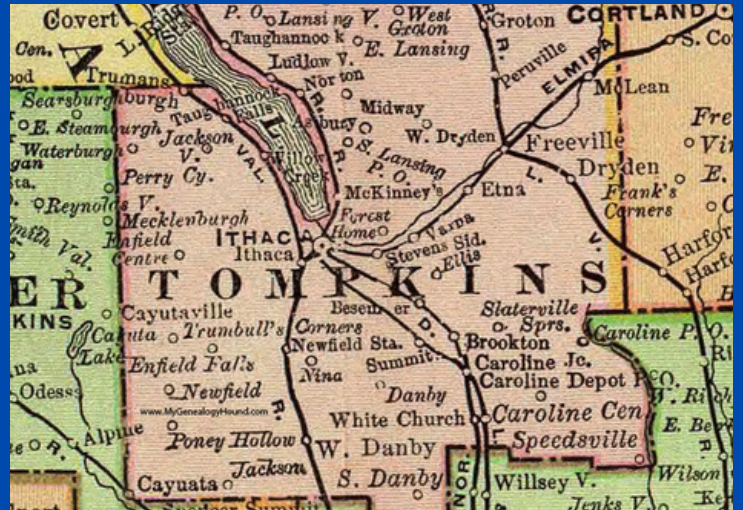
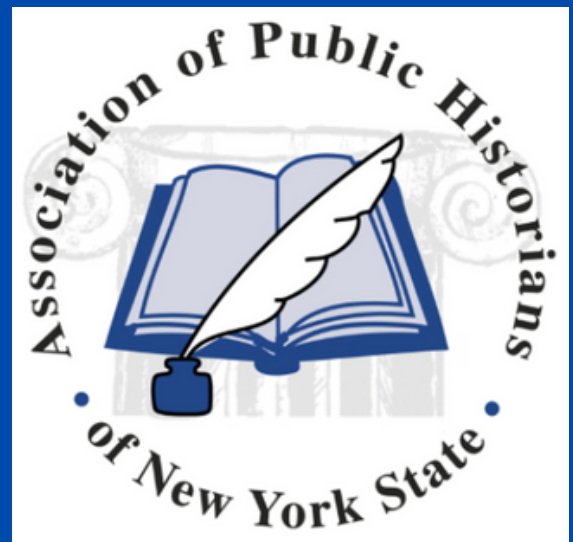


2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Preliminary Program

ITHACA, NY

September 18-20



Conference Schedule

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

9:00-9:45 AM - PRE-CONFERENCE CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. City of Ithaca (Streaming)

In this presentation, the Tompkins County Historian will provide a brief overview of the history of the host city for this year's conference. Presented by Laura W. Johnson-Kelly.

B. Hometown Schenectady: Indigenous Habitations to Downtown Condos

This session will look at the evolution of homes in Schenectady over more than 360 years, beginning with Mahican and Mohawk dwellings between the rivers now known as the Hudson and Mohawk. With European colonization in 1661, the Dutch West India Company established a stockaded village with home lots for the community's first fifteen proprietors, with farmland on the nearby river flats. The expansion of Schenectady from this stockade to the numerous neighborhoods of today's city will be illustrated with images depicting the changing styles of homes in response to changes in the area's economy, transportation, and population, disasters and other major events, as well as to various fads and fashions. Presented by Laura A. Lee.

10:00-10:45 AM - PRE-CONFERENCE CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. This Old House: Constructing a House History (Streaming)

To many, Home Sweet Home is the house that they call home. In this session, Town of Clifton Park Historian John Scherer will explain how to put together the history of a house, examining the many sources available and how to use them. Scherer will begin by looking at architectural styles and building techniques to date the structure and the changes made throughout its lifetime, and end with sources to identify the occupants, their family dynamics, and their role in the community. Presented by John L. Scherer.

B. Gilded Age Hometown Terror: the 1892 Lynching of Robert Lewis in Port Jervis, NY

On June 2, 1892, a local African American man, Robert Lewis, was beaten and dragged through the streets of Port Jervis, NY, before being hanged from a tree. Lewis, accused of sexually assaulting a local white female, was no stranger to the men who murdered him. This session explores the complex relationship between the white and Black community and the dichotomy of the people who tried to stop the lynching versus those who perpetrated it. How could one close-knit town suddenly become divided into those who condoned the lynching and those who condemned it, and how did that community unite to prevent anyone from ever being held responsible for the crime? How has Port Jervis come to terms and acknowledged what has become the only documented lynching in New York after 1865? Presented by Michael J. Worden.

11:00-11:45 AM - PRE-CONFERENCE CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. The Language of Home: Teaching Gayog̃hó:nq̃ (Cayuga) in Its Ancestral Homeland (Streaming)

The Gayog̃hó:nq̃ (Cayuga) language has been spoken in the Cayuga Lake region of New York State for thousands of years. Yet today, long impacted by land dispossession and such forced assimilation policies as Indian boarding schools, it is considered a critically endangered language by UNESCO. Gayog̃hó:nq̃ Learning Project Language Teacher Stephen Henhawk is one of only seven remaining Gayog̃hó:nq̃ first-language speakers, and the only one to be teaching the Gayog̃hó:nq̃ language in the United States. Henhawk discusses his experience teaching in his ancestral homeland and reconnecting Gayog̃hó:nq̃ people dispersed across North America with the plants, landforms, and seasonal practices that uniquely define the Gayog̃hó:nq̃ concept of home. Presented by Stephen Henhawk.

B. New Historians Workshop

Are you a newly appointed historian? Do you need a refresher concerning the duties of a local government historian? This session will review the duties and responsibilities of local government historians in New York - and the obligations your appointing officials have toward you as historian. The presenter will encourage audience members to share their ideas and bring to the group any issues of concern. Presented by Ray LaFever.

12:00-1:00 PM - LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:00-2:30 PM - CONFERENCE KICK-OFF AND ANNUAL MEETING (STREAMING)

Welcome to Ithaca

State of the State Address

Devin Lander, New York State Historian

APHNYS Annual Meeting of the Membership

2:45-4:00 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Beyond Main Street: Creative Approaches to Finding "Home" in Your Community with Historic Markers (Streaming)

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation (WGPF) launched its first signage program - the New York State Historic Roadside Marker Grant Program - in 2006. Since then, the Foundation has expanded to offer six signature marker grant programs in addition to marker programs funded through partnerships. Join panel facilitator Susan Hughes, historian and archivist at the WGPF, and panelists Jodi Oaks, Nicole Fragnito and Zachary Finn, the research historians and grants reviewers at the WGPF, as they discuss creative and dynamic ways to commemorate the places people have called "home." Along with examples of unique historic markers that have received funding and the stories behind them, learn about the primary sources applicants have used to verify the facts and where you might find similar resources. Presented by Susan Hughes, Jodi Oaks, Nicole Fragnito, Zachary Finn.

2:45-4:00 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS (CONT.)

B. The Borscht Belt: How and Why Jewish Immigrants Built a World-Famous Tourist Destination in the Sullivan County Catskills

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, thousands of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe flooded into New York City. These immigrants looked, dressed, and spoke differently from other Americans, and when it came time to vacation, they were not welcome in most hotels. Signs proclaiming "No Hebrews Accommodated" were commonplace. When Sullivan County's tourism-based economy collapsed around 1915, it presented an unprecedented opportunity for these Jewish immigrants to purchase floundering hotels and failing farms and to create their own vacation land, by Jews for Jews. The Borscht Belt was born. It is a fascinating story, and no one knows it - or tells it - like longtime Sullivan County Historian John Conway. Presented by John Conway.

The Changing Nature of a Resort Community

Change happens, frequently when we're not paying close attention. Nowhere can change be more disruptive than in a resort community, where the situation tends to ebb and flow in response to such factors as nature and the environment, travel trends, the costs of goods and services, crime and safety conditions, and the dynamics of the relationship between local residents and visitors. In this session, Marilyn Hayden examines change in Greenwood Lake, NY, a village planning for its centennial celebration in 2024. Through good times and bad, this resort area has had to reinvent itself many times since it was first discovered by tourists in the 19th century. Hayden, Greenwood Lake's Historian, will reveal how. Presented by Marilyn Hayden.

4:15-5:30 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. HistoryForge: Discovering Home through Local History (Streaming)

HistoryForge (historyforge.net) is an interactive digital history platform that integrates data from census records, maps, and other sources, allowing for its visual representation on historical maps layered over present-day Google Maps. An open-source platform developed by The History Center in Tompkins County (Ithaca, NY), HistoryForge encourages meaningful public engagement with history at all stages of the project, from transcribing records and constructing map layers to adding photographs and information about the people and places represented. In this session, HistoryForge experts will lead participants in an exploration of the platform and its many capabilities. You will get hands-on experience building your own HistoryForge installation and learn how to bring this amazing resource to your community. Presented by Eve Snyder, Andrea Renshaw, Dori Gottschalk-Fielding, and Mary Lovell.

B. Documenting September 11th in Your Local Community

In 2026, we will be looking back at the attacks of September 11th, 2001, marking the 25th anniversary of this historic national tragedy. Many New York communities lost residents that day. Some sent needed resources, first responders, and more to help in the aftermath. In this session, historians Mary Cascone (Town of Babylon), Aaron Noble (NYS Archives), and Matt Urtz (Madison County) will share how their communities responded to the 9/11 attacks and what they are doing to document these events today. Presented by Mary Cascone, Aaron Noble, and Matt Urtz.

5:30-6:30 PM - NETWORKING/RECEPTION

6:30-8:30 PM - DINNER AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

7:15 PM - KEYNOTE SPEAKER (STREAMING)

TBD

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

8:30-9:45 AM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Regents Civic Readiness Initiative & Opportunities for Local Government Historians (Streaming)

The New York State Education Department awards the Seal of Civic Readiness to students who demonstrate civic proficiency. One of the requirements for obtaining the Seal is a capstone project, which can--and should--include research on local history. With more than 400 schools participating in this program statewide, and more joining as it grows, this is a major opportunity for local historians to engage directly with students and teachers. Roundtable members will talk about how historians can take advantage of this opportunity to work with schools in their communities. Presented by Devin Lander, Christine Radez, Jordan Jace, and Rich Pyszczek.

B. Massena's Lost Black Community, 1915-1930: Home Found and Home Lost

Following a large-scale strike in Massena, NY, in 1915, Andrew Mellon's ALCOA corporation began recruiting as many as 200 Black people a week to work at its Massena operation. ALCOA supported social clubs, churches, and cultural events for these employees. The Chicago Defender, a prominent Black-owned newspaper, even had a local reporter in Massena. What happened to this fledgling Black community when faced with local opposition? This presentation is part of a newly published work by the presenter, African Americans of St. Lawrence County: North Country Pioneers (History Press, 2023). Presented by Bryan S. Thompson.

Chicken Hill: A Community Lost to Time

Chicken Hill was a multi-racial, multi-ethnic community that existed in Setauket, Long Island, from 1860 to 1960. This small working-class enclave is typical of many such neighborhoods. It arose, functioned, and disappeared for various reasons. Fueled by the industrial age of large factories, Chicken Hill attracted new immigrants eager to work and set up homes, changing the fabric of the local community. Based on award-winning research conducted by a group of local residents with the Three Village Historical Society, this session will explore the history, people, and community of Chicken Hill, how it developed and why it no longer exists. The session will also consider further work that can be done to make the story more inclusive. Presented by Barbara M. Russell.

9:45-10:15 AM - BREAK

10:15-11:30 AM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Reinterpreting the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign in the Mohawk Valley and Otsego (Streaming)

This session will explore efforts to create new public interpretation of the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign of 1779 in Canajoharie, Cooperstown, and Oneonta. Local historians and museum professionals will share their processes of research and consultation leading to new interpretive signage that will offer expanded contextualization of this critical moment in the Revolutionary War. A key focus of the session will be efforts to incorporate more accurate and detailed discussions of Native history and to involve Indigenous scholars in the process of crafting new interpretations. In addition, the panelists will discuss how revising public memorialization of the Clinton-Sullivan Campaign can make a valuable contribution to New York's commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the Revolution. Presented by William S. Walker and Mary Alexander.

B. Andy and Vicky Johnson's Journey to Summit, NY

Andy, a Black man from South Carolina, and Vicky, a white woman from Belgium, met in Germany during World War II. They married, sailed to New York City, and ended up in the tiny rural town of Summit, NY, where they opened a restaurant and motel complex on the beautiful shores of Summit Lake. Schoharie County, where Summit is situated, was mostly settled by blond-haired blue-eyed folks of German and Dutch descent. When Andy and Vicky arrived in 1958, the interracial couple caused a bit of a stir. Learn more about their experience and the thriving business they ran until 1989, when their restaurant burned down. Presented by Karen McLaughlin Cuccinello.

At Home, On the Water

This session will relate the story of a family who lived on the lakes, rivers, and canals in New York State for more than 30 years. From 1889-1919, the family of six lived on the Hudson River, the mule-era canal, and Lake Champlain. They established and ran a tugboat operation, documenting their experiences in detail through logbooks, diaries, and the many photographs they took with the camera they possessed. Theirs was an unusual lifestyle and an interesting story, as Waterford Town Historian Russ Van Dervoort will reveal. Presented by Russ Van Dervoort.

11:45 AM-12:30 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Life at the County Home (Streaming)

From 1864 until 1998, Dutchess County government operated a facility to care for indigent residents in the town of Washington, NY. Initially consisting of a poor house, insane asylum, and pest house, this facility transformed into an almshouse in the 1870s, then into an infirmary in the 1930s. Drawing on surviving poorhouse records, newspaper accounts, and scrapbooks kept by residents, this presentation will explore how life for denizens of the poorhouse changed over its 134 years of operation and three shifts in focus of care. Considering both the broad strokes of institutional history and accounts of individual residents' lives, this presentation will contextualize life at the county home within the changing visions of poor relief and care across New York State. Presented by William P. Tatum III, Ph.D.

11:45 AM-12:30 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS (CONT.)

B. Home Mail Delivery

The delivery of mail and packages was an important change factor for home and community life in America. In this presentation, Ontario County Historian Preston Pierce will highlight key developments in home mail delivery, beginning with the status of postal service up to 1863, when Congress first authorized free mail delivery in some cities. Pierce will examine the rationale and impact of free city delivery, the factors that resulted in the 1896 authorization of Rural Free Delivery, and the impact of free city/rural home mail delivery, including mail order business, house numbering, the closure of rural post offices, and the "good roads" movement. Join us for this look into the precursors of the modern postal service, not to mention UPS, FedEx, and Amazon. Presented by Preston E. Pierce.

12:30-1:30 PM - LUNCH

1:30-4:30 PM - FIELD EXPERIENCES (CHOOSE ONE OPTION)

Tour 1: INFO

Info.

Tour 2: INFO

Info

4:30-5:30 PM - BREAK

5:30-6:30 PM - NETWORKING/RECEPTION

6:30-8:30 PM - ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Presentation of Registered Historian Certificates and APHNYS Awards

Mary Cascone, Registered Historians Committee/Awards Committee

Devin Lander, New York State Historian

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9:00-9:45 AM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. North Fork Project (Streaming)

Three years ago, in response to an obvious gap in the historical record, Town of Southold Historian Amy Folk and her colleagues set out to document the experiences of enslaved people on the North Fork of Long Island. Their goal was to identify those who had lived and worked in the area, and to learn as much about their lives as possible. When they began, they knew of only a handful of individuals. After searching through thousands of primary and secondary sources, they have now assembled a database of over 500 people previously overlooked by local history. The information they uncovered is being shared through local databases, such as the In Plain Sight project, and on national sites like Enslaved.org. Come learn about the North Fork Project and meet some of the historical figures it has revealed. Presented by Amy Folk.

9:00-9:45 AM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS (CONT.)

B. The Road to a New Home: A Brief History of the Great Genesee Road

Odysseus travelled the sea to find his way home. We used and continue to use ancient paths, trails, and, ultimately, modern roads to get around. Where did our roads come from? How and why were they built? There was no central planning behind the development of New York's major thoroughfares, but their formation wasn't random, either. Come learn how the intersection of science and history—from the Ice Age to the Industrial Age—worked to create the much-traveled highways and byways that cross the Greater Western New York Region. Presented by Christopher Carosa.

9:45-10:15 AM - BREAK

10:15-11:30 AM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Editor's Tips on Self-Publishing (Streaming)

Town of Owego Historian Peter Gordon is passionate about helping people get their written works into print without spending money on expensive typesetters, editors, and publishers. In this session, he will share tips and tricks learned from 40 years in the book business (Macmillan Publishing, Cambridge University Press) to help you bring your work into print and make it available for sale. Gordon will demonstrate how to write, design, and format your book using Microsoft Office tools and how to upload your work for sale—for free—on Amazon.com. This interactive discussion will be tailored to help you accomplish your self-publishing goals. Presented by Peter C. Gordon.

B. Discovering and Preserving "Home" through Family History

This session will explore the significance of family history documents and genealogical research as a means of establishing a connection to home. Kalyn Loewer, digital preservationist and historian, will outline the types of documents that give people crucial insight into the lives of their ancestors and the places where they lived and worked. Loewer will demonstrate the ways in which documents such as censuses, account ledgers, church marriage registers, and tax records can answer pertinent questions about an ancestor's place of birth, marriage, work, and beyond. With an in-depth review of the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society's powerful digitization tools and the online collections search engine, session-goers will engage with sources that are fundamental to family history research. Presented by Kalyn P. Loewer.

11:45 AM-12:30 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS

A. Freedom 2027 (Streaming)

The legal abolition of slavery in New York State took effect on July 4, 1827. The Underground Railroad Consortium of NYS is leading the charge to commemorate the bicentennial of this historic moment with the statewide program, Freedom 2027. Join Mary Liz Stewart to learn about the plans for Freedom 2027 and how you and your community can be involved. The movement to end enslavement brought together free Blacks, Freedom Seekers, and abolitionists. This initiative will celebrate the resilience and contributions of Black Americans to the development of New York State and recognize that the fight for full freedom and equality is not over. Presented by Mary Liz Stewart.

11:45 AM-12:30 PM - CONCURRENT SESSIONS (CONT.)

B. "These were no ordinary people": How Walden, NY, Became the Sheffield of America

Fueled by a 40-foot waterfall, industry flourished in the village of Walden, NY. But it was the arrival of British immigrants in 1856 and their cooperative principles of production that sparked the development of the pocketknife industry, which lasted well into the 20th century. Three world-famous factories hiring over 1,000 workers earned Walden the title "Little Sheffield" and produced pocketknives of exceptional quality and design. Presented by Mary Ellen Matisse.

12:30-1:30 PM - LUNCH

1:30 PM - CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

1:30-4:00 PM - POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Basic Gravestone Conservation

This hands-on workshop will introduce participants to basic conservation treatments and practices used in preserving historic cemeteries and burying grounds. Learn the environmentally safe way to clean, preserve, and document the gravestones that mark the final homes of the deceased.

Participants should be prepared to get dirty! Wear sturdy shoes and bring rubber gloves (like you would wear to wash dishes). There will be some standing and bending involved in the cleaning, as well as some walking on uneven ground. A degree of dexterity is required. Presented by Marianne Greenfield. Pre-registration is required.