

Pratt House News

Fall 2020 | Volume 21, Issue 4

Friends of History in Fulton, N.Y., Inc.

New Roadside Marker Commemorates the J.W. Pratt House National Historic Register Status

A new roadside marker was dedicated in September to commemorate the John Wells Pratt House Museum's National Historic Register status as a place of historic designation. The Pratt House was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1999, but, until recently, there was no official sign designating the museum's status.



Friends of History in Fulton's board members LaVerne DeLand and Sue Brown worked together with the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to obtain the official sign. The Foundation would provide the sign if we were able to apply for a grant to be recognized. The grant application conveyed that the Pratt House Museum is a circa 1861 Italianate style mansion featuring permanent and seasonal exhibits displaying local and surrounding area history and that it is a well-preserved example of the Fulton area residential architecture in the 19th century.

"The Friends of History is honored to receive this generous grant for the roadside marker from the Pomeroy Foundation," Brown said. "The new marker serves to commemorate our significance on the National Register of Historic Places."

Continued on pg. 3.

More Puzzle Fun!

Want to put together your own Pratt House puzzle?



**Pratt House Puzzle
RAFFLE**

See details on pg. 9



2020 - 2021 Board of Directors

Tom Brown, President
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Angela Bernat, 2nd Vice Pres.
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Staff

Theresa Jones, Museum Coord.
Alec Seymour, Displays
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Handicap Accessible

A ramp off the driveway to the side door enables handicapped access to the Pratt House. (During the winter months, however, we are closed and there is no handicap access.)

Pratt House Hours
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday:
10a to 3p

**Closed for the
season due to
COVID-19. See
you next year!**
Saturday by appointment only. Call
us at 315-538-4619

Message from the Board of Directors

Our Annual Meeting was held on September 23rd via Zoom; in addition to the election of new board members, we enjoyed an interesting program about the evolution of telephones throughout the years. Our very own Alec Seymour was the speaker and, although it was probably his first video presentation, as usual he did not hesitate when we asked. If you did not receive the email that included his presentation, let us know and we will send it to you.

As we start our FOH new year, we welcome our new board members Tom Brown, Janet Sczupak and Joe Sczupak. We gratefully thank Cindy Bickford, Jean Lewis, and Paula Rohn, who have served many years on the Friends of History board and who have decided to step down from the board. They will be greatly missed, but we know that they will continue to be great supporters of the FOH.

The FOH has elected new officers: President, Tom Brown, First Vice President, John Finocchiaro, and Second Vice President, Angela Bernat. Carol Dexter, Sarah Conley, and Sue Brown will continue their roles as Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively.

Our exciting new fundraiser, the Pratt House puzzle, has been completed. Watch for pictures of the puzzle that will be displayed in the museum when we hopefully open in the Spring.

The virtual tour of the Pratt House Museum is nearing completion. We are excited to be sharing this video with our members and with the community.

The Friends of History Board of Directors has continued to hold meetings and we have enjoyed the times we were able to meet in person on the lawn of the Pratt House Museum. With the changes in the weather, we will again hold our monthly meetings remotely.

It has been a difficult year for the Friends of History, but we are continuing to support our mission to ensure the preservation of the history of Fulton. We look forward to the day when you can visit the Pratt House and can see for yourselves the results of our efforts. In the meantime, stay safe, stay well and we will get through this together!

For those who could not attend this year's annual meeting, here is a link to the program, "History of Phones," presented by Alec Seymour: http://prathousemuseum.org/FOH-Annual-Meeting-2020_1.mp4

Click here to see a [Virtual Tour](#) of the Pratt House Museum.



A new updated video of the Pratt House Museum is in the works! Watch for it in your email and on **Facebook**. We'll keep you posted!

Corporate Sponsors 2019-2020

Gold Membership

- Fulton Savings Bank

Bronze Membership

- Harbor Eye Associates (Dr. David J. Dexter)
- OVIA Insurance Agencies, LLC
- Pathfinder Bank
- Save-A-Lot (Fulton)

Silver Membership

- Advanced Dental Arts (Dr. Frank Fruce, DMD)
- L.C. Smith Collectors Association

Patron Membership

- The Great Outdoors
- Oswego County Bookkeeping, Inc.
- Scriba Electric
- Valley Locksmith

We thank all of the businesses for their sponsorship support. They help the Friends of History and the Pratt House Museum to continue to share local history of Fulton and the surrounding area.

New Roadside Marker—Cont.

The Pomeroy Foundation is a private, grant-making foundation in Syracuse that assists organizations in celebrating their community's history through a variety of grant programs, including its National Register Signage Grant Program.

There were specific installation and care instructions for the sign provided by the Pomeroy Foundation. Thank you to Les Weldin and Ed Farfaglia for their diligence and commitment to putting the sign up for the Pratt House!

This was a great day for the Pratt House Museum. The Friends of History in Fulton was and continues to be dedicated to preserving the history of Fulton and the surrounding areas.



Joining the commemoration celebration were members of the Friends of History board as well as the Fulton Common Council and other friends of the museum.

Special Award Presented to Longtime Pratt House Museum Volunteer

When it comes to building exhibits and displays at the Pratt House, Alec Seymour is *the man*. Alec, also known as the man who loves old telephones and has quite a large collection of them, was presented with a special plaque in September.

The plaque was presented by FOH board member Ed Farfaglia on the same day as the roadside marker ceremony commemorating the museum's inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. "On behalf of the Fulton Historical Society, we'd like to present this plaque which will be mounted inside the museum," he said.

The inscription on the plaque reads, "The Alec Seymour Room: Thank you for your love of telephones, history, and your dedication to the Pratt House Museum."

Ed said that it is impossible to think about the Pratt House without

thinking about the contributions Alec has made. "I know, Alec, you've been here since the inception. When I think of the Pratt House, I think of you," he said.

When kids (and adults) visit the museum, Alec explains how all the old telephone equipment worked back in the day, including the old switchboard, which was donated by the Fulton Telephone Company and is located upstairs in the museum. Alec commented on how much the museum means to the kids and adults in the community. "It's amazing how much the kids get out of it, especially at Christmas Time. They really enjoy it," he said.

Alec was a former president of FOH. His role now is setting up exhibits and displays, as well as handling



Friends of History Board Member Ed Farfaglia presents a special award to Alec Seymour, a longtime Pratt House Museum Volunteer.

maintenance projects. If something needs to be painted or fixed, he steps right up for the task.

Alec has said many times that he has no problem working at the house. He loves and enjoys it; and we love and enjoy him.

Thank you, Alec, for all that you do!



Nearly half of Ed Bernat's basement in Westvale is home to a model train display that he lovingly calls "Silly City." The layout is anything but silly. It's a testament to Bernat's imagination, sense of humor and patience.

On the Right Track

Green-thumbed couple cultivates joy in retirement

By Mary Beth Roach

Whether it's gardening or building his model railroad display, Ed Bernat has found his creative outlets.

The neatly trimmed greenery and red geraniums in the front of Ed and Angela Bernat's home in Westvale just hints at the oasis the couple has created in their back yard.

Entering this space is like walking into a small, magical garden awash in color, from the geraniums to the crimson coleus to the pink-and-white hydrangea tree to bright planters. A gazebo anchors the corner of the yard, which features miniature, perfectly manicured trees and meandering walkways.

There are little surprises at every bend, whether it's one of the many birdhouses that Ed built or a quirky metal chicken figuring. He constructed the little shed in the back from leftover siding on their house. The crane fig-

ures in the yard have been christened George, Kramer and Elaine, in honor of one of the couple's favorite TV shows, "Seinfeld."

When it was first designed, Ed said that he wasn't fond of the curving walkways. The computer programmer in him wanted straight lines, he said, but he deferred to the designer. But Ed has since taken over and it's become his design. He takes care of all of the maintenance and upgrading these days, especially since his retirement in 1992.

"I just fell in love with it," he said. To say that Ed is immersed in gardening would be an understatement. The 83-year old still climbs the ladders so he can do precision trimming, even utilizing a gauge he built for himself.

"If there's more than one of the same species, I'd like them to be all the same," Ed said. And he still gets on his knees to do the lawn trimming by hand — there is no electric trimmer for

him.

"I do everything by hand to stay in condition," Ed said.

Their work in the yard has paid off as the Bernats' yard was included on the 2019 summer's Westvale Garden Tour, and it was featured on the cover of some of the tour's promotional materials.

But yet, the space is a continual work in progress for Ed.

"He's never happy," Angela joked. "He's always looking for one leaf that might be dying so he can have an excuse to pull it out and plant something in its place."

And every year, something will die, triggering them to look into planting something else the following season.

Ed does his horticultural homework, always researching the perennials and annuals, his wife said.

Ed Bernat was born and raised in Fulton, New York. He graduated from Fulton High School in 1953.

This article has been reprinted from 55 PLUS — A Magazine for Active Adults in CNY. Visit www.cny55.com to subscribe.

Continued on pg. 5

On the Right Track—Cont.

They find inspiration wandering the aisles of some of their favorite gardening shops, like Chuck Hafner's Farmers Market & Garden Center, or simply by strolling through their neighborhood.

"We're big walkers, so we notice shrubs and plantings wherever we are," Angela said.

All aboard

While gardening has been an avocation for Ed for nearly 30 years, his passion for collecting model trains has been going on for about a half-century. It all started when he went to an auction in his hometown of Fulton in the early 1970s.

The interest has taken the couple all over the east coast to various train shows, and even the day after their wedding in 1975, they were in Rochester for another train exhibit.

A wall in their den has shelves of model locomotives and cars on display, even a rare pink one. Pink locomotives, the couple explained, were introduced into the marketplace in the 1950s to interest girls, but when sales hadn't gone as hoped, many storekeepers painted them black, leaving only a few of the original ones in circulation today.

Nearly half their basement is home

to a model train display that Ed lovingly calls "Silly City."

While Ed might refer to it as Silly City, the layout is anything but silly. It's a testament to Ed's imagination, sense of humor and patience.

One could easily spend hours looking at it from various angles and always see something different.

Being that Ed hails from Fulton, the display, while not laid out like the actual city, has replicas of buildings from his boyhood that conjure up fond memories for him.

In his younger years, for example, he recalled waiting anxiously for the trucks to deliver goods that his mother had ordered from Spiegel's, Montgomery Ward and Sears, so there's a railway express truck in this "city," with folks waiting nearby for their packages. And he fondly remembers hanging with friends at the Texaco gas station, so there's a gas station.

Ed worked at Sealright [now Huhtamaki] in Fulton for a while, so he's made room in one of the corners for a Sealright plant, and adjacent to the plant is the Victory Grill, one of Ed's hangouts back in the day.

There's also a chocolate plant, which had once bore the name Nestle. But when the company pulled out of Fulton, down came the sign on the building in "Silly City."



Ed Bernat's passion for collecting model trains has been going on for about a half-century. It all started when he went to an auction in his hometown of Fulton in the early 1970s.

Ed of course, has taken some liberties in constructing his Silly City. While there might not be a Talbot's shop in the actual city of Fulton, there is one in Ed's town. It's actually a nod to Angela, since Talbot's is one of her favorite shops. And because his wife enjoys reading, there is, of course, a library. She also likes ice cream, so there's a scene with a couple buying a small girl an ice cream cone.

And like any bustling city, there has to be some utility work going on. While driving near the Palace Theater in Syracuse's Eastwood neighborhood one day, Ed noticed a guy coming out of a manhole, having completed his task underground. This was enough of an inspiration for Ed. He went home, and out front of his "city's" movie house, he drilled a hole in the wood, and placed a guy just coming out of the hole, with another one standing overhead, and a telephone company truck nearby.

The town is fully electrified, and he's even fashioned his own streetlights and many of the signs on the various buildings.

Unlike his garden, the Silly City is a finished project, one reason being there's little room left in the basement for any expansion.

"Now it's a matter of dusting without breaking something," he said.



The neatly trimmed greenery and red geraniums in the front of Ed and Angela Bernat's home in Westvale just hints at the oasis the couple has created in their back yard.

Membership 2020

Cupola

Elma J. Smith

Attic

Alicia & Dick Calagiovanni

Alan S. Drohan, Esq.

Jim & Teri Hunter

Jim Leo & Stephen Wise

Gallery

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Mary Ann Babikian

Ed & Angela Bernat

Thomas & Suzanne Brown

Richard Burke

Gordon Chalone

Marilyn Datz

Carol Dexter

Verner & Gail Drohan

Richard & Naneen Drosse

John Finocchiaro

Terry & Deanne Morrill

Bill & Jean Niver

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Joseph & Janet Sczupak

Fran Sullivan

Ed & Eleanor Vayner

Les & Janet Weldin

Exhibit

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Joyce Cook

Pat & Becky Devendorf

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Beverly Helm

Mary Lou Hill

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Jerry & Beth Mirabito

Rick & Mary Rebeor

Mary Ellen Ross

Alec & Ginny Seymour

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Mary Ellen Stewart

Carolyn L. Waterman

Judith Wellman

Bob & Sandy Weston

Senior with Spouse

Charles and Audrey Avery

Jean Barrus

Verne & Cindy Bickford

Dr. Michael & Janine Botty

Jim & Chris Brannan

Gary & Alexa Carter

Steve & Cathy Chirello

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Timothy & Josephine Farrell

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Doc & Gloria Manitta

Dennis Merlino

Francis & Charlene Mirabito

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Kathryn Reynolds

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Floyd Wallace

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Anne Miller

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Joan Nucifora

Karen Potter

Eleanor Pryor

Madelyn Schmidt

Shelly Shepard

Michael & Karen Stafford

Jerry Stanard

Nancy Galusha Thomas

Robert Vayner

Carmella Warner

Kelly Weaver

Charles Young

Individual

Stephen T. Burnham

Gail Chesbro

Dorothy Engell

Roberta Dunn

G.C. Garbus

David Guyer

Carole Lescarbeau

Fred Sumner

Dorothy Thomas

Rick Wallon

We have books about Fulton's history and nice Fulton tapestry throw blankets, as depicted in photo. Also, we have Fulton High School yearbooks for most years. Some of these items also can be purchased at the Village Shops in Fulton.

Contact us at 315-598-4616 for more info.



Thank you to our friends who have donated to the Pratt House in memory of loved ones.

In Memorium

The following individuals donated in memory of Marian Stanton:

Ed & Eleanor Vayner

Frances Sullivan

Other Donations

Joe & Janet Sczupak donated in memory of Terrence Morrill and Suzanne Cook in memory of Bobby Dexter.

Condolences

We extend our sincere condolences to the families of Marian Stanton, Terence Morrill, to Gloria Manitta on the passing of her sister, Amelia "Emily" St. Phillips, and to Paula Rohn on the passing of her husband, Bill Rohn.

Meet New Friends of History Board Members

Welcome Tom Brown

Meet and welcome Tom Brown, the new president of the Friends of History in Fulton. Tom was born and raised in Fulton. He graduated from Fulton High School in 1964. Tom earned his bachelor's degree from Murray State (Kentucky) in 1968 and master's degree from SUNY Oswego State in 1993.

Tom began his teaching career as an elementary physical education teacher in 1968 in Fulton and entered the classroom as a 5th grade teacher in 1990, retiring in 2001.

Tom served as president of the Board of Directors at A.L. Lee Memorial Hospital auxiliary and the Oswego County Salvation Army, vice president on the Fulton Public Library board, and chairman of First United Methodist Church trus-

tees and financial committees.

Tom has been married to Sue (Lortie) Brown for 49 years, who also serves as treasurer on the Friends of History in Fulton Board of Directors. They have a son Scott, a daughter Kristin and 3 grandchildren.



Tom will be replacing LaVerne DeLand who was president of the Board of Directors for four years. LaVerne has chosen to step down as president but will continue to serve on the board. We thank LaVerne for her dedication, service and outstanding leadership.

Welcome Joe and Janet Sczupak



Joe and Janet are lifelong residents of the Fulton area and look forward with much enthusiasm to serving on the Board of Directors for the Friends of History in Fulton. Both are graduates of the Fulton Public School District. Janet earned her bachelor's degree from SUNY Oswego; Joe is a graduate of Union College in Schenectady, NY and earned his master's degree from SUNY Oswego.

Janet taught English in the North Syracuse, Baldwinsville and Fulton school districts. Joe taught mathematics at G. Ray Bodley High School in Fulton.

Their son Peter and his family live in Arlington, MA and son Rob and his family reside in Oceanside, CA.

We extend a warm welcome to Tom, Joe and Janet and wish them much success.



Pictured here is our Pandemic Puzzle Fundraiser completed with a list of all who participated framed beneath. It has been proudly mounted in the museum's office. We thank all who participated and sincerely appreciate your participation.



Thank you 2020 Pandemic Puzzle Fundraiser Participants

Jennifer Allen	Jonathan Combes	Jack Frawley	Tammy Lytle	Barbara Scerbo
Margi Anderson	Kelsey Combes	Donna Galusha	Tucker Lytle	Claudia Scerbo
Robert Anderson	Michael Combes	Helen Galusha	Hollie MacLennan	Edward Scerbo
Susan Anderson	The Comes Family of Hannibal	Jim Galusha	Gloria Manitta	Alan Schnell
Tara Baker	Sarah Conley	Nancy Galusha	Gennifer Marriner	Juliet Schnell
Beverly Bergh	Joyce Cook	Ken Garno	Grant Marriner	Kate Schnell
Angela Bernat	Rose Cummins	Aaron Garrett	Griffin Marriner	Janet Sczupak
Ed Bernat	Stan Curtis	Cynthia Garrett	Morgan Marriner	Joseph Sczupak
Victoria Best	Alan Daniels	Jackson Garrett	Vance Marriner	Kevin Seeber
Fred Bevacqua	Cole Daniels	Sherry Glazier	Jim Mattice	Roxanne Seeber
Marilyn Bevacqua	Gladys Daniels	Anne Grassi	June Mattice	Tracy Seeber
Josie Borek	Leonard Daniels	Mike Grassi	Ruth Mattice	Alec Seymour
Ralph Borek	Susan Daniels	Bob Green	Arlene Mayne	Virginia Seymour
Cosimo Borzumate	Taylor Daniels	Sandy Green	John McGraw	Tim Sharkey
Nettie Bradford	Dennis DeLand	Michelle Handley	Lena McGraw	Florence Shoults
Chris Brannan	LaVerne DeLand	Daryl Hayden	Nora McGraw	Debbie Smith
Daniel Brannan	Carol Dexter	Sharon Hayden	Mac McKinstry	Elma Smith
J.P. Brannan	Bart Dimento	Shiela Hayden	Peg McKinstry	Jo Smith
Jim Brannan	Bill Donnelly	Shiela Hayden	Anne Miller	Molly Smith
Michael Brannan	Peggy Donnelly	Amy Hazard	Deanne Morrill	Nathan Smith
Arden Brown	Alan Drohan	Katelyn Hazard	Terry Morrill	Paul T. Smith
Bob Brown	Anne Ebert Kimball	Michael Hazard	Gayle Musumeci	Marilyn Soluri
Gunnar Brown	Brian Ebert	Trina Helmke	Andrew Mylkes	Amanda St. Onge
Jameson Brown	Debbie Ebert Hills	Carol Hill	Dakota Mylkes	Tyler St. Onge
JoHannah Brown	Julie Ebert Austin	Matthew Hill	Aodhan Nevin	Velma Steele
Kristin Brown	Roger Ebert	Sarah Hill	Claran Nevin	Kash Stuber
Scott Brown	Sue Ebert	Hugh Hillick	Elizabeth Nevin	Kenneth Stuber
Sherley Brown	Mary Elliott	Kenneth Hillick	Lowell Newvine	Kenny Stuber
Sue Brown	Dave Falanga	Robert Hillick	Kelly Niccoli	Kyle Stuber
Tom Brown	Mary Falanga	Sarah Hillick	Camella Nucifora	Makenna Stuber
Rich Burke	Megan Falanga	William Hillick	Joan Nucifora	Mimi Stuber
Nick Burrescia	Sarah Falanga	Mike Jones	John Nucifora	Shawna Stuber
Alan Button	Alice Farfaglia	Theresa Jones	Aiden O'Brien	Fran Sullivan
Faith Button	Angie Farfaglia	Marjorie Julian	David O'Brien	Fred Sumner
Logan Button	Carly Farfaglia	Ellen Kane	Fiona O'Brien	Gregory Sumner
Laura Campolietta	Carole Farfaglia	Jerry Kasperek	James O'Brien	Katherine Sumner
Christy Carrington	Douglas Farfaglia	Carol Kaufman	Jenn O'Brien	Leland Sumner
Alexa Carter	Ed Farfaglia	Dave Kehoe	Jim O'Brien	Mary Sumner
Braelin Carter	Elise Farfaglia	Sue Kehoe	Karen O'Brien	Dorothy Thomas
Gary Carter	Heidi Farfaglia	Bill Kemp	Lila O'Brien	Dorothy Thomas
Travis Carter	James Farfaglia	Sue Kemp	John O'Connor	Nancy Thomas
Theresa Chalone	Jason Farfaglia	Charrise Kidd	John O'Connor Jr.	Ralph Thomas
Brad Chesbro	Jim Farfaglia	Robb Kidd	Kris O'Connor	Marilyn Vant
Gail Chesbro	Joanna Farfaglia	Ann King	Nora O'Connor	Edward Vayner
Haley Chesbro	Matthew Farfaglia	Carolyn King	Rachel O'Connor	Eleanor Vayner
McKenna Chesbro	Nicholas Farfaglia	Harvey King	Matthew Osborne	Chelsea Wahrendorf
Kathleen Chinchilla	Nicole Farfaglia	Jim King	Nathaniel Osborne	Carmella Warner
Grace Marie Chinchilla-Donnelly	Silvio Farfaglia	Nancy Kush-Ellis	Tyler Osborne	Janet Weldin
Mari Sol Chinchilla-Donnelly	Timothy Farfaglia	Evelyn Lamont	Oswego City Bookkeeping	Les Weldin
Cathy Chirello	Amy Fink	Fred Lamont	Mary Pennala	Deacon Wiebel
Steve Chirello	Dee Marie Fink	Alan Lane	Chris Pepper	Dylan Wiebel
Dave Coant	Pat Fink	Susan Lane	Julie Pepper	Stephen Wise
Gayle Coe	Sean Fink	Jim Leo	Maddie Pepper	Jamie Yannes
Halina Cole	Bill Finocchiaro	George LeVea	Zachery Pepper	Charlie (the dog)
Harlow Cole	John Finocchiaro	Jean LeVea	Courtney Plonka	Gus (the cat)
Susan Cole	Laura Finocchiaro	John LeVea	Elise Plonka	Rusty (the cat)
Diane Collins	Pam Finocchiaro	Michael LeVea	Lena Plonka	Sophia (the cat)
Robert Collins	Sarah Finocchiaro	Robert LeVea	Karen Potter	Friends of History
Courtney Combes	Bill Fivaz	Severn Loftus	Mrs. Pratt	Fulton Strong
Dawn Combes	Ethan Frank	Chad Lytle	Barb Rice	Good Luck
	Shirley Franko	Larkin Lytle	Lilliana Rivera	History
		Liam Lytle	Greg Rudes	Pratt House



Pratt House Museum

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Fall 2020

Over 40 Years Preserving Fulton History

More Puzzle Fun!

Pratt House Museum Puzzle Raffle



The pandemic puzzle fundraiser was so well received we are raffling off a puzzle just like it! Raffle tickets for this 520-piece (16 x 20) puzzle are \$5 each. The drawing will be on December 15, 2020.



enjoys putting puzzles together and for those who love pictures of beautiful museums.

Please fill out the form attached or click here <http://www.pratthousemuseum.org/puzzleraffle.pdf>, print and mail it with a check to Friends of History in Fulton, P.O. Box 157, Fulton, NY 13069. You may also pay using PayPal at <https://PayPal.Me/pratthousemuseum>, or you can pay using a credit/debit card by calling 315-598-4616 or 315-297-5561. If paying by PayPal or credit/debit card be sure to email your form to friendsofhistoryinfulton@gmail.com, or mail by USPS to P.O. Box 157, Fulton, NY 13069.

This puzzle would be a great Christmas gift for anyone who

For more information call 315-598-4616. Thank you for your willingness to participate.

More raffle tickets available here <http://www.pratthousemuseum.org/puzzleraffle.pdf>. or print out attached form.


FRRIENDS OF HISTORY IN FULTON

PRATT HOUSE MUSEUM PUZZLE RAFFLE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____



520 piece puzzle (16 x 20)
Tickets are \$5.00 each
Drawing will be on
December 15, 2020.

Mail raffle ticket to: Friends of History, P.O. Box 157, Fulton, NY 13069

