



Matthewis Persen House Museum & Cultural Heritage Center

74 John Street, Kingston, NY

Keeping Ulster County's
History Alive!



2022

May-June 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!

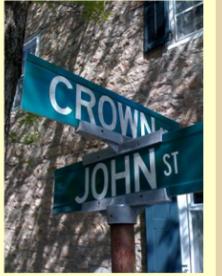
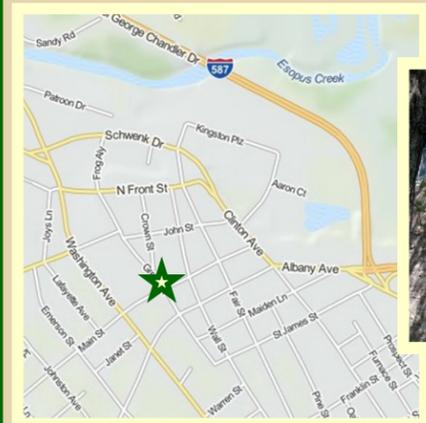
Restoration of the Persen house began in 1999. During the restoration, the historic significance of the structure was uncovered. The house has been left unfinished to highlight the architectural significance of the different phases.

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 May & June

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

Saturday, May 28, 10:00 am—4:00 pm

Opening Day with the 1st Ulster Militia Revolutionary War Era Reenactors

For a glimpse of 18th century life at the time of the American Revolution, join the 1st Ulster Militia for a day in the life of a militiaman. The original 1st Regiment, Ulster County Militia was composed of citizen soldiers from the area now within the boundaries of Kingston, Saugerties and Woodstock. Members promote the education of the public as to military and social life in the colonial and Revolutionary War eras through demonstrations of everyday crafts and skills and the typical life of the militiaman.



Saturday, June 4, 10:00 am—4:00 pm

D-Day Presentation with Hank Yost, World War II Reenactor

D-Day—June 6, 1944—the biggest amphibious landing in history assaults Hitler's Atlantic Fortress. Over 156,000 Allied forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region. World War II reenactors will discuss various aspects of the troops, tactics and weapons as well as what was happening on the home front and the changes in US society.



Saturday, June 11, 10:00 am—4:00 pm, Concert at 3:00 pm

Songs of The Irish Brigade Presented by Veterans in a New Field and the Ulster County Civil War Roundtable

Join the members of The Veterans in a New Field as they perform various songs of the Irish Brigade in the Civil War and songs of World War I. The Irish Brigade, consisting of mostly Irish Americans, served in the Union Army in the American Civil War. This infantry brigade became known as the "Fighting 69th" and continued in later wars. Come hear: Marching Through Georgia, Over There, You're a Grand Old Flag, The Irish Volunteer, It's a Long Way to Tipperary, Yankee Doodle Dandy, Danny Boy, Give My Regards to Broadway, Goober Peas and many more!



Saturday, June 18, 10:00 am—4:00 pm

Original Document Day: Sojourner Truth Special Exhibit Presented by the Ulster Surrogate's Court and Ulster County Clerk's Office

On display will be the traveling exhibit *Sojourner Truth: From Slavery to Activism*, a collaborative exhibit from the Ulster County Surrogate's Court and Ulster County Clerk's Office. This exhibit celebrates the life and legacy of one of the most influential and important figures in American history. Also, view documents from the historic court case where she became the first black woman in American history to be seen as an equal to a white man in the eyes of the law.



Saturday, June 25, 10:00 am—4:00 pm

The British Brigade 24th Regiment of Infantry Reenactors

Portraying soldiers of the Major's Company of the 24th as they would have appeared on the 1777 Northern (Saratoga) Campaign during the American Rebellion, reenactors authentically portray these men with honor and respect without losing the enjoyment of bringing to life a common soldier of the 24th Regiment of Foot. Join them for a day in the life of a British foot soldier. They may just recruit you to their cause!



Exhibits

Gysbert's Inventory: A Reflection of 1665 Dutch Life

All Season



The legacy of the Dutch settlers of Wiltwyck lives on at the Mattheus 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 it used? Answer these questions and more in this first installment of "History At Your Fingertips" at the Mattheus 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

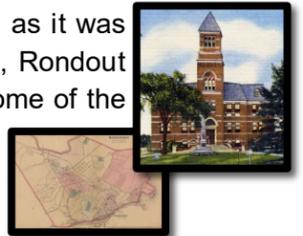


In 1665, English Governor Richard Nicolls along with the Esopus sachems (chiefs) signed a treaty to help establish an everlasting peace between the two cultures. The Richard Nicolls Treaty stated that the natives and settlers "engage to come once every year and bring some of their young people...that 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.

Daily Dutch: Exploring Dutch Life through the Records

May 28—July 2

Daily Dutch examines aspects of Dutch life in Wiltwyck in the 1660s. Learn about Dutch homes, leisure activities, local farming, currency and trading, household goods, and more. The exhibit features records from the Dutch Colonial Records Collection and images of artifacts found during an archaeological excavation at the Persen House.



Sojourner Truth: From Slavery to Activism

June 2—30



A collaborative exhibit from the Ulster County Surrogate's Court and Ulster County Clerk's Office, this travelling exhibit celebrates the life and legacy of one of the most influential and important figures in American history. Sojourner Truth's life was filled with hardship, pain, and suffering – yet through all of that she persevered with bravery and fortitude enough to challenge the institutions of the time. From her humble beginnings on a farm in Esopus to her historic legal battle at the Ulster County Courthouse, learn about the early life of Sojourner Truth and how she became the first black woman in American history to be seen as an equal to a white man in the eyes of the law.

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 Mattheus 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.

