

May 2022



History Happenings

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Last Month at The History Center...

Opening of 'reCOUNT: Facing Our Census'

Thank you to all our 2021 supporters who joined us for the 'First Glimpse' private opening of [reCOUNT](#) on March 31st!

[reCOUNT: Facing our Census](#) offers visitors a new way to engage with the census. Instead of an overwhelming set of numbers and data aligned in tables and charts, the exhibit builds human connections to the people behind the statistics. The interplay of historical narratives from historian Eve Snyder, and exhibit design by Cindy Kjellander-Cantu, asks us to reflect critically and interactively on "WHO counts" and who does the counting.



If you haven't made it in yet, [come visit us!](#) We are a mask-friendly space during all open hours, but private fully masked visits can still be scheduled in advance for your comfort (contact community@thehistorycenter.net).

Thank you to WHCU Radio and IthacaWeek for covering the opening of our new exhibit!

[WHCU Radio Ithaca's Morning News interviews Ben Sandberg - 4/18/2022](#)

[IthacaWeek's Alyshia Korba 'Storytelling Through the Census' - 4/19/2022](#)



Join us for Guided Tours of Downtown!

The History Center in Tompkins County offers [guided, thematic tours](#) that explore different parts of Tompkins County history. Specific tours are scheduled at various points throughout the year and vary in availability.

In April 2022 we debuted our 'Around the Block Tours', and are offering Commencement Week tours for both [Ithaca College](#) and [Cornell University](#) in May 2022.

Keep an eye out for **'Prohibition Era Ithaca'** - Dates will be announced in late May for July tour dates.

A DOWNTOWN HISTORY OF ITHACA COLLEGE



2022 COMMENCEMENT WEEK TOURS
MAY 19TH, 20TH, & 21ST
2PM & 5PM



UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday-Saturday - **EXHIBIT HALL IS OPEN!**
10am-5pm

[Hours & Safety Guidelines](#)

MAY is [ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH!](#) Explore local Pan-Asian history, virtual exhibits and learning materials [here](#).

MAY is [JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH!](#)

Explore [HistoryForge.net](#) to find Ithaca's earliest Jewish residents.

Thurs - May 5th - [CHAT New Research on Early Asian Residents w/ Claire Deng](#) - 5:30-6:30pm

Fri - May 6th - EXHIBIT OPENING/GALLERY NIGHT - [Unfolding: A Timeline on Sexual Assault Activism in Tompkins County](#) - 5-8pm @CAP ArtSpace inside the Tompkins Center for History & Culture. FREE drop-in program.

Sat - May 7th - [Mailed with Love Cardmaking Workshop](#) 1-4pm. FREE drop-in program.

Weds - May 18th - [Screening & Discussion of Our Founding Mothers](#) - 5:30-6:30pm. FREE drop-in program.

Guided Tour - [Downtown History of Ithaca College](#) - 5/19, 5/20, 5/21. \$15/person

A Downtown History of CORNELL

MAKE SURE YOU
CATCH THE
UNKNOWN AND
UNTOLD STORIES OF
DOWNTOWN
CORNELL!



2022 COMMENCEMENT WEEK TOURS
MAY 25TH, 26TH, 27TH, & 28TH
2PM & 5PM

THE HISTORY
CENTER
in Tompkins County

Guided Tour - [Downtown
History of Cornell University](#)
- 5/25, 5/26, 5/27, 5/28.
\$15/person

UPCOMING:

- 6/18 - Annual Juneteenth Festival
- 6/26 - Shortstop Classic - Vintage Baseball at Taughannock Park
- 6/29 - Screening of 'Lavender Hill'
- July - Guided Tours on 'Prohibition Era Ithaca'

We are seeking [volunteer docents](#) for our summer and fall seasons to greet the public and share knowledge with visitors in the [Exhibit Hall](#). No previous experience or familiarity with local history necessary, we offer monthly training opportunities.

The opportunity is flexible; docents can specialize in one topic or a particular exhibit, give weekly tours, or volunteer only during the semester or summer if they live elsewhere for part of the year. Volunteer shifts can range from 2-10 hours per week, and are organized in coordination with docents availability and personal needs.

Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with interest or questions.



[UNFOLDING: A Timeline of Sexual Assault Activism in Tompkins County - OPENS MAY 6TH](#)

On display May & June 2022 in the CAP ArtSpace/Gallery - M-Sat 10am-5pm

['Unfolding: A Timeline of Sexual Assault Activism in Tompkins County'](#) features [Clothesline Project](#) artwork by local survivors of sexual and domestic/relationship abuse displayed alongside a timeline of victim/survivor support and prevention efforts in Tompkins County from the 1970's to the present day.

The [Advocacy Center of Tompkins County](#) has been providing sexual abuse support services in Tompkins County for over 40 years. This exhibit honors the voices of local survivors and the organizations that have supported them.

UNFOLDING MAY EVENTS

- Friday May 6th - 5-8pm - **Exhibit Opening in tandem with First Friday Gallery Night in Downtown Ithaca**
- Saturday May 7th - 1-4pm - **Mailed with Love - Card & Envelope Making Workshop**
- Wednesday May 18th - 5:30-6:30pm - **Documentary Screening & Discussion of 'Our Founding Mothers'**

THE HISTORY CENTER & ADVOCACY CENTER OF TOMPKINS COUNTY PRESENT

UNFOLDING
A TIMELINE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT ACTIVISM IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

ON DISPLAY May & June 2022
at the
CAP ArtSpace/Gallery - First Floor
Tompkins Center for History & Culture
110 N. Tioga St, Ithaca NY 14850
Open Monday-Saturday 10-5pm

Entrance on "Bank Alley" on the Ithaca Commons
Opening Friday, May 6th as part of First Friday Gallery Night

Details at www.thehistorycenter.net/Unfolding

MAILED WITH LOVE
Saturday 5/7
1-4pm Drop-In Cardmaking Workshop @ CAP ArtSpace
Stop by Saturday and craft a card with us! Decorate cards, fold your own art envelopes and share thoughts. Craft materials provided. All ages welcome!

UNFOLDING Features
Clothesline Project artwork by local survivors of sexual and relationship abuse displayed alongside a timeline of victim/survivor support and prevention efforts in Tompkins County from the 1970's to the present day.

SCREENING OF 'OUR FOUNDING MOTHERS'
Wednesday 5/18
5:30-6:30pm @ CAP ArtSpace
Join us for this half hour documentary featuring interviews with the powerful women who founded Domestic Violence and Child Sexual Abuse Services in Tompkins County.

Contact Zoë Van Nostrand at community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions.

THE HISTORY CENTER
www.thehistorycenter.net

24-HOUR HOTLINE
607-277-5000
Advocacy CENTER
www.actompkins.org

reCOUNT
Facing Our Future

COMMUNITY ARTS PARTNERSHIP

This exhibit is open to the public Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm throughout May & June 2022.

The History Center's Inaugural CHAT Puts Deaf History into Focus

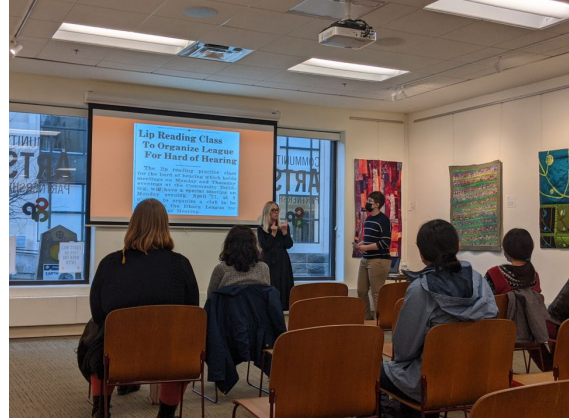
Article by Jay Bradley - IthacaWeek

The inaugural CHAT, or Community History Across Tompkins event took place the evening of April 7 at the Community Arts Partnership ArtSpace and Gallery at the History Center focused on local deaf and hard of hearing history

ITHACA, NY – A wedding of Newfield residents was marked as a special occasion not just for the couple's lives, but because the ceremony was performed entirely in sign language. Matilda Arnold Brown, after completing an education at the Central New York Institution for Deaf-Mutes in Rome, New York, married Calvin Brown who was also deaf. The uniquely communicated event was spread throughout newspapers, but there was another twist that made it even more unique — this happened all the way back



in 1896.



The wedding of Matilda and Calvin Brown was just one of many stories uncovered and compiled as part of a new compilation project by The History Center in Tompkins County. Former intern and volunteer Leanza Kopa, as part of their Masters studies program at Maryville University, explored various [archives](#) of local history in order to highlight deaf and hard of hearing history in Ithaca and Tompkins County. Working with the History Center’s marketing and experience coordinator Zoë Van Nostrand, she began to fill in the records on deaf and hard of hearing history.

“When Zoë first presented it to me, we had absolutely nothing on it, there was nothing in the archives, it was a complete blank page,” Kopa said. “All we had were a few names from the 1910 census, in which they were labeled as ‘deaf and dumb’. And so I kind of thought, ‘you know, I’ll find the golden story, I’m one of these people and discovering someone’s lost history, right?’.”

And while that idea did not come perfectly to fruition, Kopa says Ithaca Journal archives and other sources explored resulted in finding local stories on lip reading, sign language, hearing devices, and other topics relevant to the deaf and hard of hearing.

Highlighting [National Deaf History Month](#), which takes place from March 13 – April 15 every year, the resulting compilation of deaf and hard of hearing history was highlighted on the History Center’s [website](#) and culminated in a new type of event for the History Center where an audience gathered to hear the culmination of the research.

The inaugural CHAT, or [Community History Across Tompkins](#), event took place the evening of April 7 at the [Community Arts Partnership ArtSpace and Gallery](#) at the History Center. The gathering of about a dozen history-curious community members began with a lecture by Kopa followed by a rearrangement into a discussion circle.

In the lecture, Kopa explored the origins of deaf stigma and community, from Aristototle to the term “deaf and dumb” and highlighted instances of deaf and hard of hearing community camaraderie and solidarity in the past. One of these was the Ithaca League for the Hard of Hearing, a group that gathered frequently and was featured in newspapers throughout the 1930s educating on the latest hearing devices, practiced lip reading, ran social functions, and worked to improve quality of life for hearing-impaired community members before its leaving the historical record around 1939. Kopa said her favorite discovery was that Tompkins County was the first county in the United States to perform a hearing test for children throughout the county in 1934 so it could be found when students needed additional treatment or assistance, which remains important to this day.

“As a hard of hearing individual myself, that was a really important thing; they didn’t discover it until I was older,” Kopa, who was about four years old at the time, said. “So having testing for children is very important for their communication, development, and their social skills, and if you catch it early on, we can adjust [for]those children and put

them in classes that better suit their needs, or get them hearing aids, hearing devices, or however the parents and child see fit.”

Following the lecture, attendees shared their thoughts on what they learned from the presentation, what they found most interesting, and how it connects to their experience or what they know about deafness in Tompkins County now. An ASL interpreter was present for those hard of hearing that wished to still take part.



“I didn’t know, really any of the history that Leanza shared, so this was good to learn,” said [Tompkins County Legislator Veronica Pillar](#), who attended the event. “I’m looking forward to like, more, you know, more stories being added to the project and more sort of connection to what the deaf and hard of hearing community here right now or what could it be, especially hearing that, you know, other places have more of a community and more supports for people”.

The new [CHAT](#) events intend to allow citizen historians and local researchers of all ages present on regional history topics in an informal setting. Van Nostrand says that this and an upcoming event are hopefully the start to a great new series of programs.

“The hope is that these are open to the public, and that anyone who really wants a space to talk through new content that they’re working on, or local history projects, has the opportunity to reach out,” said Van Nostrand. “With switching to the roundtable discussion and having people the opportunity to really engage in a more relaxed format, it’s my hope is that there’s less barriers for people who might not be who might be in school to become academics...but still giving them an opportunity to share really valuable research and valuable work with the community.”

The research will be made into a formal [archival collection](#) in The History Center’s [archives](#) and connects these past events to the present community. The online compilation also highlighted former [reporting by Ithaca Week](#) highlighting the American Sign Language Chat Ithaca (ASLCI) group, which continues to [meet weekly](#) on Tuesdays in Ithaca to practice their sign language skills since it was founded in 2015.

“For me, it was an absolute honor,” Kopa said about the experience. “For someone who is hard of hearing, I’ve noticed going into this, I really don’t know too much about, I guess you’d say my history[...]. It’s really a history that hasn’t been taught or told, and so by doing this, having an opportunity to give that history a voice again and bring it back to the forefront, that’s definitely something I’ve taken extremely seriously and have felt, you know, extreme honor and I hope that by doing this I can do the community right by it.”

Additionally, The History Center is undergoing an effort to make more of its content accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing by creating transcripts to [oral history interviews](#) and adding subtitles to their [YouTube](#) videos.

The History Center is looking to add to its materials on local deaf history, and those wishing to contribute materials, stories, or research to these collections are encouraged to email archives@thehistorycenter.net.

The [next CHAT](#) is set to take place [May 5](#), and will focus on [early Asian residents in Tompkins County](#) corresponding with [Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#). Community members and groups interested in presenting for future CHATs on local research can contact community@thehistorycenter.net.

[CHAT - New Research on Early Asian Residents in Tompkins County w/ Claire Deng - 5/5](#)

Community History Across Tompkins - NEW Program Series

THE HISTORY CENTER IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

Join us for a **CHAT** on

EARLY ASIAN RESIDENTS IN TOMPKINS

Join us for a round-table presentation and discussion about Cornell student Claire Deng's year-long research project and collaboration with the Ithaca Asian American Association on early Asian residents in Tompkins County.

Thursday May 5th
5:30 - 6:30pm

Tompkins Center for History & Culture
CAP ArtSpace/Gallery - First Floor
110 N. Tioga St., Ithaca
Entrance on "Bank Alley" on the
Ithaca Commons

Details at thehistorycenter.net/CHAT

This program is organized in recognition of Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

May 5th - 5:30-6:30pm

CAP ArtSpace/Gallery at the Tompkins Center for History & Culture on the Ithaca Commons

Join us for a **CHAT (Community History Across Tompkins)** round-table presentation and discussion with Cornell student Claire Deng '22 and History Center intern about her 2021-2022 research project on early Asian residents in Tompkins County. Join us as she shares the stories discovered so far and offers suggestions and ideas for future research and collections on this topic moving forward.

Claire's research was used to create the Asai Family exhibit on display at Ithaca Town Hall, and one side of the Family Origins tower in the '[reCOUNT: Facing our Census](#)' exhibits at The History Center in Tompkins County. Her research is being made into a formal archival collection in The History Center Archives (thehistorycenter.net/Archives).

Contact Zoë Van Nostrand at community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions.



We would also like to **CONGRATULATE CLAIRE** on receiving [Cornell's Campus-Community Leadership Award](#) for graduating seniors for her work on this collection and the additions she's made to our understanding and recognition of early Asian history in Ithaca.

This program is organized in recognition of Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Learn more at thehistorycenter.net/AAPI-Heritage-Month

Please reach out to community@thehistorycenter.net if accessibility options are needed. Learn more at thehistorycenter.net/Accessibility.

This event is part of '[reCOUNT: Facing our Census](#)' program series by The History Center in Tompkins County, and Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month programming in Tompkins County. The program is offered through the CHAT (Community History Across Tompkins) program series. See other upcoming CHAT's at thehistorycenter.net/CHAT.

OTHER LOCAL HISTORY NEWS & UPDATES

Simeon DeWitt: America's Surveyor General

Article by Peter Hess, *New York Almanack*, published April 25th 2022



"...In 1795, Simeon DeWitt named the little settlement at the head of Cayuga Lake "Ithaca" after the hometown of ancient Greece's hero Ulysses. He was so taken with the area that he and his family members started purchasing large tracts of land. For the next ten years [Ithaca](#) was a remote community but roads were being constructed.

In 1810, DeWitt wrote from Albany that he was contemplating Ithaca as his future and permanent residence. By May 9th, he was in Ithaca and reported that the place had grown substantially. He counted 38 dwelling places, a three-story hotel, a schoolhouse, stores and shops for carpenters, cabinet-makers, blacksmiths and tanners as well as shoemakers, tailors, two lawyers and a doctor...."

[Read Full Article](#)

Groton Veterans Gather in Remembrance of Vietnam

Article by Linda Competillo, *Tompkins Weekly*, published April 6th 2022



Youngs is a member of the VVA (Vietnam Vets of America) Finger Lakes Chapter #377 in Dryden and explained that anyone who served in any branch of the military from 1959 to 1975, no matter where they served, is eligible to be a member. "People in the service consider ourselves like brothers and sisters," Youngs said. "So, it's good for anyone who was a Vietnam-era veteran to join."

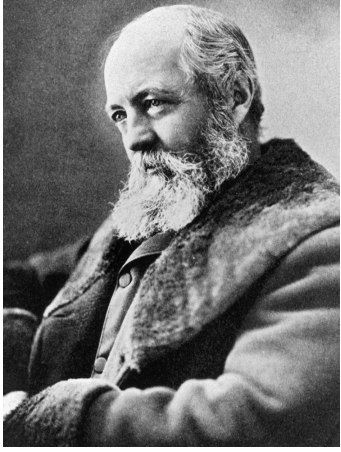
Youngs spoke about the many things the VVA does, such as marching in parades, doing burial details for military funerals, building ramps for veterans in wheelchairs and more.

[Read Full Article](#)

Olmstead at 200: Exploring Lesser-Known New York Connections on the Bicentennial of His Birth

Story by Michelle Sutton, *New York State Urban Forestry Council*, published March 30th 2022

"In 1867, first **Cornell University** President Andrew Dickson White asked the busy Olmsted to visit the Ithaca campus and draw up a landscape plan. There was a major hitch, however. Cornell Founder Ezra Cornell wanted a quadrangle on the hill overlooking Cayuga



Lake, and building had already begun based on that concept. This was frustrating to Olmsted.

From Schuyler's article:

Olmsted urged White to avoid making the "same mistake which all the large colleges of the country are now repenting." If built, Olmsted predicted, the quadrangle would stand as "another monument of shortsightedness, inconsideration & complacency with our little present."

[Read Full Article](#)

The History Center in Tompkins County

Exhibit Hall, Research Library, Archives, and staff offices are located at 110 North Tioga St. (Inside the **Tompkins Center for History & Culture**) Ithaca, N.Y. 14850
Gayogohó:nə' Territory

Web: www.thehistorycenter.net

Phone: 607-273-8284

Email: Staff emails can be found [here](#)

Museum Hours: *Wednesday-Saturday 10am-5pm*

Research Library & Archives: By appointment. [Contact](#)

Follow us on social media

@TompkinsHistory

Follow #TompkinsHistory for posts from the reCOUNT exhibit!



SUPPORT