

# *AASLH Awards Banquet*

*RECOGNIZING THE BEST  
IN STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY*



*FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2015  
LOUISVILLE, KY*



**HISTORY**™

# AASLH Awards Banquet

LOUISVILLE MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN

6:30 PM

---

DINNER IS SERVED

7:00 PM

---

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Dichtl, President and CEO, AASLH

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY PRESENTATION

Jay Mehta, Pembroke Hill School, Kansas City, MO

Junior Individual Performance

*Victory at All Costs: The Leadership and Legacy of Winston Churchill*

7:30 PM

---

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

Trina Nelson Thomas, Chair, AASLH Awards Committee

Director, Stark Art and History Venues, Stark Foundation, Orange, TX

AWARDS ADDRESS

Carol Kammen

Ithaca, NY

8:15 PM

---

PRESENTATION OF AASLH AWARDS

Trina Nelson Thomas, Chair, AASLH Awards Committee

Julie Rose, Director, West Baton Rouge Museum, Port Allen, LA

John Dichtl, President and CEO, AASLH



## FROM THE *President of AALSH*

**I**t is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to the 70th annual awards banquet, which is co-sponsored by our friends at The History Channel.

This year, AASLH is proud to confer sixty-one national awards honoring people, projects, exhibits, books, and organizations. The winners truly represent the best in the field and are leaders for the future of state and local history. Each winner deserves our thanks for the important role they play in keeping history vital, engaging, and relevant.

The Leadership in History Awards program represents a year-long effort that requires many hours contributed by a large number of extraordinary volunteers. Bethany Hawkins is the AASLH staff liaison to the awards program. Trina Nelson Thomas, Director, Stark Art and History Venues, Stark Foundation, chairs a national committee comprised of volunteers representing regions, and each state has its own state leadership chair who brings the best projects in their state to our attention. Having witnessed one hour of the committee's three-day meeting in Nashville this summer, I can attest that the group responsible for pulling this awards program is experienced, energetic, and extremely diligent. Please join me in thanking Bethany, Trina, and the volunteer regional and state representatives for their hard work and dedication!

And thank you for joining us this evening to celebrate the best in history.

Sincerely,



John Dichtl  
President & CEO

“ Carol [Kammen] encourages us as public historians and local historians to give our history skills away, to share our authority with the people in our community...If we share the basic method of doing good history, we will encourage historically informed work throughout our families, towns, and cities. Individuals can claim interpretive power over their own historical experience and view their own lives as taking place in history.

...Historical societies and museums can do exciting, difficult history that engages visitors as responsible participants in making meaning of Main Street and of their own lives. [Carol] liberates our historical work, on the one hand, from the mere maintenance of collections and hand-me-down-stories, and—on the other hand—challenges us to develop active centers that engage the community to explore its past so that the present makes sense. If that community education is successful, every citizen can make better-informed choices for the future. This point of view was visionary in the later decades of the twentieth century; it remains a transformative mission today.

—Lorraine McConaghy, Public Historian, Seattle, Washington  
From Her Foreword in *Zen and the Art of Local History*

Welcome to the 2015 Leadership in History Awards Banquet and Congratulations to this year's award winners. The quote about Carol Kammen and her calling for local history is especially appropriate this evening. First, we are most fortunate to have Carol, an AASLH award winner herself, as tonight's keynote speaker. While known to many of us through her long standing *History News* column, "On Doing Local History," it is a distinct pleasure to have her in person this evening. Tonight we also celebrate state and local history practitioners and their projects that champion innovative and compelling ways to connect history to their communities. And to make the evening even more special, following presentations of the Awards of Merit, the HIP Awards and the Albert Corey Award, Carol will present the first Michael Kammen Award to a history institution with a budget under \$250,000 that has shown outstanding effort. This award and its cash prize is given to "aid the selected organization in some significant way that might not otherwise be possible." On behalf of the Awards Committee and the AASLH staff and council, we are most appreciative of this generous and exciting addition to the program.

I've long considered the Annual Meeting, and especially the Leadership in History Awards Banquet, as an annual recharging for the field of state and local history. In addition to great sessions, visits to host organizations, and both daytime and nighttime networking, this week we celebrate outstanding projects from the past eighteen months and individuals who have spent their lifetime championing state and local history. Award recipients come from large, established organizations and small, but equally compelling, organizations. Some award recipients have long histories of engaging their communities and some are reconnecting or energizing these award-winning communities in new ways about "the past so that the present makes sense." These award-winning projects and individuals inspire other state and local historians and organizations to stretch themselves, "to give...history skills away," and "to share authority."

During the course of the evening please take a moment to congratulate the award winners and thank the Awards Program state chairs and regional representatives, the AASLH staff, particularly Bethany Hawkins and Aja Bain, and our evening sponsor, HISTORY™, for making this evening possible.

Onward! Recharge and keep doing good state and local history!

Trina Nelson Thomas  
Chair, AASLH Awards Committee  
Director of Stark Art and History Venues  
Nelda C. and H.J. Lutcher Stark Foundation

# *Leadership in History*

## AWARDS

The American Association for State and Local History offers its Leadership in History Awards to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States.

By publicly recognizing excellent achievements, the association strives to inspire others to give care, thought, and effort to their own projects.

THERE ARE FIVE TYPES OF AWARDS:

---

---

### ***The Award of Merit***

Presented for excellence in history programs, projects, and people when compared with similar activities nationwide.

---

---

### ***The HIP Award***

The History in Progress (HIP) award is given to a project that is highly inspirational, exhibits exceptional scholarship, or is exceedingly entrepreneurial in terms of funding, partnerships, and or collaborations, creative problem solving, or unusual project design and inclusiveness. This award is given at the discretion of the awards committee to five percent or less of the total number of winners of the Award of Merit.

---

---

### ***The Albert B. Corey Award***

Named in honor of a founder and former president of AASLH, it recognizes primarily volunteer-operated historical organizations that best display the qualities of vigor, scholarship, and imagination in their work.

---

---

### ***The Award of Distinction***

This award is bestowed infrequently and only in recognition of long and very distinguished service. Recipients are noted for their contributions to the field of state and local history and are recognized nationally as leaders in the profession. The individual must have demonstrated the highest standards of performance and professional ethics.

---

---

### ***The Michael Kammen Award***

Named in honor of the late Michael Kammen, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Cornell University's Newton C. Farr Professor of American History and Culture Emeritus, this award is new for 2015. It is presented to a history institution with an annual budget under \$250,000 that has shown outstanding effort.

---

---

# Leadership in History

## AWARDS

2015

### The Michael Kammen Award



#### The Lombard Historical Society

LOMBARD, IL

The Lombard Historical Society's *Footsteps to Freedom* exhibit explores the story of the Underground Railroad by focusing on the work of local abolitionist Sheldon Peck. Peck's 1839 homestead was a station on the Underground Railroad, and provides a lens through which to view larger themes about slavery, abolitionism, the Civil War, race, and social justice. The exhibit was particularly designed to engage student visitors and older visitors who may not have studied the Underground Railroad in school. Through thought-provoking text, reproduction objects, the house itself as an object, and interactives, the Lombard Historical Society has created a thorough yet accessible interpretation of this tumultuous period for visitors to experience.

2015

### The Albert B. Corey Award



#### Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum

VASHON ISLAND, WA

The exhibit *Vashon Island's Native People: Navigating Seas of Change* provided insights into the culture and unwritten history of the Sqababsh people, a band of the Puyallup Indians who lived on Vashon-Maury Island for thousands of years. The story of Lucy Gerand (born ca. 1840), a native Sqababsh woman whose descriptions of their life are the basis of contemporary knowledge, gave a personal focus to the exhibit. Through consultation with educators, language specialists, and tribal leaders, the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum, in partnership with the Puyallup Tribe, crafted an innovative exhibit that educated visitors about a group neglected in the historical record while challenging assumptions about the Island's Native history and heritage.

2015  
**HIP**  
**Awards**



**The Jenks Society for Lost Museums**

PROVIDENCE, RI

for the exhibit **The Lost Museum**



**Jewish Museum Milwaukee**

MILWAUKEE, WI

for the exhibit

**Stitching History from the Holocaust**



**Centre d'histoire de Montréal**

MONTREAL, CANADA

for the exhibit

**Scandal! Vice, Crime, and Morality in  
Montréal, 1940-1960**



# 2015 Award of Merit Winners

## ALABAMA

**Alabama Department of Archives and History**, Montgomery, for the exhibit *Alabama Voices*. This exhibit is the cornerstone of the redesigned Museum of Alabama, and draws heavily on archival sources and collections. By presenting multiple voices and views with accessible interpretation, *Alabama Voices* tells an inclusive story of the state's history and development.

## CALIFORNIA

**Karen Holmes and Sherrie Smith-Ferri**, Ukiah, for the publication *Days of Grace: California Artist Grace Hudson in Hawaii*. This catalog accompanied an exhibit of the same name that explored Hudson's formative year in Hawaii in 1901 and the work she produced there. By identifying unknown Hudson works and connecting them to contemporary Hawaiian artists and collectors, the project achieved a valuable cross-cultural understanding of Pacific art in this era.

## CANADA

**Centre d'histoire de Montréal**, Montréal, Canada, for the exhibit *Scandal! Vice, Crime, and Morality in Montréal, 1940-1960*. Based on extensive documentary research and a wide-ranging collection of personal accounts from Montréalers from the era along with comments by contemporary specialists, this exhibition delves deeper into the reputation of Montréal as the "Little Paris of America." The exhibit's subject matter is all the more pertinent through the parallels one can draw to current headlines and issues, and connects residents to their city's past in a tangible and thought-provoking way.

## COLORADO

**History Colorado**, Denver, for the *RACE Project*. This project brought together community organizations dedicated to promoting racial equality and creating safe spaces for meaningful conversations. The exhibit and associated programming allowed History Colorado to build significantly on the civic engagement programming that has become a priority for the institution.

**Telluride Historical Museum**, Telluride, for the exhibit *Voices of Wartime: Telluride During World War II*. This groundbreaking exhibit explored how a global conflict affected the everyday lives of those living in an isolated Western mining community. It included new research, two new museum publications, collaborations with new community organizations and local businesses, new oral histories, innovative interpretive displays, and artifact loans.

## CONNECTICUT

**The Lyman Allyn Art Museum, Connecticut College, and Stephen Fan**, New London, for the project *SubUrbanisms: Casino Company Town/China Town*. This project, including an exhibit, public forum, and publication, documents the development of a suburban Chinatown surrounding the Mohegan Sun casino. This project challenged assumptions associated with American suburban living and fostered public conversation about cultural change and transformation in the area.

**Mystic Seaport: the Museum of America and the Sea**, Mystic, for the project *38th Voyage of the Charles W. Morgan*. This project brought an 1841 whaleship and accompanying outdoor exhibit to historic New England ports to raise awareness of maritime heritage and issues of ocean sustainability and conservation. Sailing for the first time since 1941, the *Charles W. Morgan* reached thousands outside the museum with its innovative interpretation.

**Wethersfield Historical Society**, Wethersfield, for the exhibit *Castle on the Cove: the Connecticut State Prison and Wethersfield*. This exhibit explores the prison as an integral part of the town's identity. By assessing the prison's significance through the perspectives of inmates, employees, and local residents, the exhibit presents a nuanced interpretation of a sensitive and relevant local topic.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**President Lincoln's Cottage**, Washington, DC, for the *Visitor Experience Re-Vision*. This project enhanced and updated the multimedia approach to interpreting Lincoln's seasonal retreat. By utilizing smart technology to make the house come alive, frontline interpreters have the platform and tools they need to create a multi-sensory experience for visitors.

## GEORGIA

**Georgia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration—Georgia Division, and New South Associates, Inc.**, Atlanta, for the project *Abercorn Archaeology: African American History in the Shadow of the Oak*. An archaeological survey for a construction project led to the identification and study of historically significant African American sites near Savannah. Public outreach, tours, scholarly publications, and a children's book help preserve and interpret the project's findings.

## IDAHO

**Keith Petersen**, Moscow, for his outstanding dedication to promoting and preserving Idaho's state history. Currently the Associate Director of the Idaho State Historical Society and State Historian, Petersen has served the history field for nearly forty years and authored numerous publications. He is a champion of best practices at the local level and an advocate for small rural historical societies.

## ILLINOIS

**Edgewater Historical Society**, Chicago, for the exhibit *Motoring Through Edgewater*. This exhibit explores how the automobile transformed the community and the nation from 1900 to 1930. Located on the northeast side of Chicago, Edgewater was so densely populated with automobile-related businesses that industry experts dubbed it "North Side Motor Row." Through programs and community outreach, the society brought the story of Edgewater's importance to the auto business to a wide and diverse audience.

**Midway Village Museum**, Rockford, for the exhibit *Many Faces, One Community*. This exhibit explores the history of immigration to Rockford and the ethnic groups who impacted the community's growth. Through teacher input, oral histories, and evaluations, the museum broadened its focus of interpretation and its audience to truly reflect the diversity and needs of the city.

## INDIANA

**Historical Society of Harrison County**, Corydon, for the *Harrison County, Indiana Driving Tour*. This ambitious project highlights 232 historically significant sites along its 357-mile tour. Buildings, bridges, churches, towns, and natural features are included in this exploration of local history, which is divided into four loops and includes an illustrated guidebook.

## IOWA

**State Historical Museum of Iowa**, Des Moines, for the *Community Based Learning Program*. This program, developed with public school teachers, builds relationships with at-risk student populations while engaging them in the study of state history and culture. High school and elementary classes meet at the museum to learn about history, civics, economics, and literacy in a nontraditional hands-on environment.

**State Historical Museum of Iowa**, Des Moines, for the exhibit *Riding Through History*. This exhibit focused on the history of recreational bicycling in the state, with particular emphasis on the Des Moines Register's Annual *Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa*. The museum supported its mission of presenting accessible stories with local significance through this interpretation of a popular and visible hobby.

## KANSAS

**Franklin County Historical Society and Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area**, Ottawa, for the program *Native Neighbors from Freedom's Frontier Past*. This public program highlighted native groups relocated to Franklin County in the 1830s and relocated to Oklahoma by the 1870s. The society invited representatives of those groups to participate in the program, which was expanded and restructured so other heritage area communities could host it in future years.

**Overland Park Historical Society and Svadlenak Museum Consulting**, Overland Park, for the exhibit *Overland Park: a Place of Peace, Comfort, and Plenty*. The society and museum consultant Jean Svadlenak worked together to produce this exhibit of community history from 1905-1925. Using photographs, artifacts, and other primary sources, the exhibit tells the story of the town's entrepreneurial founder and the families who sought peace and prosperity in the suburbs of Kansas City.

## KENTUCKY

**Kentucky Historical Society and Bridgeport Elementary School**, Frankfort, for the *HistorysmArts* program. This museum/school partnership offers interdisciplinary in-school experiences for K-8 students to increase skills in visual literacy, historical literacy, and critical thinking. During its first five months, KHS provided more than 200 in-school lessons and had 5,939 interactions with Kentucky students and teachers.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**#BostonBetter**, Boston, for the exhibit *Dear Boston: Messages from the Marathon Memorial*. This temporary exhibition, held at the Boston Public Library for the one-year anniversary of the marathon bombing, presented items from the makeshift memorial that sprung up following the tragedy. This collaborative effort thoughtfully interpreted a recent and traumatic event and created a communal civic space for reflection and healing.

**Marietta Mullen**, Plymouth, for her dedication to preserving and interpreting the *Mayflower II*. Through exhaustive research and investigation, Mullen revived the story of the 1957 replica Mayflower that was built and sailed from England as a gift. By the time of the Millennial Sail in 2000, Mullen had the 1957 crew eager to participate in events in Plymouth and Provincetown, and her own band of interpreters ready to engage the public with a story spanning four centuries and two continents.

**The Preservation Collaborative, Inc.**, Medford, for the program *Industrial Eden: the Legacy of Haywardville*. This was a year-long multi-community program designed to heighten awareness of area residents to a vanished mill village whose story remained untold and obscured by myth. *Industrial Eden* celebrated the shared impacts of the village on the local communities and stimulated interest in the influence, trade networks, and innovation of the forgotten village and its inhabitants.

**Worcester Revolution of 1774**, Worcester, for the *Worcester Revolution of 1774* project. This project made a significant contribution to changing the way residents in Central Massachusetts understood the essential role the region played in starting the American Revolution. Encompassing lectures, public programs, workshops, a reenactment, website, and original play, the project commemorated forgotten national history in their own backyard.

## MARYLAND

**Jewish Museum of Maryland, Maryland Historical Society, and Minotaur Mazes**, Baltimore, for the exhibit *The A-Mazing Mendes Cohen*. This exhibit created the world's first "biographic maze," and illuminated 19th-century history and the formation of Jewish American identity through the life of an obscure but colorful figure named Mendes Cohen. Cohen's adventures connected him to an incredible array of events and places, including Fort McHenry, London, and Jerusalem.

**Maryland Historical Society**, Baltimore, for the *Stitching History* program. In six weeks, volunteers for this project created a hand-sewn, full-scale, thirty by forty-two foot replica of the *Star-Spangled Banner* flag for the War of 1812 Bicentennial. The stitching process and subsequent public programming gave visitors and volunteers a tangible link to history and a personal way to participate in the commemoration.

## MICHIGAN

**Detroit Historical Society**, Detroit, for the exhibit *Built by the River*. This exhibit, focusing on the city's maritime history, rejuvenated the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle. Through input from maritime historians, community members and leaders, educators, and volunteers, this project reaches family visitors with clear learning goals and hands-on interactives.

**Edsel and Eleanor Ford House**, Grosse Pointe Shores, for the exhibit *Women Who Motor*. This project expanded interpretation at the house beyond the Ford family while interpreting the overlooked history of women and cars. The exhibit's theme, "the automobile changed the history of women, and women changed the history of the automobile," powerfully encapsulated the intersections of gender, technology, and social history.

## MINNESOTA

**Carver County Historical Society**, Waconia, for the society's website redesign. Utilizing extensive user surveys, CCHS redesigned their website to improve navigation, streamline the research process, and emphasize local history. The newly launched website is an important resource for photographs, stories, maps, sites, and genealogical information for Carver County residents and those interested in its past.

**Carver County Historical Society, Wendy Petersen-Biorn, and Darlene Wendlandt Fasching**, Waconia, for the publication *Two Wars on the Frontier*. This project re-published the story of Minnesota soldier A.J. Carlson's experiences serving in the US-Dakota War of 1862 and for the Union Army in the Civil War. Carlson later published his journal in a newspaper with added contextual articles, court documents, and other firsthand accounts. These re-discovered documents give valuable and balanced local perspectives on two of the most significant national conflicts of the nineteenth century.

**Greg Donofrio, Laurel Fritz, and Stearline Rucker**, Minneapolis, for the *Arthur and Edith Lee House Project*. This project documents and interprets the conflicts that occurred when a house in a white neighborhood was purchased in 1931 by a young African American couple. It consisted of both a National Register nomination for the Lee House and an exhibition interpreting its significance for the history of segregation and protest in the Twin Cities. Through oral histories and community collaboration, this project brought the Lee's story to a new generation.

**Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County**, Moorhead, for the exhibit *Doing Our Part: Clay County in WWII*. Using a traveling exhibit called *Homefront* as a starting point, HCSCC staff researched, designed, and installed this innovative exhibit to honor people who made sacrifices seventy years ago and to share their stories with an intergenerational audience. Interactives and hands-on activities bring the struggles of the era to life through narratives examining the war and everyday life at home.

**Minnesota Humanities Center and Minnesota Indian Affairs Council**, St. Paul, for the *Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations* project. This project was designed to communicate, in a meaningful and truthful way, the history of the sovereignty of and treaties between nations in Minnesota territory (and, later, the state of Minnesota) to educators, students, and the general public. The traveling exhibit and website present a real and important absent narrative about the genesis of current culture and the foundation of contemporary indigenous issues.

## MISSOURI

**Missouri History Museum, Charles E. Clagget, Jr., and Richard H. Weiss**, St. Louis, for the publication *Max Starkloff and the Fight for Disability Rights*. Max Starkloff, paralyzed at age twenty-one, was instrumental in the Independent Living Movement, which enabled thousands of disabled people to move out of nursing homes by encouraging local governments to remove physical barriers, make public transportation and housing accessible, and pass laws preventing job discrimination. By sharing this story, the book aims to educate the community on how far we've come in making the world more accessible for those with disabilities, while at the same time focusing on how we can all work to continue the progress.

**Piper Memorial Medical Museum, St. Joseph Medical Center, and Svadlenak Museum Consulting**, Kansas City, for the exhibit *Caring for Body, Mind, and Spirit: The Story of St. Joseph's Nurses*. As the oldest private hospital in Kansas City, St. Joseph's history is a reflection of how the training and practice of nursing has changed since the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet opened it in 1874. Through archival collections, artifacts, and personal stories, this exhibit interprets developments in medicine and nursing practice and how these impacted care at St. Joseph's.

## MONTANA

**Montana Historical Society**, Helena, for the *Montana Women's History Matters* project. In commemoration of Montana's women's suffrage centennial, this project shared an online exhibit, publication, walking tours, and other public programming with the community that focused on women's roles in shaping state history. By including stories of women from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and occupations, the WHM project fostered meaningful conversation and consideration of everyday women as important historical figures.

## NORTH DAKOTA

**State Historical Society of North Dakota**, Bismarck, for the multimedia project *North Dakota: People Living on the Land*. This project was designed, written, and produced by a development team of seven professional educators, and is intended as an 8th grade North Dakota Studies curriculum. It includes 90 topics on state history, geology, geography, and culture from about 500 million years ago to the present, and is based on primary archival sources and documents, photographs, maps, and films.

**Tamakewaštewin LaDonna Brave Bull Allard**, Fort Yates, for her leadership and work to reclaim the narrative regarding the history of the Lakota/Dakota people. Allard leads the people of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in matters of heritage conservation but also speaks to the wider world by fostering historical consciousness across cultures. As a scholar and advocate for Native history, Allard's numerous achievements include establishing the first Tribal Historic Preservation Office in the country and organizing the groundbreaking Teton Lakota History and Killdeer Mountain Symposium at Sitting Bull College in 2014.

## NEW YORK

**National September 11 Memorial and Museum**, New York City, for the *National September 11 Memorial and Museum Exhibition*. The 110,000 square-foot museum tells the story of the events of 9/11 through artifacts, images, first-person accounts, and multimedia displays, and is the global focal point for preserving the history of the attacks and exploring their continuing significance. The exhibit facilitates memorialization and mourning, and invites visitors to place their own experiences and reflections on 9/11 into the context of others.

**Three Village Historical Society**, Setauket, for the exhibit *Chicken Hill: a Community Lost to Time*. This project highlights and educates the public about a unique community that is largely forgotten in the area. Through artifacts, interviews, and personal stories, *Chicken Hill* tells the story of an isolated polyglot community of Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Romanians, Irish, Italians, Native Americans, and African Americans who lived in a company town in the midst of a white farming community.

## NEW JERSEY

**Tuckerton Seaport and Baymen's Museum**, Tuckerton, for their *Community Museum Leads Community Recovery* initiative. Despite damage in excess of \$350,000 (the most of any cultural institution along the Jersey shore) from Superstorm Sandy, the Seaport reopened as a center of support to the community less than twelve hours after the storm. By hosting community dinners, visiting classrooms, holding forums, and collecting stories and interviews, the museum offered extraordinary economic, social, and emotional assistance to a community in need.

## OKLAHOMA

**Chisholm Trail Museum**, Kingfisher, for the exhibit *TG&Y: an Original Oklahoma Icon*. Through photographs, narratives, hands-on materials, and loaned artifacts, this exhibit revealed the history of a local small town variety store from the 1920s and how it become one of the most successful chain variety stores in the nation, with over 900 stores by the end of the 20th-century. TG&Y drew upon local memory and ties to create a compelling story with national significance.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Betsy Ross House**, Philadelphia, for the project *Dressing the Bed: a Living Demonstration of 18th-Century Needlework*. The ca. 1740 Betsy Ross House tells the story of Ross, her work in the upholstery trade, and her legacy as a flag-maker. The focus of the project was to make new bed hangings for the room interpreted as Ross's, but was also part of a larger plan to bring a historically accurate Betsy Ross to life and counter misconceptions about the site and Ross herself. The project had achieved two goals: refurnishing an outdated exhibit space and strengthening the interpretation of Betsy Ross beyond that of a mythical figure.

**Brian L. Fitz and Kenneth Burkett**, Brookville, for the publication *The Scripture Rocks: Why Douglas Stahlman Carved His Legacy in Stone*. Local legends abound about the mysterious engraved rocks frequently encountered in the wooded hillsides around Brookville, and are explained for the first time in this groundbreaking book. *The Scripture Rocks* is a historically accurate account and comprehensive resource of the life of Douglas Monroe Stahlman and an index of his unique religious expressions.

**Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site**, Philadelphia, for the exhibit *The Big Graph*. A massive infographic sculpture illustrating incarceration rates over 110 years, *The Big Graph* displays the changing racial makeup of the American prison population and other striking trends in recent U.S. corrections policies. Drawing input from offenders and victims, activists and scholars, community organizers and corrections officers, this 16-foot tall, 3,500-pound plate steel sculpture presents a striking public visualization of American incarceration that fosters discussion and reflection.

**Senator John Heinz History Center**, Pittsburgh, for the traveling exhibit *The Civil War in Pennsylvania*. This engaging and educational exhibit was designed to travel around the state, helping smaller venues interpret the local significance of the Civil War as part of the 150th anniversary commemoration. The History Center designed concise, modular pieces for maximum flexibility and provided an empty case and label production for venues to add and highlight their own local collections. The exhibit package, provided to venues at no cost, also included installation and de-installation of the exhibit, curriculum materials, programming contacts, a press kit, and suggestions for marketing.

## RHODE ISLAND

**Jenks Society for Lost Museums**, Providence, for the exhibit *The Lost Museum*. This student-led project intertwined art and the history of science to share the story of J.W.P. Jenks, a New England naturalist whose museum of natural history at Brown University was dismantled and dispersed after his death. By re-collecting this lost museum and soliciting recreations of specimens from artists, the Jenks project explored the ephemerality of museum collections and revived lost campus lore in a way that fostered collaboration, reflection, and appreciation.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Historic Columbia**, Columbia, for the *Woodrow Wilson Family Home: a Museum of Reconstruction in Columbia and Richland County*. Closed in 2005 for structural issues, the Wilson Home underwent unprecedented physical rehabilitation and a total interpretation overhaul before reopening in 2014. The Woodrow Wilson Family Home is not only South Carolina's only presidential site, it is also the only museum in the United States to focus solely on the Reconstruction era. This careful and thorough restoration and updated interpretation have transformed the home into a vibrant and relevant cultural site.

## TENNESSEE

**Andrew Jackson Foundation**, Nashville, for the exhibit *Andrew Jackson: Born for a Storm*. This exhibition, timed to celebrate the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans, represents a hundred year shift in the way the institution interprets the seventh President by turning a lens on the man himself. It focused on building a strong educational foundation, offering a meaningful engagement with important topics that are relevant today, and embracing controversy as an opportunity to open dialogue and creating partnerships.

**Tennessee State Museum**, Nashville, for the *Slaves and Slaveholders of Wessyngton Plantation* exhibit and programming. Using innovative storytelling techniques, sound scholarship, exhibit films, educational programming, and engagement with descendent communities, this project sensitively portrayed the complexity of relationships on the plantation. Through a dual-storytelling technique that balanced coverage of the lives of slaves and slaveholders, it also sought to create an understanding of the 19th-century American mind and contemporary views of slavery.

**Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission**, Nashville, for the *Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial* project. The Commission worked with many partnering organizations to bring attention to the War of 1812 and the role Tennesseans played in that conflict. The programs, tours, articles, workshops, exhibits, and preservation efforts of this project included the stories of diverse everyday Tennesseans alongside familiar figures like Andrew Jackson to recognize the roles of those who have been obscured and forgotten by history.

## TEXAS

**The Bullock Texas State History Museum**, Austin, for the exhibit *La Belle: the Ship That Changed History*. The French ship *La Belle's* story spans over 300 years, and ranks as one of the most important shipwreck discoveries in the country. The museum told the story of its life, death, and eventual recovery and conservation in an engaging and accessible way that fascinated visitors. Patrons were also able to view the ship's reconstruction at the museum and live-streamed on the website.

## VERMONT

**James Sanborn Davidson**, Rutland, for his lifelong dedication to preserving and interpreting the history of Rutland, Vermont. Davidson was a founding member of the Rutland Historical Society and has worked with them over the past forty-six years to promote local history within the community. He has been Honorary Curator for the past sixteen years, and shares his knowledge through the society's newsletter, website, books, volunteer service, live programs, and television series. Davidson's advocacy for local history have made him invaluable to the community and the state.

## VIRGINIA

**Preservation Virginia**, Richmond, for the *Tobacco Barns Preservation Project*. This program was intended to raise awareness of the state's rural heritage, specifically the tobacco heritage of southside Virginia, by helping to protect its most iconic symbol, the tobacco barn. It was designed with several components, including an architectural survey of tobacco barns, public workshops on barn repair, an oral history project to record stories of elderly tobacco farmers, a poster contest for local middle school students, and a grants project to provide funding to repair tobacco barns.

## WASHINGTON

**Washington State Historical Society and Lorraine McConaghy**, Tacoma, for the project *Civil War Pathways in the Pacific Northwest*. This project seized the opportunity of the Civil War Sesquicentennial to test a set of programs exploring the Pacific Northwest from 1857 through 1871. Through multiple programs including an exhibit, online feature, and crowdsourced research project, *Pathways* showed how the Civil War was not just a regional war, but a national war of ideas, and that it mattered in Washington Territory.

## WISCONSIN

**History Museum at the Castle and African Heritage, Inc.**, Appleton, for the project *A Stone of Hope: Black Experiences in the Fox Cities*. The museum and partnering organizations created a civic engagement initiative to highlight the marginalized history of black experiences and racial discrimination in Appleton. This project utilized historic black newspapers, state archival records, military pension applications, and traditional local sources, as well as reviews and listening sessions with community partners. As the first major study of blacks in northern Wisconsin, the exhibit and programs served as a truth and reconciliation effort for the community to reflect on past racism and move forward as a more equitable place for people of color.

**Colleen Bradford Krantz and Clark Kidder**, Janesville, for the documentary *West by Orphan Train*. This project tells the story of the thousands of orphans from the East Coast who were transported west for adoption and farm work between 1854 to 1929. This massive resettlement of children is a major story in Western history that is increasingly difficult to tell as those who experienced it become fewer. The documentary strives towards an understanding of rural life and child welfare in a much different era.

**Jewish Museum Milwaukee**, Milwaukee, for the exhibit *Stitching History from the Holocaust*. This exhibit explores the intangible loss of the Holocaust through the personal story of Hedwig Strnad, a dressmaker from Prague. The Museum recreated eight dresses from design sketches and contextualized them with the story of Hedwig, her husband, and their tragic death along with millions of others in the Holocaust. This sensitive and emotional project utilized extensive primary source research and creative interpretation to memorialize this tragedy and its victims' stolen futures.

## WYOMING

**Richard G. Ewig**, Laramie, for a lifetime of preserving, interpreting, and championing the history of the state of Wyoming. Ewig has had a distinguished forty-three-year career in the field of local and public history, developing exhibits, publishing articles, directing workshops, and securing grants. His work with the Wyoming State Historical Society, American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Historical Foundation, and History Day has been extraordinary, and his dedication to local history is nothing less than inspiring.

**Jackson Hole Historical Center and Museum**, Jackson, for the project *The Last Homestead*. This project tells the story of Linda and Harold "Mac" McKinstry, a young couple who homesteaded at the mouth of Pacific Creek in 1915. They faced significant challenges in this wild and isolated spot, yet persevered in their love of the wilderness. Combining family memoirs with historic photographs, this exhibit reveals the hidden history of 20th-century homesteaders, their interactions with the growing national park movement, and their legacy in the Mountain West.

2015

**StEPs Graduate**

**Tampa Bay History Center**

TAMPA, FL

This organization has completed the StEPs Program (Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations) and earned all applicable Gold certificates.

# 2015 Awards Program Volunteers

A special thank you to the AASLH 2014-15 regional and state awards team leaders (as of March 1) who helped make the AASLH Leadership in History Awards possible.

**NATIONAL AWARDS CHAIR:** Trina Nelson Thomas, Stark Cultural Venues, Orange, TX

## REGION 1

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Jennifer Pustz, Historic New England, Boston, MA

**MAINE:** Raney Bench, Seal Cove Auto Museum, Mount Desert

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Susan Goganian, Beverly Historical Society, Beverly

**NEW HAMPSHIRE:** Vacant

**VERMONT:** Elsa Gilbertson, Chimney Point, Mount Independence, Hubbardton Battlefield State Historic Sites, Addison

## REGION 2

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Ronald Potvin, John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities, Brown University, Providence, RI

**CONNECTICUT:** Stephen Bartkus, Gunn Memorial Museum, Washington

**NEW JERSEY:** Timothy Hart, Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Toms River

**NEW YORK:** Lenora M. Henson, Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural NHS, Buffalo

**RHODE ISLAND:** Vacant

## REGION 3

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Terri Blanchette, Washington, DC

**DELAWARE:** Joan Hoge-North, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:** Erin Carlson Mast, President Lincoln's Cottage, Washington

**MARYLAND:** Mark R. Thompson, Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, Saint Leonard

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Jeff Hawks, Army Heritage Center Foundation, Carlisle

Melinda Meyer, Erie Yesterday, Erie

## REGION 4

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Mike Bunn, Historic Blakeley Park, Spanish Fort, AL

**ALABAMA:** Karen R. Utz, Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark, Birmingham

**FLORIDA:** Jon Hill, Pensacola Lighthouse and Museum, Pensacola

**GEORGIA:** Sylvia Naguib, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, Atlanta

## REGION 5

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Rikki Davenport, Charleston, SC

**KENTUCKY:** Vacant

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Raelana Poteat, North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** Betsy Kleinfelder, Historic Columbia, Columbia

**VIRGINIA:** Cheryl Jackson, Virginia Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, Richmond

**WEST VIRGINIA:** Danielle Petrak, The Royce J. and Caroline B. Watts Museum, Morgantown

## REGION 6

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Jason Crabill, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, OH

**ILLINOIS:** Jeanne Schultz Angel, Illinois Association of Museums, Springfield

**INDIANA:** Tamara Hemmerlein, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis

**MICHIGAN:** Alex Forist, Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids

**OHIO:** Maggie Marconi, Sandusky Library/Follett House, Sandusky

## REGION 7

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Katie Stringer, Blount Mansion Association, Knoxville, TN

**ARKANSAS:** Allyn Lord, Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, Springdale

**LOUISIANA:** Katie Burlison, Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans

**MISSISSIPPI:** Rachel Myers, Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson

**TENNESSEE:** Ashley Bouknight, The Hermitage, Hermitage

Dave Hearnese, Blount Mansion Association, Knoxville

## REGION 8

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Adam Lynn, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher, OK

**NEW MEXICO:** Vacant

**OKLAHOMA:** Stacy Moore, Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, Duncan

**TEXAS:** Daniel Schlegel, Jr., Scurry County Museum, Snyder

## REGION 9

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Nicholas Hoffman, The History Museum at the Castle, Appleton, WI

**IOWA:** Leo E. Landis, State Historical Museum of Iowa, Des Moines

**MINNESOTA:** Joe Hoover, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul

**WISCONSIN:** Emily Pfothenauer, Recollection Wisconsin/WiLS, Madison

## REGION 10

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Dr. Jody Sowell, Missouri Historical Museum, St. Louis

**KANSAS:** Vacant

**MISSOURI:** Anne Cox, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia

**NEBRASKA:** Vacant

## REGION 11

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Shannon Haltiwanger, History Colorado, Denver, CO

**COLORADO:** Zebulon Miracle, Gateway Canyons Resort, Gateway

**MONTANA:** Vacant

**NORTH DAKOTA:** Danielle Stuckie, State Historical Society of North Dakota, North Dakota Heritage Center, Bismarck

**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Sue Gates, Dacotah Prairie Museum, Aberdeen

**WYOMING:** Sylvia Bruner, Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum, Buffalo

## REGION 12

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Brandi Burns, Boise City Department of Arts & History, Boise, ID

**ALASKA:** Ross Coen, Board Member, Alaska Historical Society, Seattle, WA

**IDAHO:** Dulce L. Kersting, Latah County Historical Society, Moscow

**OREGON:** Vacant

**WASHINGTON:** Susan Rohrer, State Capital Museum, Olympia

## REGION 13

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Wendy Franklin, Independent Museum Professional, Sacramento, CA

**CALIFORNIA:** Carmen Blair, San Mateo County Historical Association, Redwood City, CA

Carlota F. Haider, Brea

**HAWAII:** Vacant

## REGION 14

**REGIONAL CHAIR:** Jody Crago, Chandler Museum, Chandler, AZ

**ARIZONA:** Mary Ann Ruelas, Arizona History Museum, Tucson

**NEVADA:** Crystal R. Van Dee, Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas

**UTAH:** Kaia Landon, Brigham City Museum, Brigham City

**Thank You** FOR ATTENDING THE 2015 AASLH AWARDS BANQUET

Join us for the 2016 AASLH Awards Banquet in Detroit, Michigan.

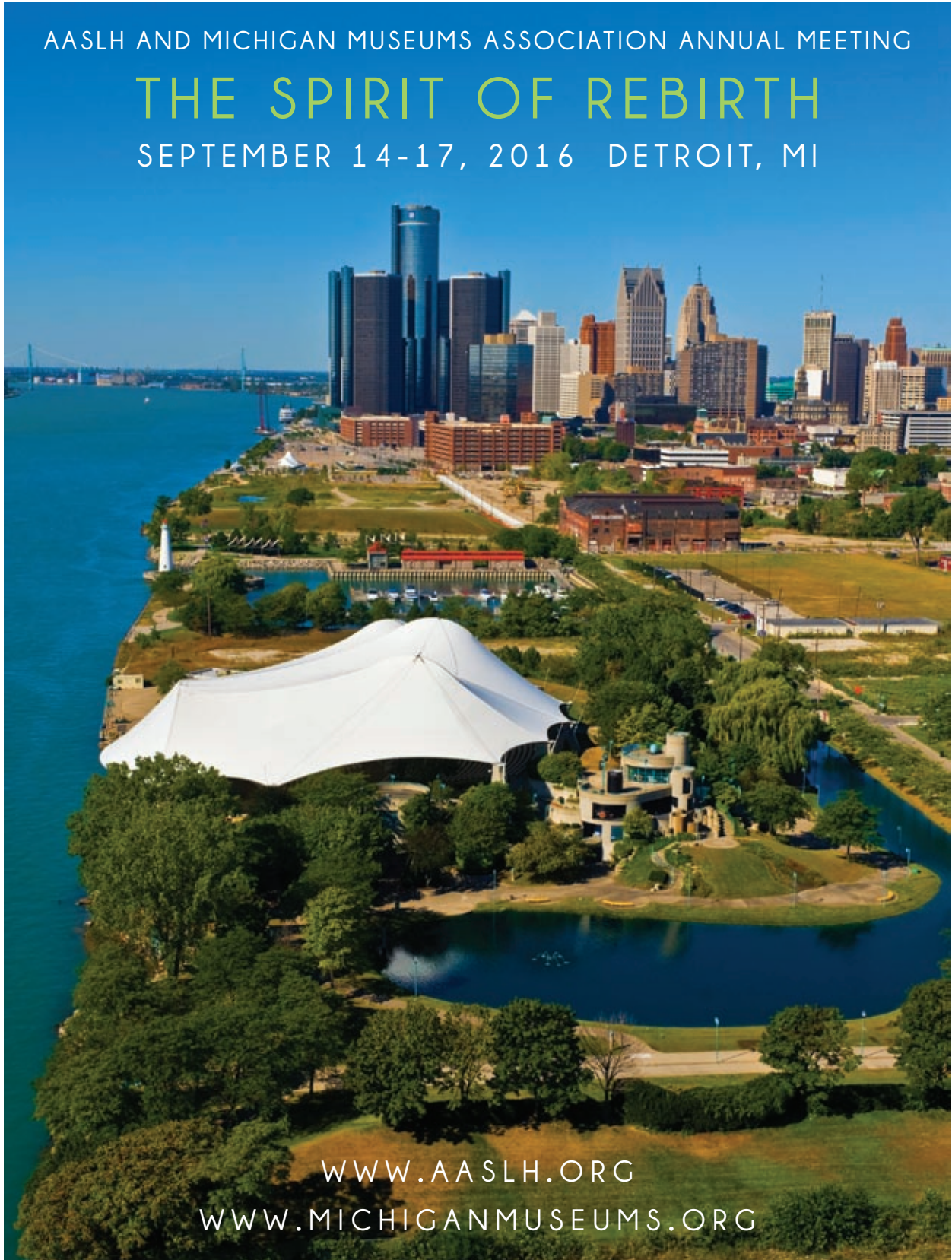
If you know of an individual or project deserving of an award, we encourage you to submit a nomination.

Visit [aaslh.org](http://aaslh.org) for information.

AASLH AND MICHIGAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

# THE SPIRIT OF REBIRTH

SEPTEMBER 14-17, 2016 DETROIT, MI



[WWW.AASLH.ORG](http://WWW.AASLH.ORG)

[WWW.MICHIGANMUSEUMS.ORG](http://WWW.MICHIGANMUSEUMS.ORG)