



# ASSOCIATION UPDATE

WINTER 2010-2011

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## RMSC Hosts Successful Annual Meeting

WNYAHA held a very successful annual meeting November 13 at the Rochester Museum & Science Center. Attendees were pleased with the program, which included presentations by Anne Ackerson of MANY and Catherine Gilbert of Museumwise; a presentation by Niagara County Historian Kate Emerson on Civil War Sailor Michael Huskey; and behind the scenes tours of the museum's collections storage. The highlight of the day, however, was the inspirational speech given by Lynne Belluscio. In addition to being the Director of the Leroy Historical Society and Jell-O Museum, Belluscio is a former President of The Association of Living History, Farm & Agriculture Museums (ALHFAM), and a former long-time President of WNYAHA. An abridged version of her speech is included in this newsletter. Also in this issue, are the list of award winners, and photos of the annual meeting, as well as the usual information about grants, workshops and news about our members.

2010 has been a challenging year for WNYAHA, as we know it has been for many of you. Government cutbacks at all levels, and a less than robust economy (to put it mildly), has resulted in fewer resources for all non-profit organizations. WNYAHA has attended roundtables hosted by the Museum Association of New York (MANY), discussing the needs of local historical and heritage organizations. According to their fact sheet *New York State's Museums: Building Communities*, "74% of businesses recognize that it is important to have an active arts community where they operate. Nonprofit arts organizations, which spend \$55.4 million each year, leverage a remarkable \$37.4 million in additional spending by arts audiences - spending that pumps vital revenue into local restaurants, hotels, retail stores, parking garages and other businesses."



Lynne Belluscio, director of the Leroy Historical Society and the Jell-O Museum, and former long-time President of WNYAHA cuts the cake at the annual meeting while current President Melissa Brown looks on. WNYAHA celebrated its 25th anniversary at the Rochester Museum and Science Center November 13. More pictures from the annual meeting on page 4.

Photo by Susan Eck

**Don't forget, your membership expires at the end of the year!  
Renew your membership now, using the form on the back page.**

# Rekindling the Passion *By Lynne Belluscio*

*Editor's note: The following is an abridged version of the keynote speech given at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary annual meeting at the Rochester Museum & Science Center in Rochester on November 13.*

Twenty five years ago, the Western New York Association of Historical Agencies was organized to provide a forum for museums and historical organizations to share ideas and seek solutions to problems that were common to all its members in this part of the state. Patterned after similar organizations in the central part of New York and along the Hudson River, it became one of three service agencies supported by the New York State Council on the Arts. But through the course of time, funding sources dried up and WNYAHA found that it had to go it alone. The organization now exists primarily as a volunteer organization. A lot has happened over the last twenty five years. But I am not here to review the past. After all, history is a guidepost not a hitching post.

When your children celebrate their twenty fifth birthday, you certainly hope they are well on their way to being independent and self sufficient. But in today's workplace we know that it is rare that they will collect a gold watch after 25 years of service and more than likely, they will not retire from the same company – much less the same profession that they embarked on. I don't know if it is because we all have a shorter attention span, or a lack of focus. Perhaps it has more to do with the necessity to change with the times and to upgrade the software.

Unfortunately, the state has continued to charter museums and organization but does not provide support or guidance. I believe that more than ever, there is a need for an organization like WNYAHA, but after twenty five years, does this organization have the energy and expertise to continue? For that matter, how many of the organizations that you represent are in the same situation? How many

times do we hear that it's hard to get members, or volunteers, or people who are committed? I think I've heard the same concerns for twenty five years. Sometimes I think it's like a marriage. How many times have we heard that a couple stayed together – just for the sake of the kids. But of course, we know what happens when the kids leave home. The challenge is how to put the passion back into the marriage. I think that in many ways, this applies to everything we do.

Passion is an emotional topic. I know it might sound provocative. Maybe a little too sensuous. And I am sure, some of you are thinking that I'm bringing it up just to catch your attention. I thought about commitment and that missed the mark. Dedication – now there's a topic – we could rededicate ourselves. No, I want to talk about passion.

Now before you get nervous, this is not an R rated talk. My premise is that the trends that we are experiencing might have something to do with our passion – the loss of it, the lack of it, or the notion there isn't a place for it in our profession. Tennyson wrote: "Passion is the element in which we live; without it we hardly vegetate." The decline in passion occurs when we have to concentrate on the business of what we do, rather than the pleasure of what we do. It happens when we don't have time to enjoy what we do. It happens when we take ourselves too seriously. It happens when we get burned out. It happens when we get too close to what we are doing, and don't have the opportunity to stand back and admire the beauty of what we have created. It happens when we are afraid to make mistakes. It happens when we lose sight of our mission and our vision.

I did a Google search to find out who else was concerned about lost passion. Not surprising, teachers and nurses are concerned about regaining their passion for their professions. But of course the websites that are the most prevalent are those dealing with rekindling passion in relationships and marriages. It makes for interesting reading. There are a myriad of suggestions. Some are too explicit to be repeated here. But I think there are some ideas that can be applied. Almost

all of the advice for improving relationships is quick to point out that we need to revisit what first attracted us to this other person. But this also applies to jobs and organizations. What were our hopes and dreams? What enticed us to become involved? Why did we think this was what we wanted to do? It requires some introspection. Why did a group of people believe that it was important to create an organization that would provide support and expertise to small museums and historical societies? And what brought a group of people together who were willing to dedicate time and expertise to help other institutions? What did WNYAHA offer its members? Was it more relevant then?

Sometimes after a 25 year marriage, it becomes boring. It's the same thing over and over. There's nothing new. We become complacent. Just because it was good twenty five years ago, doesn't mean that it is good now. Change can keep the relationship fresh – but change for the sake of change isn't always the answer. With that said, I also think that we need to get over the notion that "Well, we tried that ten years ago and it didn't work." That is a pitfall that we need to keep in mind. Change can help a relationship, or it can destroy it. The same is true for an organization.

Entire books have been written about making changes. No matter what happens, it is important that everyone buys into the decision to change. It can be counterproductive to have people pulling in another direction when you have agreed on a new mission or a new strategic plan. Getting to the point of change can be laborious, tedious, and challenging. In a marriage, it might be necessary to call in a counselor. An organization needs a facilitator – a person with no stake in the outcome, but a person who can guide you along the path that results in a new direction.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Grants News & Notes

Through the National Endowment for the Humanities' Preservation Assistance Grants (PAG) program, small and mid-sized institutions—such as libraries, museums, historical societies, archival repositories, cultural organizations, town and county records offices, and colleges and universities—can apply for up to \$6,000 to improve their ability to preserve and care for their humanities collections.

**Funding May Provide:** General preservation assessments, collection-level surveys or item-level surveys; long-term preservation plans; disaster preparedness and response plans; consultation to develop a plan to address a specific preservation problem; attendance at preservation workshops; purchase of preservation supplies, equipment and furniture.

**Grant Amount:** Grants up to \$6,000 will be awarded. No matching funds are required.

**Deadline:** May 3, 2011

**Eligible Organizations:** United States non-profit organizations;

state and local government agencies.

**Complete Guidelines:** Visit the NEH PAG page

**Applications for PAG must be submitted through grants.gov, the government-wide grants portal. For more information, visit the NEH grants website.**



## Grants to Support Costume Collections in Small Museums

### Purpose

Small Museums Collection Care Grants are intended to assist the costume and textiles collections of small museums (including historical societies, historic houses or sites, and other similar institutions) that have very limited budget and staff. Funding may be used to support the care, conservation, and/or exhibition of costume and textiles that have historic, regional, or other significance and are intended for preservation.

### Description

Up to two \$1,500.00 grants to support costume in small museums are awarded annually. These Grants, first awarded in 2003, may be used for appropriate supplies or display items, the services of a consultant or specialist, or other projects which relate directly to the institution's costume collection and foster the care or use of the collection at a level appropriate to the particular collection's most pressing needs.

### Eligibility

Institutions applying for a Grant must meet the following requirements: have very limited budget and staff to support their costume collection. The project must relate to maintaining the costume and textile collection; fall into the small museum category, which includes historical societies, historic houses or sites, or other similar institutions; be a non-profit organization as recognized under IRS Section 501; be regularly open to the public for a minimum of forty days per year;

*(continued on page 7)*

## WNYAHA Awards Given at Annual Meeting

At the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary annual meeting on November 13, WNYAHA gave out the following awards:

**An Individual Lifetime Achievement Award to Eunice Chesnut**, historian with the Western Monroe Historical Society/Morgan-Manning House in Brockport. The award was given in recognition of her work, *The Encyclopedia of Brockport*, published this year, as well as numerous other publications.

**Organizational Achievement Awards included:**

**For programming: Angelica Booster Citizens, Inc.**, for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary tour of Villa Belvidere, a privately owned mansion in Angelica, NY.

**For publications: Stafford Historical Society**, for the DVD, "Grace Woodworth Interview 2007." Re-edited in 2009 with added images, music & sound effects, this DVD provides a unique example of how an oral history interview can be made more relevant and informative, giving a new dimension to the Historical Society's archives.

**For special projects: Lockport Old Home Week 1910-2010.** The committee, chaired by Jay and Therese Krull, produced a week-long series of 80 anniversary events, commemorating the original Old Home Week, held in 1910.

**A special recognition award was given to the Oakfield Historical Society** for the opening of their new museum at 7 Maple Avenue, Oakfield, NY. This new museum opened after many years of effort in finding a home for the Historical Society.

# 25th Anniversary Annual Meeting at RMSC



Top left: Catherine Roth accepts an award for the Stafford Historical Society from Jean Neff of the Amherst Museum.

Top right: Attendees network during a break in the program.

Center: 25th anniversary cake.

Bottom left: attendees during lunch in the ballroom.

Bottom right: David Haggstrom accepts an award for the Angelica Booster Citizens, Inc.

*Photos by Susan Eck*



# Conferences & Workshops

The Museum Association of New York (MANY) and Museumwise (formerly the Upstate History Alliance) will be holding their annual conference, *Museums in Conversation*, April 3-5, 2011 at the Hyatt Regency, Buffalo NY.

This year's focus is "How Do We Prove The Value of Museums?" The program includes some very exciting speakers. These include Barbara Soren, independent consultant and Coordinator of the Knowledge Media Design (KMD) Collaborative Program at University of Toronto, will facilitate conversations to develop a shared set of value indicators. Marsha Semmel, Acting Director of the Institute for Museum & Library Services will be the keynote speaker.

The *Museums in Conversation Conference* will be held at the Hyatt Regency at Two Fountain Plaza in Buffalo, NY. A special rate of \$119/night for a single or double room has been negotiated for conference participants. A limited number of rooms are available on a first-come, first-

served basis. Please use reservation code: Museums in Conversation. Reservations must be made by March 9, 2011.

## Building Leaders in State and Local History:

### 2010-11 Workshop Series

Improve your knowledge and skills through AASLH's workshop series. AASLH online and onsite workshops are developed by respected professionals in the field. Class size is limited to give you the best professional development experience possible so register early! For over half a century AASLH has offered high-quality professional development workshops. Our formula for success is thoughtful planning, excellent faculty, comprehensive curriculum materials, tried and true teaching methods in a compact schedule, an inspiring and welcoming host institution, and a very reasonable registration fee.

### Online Workshops

Dates: January 10-February 4, 2011

(Registration Now Open)

Time/Duration: 15-20 hours to be completed anytime during the above dates

### Board Development 101 Webinar

Dates: February 8 and 15, 2011

(Registration Now Open)

Time/Duration: 2-3:30 pm eastern; Two 1.5 hour sessions, plus homework

### Are You Really Ready for Volunteers?

Dates: March 1-30, 2011

(Registration Opens 1/4)

Time/Duration: 2-5 hours to be completed anytime during the above dates.

### Onsite Workshops

#### Museum Education 101

Dates: March 7-8, 2011

Location: Traveller's Rest Plantation, Nashville, TN

#### Historic House Museums Issues and Operations

Dates: March 24-25, 2011

Location: The Molly Brown House, Denver, CO.

#### Exhibit Makeovers

Dates: April 28-29, 2011

Location: Chicago History Museum, Chicago, IL

For more information or to register by phone or mail, contact Bethany Hawkins, Program Associate, at 615-320-3203 or by email to [hawkins@aaslh.org](mailto:hawkins@aaslh.org)

## Cobblestone Museum Celebrates 50th Anniversary with New Director

After nearly 40 years, C. W. "Bill" Lattin has retired as Director and curator of the Cobblestone Society & Museum, in Childs, Orleans County, NY. The society recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Founded in 1960, the Cobblestone Society was formed when a group of approximately 60 people got together to preserve the 1834 cobblestone Universalist Church in Childs. The Museum complex now has 18 buildings. Leaders of the

group included Bill Lattin's father, Orleans County Historian Cary Lattin, and Robert Frasch, a teacher in Holley. Bill Lattin was teaching art at Albion High School when he was appointed curator in 1970. He was also appointed Orleans County Historian in 1979, a position he continues to hold. Succeeding Lattin as Director is Deborah Brundage. She began her museum career as a volunteer at the Stone-Tolan House in Rochester. Prior to her appointment as Director, Brundage was

the manager of School and Family Programs for the Farmers Museum and NY State Historical Association in Cooperstown. A native of Webster, NY, Brundage has taught in Bangkok, Thailand and Osaka, Japan, and at the Strong Museum in Rochester. The Cobblestone Museum is located on Route 104 in Childs, NY, in Orleans County, and is registered as a National Historic Landmark.

## Rekindling the Passion (continued from page 2)

One of the important aspects of developing a better relationship and rediscovering the passion for what we do is to open up lines of communication.

It is imperative to communicate – to share ideas and to listen. It is critical to provide a climate that allows good communication. Between partners, we all know that we often don't communicate well – especially after twenty five years. For an organization it's hard to keep the lines of communication open. Many of our organizations use newsletters to communicate with our members. But we need to ask ourselves, with all the printed material that we receive in the mail, what makes our newsletters something that our members want. What do we include in our newsletters? Who is writing our newsletters? Some people become members just because of the newsletter. So sometimes we need to take a hard look at the quality of our newsletters. Is the newsletter communicating with our members? And of course, we need to look at internet communication. Can people access your newsletter through a website? Or can they communicate with your organization through the internet? And what about the old phone call? A lot of our organizations do not have readily accessible phone numbers. Is there something that can remedy that? If someone wants to get in contact with your organization by phone or the internet, is that possible? Is that information out of date? Where is that information available? Does anyone return the call or the email?

A couple of years ago I discovered a great book. Serene Suchy's *Leading with Passion: Change Management in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum*. Dr. Suchy is an organization development specialist. When she gave the title of her book to her publishers, she was asked what sex had to do with leadership. Another was concerned about the media attention and the title of her book. Suchy explained her reasons for choosing the word passion much better than I can, but in essence passion is doing what we love – an emotional force that evokes contagious enthusiasm. I'd like to share some of Dr. Suchy's insight in a few

minutes. How many times have we sat around and talked about the new museums springing up all over? How they are built with enthusiastic and dedicated people with a new passion for history. And those of us connected with long established museums wonder, what we are lacking? Maybe . . . just maybe, it has something to do with passion.

Sometimes when a relationship becomes institutionalized the focus changes to other interests – finances, rearing children, and hobbies. It becomes a challenge to keep the relationship as the primary concern. This happens in our museums. I think of the board meetings and staff meetings I have attended where the main item on the agenda is fund raising, or investment accounts, museum shops, food service, gift shops, attendance. Just recently I spent the better part of the day trying to find a new garbage service. I never did get a chance to work on the new exhibit. Faced with the business aspect of the history business, many museums have looked to the business community for guidance. But we need to be careful, because this can take our attention away from our mission – the core of what we do.

In the foreword of Suchy's book, the Chair of the Department of Organizational Behavior at the Weatherhead School of Management of Case Western Reserve University comments: "[Suchy] helps people find their way around the 'business-speak' and away from the trivial notions of making museums more like businesses." Let me repeat that: ***away from the trivial notions of making museums more like businesses.*** That statement certainly caught my attention. That's no easy feat in today's museum where leaders are often recruited from the business community with the thought that they can "turn the museum around."

Suchy actually accepts the fact that the museum community is tapping the business world for leaders, but she argues that the most effective

museum leaders are those that accept and exhibit passion for the mission of the museum. She maintains that leaders need to utilize EQ or Emotional Intelligence. They may come from the business segment, but they know how to utilize the energy of their staff.

She states that in many workplaces, the word professional means unemotional. Yet her research shows that passionate workers are more fulfilled and more supportive of the organization and they take responsibility and become advocates for the organization. They make commitments to wider organizational goals. However, to involve passion in the workplace and to create what she calls flow, it is necessary to have clear intentions on which people can focus their energy. There needs to be a sense of caring which means providing material and moral support and there needs to be trust. In her research she interviewed many museum directors for their thoughts on successful leadership and succession planning. Many of them shared their personal passions and how that was conveyed through their museum work.

Paraphrasing one interview: "My passion is about bringing great experiences. . . bringing people in touch with the real thing . . . we expect everything to be self-evident but there's no time to decode and without a code you can't see it . . . we are about being a catalyst for changes in perception, for how we see our world. " It is important – no, vital – to understand the mission of what we do. Then we can ask "What is the purpose of the relationship?" This is true for museums and it is true for WNYAHA. Although WNYAHA has been around for 25 years, are we certain that we understand our mission and purpose?

"Leading with passion means allowing feelings to guide change in an emotionally responsible way . . . The cultural industry sector seems to attract passionate people. Attracting and directing passionate people toward a shared vision can be tricky."

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Grants News & Notes (continued from page 3)

have a collection of tangible costume objects; propose a project relating to maintaining the costume and textile collection.

To accept a Grant, an institution must be or become an Institutional Member of the Costume Society of America or have an active staff member who is an Individual CSA member. An institution is not eligible to receive a Grant more than once in three years.

### Application Deadline

Completed applications and relevant documentation must be post-marked by February 1.

### Application Procedure

Complete the application and send five copies, together with any relevant documentation and supporting material, to:

Chair, Small Museum Collection Care Grants  
The Costume Society of America  
390 Amwell Road, Suite 402  
Hillsborough, NJ, USA 08844

### Selection Criteria

CSA's Grants to Support Costume in Small Museums are intended to make a dramatic beneficial impact on the receiving institution's costume collections. There is no set limit on institutional budget size, since the field of candidates may vary from year to year; however, budget size and access to other financial resources will be taken into account when selecting grant recipients, with strong preference given to institutions with very limited budget and resources.

**Applications will be judged by:** high impact of the project on collection's well-being and mission; feasi-

bility of the project in terms of budget, time line, and personnel to carry it out; significance of the collection

**For more information call 1-800-CSA-9447 or contact:**

**The Costume Society of America**  
390 Amwell Road, Suite 402  
Hillsborough, NJ, USA 08844.



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## Rekindling the Passion (continued from page 6)

But, as she points out, omitting passion and passionate people from decisions is a mistake.

It takes a certain amount of energy to rekindle your passions. And it certainly takes time. It doesn't happen overnight. It takes commitment and dedication. It gives us purpose. It makes us vulnerable and we know we can't fake it. Lost passion is tragic. If we are to retain our purpose and to give meaning to what we do, we need to define our passions. We are, I believe, after all, passionate about what we do.

I have always been a baseball fan and one of my favorite movies is Bull Durham. There's many things about the movie that I love. First and foremost, it tells a story about a man who loves the game – not for the money or the fame, but the pure joy of playing baseball.

And of course I always wanted to understand baseball as well as Annie Savoy, but one of the most memorable and passionate is scenes is when Crash Davis recites to Annie what he believes in. Here is my parody:

I believe that history is not written in stone; that museum is not a four letter word; that small museums have collections that are as significant as large ones; that a vision statement is more important than a mission statement; that a strategic plan is only good when everyone buys into it; that general operating grants are a path to financial disaster; that grants can't solve all the problems; that we can't collect everything; that losing members is an indication that we aren't giving them what they need; that most people don't have a good grasp of American history; that kids love old stuff; that teachers are trapped into teaching

for the test and their students are the losers; that academic historians were lured into history by museums; I believe that the only successful people are those who have the passion for what they are doing and share that passion with others.

## ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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**Advertise your museum/historical society, service or product in the newsletter. Discounted rates for WNYAHA members! The ASSOCIATION UPDATE goes to our members in a 12 county region (and beyond!)**

Ad size	Non-member/issue	Member/issue	Non-member annual (4 issues)	Member annual (4 issues)
Full page	\$150.00	\$100.00	\$450.00	\$300.00
½ page	\$110.00	\$80.00	330.00	\$240.00
¼ page	\$75.00	\$50.00	\$225.00	\$150.00
1/8 page	\$40.00	\$30.00	\$120.00	\$90.00
1/16 page (business card size)	\$25.00	\$15.00	\$75.00	\$45.00

Organizational Supporting members get 1 free ad (1/8 page)! For more information, contact the WNYAHA office at P.O. Box 39 Getzville, NY 14068, or by phone (716) 539-6293 or email wnyaha@yahoo.com.

## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Categories:

Student \$15 \_\_\_ Individual \$30 \_\_\_ Organizational \$50 \_\_\_ Organizational Supporting \$100 \_\_\_

Yes! I would like to make an additional contribution: \$10 \_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail Check or money order to:

Western New York Association of Historical Agencies, P.O Box 39, Getzville, NY 14068

Phone: (716) 439-6293 email: wnyaha@yahoo.com

Winter 2010-2011