



ASSOCIATION UPDATE

SUMMER 2011

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Latest News From WNYAHA

It is always a pleasure to get out of the office and visit our members. I recently attended the annual meeting of the Western Monroe Historical Society at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport to present a Lifetime Achievement Award to Historian Eunice Chesnut, for her work on the *Encyclopedia of Brockport*. Eunice was unable to attend the WNYAHA annual conference in November, so I was happy to present it to her there. They had a very nice potluck dinner, and a program showing recently found images of the house taken in the 1960s. The encyclopedia represents over 25 years of work, and along with many other books, makes her deserving of the award. They have a very dedicated group, and everyone was thrilled for Eunice. If you're in the area, I encourage you to stop and visit the Morgan-Manning House.

With recent activity regarding deaccessioning, we have included an article about the deaccessioning process, by Cindy Boyer of the Western NY Landmark Society. Also in this issue is information about Return of Grave Matters, the most recent in our cemetery preservation series.

We say goodbye to board member Leonora Brown, who has retired as the Interpretive Assistant at the William P. Letchworth Museum at Letchworth State Park. Leonora is getting married and moving to Ithaca, NY. Congratulations, and thank you for your service to WNYAHA. We wish you the best of luck in retirement!

WNYAHA notes the recent death of Stuart Bolger, former director of the Genesee Country Village & Museum. Mr. Bolger received the Winslow Award from WNYAHA in 1995 for his significant contribution to local history. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.



WNYAHA Administrative Coordinator Terry Abrams, right, presents an award for Lifetime Individual Achievement to Brockport historian Eunice Chesnut, at the annual meeting of the Western Monroe Historical Society at the Morgan-Manning House. Eunice was honored for her work on numerous books, including *The Encyclopedia of Brockport*, published last year.

Photo courtesy the Western Monroe Historical Society.

Register now for Return of Grave Matters!
See page 3 for more details.

Deaccessioning: Not a Dirty Word

By Cindy Boyer, Director of Museums and Education, The Landmark Society of Western New York

Editor's note: This article is reprinted with permission from the Landmark Society of Western New York's newsletter.

Campbell-Whittlesey: Where is the Stuff Going?

It's been almost a year since we ceased museum operations at The Campbell-Whittlesey House. As I write, we are anticipating the sale of the house. We're thrilled the new owner loves history, was looking for a "preservation project," and will be returning the house to its original purpose – a family home. The house passes out of 74 years of dedicated stewardship by The Landmark Society with protective covenants in place, insuring that significant architectural details will be preserved for future generations.

But what about the museum collections? The chairs, tables, wine goblets, beds, linens, musical glasses and more - what is happening to the "stuff?"

We are following the deaccession process defined in The Landmark Society's Collection Policy. The policy is based on legal, ethical and professional guidelines, as defined by New York State and professional organizations such as the American Association of Museums.

Once the objects were deaccessioned – no longer part of a museum collection - our first step was to offer them to other museums or historical societies in New York. It is our hope that many of the locally significant items will continue to benefit the general public through other institutions.

When those resources have been exhausted, the remaining objects will be sold at public auction.

Funds derived from the sale of objects will be placed in a restricted fund, which may only be used to improve or care for the collections at The Stone-Tolan House Museum.

A lot the items that filled Campbell-Whittlesey were donated by supporters in the 1940's and 50's. It's comforting to know a chair donated in 1943 to help our community appreciate its heritage has done so for over 60 years. That chair will to *continue* to serve that purpose – either in another museum, or by raising funds to support that activity at Stone-Tolan.

I am grateful to the many people who supported Campbell-Whittlesey over the years with gifts of objects, funds, or donation of the time and talent. In a way, we are "investing" those gifts. We continue to draw on the interest as we determine the best ways to use our resources in fulfillment of our mission.

Cindy Boyer has been with The Landmark Society for more years than she cares to mention. In September she will be part of a panel at the American Association for State and Local History conference on closing a house museum. Come on down to Richmond, Virginia if you'd like to learn more.



Excerpt from the American Association for State & Local History (AASLH) Ethics Position Paper #2: When a History Museum Closes.

III. Deaccessioning, Disposal, and Dissolution

When discussing the dispersal of collections, the museum community's usual concern is with deaccessioning and disposal by a history museum of some portion of its collections: the focus is on policies and procedures that govern decision making within an *operating*

institution. In *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, Marie Maloro defines **deaccessioning** as "the process used to remove permanently an object from a museum's collections or to document the reasons for involuntary removal (one required by law or due to circumstances not controlled by the museum)."² The courts have upheld the legality of deaccessioning, and professional associations across the museum community have deemed it ethical when handled within the context of appropriate policies and procedures. The *AASLH Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics* recognizes deaccessioning as a legitimate practice as long as it is done to improve the collections: "Collections shall not be deaccessioned or disposed of in order to provide financial support for institutional operations, facilities maintenance, or any reason other than preservation or acquisition of collections, as defined by institutional policy." In short, while removing an objects or objects from a collection should never be considered lightly, it is appropriate when the goal is the improvement or preservation of the collections and the process recognizes that the collections are held in the public trust.

Disposal shifts the discussion from whether an object should be removed from the collections to what will be done with it. Disposal can be handled via transfer to another institution, sale, physical destruction, or other methods. In deciding how to dispose of an object, historical organizations must keep in mind that those objects are held in the public trust and that public perception may be more binding than legal or ethical requirements.

(continued on page 4)

RETURN OF GRAVE MATTERS

*Documenting & Preserving Your
Historic Cemetery*

August 18, 2011

9 AM—3:30 PM

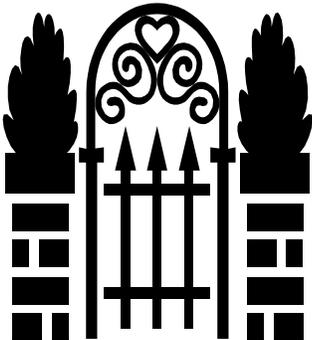
Hosted by

The Fenton History Center

and

Lake View Cemetery

Jamestown, NY



The responsibility for maintaining historic cemeteries is most often in the hands of volunteers who lack any professional experience dealing with the preservation issues involved in their maintenance. Yet those properties are treasured resources for historians, researchers, genealogists and the general public.

Too often, attempts to repair damage only make matters worse. The sad fact is that our cemeteries are vulnerable to the effects of weather, neglect and not uncommonly, vandalism. **GRAVE MATTERS** provides volunteers training that can then be taught to others in their communities.

This one day workshop trains individuals in preservation techniques through classroom instruction and hands-on demonstrations.

The morning session will be at the Fenton History Center, and includes presentations on legal issues, documentation, and symbolism on gravestones. The afternoon session will be held in Jamestown's historic Lake View Cemetery and includes

basic cleaning and setting techniques.

Tentative Agenda (*subject to change*):

NYS Association of Cemeteries—
Joan Schumaker, Nunda Historical Society

Documenting your Historic Cemetery—Sam Genco, Lake View Cemetery

“Remains to be Seen”: Symbolism & Cemetery Architecture— Craig Braack, Allegany County Historian

Lunch to be provided at the Fenton History Center

Hands-on Demonstration at Lake View Cemetery

Funding support by the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation pending.

To register, or for more information go to our website at www.wnyaha.org or use the registration form on page 8

Membership Renewals

Membership renewals from March 29-June 6, 2011.

Individual

Niles Dening

Nancy Eckerson

Laurence Haseley

Maureen Kingston

Steve Kruppenbacher*

Kathryn Leacock*

James Rice

Mary Lee Strauss

Susan Swanton

Organizational

Busti Historical Society

Cohocton Historical Society

Grand Island Historical Society

Jean B. Lang History Collection at
Hinkle Memorial Library, SUNY
Alfred

Newstead Historical Society

Pioneer Oil Museum of New York

Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern
RR Historical Society

Stafford Historical Society

Town of Porter Historical Society

Organizational Supporting

Buffalo & Erie County Historical
Society

**Indicates new member.*

Deaccessioning *(continued from page 2)*

Dissolution poses a very different situation. The decision-making process no longer addresses the future of a functioning institution but rather the consequences for its collections, endowments, and other restricted assets when an institution ceases to exist. The closest the literature on deaccessioning comes to offering guidance is in regard to an institution deaccessioning a substantial portion of its holdings. In such a situation, Marie Malaro advises the museum or historical organization to consult with the state attorney general's office, noting that in New York, for example, "court approval is needed for a proposed sale of substantially all the assets of a not-for-profit corporation."³ That advice is even more pertinent when an institution faces closing or dissolution, for ethical policies and procedures do not offer clear direction, perhaps in part because we do not want to acknowledge such a possibility. The literature instead assumes the continued existence of the larger collection and of the collecting institution.

Legal Issues

While the literature on deaccessioning and disposal offers little in the way of guidance, there are legal precedents and standards that provide the context for dissolution. Generally speaking, the state's attorney general and courts, acting on behalf of the public, will ultimately be the key players in the disposition of the history museum's collections and endowment. While institutional governing boards hold legal title to the collections and other assets, they do so in the public trust, and the states' attorneys general are charged with protecting the public interest in those assets through either common law *parens patriae* power (in which case the government acts on behalf of a child or mentally ill person) or specific statutory provisions or both. Gener-

ally speaking, the state attorney general must be notified of dissolution plans, and the state courts may have to review and approve the plan.

The case law is strongest in New York, where non-profit museums and historical organizations must be chartered through the Board of Regents of the New York Board of Education. In a series of cases addressing the dissolution of nonprofits and charitable institutions, the New York courts have focused on the authority of the attorney general to enforce the terms and restrictions of charitable gifts. Three legal standards come into play—*cy pres*, quasi *cy pres*, and equitable deviation. *Cy pres* is shorthand for the French phrase *cy pres comme possible*, which means "as nearly as possible." Under the doctrine of *cy pres*, a court may require that assets of a charitable trust that is closing be distributed consistent as nearly as possible with the will or intention of the original donor. Quasi *cy pres* is a variant that applies the same principle to gifts to museums, charities, and other nonprofits, which are not governed by trust law. And related to both is the doctrine of equitable deviation, which permits a court to alter the provisions of a charitable trust. While established largely through case law, these doctrines have been codified in many states in recent years. For the purposes of this paper and without attempting to explain the finer points of these concepts and standards, what is key is that all three focus on the disposition of restricted assets, including collections and endowments, to institutions with a similar purpose. In other words, in the case of dissolution, restricted assets should remain restricted consistent with original gift instruments, removing them from the reach of creditors. New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law §1005 (a) (3) (A) states,

"Assets received and held by the corporation for a purpose specified...or which are legally required to be used for a particular purpose shall be distributed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations or other organizations engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the dissolved."

Endnotes

2. Marie Malaro, *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 217.

3. *Ibid.*, 224.

Angelica Heritage Days

August 6 - 7

Park Circle, Angelica

Civil War Tours of Until the Day Dawn Cemetery / Roque (croquet) Tournament / Chinese Auction / Art – Craft – Antique Market / Live Music Saturday & Sunday Afternoons / Antique Machinery / Quilt Show / Displays – Exhibits – Demonstrations / Wagon Rides through Historic District / Chicken BBQ – Sunday / More

42nd Annual Event

Sponsored by Angelica Booster Citizens Inc., P.O. Box 173, Angelica, NY 14709

For more information (including market vendors):

call - 585-466-7930

email – info@angelicaboosters.com

on the web –

www.angelicaheritagedays.com

on Facebook – Angelica Booster Citizens, Inc.

Northeast Document Conservation Center Webinars

Seats Still Available for NEDCC's *Cool* Summer Preservation Webinars

Care and Handling of Scrapbooks

Live online webinar

When: Tuesday, July 19, 2011, 2 - 4 PM

Cost: \$95 (\$80 Early-bird Registration)

Early-bird discount available until Jun 28 - HURRY!

An introduction to the structure of scrapbooks, types of materials commonly found in them, methods of attachment, and the implications for preservation and conservation. Low-cost, in-house preservation approaches are discussed.

This introductory webinar is

designed for those new to library collections care or those with private or family collections.

Pest Management

Live online webinar

When: Tuesday, August 9, 2011, 2 - 4 PM

Cost: \$95 (\$80 Early-bird Registration)

Early-bird discount available until July 19

An introduction to the best practices for protecting against pest infestation and what to do if a problem with pests is identified. The common types of pests found in libraries, archives, and museums will be discussed.

This introductory webinar is designed for those who wish to know more about controlling pests in their institution.

Visit the NEDCC Training Calendar at

<http://www.nedcc.org/education/training.calendar.php>

for more information and online registration, as well as the complete list of workshops and webinars through November.

Questions?

Contact:

Donia Conn

dconn@nedcc.org

(978) 470-1010 ext. 220

MANY, Museumwise, Consider Consolidation

In April the Museum Association of New York (MANY), and Museumwise (formerly UHA), announced at their annual conference in Buffalo that they are exploring the possibility of consolidation.

In their joint announcement, MANY Board chair John Hayworth, and Museumwise Board chair Michele Phillips stated:

“MANY and Museumwise pride themselves on developing innovative solutions and responses to support you, and it is for this reasons that MANY and Museumwise are actively engaged in exploring how together we can more effectively serve our members.

We have come together to investigate how we could jointly best ful-

fill our organizational missions and strategies into the future. We have embarked on this endeavor to assess and analyze the benefits and implications of blending our two organizations. Our goal is twofold:

1. To envision a model that holds the greatest potential for long-term feasibility, sustainability and effectiveness.
2. To develop a process to serve as a model for the greatest cultural community for such creative exploration and envisioning (visioning?)”

A Get Set Grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) will allow consultant Scott Sears to facilitate a process of “self-examination and stakeholder input that will allow [them]

to determine how best to serve the field.”



The History Center of
Niagara County Historical Society

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Executive Director

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www.niagaracounty.org

Grants News & Notes

New York Council for the Humanities Special Initiatives

Fall 2011: War of 1812 Mini Grants

On May 21st Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand announced that in the fall of 2011 the Council will be launching War of 1812 Mini Grants. The Council is partnering with the State Historian and State Archives to coordinate commemoration efforts statewide, and will fund grants of up to \$3,000 that present programming dedicated to the legacy of the War of 1812 in New York State.

New York's economic prominence and long border with Canada gave the state a central role in the War of 1812. New York State's experience of the War of 1812, from the militarization of the Great Lakes to the decisive American victory at Plattsburgh, is critical to understanding the developing political and military mindset of the young United States.

Let us know how you're planning to commemorate the War of 1812 through public programming- send us an email at grants@nyhumanities.org.

NHPRC Documenting Democracy: Access to Historical Records Projects Grants

Draft Deadline (optional): August 1, 2011
Final Deadline: October 6, 2011

NHPRC's grant supports projects that promote the preservation and use of the nation's most valuable archival resources. Projects should expand our understanding of the American past by facilitating and enhancing access to primary source materials.

Eligible activities include establishing archives programs, processing

archival collections at the basic or detailed levels, surveying and accessioning archival records, and converting existing archival collection finding aids to new online formats.

Applicants may submit proposals for one or any combination of the following four project categories:

1. Basic Processing

Eligible activities include establishing archives and undertaking basic processing activities. Applications may request funds for limited preservation activities, such as preservation surveys of collections, the evaluation of environmental controls, and risk assessments.

2. Detailed Processing

Eligible activities include detailed processing and preservation reformatting of collections of national significance. Activities may also include item-level processing or preservation treatment, such as refoldering, cleaning, flattening, copying, encapsulating, deacidifying, and mending documents. Applicants may propose limited digitization of series or items that have the most potential to benefit a broad public.

3. Documentary Heritage

Eligible activities include arrangement and description projects, documentation surveys, archival needs assessments, or some combination of the three.

4. Retrospective Conversion of Descriptive Information

Eligible activities include converting card catalogs and paper finding aids so that they may be made available electronically, or creating a comprehensive online database or finding aid from information only available in a variety of non-compatible formats.

Awards: Up to \$200,000, and for

one or two years. (NHPRC expects to make up to 25 grants in this category for a total of up to \$2,000,000.)

For complete information:

<http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/access.html>

Or contact:

NHPRC

(202) 357-5010

nhprc@nara.gov

Note: This funding opportunity was formerly known as the *NHPRC Archival and Records Projects Grant*

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) promotes the preservation of America's documentary heritage essential to understanding our democracy, history, and culture.

“Get Ready! Get Set! Go!” Grants Still Available Through Museumwise

Just a reminder that all museums and historical societies should take advantage of these grants offered by Museumwise. “Get Ready!” grants assist organizations with hiring consultants who can assess the needs of the organization. There is no deadline for “Get Ready!” grants. “Get Set!” grants allow museums who are ready to start a specific plan to hire a facilitator to assist them with the process. The next deadline for the “Get Set!” grant is October 1st. Grants are up to \$3,000. “Go!” grants enable museum staff, volunteers, board to travel to museums, conferences and workshops to enhance their professional development. There is no deadline for “Go!” grants. They are up to \$750.

For more information, contact Museumwise at 1-800-895-1648 or at director@museumwise.org

IMLS Wants Input on Strategic Plan

Submit Your Ideas on IMLS's Strategic Plan

Washington, DC—The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) wants your ideas on how it can carry out its statutory responsibility “to support museum, library, and information services to meet the information, education, research, economic, cultural, and civic needs of the people of the United States.”

We are currently working on a five year strategic plan. The plan is required by the Government Performance and Results Act and the Administration has asked agencies to focus on three performance improvement strategies:

Using performance information to lead, learn, and improve outcomes; Communicating performance coherently and concisely for better results and transparency, and; Strengthening problem-solving networks, inside and outside government, to improve outcomes and performance management practices.

Your input is needed to help us examine all our grant programs, research, and leadership initiatives to assure that we continue to meet the evolving needs of the American public.

Through discussions with the National Museum and Library Services Board, IMLS stakeholders, and the public, we have developed five strategic questions to help envision future services. Using a social media tool called IdeaScale, we are inviting the public to suggest answers to these questions, read the comments others have provided and vote on the ideas that have the greatest merit. The comment period will continue until Friday, August 12. <http://imls.ideascale.com>

Please share this message with your networks so that together we will shape the future of IMLS.

Five Strategic Questions

How can IMLS leverage its resources, position, reputation and relationships to:

Promote effective public access to physical and digital content? Promote policy that sustains information access for the American public? Support lifelong learning for a competitive workforce and engaged public? Promote museums and libraries as community anchor institutions? Achieve excellence in public management?

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services:

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit <http://www.imls.gov>.

National Preservation Conference Being Held in Buffalo

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is holding their National preservation conference in Buffalo from October 19-22. Local partners are Preservation Buffalo Niagara, the Niagara Parks Commission (Ontario), National Association of Olmsted Parks, and Visit Buffalo Niagara.

To register for this conference, Go to www.preservationnation.org/conference and follow the links to register online.



ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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Newsletter editor: Terry C. Abrams

Special thanks to Ann Marie Linnabery of the History Center of Niagara County for assistance with proofreading and editing.

RETURN OF GRAVE MATTERS Registration Form One person per form, please. Make copies for more individuals

Name: _____ Title _____

Organization: _____ County _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration Fee (check one)

Non-Member \$50	_____	I would like to join WNYAHA! <u>WNYAHA membership dues:</u>	
Individual Member \$45	_____	Individual \$30.00	_____
Organizational member \$40	_____	Organizational \$50.00	_____
Organizational Supporting member \$35	_____	Organizational Supporting \$100.00	_____

Total amount _____

Registration fee postmarked by August 12, 2011 payable by check or money order and mail to:

WNYAHA RETURN OF GRAVE MATTERS WORKSHOP P.O. Box 39 Getzville, NY 14068

Membership Application

Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____ County _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip+4 _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Membership Categories:

Student \$15 ___ Individual \$30 ___ Organizational \$50 ___ Organizational Supporting \$100 ___

Yes! I would like to make an additional contribution: \$10 ___ \$20 ___ \$50 ___ Other _____

Mail Check or money order to:

Western New York Association of Historical Agencies, P.O Box 39, Getzville, NY 14068

Phone: (716) 439-6293 email: wnyaha@yahoo.com