



## News for Immediate Release

July 7, 2010

### **The State Museum of Pennsylvania's Exhibit on 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FDR's 'New Deal' Earns National Honors**

**Harrisburg** – The State Museum of Pennsylvania has been nationally recognized for its exhibit featuring the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal."

The exhibit, "A Common Canvas: Pennsylvania's New Deal Post Office Murals," will receive an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Leadership in History Awards.

The exhibit, which ran from Nov. 2008 – May 2009, highlighted post office murals and art works commissioned by the U.S. Treasury Department between 1933 and 1942. The featured artworks were widely dispersed throughout Pennsylvania portraying life and culture during the Great Depression.

"This national recognition not only honors a significant achievement in the field of state and local history, but also brings public attention to the contributions that small and large organizations and institutions in Pennsylvania make to further our understanding of history," said Barbara Franco, executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC).

"These engaging pieces offered a unique glimpse into a 'lost' Pennsylvania and represented a treasure trove of public art and a vivid portrait of Pennsylvania society and culture during the Great Depression," Franco added. "Each piece was created to capture something intrinsically important about the Pennsylvania community where they were to be installed."

Given Pennsylvania's legacy as a manufacturing state, Franco said, industries such as coal and steel are recurring motifs, but the collection also reflected other traditions and industries like agriculture, glass making, lumbering, historical events and individuals, Native Americans, and a variety of town and streetscapes.

"Collectively, the murals and related works represent Pennsylvania's largest public art project," she said.

Franco said two other organizations from Pennsylvania also were recognized:

- Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, for the Alfred W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue and William Portner Memorial Exhibition, Jewish Life at Eastern State; and
- Lilly-Washington Historical Association for the celebration of the 200-year history of the Greater Lilly, Pennsylvania area.

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