



NEW JERSEY  
*Historical*  
COMMISSION

# Past Matters

March 2024

The New Jersey Historical Commission proudly presents *Past Matters*, a monthly newsletter specifically designed for New Jersey's state legislators.

Founded on the belief that understanding our shared heritage is essential to sustaining a cohesive and robust democracy, the New Jersey Historical Commission is dedicated to advancing and preserving the history of our state. The Commission wants to enhance your access to our state's history to support the essential work that you do.

This monthly is intended to provide you with stories from New Jersey's past that you can share on your social media accounts and to keep you informed on all the ways the New Jersey Historical Commissions serves the residents of our state.

We hope that this project will present a new and interesting way to engage with your constituents and provide a platform through which New Jerseyans can explore their shared heritage.



# Share New Jersey History

Below you will find drafted text and graphics about New Jersey's

history that you can simply copy and paste to your social media accounts.

This month our suggested post explores the winding history behind the New Jersey/New York land border on Ellis Island.



## *Where is Ellis Island?*



In which state is Ellis Island located? If you said New York, you are

correct. But if you said, New Jersey, you're right, too!

How is this possible? Like in many parts of the world today, borders in Early America were fluid and often contentious. Disputes between New York and New Jersey over who controlled the Hudson Bay date back to the founding of the colonies.

In 1832, the issue was brought before the Supreme Court, but the case wasn't settled until 1998! As part of that ruling, Ellis Island was divided between the two states. The original area of the island is located in New York, but the island was expanded considerably in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This expanded part of the island is located in New Jersey.

To learn more about New Jersey's history, visit [history.nj.gov](http://history.nj.gov).

Photo Credit: "Structural Development of Ellis Island, 1890-1935" from the National Parks Service

---

If you have any questions about the post, would like to look at our sources, or are interested in learning more about the topic, we are happy to assist! Please send an email with your questions to Rachel Thimke at [rachel.thimke@sos.nj.gov](mailto:rachel.thimke@sos.nj.gov).



## NJHC Grantee Spotlight

**Harriet Tubman Museum**  
Cape May, New Jersey



The Harriet Tubman Museum, located in Cape May, uplifts and preserves the history of Harriet Tubman's time in New Jersey as well as the legacies of prominent South Jersey abolitionists.

During the 2024 fiscal year, the Harriet Tubman Museum received \$30,000 from the New Jersey Historical Commission as a General Operating Support (GOS) Grant.

Our GOS program is one important way we support history in New Jersey. These grants help underwrite virtually all operating aspects of an organization offering New Jersey history services and need not be applied to any one aspect, program, service.

"From our programming to our educational outreach work, funding from the New Jersey Historical Commission has been fundamental to engaging the audiences of the Harriet Tubman Museum and amplifying New Jersey's role in the struggle for freedom and equality. We are grateful for the Commission's support, which enables the Museum to spark critical conversations about the past, question its impacts on the present, and explore visions for the future." - Cindy Mullock, Executive Director of the Harriet Tubman Museum of New Jersey

Harriet Tubman Museum of New  
Jersey

---

#### **About New Jersey Historical Commission Grant Programs:**

One of the many ways we fulfill our mission of sharing and preserving New Jersey's history is through an active grant program. Grant-making

has been an integral part of the NJHC's activities for over fifty years. From its inception, Project Grants, followed by GOS and later CHPP grants, enable the NJHC to strengthen New Jersey history organizations and activities statewide.

NJHC Grant Opportunities



## NJHC Resource Spotlight



### ***New Jersey Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal***

Twice a year the New Jersey Historical Commission, in collaboration with Rutgers University Libraries and Middlesex County, publishes *New Jersey Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. This peer-reviewed publication is dedicated to the whole history of our state and is completely free for both readers and contributors.

*NJS* offers readers from all around the world the opportunity to learn more about the Garden State, in addition to providing New Jersey authors - from undergraduate students to seasoned researchers - a platform on which to share their work.

Highlights from our Winter 2024 issue include:

- *Ira G. Owen: US Civil War Era Photographer of Newton, New Jersey* by Gary Saretzky and Joseph Bilby
- *Creating a Local Notable: Brigadier General Anthony Walton White of New Brunswick* by Chris Rasmussen
- *Exhibit Review: The Peter Mott House* by Meg Sharp Walton

*New Jersey  
Studies*

## Welcoming Dr. Steven Elliott New Editor of *New Jersey Studies*



After nearly ten years, Melissa Ziobro has stepped down as editor for *NJS*. During her tenure, Ziobro expanded *NJS* to a global audience and curated a platform from which researchers could share their findings about our state's history. We are so grateful for her steadfast stewardship of the journal since its reorganization in 2015 and wish her the very best in her new role at the Springsteen Archives.

Though Ziobro will be missed, we are excited to announce that Dr. Steven Elliott has joined the team as the new editor for *NJS*. Dr. Elliott currently works as a historian for the

US Army Center of Military History, where he is working on two short monographs on the campaigns of the American Revolution. He is also a lecturer in history at Rutgers Newark, where he has taught classes on local history since 2017. He is the author of *Surviving the Winters: Housing Washington's Army during the American Revolution* and is currently writing a history of Newark. His first issue as editor of *NJS* will be released this upcoming summer.



## Upcoming Events

**Raising Awareness of the Public Value of History**  
April 17, 2024 at 3:00pm



## Raising Awareness of the Public Value of History

April 17th at 3:00pm

### Presenters:

**Ember Farber**, American  
Alliance of Museums

**John Dichtl**, American  
Association for State and  
Local History

**Sara Cureton**, New Jersey  
Historical Commission

Register at [bit.ly/pvhnj](https://bit.ly/pvhnj)

History museums and historic sites are consistently perceived as trusted places in society, but they don't always know how to sing their own praises. This webinar will feature three leading authorities discussing ways to raise awareness of the value of history.

### Presenters:

- [Ember Farber](#), Director of Advocacy, American Alliance of Museums
- [John Dichtl](#), President, American Association for State and Local History
- [Sara Cureton](#), Executive Director, New Jersey Historical Commission

Date: April 17, 2024

Time: 3:00 - 4:00pm

[Register Here](#)

---

**Justice for the Dead: Reconstructing Hidden  
History** April 18, 2024 at 6:30pm



313-Plus Monument in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Photo Credit: CBS News

Please join us for this virtual (ZOOM) discussion, Justice for the Dead: Reconstructing Hidden Histories, on April 18, 2024, 6:30 PM-8:00 PM.

This virtual program will highlight the ways in which public historians from around New Jersey uplift stories of injustice from the state's past. The discussion will include presentations by Dr. Wanda Lundy of the 313+ Ancestors Speak Research Project and Christopher Lopez, co-curator of the exhibition The Fires: Hoboken 1978-1982.

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/jftd1>

This is a program of the African American History program at the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC).

[Register Here](https://bit.ly/jftd1)



## In Other News

### Briefing on the History of Affordable Housing in New Jersey

Earlier this spring the State Legislature passed the [A4/S50 bill](#) which addresses the Coalition of Affordable Housing and the execution of state and municipal responsibilities related to the Mount Laurel Doctrine.

To help provide context for this legislation, our intern, Erica Fugger from the Eagleton Institute of Politics, has compiled a concise briefing reviewing the history of affordable housing in New Jersey.

To review the historical briefing, please visit our Historical Resources page at [history.nj.gov](http://history.nj.gov).

## Affordable Housing Historical Briefing

### 2023 Award Ceremony Wrap-Up



On March 5<sup>th</sup>, we were thrilled to honor our 2023 NJHC Award Recipients with a special awards ceremony at Thomas Edison University. It was a joyous event celebrating excellence in preservation, scholarship, community engagement, and curation in New Jersey.

Special thanks to Senator Michael Testa and Assemblyman Paul Kanitra for joining the festivities!

More information about NJHC's awards and prizes, including our deadlines for 2024 award nominations, can be found at [history.nj.gov](https://history.nj.gov).

NJHC Awards & Prizes

---

## First Round of Black Heritage Trail Nominations



Picture of Governor Phil Murphy signing the Black Heritage Trail into law on September 7, 2022.

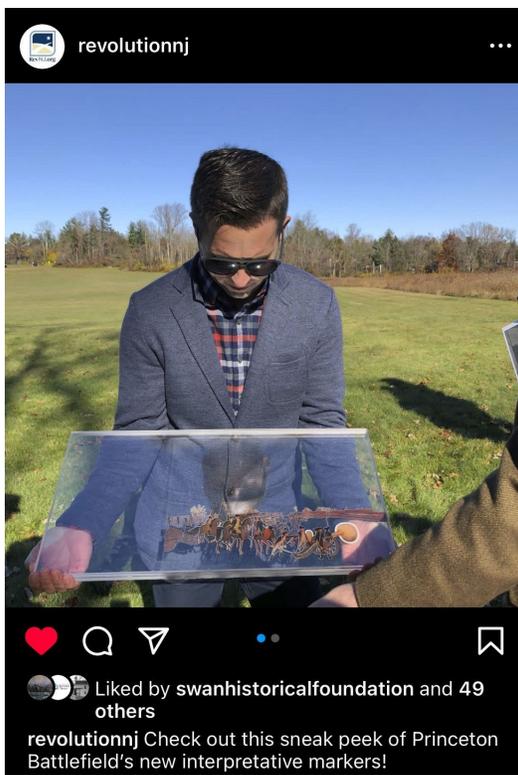
On March 8th, the Black Heritage Trail team received their first round of nominations for New Jersey Black Heritage Trail markers. A total of 63 nominations were submitted for unique sites around the state. The team is excited and humbled by the overwhelming response to the call.

Currently, staff is diligently checking applications for eligibility requirements. After passing initial review, eligible sites will be placed before an advisory committee that will present recommendations to the New Jersey Historical Commission for final approval.

New Jersey Black Heritage  
Trail

---

RevolutionNJ on Facebook and Instagram



The RevolutionNJ team is steadily preparing New Jersey for America's 250th anniversary in 2026.

One of the many ways in which they are engaging the public is through social media.

The RevolutionNJ socials are a one-stop shop where folks can learn more about how communities around New Jersey are joining in the commemoration of this historic milestone. Followers are also the first to hear about new resources to help them plan their own activities at their organizations or in their communities. Join in @RevolutionNJ

Facebook

Instagram



*Within the New Jersey Department of State, the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC) is a state agency dedicated to the advancement of public knowledge and preservation of New Jersey history. Established by law in 1967, its work is founded on the fundamental belief that an understanding of our shared heritage is essential to sustaining a cohesive and robust democracy.*



New Jersey Historical Commission | 33 West State St., P.O. Box 305, Trenton, NJ 08625

[Unsubscribe sara.cureton@sos.nj.gov](mailto:sara.cureton@sos.nj.gov)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [rachel.thimke@sos.nj.gov](mailto:rachel.thimke@sos.nj.gov) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!