When Walt Whitman finished designing a mausoleum for himself and his family, he specified that the great stone door should always be left open in case his spirit wanted to wander the world. He got his wish, and indeed it seems he will come wandering among us again this spring. Working with a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, the South Jersey Tourism Corporation and MARCH have collaborated to produce “Whitman in Camden.” Featuring the Walt Whitman House on Mickle Boulevard, Harleigh cemetery on Haddon Ave, and the Camden County Historical Society in Parkside, the tour explores late-nineteenth century Camden life by celebrating Whitman’s love of the city and the city’s love of him. Much will be learned of value to the state in general from the four initial tour events funded by the grant. And when the tours begin regularly later this year, Camden in particular will have a unique resource to support its on-going revitalization.

The tour debuts on May 12, 2006, as a feature of the New Jersey Office of Historic Preservation’s annual conference, this year devoted to heritage tourism. The conference, co-sponsored by South Jersey Tourism Corporation, the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism, Rutgers-Camden, and MARCH, welcomes professionals in historic preservation from around the state. The May 12 event will not only showcase the story of Whitman but also demonstrate the positive impact that preservation and heritage tourism can have, even in communities facing substantial economic challenges.

Three additional tours are already scheduled for Sat., May 20, Sat., June 3, and Thurs., June 15, and the public is invited to register through www.march.rutgers.edu. After the pilot phase, “Whitman in Camden” will be lodged permanently at the participating sites, and available on a regular schedule to residents and visitors alike. Increased public interest generated by the tour will help build a strong foundation for the Whitman House in particular, as it undertakes to build a new state-funded visitor center over the next several years.

Too few people know that Walt Whitman chose Camden as his last home, that he purchased the only house he ever owned, and that he chose to be buried nearby. A true Mid-Atlantic regional personality, Whitman’s poetical muse and active life took him up and down the region from Long Island’s beaches to the Washington DC

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www.march.rutgers.edu
EXPLORING THE MID@LANTIC

Web bibliography for Walt Whitman

http://www.whitmanarchive.org/
The Whitman Archive contains extraordinary resources for the study of Walt Whitman, including a comprehensive and well-written narrative of his life, teaching resources that can be directly used, and a large collection of photographs and other images, to which are attached comments from Whitman and others that materially enrich the image.

http://www.waltonwhitman.org/
Walt Whitman’s birthplace on Long Island is a historic house, and hosts programs, publications, poetry contest for students, and other interpretive resources. They also host a party each year to celebrate the poet’s birthday.

http://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/historic/whitman/
The Walt Whitman House in Camden, New Jersey is the only home Whitman himself ever owned. Between 1873 and 1892, an international list of notable people in literature, politics, and art visited him in Camden. The local people, who treasured him, turned his funeral procession in 1892 into a great street fair on Haddon Ave. Anonymous visitors still leave gifts and tributes at his great mausoleum in Camden’s Harleigh cemetery.

http://www.uiowa.edu/~wwqr/
The Walt Whitman Quarterly Review, is a literary quarterly published at the University of Iowa, and the official journal of the Walt Whitman Studies Association.

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Whitman in Camden: Heritage Tourism Takes New Steps in New Jersey

Too few people know that Walt Whitman chose Camden as his last home, that he purchased the only house he ever owned, and that he chose to be buried nearby. A true Mid-Atlantic regional personality, Whitman’s poetic muse and active life took him up and down the region from Long Island’s beaches and Brooklyn’s ferry to the Washington DC hospitals where he cared for wounded Civil War soldiers. He affirmed late in life that he had never lived far from a big river; the Delaware River at Camden, with its shipyards, ferries, and working people, became for him in old age what New York’s East River had been in youth.

The MARCH research team has worked to recover the many stories of Whitman in Camden and to prepare them for presentation during the tours and at the participating sites. But the tour is just the beginning. Research on the history of Camden opens out many new avenues for encouraging heritage tourism and sparking related reinvestment. For instance, starting with Whitman’s brother, George Washington Whitman, tour researchers are locating and marking the graves of up to 300 Civil War veterans buried in.
“Beyond the Post-industrial City,” a conference at Rutgers-Camden last November, drew nearly 400 people to mark the publication of *Camden After the Fall: Decline and Renewal in a Post-industrial City* by Dr. Howard Gillette (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), as well as the launch of a new web-based urban history research tool. Created around images by MacArthur Award-winning photographer Camilo José Vergara, www.invinciblecities.com visually chronicles Camden over the past quarter century. Ohio State University’s John A. Powell keynoted the conference with the first annual Richard Goodwin lecture in honor of civil rights pioneer Ethel Lawrence. Mrs. Lawrence was the chief plaintiff in the Mount Laurel affordable housing cases (1975, 1983), a multi-year legal battle that successfully challenged the exclusion of affordable housing by suburban communities.

The work of building a commemorative installation linking slavery and liberty at the Philadelphia President’s House won support from both Federal and city budgets. Design proposals will be shared with the public later this spring. MARCH staff has continued to contribute through analysis of the project’s essential work overcoming cultural habits of denial about slavery. Dr. Sharon Ann Holt, MARCH program director, wrote the anchor essay on this subject for a special President’s House issue of *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (October 2005).

Holt also published an analytic report in *The Public Historian* (spring 2006) on the work of saving, adapting, and interpreting the Bethlehem Steel works. MARCH and others have transformed the future of the abandoned works by fostering an effective community consensus about its value. As recently as 2003, local political leaders considered the site a hopeless liability, but now, the steelworks are the centerpiece of local identity and economic revitalization.

On December 6, 2005, the New York Public Library hosted the official release of the Heritage Health Index, a national study performed by Heritage Preservation: the National Institute for Conservation. The Heritage Health Index (HHI), the first comprehensive survey ever conducted of the condition of all U.S. collections held in the public trust, details the critical state of historic collections across the nation. The authors recommend actions for individual professionals, collecting institutions, government bodies, and the funding community designed to address the urgent and building problems. Leaders in cultural affairs from New York to Washington joined in affirming the importance of this document, echoed by the New York Times, the Associated Press and NPR’s All Things Considered.

Key findings include that 65% of collecting institutions have experienced damage to collections due to improper storage; 80% of U.S. collecting institutions lack an emergency plan that includes collections, and staff trained to carry it out. Also, 190 million objects are in need of conservation treatment.

Key recommendations include urging institutions to achieve full control of their collections environments (nearly half lack effective control over light, humidity, or temperature), preparing disaster plans to safeguard collections in emergency conditions (80% have no plan) and upgrading staff knowledge about collections care (80% retain no professional collections care staff).

MARCH highly recommends that Mid-Atlantic humanities professionals take a few moments to look at the Heritage Health Index and consider both its findings and recommendations. The HHI can be found online in both summary and full-length form at http://www.heritagepreservation.org/HHI/index.html. Case studies on institutions in our region, including the American Museum of Natural History, the National Postal Museum, and others can be found at http://www.heritagepreservation.org/HHI/caseMA.html.

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**FEATURED RESOURCE**

**The Heritage Health Index, December 2005**

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2006 FREDRIC M. MILLER MEMORIAL LECTURE

Featuring Randall Miller, Professor of History at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia.

Professor Miller’s lecture, entitled “Who Slept in Washington’s Beds?: The President’s House, Slavery, and Marking Sacred Space at Independence Park” will explore the multi-year controversy over interpreting slavery in President Washington’s Philadelphia household.

Thursday, April 20, 5:00 P.M.
The Charles Sumner School
1201 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Reception following.
Please RSVP to Howard Gillette at or 856-225-6064

Directions: The Charles Sumner School is located at the intersection of 17th and M Sts NW, two blocks north of the Farragut North Metro Stop. Use the L Street exit. Parking garages are located on 17th and M Streets and on Rhode Island Avenue.

The 8th Annual Fredric M. Miller Memorial Lecture is supported by The Philadelphia Foundation and The Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities at Rutgers-Camden and offered in conjunction with the joint meeting of the Organization of American Historians and The National Council on Public History.

PROJECTS TO WATCH

National recognition: Congress is now considering designating a heritage area and a national historic district in our region. The National Park Service has proposed the creation of a Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, building on the work of Robert Shibley’s Urban Design Project (University at Buffalo) and Ontario’s Waterfront Regeneration Trust. Seeking to induce visitors to Niagara Falls to explore nearby Buffalo and Toronto, as well as the city of Niagara itself, the initiative has grown from a series of publications and conferences, including one MARCH co-sponsored in 2001.

A second proposal, long championed by Washington DC lawyer, Leonard Zax, would make the Paterson, New Jersey, Great Falls Historic District part of the National Park system as a site dedicated to the story of the birth of American industry. According to Robert Vogel, founder of the Society for Industrial Archaeology, “Paterson is the one place in America where it is possible directly to connect the 18th century vision of a great manufacturing nation, articulated by one of our Founding Fathers, with the actual fruits of that vision in the following centuries….The Paterson National Historical District should be a National Park celebrating not only a natural resource but also the engineering, industrial, and commercial center that made the United States economically independent.”

Washington history resurgent: The Fall/Winter issue of Washington History, the journal of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. is in print after a year’s suspension in publication. The new editor is Michael Harrison, who replaces Laura Kamoie, now an assistant professor of history at the Naval Academy.

War protest on film: A gripping film detailing the anti-war effort of the Camden 28—who broke into a Camden draft board in 1971 during three days of civil disorder -- has been produced by New York’s Anthony Giacchino. Tied to Camden through his parents, who are parishioners at Camden 28 member Msgr. Michael Doyle’s Sacred Heart Parish, Giacchino includes shots of a dramatic reunion, including the FBI informant responsible for the arrest of protesters. The film connects Vietnam opposition to criticism of the current Iraqi action, showing Doyle and others of the protesters in a recent anti-war march in Washington. Shown to a full house in Camden in November, the film will return to the Philadelphia area April 25th for a showing in Villanova. For more information, see the web site, www.camden28.org.

Education website on the maritime Mid-Atlantic: Recently the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage launched Water Ways, an interactive exhibit and database on Mid-Atlantic maritime communities. This on-line exhibition, curated by Betty J. Belanus with Arlene Reiniger serving as coordinator, Water Ways offers recipes and oral histories as well as strong scholarship, excellent educational tools, and “Kid’s Coast” a special section for elementary school children. Explore Water Ways at www.folklife.si.edu/explore/ Education/Waterways/index.html.

http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/whitman/
Electronic editions of all of Whitman’s texts, prose and poetry are available at this site, thanks to the efforts of the University of Virginia and editors Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price. It’s a well designed site and very easy to use.

http://www.visitsouthjersey.com/
The homepage of the South Jersey Tourism Corporation, sponsors of the “Whitman in Camden” tour and a portal for a range of cultural and recreational information about the region.
**GOING TO THE WELL**

In this segment of each issue, you will find short essays from thoughtful members of the regional funding community. By including such a forum in our newsletter, MARCH seeks to stimulate useful mutual learning outside of the “win or lose” atmosphere of grant-seeking. Watch this space for local, regional, and national foundations and corporate entities who fund the humanities in our region, and who want to get to know you and your institution a little bit better.

To get started, this month MARCH recommends that humanities professionals check into a very helpful ongoing source of information available on the web. While leaders in the humanities continually look for new sources of funding, new ways to gain efficiency, and new perspectives on how to do fundraising better, this kind of information can be hard to find. The Internet offers a range of useful resources, but our time is far too scarce to troll in search of good information and our Inboxes full enough without inviting in more promotions and sales jobs.

But here’s a personal tip, a resource I have used profitably for years. Best of all, it’s free! Progressive Business Publications (www.pbp.com) offers a series of free e-zines on Communication, Accounting, Marketing, IT issues, and my particular favorite, the NonProfit News Update. Once you sign up, PBP sends a short list of readable and informative essays to your Inbox, which you can quickly browse for relevant material, then save or delete. Recent issues of the NPN Update included essays on spicing up grant proposals, boosting donations at special events, helping Board members embrace fundraising, and exploring new trends in private giving. I first encountered this publication in 2002, and it is the only thing of its type that I still permit to invade my Inbox. Scarcely an issue goes by without provoking thought, suggesting action, or at least relieving frustration.


Shan Holt  
Director of Programs  
MARCH

**REGIONAL ROUNDUP**

Sandy Bellamy, Esq., executive director of the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African History and Culture, announced her resignation in February, seven months after the opening of the new facility in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. Bellamy joined the Museum in April 2004, succeeding Nikki DeJesus Smith, the Museum’s founding executive director.

David Taft Terry, director of collections and exhibitions, is serving as interim director.

Linda Epps assumed the position of president and CEO of the New Jersey Historical Society in December. A native of Elizabeth, NJ, Epps was promoted from her previous position as NJHS development director. She succeeds Sally Yerkovitch, who left the society last year and is now president of the Fund for Arts and Culture in Central and Eastern Europe. NJHS is also embarking on a new formal partnership with Rutgers-Newark, which includes welcoming Rutgers-Newark provost Steven Diner onto the society’s board of directors. Dr. Diner is well known in the Washington area for his service at the University of the District of Columbia and George Mason University.

Dennis Fiori, director of the Maryland Historical Society for nearly 12 years, left in November to head the Massachusetts Historical Society. As director of the MdHS, he was responsible for a $32 million capital campaign, the expansion of the main campus and the addition of the Baltimore continued on page 6
Civil War Museum and the Fells Point Maritime Museum as satellite facilities. The search for his replacement is headed by MdHS chairman and trustee Jay Griswold.

David Young, former director of Philadelphia’s Johnson House, a notable underground railroad site, assumed the position of executive director of Cliveden of the National Trust, historic home of the Chew family and site of the Battle of Germantown (1777). Charged with using the Trust’s Main Street program in cooperation with nearby historical sites for community revitalization, Young is set to break new ground in regional collaboration. Before taking his position at the Johnson House, he directed the Salem County (NJ) Historical Society.

Congratulations To

The George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, which has received $500,000 in funding from the Save America’s Treasures Program. This will contribute to the $2.5 million Guardian Campaign to restore the church sanctuary. Located at 1801 W. Diamond Street in Philadelphia, PA, the Church is currently a National Historic Landmark built between 1887 and 1897 in the name of civil war leader George W. South. Presently the church is suffering from deterioration due to water penetration. The Guardian Campaign aims to restore the building both on its interior and exterior. For further information, contact Barbara Stechert, Director of Development, by telephone at 215-236-6773 or via email at church of the advocate@juno.com

The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, has put its January, 2006 issue online at the History Cooperative, a site hosting a number of prestigious journals, including The Journal of American History. According to PMHB editor Tamara Miller, back issues will soon join the latest edition.

The search for his replacement is set to break new ground in regional collaboration. Before taking his position at the Johnson House, he directed the Salem County (NJ) Historical Society.

For Your Calendar

April 9-11, Saratoga Springs, NY. Annual Conference, Upstate History Alliance and Museum Association of New York, “Its About People: Museums+Communities.” For more information: info@upstatehistory.org or info@manyonline.org.

May 5, Rutgers-Camden. “Race, Class, and Education,” Conference sponsored by the Center for Children and Childhood Studies. For more information, www.children.camden.rutgers.edu/events.

When Bill Ferris, as President Clinton’s choice to head the National Endowment for the Humanities, launched the regional humanities initiative in 1999, he hoped to bring additional intellectual as well as monetary resources to humanities practice throughout the United States. Tapping new sources of funding was central to Ferris’s vision, but so too was the concept of region: areas, which after all, economists were arguing serve as the central basis for competing in today’s world economy.

Ferris had already demonstrated the appeal of building capacity around shared regional identity as director of the Center for Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. Articulating a regional identity for the Mid-Atlantic proved to be somewhat more problematic. As we began working with the region’s six constituent states (New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia), there seemed less warrant for common identity here than in other regions. How, for instance, could a shared identity unite upstate New York with New York City or rural areas of Maryland long pitted against metropolitan Baltimore? And haven’t critics described Pennsylvania as Alabama separating Pittsburgh from Philadelphia, and New Jersey as a suburban barrel corked by the cities of New York and Philadelphia? Could, or should, these differences be bridged? Would there be any significantly shared culture to build on?

What became clear as we worked is that this regional pluribus was really the heart of our regional unus. The shared identity of the Mid-Atlantic emerged from choices made individually all over the region in favor of diverse and multi-faceted endeavor. The communities of the Mid-Atlantic states, immersed from the start in global trade, welcomed all manner of people marginalized elsewhere for ethnicity, religion, race, or creed, and laid down thereby a mother lode of eager, entrepreneurial talent. This mix could and did foster both innovation and specialty expertise, in organizations, ideas, and industry. Innovations brought the region great renown and wealth, while exacting a price paid in social strife and environmental degradation.

The challenge for a 21st century humanities center dedicated to the Mid-Atlantic then, is not just to build bridges across jurisdictions and across social groupings but also across disciplines and modes of work. Regional humanities in the new century must be what work in this region has always been – the product of creative collaboration. To effectively tell the foundational stories of the Mid-Atlantic we need the voices not just of the university specialist, but also the poet, the novelist, the archivist, the museum curator, the filmmaker, the preservation advocate, the school teacher, the tour guide, and indeed, the marketer, the politician, and the economist. MARCH seeks above all to mobilize the energy and expertise of these specialists around a shared vision of the value of the humanities as a vitalizing force for Mid-Atlantic communities.

At the same time as we strive for cooperative unity, our regional legacy of pluralism must remain a source of energy and inspiration. More often, unfortunately, our differences divide us and scarce resources pit us against each other. Since MARCH’s founding, we have seen the New-York Historical Society sharply adjust its mission under the influence of new funders. The Historical Society of Washington, D.C. nearly expired in 2005 under the pressure of a mission too ambitious for its resources. New institutions, some promising and some less so, continue to proliferate across the region. In this environment we in the Mid-Atlantic have to ask ourselves whether we have the will and capacity to tell the deeply complex and sometimes troubling stories that animate our region’s heritage. And we have to consider how to organize ourselves so that we excite rather than exhaust our energies and our audiences.

Much is at stake, then. We have an outpouring of research over the past quarter century that we can tap, much of it capturing the rich complexity of our regional experience. What became clear as we worked is that this regional pluribus was really the heart of our regional unus. The shared identity of the Mid-Atlantic emerged from choices made individually all over the region in favor of diverse and multi-faceted endeavor. The communities of the Mid-Atlantic states, immersed from the start in global trade, welcomed all manner of people marginalized elsewhere for ethnicity, religion, race, or creed, and laid down thereby a mother lode of eager, entrepreneurial talent. This mix could and did foster both innovation and specialty expertise, in organizations, ideas, and industry. Innovations brought the region great renown and wealth, while exacting a price paid in social strife and environmental degradation.

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Much is at stake, then. We have an outpouring of research over the past quarter century that we can tap, much of it capturing the rich complexity of our regional experience. MARCH takes up the task of leveraging these assets for a broad program of public education and institutional strengthening that can take place in a wide variety of venues. To do this effectively, we seek your help in sharing your experience. The more institutions and individuals share the resources of their communities and the stories of their sites, the more we all learn about the challenges of telling them effectively to the broadest possible audience. Through communication and exchange, MARCH can provide a vehicle to nourish our rich regional heritage and harvest the returns on the investments we have already made to bring it alive. Doing so will both enrich humanities practice and make the Mid-Atlantic a leading site for civic engagement.

We intend to use the pages of Cross Ties to highlight particular efforts, introduce important resources, and report how we are progressing and what remains to be done. We will reach our goal of robust public exchange and enhanced understanding by using our regional heritage of pluralism to infuse our work with the energy of innovation. ✽

Howard Gillette is Professor of History and Director of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities at Rutgers-Camden.
MARCH thanks Stevie and Ted Wolf for their long-standing support and particularly for their generosity in making this newsletter possible.