



History Happenings

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Last Month at The History Center...

Summer Projects Wind Down as Students Return to Campus

Over the course of the summer The History Center had nine student workers pursuing multiple projects and research initiatives. As the summer wound down it was exciting to see all the progress made on various collections, accessibility initiatives, and targeted research projects. Our student workers came from Ithaca High School, Cornell University, Maryville University, McGill University, University of Rochester, and Grinnell College.

To say that we were hugely impressed with the work they produced, and the enthusiasm and excitement they brought to the museum and our collections each week is an understatement. Our staff will be processing their work in the months to come and making it "public" or accessible in a variety of ways. But the list below gives you an idea of the immense importance and advancement we can

make in different departments with volunteer and student worker time and engagement.



My time at The History Center has enriched both my appreciation for local history and my aptitude for learning about it. Just being around the exhibits, archives, and other artifacts of history and research has inspired and awed me, and encouraged me to dedicate myself to more diligent scholarship.

SUMMER 2021 STUDENT WORKER



- Over 40 updated and reviewed [Archival Research Finding Aids](#) added to our website and The History Center Manuscript Collections
- [Oral History Finding Aids](#) completed, updated, or in progress for the following projects and collections: [Women's Voices in Tompkins County](#), Black Experience in Tompkins County, Indigenous Experience in Tompkins County, Stories of Immigration to Tompkins County, Identities of Gender & Sexuality in Tompkins County, Asian Diaspora in Tompkins County, Immigration & Food Oral History Project.
- Research on "Early Asian Residents of Tompkins County" a collaboration of the [Ithaca Asian American Association](#) (IAAA) and [HistoryForge](#) was presented to IAAA leadership in August and is being integrated into upcoming exhibits and programs.
- Research for five [Finding Fires PocketSights tours](#) in anticipation of the upcoming [Traverse Tompkins Fundraiser](#)

- Local History Connection research paragraphs created for visitors to understand the local history present in the books in our [Children's Education Area](#).
- **Seven new transcripts** completed for our [Oral Histories of Tompkins County Audio Archives](#)
- Research and publication of the [Documentaries of Tompkins County](#) web page
- Research for [Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month](#) web page and social media series
- **Social Narrative, Visual Checklist handout, and Museum Visit Preparation Guides** for visitors on the Autism Spectrum - will be available on our website in early October.
- Closed captions written for 6 videos and popular programs on [The History Center YouTube Channel](#).

Our thanks to the following school departments and institutions for their support of student workers this summer through fellowships, research stipends, and financial support: [Youth Employment Services](#), [College of Arts & Sciences Career Development Office at Cornell](#), [Cornell Architecture Art Planning MA in Historic Preservation](#), and [Cornell Summer Experience Grant](#).

Upcoming Events - thehistorycenter.net/events

Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month - September 15th-October 15th

[Hispanic Heritage Month](#) first began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage week under President Lyndon Johnson. President Ronald Reagan expanded the celebration to a full month in 1988 spanning from September 15th (anniversary of independence for: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) to October 15th. Explore stories and materials related to [Hispanic and Latinx history](#) in Tompkins County on our website. Connect with our archivist (Donna Eschenbrenner - archives@thehistorycenter.net) to contribute to the archival collections documenting Hispanic and Latinx history in Tompkins County.

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

[Hours & Safety Guidelines](#) - Schedule a [private visit!](#)

September - [Read Local](#) - Celebrate the abundance of books in Downtown Ithaca with special deals and programs all month long! Stop by The History Center and mention the "Read Local" campaign at the front desk to claim a FREE local history book!

September 3rd - [Stop and Listen to HERstory](#) - 3-8pm - Join The History Center in Tompkins County on **First Friday Gallery Night** for a unique oral history experience of women's voices in Tompkins County. The [Women's Voices in Tompkins County Oral History Collection](#) includes over 60 interviews from #TompkinsWomen speaking about their lived experiences in the community. Clips from more than 30 of these interviews showcasing the diversity of women's lives and experiences have been selected. Visitors will be able to scan QR codes placed throughout the Exhibit Hall and hear these #TompkinsWomen discuss their lives in their own voice. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own headphones and listen on their personal smart devices, a limited number of other listening options will be available at the front desk. The physical aspect of the exhibit will be up for one week (9/3-9/10) and will be available through a SoundCloud live stream playlist following the exhibit.

September 11th & 25th - [HistoryForge Transcription Sessions](#) - 11am-1pm

Help be a part of building history! THC's digital history project, HistoryForge, relies on volunteers like you. We hold community transcription sessions twice a month on Saturdays from 11-1. Join us to help finish transcribing the 1940 census for the City of Ithaca! **Learn more about the project [here](#).**

Contact Eve historyforge@thehistorycenter.net to join. *If you'd like to work on one of the HF projects in our partner cities: Elmira, Oberlin, and Auburn please reach out to Eve. She can connect you with the coordinators for each site.*

September 11th - [Council for Equality Video Premiere](#) - 10:30am - The History Center has created a brief video highlighting the history of the Ithaca Council for Equality which will premiere on Saturday September 11th at 10:30 on [Facebook](#) and our [YouTube channel](#). Join us remotely for a watch party with archivist Donna Eschenbrenner. She will be available afterwards by Zoom for questions and conversation.

September 11th - [Steppin' Into My Shoes - Radio Play](#) - 3pm - Tune in Saturday September 11th at 3pm on WRFI 88.1 Ithaca, 91.9 Watkins Glen, or listen online at [wrfi.org](#). "Steppin' Into My Shoes" is based on a series of oral history interviews that [ReEntry Theatre Program](#) and College Initiative Upstate members conducted with one another in the Fall of 2020. Individual episodes explore the themes of family, harm reduction, and individual hopes and dreams. Together, the play aims to disrupt harmful stereotypes in our community, and amplify the voices of people directly impacted by some of the most pressing concerns of our community. The oral histories conducted as part of this project are being accessioned into the [Oral Histories of Tompkins County](#) Audio Archives.

September 18th - [Corn Husk Dolls Workshop](#) - All ages (yes kids AND adults!) are invited to make their own traditional Corn Husk Dolls with Seneca artist Penny Minner, and to hear the Haudenosaunee story behind why Corn Husk dolls have no face. Registration is limited to 15 participants per session and all participants (regardless of age) must wear masks for the entire program so this program is accessible for young children and those unable to be vaccinated. **Registration Required.**

September 23rd-27th - [Traverse Tompkins Finding Fires Fundraiser](#) - Executive Director, Benjamin Sandberg is riding his bike for as many miles as possible in 24 hours. Throughout the challenge, he is exploring fires of Tompkins County and their unknown impact on our community today. [Pledge to support](#) each mile of his ride here. Walk, bike, or roll your way to your own 24-hour challenge, or leisurely explore Tompkins County through our Finding Fires tours on PocketSights.

UPCOMING: 10/27 There's Your Ready Girl Screening (details TBA), [Haunted History Walking Tours](#), Cemetery Scavenger Hunt, The Art of Wampum - November CAP ArtSpace Exhibit (details TBA), 11/5 Art of Wampum Lecture w/ Rich Hammell.

[Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#) [Events & Programs](#)

LOCAL HISTORY PRESENTED BY [chloe. capital](#)

BREAKING Barriers

Women's Lives & Livelihoods

BARRIERS

ONE EXHIBIT
#TOMPKINSWOMEN
JUL. 2, 2021 - FEB. 26, 2022

COMMUNITY PARTNERS MAKE HISTORY POSSIBLE

The Second Knob Gifts & Antiques
Tompkins County Historical Society
AD
Hopshire

Please help us spread the word about the upcoming events as part of the [Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#) exhibit by sharing the materials below with your friends, professional circles, and community connections. Thank you for helping us get the word out! Learn more at thehistorycenter.net/events.

THE HISTORY CENTER IN TOMPKINS COUNTY PRESENTS

STOP and LISTEN to HERstory



An Oral History Experience of Women's Voices in Tompkins County

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD 2021 - FIRST FRIDAY GALLERY NIGHT 5PM-7PM
THE HISTORY CENTER IN TOMPKINS COUNTY - EXHIBIT HALL ENTRANCE ON BANK ALLEY - ITHACA COMMONS

LEARN MORE AT THEHISTORYCENTER.NET/BREAKING-BARRIERS
JOIN THE CONVERSATION #TOMPKINSWOMEN #BECAUSEOFHERSTORY








FROM SEEDS TO WISDOM

Exploring Haudenosaunee Cycles
Community Education Programming from The History Center in Tompkins County

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Corn Husk Dolls

Learn the story behind the Corn Husk doll, and make your own!

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 18TH
10:30-12:30PM OR 1:30-3:30PM



All ages (yes kids AND adults!) are invited to make their own traditional Corn Husk Dolls with Seneca artist Penny Minner, and to hear the Haudenosaunee story behind why Corn Husk dolls have no face.




TO REGISTER:
www.thehistorycenter.net/events

LOCATION:
Ithaca College Gallery/CAP Artspace inside Tompkins Center for History & Culture
110 N. Tioga St., Ithaca
In "Bank Alley" on the Ithaca Commons



This FREE program is for all ages.
Participants must pre-register. Registration is limited to 15 participants per session and all participants must wear masks for the entire program, to ensure it's accessible for younger participants.

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




In case you missed it, enjoy the virtual issue of our cover story for [What's Hot Ithaca/Cortland](#) about the [Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#) exhibit.

[Ithaca Council for Equality - Video Premiere](#)

The mid 1950s through the late 1960s was a tumultuous and violent time for civil rights workers in the US. Freedom Riders were attacked as they tried to integrate inter-city busses. Black churches were bombed, and peaceful protestors were attacked by police with fire hoses and snarling dogs. This era was also renowned for powerful civil rights organizations across America, especially in the deep south, where such notables as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee worked for equality for Black Americans.

In Ithaca, the struggle for equal rights was spearheaded by the Council for Equality, Ithaca's own home-grown, grass-roots social justice organization. Founded in 1959, the organization did their work here until the late 1960s. They were an education and advocacy organization, working to inform the larger public about what life was really like for local African Americans, and, more importantly, to advocate for them. According to their



mission statement, they were a "bi-racial, private, non-profit organization," which was concerned to "study, improve, and change discrimination on whatever level it is found in Ithaca." Their membership was a diverse blend of young and old, Black and White, women and men. Some were affiliated with Cornell and Ithaca College, but there were members of a local carpenters' union, at-home mothers, teachers, and more. Their work was done through their committees, primarily employment, education, and housing. At its height, the Council for Equality had more than 200 members. Beverly J. Martin and James L. Gibbs were two of its greatest luminaries. Their work impacted the lives of African Americans in Ithaca and beyond.

The History Center has created a brief video highlighting the history of this significant organization and it will premiere on Saturday September 11th at 10:30 on Facebook and our [YouTube channel](#). Join us remotely for a watch party with archivist Donna Eschenbrenner. She will be available afterwards by Zoom for questions and conversation.

Grant Received from the Delmas Foundation

[Delmas Foundation awarded a total of \\$17,565](#) to The History Center in

Tompkins County to support improving

remote access to the museum's valuable collections through the creation of [Finding Aids](#).

*THE GLADYS KRIEBLE DELMAS
FOUNDATION*

Finding aids provide detailed scope and content descriptions to assist researchers with our collections. The project includes creating or updating Finding Aids for a number of important collections that span local industries (Groton Iron Bridge Company Collection and the Ithaca Small Business Collection), arts and culture (the Strand Theater collection and the Performing Arts collection), civic and political collections (the Public Health collection and the Tompkins County Agriculture collection), and military histories of Tompkins County (Civil War collection and World War 1 collection).

Traverse Tompkins: Finding Fires 2021 Fundraiser



[Join The History Center's Traverse Tompkins Challenge on September 23rd - 27th.](#)

There are two easy ways to participate! The easiest way is to [support Executive Director Ben Sandberg](#) as he tries to beat his record 175 miles in 24 hours from last year! [Pledge](#) any amount to support each mile of his ride across Tompkins County. Ben will begin his ride at midnight on Saturday September 25th.

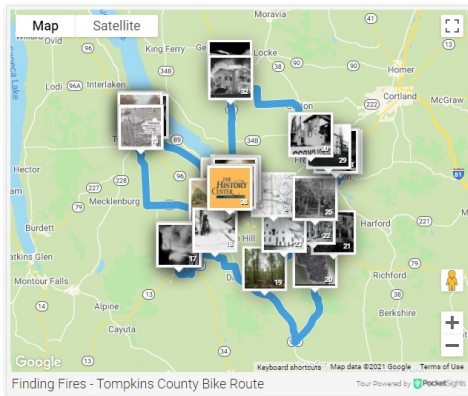
You can also explore fires of Tompkins County on your own through [four newly released PocketSights tours](#)! There's no cost to use a tour (the PocketSights app is free and has over 50 tours exploring local sites), but we hope to see people join us for the ride as well.

Look for our signs with the [Finding Fires logo](#) at some of the sites around the county and tag us in a photograph on social media at [@TompkinsHistory #FindingFires](#).

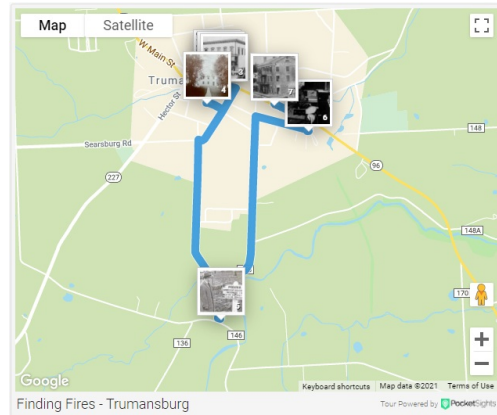
If you are up to the challenge, Walk, bike, or roll your way to your own 24-hour challenge, or leisurely explore Tompkins County through our [Finding Fires tours on PocketSights](#). Anyone who participates - no matter the miles! - in the challenge through our [Pledgelt campaign site](#) will receive this year's T-Shirt featuring the [Finding Fires logo](#).

Explore the trails below! We'll be sending out email highlights, archival objects from some of the fires, and a daily social media series at #FindingFires exploring these historic fires throughout the month of September!

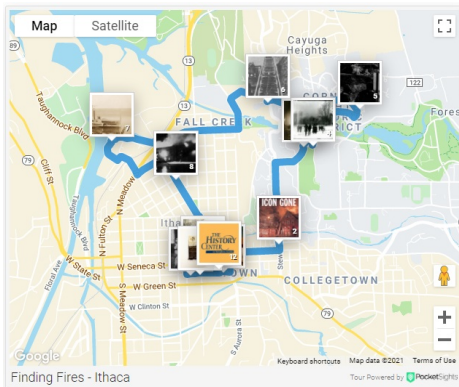
Finding Fires - Tompkins County Trail



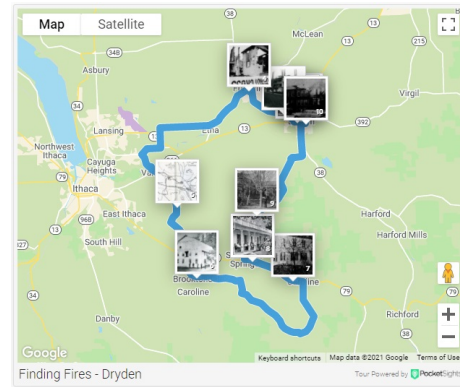
Finding Fires - Trumansburg Trail



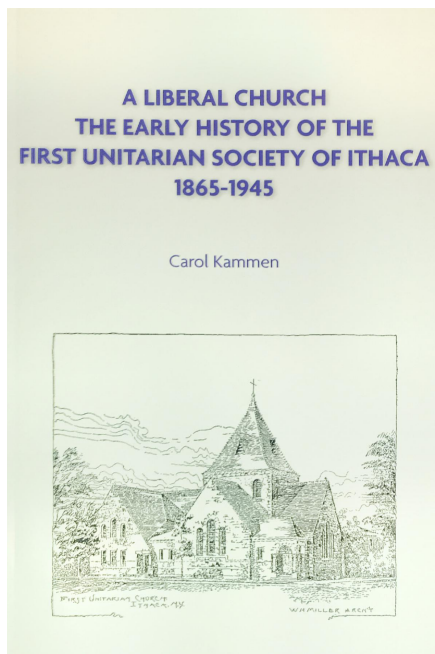
Finding Fires - Ithaca Trail



Finding Fires - Dryden Trail



NEW BOOK A Liberal Church: The Early History of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca 1865-1945



About the Book

A Liberal Church is the history of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca from 1865 to 1945, its first eighty years. Written at the request of Mark Pederson, it is by Carol Kammen, the Tompkins County Historian, aided greatly by Beverly Henderson West. Read about being a liberal congregation in the midst of orthodoxy, and wonder how and why FUSIT was planted in Ithaca and how it grew.

The book was published in 2021 by FUSIT.

[Purchase Here](#)

Deadline Extended on Call for Essays Reflecting Upon 2020



In many ways, the year 2020 was like no other. Worldwide, most people have shared in the confrontation with a dangerous, invisible illness that took millions of lives, upending plans and prosperity in every corner. Even now, we find that it is not done with us. What have the vicissitudes of this year meant for children, schools, families, communities—for YOU? In its midst, babies have been born; weddings have been celebrated, albeit online; meals have been made; friendships have been nurtured. Consider these circumstances on a personal level and share your thoughts.

In the spring, the [Tompkins County Historical Commission](#) invited the public to submit essays on 2020 and what the year meant, brought, or took away. The deadline for this call has been **extended until September 30, 2021**. The Commission has received a number of thoughtful submissions. But the editors would be particularly interested to receive some more thoughts on the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement; to hear ideas related to the 2020 presidential campaign, the election and its aftermath; to read additional thoughts on matters beyond the coronavirus.

Essays of up to 1,500 words (or up to five pages) will be welcomed, in handwriting or typing, and can be mailed to the County Historian at 125 East Court Street, Ithaca New York 14850. They can be sent via e-mail to <historian@tompkins-co.org>. Those essays sent online will be acknowledged.

All essays *must* be headed with the following sentence:

I give the Tompkins County Historical Commission the right to place this essay in an archive or include for one-time use in a publication or public format.

Sign your name and give the date.

For more information, contact Carol Kammen, County Historian, <historian@tompkins-co.org> — or — S.K. List, Trumansburg Village Historian, <skl@lightlink.com>

[READ MORE](#)

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

Web: www.thehistorycenter.net

Phone: 607-273-8284

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

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

**Please note our hours have changed due to COVID-19 and may be adjusted on a week to week basis depending on local health*

Follow us on social media

@TompkinsHistory

Follow #TompkinsWomen for posts from the Breaking Barriers exhibit!



[Contact Us!](#)

