



NEW JERSEY
Historical
COMMISSION

Past Matters

April 2024

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

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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 highlights the legendary jazz artist and New Jersey native Sarah Vaughn.



GRAMMY AWARD WINNING ARTIST

SARAH VAUGHAN

hailed from Newark,
New Jersey, and is widely
recognized for her renditions
of famous jazz songs like:

* MISTY * BLACK COFFEE *
* BROKEN HEARTED MELODY *
* SEND IN THE CLOWNS *

Suggested Copy:

In honor of National Jazz Appreciation Month, we're uplifting the vibrant and soulful jazz singing of New Jersey native, Sarah Vaughan. Her career premiered at Apollo Theater's Amateur Night in 1942 and culminated in winning both Grammy and Emmy Awards.

Vaughan is recognized for her impressive vocal range and collaborations with other artists, spanning genres like pop to Broadway shows. The Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition is held in Newark, Essex County, each November in her memory.

To learn more about Sarah Vaughan's life and legacy, check out her profile on the website of our grantee, the New Jersey Women's History project: <https://njwomenshistory.org/biographies/sarah-vaughan>

For more New Jersey History, visit history.nj.gov.

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons via the New Jersey Women's History Project.

[The black and white image features a young Sarah Vaughan, who was a Black woman, passionately singing into a microphone with her eyes closed. She has short hair and is wearing a light colored dress, with a beaded necklace on.]

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.



NJHC Grantee Spotlight

Red Mill Museum Village
Clinton, New Jersey



Photo Credit: Journey Through Jersey

The Red Mill Museum Village is a historic museum complex situated on 10 acres of land and includes the mill, a quarry, a schoolhouse, log cabin and operational blacksmith shop.

Throughout the year a variety of events and programs, including craft fairs, art shows, music festivals, and historical reenactments take place at the museum. The Red Mill Museum Village is open to the public year-round and is a popular destination for school field trips, family outings, photographers and history enthusiasts.

During the 2024 fiscal year, the Red Mill Museum Village received \$44,000 from the New Jersey Historical Commission as a General Operating Support (GOS) Grant. This support has helped the museum expand their community offerings including a Winter Festival, a new gallery exhibit, and a revamped school tour to help engage the next generation.

Our GOS program is one important way we support history in New Jersey. From FY 2024 to FY 2025, the number of applications we received for GOS grants doubled. We believe that this is due in part to historic sites preparing for increased visitation during America's 250th in 2026. We are proud to support New Jersey's heritage tourism industry through this critical grant program.

Red Mill Museum Village

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 Historical Commission YouTube Channel



Money, Power, Respect Early Black Women Entrepreneurs and Community Leaders in New Jersey



New Jersey Historical Commission
500 subscribers

Subscribed

0



Share



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Save



Public Historian Betty Holloway presenting at the "Money, Power, Respect: Early Black Women Entrepreneurs and Community Leaders" webinar in February 2024.

The New Jersey Historical Commission's YouTube Channel offers over 100 videos featuring our latest webinars, resources for researchers and public historians, and videos on New Jersey's history for general audiences. This is an excellent way for New Jerseyans to learn more about their history from the comfort of their living rooms.

Some of the topics discussed on the channel include:

- [Big Ideas: How and Why Should We Engage the Public?](#)
- ["Rethink the Narrative"](#)
- [Lenape Past and Present - 2021 NJ History Conference](#)



Upcoming Events

Public History & Elections
May 14, 2024 at 12:00pm

Public History & Elections

Share your thoughts and learn from others during this virtual, guided discussion on public history and contemporary elections



DATE
MAY 14, 2024



TIME
AT 12:00 PM

Register at bit.ly/PHE24



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Do public historians have a place in contemporary election discussions? Can the field leverage elections to foster civic engagement? What challenges or opportunities would this present?

During this event, public historians will be invited to share their ideas and learn from others during a casual, guided conversation. Participants will also receive resources on how historical work can be used to encourage civic engagement.

Date: Tuesday, May 14th
Time: 12:00 - 1:00pm

[Register Here](#)



In Other News

Representing New Jersey at VA250: A Common Cause To All



Pictured Left to Right: Marc Lorenc, Chief Public Historian, New Jersey Historical Commission; Larry Schmidt, Director of Development, Crossroads of the American Revolution; Carrie Fellows, Executive Director, Crossroads of the American Revolution; Mark Texel, Administrator, NJ State Historic Sites; Asher Lurie, Executive Director, Hopewell Museum; Vivian Davis, Chair, Bergen250; and Sara Cureton, Executive Director, New Jersey Historical Commission

RevolutionNJ, Department of the Environmental Protection, Bergen250,

and Hopewell Museum represented New Jersey at the VA250 Conference *A Common Cause to All*.

This conference was a national convening of public historians preparing for the Semiquincentennial in 2026. Hosted by the VA250 Commission and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, this gathering provided a platform for attendees to participate in meaningful discussions about the upcoming 250th anniversary of the nation.

For highlights from the conference, including videos of the presentations, visit <https://va250.org/a-common-cause-to-all-2024/>.

VA250: A Common Cause to All

Press Release: 100 Organizations Have Joined RevolutionNJ as Proud Partners

TRENTON, NJ - One hundred New Jersey businesses and organizations are officially preparing for America's Semiquincentennial anniversary through RevolutionNJ's Proud Partner program.

On July 4, 2026, the United States of America will commemorate the 250th anniversary of its founding. RevolutionNJ, the state's official 250th partnership, invites businesses and organizations from all sectors to participate in this once-in-a-generation commemoration by joining its Proud Partners program.

"The upcoming 250th is a unique opportunity for us all to recommit to the revolutionary ideals of liberty, justice, and equality," said New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, who oversees the New Jersey Historical Commission and its RevolutionNJ work in her capacity as Secretary of State. "In this endeavor, New Jersey's business and non-profit communities will play a vital role. We hope they will utilize the tools and resources provided by the RevolutionNJ Proud Partner program to prepare for this special moment in our nation's history and join us in building that 'more perfect union' that Americans have striven for since 1776."

"The New Jersey Historical Commission and the non-profit Crossroads of the American Revolution partnered together in 2018 to form RevolutionNJ and prepare New Jersey for America's 250th." said Sara Cureton, executive director of the New Jersey Historical Commission. "Our aim with RevolutionNJ's Proud Partners program is to create a statewide experience that invites participation from New Jersey businesses and organizations of all sizes and scale."

Launched in 2023, the Proud Partners program has now accepted 100 businesses and organizations from around New Jersey, representing a wide array of sectors including the arts, history, education, consulting, leisure, and more.

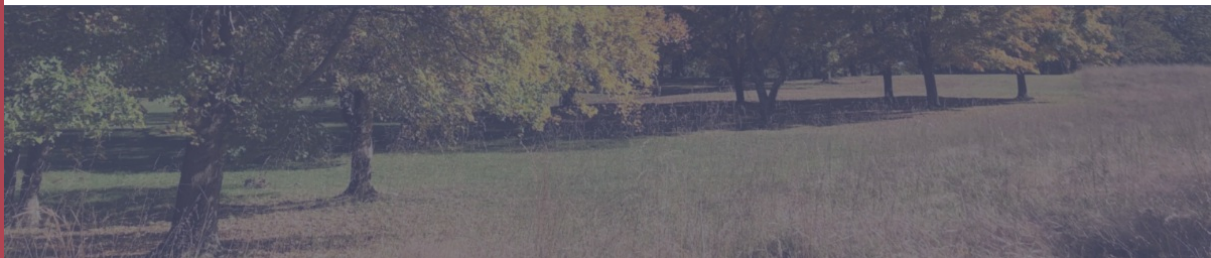
“2026 will bring thousands of visitors to New Jersey for the FIFA World Cup, the Sail4th 250 flotilla of Tall Ships, and America’s 250th,” said Carrie Fellows, executive director of the non-profit Crossroads of the American Revolution. “Businesses and organizations that join RevolutionNJ’s Proud Partners program are receiving tools, resources, and a statewide network to help them leverage this unique moment for our state.”

Organizations that join the Proud Partners program receive official recognition by RevolutionNJ, use of the RevolutionNJ Proud Partners branding kit and events calendar, and access to exclusive networking events and planning resources. This is in addition to the option to participate in cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities.

To learn more about RevolutionNJ’s Proud Partners program, visit <https://revnj.org/join-us>.

Keep up with news and updates concerning RevolutionNJ by joining the newsletter and following @revolutionnj on Instagram and facebook.com/revolutionnj.

Full Press
Release



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.





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