

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

125 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210

T: (518) 463-4478; F: (518) 462-1522

www.albanyinstitute.org

www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute

www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday February 6th, 2013

CONTACT:

Tammis Groft,
Chief curator
grofttk@albanyinstitute.org
(518) 463-4478 ext 423

Elizabeth Reiss,
Director of Development
reisse@albanyinstitute.org
(518) 463-4478 ext 402

First Presbyterian Church of Albany: 250 Years of Community and Conscience

The Albany Institute of History & Art presents an exhibition commemorating the 250th anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church of Albany, including displays two gifts from the church in the Entry Way Gallery from January 26th to April 14th, 2013. A rare 1790 Church Penny, used by congregants as currency in the Sunday collection plate; and a hand-written subscription document signed by Alexander Hamilton, Richard Varick, and John Jay to help fund the construction of the second edifice built in 1795 on the corner of Beaver and Pearl Streets.

The First Presbyterian, now located in its fourth edifice on State and Willett Streets, has played a prominent role in Albany's history. It was established at the end of the French and Indian War to serve the growing numbers of Scots-Irish immigrants. From its beginnings as a place of worship for the young nation's leaders, through its pioneering educational outreach during the nineteenth-century, to today with its food pantry, overflow shelter, and the annual "Equinox" Thanksgiving Dinner, First Presbyterian remains a vital component serving diverse communities. To tell their story, the institute has organized an exhibition comprised of thirty objects including portraits of frequent attendees Governor John Jay (the first Chief Justice of the US Supreme court and a leading abolitionist, Richard Varick (an aide-de-camp to George Washington during the Revolutionary War, and pastor Eliphalet Nott (later president of Union College and RPI). This exhibit also includes a copy of Nott's famous 1804 sermon, *Death of Alexander Hamilton*, delivered in response to the duel between Hamilton and Aaron Burr (both attendees of the church), maps, prints, and models of the church's four edifices, along with photographs of the remarkable stained-glass windows by Louis C. Tiffany and J&R Lamb Studios.

For more information about this event, visit www.albanyinstitute.org.

* * * * *

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 performances, lectures, and festivals, to its outstanding educational and family programming, 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. Visit www.albanyinstitute.org for more information, and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute).

* * * * *

Media inquiries: Tammis Groft, Chief Curator, grofttk@albanyinstitute.org (518) 463-4478 ext 423

#