



BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Contact: Jeanne Hodesh

347-381-3712

jhodesh@brooklynhistory.org

BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY RECEIVES \$1.2 MILLION MULTI-YEAR GRANT FROM ROBERT D.L. GARDINER FOUNDATION TO CONSERVE, CATALOGUE, AND DIGITIZE COLLECTION AND PRODUCE WEB-BASED LONG ISLAND HISTORY PORTAL

Generous funding will increase public access to institution's vast collection of Long Island materials.

December TK, 2017 Brooklyn, NY— Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) is thrilled to announce its receipt of a \$1.2 million grant from the Robert D. L. Gardiner Foundation. Distributed over the course of three years, the funding will make possible the creation of “Revealing Long Island History,” a project that will increase public access to the institution’s vast collection of Long Island materials.

BHS’s Long Island collections date heavily from 1850-1920, but also include notable early materials dating to the 17th and 18th centuries. Among the archives and objects are an important collection of Indian land deeds, revolutionary war era guns, furniture, genealogical materials, and works of art which represent themes of general, civic, and ecclesiastical history. Until now, these resources – particularly the objects – have remained unprocessed, and therefore undiscoverable. The Robert D.L. Gardiner Foundation grant will enable the institution to process these objects and archival materials, making them available to researchers and interested browsers alike.

The collection will be cataloged, conserved, and digitized, resulting in the creation of a web-based Long Island History Portal; a user-friendly, easily navigable, and highly visual tool that can be accessed from any computer. This initiative will expand the use of these materials, which will now be easily accessed for research, exhibitions, and education programming.

“Revealing Long Island History” dovetails with the Gardiner Foundation’s mission and Robert David Lion Gardiner’s personal passion for New York history, particularly as it relates to educating and informing the general public in the State of New York about the culture, art and traditions of Long Island. BHS is dedicated to connecting a wide range of audiences to the Long Island region and its unique place in the history of the country. BHS’s programs, which are grounded in its collections, aim to cultivate, foster, and promote interest in, and understanding and appreciation of, the rich and relevant heritage of Kings, Nassau, and Suffolk counties.

“Our remarkable collections are invaluable to anyone trying to understand the complex socio-political and cultural history of New York, and the United States. While some of the collections are already

digitized and have been researched thoroughly, this generous grant from the Gardiner Foundation will create new opportunities for scholars and students and the general public to discover aspects of Long Island history that have not been explored in decades. We are honored to work with the Gardiner Foundation in bringing artifacts and documents into a fresh context using 21st century approaches and cutting edge technology in order to share these valuable collections with interested audiences far and wide.” said Deborah Schwartz, Brooklyn Historical Society President.

“The Foundation Board is delighted to support this most exciting collaboration with the Brooklyn (ne. Long Island) Historical Society. The archives, material culture and art reflected in early collections of the Brooklyn Historical Society will open new windows into Long Island’s past. It is a great privilege to make this incredible resource available to the public and historic community.” said Kathryn M. Curran, Executive Director of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.

About Brooklyn Historical Society

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach. In May 2017 BHS opened a second site in DUMBO’s Brooklyn Bridge Park.

About The Robert D.L. Gardiner Foundation

The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, established in 1987, primarily supports the study of New York State history. Robert David Lion Gardiner was, until his death in August 2004, the 16th Lord of the Manor of Gardiner’s Island, NY. The Gardiner family and their descendants have owned Gardiner’s Island since 1639, obtained as part of a royal grant from King Charles I of England. The Foundation is inspired by Robert David Lion Gardiner’s personal passion for New York history.

The purpose of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation is: to educate and inform the general public in the State of New York, particularly in the area of the Town of Islip and more generally in Suffolk County, concerning the culture, art and tradition of the locality; to cultivate, foster and promote interest in, and understanding and appreciation of the societal heritage of Town of Islip, particularly during the nineteenth century; to encourage and sponsor the creation and perpetuation by existing and future historical societies of collections and repositories for the deposit, collection and examination of documents and artifacts of various kinds relevant to such heritage and traditions; and to sponsor and encourage the preservation, restoration and exhibition by existing and future historical societies of at least one facility appropriate to such purpose.