



DHPS | NY news

DOCUMENTING DHPSNY ADVENTURES IN THE EMPIRE STATE

FALL 2023

INSIDE:

- 1 A Message from the New York State Library and Archives
- 2 On the Road Again: DHPSNY in 2023
- 8 Interview: Richard Sloma, Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives
- 10 Planning, Survey, and Assessment Sites Across New York State
- 11 Questions for our Team: Kate Jacus, Preservation Specialist
- 12 DHPSNY by the Numbers

A MESSAGE FROM THE New York State Library and Archives

LAUREN MOORE, *Assistant Commissioner for Libraries and State Librarian*
MONICA GRAY, *Head of Archival Services, NYS Archives*

What is DHPSNY and where did it come from? We get this question a lot, so if you are asking, you are not alone! **Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY)** is a program sponsored by the **New York State Library** and the **New York State Archives** to provide free support and services to the organizations that care for

New York's historical records and unique library research materials. The organizations we support range in size and complexity from the **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts** to local public libraries and historical societies. The State Archives and Library are committed to supporting this full spectrum of organizations with the understanding that all communities deserve access to the collections that document their communities.

DHPSNY education programming and assessment services are designed using feedback we gather from workshop and webinar evaluations, statewide constituent needs surveys, and periodic independent evaluations of the DHPSNY program. All this data informs the fundamental principle that DHPSNY services need to meet organizations where they are, build on their strengths, and offer support to improve the challenges they face. The State Archives and Library recognize that professional standards and best practices can be intimidating and seem impossible to attain. With DHPSNY, the State Library and Archives are here to help you navigate how to implement those standards in ways that best meet the needs of your organization and the community it serves.

Since DHPSNY began in 2016, the State Archives and Library are pleased to see the number of organizations taking advantage of DHPSNY services increase.

Historic Geneva



**A MESSAGE FROM THE
NEW YORK STATE
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES**

(Continued from page 1)

We are also excited by the diversity in the types of organizations served, the varying sizes of these organizations, and their geographic distribution. DHPSNY is truly a statewide program, and given the size and diversity of New York State, that is a huge achievement for a program that is less than 10 years old!

In addition to helping organizations meet professional standards, the State Library and Archives are excited by the opportunities we offer collecting organizations through DHPSNY antiracism webinars and DHPSNY Dialogues to explore the impact of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work on the library and archives professions. As a statewide organization, DHPSNY must work to embrace the full spectrum of individuals' experiences and ensure that the diversity of those experiences is reflected in the collecting organizations across the state and in the collections they steward. Working towards this goal requires conversation and dialogue across the library and archives fields and DHPSNY programming is an important forum for those conversations in New York State.

While the State Archives and Library oversee DHPSNY programming and services, the future direction of DHPSNY is in your hands! Please take advantage of the opportunity to provide us with your feedback and help us adapt DHPSNY to meet the needs of your organization and your community.

If you have questions, feedback or want to get started taking advantage of free DHPSNY services contact Program Manager Amanda Murray at info@dhsny.org or call 215.545.0613 ext. 337. We look forward to hearing from you.

On the Road Again: DHPSNY in 2023

Since its inception, DHPSNY has played a pivotal role in delivering free support and services to archival and library research collections comprehensively throughout the state. Over the years, we have been awed and inspired by these invaluable collections and the dedication, enthusiasm, and collaborative spirit of those entrusted with their care—the past year was no exception. Join us for a journey into New York's cultural heritage community with a look back at highlights of the past year at DHPSNY.



Edward Hopper childhood notebook, Edward Hopper House Museum & Study Center

Rochester Public Library

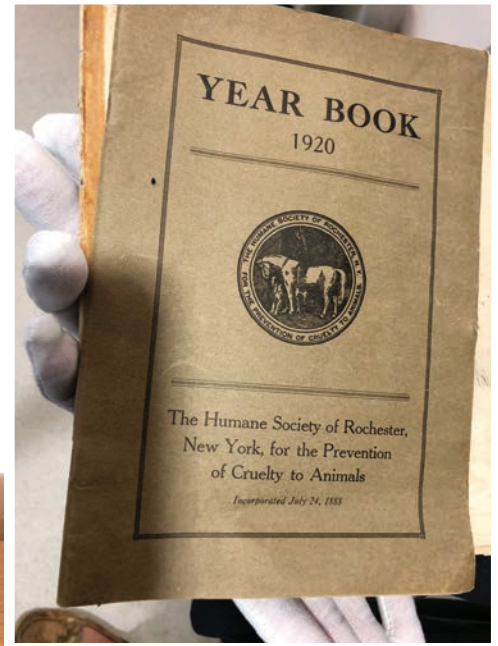
Site Visits

Collectively, New York State's diverse archival collections offer profound insights into the state's cultural heritage sector and New Yorkers at large. Ranging from institutional archives and local history rooms to internationally significant collections, they bear witness to the meticulous efforts of staff and volunteers, serving as a testament to their commitment to safeguarding the past for future generations. These collections not only deepen our understanding of history, but imbue us with a sense of continuity, identity, unity, and shared narratives that resonate with the cultural needs of New Yorkers.

It was, then, with great eagerness, that after returning to in-person services late last year, the DHPSNY team hit the road running, covering nearly **15,000 miles** to deliver Archival Needs Assessments, Strategic Planning Assistance, Preservation Surveys, Condition Surveys, and our unwavering support, empowering individuals and institutions in their preservation efforts.

We began at the tail end of last winter with an Archival Needs Assessment at **Lollypop Farm, Humane Society of Greater Rochester** in Fairport (Monroe County), which was prompted by the organization's planning for their 150th anniversary and a successful public exhibition. One of the longest-running nonprofits in the county, Lollypop's collections include the organization's communications, photographs, and objects, and relate to

their mission to "better the lives of animals through justice, prevention, and life-saving care" together with their community—a cause the DHPSNY team embraces to its core. As an institution with a mission that is not fundamentally focused on history, Lollypop's staff and the volunteers on their Archives Committee are enthusiastically learning how to gather, organize, describe, and make accessible the materials in the collection that help ground their work in an important legacy of humane animal care in Western New York.



Collection items at Lollypop Farm and displays from their 150th anniversary exhibit



SITE VISITS (Continued from page 3)



Preservation Specialist Kate Jacus conducts a Preservation Survey at Cuba Circulation Library.

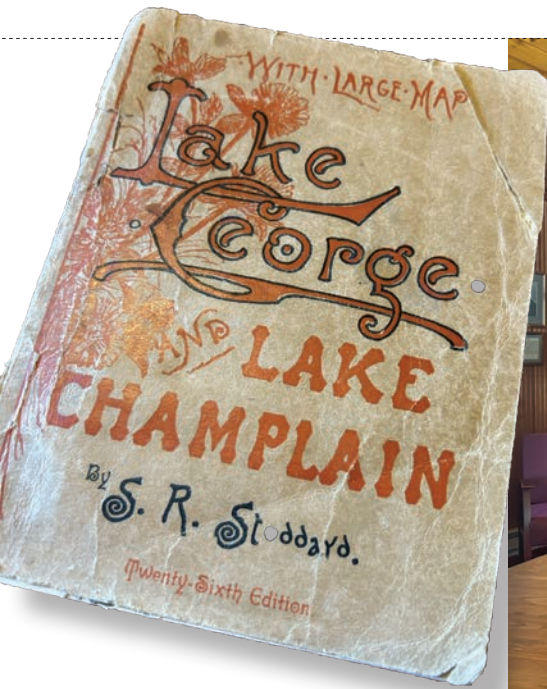
DHPSNY continues to proudly deliver Strategic Planning Assistance in partnership with the **New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON)**, and this spring we were excited to return to an early DHPSNY alum, the **Chenango County Historical Society and Museum (CCHS)** in Chenango (Chenango County), for a Strategic Planning Assistance facilitation. CCHS was first awarded an Archival Needs Assessment in 2016 and is home to the complete company archives from the world-famous Norwich Pharmaceutical Company, inventors of Pepto-Bismol and precursor to Proctor & Gamble.



After welcoming new team member, Preservation Specialist Kate Jacus, in March, she began her DHPSNY tenure with Preservation Surveys for **Cuba Circulating Library** (Allegany County), the **Town of Windsor** (Broome County), and **Buffalo and Erie County Public Library** (Erie County). In these three very different types of institutions, a resounding theme was the importance of collections for New Yorkers researching their family histories. From giant Sanborn fire insurance maps to file cabinets filled with clippings of obituaries to donated copies of family genealogies, records that document the locations and lives of New Yorkers are among the most heavily used at each institution.



From top: Pepto-Bismol display at the Chenango County Historical Society and Museum (CCHS). Staff participate in a Strategic Planning Assistance facilitation at CCHS.



SUNY Cortland, Park's Family Outdoor Center

In July, DHPSNY awarded its summer 2023 Planning & Assessment Services class, and by mid-summer, the team was back on the road for a flurry of site visits. We criss-crossed the state for a strategic planning facilitation at the **Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry** in Seneca Falls (Seneca County) and assessments at **SUNY Cortland, Park's Family Outdoor Center** in Raquette Lake (Hamilton County); **Visual Studies Workshop (VSW)** in Rochester (Monroe County), and **Millbrook Library** in Millbrook (Dutchess County).

Millbrook's unique collections are specific to Bennett College, established in 1890 by May Friend Bennett as a pioneering educational institution exclusively for women. Although the college ceased operations in 1978, its historical significance remains deeply ingrained within the fabric of women's history and higher education. The initial archival collection was generously entrusted to the Millbrook Library during the late 1970s, solidifying its enduring legacy within the Millbrook community and among numerous cherished alumnae.

Throughout the summer, we also worked with several institutions awarded our newest free service, Foundational Planning Assistance, including the **Pearl River Public Library** in Pearl River (Rockland County) and **Trocaire College Archive** in



CCAHA Paper Conservator Chloe Houseman (left) conducts a Condition Survey at Historic Geneva.

Buffalo (Erie County). Introduced in 2022 and conducted virtually, Foundational Planning Assistance is an informal and accessible service designed to strengthen organizational capacity.

As the days became shorter in the fall, we traveled to Geneva (Ontario County) for a Condition Survey at **Historic Geneva,**

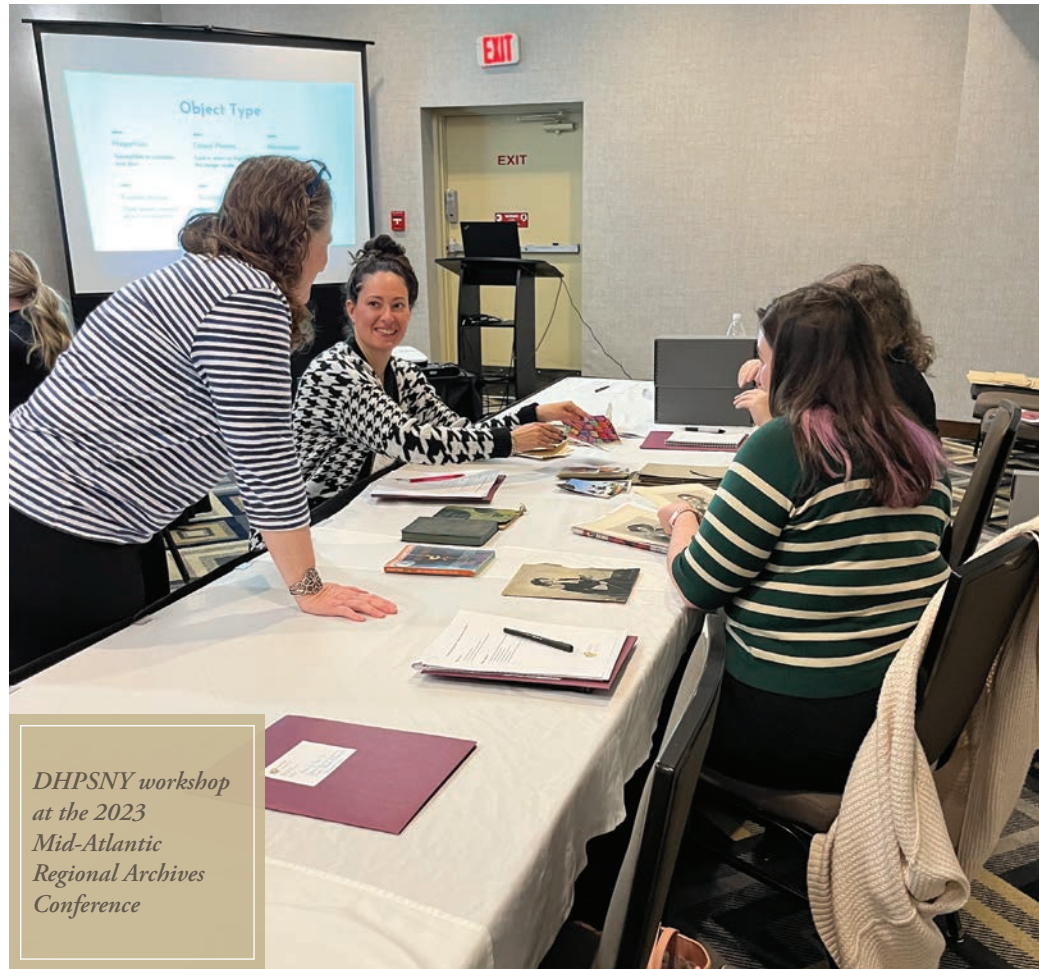
whose collections illustrate the stories of the city and the surrounding area. The survey examined the organization's rolled and oversize paper and photographic collections, assessed the suitability of current housing and storage, and documented potential conservation treatment needs.

Conferences

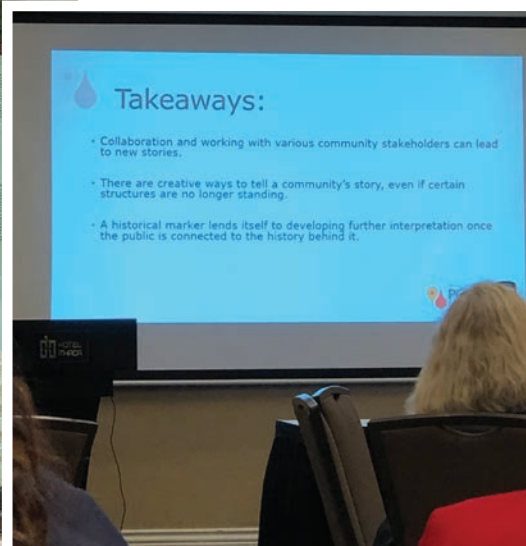
DHPSNY conference attendance supports dynamic exchanges and connections within New York's cultural heritage sector. They inform our initiatives and partnerships and expand our reach to potential beneficiaries (75 new constituent contacts this year!). Our active involvement included manning information booths at three conferences and presenting our services at a fourth.

Our 2023 conference circuit started in March at the **2023 Museum Association of New York (MANY) Annual Conference: Finding Center: Access, Inclusion, Participation, and Engagement** in Syracuse (Onondaga County). With captivating keynote speeches, insightful sessions, and interactive field trips, our first conference of the year left us feeling inspired and energized.

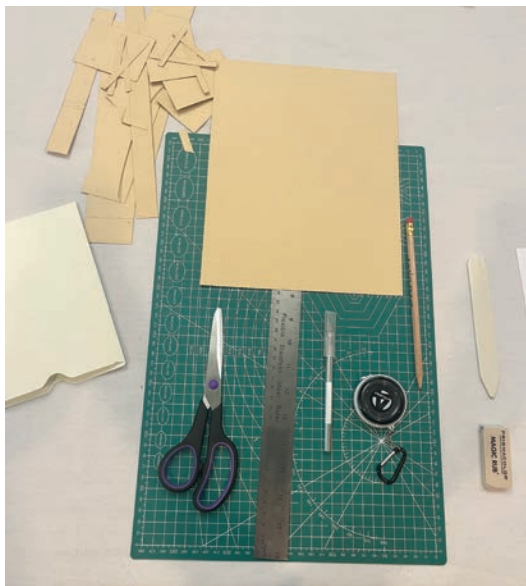
This fall, we were able to connect with New York's dynamic local and municipal history community at two conferences, the **Association of Public Historians of New York** in Ithaca (Tompkins County) and the



DHPSNY workshop at the 2023 Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference



Scenes from the 2023 Association of Public Historians of New York conference in Ithaca



Oneida County Historians' Association in Whitesboro Oneida County). Hearing from local government historians, local archivists, and folks wearing many hats as the lone employee at small museums offered us a look at the challenges faced by New York's collecting institutions and provided valuable insights that will shape our programming in 2024 and beyond.

Providing preservation education is another aspect of DHPSNY's services, and conferences make for eager audiences. At the height of the fall foliage in Upstate New York, we traveled to Saratoga Springs (Saratoga County) in October for the **2023 Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC)**. DHPSNY Program Manager Amanda Murray and Preservation Specialist Kate Jacus presented a workshop titled "Housing How-To: Stabilizing and Supporting Paper-Based Collections." In this hands-on session, participants learned how to make two types of custom archival enclosures for fragile books.

We found ourselves back in Saratoga Springs in early November for the conclusion of our conference season at the **New York Library Association (NYLA) Annual Conference**. Connecting with the state library community, we continued our goal of reaching a diverse cultural heritage audience: librarians, archivists, local historians, volunteers, and museum staff.

Education Programs

Beyond site visits and conferences, DHPSNY hosted and presented an array of free education programs, tailored to meet the needs of New York's cultural heritage community.

This year, we expanded our antiracism initiatives with a series of thought-provoking webinars, dialogues, and blog posts on diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and justice in collecting organizations. These programs were firmly centered in New York, with a focus on amplifying the voices, histories, and perspectives of the state's Black and Indigenous communities to help better inform antiracist policies and practices.

Notable highlights included the webinar **Native Experiences and Perspectives in non-Native-led Organizations** and the DHPSNY Dialogue **Describing Our Collections: Indigenous Art and Artifacts and Understanding Enslavement in New**

York. Engaged participants throughout these sessions asked challenging questions, shared insightful ideas, and demonstrated a sincere dedication to antiracism work.

Our free education programs also included three online courses. In the spring and summer our popular **Preservation 101** and **Archives 101** courses returned to provide New York's collection stewards with a comprehensive overview of the basics of preservation and archival management. This fall, participants in **An Introduction to Emergency Planning** learned the essentials of emergency preparedness, then put their knowledge to task in collaborative sessions to begin drafting an emergency plan for their organizations. The course also served as a perfect lead-up to our upcoming in-person emergency response and salvage workshop, which is set to debut in spring 2024.

SELECTED IMAGES FROM DHPSNY EDUCATION PROGRAMS



Iroquois Museum Program



*American Indian Artists, Inc.
(AMERINDA) Poster*

INTERVIEW:

Richard Sloma

Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives

From diverse collections of historical treasures to the spirited formation of a nonprofit foundation, the story of the Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives is one defined by a profound commitment to safeguarding the legacy of the Syracuse West End ethnic Polish Community. Over the past five years, the Archives has availed itself of a suite of services from DHPSNY, including an Archival Needs Assessment in 2018, a Preservation Survey in 2021, and Strategic Planning Assistance in 2022. In this interview, we catch up with Rich Sloma, a

dedicated volunteer at the Archives, to uncover their journey, the role DHPSNY has played, and the valuable lessons they've gained in preserving their heritage for future generations.

Can you tell us a little about the Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives?

The creation of the Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives was the result of an evolution combining the awareness of our community's historical heritage



Clambake 1950's, ice down the shirt, Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives

with a labor of love to preserve it. It wouldn't have been possible without the vision and efforts of Rob Synakowski. Rob was elected President of the Polish Community Home in 2004.

At that time, he not only provided leadership and direction to the social and cultural club, but he had inherited a lot "stuff" from many segments of the community. Rob understood the significance of the historical treasures that had been collected by the center of the Syracuse West End ethnic Polish Community that established the Home in 1919. He protected and added to the diverse collection of items which included organizational records, photographs, pamphlets, programs, posters, audio-visual materials, a library full of books, artwork and numerous artifacts. These items were not only created by the Polish Home over many decades over the course of its business, but also included materials created by other clubs and organizations—social, cultural, athletic, religious and veterans—that had met at the Home during its century of existence. In addition to that, the Polish Home had accumulated family papers and photographs and other memorabilia donated by individual members.

In 2018, Rob spearheaded the creation of a nonprofit Foundation which would make as part of its mission the preservation of the building and the historical collection. He turned the presidency of the Home over to the capable hands of Yola Brzostowski and persuaded me, a longtime friend and member of the community, to volunteer with this project. An "Archives and History



Polish Library in Syracuse -1930s, Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives



*ABC Bowling
Tournament Syracuse
1958 Team from
the Syracuse Polish
Home, Syracuse
Polish Community
Foundation Archives*

Committee” was formed, and we found that there were many members of the Syracuse Polish Home who not only had an interest in preserving our history, but who also had some important skills and experiences that were helpful. There were those who studied history in college or had a passion for it as a result of a lifetime of reading and learning. They wanted to help out with something that interested them and that they saw as a valuable contribution to our legacy. In addition to sharing their time, talents and labors, key volunteers—Jeff Bailey, Roxanne Bocyck and Paul Root—stepped up to serve on the Foundation’s Board of Directors.

The Polish Home continues to be a social and cultural club with over 1,000 members. The Foundation owns the structure and oversees the preservation of the historical building and its materials and artifacts, seeking to preserve and make available this proud heritage for future generations of ethnic Polish Americans and fellow Syracusans. Thanks to the DHPSNY Strategic Planning grant, our Foundation Board has become energized and focused to undertake those things outlined in the Archival Needs Assessment and Preservation Survey reports which we have also found to be great benefits through DHPSNY.

What led the organization to first apply for an Archival Needs Assessment in 2018 and subsequently pursue a Preservation Survey and Strategic Planning Assistance later?

We knew that we needed to start with an Archival Needs Assessment to help us get organized in our endeavor to form our own archival records repository. After applying for and receiving the grant, we were glad to get the final report. As anticipated, it became our “road map” to help us get to where we wanted to go.

Using the assessment, we secured a records room in our building, gathered up all our historical records and materials and placed them in this secure, centralized location. As we did our inventory, we realized that it would be useful to seek DHPSNY’s help to assess our items and the environmental conditions that they were being kept in, so we applied for a Preservation Survey.

Since we are a relatively new not-for-profit organization, we realized that we could benefit from the Strategic Planning Assistance grant, and so we applied for that. We are still in the process of finalizing our draft planning document, but we have already realized the benefit of Barbara Paxton’s facilitation and mentorship. The work that we did in completing the survey

and then having the in-person seminar helped to not only bring our Foundation Board Members together, but it also helped us to better understand our role and get us focused on what we need to do to be a better and more robust organization.

Can you share some takeaways from your experience working with DHPSNY over the past 5 years?

The DHPSNY team has a remarkable collection of helpful, flexible and extremely knowledgeable professionals. They themselves are a vast resource not only as they participate with you during their work of administering the grant, but also by providing advice after the grant is completed. They understand what you are going through because they have either been through it or have seen it.

What advice or recommendations would you give similar institutions interested in establishing an archival program?

First and foremost, to take advantage of the resources being offered by DHPSNY.



Polish-American Veterans Post 1 Ladies’ Auxiliary in late 1940s, Syracuse Polish Community Foundation Archives



Planning, Survey, and Assessment Sites across New York State

AWARDED JANUARY 2023 THROUGH OCTOBER 2023

Archival Needs Assessments

- **Cayuga Community College**
(Auburn, Cayuga County)
- **Emma Willard School Archives**
(Troy, Rensselaer County)
- **Historical Society of the Town of Bolton**
(Bolton Landing, Warren County)
- **Historical Society of Woodstock**
(Woodstock, Ulster County)
- **Millbrook Library**
(Millbrook, Dutchess County)
- **Newburgh Free Library**
(Newburgh, Orange County)
- **New Castle Historical Society**
(Chappaqua, Westchester County)
- **Treatment Action Group**
(New York, New York County)
- **The Church of St. James the Less (Episcopal)**
(Scarsdale, Westchester County)
- **Waterford Historical Museum and Cultural Center**
(Waterford, Saratoga County)
- **Visual Studies Workshop**
(Rochester, Monroe County)

Preservation Surveys

- **Allegany County Historical Society**
(Andover, Allegany County)
- **Buffalo & Erie County Public Library**
(Buffalo, Erie County)
- **Fairport Public Library**
(Fairport, Monroe County)
- **Town of Windsor**
(Windsor, Broome County)
- **Village of Croton-on-Hudson**
(Cortlandt, Westchester County)
- **Walt Whitman Birthplace Association**
(Huntington Station, Suffolk County)



Historical Society of the Town of Bolton

Strategic Planning

- **Edward Hopper House Study Center and Museum**
(Nyack, Rockland County)
- **Daniel A. Reed Library, SUNY Fredonia**
(Fredonia, Chautauqua County)
- **Greater Astoria Historical Society**
(Long Island City, Queens County)
- **Niagara Falls Public Library**
(Niagara Falls, Niagara County)
- **National Bottle Museum**
(Ballston Spa, Saratoga County)
- **The Flow Chart Foundation, Inc.**
(Hudson, Columbia County)
- **The Forward Association, Inc.**
(New York, New York County)

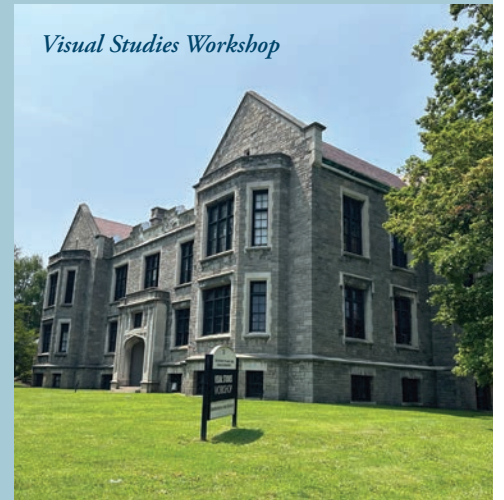
Condition Surveys

- **Historic Geneva**
(Geneva, Ontario County)

Foundational Planning Assistance

- **Wethersfield Estate & Garden**
(Amenia, Dutchess County)
- **Columbia-Greene Community College**
(Hudson, Columbia County)
- **Dr. Sandor and Berthe Benedek Memorial Library**
(Savona, Steuben County)
- **Pearl River Public Library**
(Pearl River, Rockland County)
- **Trocaire College Archive**
(Buffalo, Erie County)

Visual Studies Workshop



QUESTIONS FOR OUR TEAM



Kate Jacus

PRESERVATION SPECIALIST



Tell us about an interesting DHPSNY trip or site visit you've conducted and what made it special.

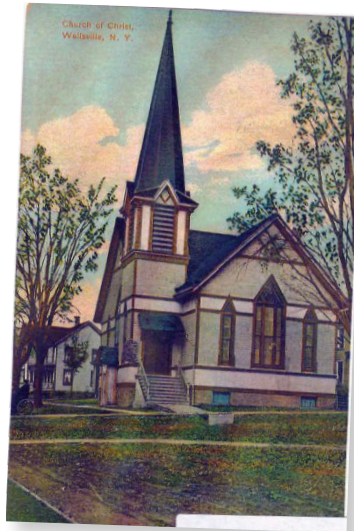
The first Preservation Survey I went on solo (I accompanied a team member for the first two) was to the **Allegany County Historical Society** in Andover. We of course did the usual review of survey topics and a collections walkthrough—all very routine. But when I got into my car afterward, I was struck by the overwhelming feeling of joy. I had gotten to spend the day with folks so passionate about their local history, so excited to tell me stories, show me important artifacts, and share their hard work. I feel so lucky to have this job and be able to connect with organizations in this way.

Can you tell us a little about your background?

I've always loved museums and history and pursued a graduate degree in museum studies and positions in collections management. After a second career in marketing, I returned to the cultural heritage world as an independent collections manager for families and did part time marketing work for Archival Methods. My passion is archival storage!

What prepared you for life at DHPSNY?

First, I am a New Yorker born and raised and have traveled widely around the state's historic sites. It's given me a solid foundation for understanding the collections and perspectives of the sites we visit for DHPSNY. Second, I have held positions at several small organizations with limited resources throughout my career, giving me a deep appreciation for working with volunteers and small budgets. Many of the Preservation Assessment sites are in similar situations, and I can empathize and bring realistic solutions to the table.



Do you have a favorite location in New York?

I love the Adirondacks! We have family in Lake Placid, and I've grown up hiking and skiing in the mountains. My daughter and I are two summits away from completing the Lake Placid Niners, a precursor to the 46er climbing challenge. I love learning new things about both the cultural and natural history of the region.

About us

A statewide program of the New York State Archives and New York State Library, **Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY)** provides free planning and education services to support the vast network of repositories such as archives, libraries, historical societies, museums, and other institutions that safeguard and ensure access to New York's historical records and unique library research materials.

Connect with us

Visit dhpsny.org for more on our free programs and services and to sign up for our monthly email newsletter, which features our recent activity and important updates on application deadlines and upcoming programs.

Contact DHPSNY staff for answers to archives- and preservation-related questions, help with applications, or to make suggestions for future programs at info@dhpsny.org or (215) 545-0613, ext. 337.

Our partners

Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY) is a collaboration between two long-running New York State Education Department programs dedicated to service and support for archival and library research collections throughout the State: the New York State Archives Documentary Heritage Program and the New York State Library Conservation/Preservation Program. DHPSNY is a program of the New York State Education Department, with services provided by the **Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA)**.





DHPS|NY

DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES
FOR NEW YORK

264 S. 23RD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

DHPS|NY *by the Numbers*



With approximately 5,000 collecting institutions in New York State, DHPSNY's goal is simple: to reach every single one with free programs, services, and other important resources. Whether your institution is interested in DHPSNY Planning & Assessment Services or attends a free webinar or workshop, we want each repository in the state to know that through DHPSNY, the New York State Archives and Library are here to help.

240

institutions awarded free planning and assessment services (total all time)

85

free webinar recordings available at dhpsny.org/webinars

48,000

engagements on social media

11,500

unique website visitors (in past year)



+      = 1,283,550

Because of your interactions with DHPSNY on our website and through social media, our message has made more than 1,283,550 total unique impressions on the professionals and volunteers around the state who help care for and safeguard New York's archival collections.