



**TO:** Cultural Education Committee

**FROM:** Elizabeth R. Berlin *Elizabeth R. Berlin*

**SUBJECT:** New York State History Month Activities

**DATE:** November 9, 2015

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *Mary Ellen Elin*

**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Discussion**

November is New York State History Month. This is a time to celebrate New York State history and the work of New York State's historians.

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, Section 57.02, designates November as New York State History Month as a celebration of state history and contributions of state and local government historians. The law authorizes the Education Department to undertake projects to recognize the month.

**Background Information**

The New York State Museum working with the New York State Archives, New York State Library, Museum Association of New York, the New York Academy of History, the Association of Public Historians, Path Through History, I Love New York, and the NYS Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation to get the message out about New York State History Month

The Museum has created a New York State History Month logo for statewide use and website that features educational resources, a schedule of History Month programs at the Museum, and a "New York Minutes" page featuring a New York State history fact of the day throughout November: <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/historymonth/>.

The museum history office and museum education department coordinates statewide activities in November and throughout the year with the state's many history

museums, historical organizations, and the network of officially designated municipal historians.

Listed below are the State Museum's History Month activities and statewide initiatives with cooperating organizations

State Museum Activities:

Provision of a specially designed logo and press kit to be used by any New York State organization sponsoring History Month activities.

History Month web page listing Museum, Library, and Archives resources and offerings and linking to activities sponsored by cooperating institutions statewide.

"New York Minutes," a web and social media feature showing significant statewide historical events for each day in November.

The State Museum is working with Teaching the Hudson Valley to specifically reach out to teachers and give them ideas on how to use NYS History month in their classrooms. This was followed up with a blog post and social media posts throughout the month.

Film Presentation: "Grand Central Station" (November 1)

Lecture and book signing: Senior Historian Emeritus John Scherer presents his new book, *Art for the People: The Weitsman Collection of Decorated Stoneware* at the New York State Museum

Program: Behind the Scenes Tour of the NYSM History Collections (November 15)

Gallery Talks: Lead by Museum historians/curators (November 5, 12, 15, & 19)

Family Program: Let's Go Take a Trip through Metropolis Hall (November 7)

Family Program: Art program in conjunction with Represent: Contemporary Art of Native Americans (November 8)

Family Program: A Day in the Life of the Shakers (November 28)

Family Program: Shaker Weaving Project (November 29)

Statewide Initiatives: Statewide History Month activities are listed through the I Love New York website.

External History Month programs with NYSM Staff:

Lecture/Interview: Senior Historian Jennifer Lemak interviews Albany Bishop Emeritus Howard Hubbard on his involvement with the civil rights movement in Albany (November 1)

Lecture/Book Reading: NYSM History Technician, Ashley Hopkins-Benton will lecture and read from her book: *Breathing Life into Stone: The Life of Henry DiSpirito*, Utica (November 1)

Lecture: NYSM Fellow Matthew DeLaMater, *The Most Notoriously Isolated Community in New York: Long Lake in the 1840s*, presenting at UA Researching NY Conference (November 19)

University at Albany Researching New York Conference: Programs will be held at the Museum. Museum Director Mark Schaming and Senior Historian Jennifer Lemak will discuss the history of the NYSM exhibits and the Gallery Renewal. NYSM History staff will give gallery talks. There will also be a special presentation by Ginger Strand about her book: *The Brothers Vonnegut: Bernard Vonnegut and Kurt Vonnegut in GE's House of Magic*. (November 19 & 20)