

Documentary Heritage Program News

Summer 2008

Advisory Committee

Michael Aikey
New York State Military Museum

Todd DeGarmo
Center for Folklife
Crandall Public Library

John Diefenderfer, Chair
Daughters of Charity

Stacy Pomeroy Draper
Rensselaer County Historical
Society

Chris Hunter
Schenectady Museum

Gretchen Koerpel
Research Community

Henry Mueller
Upstate NY Teaching of American
History Project

Amy Rupert
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Ellen Sullivan
Greater Capital Region Teacher
Center

Geoffrey Williams
University at Albany

Ex officio:

Susan D'Entremont
Regional Archivist

Denis Meadows
Regional Advisory Officer
Region 4

Andrew Raymond
Regional Advisory Officer
Region 3

Jean K. Sheviak
Executive Director
Capital District Library Council

Please Help us Help You!

To save money, we are drastically reducing the number of newsletters we send out. Our eventual goal is to eliminate print mailings altogether.

We now use the DHP email list to disseminate most information related to DHP. Besides saving us money, the email list helps our members receive information in a much more timely manner than our print newsletter ever could. The email list provides information on archives-related workshops, grant opportunities, exhibits and programs throughout the Capital District and beyond.

The DHP email list is currently a low traffic list. There are usually two to four messages every month. Anyone is welcome to join the list. **If you would like to be added to (or removed from) the list, please send your name, institutional affiliation (if any) and email address to Susan D'Entremont at susan@cdlc.org**

Not sure if you are already on the DHP email list? If you receive occasional messages from Susan D'Entremont with DHP News in the subject line then you are on the list.

Archives Month

Once again New York State is celebrating Archives Month during October. This is a great opportunity to have a special event or exhibit highlighting your archival collections. The enclosed flyer provides additional information on Archives Month, including directions for submitting your event to our Archives Month calendar, which will be distributed throughout the Capital District.

The Capital Region Archives Dinner has become a tradition for kicking off Archives Month. This year's dinner will be held on Wednesday, October 1, 2008 at the Mansion at Cedar Hill in Selkirk. The speaker will be William "Chip" Reynolds, Captain of the Replica Half Moon. The Half Moon is a full-scale, operating replica of the Dutch ship of exploration that Henry Hudson sailed in 1609. For more information or to reserve

tickets, contact Susan D'Entremont, Regional Archivist.

Tips for Reducing Your Backlog

Every year the DHP office receives requests for assistance from people who feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they face in their archives. Some of these dedicated staff and volunteers even tell us that they no longer want to accept new material for their institutions because they fear they will never be able to process and catalog it.

We usually advise people to rethink the way they approach their work. In an article in the April 15, 2007 issue of *Library Journal's netConnect*, Tom Hyry provides very clear and succinct tips on how to do this. Tom is the Head of the Manuscript Unit at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, so he has lots of experience dealing with huge quantities of archival material!

Tom makes some very important points for all institutions, large and small, to keep in mind. He stresses that not every collection deserves the same amount of attention and description; different collection and even different parts of collections can be treated differently. He also notes that *every* collection deserves some level of description, and that these descriptions should be made available to researchers, even if the staff plans on doing more work at a later date. Finally, he stresses that users' needs should be a primary factor when making decisions about processing

The Documentary Heritage Program's **Regional Archivist**, Susan D'Entremont, is in the office on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. She can be reached at:
Capital District Library Council
28 Essex Street, Albany, NY 12206
Phone: (518) 438-2500
Fax: (518) 438-2872
Email: susan@cdlc.org
Web page: www.cdlc.org (Click on Programs and Services, then Documentary Heritage Program)

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archival material.

The entire article, "Reassessing Backlogs" can be found in the *Library Journal* online archives at www.libraryjournal.com

Perpetual Calendar

If you work with materials more than fifty years old, you may have become frustrated with people's old habit of writing the day, month and date on their correspondence while leaving off the year. The University of Notre Dame's perpetual online calendar can help you pinpoint the year of items. The calendar allows you to input the day of the week, month, and date, and it returns a list of possible years by century. The calendar is located at:

<http://cobalt.archives.nd.edu/perpetua.htm>

Foundation Grants Info

The Library of Congress has a free downloadable publication, *Foundation Grants for Preservation in Libraries, Archives, and Museums*, to help locate funds for preservation. The work is a collaborative project of the Library of Congress Conservation Division and the Foundation Center.

This publication lists 1,725 grants of \$5,000 or more awarded by 474 foundations, from 2003 through 2007. The information is indexed by recipient, geographic area, and subject. It also includes hotlinks to free online grant writing tutorials and introductions to foundations. The publication is available at <http://www.loc.gov/preserv/foundtn-grants.html>

Workshops and Conferences

American Association of State and Local History, September 9-12, 2008, Rochester, NY. The Capital District is very lucky to have this well-respected national conference in our own backyard this year. This annual meeting attracts staff, volunteers and students from a variety of institutions including historical sites, museums, historical societies, libraries, and schools. Come join over 800 people interested in state and local history, and take advantage

of over 80 conference sessions and 17 workshops. For more information, including a complete program and registration information, visit <http://www.aaslh.org/anmeeting.htm> or call AASLH at 615-320-3203.

Preparing for the Unexpected: Protecting Collections and Staff from Disaster, October 27-28, 2008, Locust Grove Estate, Poughkeepsie, NY. \$215-240 (half-price for the second participant from the same institution). Presented by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA). Learn how to keep collections materials, staff and visitors safe when disaster strikes, and how to keep emergencies from happening in the first place. This program is intended for archives, libraries and museums collections care staff, including archivists, librarians, curators, collections managers, conservators, and stewards of historic house museums, and for staff responsible for the safety of collections, such as site and facility managers and security and safety staff. Visit www.ccaha.org for more information, including session abstracts, speaker biographies and a registration form. The CCAHA offices can be reached at 215-545-0613 or pso@ccaaha.org

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE, November 6-8, 2008, Silver Spring, MD. The theme for this conference is Making History Local. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) offers scholarships to attend its spring and fall conferences. To be eligible, you must be a graduate student or be employed in the MARAC region of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. For more information and application deadlines go to: <http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/awards/scholar.html> or contact the chair of MARAC's Education Committee, Brian Keough at 518-437-3931 or bkeough@uamail.albany.edu

Researching New York Conference: Perspectives in Empire State History, November 20-21, 2008, University at Albany. Researching New York brings together historians, researchers, archivists, public historians, librarians, graduate students, teachers, Web site creators, filmmakers, and documentarians to share their work on New York State history. To mark the upcoming 60th anniversary of the establishment of the state university system, the State University of New York, there will be a number of sessions that explore education in New York State. Information about sessions will be posted on the Conference web site as it becomes available. The web site address is: www.nystatehistory.org/researchny/

The Underground Railroad, Its Legacies, and Our Communities. CALL FOR SESSION PROPOSALS. The Eighth Annual UGR History Conference will be held at Union College, Schenectady, NY, on February 27-28, 2009.

The Conference Planning Committee is soliciting brief proposals for presentations, panels, and workshops that address the above theme. Proposals should be made for a 60-minute workshop session, for a poster session or exhibition, or for a cultural/artistic activity. We ask that all proposals allow for significant audience interaction. And, while we urge that proposals focus on the conference theme, we also invite proposals on other important topics concerning Underground Railroad history. Proposals should be submitted by **September 30, 2008.**

For more information, please contact the Underground Railroad History Project at 518-432-4432 or urhpcr@localnet.com or visit www.ugrworkshop.com/