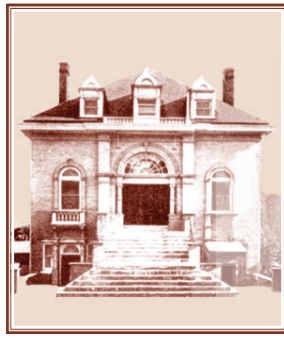


Discover History SOUTHEAST



Brewster, New York

MUSEUM and Community

FALL/WINTER 2025

VOLUME 6 • No. 2

“History is the story of events, with praise or blame.”

—*Cotton Mather*, American writer and politician—

UPCOMING EVENTS

HISTORY EXCHANGE

December 9, 2025, 12: 30 - 1:30 PM, The Chain that Saved the Colonies with Donald “Doc” Bayne, Brewster Library.

NEW YEAR'S EVE BELL RINGING

Dec. 31, 2025, midnight. A county-wide New Year's Eve Bell Ringing Celebration to usher in 2026, the 250th anniversary of the founding of our nation.

PREMIER OF THE PATRIOTIC PAINTINGS OF JEAN LEON GEROME FERRIS EXHIBIT

March 18, 2026, with a performance by the Doanesburg Chamber Ensemble. 4:30 PM. Suggested donation — \$10.

LOYALIST TEA AT FLORRIE KAYE'S TEAHOUSE

Spring 2026, at its new location at Clock Tower Commons.

ISRAEL PUTNAM TRAVELING EXHIBIT

May 26, 2026, to SEM from Putnam History Museum.

DRAMATIC READING OF THE PLAY, *DIRT*

June 5, 2026, by the Putnam Theatre Alliance. *DIRT* explores the land ownership in the Hudson Valley before and during the Revolution through three central characters: Wappinger Chief Daniel Nimham, Mary Philpse Morris, and Caesar (enslaved miller). Suggested donation - \$10.

NICHOLAS FISH TRAVELING EXHIBIT COMES TO SOUTHEAST MUSEUM

June 6, 2026, from the Desmond Fish Library

PRESENTATION ON ENOCH CROSBY

June 27, 2026, by Libby Baker, Enoch Crosby Chapter NSDAR.

AUTHOR BOOK SIGNING, *A TRAITOR'S WIFE*

September 19, 2026, by Allison Pataki. Free event. Books will be available for purchase.

PAINTINGS OF PATRIOTIC SPIRIT

The Southeast Museum is thrilled to be exhibiting 35 paintings by renowned artist Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1863-1930). Ferris married Annette Amelia Ryder in 1894. The Ferris collection is on loan by Betsey Ryder of Ryder Farm in Brewster, a longstanding supporter of the museum. The museum engaged John Vitagliano, painting consultant, to work with volunteers to clean Ferris' paintings so that they could be displayed in their original glory in March of 2026.

These works capture important moments in American history. We invite you to see these brilliant works in this special exhibit.

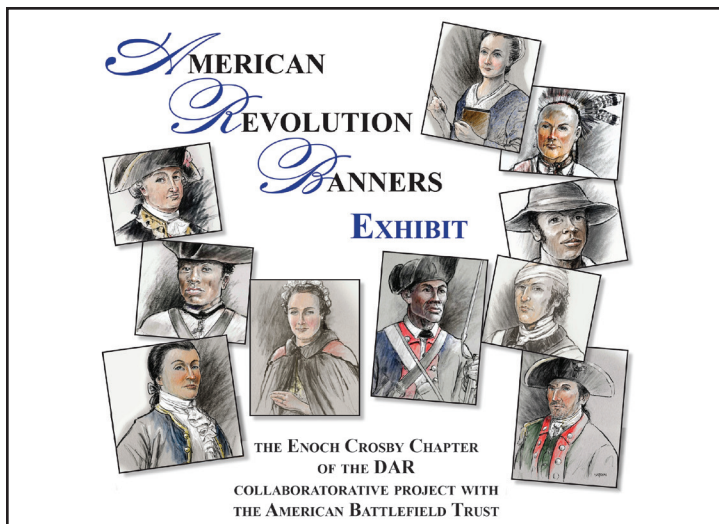


ABOVE: BETSEY RYDER WATCHES AS ART RESTORER JOHN VITAGLIANO CAREFULLY REMOVES MOLD FROM FERRIS' *SUNK WITHOUT A TRACE, 1917*, ITS SUBJECT: THE SINKING OF THE US PASSENGER LINER, THE SS ANTILOS, TORPEDOED BY A GERMAN U-BOAT IN OCTOBER OF THAT YEAR.

BELOW: ONE OF SEVERAL VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED WITH THE PROCESS, HANDLING THE PRELIMINARY AND CAREFUL VACUUMING OF SURFACE DUST PRIOR TO DEEPER CLEANING.



VOLUNTEERS HOLD UP A LINCOLN PAINTING THAT'S BEEN CLEANED OF DUST AND MOLD.



BRINGING REV250 TO SCHOOLS

Southeast Museum programming is now fully integrated into the Brewster Central School District PreK-12 Social Studies curriculum with local history presentations aligned with NYS

Social Studies Curriculum Goals and Objectives.

Our most recent school-based presentation took place in September at the BCSD conference room for students from CV Starr Intermediate School. To honor Constitution Week, this presentation explored the American Revolution. SEM collaborated with the Enoch Crosby Chapter of the NSDAR and the American Battlefield Trust to bring a



the NSDAR and the American Battlefield Trust to bring a



MUSEUM DIRECTOR DEBORAH OSWALD AT CV STARR.



traveling exhibit of banners highlighting the contributions from lesser known people from the colonies with an emphasis on people from the Hudson Valley. This traveling exhibit premiered at a well-attended Open House held at the museum on September 6, the day of the Brewster Rotary Fair. Members of the Enoch Crosby Chapter NSDAR, including Joan Hay, Susan Rebentisch, and Holly O'Connor, were on hand to guide fairgoers on a tour of the exhibit.

From there, the exhibit traveled to the Brewster School District Conference Room where our director, Deborah Oswald, gave a presentation to CV Starr fourth and fifth grade students.



GARRISON STUDENTS GAINING FROM THEIR MUSEUM VISIT.

This innovative pop-up exhibition included display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling illustration, technology and unique artifacts and primary accounts.

These banners held appeal for districts outside of Southeast as well. Faculty and staff from the Garrison School District traveled across the county to bring their seventh and eighth grade students to see this exhibit at the museum.

PUTNAM COUNTY FAIR COPPER PUNCHING WORKSHOP

Southeast Museum sponsored another very well-received workshop at the Putnam County Fair the weekend of July 26-27. Under the History Pavilion, Tinsmith James Columbo from the Sheetmetal



Workers Union conducted a Colonial Copper Punching Workshop. Fairgoers enjoyed creating designs on framed sheets of copper using tools supplied by Mr. Columbo. This is sure to be an annual family fair event.



JAMES COLUMBO ENGAGES HIS YOUNG AUDIENCE WITH OLD-STYLE CRAFTSMANSHIP.



PUTNAM HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

As a result of working side-by-side with historians from across Putnam under the History Pavilion at the fair, Southeast Museum now chairs a Putnam County Historic Schoolhouse Curriculum Committee. Historians and educators from Kent, Patterson, Mahopac, Brewster, Putnam Valley, and Cold Spring are working with Putnam County Historian Jennifer Cassidy to research attendance records of the historic schoolhouses that once populated our county with the goal of implementing this curriculum in schools across the county.



UPCOMING REV250 EVENTS

In order to prepare for the upcoming 250th birthday of our nation, Southeast Museum chairs the Town of Southeast Rev250 Advisory Committee composed of representatives from local government, the arts community, the history community, the business community, and the BCSD. Together, we are planning events to celebrate Putnam County's contributions to this important milestone in our nation's history.

NEW YEAR'S EVE BELL RINGING CEREMONY

In cooperation with the Putnam County Rev250 Committee co-chaired by George C. Whipple III and the Hon. George Pataki, SEM is organizing a December 31, 2025, bell ringing ceremony to usher in our 250th anniversary as a nation.

Houses of worship and government buildings across Putnam have been contacted and the response has been positive. Our goal is to give residents a chance to either participate in a midnight bell-ringing celebration at the location of their choice, or simply enjoy the sound of Putnam County ringing in 2026.



Current partners:

St. James the Apostle, Church, Carmel;
Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, Mahopac;
Meekel's Corner Chapel, Cold Spring;
St. Philip's Church in the Highlands

Confirm your participation and receive a free hand bell by emailing: REV250Putnam@gmail.com (quantities limited)


#250thAnniversaryYearBellRinging
#RevolutionaryPutnamCounty




GENERAL PUTNAM:

Behind the County's Revolutionary Namesake


A new travelling exhibition from the collection of George Whipple III exploring the many depictions of the Continental general of the American Revolution

September 26 @ Putnam History Museum


TRAVELING EXHIBITS COMING TO SOUTHEAST MUSEUM

SEM will also host several traveling exhibits to celebrate Rev250 including the General Israel Putnam exhibit currently on display at the Putnam History Museum, the Nicholas Fish exhibit currently on display at the Desmond Fish Library, a

Continued on page 5.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Jim Delawder has been an invaluable resource as a museum volunteer over the past year. Jim's research skills, endearing personality, and passion for Brewster history have added much to Southeast Museum. Jim has been an active member of the Brewster Fire Department for over 49 years. He has served as Ambulance Captain, Captain of the Ladder Truck, Treasurer, and BFD historian the last ten years. Jim has held a lifelong interest in history. When he moved to Brewster in 1972, he became fascinated by the history of the town. Southeast Museum has been the beneficiary of Jim's extensive knowledge.

Below is an article on Enoch Crosby that Jim wrote for a BFD newsletter.



ENOCH CROSBY

By Member James Delawder

September 22, 2021

A number of years ago, I responded with the Brewster Fire Department to a call of a possible drowning and a missing person. It was around dusk. The call came in from somebody who saw a rowboat floating empty in the Middle Branch Reservoir. Proceeding on Maple Road, we passed Enoch Crosby Road. The name whetted my curiosity.

Enoch Crosby was the original "Harvey Birch," the hero of James Fennimore Cooper's famous novel, *The Spy*. Enoch was born in Massachusetts on January 4th, 1750. His father settled on a farm in Carmel, New York. Enoch settled in the Town of Southeast in 1762 as a shoemaker. At the age of 27, he traveled south into Westchester [County] to enlist with the American rebels. However, he fell in with a Tory who supposed Enoch was a Tory. He advised Enoch how to avoid rebel dangers by joining a company which was going to fight with the British against the rebels. Crosby accepted the invitation. After three days, he claimed to be too impatient to wait and left on his own. He informed the Americans and the entire Tory gang was rounded up. At that point he decided to serve his country as an undercover agent. He received a special pass, which he was directed never to show except in dire emergency.

He joined another Tory company that was forming and gave

information that lead to the arrest of the whole company including Crosby. Somehow he was the only person to escape a few days later. He did this several times miraculously escaping his captors. Once some American soldiers recognized him, captured him and were about to execute him until he showed his pass. Eventually the Tories guessed,

because he had so many incredulous escapes from captivity, that he must be a spy. A shot from the British grazed his neck. While recovering from the gunshot, ruffians beat him and left him for dead. Neighbors pursued the ruffians and overtook them on the banks of the Croton River. Some of the ruffians were shot and some drowned. After his recovery Crosby joined the army again and continued his service until the end of the war.



ENOCH CROSBY

After the revolution, Enoch Crosby purchased a farm on the west side of the Tilly Foster Iron Mine. He lived there until the end of his life, June 26, 1835. The road he lived on is called Enoch Crosby Road. He is probably the first American spy.

After a couple of hours, the fire call ended when it was determined that there was no drowning and the missing person returned home. It was only a rowboat that somehow got loose and was floating in the reservoir.

Expertise continued from page 3.

staged dramatic reading of the play *DIRT*, which explores the founding of Putnam County, and a book signing event by acclaimed historical fiction author Allison Pataki, daughter of former Governor—and current co-chair the Putnam County Rev250 Committee—George Pataki.



BEN AND MONICA ARE PHOTOGRAPHING ARTIFACTS.

AREA STUDENTS OFFER THEIR EXPERTISE TO SOUTHEAST MUSEUM

Students from the Green Chimneys Program are digitizing SEM's historic photo collection, which will afford researchers worldwide access to our collection through a link on our website. A pupil from the Career Skills Program at Brewster High School is photographing artifacts to be included on our website. Also, students participating in the BHS Senior Success program are beginning the academic year choosing projects at the museum that will help them fulfill their community service hours required for graduation.

Students interested in art and history are invited to research the life and work of the artist Jean Leon Gerome Ferris, whose original paintings are currently on loan to the museum from the collection of the Ryder Family of Starr Ridge Road in Brewster. Ferris' work may be recognized by those of us who grew up with social studies textbooks, as he has portrayed such watershed moments in our nation's history such as the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, and the Gettysburg Address. This exhibit, in collaboration with the Brewster Chamber of Commerce, M&T Bank, and the PCSB, will open on March 18, 2026. Brewster High School students will serve as tour guides for this exhibit. Mahopac High School students will also be participating in this exhibit.

PUTNAM SENIORS ENJOY LOCAL HISTORY

SEM has enjoyed a robust relationship with Putnam County

Senior Citizens. Southeast Museum was represented at the Senior Resource Fair, organized by Assemblyman Matt Slater, at the Patterson Recreation Center. In addition to a March 2025 well-received presentation to the Southeast Seniors at their Lakeview Manor Clubhouse, Southeast Museum presented to the St. Lawrence O'Toole Senior Group in September. In November, Director Deborah Oswald gave a presentation on the Hudson Valley during the American Revolution to residents of the Drum Hill Senior Living Facility in Peekskill.

OUR
HISTORY EXCHANGE
PROGRAMS ALSO OFFER
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.
HERE, GARY PETIGINE AS BENEDICT
ARNOLD AT THE NOVEMBER 12, 2025
HISTORY EXCHANGE EVENT.
DON'T MISS OUR DECEMBER 9, 2025
EXCHANGE:
THE CHAIN THAT SAVED
THE COLONIES
WITH DONALD "DOC" BAYNE
12:30 - 1:30 PM,
BREWSTER LIBRARY.



BREWSTER ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southeast Museum was awarded a grant from the Putnam Arts Council to record interviews with lifelong residents of Brewster as well as descendants of past residents for a Brewster Oral History Program. We will be collaborating with the Town of Southeast Coalition for the Arts to record these interviews which will be edited for a documentary to be premiered at the museum later in 2026.

SCOUTS COMPLETE AWARD PROJECTS AT SOUTHEAST MUSEUM

Cadette Scouts from Brewster Girl Scout Troop 1785 are completing their Silver Award Projects at the Southeast Museum. One group of scouts is creating an exhibit on the History of Girl Scouts in Brewster. Other scouts in this troop are planning gardens in front of the museum and at the Old Doansburg church to honor such historic residents and visitors to Brewster as hymn writer Fanny Crosby, composer Charles Ives, and women's rights advocate Susan B. Anthony.

Two Brewster Eagle Scouts are working on their award projects at the museum. One scout is ready to premiere his Eagle Scout Project on the East Branch Reservoir. This project will be available to be viewed both at the museum and on our website.

HOURS:

Wednesday – Saturday: 10am-2pm

Closed Sunday – Tuesday



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please cut out this form, fill out the appropriate information and send to:
Southeast Museum 67 Main Street Brewster, NY 10509

Sr. Citizen/Student – \$15

Individual – \$25

Family – \$35

Friend – \$50

Contributor – \$100

Sponsor – \$250

Supporter – \$500

Name: _____

Address: _____

City State Zip: _____ , _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

If a gift membership,
card should read: _____

Please make checks payable to the **Southeast Museum**.

All donations to the Southeast Museum are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.