



DHPS|NY news

DOCUMENTING DHPSNY'S ADVENTURES IN THE EMPIRE STATE

FALL 2021

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LOOKING BACK & LOOKING AHEAD: DHPSNY 2.0

Since the fall of 2020, **Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY)**

has seen a year of growth, enhancement, and renewal—setting in motion an exciting future for the statewide program. In November 2020, our team emphatically welcomed the news that DHPSNY services would continue uninterrupted for a second five-year iteration. This meant that our free training, advisory, and support services would remain available through 2025 to the sweeping constellation of over 5,000 collecting institutions that safeguard New York's historical records and library research materials.

After celebrating the news, the DHPSNY team immediately began to plan and implement thoughtful adjustments to our services. In addition to introducing new services and innovative strategies to more fully engage the entire spectrum of collecting institutions in New York, the team implemented important COVID-19 safety precautions and all-virtual services. While the team has missed traveling across the Empire State by plane, train, and car, we have thoroughly enjoyed zooming onto the screens of countless institutions in every corner of the State.

By the fall of 2021, we had successfully launched our first online courses, added 15 webinars to our website, and grew the total number of organizations that received Archival Needs Assessments, Strategic Planning Assistance, and Preservation and Condition Surveys to 173. Below are some highlights from the past year and plans for the future.

The DHPSNY Team Grows

Knowing the challenge ahead of us to produce useful and engaging educational content in an all-virtual environment, the DHPSNY team added a new position dedicated to developing and managing our webinars, online courses, mentorship program, and more. Liyah Desher joined the team as the first Education & Outreach Specialist in February 2021. With her experience working in education and public programming for collecting institutions prior to joining DHPSNY, she was able to hit the ground running as she joined Preservation Specialist Amanda Murray, Archives Specialist Kate Philipson, Communications Specialist Marissa Halderman, and Program Manager Anastasia Matijkiw to deliver meaningful services to New York State.

Online Courses

With a focus on new opportunities for New York organizations to develop and grow from home, we launched **DHPSNY Online Courses**. To huge fanfare, in June we premiered our first online course, "**Archives 101**," which covered archival management basics for individuals new to working with collections as well as those looking to refresh their knowledge. The program was conducted asynchronously over a four-week period,

ELECTRONIC BODY ARTS IS GOING TO SHOW ALBANY A THING OR TWO. or three.

Saturday, November 22nd 8:30 p.m.
JULIE SCHWARTZ, DAVID MOSS
A gifted vocalist, an exciting percussionist.
In Combination. In Concert. \$2.

Saturday, December 13th 8:30 p.m.
PHILIP GLASS Musician, Performer, Fulbright scholar, Composer for Ravi Shankar. Lecture w/music.
\$2. Funded in part by Meet the Composer, proj. Amer. Music Centr., funded by N.Y.S.C.A.

Sunday, December 21st 2:30 p.m.
ELECTRONIC BODY ARTS
"A Child's Christmas" Dance Theater fantasy for children. Kids \$1 Parent w/child \$1.



Above: Jefferson Cornet Band and bandstand, Jefferson County Historical Society.

Top: Electronic Body Arts, Inc. Guest Artist Flyer, 1974.

Continued on page 2

consisting of brief, pre-recorded lectures presented by DHPSNY staff; mini-quiz checkpoints to test participants' knowledge; interactive discussion boards; and comprehensive resource guides.

In the two weeks straddling September and October, we launched our second online course, **Understanding the 10 Agents of Deterioration**. The program covered the basic knowledge needed to identify and mitigate risks posed by the 10 agents of deterioration. In addition to pre-recorded lectures, discussion boards, and resources, DHPSNY staff hosted a series of Q&As to discuss the week's agents.



Mentorship 2021

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we opened applications for a fully virtual mentorship program in July. The DHPSNY Mentorship Program has been designed to create a community that supports those who care for the unique library research materials and archival collections in New York State. Our first meeting of cohorts in September had individuals at all points in their careers, including students, new and emerging professionals, established practitioners, and volunteers. The cohorts will continue to meet through early 2022.

Planning & Assessment Services

Equipped with lessons learned from transitioning in-person to virtual site visits throughout 2020, the DHPSNY team dedicated the early months of 2021 to reviewing and refining these services. In addition to implementing new strategies of how we conduct Archival Needs Assessments, Preservation Surveys, and Strategic Planning Assistance virtually, the team modified and launched new facets for programming designed to better support collecting institutions across the State.

Starting with sites awarded services in 2021, DHPSNY began offering opportunities to receive a half-day support program intended to strengthen our sites' ability to implement a recommendation from their assessment, survey, or strategic plan.

In August 2021, we also introduced Foundational Planning Assistance, a new addition to our Planning & Assessment Services. Designed as an informal and accessible process, this new service is geared towards organizations that may not feel they are ready to take part in the other DHPSNY services. It is designed to provide a framework for institutional advancement, with an emphasis on strengthening the organizational components needed for optimal collections stewardship. The overarching goal of Foundational Planning Assistance is to strengthen an organization's capacity and prepare them to engage in a comprehensive assessment within the next one to three years.

Celebrating a Year of Antiracism Resources & Future Antiracism Work

In August 2020, DHPSNY launched a new blog series: **Antiracism Resources**. As part of the diverse network of collecting institutions that safeguard and ensure access to historical records and library research materials across New York State, DHPSNY is committed to supporting antiracist work and amplifying the voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) working in archives, libraries, historical societies, and museums in New York. The series is a first step towards broadening this support, with the intention of sharing information and promoting resources in hopes of fostering discussion among collecting institutions in New York. The series is also focused on increasing access to and awareness of the documentary record that reflects these communities so we ensure that New York's story reflects all New Yorkers.

As we head into 2022, our work will grow beyond resource-sharing as we look to the future and determine where else DHPSNY can build on antiracist efforts throughout the State including The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Policy and Framework issued by the NYS Board of Regents and the

principles outlined by the New York State Historical Records Advisory Board in Every Voice Every Story. As part of this effort, we will present webinars, facilitated by **Aria Strategies LLC**, that focus on the fundamentals of antiracist actions as well as explore the work that collecting organizations must do to implement antiracist policies and systems. Additionally, we will conduct a series of **DHPSNY Dialogues**, with a variety of topics determined by our state-wide constituents. We expect that some of these conversations will include how antiracism work is essential for collecting institutions.



DHPSNY.ORG
Antiracism Resources: Inclusive Vendors in the Archives & Conservation Field | Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York

INTERVIEW:

Mandi Shepp, Coordinator of Special Collections & Archives, State University of New York at Fredonia



Mandi works with her colleague in Austria over Skype.

From her post as Paranormal Librarian at **Marion H. Skidmore Library** at the Lily Dale Assembly to her current role as Coordinator of Special Collections & Archives at the **Daniel A. Reed Library Special Collections & Archives at SUNY Fredonia**, Mandi Shepp has been an active member of the DHPSNY community since its inception. As the sole librarian at Skidmore Library, she applied for and was awarded an Archival Needs Assessment for the institution in 2016. After joining the larger staff at Reed Library, Mandi would apply for and receive for the institution DHPSNY Strategic Planning Assistance in 2019 and a virtual Preservation Survey in 2020. Here, we catch up with her on her unique experience of undergoing three

different DHPSNY services at two very different institutions as well as other avenues where she has both participated in and contributed to our program and larger community.

Can you tell us about some highlights working with DHPSNY over the past 5+ years?

My first experience with DHPSNY was while working at the Lily Dale Assembly as their Library Director, which was also a solo position. I applied for an Archives Assessment, as the library held some unprocessed archival collections and I wanted some outside advice on how to handle them, as I was somewhat early in my career still and I didn't feel entirely

comfortable making those decisions on my own. DHPSNY provided a succinct assessment of the collections and the building in an easily digestible report that I was able to share with my organization's board and executive director so that we could make informed decisions about how to improve the collections, their preservation environment, and what steps should be taken to achieve these tangible preservation/arrangement goals.

More recently, I have worked with DHPSNY while at SUNY Fredonia to create a strategic plan for the Special Collections & Archives Division through DHPSNY's Strategic Planning Assistance, which has been key in providing structured guidance that can be shared with the administration as well as the other members of the library staff to better communicate the need for specific improvements and projects. The latest assistance I have received from DHPSNY has been the Preservation Survey, which was conducted virtually in 2020, and has been critical in coordinating improvement efforts with administration, construction companies, and vendors, as well as underlining the importance of our collections to these groups.

I have also had the enjoyable experience of serving as a Field Reviewer for DHPSNY assistance applications, and I have thoroughly enjoyed this process. It's a wonderful way to become better acquainted with the collecting institutions across New York State, and to learn more about their stories, projects, and unique holdings. If you are interested in becoming a part of the



Archives Assessment at Lily Dale.

process of helping collecting institutions reach their organizational and preservation goals, being a Field Reviewer is an excellent way to get involved!

After serving as both a lone arranger and as part of a larger institution, do you have any advice or recommendations for institutions interested in DHPSNY?

The best advice that I can provide for anybody who is interested in working with DHPSNY is to give it a try! It may feel intimidating to reach out to a larger/ State-level organization for assistance, and I can definitely relate to the fear of being lost in the potential sea of applicants, but I can assure you that it's not at all the case with DHPSNY. Everyone at DHPSNY whom I have had the pleasure of working with has been very understanding of situations in both my lone arranger organization and my larger State organization, and are always willing to have a discussion to figure out a solution to the issues that I've come up against over the years.

Are you working on any current projects or future plans you would like to share?

Currently, I have been working with a team in Salzburg, Austria to update the arrangement and description of the Stefan Zweig Collection here to create an updated finding aid (currently the collection uses an



Correspondence materials from the Stefan Zweig Collection on display in Reed Library.

inventory that was created in 1979) and also to prepare the collection for digitization in the near future. Once digitized, the materials in the collection will be available for worldwide research and use through the Stefan Zweig Digital Project hosted by the Literature Archive of Salzburg and in collaboration with the University of Salzburg. This project began during the lockdown and has continued to operate virtually for the past year and a half, so our meetings are held over Skype and are aided with the use of a document camera. We are also implementing an international system

of shelfmarks, which will help provide a sort of "union catalog" for these digitized materials held in repositories and private collections across the world.

I'm also working on creating several new digital collections through the organization and arrangement of our University Collections, as we have a wide array of multimedia materials held in our collections, and I would like to see these materials digitized for preservation's sake as well as higher accessibility and discovery by members of the SUNY Fredonia campus and SUNY Fredonia alumni.

INTERVIEW:

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, dedicated to preserving the Mohawk's dynamic, influential culture, was awarded Strategic Planning Assistance in 2019 and became the first Federally Recognized Tribe to receive DHPSNY services. Then, in 2020 they were awarded a DHPSNY Archival Needs Assessment, which examined their archival program holistically through an external lens and facilitated archival work funded by a grant from the New York State Archives Documentary Heritage Program. In this interview, we caught up with Gail McDonald, Akwesasne Heritage Complex Project Developer, to learn about their DHPSNY Archival Needs Assessment experience and their busy past few years. You can find the full, unabridged version of this interview on the DHPSNY Blog at bit.ly/StRegisInterview.

First, can you tell us a little about the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe?

The Mohawk are traditionally the keepers of the Eastern Door of the Iroquois Confederacy, also known as the Six Nations Confederacy or the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Our original homeland is the northeastern region of New York State extending into southern Canada and Vermont. Prior to contact with Europeans, the Mohawk settlements populated the Mohawk Valley of New York State. Through the centuries Mohawk influence extended far beyond our territory.

Our location, as the Iroquois nation closest to Albany and Montreal, has



Akwesasne Museum's Basket Exhibit.

contributed directly to a long and beautifully complicated history.

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and recognized government of the Mohawk people. The Tribe is located in Akwesasne, New York.

The Tribe's Vision, Principles, Core Strategies, and a Strategic Plan 2020-2027 can be found on the Tribe's Website: <https://www.srmt-nsn.gov/about-the-tribe>.

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

Akwesasne has many artifacts and historical documents held in various locations across our territory as well as many historical belongings housed in museums, archives, and private collections.

Given our recent work with documenting our archival holdings and preparations for the construction of our new Heritage Center (new Library, Museum, Archive and Event Center) we have documented many of those holdings to support our planning and design processes to ensure we have the greatest protections in place for our valued historical items.

While we have many items to choose from, my personal favorite items are contained in the beautiful basket exhibit held at the Akwesasne Cultural Center Museum. This unique exhibit has been

created by a local Mohawk designer along with a skilled wood craftsman from our community who incorporated our traditional black ash tree splint basket weave into the exhibit itself. The baskets displayed represent the works of some of our most famous basket makers. The exhibit displays many unique Mohawk designs and features and the craftsmanship is extraordinary. If you ever have a chance, it is worth the visit to the Museum to view this exhibit and the other fine offerings.

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

Through the work we have done via DHPSNY, we have enjoyed a great partnership and sharing of information, resources, and networking. The application process was not complicated and we were grateful for the expertise shared in planning the many aspects of strategic planning and documentation and archival work. Akwesasne is a complicated community with its geographical and historical uniqueness—it didn't take too long to orientate the DHPSNY team and consultants to our uniqueness and the desire we have to develop our heritage facilities, programs, and services to address a one Akwesasne.



Planning, Survey, and Assessment Sites across New York State

AWARDED JANUARY 2021 THROUGH OCTOBER 2021

Archival Needs Assessments

- **Adirondack Mountain Club** (Lake George, Warren County)
- **Desmond-Fish Public Library** (Garrison, Putnam County)
- **Electronic Body Arts, Inc.** (Albany, Albany County)
- **The Garden Club of America** (New York, New York County)
- **Jefferson Historical Association & Museum** (Jefferson, Schoharie County)
- **Johnstown Public Library** (Johnstown, Fulton County)
- **Woodstock Public Library District** (Woodstock, Ulster County)

Preservation Surveys

- **Center for Social Justice & Human Understanding** (Selden, Suffolk County)
- **Howland Stone Store Museum** (Aurora, Cayuga County)
- **Shelter Island Historical Society** (Shelter Island, Suffolk County)

Strategic Planning

- **Clinton County Historical Association** (Plattsburgh, Clinton County)
- **Historical Society of Woodstock** (Woodstock, Ulster County)
- **International House** (New York, New York County)

- **Irish American Heritage Museum** (Albany, Albany County)
- **Richard F. Brush Gallery, St. Lawrence University** (Canton, St. Lawrence County)
- **Rose Archives of Drake Memorial Library, SUNY Brockport** (Brockport, Monroe County)



INTERVIEW: THE SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE *(continued from page 5)*

Given the impact of COVID-19, we quickly adapted to a virtual means to stay connected and to keep our progress moving forward. Our Working Group, comprised of key representatives from our Library, Museum and Archives, worked very well with the Program Manager Anastasia Matijkiw. The process was seamless and the feedback and comprehensive report provided were very well done and very helpful. We continue to remain in contact with Anastasia, which illustrates the commitment of the professionals in DHPSNY to working in an ongoing relationship of support.

Can you catch us up on some of your recent projects and progress on your strategic plan?

We have been extremely busy over the past 4 years developing our Heritage facilities and Cultural Tourism for Akwesasne—"Sharing the Mohawk Spirit". Our Tourism Team has made great strides in developing our infrastructure, working with consultants, community and organizations, and our cultural artisans to create the programs and services needed to support our community objectives.

We have been fortunate to seek and gain

some grant funding to help support the work efforts and enable us to plan for our new Heritage Center, an Art Gallery, and develop park spaces along the St. Regis Riverfront in Downtown Akwesasne—Skén:nen (Peace) Park. They are beautiful developments that are much needed. Our next task is to obtain the necessary capital funding to get these projects moving forward.

If anyone would like more information on the work we have undertaken, we are more than happy to discuss, contact me at: gail.mcdonald@srmt-nsn.gov.

In closing, we have been very pleased with our work and partnership with DHPSNY.

QUESTIONS FOR OUR TEAM

Liyah Desher



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

Before I joined the DHPSNY team I was the Preservation Services Assistant at CCAHA, so I already knew all about the program and was already friends with everyone on the team before joining the project! I don't think I have ever felt more prepared for a new job, because to me the scariest part of starting somewhere new is always wondering if you are going to get along with your new co-workers. Before CCAHA I worked in a few different libraries and museums in the Philadelphia region, typically in education and public programming positions, while getting my degree at Drexel University.

You are the first DHPSNY Education and Outreach Specialist. What part of the position have you enjoyed the most so far?

My favorite part of this position so far definitely is getting to work with such a wide variety of folks from all different types of institutions that focus on so many different topics. Each educational program that we produce is different from the last, so that always keeps me interested and on my toes.

I am not the type of person who enjoys doing the same thing every day, so it is really fun for me to have something new to work on all the time!

Do you have a favorite NYS location?

Probably the Adirondack mountains. I enjoy hiking and camping, and there are so many great spots there so every time feels new and exciting. If I had to pick a specific spot in the Adirondacks it would be Lake George, especially in the late summer when the water has warmed up enough to swim in. The water is so clear, and every bit of the coastline is gorgeous. There's something about the way the mountains are right next to the water's edge that I just love!

However, there is still so much of the state that I haven't seen yet, so I am always looking for new places to go and explore!



Liyah with cat coworker Bandit.

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 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'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.

173

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

2,100

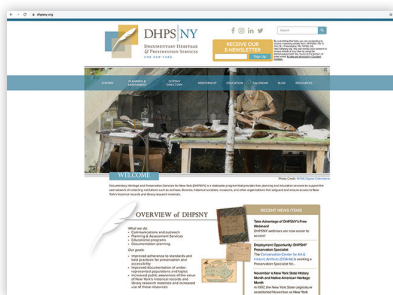
education program attendees (in past year)




59,857

page views (in past year)

21,096

unique website visitors (in past year)



+    = 809,061

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.