



DHPS | NY news

DOCUMENTING DHPSNY'S ADVENTURES IN THE EMPIRE STATE

FALL 2020

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ON THE ROAD AND AT HOME: Our Fourth Year in Site Visits, Conferences, and Workshops

In the fall of 2019, the **New York State Archives/New York State Library's Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York program (DHPSNY)** was on track for another record-breaking year, traveling **7,544 miles** to deliver consistent and comprehensive services to the vast network of organizations that safeguard New York's history. Shortly after taking a winter break to avoid unsafe driving conditions, in February, we welcomed **Preservation Specialist Amanda Murray** to the team and geared up for another packed year of in-person DHPSNY programming.

However, these plans would be cut short in mid-March when New York State issued travel restrictions and social distancing measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. In response, we quickly transitioned to remote work and focused on developing creative ways to serve our community in light of canceled in-person programs. Thanks to the flexibility and adaptive capacity of DHPSNY and the institutions we serve, we ended Year Four on a high note, bringing the total number of organizations awarded free Planning & Assessment Services to 157 while also delivering vital educational supports in a variety of formats. Let's take a look back at some of the highlights of the past year at DHPSNY.

From left: American Institute of Graphic Arts; Yates County Genealogical and Historical Society



Site Visits

In early fall of 2019, **CCAHA Director of Preservation Services Dyani Feige** conducted Archival Needs Assessments for the **American Institute of Graphic Arts** in New York City (New York County) and **Yates County Genealogical and Historical Society** in Penn Yan (Yates County). Of special interest to scholars of both religious and women's history, Yates County's archival collections feature the papers and personal items of the **Public Universal Friend**, who is considered the first American woman to found a religious sect (despite not having identified with any gender).



Later in the fall, **DHPSNY Preservation Specialist emerita Gillian Marcus** conducted Preservation Surveys for the

Continued on page 2

LOOKING BACK (continued from page 1)



Thomas Cole National Historic Site in Catskill

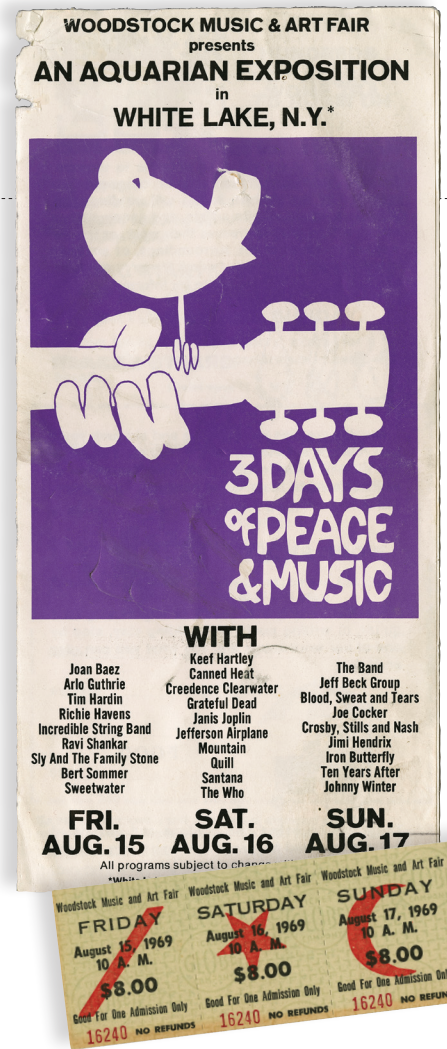
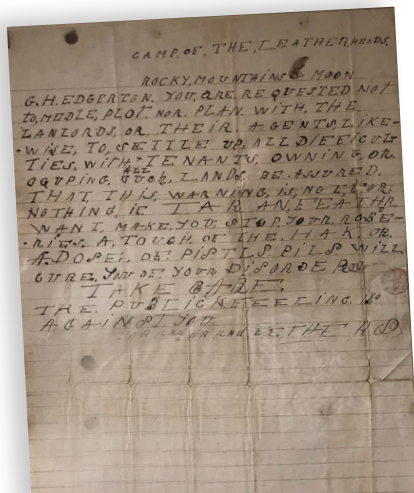
Franklin County Historical and Museum Society in Malone (Franklin County) and the Thomas Cole National Historic Site (TCNHS) in Catskill (Greene County). Located in the home and studios of Thomas Cole (1801–1848), founder of the Hudson River School of painting, TCNHS became the third historic home of a famous American artist to receive DHPSNY services, following our 2018 visit to the Pollack-Krasner House and Study Center in East Hampton (Suffolk County) and spring 2019 visit to the Edward Hopper House and Study Center in Nyack (Rockland County).

Around the same time, we also traveled to sites selected for Strategic Planning Assistance, which DHPSNY continues to provide in partnership with the New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON). Our visits in the late fall included trips to the Chenango County Historical Society in Norwich and the Russian History Foundation (RHF) in Jordanville (Herkimer County). During these visits, DHPSNY and NYCON staff met with key stakeholders at the organizations to help develop their strategic plans. They also had a little extra time to tour the museums' exhibits,

including an ornate Russian religious art exhibit at RHF, composed of hand-illustrated books, intricately painted icons, and other glittering treasures.

After taking a short winter break, we headed back on the road for our first site visits of 2020. As part of her inaugural set of site visits, DHPSNY Preservation Specialist, Amanda conducted a Preservation Survey for the Delaware County Historical Association (DCHA) in Delhi (Delaware County). On site, Amanda toured DCHA's extensive collections of maps, books, photographs, newspapers, and other artifacts that offered snapshots of Delaware County's history, including a rare letter (pictured below) from the Anti-Rent War, a 1839–1845 tenants' revolt in upstate New York, which was the impetus of a longstanding law that banned the use of face masks in public that the State repealed earlier this year.

When the scale of the pandemic and resulting shutdowns became clear in mid-March, we postponed our upcoming site visits and focused our attention on developing a safe alternative that still met our high standards. While not a replacement for in-person site visits,



Bethel Woods Center for the Arts—
The Museum at Bethel Woods

we developed a new approach that enabled us to engage with sites from afar, utilizing video conferencing platforms to connect with sites remotely. Archives Specialist Kate Philipson and Program Manager Anastasia Matijkiw conducted DHPSNY's first virtual site visit, an Archival Needs Assessment for the Museum at Bethel Woods, part of The Bethel Woods Center for the Arts. Located in Bethel (Sullivan County) at the site of the 1969 Woodstock festival, the Museum's collections document the festival, its world-wide cultural impact, and other social movements and current events of the 1960s, including the anti-war movement, the civil rights movement, and the space program.

With headsets and laptop stands in place, DHPSNY staff conducted virtual Archival Needs Assessments and Preservation Surveys throughout the summer. Reaching institutions in all corners of the State, our summer sites included, among



Virtual Preservation Survey with staff at RIT

others, the **Shaker Heritage Society** in Albany (Albany County); the **Thousand Islands Arts Center—Home of the Hand-weaving Museum** in Clayton (Jefferson County); the **Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)** in Rochester (Monroe County); and the **Buffalo Broadcasters Association** in Williamsville (Erie County), whose collections include thousands of local news film reels and video tapes dating back to the 1960s.

In early fall, we added a fourth historic artist home to our list with a virtual Archival Needs Assessment for **The Victor D’Amico Institute of Art** in Amagansett (Suffolk County), which comprises **The Victor and Mabel D’Amico Studio and Archive** and **The Art Barge**. The Art Barge was created in 1960 as the Summer Art Center of The Museum of Modern Art by Victor D’Amico, who served as the founding Director of Education at the Museum from 1937 to 1969. Today, The Art Barge remains a summer arts education space, while the Studio and Archive contains an extensive collection of research materials, including photographs, films, articles, books and motivational materials documenting the D’Amicos’ pioneering work as artists and art educators, as well as the history of The Art Barge.

Workshops

Before our plans for 2020 programming were curtailed, last fall DHPSNY presented **Understanding Archives: An Introduction to Archival Basics**. In this workshop, DHPSNY staff discussed the fundamentals of archival appraisal, acquisition, and access; proper storage materials; and the most common preservation problems found within paper-based archival collections. For a total of five sessions, the series took us to the **Huntington Public Library** in Huntington (Suffolk County); the **Richard F. Brush Art Gallery & Permanent Collection, St. Lawrence University** in Canton (St. Lawrence County); the **Chautauqua Institution** in Chautauqua (Chautauqua County); the **Holland Land Office Museum** in Batavia (Genesee County); and **The Farmers’ Museum and Fenimore Art Museum** in Cooperstown (Otsego County).



*Above: St. Lawrence University
Below: Chautauqua Institution*



Conferences

Last fall, the conference circuit took us to the **Greater Hudson Heritage Network (GHHN) Annual Conference** at the Historic Bear Mountain Inn (Rockland County); the second annual **Western New York Library Resource Council (WNYLRC) Unconference—Intersect 2019: the Global Library** in Buffalo (Erie County); and the **Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM) Annual Meeting** in West Point (Orange County). We were happy to have the opportunity to contribute to the enthusiasm and optimism of these events and spread the word about DHPSNY’s free programs and services.

As conferences went virtual in the summer of 2020, we attended the 51st annual **New York Archives Conference (NYAC)**; the **Council of State Archivists (CoSA)** and the **Society of American Archivists (SAA)** joint annual meeting **ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2020: Creating Our Future**; and the **American Institute for**



2019 GHHN Annual Conference

Conservation (AIC) 2020 Virtual Meeting. During AIC’s event, Anastasia and Dyani presented “Three Approaches to Sustainable Collections Care,” which focused on three programs managed by CCAHA: DHPSNY, the Philadelphia Stewardship Program, and the Regional Heritage Stewardship Program. The pair discussed the development of each program and how they meet the needs of their respective regions.

INTERVIEW:

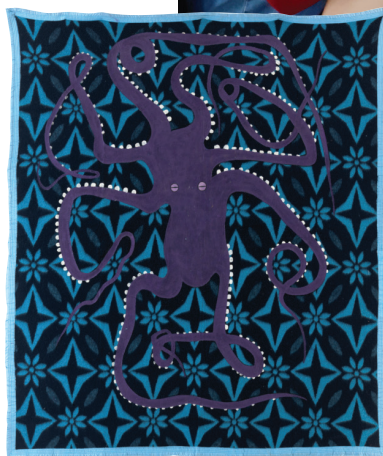
Tracy Fenix

of Visual AIDS

After being awarded an Archival Needs Assessment in our spring 2020 Planning & Assessment Services round, this past June, **Visual AIDS** received the service entirely online, making it one of the first sites to participate in a DHPSNY virtual assessment. We chatted with Tracy Fenix, Artist Engagement & Archive Associate at Visual AIDS, about the institution's important work and unique archive, as well as their experience collaborating with DHPSNY and why they are excited about the institution's next steps.

Can you tell us a little about Visual AIDS?

Visual AIDS utilizes art to fight AIDS by provoking dialogue, supporting HIV+ artists, and preserving a legacy, because AIDS is not over. The Archive Project was founded in 1994 as a slide and research library to preserve the work of artists with HIV/AIDS. The online Artist+ Registry was launched in 2012 and features digitized versions of many of the original slides held in the Archive Project as well as new work updated directly by living Artist Members both nationally and internationally. The online registry offers a greater forum for artists living with HIV to expose their work to a worldwide audience, while preserving a legacy for artists lost to AIDS. Membership is free and open to all visual artists living with HIV and AIDS and the estates of artists who have died from AIDS-related complications.



Feliciano Centurión, Pulpo violeta (Purple octopus), 1993. Collection of Adriana Cisneros de Griffin. Image courtesy of the Americas Society and Visual AIDS.

Do you have a personal favorite document or item in the archives?

There are too many! I'm deeply mesmerized by the tantalizing and delightful textile works by Paraguayan artist Feliciano Centurión who paid homage to Guaraní indigenous cultures and his Paraguayan upbringing; and the compelling intergenerational photographs and paintings by Darrel Ellis, who revealed his intimate family relationships and their entangled experiences with police brutality. They were both such strong life forces of joyful complexity.

How did you find out about DHPSNY?

I initially heard about DHPSNY from Caitlin McCarthy, Archivist at The LGBT Center in New York City. I'm a member of



The Center's Archive Advisory Committee and heard about DHPSNY through Caitlin's thoughtful work around collectively drafting and implementing collection and digital preservation policies for their archival collections.

How was your experience with the DHPSNY application and Archival Needs Assessment process?

DHPSNY was so great and really helpful in supporting us with prioritizing our collection management needs. It was a



"Revisiting Artist Member Garland Eliason-French's archives with niece Laura Eliason," 2019; Visual AIDS

From left: Visual AIDS interns x senn yuen and Jennell Strong supporting the Carl George/ Felix Gonzalez-Torres/ Ross Laycock Archive, 2019; Visual AIDS' Day With(out) Art Posters in the VA office. Images courtesy of Visual AIDS



pleasure having worked on ZOOM with Anastasia Matijkiw and Maggie Downing [CCAHA Manager of Digital Imaging] for the Archival Assessment Report during this stay-at-home order during COVID-19. They were both accessible and generous with their time throughout this online process.

Visual AIDS is a unique space that doesn't fit the traditional definition of an archive. How does having an Archival Needs Assessment help your organization?

Since the creation of the community-based Archive Project in 1994, this was Visual AIDS first professional archival assessment—we're excited to make headway in developing our strategic planning initiatives and drafting collections management policies in conversation with our Archive Committee and artist members. Building trust and rapport and centering our artist members' voices are essential to nurturing a thriving archival collection. The Archival Needs Assessment allowed us to develop some structure around protecting and building artist member's legacy work.

DHPSNY STATEWIDE DOCUMENTATION PLANNING

Notes from the Fourth Year

By John Diefenderfer, NYS Archives, Documentary Heritage Program

As part of the **Statewide Documentation Planning Project**, DHPSNY hosted eight planning sessions to engage historians, archivists, librarians, academics, activists, and others in conversations on the scope and meaning of local history. These **Conversations on Local History** were originally scheduled as in-person regional meetings from March through June 2020. However, these sessions went online in response to the coronavirus pandemic. These sessions, attended by over 180 individuals, generated spirited discussion and provided valuable insights into the work being done by collecting institutions across the State and will guide future activities of the **Documentary Heritage Program**.

The **Documentary Heritage Program (DHP)** of the **New York State Archives** was created in 1988 for the purpose of improving access to and diversifying the historical record in New York State. For more than 30 years the DHP has chosen to focus this work on specific topics that are under-represented in the historic record. Traditionally these topics were defined in consultation with the **New York State Historical Records Advisory Board (NYSHRAB)**. On behalf of the DHP, DHPSNY has implemented a more systematic approach to defining these topics by undertaking a statewide documentation planning effort. Initial research efforts, including a textual analysis of collection policies, identified local history as a common collecting focus for repositories in the State. To better understand what this means to collecting institutions, the DHPSNY Documentation Planning Project undertook an initiative called **Conversations On Local History**. The initiative included an online survey,

Facebook engagement, and the series of discussions mentioned above with historians, archivists, librarians, museum staff and others interested in preserving the history of New York State.

Each conversation was designed to explore the meanings of local history and begin to identify who is included in or missing from that history. The conversations also focused on how collecting institutions acquire materials for their collections, what challenges they face, and what resources are needed to support future local and statewide collecting activities.

Ultimately, the valuable insights shared by participants will inform the final Statewide Documentation Plan. This Plan will identify several under-documented topics in New York State history and key stakeholders for each topic. It will also include strategies for engaging those stakeholders and what resources are required to improve documentation of the marginalized communities and topics outlined in the plan. The recommendations will be used to revise the topical priorities for the Documentary Heritage Program grants as well as to adjust the types of projects funded by the DHP to better meet the needs of collecting institutions in NY.

The **Conversations on Local History** were a first step in engaging the historical records community served by DHPSNY in improving access to an equitable historical record in New York State. Building on the success of these conversations the Documentary Heritage Program looks forward to future collaboration with this community as we strive to empower New Yorkers to collect and define their histories.



Planning, Survey, and Assessment Sites across New York State

AWARDED FALL 2019 THROUGH SUMMER 2020

Archival Needs Assessments

- **Alice T. Miner Colonial Collection** (Chazy, Clinton County)
- **Bethel Woods Center for the Arts—The Museum at Bethel Woods** (Bethel, Sullivan County)
- **Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Historical Society** (Rochester, Monroe County)
- **Geneva Historical Society** (Geneva, Ontario County)
- **Greater Ridgewood Historical Society** (Ridgewood, Queens County)
- **Historical Society of the Town of Middletown** (Margaretville, Delaware County)
- **La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club Archives** (New York, New York County)
- **Landmark West! Inc.** (New York, New York County)
- **Montour Falls Memorial Library** (Montour Falls, Schuyler County)
- **Orchard Park Historical Society** (Orchard Park, Erie County)
- **Penfield Library, SUNY Oswego** (Oswego, Oswego County)
- **Russian History Foundation** (Jordanville, Herkimer County)
- **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe** (Akwesasne, St. Lawrence County)
- **Shaker Heritage Society** (Albany, Albany County)
- **Sojourner Truth Library, SUNY New Paltz** (New Paltz, Ulster County)
- **St. Lawrence County Historical Society** (Canton, St. Lawrence County)
- **The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.** (New York, New York County)
- **Thousand Islands Arts Center—Home of the Handweaving Museum** (Clayton, Jefferson County)



Russian History Foundation in Jordanville

- **Visual AIDS** (New York, New York County)
- **Western Monroe Historical Society—Morgan-Manning House** (Brockport, Monroe County)
- **Yeshiva University Archives** (New York, New York County)
- **Oskar Diethelm Library, DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry: History, Policy, and the Arts, Weill Cornell Medical College** (New York, New York County)
- **Rochester Institute of Technology** (Rochester, Monroe County)
- **Samuel de Champlain History Center** (Champlain, Clinton County)

Preservation Surveys

- **Albany County Historical Association** (Albany, Albany County)
- **Buffalo Broadcasters Association** (Williamsville, Erie County)
- **Cultural Center and Museum at the Poppenhusen Institute** (College Point, Queens County)
- **Daniel A. Reed Library Special Collections & Archives, SUNY Fredonia** (Fredonia, Chautauqua County)
- **Delaware County Historical Society** (Delhi, Delaware County)
- **Hudson Area Association Library** (Hudson, Columbia County)

Strategic Planning

- **Jefferson Historical Society** (Jefferson, Schoharie County)
- **Lyons Heritage Society** (Lyons, Wayne County)
- **Plattsburgh State Art Museum** (Plattsburgh, Clinton County)
- **Town of Clinton Historical Society** (Clinton Corners, Dutchess County)
- **Waterloo Library & Historic Site** (Waterloo, Seneca County)
- **Wilderstein** (Rhinebeck, Dutchess County)

QUESTIONS FOR OUR TEAM

Amanda Murray



What's your background? What prepared you for life at DHPSNY?

I've always been interested in working with museums, libraries, and archives. My background is in archives as well as photographic preservation and collections management, so I've spent time working between museums and libraries of all sizes throughout my career. I most recently worked as the Visual Materials Cataloger for Cornell University and spent time describing and housing photograph collections in the Rare and Manuscript Collection as well as at the Johnson Museum of Art. This experience working on projects with a variety of organizations has prepared me to be really nimble in working with different types of collections, which I think has been a huge asset to my work with DHPSNY. One of my favorite aspects of life at DHPSNY is that everyone on the team brings their own areas of expertise, so I'm constantly getting the opportunity to learn new things and expand my knowledge of preservation.

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

I've only gotten to travel to a few sites in person, but have gotten to work with some really great organizations both in person and virtually. I think visiting Diethelm Library at Weill Cornell was really special because it was my very first site visit, and I had just recently worked at the main Cornell campus in Ithaca. They have an incredible rare book collection and I really enjoyed spending the day there. A recent virtual site visit that was special for me as well was working with the Daniel A. Reed Library at SUNY Fredonia. I'm a Fredonia alum and it was really fun to get to work with such a familiar site, getting to interact with the fantastic staff and collection in a different capacity than when I was a student there. It was interesting to see what had changed and what was still as I remembered it!



What's your favorite part of being DHPSNY's Preservation Specialist so far?

Getting to know so many great people from different areas and seeing their fantastic collections! While a lot of that "visiting" has been virtual for me, I'm still really enjoying getting to know these different institutions and understanding more of the fascinating history collected across NYS. Also, the DHPSNY team is pretty fabulous, and I feel really lucky to be able to work with them.



Oskar Diethelm Library, DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry: History, Policy, and the Arts in NYC

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.

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 4,500 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's free 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.

157

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

1,202

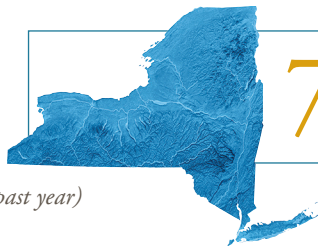
education program attendees (in past year)

26,988

page views (in past year)

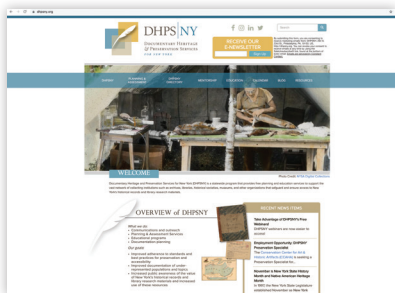
8,242

unique website visitors (in past year)



7,544

miles traveled in the past year by DHPSNY staff (67,093 total all time)



+    =

297,600

Because of your interactions with DHPSNY on our website and through social media, our message has made more than 297,600 total unique impressions on the professionals and volunteers around the State who help care for and safeguard New York's historical records.