

**FRIENDS OF HISTORIC GROOMS TAVERN  
P.O. Box 1166  
CLIFTON PARK, NEW YORK 12065**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Alexandra Verrigni  
November 2, 2009  
(518) 399-2446

**FRIENDS OF TAVERN TO HOST DISCUSSION OF  
“ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS & CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS”  
*WITH ROBERT HALLEY***

**CLIFTON PARK, New York** – The Friends of Historic Grooms Tavern, a not-for-profit association dedicated to Historic Grooms Tavern, presents “Origins of Christmas & Christmas Ornaments” a lecture by Robert Halley on Friday evening, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Grooms Tavern, located at the corner of Grooms and Sugarhill Roads, Rexford. Preceding this presentation, there will be an open house and holiday reception, when Mr. Halley has generously offered to appraise, free-of-charge, antique ornaments and decorations brought by attendees.

The talk by Mr. Halley includes an exhibit of 50-60 examples of antique Christmas ornaments dated from 1820s to 1940s. His talk will explore subjects such as the date of the first Christmas tree; pagan, religious and secular customs of Christmas; and, how religious leaders -- from a Pope in Rome to an Archbishop in England -- viewed pagan customs relating to Christmas. He will discuss how English kings before Queen Victoria and literary authors including Samuel T. Coleridge, Washington Irving, Clement C. Moore, Harriet B. Stowe, Thomas Nast and Charles Dickens, all contributed to shape our ideas of both religious and secular celebrations of Christmas.

Robert Halley taught history for over thirty years. He has a broad knowledge of a wide variety of antiques that includes early pottery and stoneware, Christmas decorations, folk art, and a wide variety of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century objects. His wife Martha also has been an antique dealer and collector for the last forty years.

The event is free of charge and the public is invited to join us for an evening of fun, learning about the history of antique decorations.