



ASSOCIATION UPDATE

SUMMER 2012

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News from WNYAHA

We have been very busy here at the WNYAHA office this summer. Our technical assistance workshops have proven to be quite popular, with several requests, the most popular topics being collections management and strategic planning.

Our Grave Matters cemetery preservation workshop was once again a success, with over 40 people attending, the most we've ever had. Check out the photo below, and more on page 6. Several people have attended Grave Matters more than once, and we are discussing the possibility of offering an advanced workshop.

It is about that time of the year, we are preparing for the annual meeting. This year it will be held at Genesee Country Village & Museum, in Mumfordsville, NY. With the War of 1812 and Civil War anniversaries being the focus of attention for many museums and historical societies, the theme for this year is "I Want You: Recruiting Students and Volunteers for Your War Commemoration." But it's not just about drafting workers for your organization; it's also about providing appropriate programming for schoolchildren.

We are also very pleased to announce that we will be doing strategic planning, with the help of consultant Sally Treanor. Courtesy of a Get Set Grant from Museum-wise, this allows us to update our strategic plan, and position WNYAHA as a dynamic and valued member of the cultural heritage landscape. We hope you will continue to support us as we endeavor to provide useful and timely services.



Orleans County Historian Bill Lattin (at right) looks on as participants in the Grave Matters workshop practice proper cleaning techniques on a headstone at Mt. Albion cemetery. For more photos of the workshop, go to page 6.

Photo by Terry C. Abrams

Bowling Alone in 2012

By Peter Feinman

*Editor's note: This essay originally appeared in the online history magazine **New York History** www.newyorkhistoryblog.com and is reprinted with their permission.*

"Harlem Loses Its Bowling Alley" was part of the headline for an article in the *New York Times* on August 6, 2012. The article told the story, not of some hallowed bowling alley from the time when life was simpler, but from 2006 when with great fanfare and former President Clinton in attendance, Harlem once again had a bowling alley decades after its last one closed in the 1980s.

At first the modern facility enjoyed great success but with the economic decline in 2008 and perhaps other reasons, the bowling alley has come on hard times and closed. The article states "some of the last patrons of Harlem Lanes lamented the loss of another local establishment." A camp counselor at the Harlem Y.M.C.A. who brought kids there four or five times each summer said as they bowled there for the last time, "It's a bittersweet day."

Naturally the story immediately brought to mind the book that became a phrase in popular culture, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* by Robert D. Putnam. His book reported how the community associations that once were the fabric of life that so impressed Alexis de Tocqueville as one of the strengths of this country were unraveling as community life disintegrated. Think back to the revered place civic organizations, the clubs, the PTAs, and the local religious and political organizations that once were the life of the community. Think back to the Norman Rock-

well paintings of Main Street in your town with all the local merchants and store owners whose kids attended the same schools you did and participated in the same games and local holidays as you. Think back to Jane Jacobs writing on *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* with its "descriptions of street life as a kind of ballet" in which everyone participated. And think of the destruction of the once glorious Penn Station that heralded the absence of life in the new constructions that came to define the country. If you wake up in a Marriott with a Starbucks by the Interstate, where are you? What town? What state? What country?

This new way of life easily can be glimpsed along our highways and byways. Whereas once the Fishkill Dutch First Reformed Church was on the main street of the community, it now sits just off the vastly widened Route 9. Lining this big road is one shopping complex of chain stores after another, from the Van Wyck Homestead where American troops camped during the Revolution and were buried on land since built over, all the way to Poughkeepsie. Or consider Amsterdam, where the factories of the Mohawk Mills Carpet once carpeted the world. Route 5, a route once traveled by the Mohawks that hugs the Mohawk River, became the King's Highway and paralleled the Erie Canal, the train, and the Interstate. Now Route 5 has been surpassed as the center of the community with Route 30 and its series of shopping centers with chain stores. And so it goes.

In the May issue of *The Atlantic* there was an article entitled "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?" It began with a notice about former playmate and b-movie actress who didn't bowl alone, but died alone. For who knows how long she lay dead alone in her apartment before someone realized something was wrong. The article referred to her "web of connections," the same imagery and metaphor frequently

used to refer to an organism being part of a web of life. The article was about our increased detachment from each other as life more and more is through a computer which is where I am writing this and how you will be receiving it regardless of the particular device you use for emails and website connectivity, since that is the real connection which matters today.

The problem raised is the increased loneliness of the Matrix generation. If a tree falls in the woods and it is not on YouTube, has anything happened? I love the commercial with the live-at-home adult daughter and her over 600 Facebook friends wondering if the cute picture of a dog one of her "friends" sent is a real dog or not while she criticizes her parents who are zooming around in their car meeting friends in person to have fun, for only having 17 (or is it 19?) online friends. Such an empty life these parents devoid of Facebook friends lead! And the daughter who loves her parents is so concerned about their happiness. The commercial of the adult son living at home whose mother didn't cook dinner for him tells a similar story. The image of the son who knows how to cook dinner at the microwave while his parents are out meeting real people is priceless.

Not to worry, Good Humor is to the rescue. On June 11, 2012, as reported in *The Journal News*, Joe Villardi, ice cream truck operator for 59 years in the city of White Plains and the town of Greenburgh, died. His death led to loyal customers contacting Good Humor to honor his memory. And yes, the effort included a "We Love Joe the Good Humor Man!" Facebook page that gathered 2000 members and counting.

(Continued on page 5)

Conferences and Workshops

AASLH 2012 Online Conference
Oct. 4 and 5
\$55 for individual members or \$105 for individual nonmembers; additional rates available for groups.

Can't come to Salt Lake City but still want to attend the AASLH Annual Meeting? You can still attend the Online Conference and attend six hot topic sessions from 2012 Annual Meeting, plus featured speakers Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and Will Bagley. Participate in live presentations of the six sessions listed below. Listen, ask questions and make comments from your desktop.

For more information, visit www.aaslh.org/online2012.htm.

AASLH Mentor Program Deadline October 15

Would you like to participate as a mentor or mentee in a program that improves the field of state and local

history and provides opportunities for professional growth? If so, apply for AASLH's newly revised mentor program that is committed to facilitating and nurturing meaningful and impactful one-on-one relationships between AASLH members. Program participants can help develop leadership skills, share knowledge and expertise, and provide mutual support and encouragement. Applications for mentors and mentees will be accepted and reviewed quarterly. **The first deadline for applications is October 15!**

Through one-on-one relationships established by regular and open communication, and through a commitment to learning and professional growth, the Mentor Program will:

Encourage learners to form their own learning objectives;

Encourage learners to identify and utilize a variety of resources;

Help learners implement and evaluate their learning.

Mentors are especially needed!

Consider sharing your experiences with a new generation of history professionals by volunteering to be an AASLH mentor. For more information and to download forms to apply at the AASLH website: <http://www.aaslh.org/mentor.htm>

NY State Historical Association: The 2012 October Conference for Teachers

Teaching Through the Lens of Race, Class & Gender

**Thursday and Friday, October
11 - 12, 2012**

Please join us at our 55th annual October Conference for Teachers - a professional development opportunity in social studies education.

(continued on page 7)

Membership Renewals

Listed are the new and renewal memberships from May 11 to September 15. Also listed are the contributors to the Annual Fund since May 11

Individual

Mary Elizabeth Dunbar*

Sarah LeCount

North Tonawanda History Museum

Organizational

Heidi Bamford, WNY Documentary Heritage Program

Genesee Country Village & Museum

Niagara County Federation of Historical Societies

Pioneer Oil Museum of New York

Organizational Supporting

Holland Land Office Museum

Contributors to the Annual Fund

Shirley Edsall

Joan Schumaker

Patrick Weissend

** Indicates new membership*



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Grants News & Notes

Museum Assessment Program

The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) helps small and mid-sized museums strengthen operations, plan for the future and meet national standards through self-study and a site visit from a peer reviewer. IMLS-funded MAP grants are non-competitive and provide \$4,000 of consultative resources and services to participating museums.

MAP provides guidance and growth in the following areas:

- prioritization of goals
- focus on mission and planning
- communications between staff, board and other constituents
- credibility with potential funders and donors

MAP offers four assessments:

- Organizational
- Collections Stewardship
- Community Engagement
- Leadership (full cost only)

Each assessment can be completed in less than a year. Costs to participate range from free to \$750. Applications are accepted twice per year by deadlines of July 1 or December 1.

MAP is supported through a cooperative agreement between the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Alliance of Museums.

Application: Guidelines for the current fiscal year are made available approximately 90 days before the grant deadline. Until that time, guidelines from the previous year are available for your reference, but you must use the current fiscal year's guidelines when you apply.

For the fiscal year 2011 application, plus examples of how this program can benefit your institution and more information, please visit the American Alliance of Museums website: <http://aamus.org/resources/assessment-programs/MAP>

Deadline:

December 01, 2012

Program Overview:

The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is supported through a cooperative agreement between the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Alliance of Museums. It is designed to help museums assess their strengths and weaknesses, and plan for the future.

A MAP assessment requires members of the museum staff and governing authority to complete a self-study. After completion of the self-study, a site visit is conducted by one or more museum professionals, who tour the museum and meet with staff, governing officials, and volunteers. The surveyors work with the museum and MAP staff to produce a report evaluating the museum's operations, making recommendations, and suggesting resources.

There are three types of MAP assessments:

Organizational/Institutional Assessment: Reviews all areas of operations.

Collections Stewardship/Collections Management Assessment: Focuses on collections policies, planning access, documentation, and collections care within the context of the museum's total operations.

Community Engagement/Public Dimension Assessment: As-

sesses the museum's understanding of and relationship with its communities as well as its communities' perceptions of and experiences with the museum.

Eligibility: Eligible organizations should select one of the assessment types and prepare an application for either the December 1 or July 1 deadline. Application materials and additional information are located at www.aamus.org/map.



WNYAHA receives GET SET Grant

Joan Schumaker, President of the WNYAHA Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the receipt of a GET SET Grant of \$2,850.00 to retain the help of museum management consultant, Sally Treanor. WNYAHA has secured Ms. Treanor's services to assist in updating the strategic plan. The GET SET grant, from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) is administered by Museumwise.

Ms. Treanor is retired from the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society where she held several positions, including Director of Development, and Senior Director of Administration and Operations. Her work will consist of facilitating the planning process.

The GET SET grants are one of a series of grants, offered to help museums and historical societies strengthen and develop their institutions. These grants, administered by Museumwise, are designed to make it easy for organizations to access professional help and improve their institutions. To learn more about these grant programs, visit their website at www.museumwise.org or contact them at info@museumwise.org or by phone at 1-800-895-1648.

Bowling Alone in 2012 (continued from page 2)

Susie McCaughey, now of Wichita but raised in White Plains, led the effort saying, "He affected thousands of lives in a positive way. He taught kids to be polite, and he made sure that every kid got ice cream, whether they could pay or not. He must be remembered." Truly, Joe Villardi belongs in the George Bailey Hall of Fame.

McCaughey's calls to Unilever, the parent of Good Humor, left her in a bad humor. Similarly Madge Anderson, now of Tarrytown, did not have good words to say about her experience with them either. She said, "He was more than just our ice cream man. He treated everyone like they were special—he remembered all of our names and what we truly liked. He truly cared about people and it showed." Finally, on August 6, 2012, White Plains celebrated Good Humor Joe Day and Good Humor distributed free ice cream at

one of Joe's regular stops. Joe never married and had no children but when he died he didn't die alone forgotten in his apartment. A friend who calls him her uncle plans to keep his memory alive.

Joe Villardi will never appear on a statewide social studies test. There may never be an infamous blue New York State history marker along his truck route. In the years to come he may be forgotten, but is there any doubt that he was part of the web of life, the social fabric, the connectiveness of a community? I remember looking at photos and news clippings in the Walter Elwood Museum in Amsterdam pre-Irene of all the organizations and clubs that made up the fabric of the community back when Amsterdam was a carpet-manufacturing powerhouse. These are the stories of our communities, of the places where we live, of the fabric of life. These are the stories we need to tell and remember to maintain and nurture the web of life, the organism of community so we don't bowl or die alone. We are a story-telling species but all our stories

don't have to be about people who changed the entire world, just our own, where we live. These are the stories we should be telling in our historical societies and our schools, "I remember Joe, the richest man in town."

PS: Best Buy is concerned that people visit the stores to see an item and then go home and buy it online from Amazon. Chain stores may not be the way of the future. What will we do with all those malls, then?

Peter Feinman is the founder and president of the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education, a non-profit organization which provides enrichment programs for schools, professional development program for teachers, and public programs including Historyhostels and Teacherhostels.

AAM Changes Name

After more than 100 years as the American Association of Museums, AAM has changed their name. They are now known as the *American Alliance of Museums*. According to their website: "The organization is adapting and evolving to play a more central role in advancing the cause of museums. As the American Alliance of Museums, we are working to unite the country's museums from A to Z, art museums to zoos and everything in between, to make a broader impact. "

In describing the new name, AAM stated: "The change in name and the programmatic changes represent the culmination of AAM's evo-

lution over the past five years—a process that was formalized with the adoption of our 2009 strategic plan." They believe that "alliance" fit their purpose better than "association," and it was felt that alliance better represented "what the museum field needed us to be—an inclusive, collaborative organization prepared to work with museum professionals and volunteers, with those who do business with museums, and with those who just love museums."

In addition, membership changes include tiered institutional membership, so you can choose your level of engagement and benefits; dues based on your museum's staff size, or what you can pay, so all museums can belong; an all-staff package of individual memberships at one low price; an opportunity to pass

discounts (20-50% off) on to staff to purchase individual memberships; a new, easy-to-navigate website with thousands of resources to help you and your museum succeed; and access to 22 professional networks at no additional cost for Individual Professional members.

Along with the new name, AAM has adopted a new logo, designed by Satori Engine. The design is a weave, "knitted together as the Alliance feels museums of all types and sizes must be in order to effectively communicate to stakeholders the value institutions bring to communities everywhere."

Grave Matters 2012



Forty people attended a very successful Grave Matters workshop in August at the Cobblestone Museum and Mt. Albion Cemetery. Bill Lattin, Orleans County Historian gave a very interesting and informative talk on gravestone symbolism and funeral practices of the 19th and 20th centuries. Sam Genco, Superintendent of Lake View Cemetery in Jamestown conducted the hands-on portion of the workshop. Thanks go to the Cobblestone Museum for hosting, Watt Farms for the lunch, and our sponsor, Christopher Mitchell Funeral Homes.

At left: At the Cobblestone Museum, Bill Lattin talks about early funeral practices.

Photos by Terry C. Abrams



Clockwise from above: Sam Genco discusses proper techniques for cleaning gravestones; Bill Lattin talks about the history of Mt. Albion Cemetery; Sam Genco documents the conditions of the stones before demonstrating resetting of small gravestones.



Museumwise: MANY Consolidation Update

At the first meeting of the Interim Board, held May 14th in Albany, the following members were elected to serve as officers and make up an Executive Committee: John Hawthorth, President; Michele Phillips, Vice President; Erin Richardson, Secretary; Lenora Henson, Treasurer; Pam Green and Michael Botwinick, at large representatives.

With an interim board in place to navigate governance and legal issues, Museumwise: The Museum Association of New York filed its consolidation papers with the State Education Department in late July with the request that legal consolidation take effect by December 31st, 2012.

Scott Sears, of Sears Associates in Trumansburg facilitated more than a year's worth of planning and discussions. Additionally, Jay Girvin and Erin Morris of the Girvin & Ferlazzo law firm in Albany for helped sort through which organization's incorporation would best serve the consolidated organization (MANY's Absolute Charter or Museumwise's Certificate of Incorporation).

In the final analysis, MANY's Charter was chosen.

On the staffing front, Museumwise's Executive Director Catherine Gilbert will be at the helm to ensure a smooth and effective transition during the first 12-18 months of operation. Stephanie Rowe, Museumwise's Program Coordinator, will continue, also. MANY Director Anne Ackerson is taking this opportunity to pursue new directions, which will be announced shortly.

Museumwise: MANY's programs and services for 2013 will be grounded in stakeholder input that was gathered during the last year-and-a-half, and the commitment to providing affordable access to professional standards and best practice. Museumwise: MANY will evaluate existing activities for their effectiveness and place within a new vision of service to the field. They will then identify those to be carried forward; those to be shared with or given to partners; and those to be retooled or eliminated because of their marginal support of the mission.

While evaluation and retooling could easily take two years, there are several current partnerships that will go forward in 2013: with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor to foster engagement with AASLH's StEPs program; the NYS Archives' Documentary Heritage Program, and with the NYS Board of Regents' new Regents Advisory Council on Museums.

The 2013 Museums in Conversation conference theme will examine diversity in museums - a topic that was voiced in the closing keynote at the 2012 conference. Education of elected officials/agency leaders about the importance of museums to P-12 education and life-long learning, tourism, and the state's economy will continue. Creating and managing constituent networking via regional meetings, online forums, and social media networks will expand. Finally, they hope to be able to continue implementing the NYSCA-funded Grants for Museum Advancement program.

Conferences & Workshops (continued from page 3)

The 2012 conference will take place in Cooperstown, New York, on Thursday, October 11 and Friday, October 12.

Each session will offer historical content based lecture plus pedagogy. Attendees will receive document packets and/or activity plans to use in the classroom! Thursday evening features a showing of the film, "The Conspirator," followed by a Q&A session by the film's historical advisor, Kate Clifford Larson. Conference sessions will be offered on Friday.

MAAM Annual Meeting

The Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM) is holding its annual meeting October 7-9 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Tarrytown, NY. The theme for this year is Building Audiences: Visitor Engagement: A Foundation for our Future. For more information go to: <http://www.midatlanticmuseums.org/programs/annual-conference/>

ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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Newsletter editor: Terry C. Abrams

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WNYAHA ANNUAL MEETING SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3



**I Want You: Recruiting Students and
Volunteers to Your War Commemoration**



About the Conference

WNYAHA's annual meeting will be held at Genesee Country Village & Museum in Mumford, NY on Saturday November 3, starting at 9 AM.

"I Want You" features presentations about creating programs for your institution that will bring students into your facility by meeting the needs of students and teachers, using the Civil War and War of 1812 anniversaries. Keynote speaker Lee Simonson of the Historical Association of Lewiston will discuss recruiting volunteers for your war commemorations.

Also featured is a behind the scenes look at Genesee Country Village's new collections storage and the recently renovated John L. Wehle Gallery. The modernized gallery features a soaring new lobby and new display areas with pull-out drawers and built-in display units, created especially for the Susan Greene Collection of historic clothing.

For more information go to our website at www.wnyaha.org

Conference Registration Form

Yes, I want to register for the 2012 WNYAHA Annual Conference.

Please register the following:

Number of Non-Members _____ @ \$50 equals \$ _____

Number of Individual Members _____ @ \$45 equals \$ _____

Number of Organizational Members _____ @ \$40 equals \$ _____

Number of Organizational Supporting Members _____
@ \$35 equals \$ _____

Total registration fees enclosed \$ _____

Names of additional registrants:

MY NAME IS _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

County _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____ Website _____

Mail check or money order to:

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P.O. Box 39, Getzville, NY 14068