



History Happenings

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Last Month at The History Center...

Douglass Day 2022 - Volunteer Support Transcribing 19th Century 'Colored Conventions' Records



[Douglass Day](#) is an annual celebration of Frederick Douglass' life and legacy on his chosen birthday of February 14th. Each year the organizers coordinate with archival repositories across the country to transcribe and digitize historic Black collections to make them more accessible to educators and researchers, and support their historic preservation.

This was The History Center's second year participating in Douglass Day, and six Exhibit Hall [volunteers](#) and student workers spent their shifts from 2/14-2/21 transcribing documents and finding names for the '[Colored Conventions Project](#).'

The Colored Conventions were state and national meetings held by free and formerly enslaved African Americans to debate their collective struggles. It's estimated that more than 10,000 delegates attended more than 600 Colored Conventions over seven decades across the United States. At these meetings, delegates talked about voting rights, education, labor, business, and a whole lot more. The conventions were highly democratic spaces at a time when Black people were denied access to the voting booth or the jury box.

Only 64% of the documents had been transcribed by the end of February 14th, and our contributions and that of other volunteer transcribers across the country helped [complete 100% of the identified documents](#) by the third week of February. No word yet on if we've been able to identify any Tompkins County residents as attendants of the Colored Conventions, but now that these [documents are digitized](#), finding a local connection to this historic movement is made possible!

Thank you to: Rhonda, Phung, Lin, Rebecca, Kethry, Jacob, and Nnenna for pausing work on other projects to join this national preservation effort!

LOCAL HISTORY PRESENTED BY **chloe. capital**

BREAKING BARRIERS

Women's Lives & Livelihoods

ONEXHIBIT
#TOMPKINSWOMEN

OPEN NOW UNTIL
MARCH 12, 2022

COMMUNITY PARTNERS MAKE HISTORY POSSIBLE

ONLY TWO MORE WEEKS TO SEE [Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#)

The Exhibit Hall will be closed to the public March 13th-31st as we install our new exhibit [reCOUNT: Facing Our Census](#) which will open on Friday, April 1st 2022.

Join IAHF for a Living History & Engine Pickling Performance on our 104 Year Old Tommy Plane!

IT'S TIME TO TUNE UP TOMMY!

THE HISTORY CENTER
110 N. TIOGA ST
ITHACA NY 14850

DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 5TH
TIME: 3-4:30PM
LOCATION:

THE HISTORY CENTER IN TOMPKINS COUNTY
110 N. TIOGA ST (ON THE ITHACA COMMONS)
ITHACA NY 14850

Join us for a public demonstration by IAHF conservator Don Funke, on how to properly "pickle" a Thomas Morse Scout S4-B engine and a living history performance by an instructor of the Thomas Morse School of Flying!
Learn more at thehistorycenter.net/events

THIS PROGRAM IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The [Ithaca Aviation Heritage Foundation \(IAHF\)](#) restored this [Thomas Morse S4-B Scout](#), known as "Tommy", over a

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

[Hours & Safety Guidelines](#)

OPEN March 1st-12th.
CLOSED March 13th-31st

March is [WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!](#) Explore women's history, virtual exhibits and learning materials at thehistorycenter.net

March 13th-April 15th is [NATIONAL DEAF HISTORY MONTH!](#) Explore newly discovered histories of deaf and hearing impaired communities in Tompkins County [here](#).

Weds - March 5th - [Time to Tune Up Tommy! Engine Pickling & Performance](#) - 3-4:30pm - @ the CAP ArtSpace inside the Tompkins Center for History & Culture. **FREE** drop-in program.

Sat - March 12th - **FINAL DAY OF ['Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods'](#)** - 10am-5pm

14-year period in preparation for his centennial flight in 2018, and now perform annual engine maintenance to keep everything in working form. Join us for a rare chance to see the inner workings of this 104 year old engine, originally constructed in Ithaca NY in the 19-teens!

Ithaca Heritage Ambassador Roger Segelken will be reprising his role as the Flight Instructor from the "[Learning to Fly with Tommy](#)" video series for a living history performance as part of the event. Following the performance IAHF mechanics will remove Tommy's propeller and hull to "pickle" the engine, while explaining their process for restoring the plane to full working order.

This event is FREE and open to all ages!

www.thehistorycenter.net/tommy-plane

COVID-19 Safety Precautions

Due to covid-19 there will be a audience capacity for the in-person event. Pre-registration is not required. All audience members and presenters will wear masks for the entire program. Learn more at thehistorycenter.net/health

UPCOMING:

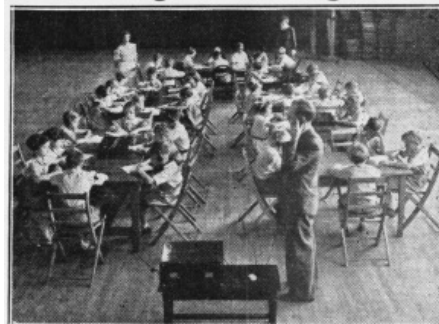
- 4/1 - OPENING of [reCOUNT: Facing our Census](#)
- April TBA - Join us for our inaugural CHAT (Community History Across Tompkins) discussion with Leanza Kopa presenting their research on local Deaf history for National Deaf History Month!
- May TBA - Book Reading

[New research on Deaf and hearing impaired community in Tompkins County highlighted for National Deaf History Month](#)

This century Ithaca, and Tompkins County more broadly [does not boast as many resources and inclusive spaces](#) to support the Deaf and hearing-impaired community as our neighboring cities of [Syracuse](#) and [Rochester](#). In the early part of the twentieth century however, Ithaca was on the forefront of combatting hearing loss in children, offering monthly programs for the Deaf community, and through work at Cornell University developing technology to assist the hearing impaired.

In 1896, Matilda Arnold married Calvin H. Brown in an all-sign language wedding ceremony in Newfield NY, an absolute rare occurrence for the time period. Some thirty years later, Dr. Frederick Bedell of Cornell University invented a bone conduction hearing device, allowing deaf and hard of hearing individuals to experience sound through vibrations of the teeth and skull. In 1934 Tompkins County was the first county in the United States to fully test school children in rural America for hearing loss. Also in the 1930's the 'Ithaca League for the Hard of Hearing' supported weekly lip-reading classes, fundraisers, and community events across Tompkins County. These stories, and others yet to be uncovered share the history and contributions of Deaf community members throughout Tompkins County.

Public School Children Undergo Hearing Tests



Third grade children from Miss Helen Gould's room in South Hill School are shown above taking the hearing test in St. John School. Ralph W. Jones is giving the examination with the audiometer, assisted by Miss Gould, standing left, and Miss Grace L. Cotton of the school medical inspection department, right.

LEARN MORE

Research for this [web page](#) and archival collection was compiled by History Center intern Leanza Kopa during the fall of 2021 as part of their Masters studies program. We are eager to add to our archival collections on Deaf and hearing impaired history in Tompkins County.

Please reach out to archives@thehistorycenter.net to contribute materials, stories and research to this collection.

The History Center in Tompkins County has been pursuing active efforts to make our exhibits and learning materials more accessible for the Deaf and hearing-impaired community. Written transcripts for most of our [Oral History](#) interviews are now available in our [Archives](#) (with many more in progress), and closed-captions have been completed for more than 90% of our [YouTube videos and local history lectures and presentations](#). Please contact community@thehistorycenter.net with requests about making specific presentations and exhibits accessible and we will prioritize processing those.

Cornell's Public History Initiative & History Center Complete 3-year Undergraduate Oral History Fellowship



In the fall of 2019 [Cornell's Public History Initiative](#) and The History Center received a collaborative [Engaged Cornell](#) grant to support a three-year oral history partnership.

This collaboration resulted in 36 interviews of Tompkins County residents recorded by undergraduate Cornellians to be accessioned into the [Oral Histories of Tompkins County](#).

The [2020-2021 project](#) focused on “rapid response” oral history—documenting community responses to COVID-19. Topics include political leadership, community organizing, food security, and responses among local business owners, including hotels, restaurants, and theaters. Resulting in 26 interviews in the '[Community Responses to COVID](#)' Oral History Project conducted by five undergraduates.

The [Fall 2021 project](#) focused on the theme “[Food and Foodways in Tompkins County](#).” This semester-long, funded fellowship gave seven Cornell sophomores and juniors the opportunity to work with The History Center in Tompkins County to learn oral history methods and ethics and conduct ten oral history interviews with community members about the ways food and foodways have shaped and reflected their lives and communities.

All interviews have now been completed, and The History Center is in process of accessioning these recordings into our collections. These interviews will be available for listening in our [Research Library and Archives](#) by fall 2022. Learn more about our Oral History collections [here](#).

reCOUNT
Facing Our Census

EXHIBITION
APRIL 1ST 2022

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS
Council on the Arts
reCOUNT is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Exhibit: Biggest Little Movie City: Ithaca's Theaters Then & Now

PRESS RELEASE - February 9th 2022



[Wharton Studio Museum \(WSM\)](#) and [Historic Ithaca \(HI\)](#), both nonprofits focused on local history and preservation, have collaborated to produce **Biggest Little Movie City: Ithaca's Theaters Then and Now**, a multimedia exhibit highlighting and celebrating Ithaca's rich legacy of movie making and watching. The exhibit runs through April 2022.

By the mid-nineteen teens, downtown Ithaca boasted an abundance of beautiful theaters – The Star, The Crescent, and The Lyceum among them -- where the city's denizens flocked daily to watch movies and episodic serials. The development of motion pictures and the burgeoning of the movie industry – including the city's own Wharton, Inc. Studios -- allowed people to be transported to other worlds and escape, for a time, their daily routines by simply paying an admission fee to enjoy a movie on the big screen.

Curated by Historic Ithaca and Wharton Studio Museum and designed by [Joe Lamarre of uncommonplace](#), the exhibit explores all seven movie theaters in downtown Ithaca, as well as the Willard Straight Theater on Cornell University's campus, built in the late 20s, and the current home of Cornell Cinema. The State Theatre and the Willard Straight Theater are the only two theaters still showing movies. Digital screens on either side of the exhibit tower afford the visitor the opportunity to dive more deeply into related materials, including film clips from the Wharton Studio era, and to discover more about what the moviegoers' experience was like in that era.

[FULL ARTICLE](#)

[PocketSights Walking Tour](#)

Request for Community to Submit Video Clips for 'Letters from Ithaca: Under the Surface'

CALL TO THE ITHACA COMMUNITY - WE WANT YOUR ONE-TAKE VIDEO
to be included in a 3/7/22 Cornell Cinema Visiting Artist Program Event

[Press Release 2/18/2022](#)

WHAT. We want your 20-60 second one-take videos, captured on any device at hand. Consider showing us that which might not be seen by visitors to the Finger Lakes region. Show us *your* Gorges. What you see might witness the abuse of or the protection of natural resources (living space, water, wilderness)! Or, show us the every-day overlooked things you see and places you inhabit. How are you in this space? Where do you work, dive, shop, drive, climb or escape to? We seek to include your contributions for a screening planned at Cornell Cinema on March 7th.

WHO. Anyone who has an image to capture and share. No previous film experience required.

HOW/WHEN: Please email your video files here: xtractionvideos@gmail.com [deadline Tuesday 3/4/22 at 12noon] along with your name and a one sentence description of your image. These clips will be edited together and screened as part of the March 7th (X)-trACTION screening <https://cinema.cornell.edu/x-traction>. If you contribute a video, you can join us FOR FREE that night.

WHY: (X)-trACTION began in Bisbee, Arizona in January as the result of a collaborative group of media artists' inquiry into the problem of "extraction" both ecologically and aesthetically.

Mid-century postcards, front and back, offer invaluable if obscured views in Nicole Antebi's archival re-animation of la frontera. Geography plays across multiple enactments in Cathy Lee Crane's video, which asserts the primacy of water and migration in the dust of militarized landscapes. Laurie McKenna conjures desert punk power in an aggregate of memory and charcoal, and grounds national rupture in a sonic diary. Erin Wilkerson and Jason Livingston, in their contributions, draw poetic power lines through industry, reminding us that extraction, for all its local magnetism and metal lures, is a view into international dynamics.

Local Bisbee residents were invited to contribute observations of life in Bisbee which were included in that night's program as interstitial seams that made their way through the sequence of five artists' films to form a meta mash-up deposit concerned for our climate, our workers, our history and future- the beauty and the failures. Whereas the logic of extraction is violently deliberate, the operative logic of this generative media work [aka the screening program] is generous, chance-based, and playful. These might combine to tell a bigger story of regional extraction.

Your contributions will run throughout the Cornell Cinema program on 3/7 as fragments from Under the Surface of Ithaca. Be a part of the conversation.

The Original Peoples Podcast Ongwehonwe



Michael Galban (Washoe Tribe)
Haudenosaunee Historian, Conservator & Craftsman

In this episode I sit down with Michael Galban (Washoe Tribe), Michael is a foremost in the field of Haudenosaunee Material Culture, Historian Conservator and a skilled Craftsman, oh by the way, he does Traditional Tattoos!!

[Listen Here](#)

Ithaca LGBTQ History Walking Tour Receives Allan Bérubé Prize

Blog by Mikayla Rovenolt published February 17th

"Earlier this week, the [American Historical Association](#) Committee on [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History](#) awarded the Ithaca College LGBT Center's [Ithaca](#)

LGBTQ History Tour the Allan Bérubé Prize for “outstanding work in public or community-based lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer history.”



...

When LGBT history is presented and discussed it rarely mentions the work put in by Ithacans, or others deemed “less important” than the bigger moments that popular culture tends to focus on. History reinforces the importance of Stonewall or the 2015 same-sex marriage legalization and the AIDS Epidemic."

[READ BLOG](#)

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:nq' 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 #TompkinsWomen for posts from the Breaking Barriers exhibit!



[SUPPORT](#)