

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

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NEWS

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ALBANY INSTITUTE TO HONOR ELIZABETH SONNEBORN AT 2015 MUSEUM GALA

Saturday, June 6, 2015

ALBANY, NY— The Albany Institute of History & Art will host its biggest event of the year, the 2015 Museum Gala, on the evening of Saturday, June 6, 2015. The Board of Trustees of the Albany Institute is dedicating this year's gala to Elizabeth "Betty" Sonneborn for her lifelong support of arts institutions in Albany. Sonneborn has volunteered at the Albany Institute of History & Art since 1940. She joined the Board of Trustees in 1978. Her mother, Bessie Aufmesser, was a devoted member of the Institute's board before her.

"For the past 75 years, Betty has volunteered her time and expertise to help serve our community," says Tammis K. Groft, Executive Director of the Albany Institute of History & Art. "As an artist, her sketches are cherished; as a volunteer, her enthusiastic and energetic support for the arts is inspiring. We wish to thank her for her life-long commitment to preserving the rich art culture of the Hudson Valley for future generations."

A Curtiss-Wright Cadette at RPI, Sonneborn put her art degree from Wellesley College on hold during World War II to work as a draftsman for the Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Corporation in an experimental program to train female students. After the war she completed her degree at Wellesley, returned to Albany, and began volunteering at the Albany Institute. Soon thereafter, she met her husband Dick. They lived in Dallas for four years and then moved back east to Albany where they raised their four children. Both were active in many community affairs. Betty served on the boards of St. Margaret's Center for Children, Planned Parenthood of Albany, Historic Albany Foundation, Two Together, and the Albany Institute of History & Art, to which she has been devoted for many, many years.

In addition to volunteering her time and expertise, Betty donates her talent. She creates beautiful portraits of people's homes, some of which she donates to arts auctions for the benefit of Albany's charities, while the others hang in the homes they portray. She has been active in arts and educational charities in Albany for fifty years, helping and encouraging countless children to reach their potential.

The event will be hosted by honorary chairs and previous Gala honorees Denise and Tony Gorman at their home in Loudonville, New York. The evening will include cocktails and hors d'oeuvres followed by a seated dinner catered by Franklin Hospitality/Michael's Catering. The master of ceremonies for this year's gala is WNYT anchor Jim Kambrich. Proceeds from the event and the accompanying live auction will support the Albany Institute of History & Art.

"The museum gala is the single largest fundraising event for the museum each year," says Groft. "All the money raised through the gala goes to support the exhibitions and educational programs at the museum. We are heartened by the sponsors and patrons who provide such generous support."

For more information or to purchase gala tickets, please call Briana at (518) 463-4478 ext 412 or visit www.albanyinstitute.org.

Major sponsorships for this event have been provided by Austin & Co., Inc., Omni Development Company, Inc., Albany Medical Center, Callanan Industries, Inc., The Gorman Group, MM Hayes, RBC Capital Markets, Times Union, and U.W. Marx Construction Company.



Elizabeth Sonneborn

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ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART



One of Sonneborn's sketches

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Founded in 1791, the Albany Institute of History & Art is New York's oldest museum. Its collections document the Hudson Valley as a crossroads of culture, influencing the art and history of the region, the state, and the nation. With more than 35,000 objects and one million documents in the library, it is an important resource for the region, giving the community a sense of the part the Hudson Valley played in the American story, and their own place in history. Permanent and temporary exhibitions are open year-round and create a sense of place, allowing visitors to meet the people who helped shape this region. Over 25,000 people visit the Albany Institute of History & Art every year, enjoying the collections, workshops, school programs, and lectures, helping to build an understanding of the history and culture of this region. Among the museum's best-known and most-loved collections are the 19th century Hudson River School landscape paintings by artists like Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, the 19th century sculpture collections, and, of course, the famous Albany Mummies that came to the museum in 1909 and have been on view ever since. For more information, please visit www.albanyinstitute.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (@AlbanyInstitute).

The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York. Free parking is available in the museum's lot at the corner of Elk and Dove Streets. 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 some holidays. Admission is free for Institute members; \$10/adults; \$8/seniors; \$8/students with ID; \$6/children 6-12; FREE/children under 6. *We are now offering free admission on Thursdays from 5PM-8PM. For more information, visit www.albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478.

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