All our staff have continued working their regular weekly hours (with some re-scheduling to meet changed family needs) remotely from their own homes since we closed to the public on March 14th. They’ve been pursuing a combination of problem solving, future planning, and finally getting around to some projects that normally they wouldn’t have the time to focus on.

Ben - Executive Director – Ben has been communicating with all our sponsors, funders, and various grant committees to ensure that our doors will reopen, and our staff continue to be paid during these uncertain times. This task has been monumental in the constantly changing financial landscape of Covid-19. In addition, he and Dave have been re-drafting the fiscal budget for next year in lieu of the massive funding disruptions of this year.

Julia - Director of Youth Education - Among many projects, Julia has been creating our new "History at Home" learning activities - adapting our educational materials for digital use; supporting teachers with resources for distance learning; and keeping our oral history programming going, supporting the Cornell Undergraduate Oral History Fellows, and transcribing interviews for the Story Vault exhibit. thehistorycenter.net/youth-education

Donna - Director of Archives & Research Services - Has been working on multiple columns for our
Here is a brief list of actions you can take to ensure the longevity of your local history museum:

- Support The History Center with a small monthly recurring donation.
- Have you visited us recently? Post a review of your experience with us on Google Reviews, Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Yelp!
- Follow The History Center in Tompkins County on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at @tompkinshistory
- Share The History Center’s digital resources with those who need them - thehistorycenter.net/research
- Contact Ben Sandberg to book one of the event spaces in the Tompkins Center for History & Culture for your event later this year.
- Download the PocketSights app to access over 40 self-guided walking and driving tours of Tompkins County! Practice responsible social distancing and share pictures from your experience with us!
- Help us build our COVID-19 Impacts in Tompkins County Archival Collection. Send pictures, video, written reflections and more to Donna Eschenbrenner at archives@thehistorycenter.net
- Help us enter Ithaca census records from the 20th century for our HistoryForge database project. Contact Eve Snyder at historyforge@thehistorycenter.net to learn more.
- Help us fill our “Breaking Barriers: The Lives & Livelihoods of Women” exhibits this summer by sending us your pictures of “Women Working” in Tompkins County and complete our “Why Vote?” digital ballot. These exhibits will be on display to the public later this year.
Your support – in its many shapes and sizes – will ensure our ability to successfully navigate the challenges ahead of all of us. We are privileged to have so many caring people in The History Center’s family.

**Upcoming Events**

All in-person events are postponed until further notice. We have not set a date for when the Exhibit Hall & Research Library will reopen to the public.

- **May 16th & 30th** - Virtual HistoryForge Transcription Sessions over Zoom - Email historyforge@thehistorycenter.net for details.
- **May 20th** - Giving is Gorges - Virtual events throughout the day

Visit [www.thehistorycenter.net/events](http://www.thehistorycenter.net/events) for more information

**Youth Education**

If our "Stay at Home" directive is lifted and it is deemed safe to hold a summer camp this summer, we will be inviting teens ages 13-17 to join us for **Inventor Camp 2020**!

Explore innovations of the past, present, and future! Learn about the history of local inventions, take field trips to innovative companies in our region to connect with professional inventors and see innovative work first hand, and work together to build your own machines. No building experience necessary. This camp is open to all teens who want to build creatively!

If you are interested in this camp and would like to stay up to date with information, please email Julia at [eightsquare@thehistorycenter.net](mailto:eightsquare@thehistorycenter.net) to be put on an Inventor Camp email list.

**Mark Your Calendars!**

**Giving is Gorges - May 20th**

**Giving is Gorges** was established by a collaborative group to celebrate the spirit of philanthropy in Tompkins County and surrounding areas. The purpose of this powerful giving experience is to unite our community members around causes in which they truly believe and help support local nonprofit organizations.

The History Center will be offering a series of virtual events throughout the day on our [social media](http://socialmedia.com) accounts. Stay tuned for details on:

- Music by Moog livestream shows on May 20th
- Virtual History Scavenger Hunt - Enter for a Chance to Win...(Prizes TBD)

Make sure to like and follow us on [Instagram](http://instagram.com), [Facebook](http://facebook.com), and [Twitter](http://twitter.com)!

This annual fundraiser is more important this year than ever due to the massive impacts COVID-19 has had on funding supplies and resources for the arts and nonprofit field.

We appreciate your support, and will send out additional details in the coming weeks.

[Donate Directly to the History Center](https://www.thehistorycenter.net/donate)
As our community practices physical distancing, we've been trying to connect with our community members more virtually. We've grown our social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram (please follow us if you haven't already!), posting local history facts, stories, and pictures daily.

Eve & Bob hosted the first ever virtual HistoryForge Transcription Session, we're looking to offer more of these sessions, and also training opportunities for volunteers who haven't done this work before.

Julia has created 3 series of History at Home activity sets (All About Tommy, The Ithaca Kitty, Tompkins County Coloring Book) inspired by local history, ranging from crafting to storytelling. These can be downloaded and worked on at home.

Help with COVID-19 Archival Collection

The History Center in Tompkins County and the Cornell University Archives are collaborating in creating ongoing archival collections related to the impacts of COVID-19. Cornell is focusing on the impacts nationally, while we at The History Center are focusing on the issues locally. To this end we need your help!

HistoryForge from Home!

Looking for something history-related to do while social-distancing? HistoryForge combines historic maps and photos with census records of the people who lived in Ithaca, creating a unique way to visualize the history of Ithaca in the early 1900s.

Experienced HistoryForge volunteers are continuing to digitize census records from the 20th century for the HistoryForge database. We're hoping to finish the 1920 census very soon! Local volunteers have transcribed three complete censuses, 1900, 1910 and 1930. You can search them at the HistoryForge website now!

We are looking for additional volunteers to help us finish entering records from the 1920 US Census for Ithaca. We will be setting up virtual training sessions to train people on how to input records from home. Individuals, classrooms, or groups interested in this project should contact HistoryForge Project Coordinator Eve Snyder at historyforge@thehistorycenter.net.
Then & Now - Ithaca Journal Column - May 2020

Tompkins County Has a Rich History in Maple Sugaring
By Donna Eschenbrenner

Local farmers have tapped maples for years. Groton photographer Verne Morton documented the early 20th century process on farms throughout the area. In these photographs from ca. 1906 we can see different aspects of the process; from tapping the tree, to gathering and transporting the sap, to boiling it into syrup, to “dipping” or making maple sugar cakes, to the high point of the early spring ritual: pouring hot maple syrup over hard-packed snow and eating it.

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: Currently closed to the public due to the Covid-19 pandemic

Follow us on social media
@tompkinshistory

Contact Us!