Monday Walks & Talks 2019
All Walks & Talks begin at 6pm

June 3 – The Stanley Theatre - Lisa Wilsey - Originally built to be a movie palace, The Stanley opened on September 10, 1928 with 2,963 seats. Constructed in just 13 months, it was designed by famous architect Thomas Lamb, who is considered one of the foremost designers of theaters and cinemas in the 20th century. His creations include the Fox Theatre in San Francisco and the Capitol Theatre in New York, both now demolished. It is one of three remaining Lamb theaters: The Stanley, Proctor’s Theatre, Schenectady, NY, and The Landmark Theatre, Syracuse, NY. In 2007 a $20 million expansion was undertaken to replace the old stage and dressing room space and a new wing was added. We will meet in front of the theater.

June 10 – "Historic Genesee Hill & the McKinnon Mansion" - Michael Lehman– Please join us this spring as we examine the grand residences of Utica’s business and professional class, built during a period of the city’s major expansion and unprecedented prosperity. Learn about the various architectural styles, the architects, the owners- their occupations & lifestyles, and some of the houses that are now gone- replaced by mid-20th century modern office buildings or vacant lots.

Wealthy Genesee Hill residents at the turn of the last century expected such design features as a $10,000 (in 1880s dollars) hand carved teakwood front door with sidelights imported from India, custom-made yellow-orange color bricks imported from Europe individually wrapped costing 12 cents each (in 1895 dollars), porte-cocheres, reception halls with grand staircases, elaborate interior woodwork, elegant chandeliers, stain glass windows, marble bathrooms and mantelpieces, and third floor ballrooms- plus the latest advances in residential technology.

Conclude the walk by exploring the interior of the Robert McKinnon mansion, now the First Presbyterian Church House, to see how the Captains of Mohawk Valley industry lived over a century ago.

June 17 – “Westwood – Lofts & Grocery Store 167 & 171” - Christine Martin – 167 Genesee St. Westwood is ideally situated in the heart of Downtown Utica just steps away from restaurants, bars, entertainment, cafes, shops, and the Utica Auditorium, home of the Utica Comets, our professional hockey team. Tenants enjoy the convenience of downtown living with the added benefit of Street Corner Market, a full-service grocery store and Jimmy Johns Sandwich Shop on the first floor of the building. Our tastefully appointed units boast this historic building’s original charm featuring hardwood floors, exposed brick walls, expansive windows and lofty ceilings. The high-end kitchen and bath finishing’s offer a modern twist to the urban industrial atmosphere.

June 24 – “Smith Market” – Luciann Gould and Christopher Tillotson - Smith Market was selected as the winner of The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties’ $25,000 Impact Opportunity Challenge. The market was one of five finalists to pitch their idea for an innovative business concept for downtown Utica to a panel of judges on Wednesday, August 10.

The market will be located at 412 Main Street, Utica, in the previous D.B. Smith & Co. building. Smith Market will offer a selection of organic and locally grown produce, flowers, chemical-free groceries, natural body care and eco-friendly household products. It intends to meet the growing demand for a natural food store and year-round local market in the downtown community.
July 8 – Forest Hills – Gerald Waterman – Oneida St Utica - Conveniently located in the greater Utica area, this not-for-profit, non-sectarian cemetery is known worldwide for its rich historical value. Many national, state, and local leaders rest at Forest Hill. A Vice-President of the United States, veterans of many armed conflicts (including Medal of Honor Recipients), political and industrial leaders and many philanthropic giants are at Forest Hill Cemetery; all representing the historic richness. Please join us as we walk and learn of another historic section of this wonderful history book. We will be meeting at the Chapple.

July 15th –“Russia Union Church (1820) – Russia, NY- Speaker TBA— A two-story, rectangular frame meeting house with vernacular Federal stylistic influence, including projecting entrance pavilion, staged bell tower, flanking molded entrance architraves, tripartite window in tower, narrow molded cornice. The interior is highly intact, with original wide plank wainscoting, chancel, turned columns and stairs. Pews are original, although modified to a side-aisle configuration mid-19th century. Gallery was eliminated, late 19th century, to provide a second-floor social hall, though original plastered cove ceiling and gallery wainscot remains intact.” 5078 Military Rd, Russia, NY 13431

July 22 – Walk in the Footprint (West Side) - Mike Lehman - It has been two years since our first 2017 and 2018 tours of the historic Erie Canal-era Columbia/Lafayette St. (COLA) neighborhood. MVHS has released proposed conceptual and final building/campus site designs which will be examined during our third walking tour. We will explore their major impact on the existing businesses, non-profit community service organizations, and residents that call the proposed downtown hospital site home. Final SEQRA review findings, including the 12 National Register of Historic Places listed and eligible buildings identified will be highlighted. MVHS is proposing to demolish all existing buildings in this portion of the legacy Gateway Historic Canal District - primarily for surface parking lots, a parking garage, hospital, and a medical office building. The proposal does not attempt to repurpose any of these historic structures for healthcare-related uses.

Meet in front of 333 Lafayette Street at Cornelia Street- the home of Wilcor International

Guides: Michael Lehman, AIA and other Community Stakeholders-TBA

July 29 – St Margaret’s House – Speaker on Site - 47 Jordan Road New Hartford, NY 13413 The first stone was laid on July 9th, 1936 at the Jordan Road building, but the history of the house started many years before that moment when Rachel Munson Williams Proctor of Utica, NY visited the St. Margaret’s Convent in East Grinstead, Sussex, England during her travels. The Order of the Sisters of St. Margaret was founded in England in 1854. The Sisters have several homes throughout the United States of America, with their Mother House located in Boston, Massachusetts. When Rachel returned to the United States, she visited the Mother House in Boston, became an Associate of the Order, and asked that some of the Sisters come to her home city of Utica, NY. In 1912, two of the Sisters arrived in Utica to begin their work. Mrs. Proctor established a home for the Sisters on Clark Place in Utica. They began mission work, put people up who were on retreat, provided spiritual direction for some, and provided shelter for those who needed a place to stay for a night or two. It soon became clear that the Sisters would need a bigger residence. During this time, the St. Margaret’s Corporation was formed. Upon the deaths of Rachel and Frederick Proctor, funds were bequest to the Corporation for the purchase of the land upon which the new house for the Sisters was built. In 1929 the land on Jordan Road in New Hartford, NY was purchased. The architects, Bagg and Newkirk were hired, as were the contractors of the house, Charles and Frank Alt. The cornerstone for the new house was laid on July 9, 1936, and the house was dedicated on St. Peter’s Day, 1937. When the house first opened, it served as a rest home for convalescent women and those in need of rest, care, quiet, and spiritual help. During the time that the Sisters were in residence, they would welcome those of all faiths who wished to come for quiet hours, for retreats, or just to make a visit. The beautiful grounds were always filled with flowers, gardens, and grape vines. The Sisters continued their work with the Episcopal churches throughout the area until 2009 when, with advancing age, it was necessary to return to Massachusetts.

From 2009 until 2018, the house was cared for by the loving hands of stewards. They, along with the staff, and Board of Trustees of the Corporation, ensured that guests of the site and the property were well cared for. In 2018, the Board of Trustees hired the Corporation’s first Executive Director, Judith H. Reilly, to move the Corporation forward, and Judy serves in that capacity today.