

# Capital Area Archivists of New York State

# CAA

SPRING



2012

# NEWS

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

## **Officers:**

Chris Hunter

President

Michael Martin

Vice-President

Susan D'Entremont

Secretary

Brian Keough

Treasurer

Gertrude Hutchinson

Membership Chair

## **Board of Directors:**

Emily Allen

Newsletter editor

Craig Carlson

John Diefenderfer

Keith Swaney

Geoffrey Williams

Visit CAA online at:

<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/caa/index.htm>

## **Clifton Park/Halfmoon Public Library Wins State Archives Award**

The New York State Archives and Archives Partnership Trust selected the Clifton Park/Halfmoon Public Library to receive the 2011 Annual Archives Award for Excellence in the Educational Use of Local Government Records. This award is presented to a local government that has demonstrated outstanding initiative, leadership, and creativity in encouraging and promoting the use of local government historical records for elementary, secondary, and community education.

The award was presented to Library Director Alexandra Gutelius, and Gail Winters and Lauren Cardinal, at a luncheon ceremony at the Cultural Education Center in Albany on October 25, 2011.

This award commends the library for its work documenting the towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon, as well as caring for the records of the Town of Clifton Park Historian and pre-Shenendehowa Central School District school records. It also recognizes the time, resources and dedication of the Library's staff in making these records available to students, teachers and community members. This award acknowledges the Library's strategic use of records management grants, and its public programs, such as "Local History at the Library," to introduce the public to the Library's historical records.

The annual Archives Awards program recognizes outstanding efforts in archives and records management work in New York State by a broad range of individuals and

Membership dues can be sent to Gertrude Hutchinson at:  
Gertrude Hutchinson  
ATTN: CAANY  
PO Box 254  
Guilderland, NY 12084-0254  
Office: (518) 456-7858, ext. 24  
Email: [ghutchinson@fnysn.org](mailto:ghutchinson@fnysn.org)  
<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/caa/Membership/index.htm>

organizations.

### **Lights, Camera, Archives! Schenectady Museum Goes Digital and Posts Rare Archival Films on New YouTube Channel**

The Schenectady Museum is now presenting a collection of rare films from its General Electric film collection on a new YouTube channel: Schenectady Museum: Invention and Tech Films. The archival collection includes more than 1,500 advertising, training, and educational films from 1915-1983, some of which have not been viewed by the public in over 90 years.

Films range from advertising and educational films to raw footage of equipment tests and company picnics. Many of the promotional films were originally shown in movie theatres in the days of newsreels and cartoons. While more films are being added daily, there are currently more than 50 films available, including: *The "More Power to America" Train*, 1960; *Magic vs. Science*, 1932; *Charles Proteus Steinmetz: The Man Who Made Lightning*, 1960s; *Felix the Cat in The Kit and the Cat*, ca. 1925; and *General Electric Women in Science*, 1954.

The Museum is currently offering three playlists on the channel: Transportation – rail and aviation films promoting innovations, including electric and diesel locomotives, turbo superchargers, and jet engines; General Electric Research – films highlighting technologies and inventions created at GE Global Research; and Electric Cars – electric car films from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Schenectady Museum Curator of Collections & Exhibitions Chris Hunter is excited to use state-of-the-art technology as a vehicle for viewing this collection of rare old films, and offer the public a chance to view on demand footage that was previously only viewed by researchers, students, and archivists by appointment in the Museum's Archives.

"YouTube is ubiquitous. The Museum's channel, Schenectady Museum: Innovation and Tech Films, will allow people around the world to gain a better understanding of the history of technology and society by viewing these films on their laptops, cellphones, or iPads," Hunter said.

Project funding was provided through grants from the Institute for Museum and Library

Services and IEEE Life Members' Foundation, which allowed the Museum to purchase a 16mm high definition film transfer machine.

The Schenectady Museum Archives is one of the premier collections on the history of technology and its impact on society. With over 1.6 million images that date from the 1850s to the present, the collection's strengths are many and include photography and film, radio and television film and images, and materials relating to marketing of consumer products as well as medical, power generation and the turbine. Collections from General Electric and the American Locomotive Company (ALCO) give a vivid picture of those companies' international impact. Audio recordings in the collection include rare radio recordings, Edison wax cylinders, and the Edison tinfoil recording from 1878.

Founded in 1934, the Schenectady Museum & Suits-Bueche Planetarium is the only science center in Tech Valley offering a multimedia experience for visitors of all ages. In addition to the Suits-Bueche Planetarium, which has the only GOTO Star Projector in the Northeast, the

Museum houses the GE Photograph collection, with more than 1.6 million prints and negatives; an archival collection with more than 3,500 cubic feet of historic materials; and more than 15,000 objects relating to the history of science and technology. The Museum also offers FETCH! Lab, with hands-on activities patterned after the popular PBS show FETCH!, in collaboration with WHMT.

### **DORIS/DCAS Proposed Merger**

On March 22, representatives from local and regional professional associations met with Mayor Michael Bloomberg's staff to present concerns regarding a proposed DORIS/DCAS merger. Archivists, records managers, historians, and genealogists have all expressed concern and have collected over 2,000 signatures in support of the position statement that DORIS will operate best as an autonomous records agency and that DORIS must have its interests and essential functions protected so that the value and accessibility of its records will be a part of the future of NYC.

The key concerns: Records agencies working as independent units provide better services than

records agencies working as part of larger, less specialized departments.

Archivists and records managers are skilled professionals with advanced degrees, specialized knowledge, and extensive training in the evaluation of records and the retention of materials with historical importance.

The proposed legislation includes no provisions for DORIS' future and no long-term protection.

There is no assurance that DORIS as part of DCAS would have the staff, funding, or mandate to fulfill its vital role.

Currently, The New York City Council's Committee on Government Operations is reviewing the proposed legislation and it is unclear at this time if this will go to the City Council for a vote.

### **UAlbany's National Death Penalty Archive Adds Papers of Race-and-the-Law Research Pioneer David C. Baldus**

The working papers of the late David Baldus, a legal pioneer on racial equality and the death penalty, will become part of the permanent collection of UAlbany's National Death Penalty Archive (NDPA), a national repository of

archival material devoted solely to the death penalty. Baldus's work was at the center of a 5-4 1987 Supreme Court decision, which upheld Georgia's death penalty law regarding race-of-victim differences in capital charging and sentencing decisions. The papers were donated at a public event featuring a panel of death penalty experts on Friday, April 20 at the University's Science Library. "David Baldus's work has produced sobering evidence of the wide gap between how the laws are written and how they have been applied in courtrooms throughout the country," said Acker. "Having his working papers included in the National Death Penalty Archive and made available for inspection by historians, researchers, and the public will enrich our collection immeasurably and ensure that Professor Baldus's meticulous and important work will be preserved for posterity."

Prior to the Court's decision, Baldus, a long-time University of Iowa College of Law professor, and two colleagues examined more than 2,000 murders in Georgia, controlling for some 230 variables. The study found that people convicted for killing white victims were four times as likely to be sentenced to death as those

convicted for killing black victims in otherwise similar cases. Therefore, according to the study, a death sentence often hinged not on legally relevant factors but rather on murder victims' race and, to a lesser extent, the race of the defendant. Baldus, who died last year, wrote two books, "Statistical Proof of Discrimination" and "Equal Justice and the Death Penalty," as well as numerous scholarly articles.

The NDPA was initiated by UAlbany's Capital Punishment Research Initiative (CPRI) as part of its mission to collect, archive, and make available historical and other material on the death penalty in America, and the University Library's M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives is collaborating with CPRI to maintain and grow the National Death Penalty Archive. The National Death Penalty Archive collects archival materials documenting the important history of capital punishment, and to provide resources for historical scholarship. The collection of historical materials will be an unrivaled resource for scholars, students, and the public interested in the history of capital punishment in America, and in the legal and political battles engendered by the

sanction. In addition to housing the records and documents of leading figures in scholarship, and legal and community organizations concerning capital punishment, the archive includes oral history interviews featuring prominent activists and professionals involved in death penalty abolition efforts and related work.

The Capital Punishment Research Initiative, part of the Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center, was founded in the late 1990s with three primary goals: (1) to build and maintain a national archive for historical documents and data on the death penalty; (2) to plan and conduct basic and policy related research on capital punishment; and (3) to encourage scholarship, conduct graduate and undergraduate training, and disseminate scientifically grounded knowledge about the ultimate penal sanction.

### **New York State Archives Announces Electronic Records Workshop for Colleges and Universities**

“Preserving Electronic Records in Colleges and Universities” (<http://www.nyshrab.org/training/erecords/index.shtml>) is a new web-based recorded workshop designed primarily for

college and university archivists, librarians, and records managers. The workshop is valuable as well to individuals responsible for electronic records in other types of organizations, large and small, in the government, nonprofit, and business sectors. Topics covered include e-records to be aware of in your environment; preservation issues, standards, goals, and strategies; disaster preparation and recovery, and creating an action plan.

Preserving Electronic Records is organized in eight segments and takes about two hours to complete. It was developed through a grant to the New York State Historical Records Advisory Board (<http://www.nyshrab.org/>) and the New York State Archives from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (<http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/>). Stephen Goodfellow of Access Systems Consulting served as the consultant on the project.

### **Celebrate MayDay 2012**

*Do one simple thing* Heritage Preservation and other members of the Heritage Emergency National Task Force are encouraging libraries, museums, archives, historical societies, and

preservation organizations to participate in MayDay (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=3003c31676&e=f6885084ea>), a national effort to prepare for disasters. Severe damage by this year's tornadoes is a reminder that it is essential to have a plan for when emergencies strike. Set aside some time this May to do one simple thing to become more prepared.

#### *How to participate*

Any organization can participate in MayDay. Last year, staff at the Newport Restoration Foundation in Newport, Rhode Island, hosted a dialog between 50 cultural heritage and emergency managers that focused on emergency preparedness. In Texas, the Wolf Creek Heritage Museum instructed museum staff and volunteers on how to operate its fire extinguishers. For more ideas and to see what past participants have done, visit the MayDay Web site (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=49d5a8a566&e=f6885084ea> ).

Learn more at Connecting to Collections (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=1d1fd193b2&e=f6885084ea>).

[us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=1d1fd193b2&e=f6885084ea](http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=1d1fd193b2&e=f6885084ea)).

*Take advantage of MayDay offers*

Submit (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=e2fe17a0e3&e=f6885084ea>) a summary of your organization's MayDay activity and enter to win free disaster supplies from Gaylord Brothers (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=e61cb57ac5&e=f6885084ea>). Pick up special deals on disaster publications at the Heritage Preservation bookstore (<http://heritagepreservation.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00cbcc194404641e545c4b972&id=e48158731c&e=f6885084ea>) through May 31.

#### **Announcements**

Jenifer Kuba has been appointed Assistant Institute Archivist in the Institute Archives and Special Collections Department at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. For the last year Jen has been employed at the Institute as a project archivist.

#### **Capital Region Archives Dinner**

The Archives Dinner will take place at the **Gideon Putnam in Saratoga on Thursday, October 4, 2012**. Our speaker will be Dr. Jennifer Hull Dorsey, Director of the Center for Revolutionary Era Studies, Siena College.

#### **New York Archives Conference (NYAC): June 6-8, 2012**

ALL roads lead to Rochester's Nazareth College for the Annual New York Archives Conference. Please visit the NYAC website for further details. <http://www.nyarchivists.org>

#### **Conference on New York State History, June 14-16, 2012.**

The 32nd annual Conference on New York State History will be held at Niagara University on June 14-16, 2012. The Conference on New York State History is an annual meeting of historians, librarians, archivists, educators, and community members who are interested in the history, people, and culture of New York State and who want to share information and ideas about historical research and programming. Each year the Conference brings together several hundred interested

scholars and students at locations across the state. Conference program and registration at:

[http://www.nysha.org/nysha\\_0](http://www.nysha.org/nysha_0)

**Researching New York 2012: University at Albany, SUNY, November 15-16, 2012**

CALL FOR PAPERS - DEADLINE JULY 1, 2012

The organizers of the 15th annual Researching New York Conference once again invite proposals for panels, papers, workshops, roundtables, exhibits, and documentary and multimedia presentations on any aspect of New York State history in any time period and from any perspective. We especially encourage proposals that explore the history of science, technology, and the environment in New York. Researching New York brings together historians, archivists, museum curators, graduate students, teachers, documentarians, and multimedia producers, to share their work on New York State history.

Presentations that highlight the vast resources available to researchers, as well as scholarship drawn from those resources, are encouraged.

Proposals are due by July 1, 2012. Complete panels, workshops, media presentations, or sessions are preferred; we will consider partial panels and individual submissions. For additional details and future conference updates, visit the Researching New York Web site at <http://nystatehistory.org/researchny>

Please remember that this newsletter is developed from the stories and news from your institutions. If you have something you'd like to share from your organization, please consider sending an article for the fall newsletter to me at [emilysouthworth@yahoo.com](mailto:emilysouthworth@yahoo.com).

# Sunday, May 6

Noon-4pm

Historic Cherry Hill

523 1/2 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY

## *Albany 1812*

2012 marks the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. Cherry Hill's second generation owner, Solomon Van Rensselaer, played a prominent role in the conflict. His military career and many of his possessions will be featured at the fair. Activities will include:

Period music by HeartsEase

Demonstrations by Kellogg's Volunteer Artillery, New York State Militia

Children's activities

Exhibits by area historical organizations

Presentations:

*Archeology and the Second Battle of Sacketts Harbor: Why the Militia Deserves its Due*, Matthew Kirk, Hartgen Archeological Associates

*Albany in 1812*, Tony Opalka, City of Albany Historian

*Cherry Hill's War Hero, Solomon Van Rensselaer*, Erin Richardson, Director of Collections, New York State Historical Association

*The Watervliet Arsenal Support to the War of 1812*, Robert Pfeil, Curator, Watervliet Arsenal Museum

For more information, call Historic Cherry Hill at (518) 434-4791

THE FAIR IS CO-SPONSORED BY:



THE FAIR IS SUPPORTED BY:

The TimesUnion, Media Sponsor  
Capital District Physician's Health Plan  
Cohoes Savings Foundation  
Hudson River Construction Company

# ALBANY HISTORY FAIR