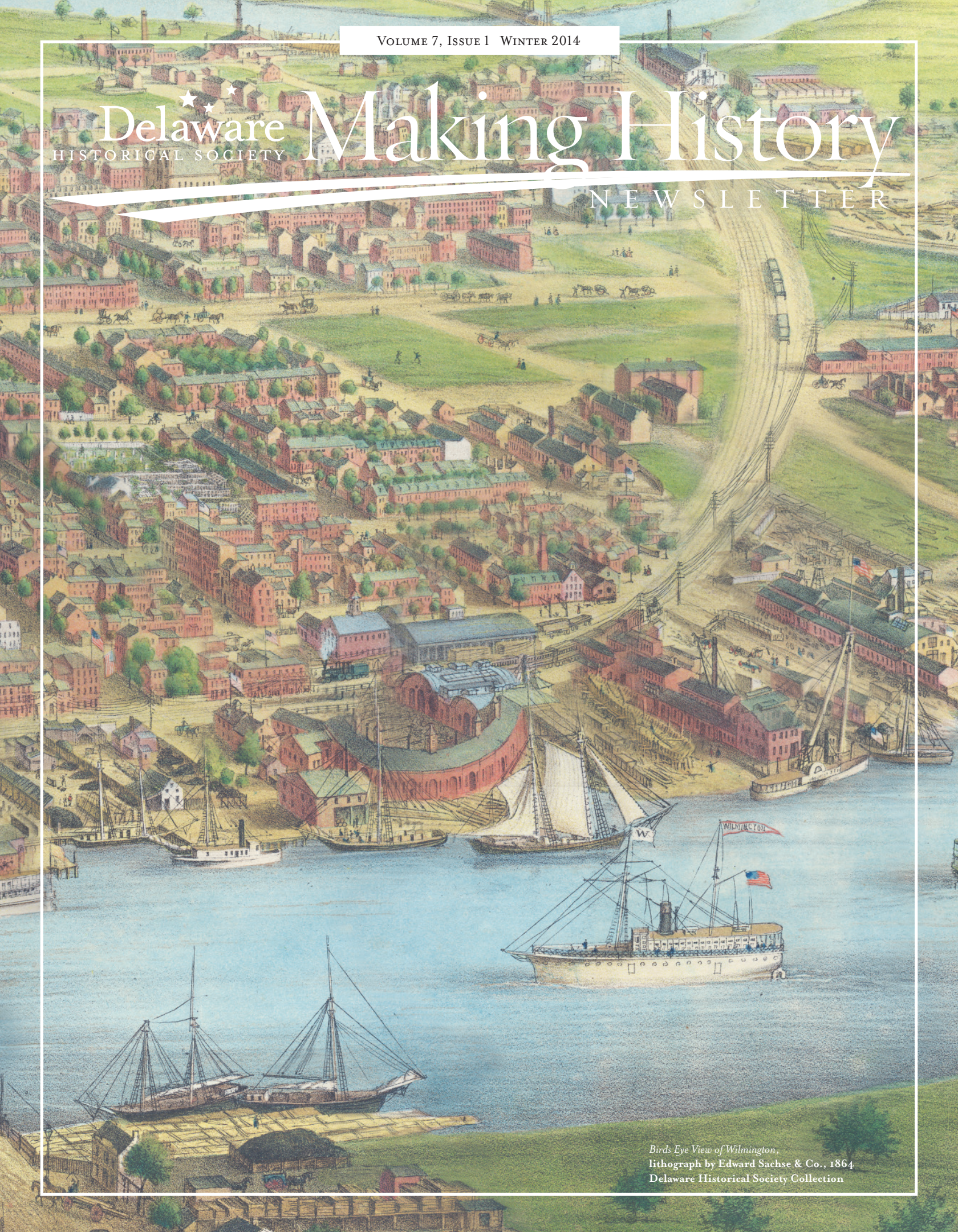


VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1 WINTER 2014

Delaware Making History

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



*Birds Eye View of Wilmington,
lithograph by Edward Sachse & Co., 1864
Delaware Historical Society Collection*

Delaware

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SESQUICENTENNIAL

where history *lives* 1864-2014

150 Years of “elucidating” Delaware History



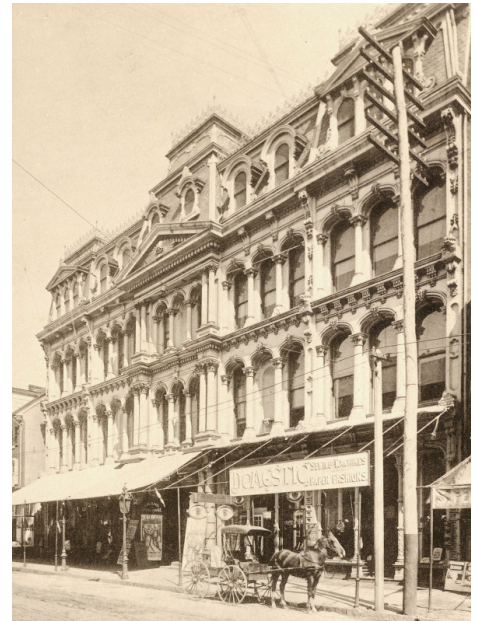
Wilmington Institute Free Library, 8th and Market streets, ca. 1860s, Society headquarters from 1864 to 1872 (Delaware Historical Society Collection)

In 1864 a group of civic leaders founded the Historical Society of Delaware, now known as the Delaware Historical Society, for “the elucidation of history, particularly such portions as may refer to Delaware.” In the 150 years since then, the Society has remained true to that mission, changing and growing over time.

The Society has always had a presence on Wilmington’s Market Street. After about fifty years in rented quarters, the Society purchased Old Town Hall in 1916, but did not move into the building until 1927. For many

years, Old Town Hall housed the Society’s museum, library, and administrative offices. Throughout its first century, the Society’s collections focused on what was then considered important in the study of history—political, military, and economic history up to the Civil War. Activities consisted primarily of meetings at which members presented papers on historical topics, and then publishing those papers. The Society’s headquarters were open for the public to visit and do research.

Major change and growth began in the 1960s. By then facilities had become inadequate and a period of expansion began. In 1973, the former Artisan’s Savings Bank opened as the Research Library. The Read House and Gardens in New Castle, a historic house museum, came to the Society in 1975. In 1977, Willingtown Square provided additional offices and a small park. Finally, the Society acquired the Delaware History Museum in 1992.



Grand Opera House, 800 block of Market Street, 1893, Society headquarters from 1872 to 1878 (Delaware Historical Society Collection)



First Presbyterian Church, 10th and Market streets, early 1900s, Society headquarters from 1878 to 1916 (Delaware Historical Society Collection)

The Society's approach to history broadened as well, responding to changes in American society and the study of history. Collecting now focuses on all people and topics relating to Delaware, while a wide variety of exhibitions and programs appeals to people of all ages. Electronic media and traditional

publications disseminate information on Delaware history in a variety of ways. In the 21st century as in the 19th, the Delaware Historical Society remains committed to "the elucidation of history, particularly such portions as may refer to Delaware."



Interior of Old Town Hall, 1927 (Delaware Historical Society Collection)

Letter from the CEO



History is fluid, dynamic, ever-changing. As the old adage goes, history is hard to recognize when we are passing through it.

2014 marks the 150th anniversary of the Delaware Historical Society, and the organization has captured history's dynamic qualities with the year's theme "Where History Lives." In reality, the year is a microcosm of the Delaware Historical Society's previous 149. From lectures to publications, from a symposium to exhibitions, and from family days to Delaware Day, the Sesquicentennial year offers some First State history to all Delawareans. Those of you outside of Delaware can participate in activities virtually through the historical society's website and social media programs.

Many, many historical society friends have invested considerable time, energy, and talent in planning for the organization's milestone year. To all of them, I say thank you. Please spend some time with this edition of *Making History*. You will discover that history does indeed live at the Delaware Historical Society. I encourage you to be a part of this historic year by engaging with and supporting the Delaware Historical Society – your state historical society.

Scott W. Loehr, CEO

Exhibitions and Programs

Little Italy, Big Festival

The Historical Society will honor 130 years of Italian-American presence in Wilmington with an exhibit in the Willingtown Square Gallery to kick off the new year. *Little Italy, Big Festival* will examine the vibrant history of Wilmington's west side, known as "The Hill" to early generations of Wilmington's Italiani. Early settlers, businesses, cultural organizations, and the founding of Saint Anthony's Parish will be explored along with the origins of the "mega celebration" Wilmington proudly calls its own, St. Anthony's Italian Festival. This celebration is so popular that Italians from Italy are said to come to it! Rare photographs and memorabilia from the Society's collections as well as materials from the *Little Italy* community will be on display through, appropriately enough, the *Big Festival* itself in June.



*First Mass at Saint Anthony's Church, March 28, 1926
(Sanborn Collection, Delaware Historical Society)*



*Mother's Picnic, Italian Neighborhood House,
710 Lincoln Street, 1946
(Delaware Historical Society Collection)*



*Italian American Picnic in Wilmington, 1917
(Delaware Historical Society Collection)*

Forging Faith, Building Freedom Opens

Forging Faith, Building Freedom: African American Faith Experiences in Delaware, 1800-1980, opened on September 26 with a joyous celebration. This exhibition reflects the contributions of many churches, individuals, and organizations in the African American community. Thank you!



7th Annual History Makers Award Program Honors Achievers in a Diverse Delaware

On the evening of September 12, the Trustees of the Delaware Historical Society welcomed 325 guests to the Chase Center on the Riverfront for an evening of celebration and inspiration as three remarkable individuals were named 2013 Delaware History Makers. The honorees – the eminent historian Dr. Carol Hoffecker, the Reverend Canon Lloyd Casson, and the late Father Roberto Balducelli – have each made extraordinary contributions to the First State and far beyond, and the awards generated an outpouring of respect and affection from all in attendance.

Keynote remarks by Governor Jack A. Markell reinforced the promise of Delaware's future. With a foundation based on rich and diverse populations sharing histories and experiences, Markell spoke of working together to promote new models and technologies that will benefit all Delawareans while promoting the social and spiritual values that reinforce healthy, sustainable communities. The lively conversations of old and new acquaintances mixed with laughter, music, and thunderous applause as all paid tribute to the lives and accomplishments of the Society's newest Delaware History Makers.



Honoree the Reverend Canon Lloyd S. Casson, The Honorable Jack A. Markell, and Honoree Dr. Carol E. Hoffecker



Left: Honoree the late Father Robert Balducelli; Right: Thank you to Co-chairs Niki Hawkins (left) and Melva Ware (right)

Read House & Gardens

Read House Hosts Collections Storage Workshop

On November 5 and 19, 2013, ten staff members and volunteers from cultural institutions in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland participated in a two-part workshop at the Read House and Gardens. The participants first learned about creative and budget-friendly collections storage options and then applied the lessons to their own institutional collections storage challenges. Delaware Historical Society Objects Curator Jennifer Potts and Assistant CEO Michele Anstine participated in instructing the course, offering storage techniques used in the Read House and Delaware History Museum as examples. Funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum



and Library Services obtained by the Museum Studies at the University of Delaware, the workshop is part of a larger project designed to help sustain small cultural institutions in the region

and promote collaborative learning among museum professionals, volunteers, and students.

Construction at the Read House in 2014

Between January and March 2014 the Read House will undergo construction. With a grant from Crystal Trust, the museum basement will be transformed into a space to accommodate student groups, meetings, and workshops. In addition, a first floor powder room will be renovated to meet current ADA standards. The renovations will promote a better visitor experience at the Read House and Gardens and will be unveiled in time for the busy spring school program season.

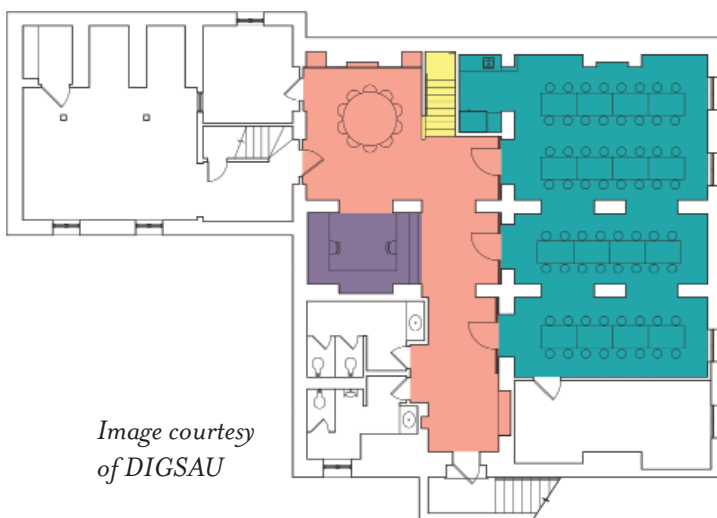


Image courtesy of DIGSAU

Stories from our Collections

Wilmington Life in Miniature: A New Acquisition

A modern miniature house is an exciting new addition to the Society's collections. This new acquisition is the fourth of its kind to enter the Society's collections, joining the ranks of the illustrious Civil War-era McComb Dollhouse and two other examples from the twentieth century. It has the distinction of being the most modern example to date. This new miniature house was donated by former Wilmingtonian, Laura Proctor, who not only owned it but also built it between 1991 and 1993.

The miniature house is an exact 1":1' scale replica of Mrs. Proctor's former home at 213 North Road in Wilmington. The original full-sized house was built in the 1920s in the Lindamere neighborhood, where the Proctors lived as the third owners of the house from 1980 to 1994. Mrs. Proctor became interested in miniature houses after attending a show about them and soon began making plans to build one of her own. Her project took shape over the course of two years in the wood shop at the Wilmington Senior Center, and when it was finished became a treasured family heirloom. Mrs. Proctor was also created most of the interior fittings and furnishings, which closely replicate what was in the house at the time.



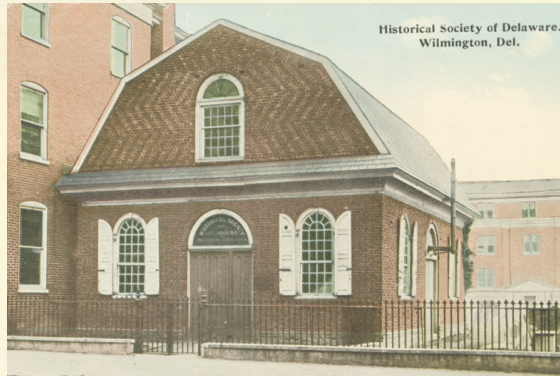
Delaware Historical Society

by the **NUMBERS**

2014 marks the Sesquicentennial of the Delaware Historical Society!
Here are some fast facts about the Society's 150 year history.

1864

Year the
Delaware
Historical Society
was founded



23,000

Visitors to the Read
House and Delaware
History Museum each
year

2,100

Number of titles
in the serial collection

3,000,000

Number of items from Delaware's
history preserved in our collections

1946

First issue of our scholarly journal,
Delaware History published



30,000

Number of collection entries accessible via our
online catalog, AskCaesar

34,892+: Number of items available in
AskCaesar, our online public access catalog,
with new entries added daily!

8,500: Unique visits to AskCaesar in 2013

500: Number of li

5,000: Size of Society's manu

1895

Year women were first admitted as associate members of the Society



1986

Year first female president of the board Cynthia Hoagland was elected

required
ship
in 1864



1864.0001: Accession number of first item entered into the collection, alleged to be a piece of the boat in which George Washington crossed the Delaware River on Christmas Day, 1776, given by William Bringham



22: Number of rooms in the Read House

1975: Year Read House & Gardens was acquired by the Delaware Historical Society

74: Number of descendants who attended the Read House reunion in 2013

1725

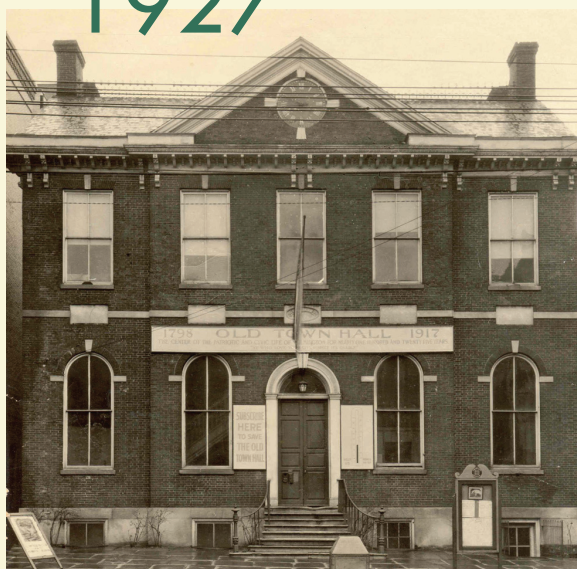


Date of the oldest item in the Read House collections, a portrait of Catherine Van Gezel Ross, school of Gustavus Hesselius, which hangs in Mrs. Read's bedroom

2014

Year construction on the Center for African American Heritage begins

1927



Year Old Town Hall reopened after the Delaware Historical Society raised the money to purchase and restore the property

of linear feet in our largest manuscript collection, the William V. Roth, Jr. Congressional Papers

manuscript collection in linear feet. If every box was put in a line end to end, it would stretch nearly 1 mile!

150th Celebration at a Glance

JANUARY

History Lives Lecture Series
Abraham Lincoln in 1864

January 16, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Dr. John Stauffer, professor at
Harvard University
Delaware History Museum

FEBRUARY

History Lives
at the Old Courthouse

February 1, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Sesquicentennial Soirée

MARCH

History Lives Lecture Series
Frederick Douglass in 1864

March 13, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Dr. Wilson Moses, professor at
Pennsylvania State University
Delaware History Museum

APRIL

DHS Annual Meeting
April 24, 2014
5:30 p.m.

Followed by a reception

Dr. Todd Croce, president &
CEO of the Georgia Historical
Society will speak on the state
of public history.

Reservations requested
for all events. Please call
302-655-7161 or email
deinfo@dehistory.
Visit www.dehistory.org
for updated details.

MAY

History Lives Lecture Series
Lee & Grant in 1864

May 8, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Dr. Joseph T. Glatthaar, professor at
University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill
Delaware History Museum

History Lives ... in Odessa

May 18, 2014
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

A gathering with a colonial theme with
tours of the Historic Houses of Odessa,
followed by dinner in the Old Bank
Building.

Saturday Family Program:
Encapsulating Our School
May 31, 2014

Delaware schools are invited
to participate in a time capsule
competition.

JUNE

History Livesat Fort Delaware
June 14, 2014
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

A family-oriented day. Take the ferry
to Pea Patch Island and participate in
period activities.

JULY

Saturday Family Program:
Shopping the Sears Catalog
at the Beach

July 19, 2014
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Join us for a look at how families
spent their summers 100 years ago.
Rehoboth Beach Historical Museum

AUGUST

History Lives at the Delaware Coast
August 23, 2014
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

A day in Lewes focused on Delaware's
maritime history. Choose from a trip
on the Cape May-Lewes ferry, tours of
the *Kalmar Nyckel*, *Overfalls Lightship*, and
Lewes. Followed by a seafood dinner.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday Family Program: Coming to
America: Our Delaware Immigration Story
September 20, 2014
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Bring your family and your immigration
story for a fun day of exploration.

OCTOBER

Recounting & Documenting the
Delaware Civil Rights Movement
Symposium with Delaware State
University
October 2 and 3, 2014
Delaware State University Campus

History Lives Lecture Series
James A. Bayard in 1864
October 16, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Dr. Jonathan S. Russ, professor at
the University of Delaware
Delaware History Museum

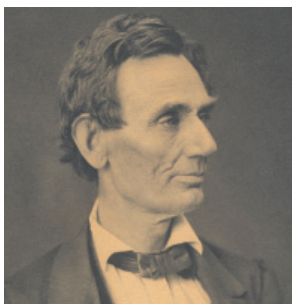
DECEMBER

History Lives in Kent County
December 7, 2014
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Celebrate Delaware Day in Dover. Tour
the Dickinson Mansion, walk the Green
to visit several significant buildings, and
conclude at the Governor's Mansion.

Upcoming Highlights

The Delaware Historical Society's 150th anniversary will be commemorated with a array of programs and events with broad public appeal. These are a sample of some of the planned activities for the next four months. *History Lives* at the Historical Society - be a part of it!



History Lives Lecture Series *Abraham Lincoln in 1864*

January 16, 2014, 6:30 p.m.

Delaware History Museum

Dr. John Stauffer, Harvard University professor, award-winning author, and noted historian, will discuss the life and influences of President Abraham Lincoln in our founding year of 1864.



History Lives ...at the Old Courthouse Sesquicentennial Soirée

February 1, 2014, 6:30 p.m.

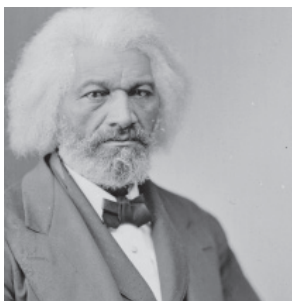
Dinner & Dancing / Valet Parking

Black Tie Optional

Various culinary stations created by the Wilmington Club

Member \$110 / Non-member \$125

Tickets on sale now! Call 302-655-7161 or visit dehistory.org

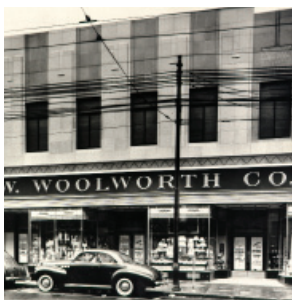


History Lives Lecture Series *Frederick Douglass in 1864*

March 13, 2014, 6:30 p.m.

Delaware History Museum

Dr. Wilson Moses, Ferree Professor in American History at Pennsylvania State University, will discuss the life and works of Fredrick Douglass in our founding year of 1864.



DHS Annual Meeting

April 24, 2013, 5:30 p.m., followed by a reception

Delaware History Museum

Dr. Todd Croce, president & CEO of Georgia Historical Society will speak on the state of public history.

Membership Listings and 2013 History Makers Award Support for the Delaware Historical Society

Due to timing issues with the production of the Winter 2014 issue of *Making History*, contributors will not be listed here, but will have a complete listing in the Spring 2014 issue. Many thanks to our many supporters.

History Makers Award sponsors are listed here, including table sponsors, since the event occurred in September 2013. They will be shown again in the Spring.

First State Stewards who entered through the membership process are included here. First State Stewards can also enter through the Annual Fund, and those extraordinary supporters will be recognized in the Spring issue.

Again, thanks to all our of supporters, members, annual funds contributors, foundations, corporations, individuals. We are a stronger, more relevant Society because of you.

Please call Wright Horne, DHS Chief Advancement Officer with comments or corrections, (302) 295-2393, or whorne@dehistory.org.

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Please consider this important means of support for the Delaware Historical Society. For information, please call Wright Horne, DHS'S Chief Advancement Officer, (302) 295-2393, or whorne@dehistory.org. Thank you.

Letter from the Chair

History is not part of your life -
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As a member, you recognize the value in *Delaware History*, the newsletters, the discounts, the free or reduced admissions to our museums, gift shop, programs, and events.

However, as valuable to us as your membership is, memberships in the Delaware Historical Society do not pay all the expenses of a dynamic, growing organization.

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- Educational programs for 15,000 Delaware schoolchildren.
- Care and management of the Historical Society's three million objects reflecting our state's history.
- The historic buildings of the Historical Society, including the Read House & Gardens, the Delaware History Museum, and Old Town Hall.
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The Society relies on contributions to its Annual Fund to continue to build on its vision—a Society inspired and empowered by Delaware history to shape the future.

Please help the Historical Society continue its unique mission by going online to our secure website and contributing electronically at dehistory.org, or by calling the Delaware Historical Society Advancement Office at (302) 295-2392.

Again, thank you for your membership in the Delaware Historical Society. We hope to see you at our events and at our historic properties in the coming year!

Sincerely,
Glen Gray



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