



Coming in February
In recognition of Black History Month

Slavery, Antislavery and the Underground Railroad: A Dutchess County Primer

February 8, 2024: Via Zoom
Registration details will be available in January

Peter A. Bunten, Executive Director
Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project

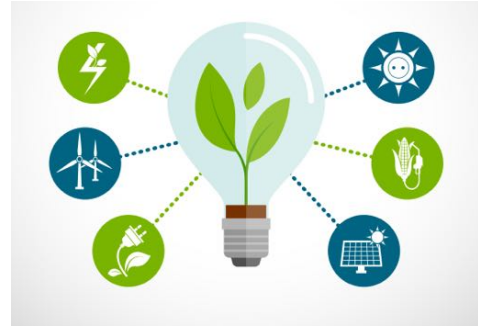


In his presentation, Peter Bunten will examine the history of slavery and antislavery in Dutchess County, focusing on its key players and events. He will place this local history within the broader national context of slavery and antislavery.



Peter Bunten is Executive Director of the Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project (MHAHP), located in Dutchess County. He represents the MHAHP with the Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State and is a Trustee of the Dutchess County Historical Society. Before his retirement in 2018, Peter was the Education Manager for Historic Hudson Valley. He has a Master's degree in Historical Studies, with an emphasis on Public History, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He is a native of Poughkeepsie. Peter is also a member of AAUW Poughkeepsie.

A View from the Clean Energy Future



January 11, 2024
7:00 PM on Zoom
Registration is required
Register now: <http://bit.ly/473LY5W>

Imagine a world where our energy no longer comes from extracting and burning huge amounts of oil, gas, and coal, with the resultant pollution. What will a clean energy future look like for the average household? What can we do to be ready for this transition?

Our presenter, **Sean Dague**, will give us a view of that world, because it's already here. All the solutions we need for this transition exist, we just need to deploy them faster. He'll discuss how we can make this transition, both individually and collectively, through his journey to remove fossil fuels from his home, and engaging in climate policy. Learn why this is a better future, a healthier and more affordable future, and one that we should be excited to create. And see why we need to accelerate this future, and how you can do that, both at the individual and collective level.



Sean is a volunteer with the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), a grassroots climate advocacy organization that exists to create the political will for climate solutions, and by enabling individual breakthroughs in the exercise of personal and political power. He is one of the leaders of the Mid-Hudson Chapter of CCL, as well as active in the NY State Action team, and a NY State Coordinator. In those roles he has given dozens of climate presentations, and lobbied members of Congress and NY State representatives on over 40 occasions, pushing for climate solutions. Sean is a software architect with IBM's Quantum Computing team.

JANUARY CALENDAR

Online Calendar: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

Calendar listing: Philippa Goodman,
communications.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

To contact interest groups: interest.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

- 1 Word Games: 1:30 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 2 World Travelers: 7-9 pm on Zoom and live at Paula's house**
Presentation by Paula Greenspan on her year in Laos.
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 3 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:30 pm**
Tamarind
2185 South Rd, Poughkeepsie 12601
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 4 Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 4 Board Meeting: 7:00 pm on Zoom**
- 8 All those books...: 2:30 pm on Zoom**
The Heart is a Lonely Hunter, by Carson McCullers
Hostess: Peggy
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 9 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *Summer of Soul*.
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 11 Monthly Program: 7:00 pm on Zoom; see page 1**
- 13 Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm, Zion Church Parish Hall,
12 Satterlee Place, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 15 Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
The Covenant of Water, by Abraham Verghese
Reviewer: Jackie Klein
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 16 Cuisine: details TBD**
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 17 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 18 Aventures en Soleil: Escape Room; details TBD**
Host: Pat Luczai
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 19 Poetry & Play Readings: 12:00 pm**
Planning meeting at the Culinary Institute
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 22 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 22 Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 23 Contemporary Literature:**
Details TBD
- 24 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
TGI Fridays Restaurant in the Poughkeepsie Plaza
Contact: Blanche Bergman

- 25 Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg
- 26 Art on the Go: 10:30 am**
Trip to the Francis Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar to see the celebrated Spelman Art Collection.
Meet at 10:30 by the front desk. Docent led tour of the exhibitions: *Silver Linings*, *Celebrating the Spelman Art Collection* and *Women at Work. Photography and Labor*
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux

Pedal Pushers: See you in the spring!

Coordinator: Patricia Luczai

Reminder:

Please be sure to check your email for AAUW announcements. If a response is requested about attendance, please do so. That makes it much easier for leaders of Initiatives and Interest Groups to plan.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH OFFICERS 2023-2024

President	Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VPs	Kay Saderholm Gail Sisti
Membership VP	Bonnie Auchincloss
Development VP	Betty Harrel
Communications VP	Barbara Durniak
Secretary	Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer	Kathy Friedman

President: president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Board members: board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Association: www.aauw.org NY State: www.aauw-nys.org

Poughkeepsie Branch: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

MISSION: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

VISION: Equity for all.

VALUES: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW Poughkeepsie values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

THE **BRANCH** is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Submit articles to Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Appointed Board members, and Off Board members, we wish you a very **Happy New Year!** For me personally, the past three years have been a challenge with a variety of physical health related issues. There have been some really difficult moments, but frankly, being in the role as your president has provided me with mental relief and distraction from those difficult moments. For all of us, let's hope that 2024 will bring us good health and lots of energy to continue the good work of AAUW Poughkeepsie.

Our Strategic Plan Review Committee will begin its work with our consultant Ingrid Kulick this month. Our Treasurer, Diane Jablonski has done a great deal of work completing and applying for grants from the Dyson Foundation and AAUW New York State. I am delighted to report that the Dyson Foundation has awarded us our requested \$4200 grant.

We are forming another committee to plan for our 100th Anniversary as an AAUW affiliate in 2025. Our Historian Marge Barton has already begun looking into our archives at Adriance Library and reading through the minutes of early meetings and has shared them with us through *The Branch*. I don't think there's ever a lull in the activity level of our Branch.

In continuing to bring to your attention the governing foundations of AAUW Poughkeepsie, I will center on the Bylaws in this issue. This is the last major cornerstone of our organization. You can access the Bylaws on our website Poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net for a complete view of these governing laws. For my purpose here I will highlight some of the important points.

The document begins with our official name and then states our affiliation with the national AAUW organization and our legal compliance with it.

The purpose is given: "The purpose of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. The purpose of the Affiliate is to further AAUW purposes and policies." We are bound by these Bylaws as is stated here, "The policies and program of AAUW shall be binding on all members engaged in AAUW activities, and no member shall use the name of AAUW to oppose such policies or program." We all have the right to state our personal objections to any policies the national organization supports by contacting that organization and letting the leaders know. We just can't use the name AAUW to put forth those opinions.

One of the most significant sections in the Bylaws is the **description of eligibility**:

A (sic) individual holding an associate's (or equivalent, e.g. RN), bachelor's, or higher degree from a higher education

institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (an "Accredited Higher Education Institution") or other qualified educational institution located outside of the United States, as determined by the AAUW Board of Directors, shall be eligible to receive admission to AAUW membership; such membership shall be granted upon payment of AAUW dues.

This section has changed over the past several years. National has put the eligibility requirement to a vote at least three times in my memory. The previous eligibility required a full four-year Bachelor's degree, and was changed with the intention of expanding membership and offering it to women who for one reason or another did not complete a Bachelor's degree. There is still a desire on the part of National to expand eligibility further by doing away with the above criteria. That may come up as a vote in the future as well, so we'll let you know if it does.

Finally, I think it's important to note that AAUW and our Branch welcome **students as members**. The following paragraph states this:

Section 3. Student Associates. The AAUW Board of Directors may permit undergraduate students enrolled in Accredited Higher Education Institutions or in other qualified educational institutions located outside the United States, as determined by the AAUW Board of Directors, to associate with AAUW, with fees (if any) and benefits as determined by the AAUW Board of Directors.

And, we offer a free membership to our scholarship winners and our awardees of the Irene Keyes Memorial Fund. We welcome these young women to share their ideas, thoughts, experiences, and suggestions with us.

The Bylaws continue with detailed descriptions of the following: definition and requirements of an affiliate of AAUW; use of parliamentary procedure when applicable; mandated amendments to the Bylaws; rules for nominations and elections; description of officers and directors and their duties; specific rules for the Board of Directors; our financial administration; committees; the terms of office for the Elected Board members; meeting requirements; our official seal of incorporation is attached; our indemnification; that the provisions of the indemnification take precedence over our Bylaws in cases of conflict; and finally, how and when our Bylaws have been amended.

A great deal of work went into creating this original document and amendments have been made numerous times through the past several decades. I know that many of our current members were instrumental in amending this document. We thank them for this very comprehensive governing product. And, as I have stated many times before, we welcome and look forward to those of you who might want to get more actively involved. Just let one of us know!

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Bonnie Auchincloss and Linda Eagleton
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

During much of the month of November and into December, the membership committee was busy proofreading the current directory, adding new members and making any requested changes. It is now being printed and will soon be distributed to all members.

New Member Glimpses

Meet the following new members:

Pamela Brown— Pamela practiced landscape architecture for many years in CA, taught 5th grade in San Diego, headed a professional theater in Spokane; loves garden design, art and nature. She is currently holding puppy kindergarten classes for her newly acquired puppy.

Francine Wizner— Francine is a recently retired biology teacher. She is involved in many activities, including writing, playing (tennis, mahjongg, etc), and renovating her new property.

Laura Chasin — Laura has lived in both Ulster County and NYC, relocating to Dutchess five years ago. She retired from a diverse career in public service that included teaching, local elected office, and working for the late Governor Mario Cuomo, as well as for the City of New York. Her interests include public and political affairs, theater, gentle hiking and travel.



January Birthdays:

Geraldine Allan, Patty Cerniglia, Susan Davis, Pat Deleo, Sharon Fleury, Pat Gullick, Beverly Hanna, Mary Anne Hogarty, Christina Houghtaling, Julia Kessler, Susan Kinney, Pat Luczai, Linda Lurie, Kathleen Mantaro, Barbara Mindel, Kathy Prisco, Christine Romano, Marilyn Walsh, Mary Therese Yamamoto.

When We Need to Support Each Other

There are times when one of our members is dealing with an illness, a loss, or another personal crisis. If you know of a member who should receive our well wishes or support, please send the information to our Assistant Secretary, Paula Greenspan. Her contact information is in our Directory.

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Deep Sea Fishing and Hooked a Red Herring

As the presidents of Harvard, MIT, and U Penn were questioned by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce over accusations of allowing anti-Semitism to foster on their campuses, I realized three women were heading Ivy League schools. Rather than focus on the issues they were summoned to address, I became enamored with the reality of three women leading top universities.

Further inquiries revealed women hold 6 of 8 Ivy League presidencies. Harvard, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, and Dartmouth and U Penn have women as their chiefs with Yale and Princeton being served by males. The Seven Sisters, a group of liberal arts colleges in the Northeast offering Ivy League academic standards, are historically women's colleges. Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and Wellesley, are still women's colleges while Vassar and Radcliff are now coed. Of the historic sisters, six have female presidents with only Mount Holyoke currently being served by an acting male president.



Why was I surprised? Women comprise 70% of the country's valedictorians and 60% of the straight A and A+ students. At most Ivies, women average a 51% acceptance rate to a 48% male acceptance rate with the exception of Brown, which admits more men and MIT, which has a higher acceptance for women. Retention rates appear equal. Women earn 58.5% of master's degrees and 52.9% of Ph.D.s. Seem a little off balance?

So I had questions.

If women are in the campus majority, why aren't they equally represented in higher level jobs? Have we lost a large portion of the best and brightest women to alternative careers? Marriage? Have women been lured out of the work force? Has re-entry into a professional work force become biased? Has a lack of quality childcare prevented women from pursuing careers and employment? Has a decreasing percentage of women in higher paying employment made it easier to devalue women's role and feed the pay gap? What structuring in the work force happens post college graduation that delegates women to lower pay or non employment? Are women being exploited as figureheads? I've done some research and have had discussions, but I have no definitive answers. So far, it's mostly opinion.

To what extent is the gender gap socially, politically and financially biased? The fight continues. One thing does appear obvious. Freshman year it begins. And that is no red herring.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno

Bill to Establish International Women's Day in NY Signed by Gov. Hochul

Nov 29, 2023

State Senator Michelle Hinchey announced that her bill (S1792) to establish March 8th as International Women's Day in the State of New York has been signed into law and will now be observed annually. Supported by over 40 labor and social justice organizations statewide, this commemorative day championed by Hinchey serves as a platform to honor the achievements of New York women, both historical and contemporary, while highlighting the continued pursuit of women's equality.

March 8, 2024

International Women's Day is Theme: Inspire Inclusion

The aim of the IWD 2024 **#InspireInclusion** campaign is to collectively forge a more inclusive world for women.

Further information can be found at www.internationalwomensday.com

March 10-22, 2024

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

CSW68 Priority Theme: Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective

NGO CSW68 Forum: A free parallel virtual event that mirrors discussions that will be happening at the UN that week. If you'd like updates about the Forum, you can sign up for their mailing list at www.ngocsw.org



HISTORIAN

Marge Barton

Excerpted from the Branch newsletter, Nov. 1, 1953:

At a time when most branches are bereft of leaves, it seems unfair for us to be flaunting ours. Rather than have you think us facetious, we would like to explain our metaphor. It seems to us that our national organization is a strong vigorous tree. The 48 limbs stretching out in all directions are the state divisions, each sprouting many branches. Similarly, the branch members may be compared to the leaves which, depending on the branch, nevertheless receive sustenance from the tree.

Note: Alaska and Hawaii gained statehood in 1959.

Volunteer Opportunity with Dutchess Outreach

Linnea Masson



Dutchess Outreach is in need of a few volunteers for their Children's Clothes Closet. This would involve sorting and organizing the Closet so that it looks inviting when little ones visit. It also might include being there on days when it is open to assist parents/guardians.

This volunteer opportunity is flexible and can work around your schedule. If you are interested in helping Dutchess Outreach meet the needs of children, please contact Linnea Masson at patandlinnea@yahoo.com; or call 845-883-7726.

(Note: This is not an AAUW Community Initiative)

SUPPORTERS OF THE BRANCH

Many thanks to our newsletter Patrons (\$25 or more) and Sponsors (\$10 or more). Their annual contributions help defray the expense of publishing THE BRANCH and other communication expenses. To add your name, send a check, payable to: "Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc." to Cyd Averill, editor.

Patrons: Ruth Aldrich Gau, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis