

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

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NEWS

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HISTORIC PUNCH RECIPES FEATURED AT POTENT POTABLES EVENT AT ALBANY INSTITUTE

Wednesday, February 26, 6PM-8PM

ALBANY, NY— On Wednesday, February 26 from 6PM-8PM, the Albany Institute of History & Art will host Potent Potables, which will highlight historic punch recipes and showcase punch bowls from the museum's collection. The event, which is hosted by the Albany Institute's Special Events Committee, costs \$25 per person to attend and participants must be 21 and over (ID required). Featured punches include Champagne Punch, Cherry Bounce, Lime Rub Shrub, Pumpelly Punch, and Regents Punch. Reservations for Potent Potables can be made by calling (518) 463-4478 ext. 412 or online at www.albanyinstitute.org.

Punch, an Eastern drink, is from the Hindi word *panch*, meaning "five," for its five basic ingredients of rum, water, sugar, juice, and spice. Punch was introduced to the West in the late seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century it had become the drink of choice in England and the American colonies where punch making was considered a social accomplishment.

Some of the historic punches that guests can sample at Potent Potables include Lime Rub Shrub, Pumpelly Punch, and Regents Punch. *Lime Rum Shrub* (from the Arabic *shurb*, meaning drink), was made from sugar, water, dark rum, and fresh lime juice (not unlike the modern gimlet) and was a favorite drink of the Van Rensselaers. *Pumpelly Punch* consists of Santa Croix rum, brandy, arrack, peach brandy, strong green tea, champagne, sugar, lemon juice, and water. *Pumpelly Punch* was known to be served by turn-of-the-century Albany hostess Mrs. Harmon Pumpelly Read. This powerful punch may have evolved from an earlier recipe used by ancestor George Read, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. *Regents Punch*, a mid-nineteenth century recipe from New York State Board of Regents chancellor John Van Schaick Lansing Pruyn, contains champagne, hock, Curacao, Madeira, brandy, lemon juice, green tea, seltzer, rum, raisins, and fruit.

Potent Potables is also a chance for participants to see a special exhibition of the Albany Institute's punch collection. The Institute's collection includes bowls ranging from the seventeenth through the twenty-first centuries. Many of the bowls were made in Holland, England, China, Germany, as well as the United States. The exhibition will include a massive Chinese export punch bowl (see image) that once belonged to New York Governor Daniel D. Tompkins who served as Vice President of the United States from 1817-1825. In 1824 this punch bowl was used at the Great Ball held in the New York State Capitol for General Marquis de Lafayette. It was later acquired by John Van Schaick Lansing Pruyn, who, when chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, used it to serve punch at his annual party for the Regents in Albany.



Punch Bowl, China, c 1765, porcelain, enameled and gilded, Albany Institute of History & Art, Gift of Col. William Gorham Rice and his son, William Gorham Rice, Jr., u1972.25.1.

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The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue, near the New York State Capitol. The museum is open Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM, Thursdays until 8PM and Sunday Noon-5PM. On Tuesdays, the museum is open to registered groups only. The museum is closed on Mondays and major holidays. Admission is FREE for Albany Institute members; \$10/adults; \$8/seniors and students with ID; \$6/children 6-12; FREE/children under 6. Admission is free on Thursday nights (5PM-8PM). For more information, visit www.albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478.

The Albany Institute's distinguished collections and acclaimed exhibitions comprise the definitive expression of the cultural, historical, and artistic heritage of Albany and the upper Hudson Valley. From its world-renowned Hudson River School collection, to the famous Albany Mummies, to the wide range of lectures, outstanding educational and family programming, and special events, this distinctive and engaging institution provides visitors of all ages and interests with a splendid museum experience. One of America's oldest museums, the Albany Institute of History & Art was founded in 1791, during the presidency of George Washington, making it older than the Louvre, the Smithsonian, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

For more information, please visit www.albanyinstitute.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute).

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