A message from our president

It has been a very interesting few months. Since last fall, there has been movement in Albany to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Robert Weible in 2015. There was much discussion—both on the part of the appointing bodies in Albany, as well as various members of the history community, about the state of the state historian. APHNYS wrote a supportive letter to the Commissioner of Education asking that the position’s duties be separated into that of State Historian and Chief Curator.

That much was accomplished when Jennifer Lemak was appointed as Chief Curator. She is a supporter of APHNYS, and we have worked with her on several initiatives. There have been many postings about how the State Historian was downgraded—and that is misleading. The last time it held a managerial level position was in 1976 when the Office of State History was disbanded. The State Historian was moved under the umbrella of the State Museum, and through those years several people have assumed those duties—each with declining staff and resources.

For those of us who have been in office for many years, we looked fondly on the guidance of Ed Winslow and Joe Meany, who worked hand in hand with local government historians. Those individuals who impacted our direction were actually Senior Historians at the same grade level as the current State Historian. While I would prefer to see the State Historian at a higher managerial and salary level, it is something to work towards and not fight against.

Devin Lander is a good person to fill those shoes and we need to give him time to find his way amidst the Albany bureaucracy. Some of you were aware that I was one of the six candidates interviewed for the position. I am not unhappy that I was not selected—I would have turned down the job due to the salary and the relocation aspect. But I was honored to have been interviewed.

We will work with Devin who has already reached out to all of you. I have also been in a conference call with the State Archivist and the Archives Partnership Trust about several initiatives that they want our help to promote. In addition, we have representatives at the fall conference from the State Museum, State Library, and State Archives presenting sessions for APHNYS. That speaks to our importance. It also helps build those bridges as we work to promote the importance and stature of the historian in each of their communities.

When I first assumed office as president, the state of APHNYS was poor. Our membership was failing, and our finances were horrendous—we were bankrupt. We have worked to turn that around. It has been because of you and the membership that APHNYS is now strong. We can once again afford to spend money on those things that benefit the organization and the members. It is something that we need to do to grow APHNYS. Switching to a fall annual meeting also means that our membership numbers will grow more in...
A Message from the New York State Historian

Devin Lander was appointed State Historian effective May 19. Previously, Lander spent two years as Executive Director of the Museum Association of New York State (MANY) and six years as Deputy Legislative Director for Assemblyman Steve Englebright. Lander holds a B.A. in American History (SUNY Plattsburgh) and an M.A. in Public History (University at Albany). Here is his first report to our membership:

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the members of APHNYS and to briefly discuss my role as State Historian. First, let me say that I am humbled and honored to be named to this position. As a lifelong New Yorker and historian, I know firsthand the incredible breadth and depth of our state’s history and the complexities that exist in its preservation, interpretation, and celebration.

The position I currently have the honor of holding is extremely important as the main statewide coordinator and facilitator of the historical endeavor in New York State; I applaud the Regents and the Commissioner of Education for enabling the State Historian to once again be a full-time position dedicated 100% to the tasks of the office.

As the membership of APHNYS knows full well, New York has long held a leadership role as the only state in the country that, by law, requires municipal historians in each of its 1,600+ municipalities. My first goal as State Historian is to better support these historians in their work. This process begins with me listening to the field to better understand the realities of the challenges faced.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the June 2016 APHNYS Board Meeting and listen to the Board describe issues and opportunities for the organization going forward. It is very much my hope to keep this communication and partnership with APHNYS going; I want each member to know that I plan on being as accessible to you as possible.

A major part of my role is facilitating partnerships, collaborations, and opportunities for the field. With New York’s vast array of municipal, academic, and organizational historians, we are uniquely gifted by access to a wealth of historical knowledge and experience New York also is rich in world-class museums and historical societies, as well as governmental agencies such as archives and libraries, tasked with preserving and interpreting history. This fabric provides a foundation on which to build an expansive statewide historical enterprise.

I truly believe that the study and understanding of history is far more than just “nice to have;” it is essential to the functioning of a democratic society. Failure to encourage the study and understanding of history at all levels can only lead to an uninformed populace unable to contextualize why things are the way they are and, therefore, unable to make well-informed civic decisions.

History provides the context and setting for the full comprehension of the very path our society is travelling. Without historical context, we as a society would be left blindly flailing in the darkness, unsure of where we have been and ignorant of where we are going. By encouraging the thoughtful study and understanding of history we are helping to create informed citizens able to take part in the democratic process.

Together, we can do so much to preserve, protect, and promote our state’s rich heritage. I ask you to join with me in this important endeavor—and please know—I am here as an advocate.

Thank you.
Spring Regional Meetings a Success

With APHNY’s state meeting moved to the fall, the Regions held their annual meetings this spring. Here are the reports we received:

Region 4

Region 4 historians met at the Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center on April 30 as part of the Catskill History Conclave. The agenda included remarks by Region 4 Coordinator Ray LaFever; a presentation by author Bob Steuding, “Researching the History of the Catskills,” and a discussions on organizing to advocate for the collective work of Catskill historians.

Steuding closed the program with a fabulous song about whether the Shokan Dam would fill, as relayed to him by Elwin Davis, who lost a hand between 1907 and 1915, while building the dam.

Region 7

Forty-two historians and guests gathered at Basloe Library in Herkimer on April 16 for the Region 7 meeting. Highlights of the program included a presentation by Town of Webb Historian Peg Masters about the mail-order home industry that existed between 1910 and 1950, and Herkimer County Historian James Greiner’s telling of the grisly tale of the hatchet murder of William Druse by his wife Roxalana in 1884. Mrs. Druse was the last women hanged in New York State. Greiner also took participants on a tour of the 1830s County Jail where Druse was held.

Other presenters included Sue Perkins, director of the Herkimer County Historical Society; Norway Historical Society President Janet Burt; Marshall Historian Janet Dangl; and Summit Historian Karen Cuccinello.

Region 9

Region 9’s meeting was held on April 23 at the Homer Center for the Arts and was attended by more than 50 historians. The day’s events featured presentations on the History of Homer by Town Historian Martin Sweeney; the Cornell University Archives by Lance J. Heidig, Outreach & Learning Services Librarian for Olin/Uris Libraries and the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections; the New York State Preservation Office by Dr. Virginia Bartos of the National Register Unit; and on the Homer Center for the Arts by Ann Siegle and Linda Hartsock.

Survey results showed an overwhelmingly positive response from attendees.

Region 10

APHNYS Region 10 met on April 9 at the Broome County Public Library in Binghamton. Twenty-three historians from across five of the six counties in the region attended the meeting.

Attendees were honored to hear basic techniques for genealogical research given by Margaret Hadsell, Town of Vestal Historian, and an overlook by Roger Luther of the project to preserve and interpret over 5,400 glass-plate negatives found in the Castle building of the Greater Binghamton Health Center. The building was originally the New York State Inebriate Asylum, and many of the images were of the thousands of inmates of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Continued on page 4....

The Historian's Exchange
A message from our president (cont.)

the fall rather than in the spring, so we have to watch carefully so that we all do our best to keep membership in our minds.

We are nearly set with the 2017 conference in Poughkeepsie, and we will be deciding between several proposals for the 2018 conference. Keeping two years ahead on conferences is essential to keep our costs down.

I would like to say that we have made progress on some of our ongoing projects, but that is one area that we have not made as much progress as I would like. It is an area for improvement. This is also true for our historian’s bill, as I have let the ball drop on progress in that area.

I am happy to see the number of and attendance at the regional meetings. There is still room for improvement, and we need to see what other methods of delivering training and instruction for the historians can be developed. I still see the opportunity of streaming content via our webpage as a possibility.

Finally, you will note that all of our areas of work in APHNYS take time and effort. You have all been wonderful in helping to achieve our current status. We all have busy schedules and multiple responsibilities. Over the last few years, I have struggled to juggle my responsibilities to APHNYS with three jobs, my family, and myself. Some of you were aware that there were health concerns that I needed to address. There are also future responsibilities in developing new history efforts in my own area that need to be addressed.

After my interview in Albany, I came to the realization that my professional career is entering its last stage, and I want that stage to be the one that I choose and not the one I feel compelled to complete. Therefore, I am formally tendering my resignation as President of APHNYS effective October 31, 2016. This will give everyone time to complete the fall conference and to work with Rosemarie Tucker and Matt Urtz to move everything under their capable hands.

In addition, Barbara Russell intends to resign as treasurer effective December 31, 2016. Both of these are one-year ahead of our normal final term dates, but both of us intend to work to make the transition as smooth as possible. With a new State Historian, it is time for change as well within APHNYS. This gives everyone 2017 to work on how it wants to progress. I will have more to say about that at the fall conference, but I feel honored to have worked with each and every one of you for these years. Fear not the change, but embrace the possibilities. I look forward to my final board meeting and annual business meeting in September.

—Gerald Smith, APHNYS President

Regional Meetings (cont.)...

Attendees were also given a tour of the Broome County Local History & Genealogy Center, which houses the collections of the Broome County Historical Society, the Broome County Public Library, the Broome County Historian, and the City of Binghamton Historian. They also toured the Phelps Mansion Museum, the 1870 home of Sherman Phelps that was designed by Isaac Perry, the last State Capitol Architect.

Regions 11 & 12

Regions 11 and 12 hosted a joint conference on April 30 the campus of SUNY Brockport. The event was co-sponsored and co-organized by the college’s History Forum, a student organization.

Tompkins County Historian Carol Kammen gave the keynote address. Other presenters discussed development of the Brockport Community Museum, digitization of historic materials, and SUNY Brockport’s Public History and Museum Studies program.

The nearly 50 people in attendance agreed that the highlight of the event was the interaction between historians and Brockport faculty and students, many of whom exhibited poster presentations.
Association of Public Historians of New York State

2016 ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
Syracuse, NY - September 15-17, 2016

Register and reserve your hotel room NOW!

The Association of Public Historians of New York State is pleased to announce that the 2016 Annual State Conference will be held in Syracuse on September 15-17, 2016, in conjunction with the New York State Family History Conference. APHNYS members will have the opportunity to attend NYSFHC sessions at no additional cost. Accommodations and most conference sessions will be held at the Holiday Inn—Syracuse/Liverpool.

Please note the change in timing, as APHNYS has historically held its annual conference in the Spring. The move to a Fall conference will reduce conflicts between our conference and others normally held in the Spring, such as the Museum Association of New York and the New York Statewide Preservation Conference, and provide new opportunities to partner with organizations such as NYSFHC.

The APHNYS conference draws between 175-200 Local Government Historians and supporters of local history from across the Empire State. NYSFHC draws hundreds more.

Due to the popularity of the NYSFHC and a limit on the total number of attendees the conference venue can accommodate, we are encouraging APHNYS members to REGISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to ensure that they are able to reserve a spot. Use the form in this newsletter to register at the APHNYS rate of $75.

Reserve your room now, too! We also highly recommend reserving your hotel room as soon as possible. The Holiday Inn and Conference Center—Syracuse/Liverpool is conveniently located at 441 Electronics Parkway, Liverpool, NY, across from the NYS Thruway (I-90) Electronics Parkway exit toll booth and one mile from the 7th North Street I-81 exit. Located 5 miles from Syracuse Hancock International Airport (SYR) with flights provided by Air Canada, American Eagle, JetBlue, USAirways, Delta and United, the hotel offers complimentary shuttle service to and from the Airport.

The conference rate is $129 per night, plus applicable fees and taxes. To reserve your room, contact the hotel directly, at 315-457-1122 and use the discount code "CNY." Do not use the hotel’s toll free number or website, as you will not get the conference rate.

See the Schedule of Conference Events beginning on the next page!
Schedule of Conference Events

Please Note: During each concurrent session, we attempt to offer conference attendees a focus choice of: History Session (H) or Skills Session (S).

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

6:00 – 8:00 PM  APHNYS Board of Trustees Fall Meeting
7:00 p.m.-9:00 PM  APHNYS Movie Night for Early Arrivals -A number of video selections on local history topics.

Thursday, September 15, 2016

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 PM. Conference Registration

Pre-Conference Sessions

11:00 – 12:30 AM

Session A1 – Skills, techniques, and Sources for Local Government Historians to do Family Research (S)

Richard Williams, Town of Historian

Learn the sources and skills for genealogical research and how it can help the historian do a better job.

Session A2 – Live Oaks & Dead Folks: A Virtual Tour of Oakwood Cemetery (H)

Sue Greenhagen, Town of Eaton and Village of Morrisville Historian

Meet some of the famous, infamous, and even bizarre, residents of historic Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse.

Lunch (on own/hotel restaurant available)
Conference Sessions

1:00 - 2:30 PM

Session A3 - The William G. Pomeroy Foundation Announcements (S)

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation will have announcements on new programs and new ways of seeking funding through their well-established grant programs.

Session A4 - Mapping the Village: An Online Interactive Mapping Program (S & H)

Carole Schiffman and Randi Kepecs, Historic Preservationists

Learn about the Village of Cayuga Heights online mapping program of over 1,000 sites – how it works and about the successes and pitfalls of its development.

3:00 – 5:00 PM

Session A5 - APHNYS Annual Business Meeting

5:00 – 6:00 PM

Unopposed vendor hall time

7:00 – 9:00 PM: Joint Dinner with APHNYS – Awards and Speaker

Friday, September 16, 2016

8:30 – 9:30 AM

Session A6 – Church Records Available at the New York State Library (S)

Cara Janowsky, New York State Library

Church records are a rich source of materials for both historians and genealogist. Learn about these records available at the New York State Library for researchers.

Session A7 – The Perfidious Rev. Thomas Lake Harris and the Development of His Bizarre Cult in New York State (H)

Jacob Ludes III, President/CEO Emeritus, New England Assoc. of Schools & Colleges

Every New York historian should know the facts surrounding this most lascivious character and the X-rated chapter of the state’s history.
9:45 – 10:45 AM

Session A8 – **New York State Library records relating to World War I (S)**

Keith Swaney, New York State Archives

As the centennial of WWI approaches, learn about the extensive resources of the State Archives to help historians, communities, and researchers.

Session A9 - **Helen Hinsdale Rich: St. Lawrence County's First Suffragette (H)**

Bryan Thompson, Town of DeKalb Historian

Learn about the 1860s effort of the poet, social reformer, and first suffragette in this North Country area.

11:00 – 12:00

Session A10 – **Local Historians’ role in identifying and promoting historical records in their locality (S)**

Kent Stuetz, Regional Advisory Office, New York State Archives

Staff will review the role of the local historian in identifying records and resources, and using the programs of the Archives to assist.

Session A11 – **Minstrels to Macushla: The Amazing Life of Chauncey Olcott (H)**

Mary Ann Fitzgerald, Saratoga Springs City Historian

Enjoy a trip back in time to follow the life of this song writer, singer, dancer, and actor – from his life in the world of minstrels to Broadway productions.

12:15-1:45 PM

Joint Luncheon

1:45 – 4:15 PM

Session A12 - **Field Excursions –**

**Tour 1:** The first tour will be a guided tour at the Skanonia Lodge Great Law of Peace Center is a Haudenosauenee Heritage Center focused on telling the story of native peoples of central New York through the lens of the Onondaga Nation. The heritage center covers creation, European Contact, the Great Law of Peace and more. The Great Law of Peace Center was opened in 2015 at the former Sainte Marie Among the Iroquois and should be a wonderful learning experience.
**Tour 2:** A guided tour at the Erie Canal Heritage Park at Port Byron, scheduled to open early summer 2016, will be a highlight for any attendee. The tour will feature a number of sites formerly tied to the Erie Canal including a Tavern/Boarding House, Mulebarn, blacksmith shop and of course lock 52. If completed the Visitors Center will also be available for viewing (Currently the center is scheduled to open July 2016).

4:15 – 5:15 PM

Session A13 – **APHNYS Regional Coordinators Meeting**

5:15- 6:00 PM

Unopposed vendor hall time

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Joint Dinner with NYSFHC speaker

**Saturday, September 17, 2016**

8:30 – 9:30 AM

Session A14 – **Basic Orientation for Newly Appointed Historians (S)**

Christine Ridarksy, City of Rochester Historian

Workshop for Public Historians on the job for 1-3 years; provides overview of role and responsibilities, as well as insights on how to get the job done.

Session A15 – **APHNYS Panel – The Local Government Historian and New York State: A Unique Resource for Family History (S)**

Genealogists have a unique resource in the appointed historian in every municipality and how we use family history to promote our work.

9:45 – 10:45 AM

Session A16 – **New York State Social Studies Framework and How Historians Can Help (S)**

Diane Wendell, Madison Oneida BOCES

The Common Core has made for opportunities for historians, teachers, and students.

Session A17 – **The Creation of a Local History & Genealogy Center: How Consolidation and Resource Sharing Can Work (S)**

Gerald Smith, Broome County and Binghamton City Historian

Learn how 4 agencies came together to make for a successful effort to build an efficient heritage center.
11:00 - 12:00

Session A18 – Celebrating New York State History: Canalers, Suffragists, and Doughboys (H)

Jennifer Lemak and Ashley-Hopkins Benton, co-curators, “Votes for Women”
Aaron Noble, curator, “Spirit of Sacrifice”
Brad Utter, curator, “New York’s Erie Canal: Gateway to the Nation”
Devin Lander, State Historian, moderator

2017 marks three important anniversaries for New York State and gives historians an opportunity to look back on how these events have shaped our present. The New York State Museum has been work with many groups to present large-scale exhibitions in 1917 for the bicentennial of the Erie Canal, and the centennials of U.S. involvement in WWI and women winning the right to vote in New York State.

Session A19 – APHNYS Registered Historians Program (S)

Sandra Bradford, Town of Hector Historian

Make the move toward recognition for all your efforts -- for historians who have been in office for more than 3 years.
APHNY Conference Registration Form

September 15-17, 2016, Syracuse, New York

Name: ____________________________

Guest registrant name: ____________________________

(Guest registrants of the APHNY Conference may only attend the APHNY sessions.)

Street Address: ____________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________

Phone Number: ____________________________

E-mail Address: ____________________________

APHNY Region: ____________________________

Historian for: ____________________________

(Town, Village, City, County or Borough)

Please check all that apply:

___ I am a newly or recently-appointed Public Historian.

___ I have been a member of APHNY since ________

___ I am a Registered Historian.

___ This will be my first visit to Syracuse.

Lecture Choices:
The APHNY 2016 will run concurrently with the NYS Family History Conference. APHNY registrants may attend any of the NYSFHC conference lectures at no additional cost, but will not receive the NYSFHC syllabus. The NYSFHC syllabus will be available for purchase at the NYSFHC booth in the exhibitor hall.

Membership:
For those who have yet to renew or wish to join APHNY for 2016

Dues for Historian and/or Co-Historian are based on Community's population

0 – 1,000 ...........................................$25.00

1,001 – 4,000 .....................................$30.00

4,001 – 12,000 ...................................$35.00

12,001 – 100,000 .................................$40.00

100,001 – 200,000 ..............................$45.00

200,001 – 1+ Million .............................$50.00

Dues for the following categories are as follows:

Deputy and/or Assistant Historian .......$25.00

Affiliate Member..............................$25.00

(An Affiliate Membership is for any cultural agency, educational institution, corporation, historical societies, museums, or individual interested in NY State History and the work of the public historians of New York State. Affiliate Members shall be non-voting members and shall not hold office)

For the 2016 conference, Affiliate Members who join as Affiliate members on or before September 15, 2015, will be eligible for the member registration fee.

Conference Registration

Regular—after May 31, 2016

APHNY Member $75 $_______

APHNY Guest $35 $_______

Registration total (lectures) $_______

Thursday Dinner & Program $45 $_______

Friday Breakfast $25 $_______

Friday Lunch & Lecture $32 $_______

Friday Dinner & Program $45 $_______

Saturday Breakfast $25 $_______

Saturday Lunch & Lecture $32 $_______

Excursions & Membership:

Pick one excursion only, seating is limited to 40 per trip.

Friday APHNY Excursion 1 $30 $_______

Skanoh Lodge Great Law of Peace Center

Friday APHNY Excursion 2 $30 $_______

Erie Canal Heritage Park at Port Byron

Membership Fee $_______

Total $_______

NOTE: IF ATTENDEES MUST CANCEL DUE TO EMERGENCIES PRIOR TO 72 HOURS OF THE CONFERENCE, ALL FEES WILL BE RETURNED EXCEPT REGISTRATION FEES. IF CANCELLED LESS THAN 72 HOURS, MEAL COSTS ALSO CANNOT BE RETURNED.

Please make checks payable to APHNY and return this form to:

APHNY 2016 Conference
P.O. Box 2985
Setauket, NY 11733

For more information go to www.aphnys.org
Regional Coordinators Around The State

Region 1: Sharon Wilkins, Manhattan Deputy Historian, swilkins@manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Region 2: Zachary Studenroth, Town of Southampton, zstudenroth@southamptontownny.gov
Region 3: William Tatum III, Dutchess County Historian, WTatum@DutchessNY.Gov
Region 4: Ray LaFever, Town of Bovina Historian, bovinahistorian@gmail.com
Region 5: Lauren Roberts, Saratoga County Historian, historian@saratogacounty.ny.gov
Region 6: Eliza Jane Darling, Hamilton County Historian, historian@hamiltoncounty.gov
Region 7: Richard Williams, Town of Kirkland Historian, apulia@verizon.net
Region 8: Justin White, Oswego County Historian, whitej@oswegocounty.com
Region 9: Matthew Urtz, Madison County Historian, matthew.urtz@madisoncounty.ny.gov
Region 10: Gerald Smith, Broome County Historian, gsmith@co.broome.ny.us
Region 11: Peter Evans, Wayne County Historian, historian@co.wayne.ny.us
Region 12: Vacant
Association of Public Historians of New York State

2016 Dues/Membership Form

Membership Category:
- Historian
- Co-Historian
- Deputy Historian
- Assistant Historian
- Affiliate Member

Appointed for:
- County
- Town
- Village
- City
- Borough

Other

Name of Municipality: ____________________________ County: ____________________________

Affiliates also list your county

Date of original appointment ______________________ (estimate if not sure)

Are you a New Historian? Yes No

If yes, name of Prior Historian ____________________________

Member’s Name: ____________________________

Member’s Mailing Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

Municipal Billing Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

Member’s Phone w/Area Code: ____________________________ Fax: ____________________________

Email (please print clearly):

We strongly encourage Historians have an email address in order to receive APHNYs messages. All
information is sent by email. Those without email will receive only dues notices and conference information.

Date: ____________________________ Amount Enclosed: ____________________________ Check #

 Aphnys does hereby certify that the items of the account are true and correct; that no Federal or State taxes for which the
municipality is exempt are included; and that no part of the same has been previously paid. APHNYs’ fiscal address for
receiving dues, conference payments, etc. is APHNYS, PO Box 2985, Setauket, NY 11733. Regular
 correspondence should be sent to APHNYS, PO Box 366, Chenango Bridge, NY 13745. If a person is
appointed historian/deputy historian for more than one community, dues are to be paid for each community.
If you have questions, email us at APHNYS@yahoo.com or call 607-595-1571. Please return completed form
with check made payable and mailed to:

APHNYs
PO Box 2985
Setauket, NY 11733

Dues Structure

2016 Annual Dues for Historian and/or Co-Historian is based on Community’s population

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Range</th>
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<td>0 – 1,000</td>
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- Deputy and/or Assistant Historian Dues: $25.00
- Affiliate Member Dues: $25.00

1 Affiliate Membership is for any cultural agency, educational institution, corporation, historical societies, museums, or
individual interested in NY State history and the work of the public historians of New York State. Affiliate Members
shall be non-voting members and shall not hold office.
The board currently has one vacancy due to the recent resignation of Judith Littlejohn, Town and Village of Elba Historian (Region 12).