Rendezvous
News and Notes from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Institute
Winter 2005

Student Photography Contest Reflects New Deal Project

The Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in cooperation with the Poughkeepsie Journal is proud to sponsor, “This Great Nation Will Endure”: A Student Photography Contest running March 12 - April 22, 2005. The contest is designed to encourage young people to become involved in their communities by using photographs to document daily life and social conditions.

Photographers of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal used documentary photography to raise public awareness of urban and rural poverty during the Great Depression. Their photographs were published in newspapers and magazines and helped inform the nation about conditions that were otherwise not widely known.

Today’s student photographers are invited to use photography to document conditions in their communities. Selected photographs will be published in a special section of the Poughkeepsie Journal and exhibited in the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center located at the FDR Presidential Library and Home of FDR National Historic Site. Pre-registration, which includes lunch and closing reception, is $15, $5 for students with valid ID. Onsite registration on March 12 is $25, $10 for students with valid ID. For information please call (845) 486-7745 or visit our web site at www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu.

The all day conference will take place in the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center located at the FDR Presidential Library and Home of FDR National Historic Site. Pre-registration, which includes lunch and closing reception, is $15, $5 for students with valid ID. Onsite registration on March 12 is $25, $10 for students with valid ID. For information please call (845) 486-7745 or visit our web site at www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu.

Student Photography Contest reflects New Deal Project

Documentary Photography of the New Deal: A Legacy of Social Conscience, a conference organized by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library will be held on Saturday, March 12, 2005, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The conference explores themes suggested by the Library’s current special exhibition, “This Great Nation Will Endure”: Photographs of the Great Depression, which showcases 175 photographs produced by the legendary photographic unit of the New Deal’s Farm Security Administration.

Historian Lawrence Levine, co-author of The People and the President: America’s Conversations with FDR and professor at George Mason University and the University of California at Berkeley, will deliver the keynote address and lead a panel discussion of the photo unit of the Farm Security Administration in broad historical context. Morning panelists will continue the discussion with a focus on several unique aspects of FSA photography. The afternoon session will discuss documentary photography in a more contemporary sense, emphasizing the legacy of FSA photography and its impact on modern photographers in the Hudson Valley. The Plow That Broke the Plains and The River, the documentary films produced by Pare Lorentz for the Farm Security Administration will be screened during lunch.

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The contest is made possible through the support of the Poughkeepsie Journal, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, The Dyson Foundation, the Wallace Genetic Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year the nation's presidential libraries are celebrating their fifth anniversary as a federal system. Presidential libraries trace their roots to FDR and the library and museum that carry his name here in Hyde Park. In 1955 Congress passed the Presidential Libraries Act, codifying the unique institution that FDR created seventeen years earlier. The Act encouraged other Presidents to donate their historical materials to the government and ensured that presidential papers and memorabilia would be preserved and made available to the American people in National Archives facilities constructed with privately raised funds.

It is therefore very fitting that in 2005 we begin to plan for the revitalization of the Roosevelt Library—brining this facility up to the standards of the 21st century for preservation and access to its priceless holdings.

We are grateful to Congressman John Sweeney who led the effort in Congress to secure an appropriation of $750,000 to begin architectural and engineering design for the renewal of this Library. He was joined on the Senate side by Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer with the support of Senators Robert Byrd and Barbara Mikulski.

That money is the first of a two-year appropriation needed to determine the extent of renovations necessary to bring the Roosevelt Library back up to the standards FDR incorporated into the nation's first presidential library. FDR made sure that his Library reflected not only his favorite architectural style and his historical and collecting interests;
Remembering Sara Delano Roosevelt on her 150th Anniversary

By Christine M. Totten
November 10, 2004

At the end of Sara Delano Roosevelt's long life, the New York Herald Tribune called the President's mother "one of the women who have influenced the course of American history." She would "remain for future historians a figure of compelling interest." Upon her death, the White House was deluged by thousands of messages telling FDR that people saw his mother as "the source of your greatness." She had been "their mother and grandma, too," the matriarch who "kept us all together." Honored with the Einstein Medal for humanitarian service, Sara was praised as "a woman of biblical stature, wise, kind and vital."

A decade later, Sara's image had been turned upside down. She was now portrayed in books and on the stage as a screen villain. Even serious scholars accepted such reports at face value. Only David McCullough disagreed. He explained in 1983 that Sara was "considerably more appealing and admirable than is generally understood." The bias against her was "transient, with "most descriptions being based on the viewpoint of her daughter-in-law, Eleanor."

Eleanor's animosity emerged only after 1920, when she began to see Sara as a trial rather than as the most generous of mothers. But Sara is too important an asset to our understanding of FDR to be eclipsed as Eleanor's controversial mother-in-law. She devoted herself to the advancement, and was committed all her life to doing anything—"If it helps Franklin." To discover the real Sara, numerous misunderstandings about her must be corrected. She did indeed grow up beautifully, beautiful, athletic, witty and talented, in the warmth of a close-knit family, as the fifth of eleven children. Yet contrary to standard accounts, the Delanos' life at Algonac on the Hudson was luxurious but frugal. Of old New York stock, to them life's purpose was to be useful in the service of God and fellow man.

Sara's father, Warren Delano II, was his family's breadwinner and a merchant in the China trade, he overcame strife . . . she kept a place apart, full of memories and traditions of a quieter and more stable age, to which he flew for refuge. The tribute to Sara concluded, "No one will ever be able to estimate the place of this woman in American history, for such services of love, so deeply personal, are inestimable."

Professor Christine M. Totten authored this brief article in remembrance of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sara Delano Roosevelt. She is at work on a full-length biography of the life of FDR, based on extensive research at the Roosevelt Library. Roosevelt's perceptive champion, Dorothy Thompson, wrote about her mother: "And in the midst of political strife . . . she kept a place apart, full of memories and traditions of a quieter and more stable age, to which she flew for refuge." The story of how "Sallie" Delano got her name comes from a letter to a friend by Sara Delano Roosevelt's life at Algonac on the Hudson. Sara respected, but refused to marry, the much older squire of Hyde Park. She only yielded to her parents' pressure when it became clear that James could rescue her beloved brother, Warren, from losing his position. Miraculously, Sallie fell in love with her husband on a glorious honeymoon—and came home pregnant.

Ambitious and well-educated, Sara recognized the promise of greatness in her strong-willed little boy even before he was three years old. As an adolescent, she admonished Franklin to "be kind to every one if you have the chance . . . and to your parents who live in you and for you." When Franklin was a student at Groton and Harvard, she encouraged him to emulate her idol, Theodore Roosevelt. Franklin was only eighteen when Sara, widowed at forty-six, had to serve both as his mother and father. Roosevelt with his mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt.

Sara's role in getting Franklin and Eleanor together was crucial. Sara invited Eleanor, Theodore's niece, to two house parties for her son at Hyde Park on June 20 and July 7, 1903. When he returned from England two months later after a flirtation with the aristocratic Aline Chouteley, Franklin joined into courting coopellos and found Eleanor there as her guest.

In September, Sara recommended Eleanor to her brother Warren, the head of the house of Delano, for a visit. She described Eleanor as the nicest, "most intelligent and thoughtful girl" she knew. Still, it came as a shock when Franklin, then a student at Harvard, proposed marriage—premaritally and against custom—only two months later. When Franklin rose to an office higher than her boldest expectations, she became a new, less-private person for his sake. Most famously, she acted as his Hyde Park hostess for the King and Queen of England in 1939. Above all, Sara maintained a haven for FDR in his childhood home. Roosevelt Grandchild Contributes to the Museum Collection

The FDR Library recently received an important gift of Eleanor Roosevelt materials from Eleanor R. Seagraves, the daughter of Anna Roosevelt and her first husband, Curtis Dall. Mrs. Seagraves is the Roosevelt's first grandchild. Known as "Sticie," she and her brother Curtis ("Buzzie") lived in the White House from 1933 until 1934.

Mrs. Seagraves' gift includes a number of very important items. Among these is a gold oval locket and chain worn by Mrs. Roosevelt. The locket bears teeth marks left by the Roosevelt children when they were infants. It is engraved "E.F./1903" in commemoration of the engagement of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt in 1903.

Among the other items in Mrs. Seagraves' gift are a variety of clothing pieces owned by Mrs. Roosevelt, including a hand-embroidered silk Chinese coat, two dresses, a skirt, a fox stew and muff, and several elegant evening purses. There is also a 14k gold fleur-de-lis pin studded with pearls owned by Mrs. Roosevelt and passed on to her daughter Anna. Mrs. Seagraves' gift also includes a small travel clock owned by Mrs. Roosevelt.

In addition to these new materials, Mrs. Seagraves has donated two other items to the FDR Library—a silver fox collar and a mink necklace that belonged to Mrs. Roosevelt.

A generous friend of the FDR Library, Mrs. Seagraves is an author and editor. She edited a 1994 reprint of Delano's Voyages of Commerce and Discovery: An annotated bibliography of on environmental subjects, including A Search for Environmental Ethics: An Initial Bibliography (1980).
THE DEATH OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
60 YEARS LATER, THE IMPACT IS STILL BEING FELT

The “War President” who led America through World War II and saved Democracy, who founded Social Security, who helped lift the country out of the Great Depression. President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s legacy endures.

APRIL 12, 1945

In April 1945, America and its allies were nearing victory in World War II. In Europe, Germany was on the brink of defeat, while in the Pacific plans for the invasion of Japan were underway.

Three long years of wartime leadership took a grim toll on Franklin Roosevelt. By spring 1945 he was suffering from hypertension and heart disease. On March 29 he left Washington for a vacation at Warm Springs, Georgia. For years he had sought to restore his health at the rehabilitation center he founded there in 1927.

In the early afternoon of April 12, 1945 the President was in his private cottage at Warm Springs signing papers and sitting for a portrait painter. Suddenly, he raised his hand to his head, complaining of a headache. He slumped forward, losing consciousness.

At 3:35 P.M. the President was pronounced dead from a massive cerebral hemorrhage. Americans soon learned the news: the man who had led them through years of economic crisis and war was gone.

FDR’s sudden death stunned the nation. Few had known of the severity of President Roosevelt’s health problems. The public’s shock was magnified by the fact that Roosevelt had been America’s chief executive for over twelve years. Young Americans had no memory of any other President. The timing of his death, at a moment when victory in World War II seemed at hand, added to the country’s grief.

THE LONG RIDE HOME

On the morning of April 13, President Roosevelt’s casket was carried to the railroad station at Warm Springs, Georgia, accompanied by a procession of 2,000 soldiers from Fort Benning. Moving no faster than thirty-five miles per hour, the train passed through the Carolinas and Virginia, arriving in Washington, DC on April 14. All along the way, at all hours of the day and night, people lined the route of the funeral train, paying tribute to their leader. President Truman, members of the immediate family, and high-ranking government officials met the funeral train at Union Station.

Full military honors were rendered in a procession from the railroad station to the White House through the streets lined with units of the nation’s armed forces and thousands upon thousands of grieving citizens. The casket was carried on a caisson preceded by a riderless horse accompanied by two soldiers who bore the American flag and the presidential standard. At the White House, the casket was placed in the East Room where a private Episcopal Funeral Service was conducted at 4:00 p.m. The service lasted twenty-three minutes.

The final photograph of President Franklin D. Roosevelt—taken at Warm Springs, Georgia on April 11, 1945—the day before his death. FDR Presidential Library and Museum.

President Roosevelt's casket on a caisson along the parade route lined with soldiers in Hyde Park, New York. FDR Presidential Library and Museum.

President Roosevelt's body did not lie in state in the Capitol.

That evening the casket was removed from the White House and taken in a small procession of soldiers and police to Union Station for the trip to the President's Hyde Park home. The morning of April 15 the funeral train arrived at a siding on the Hudson River four miles from the Roosevelt home. Again all along the route, people lined the road paying homage to their President.

The casket was transferred to a horse-drawn gun carriage and carried up the hill to the estate along a route lined with soldiers, sailors and marines. The caisson was preceded by a military band and a battalion of West Point cadets and followed by limousines containing President Truman, the Roosevelt family, and close associates of FDR. Full military honors were rendered from the train to the burial site. Internment was in the Rose Garden at the estate in Hyde Park. The rector of St. James Episcopal Church read the burial services, three volleys were fired over the grave, and taps were sounded as the casket was lowered to its final resting place.
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

A memorial service for President Roosevelt was held before a joint meeting of the two houses of Congress on July 1, 1946. The FDR Presidential Library and Museum holds a copy of the proceedings. Below is an excerpt from the memorial address presented by the Hon. John G. Winant, United States Ambassador to Great Britain during World War II.

In Franklin Roosevelt the qualities we knew were these—we who worked with him and watched him. He loved mankind. There was no one in public life in our time who had the confidence of a greater part of the people of the earth than Franklin Roosevelt. He had their confidence not only because he believed in them as men and women, but because he expected much of them as men and women. The world to him was not composed of nations only, nor the nations of classes. He did not believe in abstractions. He believed in individual human beings. The compact, as Walt Whitman put it, was always with individuals. The decisions, whether in war or in peace, were decisions which affected the lives of individuals. The friendship, the disagreements, the agreements were individual friendships, individual dissensions, individual agreements. He loved men, but he loved them to be free, to be themselves.

He was brave. There is no man in this room—not those who saw him in the weakest moments of a frightful illness—not those who saw him in the most terrible moments of the war—there is not one of us who can say that he saw Franklin Roosevelt afraid.

He was steadfast. Once the decision had been made, he stood to it. Strong-willed and stubborn of purpose, he chose the men and framed the plans to bring to bear upon his country's enemies the full and overwhelming power of its strength, turning the first and terrible defeats to victories unprecedented in the history of war. Those who know of their own knowledge what risks he had to take, what burden of responsibility he had to bear know how to estimate his steadfastness.

He saw the facts and faced them. Even in the brief perspective of a year we have learned how well he saw the facts of danger to his country. At a time when few men other than he, whether in positions of responsibility or not, understood the meaning of the history of our time, he understood it. We know now from the mouths and records of our enemies how well he understood. At a time when it was intellectually unpopular and politically dangerous to face the facts, he faced them. Neither the initial indifference of many among our people upon whose understanding he must have counted, nor a campaign of personal vilification in certain sections of our press, rarely equaled in any country, deterred him. He carried the distasteful burden of an unpopular awakening and brought the people, not of his own country only, but of the democratic world, to see their danger while yet there was time—how little time—to save themselves and save the world they live in.

He dared to act. It is not always that those who have the courage to see have the courage to act on what they see. Franklin Roosevelt acted. In two great crises, one within, the other without, his acts changed history. That the confidence of the American people in themselves and in their Nation was restored and strengthened by the vigor and decisiveness of his action of 1933, all of us here know, for many have shared in that action and remember well. That Britain was saved to fight the war through by the courage and decisiveness of his action of 1940 we know also. None of us who knew of that decision and its consequences can forget it now that the war is won.

He believed. There was no American of his time who believed more deeply in America than he, and no believer in democracy who had a firmer faith in man. Freedom to him was not a word but a reality; not a sentiment to which men might aspire, but a reality they might possess. The reaffirmations of the rights of man to which he committed his administration and his country in the domestic and the foreign crises of his years as President were reaffirmations not of word but fact. They stand with the great charters of mankind.

And finally, and most important of all perhaps for us who have out lived him, he dared to hope. There was never a time in the dark years of the depression, of the black years of the war, when he lost hope. And as the end of the war drew near, and the end of his life with it, his hopes grew greater, grew beyond the war, beyond the victory to peace. He dared to hope for peace, to believe in peace, and to act for peace. Young in heart himself, he always thought of his country as young also, as the New World, as the builder of new worlds of peace. Believer of man, and believer therefore in men, he thought of this Republic of ours as part of that greater republic of mankind on which alone a true peace can be rested. He never thought the labor would be easy. He never questioned—he least of all men—that differences and difficulties would arise. But neither did he cease to hope. Nor would he now.

These then were his qualities as President and foremost citizen of the United States. Brave, steadfast, one who dared to see the facts, to face them, and to act; one who believed, who hoped. Whatever verdict history writes down; this much we know who knew him—that he was a man. God give us heart and will to take this Nation as he left it—not only powerful, not only rich but young and hopeful and confident and believing and strong—God give us heart and will to take this Nation forward as he meant to take it to a new, more daring future, a new world of peace.

On February 15, 2005, Rivington R. Winant, the Hon. John Gilbert Winant’s son and member of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute Board of Directors, provided Rendezvous the following recollections of his father’s address:

“When my father was notified of this singular honor, he had already been scheduled to make a number of other speeches, a good number of which were at university and college commencements. He did manage to fulfill that schedule, but was pressed for time to prepare the address in honor of FDR.

My father valued the opinions of others and a number of knowledgeable people came to our apartment in New York to give advice. Two of them I remember best. One was Lloyd Garrison, a distinguished lawyer who was a former student of my father’s and I believe one of the founders of the Liberal Party. The other was Judge Samuel Rosenman, who had been FDR’s senior speech writer. The advisers met on and off for several days.

I drove my father to Concord, New Hampshire from whence he was scheduled to drive to the Dartmouth commencement the next day. On the way Concord, . . . [we had] . . . a rather lengthy conversation with poet Archibald MacLeish . . . After attending the Dartmouth commencement, my father immediately returned to New York and spent a day or two working over the FDR address. Among other things, he delivered the Vassar College commencement address on June 30 in Poughkeepsie. From there, we took the train to Washington; he to speak and we to listen.”
We are pleased to announce that on February 6, 2005 the Roosevelt Library promoted four-year veteran archivist Bob Clark to the Supervisory Archivist position. Clark began his archival career while a student at Texas Tech University, from which he holds both a B.A. and a M.A. in history. He then took a degree in law from Syracuse University, where he received his J.D. in 1994, and would go on to practice law for seven years. In June 2001 Clark returned to history and archival work, taking a position as archivist at the Roosevelt Library.

In partnership with Marist College and IBM, the archives is continuing with the digitization of the Diplomatic Correspondence in the President's Secretary's Files. The Library plans to make the documents available on its website sometime in the Spring 2005. The FDR Library has partnered with the Truman Library on a joint online exhibit of the correspondence between Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry Truman. Based on materials representation in Steve Neal's book *Eleanor And Harry*, the archival staffs of the two libraries have digitized hundreds of original documents from their collections. The project is expected to “go live” on April 12, 2005 in commemoration of the day FDR died and President Truman took office. Access to the online exhibit will be available on both libraries’ websites.

Archives Technician Karen Anson won a National Archives recognition award for her work on NARA's Archival Research Catalog (ARC) automation initiative. The Library received a donation of handwritten letters from Eleanor Roosevelt to John A. and Anne Roosevelt. The correspondence was donated by Haven C. Roosevelt, Nina Roosevelt Gibson, and Sarah Schoonmaker. Through the courtesy of Irving J. Stolberg, a collection of books related to the UN and Eleanor Roosevelt was donated by the United Nations Association of Connecticut. The books were part of the UNA’s Ruth Steinhaus Cohen Collection.

The diaries of Martin Conboy, December 1933 - June 1935, were donated to the Library by his granddaughter Margaret S. Bailey. Mr. Conboy was the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York during the period that New Deal legislation was being challenged in court.

From Cathy Raphael, the Library received an original master script of a Democratic National Committee Election Eve radio program which was broadcast live on November 6, 1944 on the CBS network. Mr. Raphael's mother worked for CBS News. The script includes such celebrities as Judy Garland, Humphrey Bogart, and Jimmy Cagney.

From Professor Christine Totten, the Library received the unedited manuscript of her biography of Sara Delano Roosevelt. While the manuscript will remain closed to researchers pending editing and publication, the manuscript will provide invaluable information for future researchers.

President Roosevelt contracted polio in 1921 at the age of thirty-nine. He founded the March of Dimes in 1938 to find ways to stop the polio epidemics that had ravaged the country. He was honored for his efforts by having his likeness placed on the dime in 1946.

**March of Dimes Events Held at FDR Presidential Library**

On January 27, 2005 stage and screen star Mickey Rooney joined disciples of FDR at the Wallace Center to kick off a year-long tribute to Roosevelt, the March of Dimes—which he founded—and the development of the polio vaccine. "It was 1938 and polio was leaving thousands of children across the country dead or paralyzed," said Anna Eleanor Roosevelt. "So my grandfather founded the March of Dimes, a grass-roots volunteer organization that funded the work of Dr. Jonas Salk to stop, once and for all, the raging polio epidemics. Thank goodness it did." "We're celebrating today because FDR was born in January and celebrated with a Birthday Ball fundraiser to fight polio," said Rooney. "As a young man, I was privileged to help encourage Americans to send a dime to the White House to help the March of Dimes fight polio and today I continue to support its fight to improve the health of babies." Hundreds of students who are members of Key Club International, representing 37 high schools across New York State, also honored President Roosevelt by raising more than $10,000 through a "Mile of Dimes" campaign. A mile contains 92,160 dimes. On behalf of all the students, the second graders from Chancellor Livingston Elementary School in Rhinebeck, New York, presented the dimes to Dr. Jennifer L. Howe, president of the March of Dimes.

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From Patricia Prinz, the Library received a collection of letters and other materials related to her father Herzel Plaine and his association with Eleanor Roosevelt. Mr. Plaine was an Assistant Solicitor General during the period that Mrs. Roosevelt served on the Human Rights Commission, and he provided the American delegation with assistance during the drafting of the Declaration of Human Rights.

To learn about programs and events at the FDR Presidential Library and Museum and the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center sign up for our *Bulletin* by sending an email to clifford.laube@nara.gov and typing “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line.
Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt communicated by word and deed a vision of a just and caring society. The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute invites you to become a member of the Institute that bears their name and works to preserve their far-sighted vision of a free, more compassionate world.

MEMBER BENEFITS INCLUDE:

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- A one year subscription to The View From Hyde Park, the news magazine of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute
- Added to the mailing list for Rendezvous with History, the newsletter of the Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum
- 10% discount at the New Deal Museum Store in the Wallace Center of the Roosevelt Library and Home of FDR, National Historic Site
- Invitations to all events sponsored by the Library and Institute

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Mrs. Nesbitt’s Café will open for the season on April 1, 2005. Located in the Wallace Visitor Center, the café prepares delicious soups, salads, wraps, and specialty deli sandwiches. Mrs. Nesbitt’s offers indoor dining as well as patio seating. The Café is open from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM, seven days a week.

You'll find the best deals at the New Deal Store

Open seven days a week, the New Deal Store is the place to shop for presidential memorabilia, Hudson Valley handmade items, and the best book selection on the Roosevelts. If you can't visit the Store in person shop online at www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu or call 1 800 FDR-VISIT.