

2013-J3823

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Chester A. Peters upon the occasion of his retirement as Town Historian after 50 years of distinguished service to the Town of Williamson

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body seeks to acknowledge those individuals whose professional lives and civic endeavors serve to enhance the stature of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Chester A. Peters upon the occasion of his retirement as Town Historian after 50 years of distinguished service to the Town of Williamson, New York; he retired effective December 31, 2013, and his meritorious tenure will be celebrated on Saturday, March 15, 2014; and

WHEREAS, For nearly half a century, Chester A. Peters rendered faithful, conscientious, and valuable service to the Town of Williamson; and

WHEREAS, A native of the Town of Williamson, Chester A. Peters was born April 17, 1919; he graduated from Williamson Central School, Class of 1937, and earned a degree from Cornell University; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters brought to his position an abiding commitment to his community, a background rich in experience, and a deep love of history that began long before his appointment as Town Historian in 1965; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters' passion for history was aroused at a very early age when, in 1930, he became aware of a collection of old books accumulated from several former district school libraries after the schools were consolidated; his love for reading and research, along with an inquiring mind, turned into a lifelong labor of love; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his career Chester A. Peters highlighted local history and delighted in sharing his vast knowledge with both young and

old; he assisted many individuals in their genealogy pursuits, having researched his own family history as far back as 1611 Holland, served as advisor for the annual Pultneyville Historical Society Cemetery Tour, acted as counselor and judge for the annual Wayne County Student History Jamboree, assisted countless students writing research papers, including participants in the annual Hoffman Foundation Essay Contest for High School Seniors; and

WHEREAS, As Town of Williamson Historian, Chester A. Peters was also an invaluable resource for professionals and fellow historians; he authored many articles on local history for newspapers and newsletters, contributed information and photographs for inclusion in local, regional, national and international magazines, publications and books, advised educators in writing the 4th Grade Local History Curriculum, and conducted in-service workshops for adults and special electives in the Williamson Central School District; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters is well-known for his popular "talks and walks"; he conducted countless walking and bus tours of historic areas in the Village of Williamson and Hamlet of Pultneyville for out-of-town groups, led walking tours of Historic Pultneyville during annual Homecoming festivities, and each year, conducted walking tours of Historic Pultneyville for hundreds of fourth-grade students over the years, which included a stop at his home for refreshments; and

WHEREAS, In his role as Town Historian, Chester A. Peters traveled throughout New York State making presentations to community groups, including Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Legion Posts, Granges, Sunday School classes, senior citizens' organizations, The Landmark Society, and historical societies; he is a much sought-after speaker on a variety of historical subjects, including cobblestone structures; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters also served the Town of Williamson through his many volunteer and civic activities; and

WHEREAS, He is a Charter Founder, Past President, and current member

of the Pultneyville Historical Society, of which he is still a member; a two-term former member of the Board of Directors and two-term past Vice President of the Wayne County Historical Society; he served on the Building and Grounds Committees of the Wayne County Museum, and is a member of the Wayne Historians Organization; in addition, he served for 10 years on the Town of Williamson Assessment Board of Review, is a proud 55-year Member and past Secretary of Pultneyville Masonic Lodge No. 159, and is a lifetime member of Pultneyville Reformed Church, serving on the Consistory and as Sunday School Superintendent throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters has received accolades for his exceptional work as an historian; in 1984 he was recognized by the Hoffman Foundation for Outstanding Contributions in the field of Local History, is a 1989 Recipient of the Albert Corey Award recognizing long and distinguished service of outstanding town historians throughout New York State, and, in 1990, was the recipient of the Regional Council of Historical Agencies Award of Individual Achievement; and

WHEREAS, Chester A. Peters' extraordinary legacy to the Town of Williamson includes the successful placement on the National Register of Historic Places of 36 architecturally significant structures built in Pultneyville between 1810 and the late 1890's; beginning in 1974, he led and coordinated the successful effort, which consisted of 11 years of meetings, research, documentation, and redoing necessary materials as eligibility requirements for inclusion changed over the years; and

WHEREAS, A man of many talents and interests, Chester A. Peters enjoyed many occupational endeavors; he was a self-employed farmer, a carpenter, builder, florist shop and greenhouse owner, and a funeral home employee; he worked as Caretaker of Lakeview Cemetery from 1961 to 2011, and is a self-proclaimed Maker of Tall Clocks and Teller of Tall Tales; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his wife, Pearl Orbaker Peters, with whom he celebrated 70 years of marriage on June 2, 2013, as well as

their 12 children and their spouses, their 22 grandchildren, and their 31 great-grandchildren, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, During his outstanding tenure with the Town of Williamson, Chester A. Peters earned the admiration, esteem and affection of all

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whose lives he touched; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Chester A. Peters upon the occasion of his retirement after 50 years of distinguished service; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Chester A. Peters.