

Friends honor Hudson artist with memorial

By DAVID LEE

HUDSON—The 19th Century Hudson River landscape painters were captivated by the views from the hills around Hudson. Perhaps the most renowned of them, Fredric E. Church, built his house on top of one of them, the view from which is famous enough that it has its own protected status as the Olana Viewshed. In 1880, another important Hudson River School landscape painter, Sanford Gifford, was buried in his family plot on the hillside of the Hudson City Cemetery on the high ground with its own fantastic viewshed looking east toward the Berkshires.

Now a new marble stone has been installed in that vicinity, the marker of Hudson artist Bill Sullivan who died in 2010. The stone itself, which stands within yards of Mr. Gifford's, is carved in the same 19th century



David Lee
The new marble headstone for Hudson artist Bill Sullivan.

scenes that his heroes Mr. Gifford, Mr. Church, and Thomas Cole saw, but accomplished them in the higher key of the late 20th century.

A ceremony was conducted on Saturday, July 1, to acknowledge the placement of the headstone and to commemorate Mr. Sullivan's life. Artists

style and the same white marble as the other stones, but not yet tarnished with age. Mr. Sullivan painted many of the same

and writers gathered from around the region, first at the Carrie Haddad Gallery on Warren Street in Hudson for

introductions and conversation. Mr. Sullivan showed his work there and the gallery represents him.

Then the group moved up to the hillside and, as the clouds broke revealing a bright blue sky, people reminisced. In attendance were his close friend and partner, poet Jaime Manrique, who manages the estate; long-time friends Eugene Richie and Roseanne Wasserman whose Groundwater Press published the catalog for his 2006 retrospective at the Albany Institute of History and Art; David Kermani and Jeffrey Lependorf of Flow Chart Foundation which is modeled in the example of Hudson poet John Ashbery. Mr. Ashbery wrote the preface to the 2006 catalog: "With only a tinge of irony, Bill Sullivan makes new the vast spaces and swooning optimism of nineteenth-century Luminist

painting."

Filmmaker Jacob Burckhardt, who met the artist in college in the 1960s, remembers how Mr. Sullivan took him in on one particularly misspent evening in New York City. Maybe because of his homelessness in early life, Mr. Sullivan was remembered as someone who took in people who had reached the end of their tether. And friend and artist McWillie Chambers said, "Bill was a presence in Hudson—everybody knew him."

Brian Brunius, a friend, remembers that Mr. Sullivan was like a star struck teenager when he discovered the Gifford gravesite. After Mr. Sullivan died, Mr. Brunius contacted the Gifford estate and acquired permission to purchase the plot and then contracted Hudson Monumental Works to create the historically consistent headstone.

Ackerman Foundation announces 2023 grant winners

CLAVERRACK — The Ackerman Foundation has announced award-winners in its second year of providing grants to local non-profits for community improvement activities.

Twenty-one awards were made totaling \$38,000, a significant advance from the foundation's first grant cycle in 2022 that provided \$15,000 to six organizations.

"This was an especially competitive funding cycle with 36 applicants seeking almost \$86,000," said Foundation President Claire Ackerman in a press release. "Fortunately, we had more funds available for grants than in our first year, but we still faced difficult choices in our funding decisions. Priority was given to smaller organizations and to programs that delivered immediate impact to the community, supported in many cases by a strong corps of volunteers."

Organizations receiving funds this year are:

Alan Devoe Bird Club for repurposing educational kiosks for the Wilson Powell Wildlife Sanctuary; Ancram Opera House for the Writing on Your Feet Storytelling program at Taconic Hills Elementary School; Animal Kind to support veterinary assistance for low-income pet owners; Beautiful Racket for their 2023 summer music festival; Camphill Hudson for their bi-monthly community-building gatherings to promote inclusivity and social integration; Claverack Free Library for their summer enrichment and reading program for children and families; Columbia Children's Center to upgrade security measures at their facility; Columbia County Libraries Association for their county-wide community read program; Columbia County Recovery Kitchen to support its food preparation and delivery program providing 1,200 meals a week to those facing food insecurity;

Family Resource Centers of Columbia County for their community playgroups programs for children and their families; Friends of Copake Grange #935 for their theater and musical programming aimed at strengthening the local community; Friends of Hudson Youth for their spring and fall music and media programs for local youth; High & Mighty Therapeutic Riding and Driving Center to support their equine-assisted services to enhance physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing; Hudson Area Association Library for their Bilingual Storytime Program to support early literacy skills development and to strengthen their bilingual book collection; Kinderhook

Memorial Library to support their Wi-Fi Hotspots program that provides loans of equipment allowing internet access at home; Long Table Harvest in support of their gleaning program operations; Lucky Rehabilitation Center for their wildlife rehabilitation efforts; Mental Health Awareness and Creative Arts Gallery in support of their Collective Community Collage Program to showcase art and creative work of those diagnosed with serious mental health issues; Perfect Ten After School for their program of tutoring and mentoring teenage girls; Roving Actors' Repertory Ensemble (The Two of Us Productions) to support affordable live theatrical productions in

eastern Columbia County; and Valatie Community Theatre for their theater lighting upgrade project.

All Ackerman Foundation grant recipients agree to provide evaluation reports assessing the effectiveness of the programs funded.

"The Board is very excited to see these organizations and projects succeed; and we look forward to being able to assist more organizations in the future," said Ms. Ackerman.

The next round of Ackerman Foundation grants will be awarded in Summer 2024. An announcement will be

made when those applications open.

The Foundation was established by David M. Ackerman in late 2021, just prior to his unexpected passing in January 2022. Mr. Ackerman was well-known as a businessman and quiet philanthropist with a career stretching over 50 years in Hudson and Columbia County.

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