773, the Dr. Matthew Jansen House built circa 1663, and the Franz Roggen House built pre-1767.

The **Kingston Stockade National Historic District** is an eight-block area in the western section of Kingston, New York, commonly referred to as **Uptown Kingston**. It is the original site of the mid-17th century Dutch settlement of Wiltwyck, which was later renamed Kingston when it passed to English control.

It is the only one of three original Dutch settlements in New York surrounded by stockades where the outline of the stockade is still evident due to the raised ground. Within the area are many historic buildings from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, including the Ulster County Courthouse, the Senate House where the state of New York was established in 1777, and the Old Dutch Church, a National Historic Landmark. Some survived the Burning of Kingston by British forces during the Revolutionary War. The intersection of Crown and John streets has Colonial-era Dutch stone houses on all four corners, all of which pre-date the Revolutionary War.

From its founding in the mid-17th century to the creation of the modern city of Kingston in 1872, the history of the Stockade District is the history of Kingston. Most of its older buildings were restored and rebuilt in the years after the 1777 burning of the village by the British, and its historic character has been made diverse as significant buildings were erected throughout the 19th century.

The final layout of the original Stockade is shown in the Miller Map (right), which can be found in Volume 13 of *Documents Relative to Colonial History of the State of New York*. The map was designed by an Anglican Priest named John Miller in 1695. On his way back to England, Miller was captured by French Privateers, but managed to throw his notes overboard. After being paroled from the French, he returned to England and recreated the map from memory.

