
Subject: New York State Fair Wins Award for Contributions in Promoting the State's History

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N.Y. State Fair Wins Award for Contributions in Promoting the State's History

Announces Brand New Exhibit for 2014 Highlighting Shipwrecks Across the State

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball today accepted the Medal of the Onondaga Historical Association on behalf of the Great New York State Fair in recognition of the Fair's ongoing efforts to educate the public through history.

"As the oldest state fair in the United States, the Great New York State Fair itself is filled with rich history, and part of our job as administrators of the Fair is passing down that history to others," Commissioner Ball said. "We thank the Onondaga Historical Association for this great honor and look forward to doing our part to promote history once again at the 2014 Great New York State Fair."

New Shipwreck Exhibit:

Continuing the Fair's aim to promote history in 2014, Commissioner Ball and Acting State Fair Director Troy Waffner today announced a new exhibit that will take place at this year's Fair called "Great Shipwrecks of NY's "Great" Lakes." NY Sea Grant is partnering with the Great New York State Fair, Great Lakes Seaway Trail, Great Lakes Research Consortium, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, and the H. Lee White Marine Museum along with other partners and sponsors to present this new exhibit, which will tell the story of various shipwrecks located throughout the state.

For more than three centuries, Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers, in addition to the Finger Lakes, Lake Champlain, and Lake George, have been major thoroughfares for military, shipping, and recreational endeavors. As a result, their waters are home to

an extraordinary collection of historic shipwrecks. In fact, hundreds of shipwrecks are located across New York State, including Benedict Arnold's gunboat *Spitfire*, which was discovered at the bottom of Lake Champlain in 1997.

Travelers and residents are fascinated by the story of these vessels, the people that lived and worked aboard them, and the scientists who study them today. This exhibit will guide fairgoers through a journey on the many ways they can continue discovery of New York's shipwrecks whether it be diving underwater, exploring a historic site, or taking in a scenic view.

A 30 by 60 foot tent will be situated in the mini-state park, located just outside of the Horticulture Building on the Art and Home Center side. It will display a replica 18th century bateau, which is a French and Indian War vessel. The display will also provide fairgoers with information on various wreckages throughout the state through panels, photographs and videos. In the reflecting pool, a remote sensing buoy will provide real time weather and water conditions.

David G White, Recreation Specialist at NY Sea Grant, and Associate Director at the Great Lakes Research Consortium, said, "New York is home to some of the most important and historically significant shipwrecks in the entire country, and this summer our goal is to help educate fairgoers on some of the history that took place right in their own backyards. Our 'Great Shipwrecks of NY's "Great" Lakes' exhibit will highlight some of this history and bring New Yorkers back in time to when our waters were the most important transportation and strategic defense hubs in our entire nation. We want to take fairgoers on a journey through another place and time, and we can't wait to show you what's in store this summer."

History of the Fair Exhibit:

The History of the Fair Exhibit, which debuted in the Grange Building at the 2013 extravaganza with much fanfare, will return in 2014 with a number of new features. Even more historical artifacts will be on display, including historic photos of "tea time at noon at the Colonnade." An exhibit commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Art and Home Center will also be featured this year.

A three tiered, interactive sand castle will give fairgoers a small sample of what it takes to complete the annual sand sculpture, which in itself uses 180 tons of sand, and takes two workers six days to complete.

A gift shop will sell a DVD that tells the story of the 1969 Fair, as well as vintage posters and pins, logos old and new, and a collectible holiday ornament that will change annually. This year's ornament will be the Horticulture building and will provide a brief history of the building itself.

Witter Agricultural Museum:

According to the New York State Agricultural Society, the purpose of the entity known as the Daniel Parrish Witter Agricultural Museum is to enhance, advise, promote, develop and assist in the operation of the museum to share the heritage of New York's Agricultural development with museum visitors.

The Society established the State Fair and conducted it for 57 years; the organization was also instrumental in developing the Daniel Parrish Witter Agricultural Museum, built on the fairgrounds in 1928. "The Witter Museum is a great resource," comments Penny Heritage, spokesperson for the NYS Ag Society, "sharing the heritage of New York's agricultural development with visitors."

The museum, situated next to Restaurant Row, features a log cabin that was unassembled, brought within the museum's boundaries, and rebuilt exactly as it was. It's also a living history museum dedicated to telling the history of New York agriculture. It features tradespeople like basket weavers and broom makers - local artisans making actual products for fairgoers to enjoy. There is

also an interactive display on modern agriculture, featuring farm facts and statistics.

Carriage Museum:

The Carriage Museum, located next to the Witter Museum, offers fairgoers a unique perspective on carriages used for everyday agricultural purposes, including old milking trucks, buggies, sleighs, carriages of all shapes and sizes, and chuck wagons. The Museum has a number of interactive, living history shows for fairgoers, showing how a chuck wagon works and an actual working blacksmith shop that makes specialty items such as horseshoes. A blacksmith is on-site every day in the Carriage Museum to walk fairgoers through the process of the blacksmith trade.

Antique tractors on also be on display for the full Fair at Gate #10.

The [New York State Fair](#), operated by the [New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets](#), runs from August 21 - September 1, 2014. The Fair's mission, reflected in its 2014 theme, "Summer's Best in Show," is to showcase the best of New York agriculture while providing top-quality entertainment. This year's tagline - "New Attractions, Old Favorites, Timeless Fun" - highlights the more than two dozen new events and attractions and the expansion or enhancement of several Fairgoer favorites.

In addition to the annual New York State Fair, the Fairgrounds host dozens of agricultural events throughout the year, including some of the Northeast's most prestigious horse and livestock shows.

The home of the Great New York State Fair is a 375-acre exhibit and entertainment complex that operates all year. A [year-round schedule of events](#) is available on the Fair's [website](#). Find [The Great New York State Fair on Facebook](#), follow [@NYSFair on Twitter](#), and enjoy photos from the Fair at [Flickr.com/photos/nysfair](#). Also, New Yorkers are invited to send their ideas for the Great New York State Fair at statefairideas@agriculture.ny.gov.

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