

# CAA NEWS



Spring 2004

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CAA NEWS is published by the Capital Area Archivists of New York State.

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## The Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) Spring Conference in Arlington, VA, April 22-24

### *Archives: In the National Interest*

MARAC will be meeting from April 22-24, 2004 at the Key Bridge Marriott in beautiful Arlington, Virginia, just across the Potomac from Georgetown and Washington, DC. The Program Committee has assembled an exciting array of sessions, highlighting the importance of all archival institutions—large or small, public or private, local or national. Session topics include African American communities, women in the military, politicians' restrictions, archivists' enhancements, the local history of Arlington, and the national impact of September 11.

Whether paper, digital, audio, or

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## Family History in the Capital Region CAA Spring Program March 31, 2004, 4:30pm

John Travis, Albany County Historian, will discuss his experience researching family history and assisting researchers. Participants are encouraged to bring questions and share with colleagues how genealogical research and researcher expectations have changed in recent years, particularly with the expansion of the web. Share your experiences with colleagues and learn more about what other institutions in the region are doing!

The program will be held at the Albany County Hall of Records beginning with light refreshments and CAA's Annual Meeting to elect board members and officers.

Seating is limited. Please RSVP to Amy Schindler at [Aschindler@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:Aschindler@uamail.albany.edu) or (518) 437-3934.

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film, we all contribute to *Archives: In the National Interest*.

There is a great deal to explore in Arlington and the surrounding area. An enticing group of tours that highlight Northern Virginia await you. The tours provide the opportunity to visit the homes of some of Virginia's most famous citizens. These include Woodlawn Plantation, where Major Lawrence and Eleanor Custis Lewis lived, and Gunston Hall, the home of George Mason. A walking tour of Old Town Alexandria will provide you with insight into the daily lives of Northern Virginians throughout history. A tour at the new National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly offers the prospect of viewing many of the over 300 air and space craft on display, including the space shuttle Enterprise and the Boeing B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay. Unique tours of the wineries of Northern Virginia are also offered. As always, the museums, monuments, and restaurants of DC are just a short Metrorail ride away.

Mark Your Calendars. Arlington Awaits! To print a copy of the program go to: <http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC/spring2004.pdf>.



### Documentary Heritage Program Survey

With the 21<sup>st</sup> century underway, it is time to start thinking about how historic records repositories within the Capital District are documenting the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the Capital District region, there are approximately 200 historical societies, archives, museums, libraries, and other organizations involved with this endeavor. Important steps need to be taken to ensure the survival and accessibility of the Capital District's documentary heritage.

In the coming months, the Documentary Heritage Program (DHP) will be distributing a survey that will provide the Capital District Library Council (CDLC) with valuable information to this end. The survey is designed to update administrative information currently in the *Directory of Repositories of Historical Documents in the Capital District of New York*, identify current and future programming needs, and determine the extent to which area repositories are collecting and caring for 20th century records.

The effectiveness of the DHP programming is dependent upon a good response from the region's constituent historical records programs.

We look forward to receiving your responses. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Capital District DHP Regional Archivist, Susan

D'Entremont at (518) 438-2500.



### What Happens if the Sun Sets?

Prior to 1987, the Local Government Records Law was in absolute chaos. The Local Government Records Law placed the responsibility for managing their records with the local governments that generate them. In 1987, the Commissioner of Education was made responsible for regulating and providing technical assistance for LG records.

While most local governments appointed Records Management Officers as required by the law, the financial resources were simply unavailable to carry out their mandated responsibilities.

Local governments and their professional associations came together to form the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) to secure funding to address these problems.

The Fund, which has a present sunset date of 2005, supports, through a competitive grants process, hundreds of projects to improve the management of local government records. It supports the identification and protection of archival records, the deployment of information technologies, the destruction of

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obsolete records and the storage of inactive ones.

The Fund also supports a system of regionally based technical assistance, in which State Archives professionals, backed up by content specialists in Albany, staff field offices in Hauppauge, Brooklyn, Poughkeepsie, Albany, Glens Falls, Binghamton, Utica, Rochester and Buffalo. Regional Advisory Officers provide free consultation and technical assistance to 4400 local governments, present 125 (or more) workshops annually and monitor Improvement Fund grants in their respective regions.

The Fund also supports the Documentary Heritage Program, which provides grant funding and technical assistance to colleges and universities, public libraries, and other non-profit organizations that hold and provide access to historical records.

If the sun sets, all this is gone.

Historical records repositories will find that a key source of financial and technical support has vanished.

Local governments will still generate their tons of records each day and with their dwindling tax dollars they will lack the fiscal means and the specialized knowledge to carry

on alone.

Unless the State Legislature takes action, the sun will indeed set on the Fund. Archivists, records managers, and others interested in ensuring the Fund's survival should write or call their elected representatives and urge that the Fund's sunset date be extended or eliminated. Legislative contact information is listed on the websites of the State Assembly (<http://www.assembly.state.ny.us>) and State Senate (<http://www.senate.state.ny.us/>).



### **University at Albany Libraries Acquires the William Kennedy Papers**

The University at Albany has acquired the papers of Pulitzer-prize winning novelist William Kennedy, a collection comprising some 90 boxes of manuscripts, film scripts, and memorabilia. The collection will serve as a resource for scholarly research on Kennedy's literary career, and on the social, political and literary histories of the Capital Region. On October 29, the University Libraries celebrated the acquisition of the Kennedy papers at the New Library, Uptown Campus. The celebration began with a program "The Kennedy Papers - Understanding the Creative Imagination," that consisted of a

conversation between William Kennedy and the University at Buffalo's Mark Shechner, Professor of English. Shechner, a noted scholar of contemporary writing, has written on the works of such disparate writers as James Joyce and Philip Roth, and has been a frequent reviewer of William Kennedy's novels.

Kennedy joined the University at Albany English Department in 1974 and is executive director of the UAlbany-based New York State Writers Institute, which he founded. He is the author of eight novels to date, beginning with *The Ink Truck*. Seven subsequent works form his ongoing Albany Cycle of novels -- all centered on his native Albany during the 19th and 20th centuries. The most recent, *Roscoe*, was chosen as one of the seven best books of 2002 by the *New York Times*, and one of the year's eight best books by the American Library Association. Kennedy's *Ironweed* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1984 and was chosen by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. Other Kennedy works include *Legs*, *Billy Phelan's Greatest Game*, *Quinn's Book*, *Very Old Bones*, and *The Flaming Corsage*, as well as two children's books co-authored with his son Brendan, *Charlie Malarkey and the Belly Button Machine* and *Charlie Malarkey and the Singing Moose*. He has also published

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two books of nonfiction, *O Albany!*, an impressionistic history of his city, and *Riding the Yellow Trolley Car*, a collection of literary and critical essays. *Ironweed* was made into a film by Hector Babenco. Kennedy also co-wrote the screenplay of *The Cotton Club* with director Francis Ford Coppola.

An exhibit of materials from the Kennedy Papers is available in the New Library's Atrium Lobby and in the Special Collections foyer area. The materials will be exhibited until May 2004. For further information about this acquisition, please contact Brian Keough, Head, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany Libraries. 518-437-3931 or [bkeough@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:bkeough@uamail.albany.edu)



### **Christine Ward Appointed State Archivist**

In November, Christine W. Ward was able to remove the adjective "Acting" from her title when the Board of Regents appointed her Assistant Commissioner for the New

York State Archives (State Archivist). The appointment was greeted with a standing ovation from dozens of State Archives staff who attended the Regents meeting. In nominating her for the permanent position, Deputy Commissioner for Cultural Education Carole F. Huxley said, "Chris took the 'Acting' in her title as a mandate to act. She has kept the Archives' operations and its national leadership moving forward with undiminished energy. Within the past year alone, the State Archives and the Archives Partnership Trust have won eight major awards for excellence."

Chris received a B.A. in history from Russell Sage College in Troy, New York in 1971, and a Master of Library Science from the State University of New York at Albany in 1975. She began her professional career as a manuscripts librarian with the Albany Institute of History & Art.

CAA would like to congratulate Christine Ward on her new appointment as State Archivist and wish her continued success.

### **Schenectady Museum and Planetarium Receives Three Significant Grants**

The Schenectady Museum and Planetarium has received three grants in the last quarter of 2003 for the care and preservation of its archival materials. The museum's 1.5 million image GE Photograph Collection was

Membership in Capital Area Archivists of New York (CAA) is available for individuals and institutions. Dues are only \$5 per year, and membership benefits include our informative newsletter and three meetings a year.

To renew your membership or to become a CAA member see the CAA website for forms and information:  
<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/caa/>

### **Become more involved with CAA**

Would you like to become more involved with the governing and planning of the Capital Area Archivists of New York? CAA is looking for enthusiastic and organized individuals to serve as officers on our Board. If you are interested in the possibility of holding office, please contact Jean L. Root Mahalov, President of CAA, at (518) 454-5190 or [mahalovj@mail.strose.edu](mailto:mahalovj@mail.strose.edu).

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honored with a \$100,000 Save America's Treasures grant. The grant will be used to renovate the archives, install a new high density archival shelving system and print 12,000 negatives documenting the early history of the GE Research Laboratory, the first industrial research lab in the world.

In November 2003, the museum received a NYS Library Conservation and Preservation grant of \$19,704 to preserve more than 1,000 glass negatives from the personal photograph collection of Charles Steinmetz (1865-1923), a noted chief engineer at GE. At the conclusion of this project the museum will have an interpositive, polyester sheet negative, and print made from each glass negative.

In December 2003, the museum was awarded an NEH Preservation Assistance Grant for \$3,494 for a preservation assessment of its film-based collections, including 900 16mm motion picture films and nearly 400,000 sheet film negatives.

### **Workshop Announcements:**

The Capital District DHP is offering the Arrangement and Description of Historical Records workshop on May 6, 2004 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Capital District Library Council, 28 Essex St, Albany. This workshop introduces basic principles and professional practices of arranging and describing historical records. For more information, contact:

Susan D'Entremont  
Regional Archivist  
Documentary Heritage Program  
Capital District Library Council  
28 Essex Street  
Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 438-2500  
SD'Entremont@cdlc.org

The Upstate History Alliance (UHA) will be offering two preservation workshops in the Capital District this spring: *Preservation, Care and Handling of Paper-Based Materials* and *Conservation and Preservation of Photographs and Albums*.

*Preservation, Care and Handling of Paper-Based Materials* will be held on March 29 at the Capital District Library Council from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. The *Conservation and Preservation of Photographs and Albums* workshop will be on April 27, 9:00 am-4:00 pm, at the William K. Sanford Town Library in Colonie. The cost for the workshops is \$15 each (\$10 for UHA members). This includes lunch.

Registration forms for the UHA workshops are available online at:

<http://www.upstatehistory.org/services/registration.html>

### **Schenectady Museum Plans Regional Music Exhibit for Summer 2004**

The Schenectady Museum will

present "Factory Bands to Funk: Music in the Capital Region," from June 6-September 13, 2004. The museum is currently seeking artifacts and archival materials relating to the musical history of the region, including ethnic and factory bands of the early 20th century, music organizations that started as public works projects during the Great Depression, jazz musicians, and rock bands of yesterday and today. The exhibit will explore the social aspect of music and the community as well as examine the various creative forces that inspire musicians. For additional information please contact Stephanie Przybylek, Director of Collections and Exhibits at (518) 382-7890, ext. 258.

**Materials Suitable  
for the CAA  
Archives should be  
submitted to**

Amy Schindler  
University at Albany  
LE-355  
1400 Washington  
Ave  
Albany, NY 12222



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### State Archives Student Research Awards

To encourage students to use historical records, the New York State Archives is sponsoring the 14th annual Student Research Awards. The contest is open to all New York students in grades 4-12 who use historical records in their research projects.

Three awards are presented each year: grades 4-5, grades 6-8, and grades 9-12. The awards consist of a framed certificate, a check for \$100 from an endowment established by Regent Emerita Laura Chodos and her husband Robert Chodos, an invitation to have lunch with the Regents in Albany, and a behind-the-scenes tour of the State Archives.

Eligible projects are traditional research papers; exhibits; audiovisual productions; performances; works of fiction or drama; research for a historical marker, property or district; and computer-based entries, such as websites or PowerPoint presentations.

Entries must be postmarked no later than June 1, 2004. Contest guidelines, the entry form, and a color poster are available through the State Archives' website

(<http://www.archives.nysed.gov>, click "Education").

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### Government Records Falsified in Federal Case by Warren Broderick New York State Archives

On February 6, 2004 in United States District Court in Albany, Ronald A. Roberts, aged 56, of Granville, New York, pleaded guilty to felony charges of using a Social Security number that was not his own in a bankruptcy proceeding and in several banking transactions, and submitting false documents to the government in connection with a petition to the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs seeking federal recognition as an American Indian tribal government. Roberts, who sometimes referred to himself as "Chief" or "Sachem Golden Eagle," claimed to be the leader of the "Western Mohegans," a group which has not been recognized by the federal or New York State governments. Sentencing is scheduled for this June.

Evidence submitted by Roberts to the Bureau of Indian Affairs included falsified copies of state government records. A copy of the 1845 state census held by the New York State Archives, in which Native Americans were enumerated by noted ethnologist Henry R. Schoolcraft, was altered to indicate the presence of "New York Mohegans" (including an ancestor of Roberts) living in Washington County. James D. Folts, supervisor of reference services, testified regarding differences

between the altered copy and the original census record. Roberts had also presented an altered copy of a 1938 death record obtained from the Town of Hartford indicating that his grandfather, Arthur E. Smith, was an "Indian." The official copy of this death record, maintained on microfilm by the State Department of Health, shows Mr. Smith to have been "White." The death record belonging to the Town of Hartford appears to contain unauthorized alterations. In addition, falsified genealogical records and a diary of questionable accuracy were submitted as part of Roberts' application for tribal recognition for the "Western Mohegans."

The actual "Mohegans" are headquartered in eastern Connecticut and have established a well-known casino and resort in Uncasville. The actual "Mohicans" (now known officially as the "Stockbridge-Munsee band"), first made famous in the title of James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *Last of the Mohicans*, are an Indian nation who lived in the Hudson Valley (from central Dutchess County north to the Adirondacks) and in adjacent western New England. Currently headquartered on land near Green Bay, Wisconsin, the Mohicans maintain an active interest in their New York State heritage. Both the Mohegans and Mohicans operate historical repositories and cultural centers on their respective reservations.

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For submissions to the next

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please contact John Diefenderfer, CAA Newsletter Editor  
at

[jdiefenderfer@dc-northeast.org](mailto:jdiefenderfer@dc-northeast.org)

Articles and announcements are accepted on an ongoing basis.

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c/o Chris Hunter

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