

Bergen County Executive  
James J. Tedesco III  
The Board of Chosen Freeholders  
The Department of Parks  
The Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs  
The Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board  
present the

# 2018 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS



**Celebrating 36 Years of  
Historic Preservation in Bergen County, N.J.**

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**7 p.m., May 10, 2018**

Two Bergen County Plaza Conference Center  
Hackensack, New Jersey

**“THIS PLACE MATTERS!”**  
National Historic Preservation Month Theme

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# Welcome!

**Cynthia L. Forster**

Director, Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs

**James G. Koth**

Director, Bergen County Department of Parks

★★★★★★★

**Opening remarks and reading of the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation**

★★★★★★★

**HONORED GUESTS**

**James J. Tedesco III, County Executive**

**BERGEN COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS:**

**Thomas J. Sullivan Jr., Chairman**

**Germaine M. Ortiz, Vice Chairwoman**

**Mary J. Amoroso, Chairwoman Pro Tempore**

**David L. Ganz, Steven A. Tanelli**

**Dr. Joan M. Voss, Tracy Silna Zur**

**John S. Hogan, Bergen County Clerk**

★★★★★★★

**Presentations of the 2018 Historic Preservation Awards  
by members of the Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board**

**William J. Martin, A.I.A., Master of Ceremonies**

Historic Preservation Advisory Board

★★★★★★★

*Please join us after the ceremony for a reception.*

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

We ask that you refrain from taking photographs during the presentations as it causes problems and delays for the professional photographer. All photographs will be made available upon request.

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# 2018 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

*"In the end, the character of a civilization  
is encased in its structures."* - - Frank Gehry

## ◆ "Historic Mahwah for Kids!" ◆ Renee Cantor's Girl Scout Gold Award Project.

Category: Youth Preservation Project

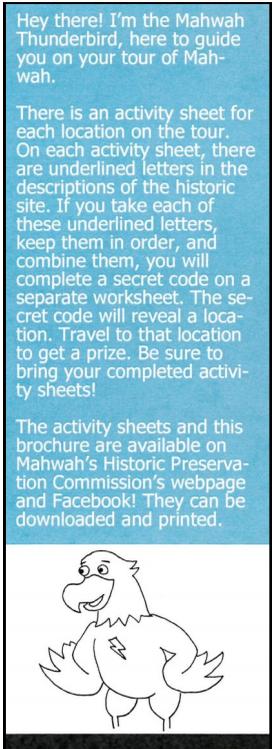
Project Team: Renee Cantor, Girl Scout Gold Award Project Leader

What does it take to inspire the next generation of historians and preservationists? How do you inspire curiosity that you hope will last far beyond the present? Can something as simple as a tour brochure and game spark this interest?

Mahwah resident, member of the Mahwah High School class of 2018, Girl Scout and young historian, **Renee Cantor, has come up with an answer to those questions: "Historic Mahwah For Kids!"**

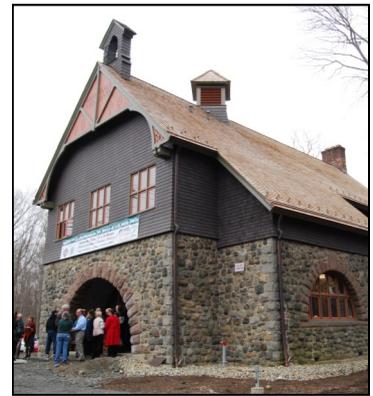
As her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, she designed a self-guided children's history tour that leads young explorers on a journey to twelve historic destinations in Mahwah. These include the 1789 Ramapo Reformed Church and the restored 1891 Darlington Schoolhouse, now the headquarters of the NY/NJ Trail Conference. This engaging student project encourages kids to explore their community and learn about local historic sites while making it relevant and FUN for the next generation.

In 2017, Ms. Cantor approached the Mahwah Historic Preservation Commission with her idea to develop a children's Mahwah history program. What she created was a brochure and multiple activity sheets with unique games, historic information and photos. The games she created weren't simple. By weaving a "secret code" throughout the entire experience, this game-playing that Renee created leads budding young history explorers on



The Destinations		
1. Ramapo Valley Road Route 202		9. Old Lutheran Cemetery Moffatt Road
2. Winter Farmhouse 1 Farmstead Road	5. Laroe-Van Horn House 398 Ramapo Valley Road	10. Quackenbush Farm Winter's Park, East Ramapo Ave
3. Darlington Schoolhouse 600 Ramapo Valley Road	6. Hopper Gristmill/Sawmill 156 Ramapo Valley Road	
	7. American Brake Shoe Factory Ramapo Valley Road at Brakeshoe Place	11. Erie RR Old Station 142 North Railroad Avenue
4. Havemeyer House 510 Ramapo Valley Road	8. Ramapo Reformed Church 100 Island Road	12. Ackerman House 748 Wyckoff Avenue at Forest
		

Activity sheets and this brochure can be found on Mahwah Historic Preservation Commission's page of [www.mahwahntp.org](http://www.mahwahntp.org) and [www.facebook.com/mahwahhistoricpreservation/](https://www.facebook.com/mahwahhistoricpreservation/)



Mahwah's Darlington Schoolhouse

their own adventure. And to solve the “secret code” you have to complete the games for all twelve historic sites.

The brochure and the Fun Activity Sheets (including one with the answers!) are available to download on the Mahwah Township website, the Mahwah Historic Preservation Commission's Facebook page and at the Mahwah Library. This program supports the educational outreach goal of the MHPC by teaching the local community about Mahwah's historic sites.

The County recognizes Ms. Renee Cantor for her Youth Preservation Project, one designed to inspire young minds and create the interest and appreciation of Mahwah's heritage; an appreciation that we hope will help ensure these historic sites are preserved for generations to come.

## ◆ Borough of Franklin Lakes 2018 Municipal Calendar ◆ Franklin Lakes

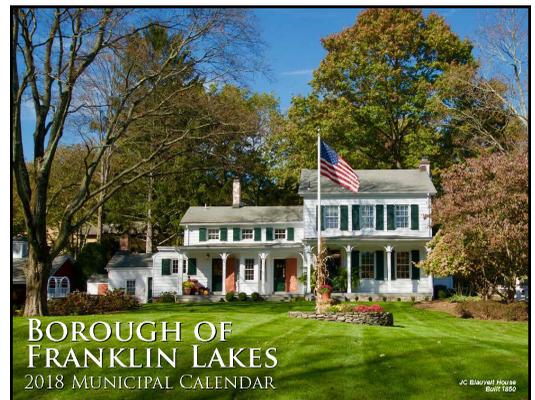
Award Category: Preservation Education

Project Team: Gregory C. Hart, Borough Administrator; Lynette P. Sidoti, Administrative Assistant; Leonor Diehl, Assistant to the Borough Administrator; Paulette Ramsey, Councilwoman and Municipal Historian; Barry Glick, Photographer

Preservation Education awards honor projects that educate the community, more narrowly or more broadly defined, about its history.

In this case, the **Borough of Franklin Lakes** produced a **2018 Municipal Calendar** that subtly furthers historic preservation through superb photographs of historic houses by photographer and local resident Barry Glick.

Full-page color photographs identify each historic



PACKER HOUSE, 1789



house and the year it was built while bringing out its significance and aesthetic appeal. The last two inside pages include smaller photographs of three more houses, additional photographs of ten of the featured houses, a brief biography of photographer Glick, and a listing of municipal offices and services.

The earliest four houses were built before the American Revolution from 1710 to 1770; the rest were built in the following years from 1785 to 1913. This 203-year range in original dates of construction ensures a variety of architectural types and styles, from Dutch Colonial to Arts and

Crafts, in a wide range of architectural scale from modest to grand.

The main audience for the calendar consists of residents, most of whom will recognize some of the historic buildings but will learn about others. In that way, the calendar reinforces a sense of community. They were mailed to everyone in the borough and are also available for download from the Franklin Lakes website which increases its outreach beyond the local community. All the photographs are on the borough's Facebook page, with additional ones of the homes taken by the photographer in different seasons. Anyone beyond the core audience will simultaneously learn about the rich variety of historic sites in Franklin Lakes and recognize how highly the borough and its residents value historic preservation and their own history.



BLUE MEADOW FARM, 1860

TERHUNE-POST HOUSE, 1871

All photographs of Franklin Lakes houses by Barry Glick

# ◆ Closter Historic Preservation Commission Blanch Avenue Project ◆

Award Category: Preservation Education

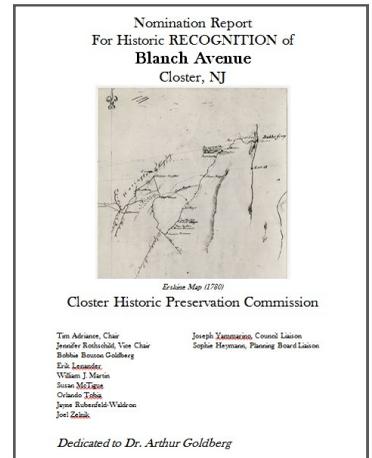
Project Team: Members of the Closter Historic Preservation Commission: Tim Adriance, Sophie Heymann, Bobbie Bouton-Goldberg, Eric Lenander, William J. Martin, AIA, Susan McTigue, Jennifer Rothschild, Jayne Rubenfeld-Waldron, Joel Zelnik, Joseph Yammarino, Council Liaison

**W**hat does Blanch Avenue, a 300-year-old trail, and then road, tell us about the history of Closter? Why is it important enough to be recognized as historically significant? Establishing the accurate history of any community – where, when and how people lived, and how the community and its built environment grow and change – is one of the bases of historic preservation. The **Closter Historic Preservation Commission**, through this outstanding, well-researched report on Blanch Avenue, examines and records the history of an important area of Closter.

Blanch Avenue, the oldest East-West road in northeastern Bergen County, was originally a Colonial-era farm lane, probably established as early as 1745. In 1795, a county road petition was filed in Hackensack, signing off property rights to the county by those who owned land along this roadway. This petition, filed to facilitate trips to and from church and named for Revolutionary War Captain Thomas Blanch, included the 33 property owners' names, notable local families who were the area's early settlers: Ferdon, Naugle, Jordan, Auryance, Demarest, Blauvelt, Haring, Westervelt. These names can be found on streets, houses and in cemeteries today. The early farms, and many of the original 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses along the avenue, eventually became the sites of local industries, including an airfield.

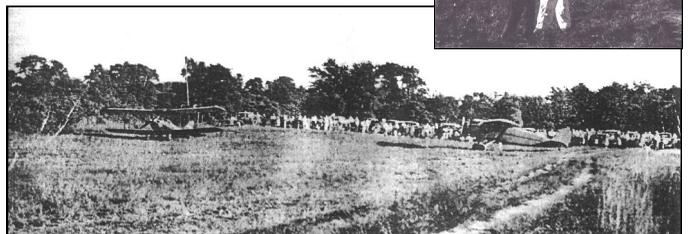
The Closter Nature Center, established in 1962, is located on 136 acres on Blanch Avenue. In 2002, four wooded acres were acquired with the help of Bergen County Open Space and Green Acres monies and are called "Blanch Woods." This acquisition provided the public a continuous, rural, forested area that reflects the conditions of its pre-Revolutionary War days.

As a result of the research and historic documentation recorded in this report, the Closter Historic Preservation Commission recommended to the Mayor and Council



## The Norwood/Closter Airfield ca. 1939.

*"In the late 1930s, an airfield located in Closter and Norwood adjacent to Blanch Avenue was active...Ernest Buzzone used his team of horses to maintain this small field, which was a good source of entertainment for the folks of Closter and Norwood..."*



that the historical significance of Blanch Avenue be publically recognized. They recommended that informative history markers be installed at each end of the road. With support of the Mayor and Council, plans are in the works to install these markers. They will include digital access to information on this historic area, tying local 18<sup>th</sup> century history with 21<sup>st</sup> century technology.

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*“Saving old buildings and neighborhoods  
is an enormously effective way to provide continuity  
in the places where we live.”*

- - Dwight Young

◆ **Merritt Memorial School, Cresskill** ◆

Award Category: Continuing Preservation and Education

Project Team: Paul Diverio, Principal; Denise Villani, President, Cresskill Board of Education; Judy Beekman; Danielle Rieff; Carol Banicki, Cresskill Municipal Historian; Joseph Donnelly; Merritt Memorial School Fifth Graders

It is fitting that the **Merritt Memorial School in Cresskill** is receiving a Historic Preservation Award in continuing preservation and education in 2018, the 90<sup>th</sup> year of its existence. Established in 1928 to accommodate the expected population growth with the completion of the George Washington Bridge, the school was designed by the architect firm of Hacker and Hacker in Fort Lee. It was built on farmland donated by the Westervelt family and named after Camp Merritt, the largest U.S. Army embarkation camp for hundreds of thousands of soldiers during World War I.

The school has been a center for the community. It maintains a commitment to community service, and instills in its students an appreciation of the historical significance of the school, its architecture and design elements, and its relation to Camp Merritt as a memorial to the sacrifices made by men and women in the military throughout the nation’s history.

Designed for durability and beauty, the exterior features ornamental entrances, a turret-lined rooftop and a soldier brick tapestry, all of which support the fortress-like look of the building. The majestic clock tower with a background light feature, serves as an eternal memorial for those who gave their lives in WWI. Although the clock tower fell into disrepair, in 1994 during the Cresskill Centennial, funds were raised to restore the clock with its original clock hands, face and new tempered glass front and copper sealing, upgraded back-lighting





and the addition of Westminster Chimes.

The building's interior features have been carefully maintained. These include: ornate marble water fountains, teal and navy blue tiles, beautiful terrazzo floors, intricate stone work, detailed crown moldings and curved ceilings. The

original kindergarten classroom featured a window seat, a fireplace encased with imported Dutch tiles and an original oil painting of Sleeping Beauty. The school had an Art Deco theater which was converted into a gym in 1970. Today moldings and carvings from the theater remain on the ceiling of the gym. The ticket booth for the theater was converted into a small guidance counselor's room. But, it still holds a safe within which are all of the school's yearbooks and the original 1928 blueprints of the building



## ◆ Holy Cross Cemetery 1936 Office Building Preservation Project ◆ North Arlington

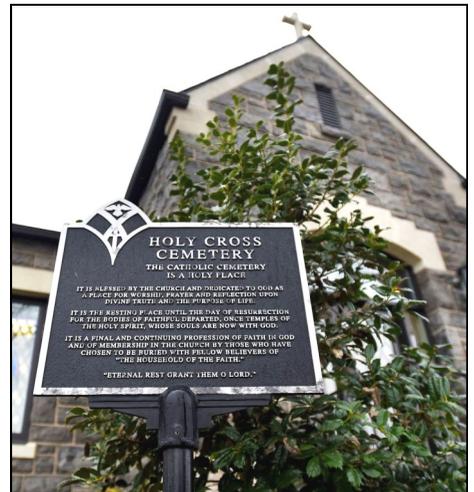
Award Category: Continuing Preservation and Use

Project Team: Cybul Cybul Wilhelm Architects: George Sirinakis, Senior Project Manager; Adrian Campos, Superintendent, Holy Cross Cemetery; Joe Verzi, Asst. Ex. Director of Catholic Cemeteries, Archdiocese of Newark

It may sound hard to believe that 100 years ago Bergen County was filled with many family-owned farms. North Arlington was no different. As the population increased the need for services of all kinds began to affect the North Jersey Bergen County landscape. Among those services were picturesque final resting places for those who had passed on. In 1905, several farms in North Arlington sold property to the Catholic Archdiocese of Newark. And thus, **Holy Cross Cemetery** was created.

At 208 acres and including 1/5 of all the land in North Arlington, Holy Cross Cemetery became the largest Catholic Cemetery in New Jersey.

In 1936, the Holy Cross Cemetery Office Building was added to the cemetery grounds. After 80 years of wear and



tear from water infiltration, acid rain, and nonexistent insulation, the building was showing its age. The sheer numbers of records that needed to be kept, which were constantly increasing, required additional interior space to safely keep the records of the lives of those who had passed on and were memorialized therein.

Understanding this, the Archdiocese of Newark decided to fully commit to the preservation of this cemetery records office building.



The beautiful ashlar stone and simple, yet tasteful, Arts and Crafts masonry design had created a quiet, understated, pastoral aesthetic highly appropriate to the repository of records cataloguing the final resting places of so many people.

In order to continue in a useful and functional way, the building would require an expansion. Rather than make an attempt to add a copycat addition utilizing partially matched materials, the architect, George Sirinakis, of Cybul Cybul Wilhelm Architects, suggested an approach whereby the addition would differentiate itself aesthetically from the original in a respectful manner. The new addition would not compete with the beauty of the 1936 building but would extend its useful life and use materials and architecture sympathetic to the dignity of the original. The original building and its addition were brought into compliance with modern building codes thereby extending the useful life into the foreseeable future. The building reopened in 2017 and continues to be a central resource for genealogists researching the Holy Cross Cemetery archives which contain over 300,000 memorials.

It is for this reason that we commend the Archdiocese of Newark and Holy Cross Cemetery for the continuing preservation and use of the Holy Cross Cemetery office building.



## ◆ City of Hackensack Cultural and Performing Arts Center ◆

Award Category: Adaptive Use

Project Team: John Labrosse, Mayor; Kathleen Canestrino and David Sims, Deputy Mayors; Leonardo Battaglia and Stephanie Von Rudenborg, City Council; Ted Eherenburg, City Manager; Al Dib, Redevelopment Director; Greg Liosi, Superintendent, Dept. of Cultural Arts; DMR Architects, Hasbouck Heights; Lloyd Rosenberg, Francis Reiner, Fernando Robledo, Megan Byers.

**I**n 2010 the City of Hackensack began a journey of downtown revitalization. Large scale planning sought to utilize 39 city blocks containing 389 properties into a more pedestrian friendly, mixed use environment. One building has exemplified commendable historic preservation through its adaptive use.

The building began as the Methodist Episcopal Church that was constructed in 1874. The Gothic Revival edifice still retains its ecclesiastic influences through its soaring windows and handsome brick ornamentation. But after 46 years, it was converted into Hackensack's Masonic Temple and remained so until purchased in 2010 by the City of Hackensack. Always a place of gathering and fellowship, its future would remain so as it evolved into today's **Hackensack Performing Arts Center**.

DMR Architects was retained to redevelop this two floor building into an upstairs theatre of 224 fixed seats and a first floor cultural center that would feature a large gallery, lobby, dressing rooms, concession stand, kitchen, bathrooms and administrative offices. Even though the architects were determined to “enhance and highlight original architectural characteristics,” upon inspection, the neglect and disrepair were woefully apparent.

During the early phases of construction, ADA compliance for entrances was adapted to complement the historic exterior. A plain surface parking lot was quickly turned into a lively, lush park in front of an outdoor performance space. Financing for the park was a combination of a Bergen County Open Space Grant and a 40K contribution from the Hackensack Business Improvement District.





When interior construction began in 2016, DMR Architects soon devised unique ways to incorporate the existing but sometimes hidden features found under crumbly 1970s finishes. Large swaths of wainscoting needed to be refurbished and reinstalled; the rear wall’s architectural dome was retained to provide a larger stage area; and full exposure of the original 1870’s wood beams in the gallery, root the building to its original use. To reflect the Masonic period, six large Deco chandeliers were removed, cleaned, rehung and now serve as majestic house lighting for the theatre space.

Now known affectionately as “HACPAC,” the Hackensack Performing Arts Center has become a centerpiece for not only a revived neighborhood but for a city whose future is moving forward while memorializing its past.

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***“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”***

**- - Margaret Mead**

# The DEDICATED LIFE

## ◆ Isabella Altano ◆

Award Category: Preservation Leadership

**A**s many people have stated, history must first be saved before it can be preserved.

**Isabella A. Altano** was passionate about the preservation of historic buildings, most notably the Zabriskie-Schedler House in Ridgewood. She worked tirelessly to motivate a community to save this 200-year-old house and surrounding property. As a founding member of Ridgewood Eastside Development (RED), she joined the team headed by Art Wrubel, Chairman of the Ridgewood Historic Preservation Commission, and successfully gained a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for state historic status of the Schedler property. This allowed the home to qualify for Bergen County Historic Preservation Trust Fund grants to make much needed repairs which will allow this Jersey Dutch framed house to stand for years to come.

Isabella earned a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and Art History from Columbia University and a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Architecture from the Pratt Institute. She started her own firm in 2010 after working as a project manager for several firms specializing in school and health care facility projects. She was also a part-time adjunct professor of design at Bergen Community College from 1999-2017. Isabella lived in Ridgewood for over 30 years, and was an involved member of the Ridgewood community, serving on the Ridgewood Planning Board and the Ridgewood Historic Preservation Commission

Across the country, local governments and their residents are being asked if they are willing to spend their tax dollars to purchase and preserve historic and open spaces. Isabella A. Altano certainly was an advocate of both. Her fight to save the Zabriskie-Schedler house never wavered, even as she battled cancer. Because of her untimely death in 2017, Isabella will never get to see the Zabriskie-Schedler House completely restored. But through her efforts, we are assured that generations to come will be able to enjoy a part of Bergen County history.

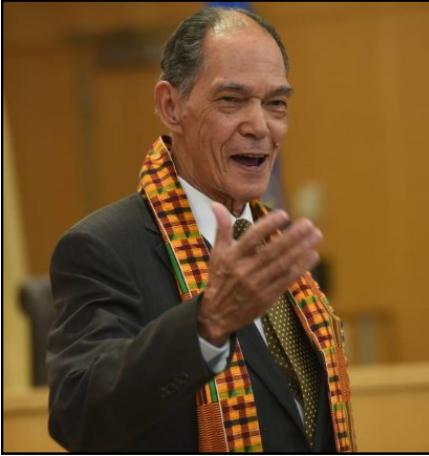


## 2018 CLAIRE THOLL AWARD

For lifetime achievement in Historic Preservation in Bergen County

### ☆ Arnold E. Brown ☆

**A**rnold E. Brown is a historian, author, lecturer and preservationist. He is the foremost historian of the County's African American community. Through a lifetime of research he has discovered and uncovered the history of the lives of this community: the homes, businesses and churches they built, and the burial grounds where they were laid to rest, some as slaves, some as free persons. He has worked to identify and preserve their stories, history and historic sites, including Gethsemane Cemetery in Little Ferry, now a County Historic Site.



By searching historic documents and records, Arnold has identified the local Black soldiers and volunteers who fought in the Civil War, where they lived and where they are buried. He has documented the life of Alfred P. Smith (1832-1901), whose house is in Saddle River. Smith, called the "Latter-Day Ben Franklin," was the owner and editor of the only 19<sup>th</sup> century newspaper published in a rural area of the county and which was among the earliest newspapers published by an African American in NJ.

His research has uncovered the often hidden or unexplored history of the county. This includes documenting the 1684 purchase of 100 acres of land from the local Lenape people by Antonius Robberse, a free-born African American. This land is now the site of the Bergen County Courthouse.

Arnold traces his family lineage - part Blackfoot, part Iroquois, and part African-American - as far back as the American Revolution. He graduated from Bowling Green State University and holds a Juris Doctor Degree from Rutgers University School of Law. He was elected the first African American Assemblyman from Bergen County in 1965; participated in the 1963 March on Washington; and was a leader in the community project of erecting the statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on the FDU Campus. He operates the DuBois Book Center, a collection of out-of-print African-American books, and was a contributing author of "The Revolutionary War in Bergen County," "Englewood and Englewood Cliffs: Images of America," and "Past and Promise: New Jersey Women."

A member of the Bergen County Historic Advisory Board for 12 years, he serves on the County's African American Advisory Board and is a member of the Englewood Public Library Board of Trustees.

There is no one who is more deserving of our admiration and recognition for a lifetime of dedication to preserving Bergen County's history and historic sites.





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Janet E. Strom, *Historian*

Elaine Kiernan Gold, *Historic Preservation Officer*

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received an operating support grant from the  
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