

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

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**PENNSYLVANIA RECOGNIZES 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
OF ‘NEW DEAL’**

**Harrisburg, PA** –The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is launching a special Web feature, mounting a special exhibition at The State Museum of Pennsylvania, supporting commemorative programs across the state, and hosting a public history symposium as part of a year-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal.”

“The historical lessons of the New Deal are many,” said Barbara Franco, executive director of PHMC. “It was a period during which the state and nation faced extreme economic hardships and people worked together to overcome adversity.”

Franco said that although New Deal projects were funded through national programs, many of them were strongly rooted in local and regional identity. In Pennsylvania, Governor George H. Earle III, a friend of President Roosevelt and an ardent supporter of FDR’s New Deal, crafted a series of innovative programs for economic relief which earned them the title “Pennsylvania’s Little New Deal.”

The commission is collaborating at the national, state and local level with organizations and individuals to create and produce commemorative programs, events and activities.

As part of the commemoration, a new Web site has been launched that encourages preservation and documentation of community-based New Deal resources at [www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us) and offers links that relate to website sites including [ExplorePAHistory.com](http://ExplorePAHistory.com) that features an interactive story on The Great Depression

in Pennsylvania. The public is encouraged to use the Web site to document New Deal-era resources in their communities.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania will present a special public exhibition, “A Common Canvas: Pennsylvania’s New Deal Post Office Murals,” highlighting post office murals and art works commissioned by the U.S. Treasury Department between 1933 and 1942. This exhibition will open on Nov. 22 and run through May 17, 2009. The featured art works were widely dispersed throughout Pennsylvania portraying life and culture during the Great Depression.

Nine county historical societies have been awarded \$1,000 PHMC special initiative grants to preserve, document, interpret, and educate the public on this important period in American history.

The New Deal commemoration will conclude with a public history symposium, Dec. 4, in the auditorium of The State Museum in Harrisburg. The symposium, “Pennsylvania’s New Deal Legacies,” will feature keynote speaker, Dr. Christopher Breiseth, president and CEO, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, Hyde Park, NY.

“Among the greatest legacies of the New Deal are an appreciation for local history and the significance of the experiences of ordinary individuals,” Franco said. “As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the New Deal, we celebrate the legions of people--millions across the commonwealth and the country--who, working shoulder-to-shoulder, helped to bring not only a sense of normalcy to their lives, but also one of belonging.”