

# SI350 schedules symposium on Island in American history

Conference at CSI is part of a year-long series marking the borough's 350th anniversary

By **STEPHANIE SLEPIAN**  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Staten Islanders can take a journey through 350 years of local history — from American federalism in the 17th and 18th centuries, through the Revolution and the Civil War and into Sept. 11.

Glimpse Dutch Colonial architecture, stop on the Underground Railroad, feel the fire as the quarantine burned in 1858, hear the legacies of Dorothy Day, Robert Moses, Father Drumgoole and Paul Zindel, witness the transformation of the Fresh Kills landfill or examine transportation, religion, politics, sports and civil rights through the ages.

It's all possible at "Staten Island in American History and 21st Century Education," a two-day academic conference and symposium on March 19 and March 20 at the College of Staten Island. It will join local scholars with those from around the country and the world, including Harvard and Cornell universities and the Netherlands.

"The whole idea in education, especially in social studies, is that you study place," said Dr. Margaret Bercl, conference co-chairwoman and associate professor of education at CSI. "Everything comes from place and is rooted in what is local — the unique history, environment, culture, economy, literature and art of a particular place."

Geared toward educators and open to the public, the conference is sponsored by CSI, St. John's University, Wagner College and the Staten Island Foundation. It is part of SI350, a year-long series of events that commemorates the Island's anniversary and its evolution.

Guest speakers include Carmen Farina, who has served for more than 40

years in public education, most recently as New York City Deputy Schools Chancellor, and Kenneth T. Jackson, a Columbia University professor.

The city's five borough historians will also join together to discuss the city's consolidation in 1898.

Highlights will include the presentation of Teacher's Guides and scholarly papers, which educators can incorporate into their own curriculums.

The Teacher's Guides were part of a contest asking educators to create lesson plans linked to one of 350 sites of historical significance on the Island. Some of those included the Alice Austen House in Rosebank, the Conference House in Tottenville, Killmeyer's Old Bavaria Inn, Rossville, Mount Loretto, Fort Wadsworth and the Advance.

A panel of judges will pick the best entries for cash prizes.

The "Call for Papers" brought in submissions from CSI, Wagner and St. John's, along with Harvard, Cornell and Seton Hall universities and several schools within the state and city university systems. Also represented are local historians, librarians and museum curators — from both on and off the Island.

Among the papers are "Monuments and Memories: World War I, 9/11 and Beyond," "Staten Island Politics Since the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge," "The Staten Island Rebellion: Burning of the New York Quarantine Station in 1858," "The Neighborhood Games: Coaching Legends, Community and Thanksgiving Day Football" and "The First Island: Staten Island as a Dress Rehearsal for the British Occupation of New York City."

A historian from the Netherlands will present a paper titled "Dutch Colonial Architecture on Staten Island."

"This reflects how the history of Staten Island resonates not only in the region, but in the country and the

## Upcoming conference

"Staten Island in American History and 21st Century Education" will take place March 19 and March 20 at the College of Staten Island.

It is part of SI350, a year-long series of events celebrating the Island's anniversary.

The cost, which includes lunch, is \$15 for the general public, \$10 for graduate students or K-12 teachers and \$20 for conference presenters, college faculty or employees of cultural or educational institutions. The fee for undergraduate students is waived, except for \$5 for lunch.

To register or for more conference details, contact Dr. Margaret Bercl at Margaret.Bercl@csi.cuny.edu or e-mail info@si350.org.

## Other events

Other SI350 events taking place next month, celebrating milestones in the Island's business history to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the Advance, include:

March 5, 7 p.m.: The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce hosts its 116th annual Gala, "Past, Present and Future: Celebrating Staten Island's 350th Anniversary" at Colony Hall on the grounds of Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center and Home. Tickets are \$175 per person. RSVP by calling 718-727-1900 or e-mailing info@sichamber.com.

March 10, 1:30 p.m.: Patricia Salmon, curator of the Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, Livingston, will address the contributions of the Irish at the College of Staten Island. Admission is free. She will discuss the contributions of Italian-Americans on March 22 at 7 p.m. in Building H at Snug Harbor. Admission is \$8. Call 718-483-7123.

March 12, 3 to 4 p.m.: The lives of Alice Austen and Jacques Marchais will be discussed at Women Entrepreneurs and Artists of Staten Island at the Alice Austen House, Rosebank.

March 15, noon to 3 p.m.: Jenna Hager Bush, daughter of President George W. Bush, will be the keynote speaker at Historic Richmond Town's Literacy Luncheon at the Hilton Garden Inn, Bloomfield. Tickets are \$80 for adults and \$40 for children 16 and under. Call 718-351-1611, ext. 244, to purchase tickets. Reservations must be made by March 7.

March 20, 3 p.m.: Staten Island Outloud presents "Triangle Shirtwaist Fire: 100 Years Later at Historic Richmond Town." Visit <http://statenislandleadoutloud.org> or call 718-907-0709 for more information.

To learn about SI350, visit [si350.org](http://si350.org).

world," said Dr. Philip Papas, conference co-chairman and associate professor of history at Union County College, Cranford, N.J. "I hope the conference makes the richness of the Island's history more accessible."

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