

Awarded grant projects

REV 250: *Examining the Semiquincentennial through a Jersey Lens*



Alfred H. Baumann Free Public Library

Historic Woodland Park: A Trolley Tour Through Time

This project aims to preserve and share Woodland Park's rich history with the community, highlighting sites like Revolutionary War encampments, 19th-century farms, mills, and the Morris Canal. Through narrated trolley rides, historical performances, and hands-on activities, participants will explore key locations such as Beckes Farm, the Jewish Cemetery, and Idlewild Park. The event will take place at Dowling Gardens, aligning with the opening of the new library and the town's incorporation anniversary. Goals include increasing historical awareness, fostering community engagement, and preserving local heritage for future generations.

Bloomfield Library

Bloomfield Public Library Local History Revitalization Project

Bloomfield, with its deep ties to the American Revolution, played a key role in supporting revolutionary efforts, despite not seeing combat. The township honors Joseph Bloomfield, a Revolutionary War Major, and is home to Bloomfield Cemetery, where 32 American soldiers are buried. This project aims to bridge historical gaps by acquiring maps, newspapers, and yearbooks to document Bloomfield's evolution from colonial times. With funding from the NJSL REV 250 Special Collections Grant, the Bloomfield Public Library will make these resources accessible to the public, supporting research, education, and community engagement while commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Revolution.

Cherry Hill Public Library

U.S. at 250: South Jersey and the Revolution

Cherry Hill, a major suburb of Philadelphia, is surrounded by historic communities like Haddonfield and Moorestown, which were settled before the American Revolution. The town has a strong connection to colonial history. The library will host a series of public presentations to highlight how Cherry Hill, the region, and New Jersey played a role in the nation's founding. These events aim to foster a shared understanding of history, creating a sense of unity and connection to the past. By commemorating the Semiquincentennial, the community will bring to life the historical figures and events that helped shape the United States.

Collingswood Public Library

Retrospect Local Newspaper Digitization Project

The Collingswood Public Library, working together with Haddonfield, Audubon, and Haddon Heights Libraries, and the Historical Society of Haddonfield, will digitize the 2004-2024 issues of the local Retrospect Newspaper. The project will update a previous digitization of 1902-2003 issues, which are valuable for research on local history, people, schools, businesses, and events. The new digital archive will allow public access to searchable issues, preserving fragile paper records. The project aims to provide open access to local news, promote historical research, and support the community's understanding of its recent past.

Elizabeth Public Library

The 313+ Ancestors Speak Project Archive at the Elizabeth Public Library

This project will highlight the cultural, educational, artistic, and historic impact of African Americans, particularly free and enslaved individuals, in Elizabeth, New Jersey. In collaboration with the 313+ Ancestors Speak Project and the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, the project will teach the community about African American contributions during the Revolutionary period, research the lives of 313+ individuals buried at the First Presbyterian Church, and add related materials to the Elizabeth Public Library's Local History & Special Collections. The initiative will include educational programs, community engagement, and library acquisitions to support ongoing research.

Gloucester County Library System

Where We Live: Gloucester County's Pivotal Role in America's Fight for Freedom, 1777-1783

Gloucester County played a vital role in the American Revolution, from defending Philadelphia to supplying Washington's army at Valley Forge. The county hosted key battles like Red Bank and Swedesboro. With population growth, many new residents may be unaware of this history. The library will create and host a year-long series of programs celebrating the county's contributions to American independence. These will include lectures, reenactor visits, walking tours, book clubs, and genealogy workshops, engaging residents of all ages in learning about local Revolutionary War history, fostering a shared community identity and pride.

Johnson Public Library

Accessing History with the Bergen County Historical News Archive

The library will digitize and create a searchable online archive of historic Bergen County newspapers, including *Hackensack Republican* (1878-1938) and *Bergen County Democrat* (1861-1919), to increase access to local history and genealogy resources. These papers, covering the late 1800s to early 1900s, are currently on microfilm but not indexed. This project will create the Bergen County Historical Newspapers (BCHN) archive, allowing remote access to these materials. Additionally, the library plans to upgrade its research station with a microfilm reader and promote the archive through training sessions and monthly articles showcasing local history.

Lambertville Free Public Library

Bringing the 250th to Life In Lambertville, NJ

Lambertville, a historic town on the Delaware River, played a key role during the American Revolution, including being a strategic location for the Continental Army. The library plans a series of programs to educate residents about the town's revolutionary history as part of its 100th anniversary in 2026. The library will collaborate with local partners to offer ten events, such as a living history encampment, reenactments, and talks about the Lenni-Lenape, African American heroes, and regional history. These programs aim to engage the community, celebrate local heritage, and raise the library's profile.

Little Falls Public Library

LFPL NJ History Channel Project

The library will create a series of educational videos highlighting New Jersey's pivotal role in the American Revolution. The project will feature historic sites like Princeton, Monmouth, and Washington's Crossing State Park, offering expert interviews, on-location footage, and visual storytelling. The videos, accessible via the library's YouTube page, aim to raise awareness of New Jersey's Revolutionary War history. The project will engage local historical societies, schools, and the public with plans for future videos on other state landmarks. This initiative will create a lasting digital archive and foster a deeper appreciation for New Jersey's historical contributions.

Maplewood Memorial Library

Digitization and Web Hosting of Maplewood Library Scrapbooks; Book Scanner Purchase; Publicity

The library will digitize 16 scrapbooks (1922-1981) containing unique images, news clippings, and community history. The grant will cover digitization, hosting fees for the Digital Archive, and a book scanner for the library's maker space. The project will expand access to historical materials and engage the community through public programs, including a hybrid introduction to the digital archive. This initiative aligns with the library's mission to preserve and make accessible local history, especially in the new LEED-certified library building, which will feature a dedicated Local History Room.

Monmouth County Library System

From Allentown to Manalapan to Shrewsbury, every corner of the county fought for independence.

The library's 13 branches will host a range of programs celebrating the county's vital role in the American Revolution. Through lectures, living history demonstrations, music, and interactive events, the library aims to instill community pride and connect residents to local Revolutionary history. Programs will highlight Native American heritage, women's contributions, and daily colonial life. Events include colonial dance with live music, costumed musical historians, and Revolutionary War encampments. Scholars and historians will bring the era to life, reminding residents that their towns were key to America's founding—and that history can be both meaningful and fun.

Moorestown Library

Moorestown News Chronicle Digitization Project

The library will digitize its collection of the *News Chronicle* and predecessor newspapers, which document the town's civic, political, and social life from 1946–1991. Currently only available on deteriorating microfilm, the papers are largely unindexed and difficult to access, especially for users with visual impairments. Digitization will create a keyword-searchable, user-friendly online archive, preserving these vital records and improving access. This project supports the library's commitment to preserving local history, enhancing accessibility, and fostering community engagement by making Moorestown's historical newspaper record widely available for generations to come.

Newark Public Library

A Lens on Jersey's Latino History

The library, working with the New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center (NJHRIC), will host two public panel discussions highlighting the history and contributions of Latino communities in the state. Despite over 130 years of Latino presence in New Jersey, their stories remain largely absent from historical narratives. These panels will feature authors of Latinas/os in New Jersey and educators who use Latino history in their classrooms. The goal is to deepen public awareness, inspire further research, and encourage community engagement through oral histories and archival contributions, ensuring Latino voices are part of New Jersey's legacy.

Ocean County Library

Rev250 Examining the Semiquincentennial through a Jersey Lens

Local newspapers capture the everyday life and major milestones of a community. Yet, when only available on microfilm or in fragile paper copies, this valuable history is often inaccessible. This project will digitize over 40 years of the *Ocean County Leader*, the key newspaper for Point Pleasant Beach, Point Pleasant, Bay Head, Mantoloking, and Lavallette. Making it searchable online will unlock decades of local business history, school records, family announcements, and more, benefiting researchers, students, genealogists, and historians, ensuring this vital part of Ocean County's story is preserved and easily accessible to the public.

Princeton Public Library

Listening for History: Resources for Engagement with the Voices of Princeton Initiative

Voices of Princeton (VoP) is an oral history initiative by the Princeton Public Library and the Historical Society of Princeton that collects and shares stories from the local community. In honor of the 250th anniversary of the U.S., VoP will launch themed projects exploring the 1976 Bicentennial, the “unfinished revolution,” and youth perspectives on America’s future. The project will also expand access and engagement through mobile recording kits, improved transcription tools, a new podcast series, and public listening stations. These enhancements aim to preserve community history while fostering deeper reflection and participation across generations in Princeton.

Rahway Public Library

Rahway History Room Digitization Project - 1910 and beyond

This project will increase access and preservation of two unique local collections: *Rahway’s newspapers (1910–2000)* and *Rahway High School yearbooks (1929–present)*. Currently, these materials are only available during limited hours, making them largely inaccessible. With grant funding, the library will digitize its microfilmed newspapers, while scanning the yearbooks in-house using a new professional-grade scanner. These digitized collections will be securely available on the library’s network, ensuring immediate access to over a century of local history, protecting irreplaceable materials from deterioration, and making Rahway’s past accessible for the future.

Ridgewood Public Library

Digitizing NJ History

The library will preserve and expand access to the community’s rich local history through digitization. By acquiring an advanced archival scanner and outsourcing digitization for fragile materials, the library will preserve at-risk documents, photographs, house histories, oral histories on cassette, and negatives from the 1920s–1990s. These materials will be added to the Heritage Catalog, a searchable online platform. The project will support genealogy research, historic preservation, and cultural understanding, while ensuring long-term accessibility for both local residents and remote researchers, strengthening Ridgewood’s identity and preserving its unique historical record.

Roxbury Public Library

Let Freedom Ring: Celebrating 250 Years of Liberty

The library will present a series of events highlighting the American Revolution’s impact on Morris County. Programs include lectures by historian Joel Farkas, a watch party for the “Sail 4th 250” tall ship parade, a historical walking tour of Main Street Succasunna, and a performance by a costumed historical interpreter. The project also includes refreshing the Wolfe Room to improve access to local history materials. These initiatives aim to foster civic engagement and highlight Roxbury’s role in the founding of the nation through dynamic, community-centered programming.

Springfield Free Public Library

Springfield Free Public Library through a Revolutionary Lens

This project will commemorate Springfield’s Revolutionary War history, especially the pivotal but often overlooked Battle of Springfield (June 23, 1780), through a series of intergenerational programs at the library. As one of the final northern battles of the war, this local event underscores New Jersey’s critical role as the “Crossroads of the American Revolution.” Partnering with local organizations, the library will offer lectures by noted historians, hands-on colonial programs for families, artifact displays, and more. These events aim to raise awareness, foster community pride, and position the library as a hub for historical learning leading up to 2026.

Sussex County Library System

Opening Windows to the Past: Local History Digital Newspaper Project

Sussex County's historical newspapers, spanning 1814 to the mid-1900s, capture diverse political views and local life from rural communities shaped by mills and farms. The library holds seven county-specific papers vital for researching local history, documenting events, and social changes. The "Opening Windows to the Past" project will digitize and provide free, searchable online access to these newspapers, expanding accessibility and enhancing research. This will enrich community understanding and strengthen the library's role as a key historical resource.

Woodbury Public Library

Historical Enhancement of Woodbury Public Library's Special New Jersey Collection

The library will enrich its New Jersey Collection by expanding materials on the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, with a special focus on the Underground Railroad and the evolving roles of women during these eras. This project highlights African slave songs, spirituals, and stories of local women who served as nurses, spies, and more. Targeting young adults and adults, the library will partner with Woodbury High School, local artists, and the Gloucester County Cultural & Heritage Commission to promote the collection. Community outreach will include programs, displays, and flyers to engage diverse audiences.