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For Immediate Release

ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS OF THE 2017 STATE HISTORY AWARDS

LANSING, Mich.— The Historical Society of Michigan announces its 2017 State History Awards, which will be presented during its annual State History Conference in Holland, Michigan, Sept. 22-24, 2017. The Society presents the State History Awards every year to individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the appreciation, collection, preservation and/or promotion of state and local history. The awards are the highest recognition presented by the Historical Society of Michigan, the state’s official historical society and oldest cultural organization.



The 15 winners are: (Detailed descriptions of each recipient are listed at the end of this news release.)

- **Lifetime Achievement Award—Le Roy Barnett** of Grand Ledge
- **Distinguished Volunteer Service—Toni Rumsey** of Ludington
- **Books: University & Commercial Press—**
 - **“Designing Detroit: Wirt Rowland and the Rise of Modern American Architecture”** by **Michael G. Smith** (Wayne State University Press)
 - **“Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies”** by **Joel Stone** (Wayne State University Press)
 - **“James Jesse Strang: The Rise and Fall of Michigan’s Mormon King”** by the late **Don Faber** (University of Michigan Press)
 - **“Mid-Michigan Modern: From Frank Lloyd Wright to Googie”** by **Susan Bandes** (Michigan State University Press)

- **Books: Private Printing—**
 - **“Footprints: Stories of Native Americans in West Central Michigan”** by **Wallace K. Ewing** (Wallace K. Ewing)
 - **“We Bought a WWII Bomber: The Untold Story of a Michigan High School, a B-17 Bomber & the Blue Ridge Parkway”** by **Sandra Warren** (Arlie Enterprises)
- **Businesses—West Michigan Tourist Association** in Grand Rapids
- **Education: Educational Programs—Wild Swan Theater** in Ann Arbor for the play **“Rosie the Riveter”** and its associated educational materials
- **Institutions—The Local History and Genealogy Collection** at the **Hoyt Library** in Saginaw
- **Local Societies—Algonac-Clay Township Historical Society** in Algonac
- **Restoration/Preservation—Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University** in Detroit for its **Michigan Labor History Mural Restoration**
- **Special Programs/Events—University of Michigan** in Ann Arbor for **“True Blue! A Tribute to Michigan”**
- **Best Article in Michigan History Magazine—“Vincent Chin: A Catalyst for the Asian-American Civil Rights Movement”** by **Frances Kai-Hwa Wang** of Ann Arbor

The State History Conference explores significant people, places and events in Michigan’s past through a diverse offering of keynote speakers, breakout sessions, workshops and tours. Each year, the conference moves to a different location to feature the local history of that area and to address notable statewide historical matters. Standard registration ends Sept. 10, 2017. Late registration takes place Sept. 11-18, 2017. [Registration details and full session descriptions are available in the conference brochure.](#)

The 2017 State History Conference is sponsored by Meijer Inc., the Edgar and Elsa Prince Foundation, Hope College, the Holland Museum, Van Raalte Press, and the Joint Archives of Holland.

The Historical Society of Michigan also hosts the Upper Peninsula History Conference, which focuses on the history of the Upper Peninsula, and Michigan in Perspective: The Local History Conference, which concentrates on Southeast Michigan and statewide history.

The Historical Society of Michigan is the state’s oldest cultural organization, founded in 1828 by territorial governor Lewis Cass and explorer Henry Schoolcraft. A nongovernmental nonprofit, the Society focuses on publications, conferences, education, awards and recognition programming, and support for local history organizations to preserve and promote Michigan’s rich history.

The 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to Dr. Le Roy Barnett of Grand Ledge. Barnett earned a bachelor's degree in geography and forestry and a master's in geography and geology from Michigan State University. He received his Master of Library Science degree from Western Michigan University and his Ph.D. in historical geography from Michigan State University. Barnett became a familiar figure to countless amateur and professional historians through his 23 years as a reference archivist for the Michigan History Bureau. Barnett has researched hundreds of papers and articles for various publications and has written numerous books, including "Mining in Michigan," "Shipping Literature of the Great Lakes," and "Michigan's Early Military Forces."

The 2017 State History Award for Distinguished Volunteer Service will be presented to Toni Rumsey of Ludington for her years of service to the Newaygo County Museum and Heritage Center. Rumsey manages the organization's reference department and archives, where she has compiled and digitized a vast amount of information about the area. She has served on the museum's board of directors, written books about local history, created exhibits, led tours and trained other volunteers. Her tireless work on behalf of the museum and local history exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism.

Detroit architectural historian Michael G. Smith will receive a State History Award in the category of Books: University & Commercial Press for "Designing Detroit: Wirt Rowland and the Rise of Modern American Architecture," published by Wayne State University Press. The book spotlights the work of little-known but innovative architect Wirt Rowland, the chief designer working under Albert Kahn, and analyzes Rowland's accomplishments in building design and his influence as a leader of Detroit's architectural community throughout the first half of the 20th century.

A State History Award in the category of Books: University & Commercial Press will be presented to Joel Stone for "Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies," published by Wayne State University Press. Stone, the senior curator of the Detroit Historical Society, edited 25 essays from journalists and historians to craft a book that leads to a better understanding of one of the worst civil disturbances in American history. In "Detroit 1967," Stone presents a series of powerful writings that take readers down a timeline from colonial slavery, the Jim Crow Era and the summer of 1967 to the present day.

The late Don Faber of Ann Arbor will be presented a State History Award in the category of Books: University & Commercial Press for "James Jesse Strang: The Rise and Fall of Michigan's Mormon King," published by University of Michigan Press. Faber's book chronicles Strang's remarkable story. During the time he spent in Michigan, Strang attempted to fill a power vacuum left by the death of Mormon leader Joseph Smith and, for six years, ruled as "king" of a colony of believers on Beaver Island in northern Lake Michigan. His book brings to life the Mormon leader's role in the early history of Michigan.

Susan Bandes will receive a State History Award in the category of Books: University & Commercial Press for “Mid-Michigan Modern: From Frank Lloyd Wright to Googie,” published by Michigan State University Press. The book explores the rich variety of modernist architecture that sprang up in the mid-Michigan area around Lansing and East Lansing from 1940 to 1970. “Mid-Michigan Modern” instills a sense of appreciation for the forward-looking, progressive ideals expressed in the mid-century’s architectural designs.

Wallace K. Ewing, Ph.D., of Grand Haven will receive a State History Award in the category of Books: Private Printing for his self-published “Footprints: Stories of Native Americans in West Central Michigan.” His book documents the lives of hundreds of Native Americans who lived in the Grand River Valley area. The book’s genealogical section includes concise biographical sketches of almost 1,700 individuals. Eight watercolors by artist Linda Foley illustrate the book, and Jay Sam of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians provided the book’s foreword.

Sandra Warren will receive a State History Award in the category of Books: Private Printing for “We Bought a WWII Bomber: The Untold Story of a Michigan High School, a B-17 Bomber & the Blue Ridge Parkway,” published by Arlie Enterprises. Her book chronicles an episode in the World War II “Buy A Bomber” campaign, where students at South High School in Grand Rapids purchased a B-17 Flying Fortress. “We Bought a WWII Bomber” brings to life the stories of South High’s participation in the “Buy A Bomber” program, the Spirit of South High Flying Fortress, and wartime patriotism.

The 2017 State History Award for Businesses will be presented to the West Michigan Tourist Association (WMTA) for its promotion and publications of the history of western Michigan. Founded in 1917 as the nation’s first grassroots tourist organization, the WMTA remains a nonprofit company funded by its west Michigan business members and promotes west Michigan travel destinations to a national audience. To celebrate the centennial of its founding, the WMTA created a 100-year timeline of the region and published a book of photographs and images entitled “100 Years of Carefree Days in West Michigan” and a 2017 travel guide that focused on its organizational history.

The 2017 State History Award for Education: Educational Programs will be presented to the Wild Swan Theater in Ann Arbor for its production of “Rosie the Riveter” and the educational materials it developed for the play. Wild Swan created its original production of “Rosie the Riveter” to tell the story of the women who filled factory jobs during World War II to take the place of men who were called up for military service. The program was designed for students in grades 4 to 12.

The 2017 State History Award for Institutions will be presented to the Local History and Genealogy Collection at the Hoyt Library in Saginaw. The Hoyt Library opened in 1890 and, in 1960, created its local history and genealogy department as a central repository for Saginaw history. The department now numbers among the Midwest’s premier local history collections. In 2016, the library

added a Saginaw Latino American Community Collection to represent and preserve Saginaw County's Latino-American culture.

The 2017 State History Award for Local Societies will be presented to the Algonac-Clay Township Historical Society of Algonac. The society was founded in 1991 and began collecting artifacts and archival materials as it sought a location for exhibits, eventually moving into the Bostwick Building and converting it into the Community Museum. Another site includes a log cabin, an interurban railway station, and a building that features farming and logging exhibits. The society's "Legends" statue honors the Chris Smith-Gar Wood Boat factory and the area's boating industry, and its Maritime Museum opened in 2013.

The 2017 State History Award for Restoration/Preservation will be presented to the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University for its Michigan Labor History Mural Restoration. The Reuther Library's two-year project preserved, restored and exhibited a 9- by 20-foot oil painting in its public reading room. The restoration project repaired 75 years of stains and damage and returned the painting to its original beauty.

The 2017 State History Award for Special Programs/Events will be presented to the University of Michigan for its production of "True Blue! A Tribute to Michigan." The live-action multimedia presentation celebrated the bicentennial of the university's founding. It incorporated music, theater, and dance and featured celebrated alumni performing alongside faculty and students from many University of Michigan schools and colleges. Performed for an audience of 3,500 people, "True Blue" hailed the university's history, accomplishments, tradition and character.

The 2017 State History Award for the Best Article in Michigan History Magazine will be presented to Frances Kai-Hwa Wang for her article "Vincent Chin: A Catalyst for the Asian-American Civil Rights Movement." The article appeared in the magazine's March/April 2017 edition and examined the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American auto industry draftsman. Two men were charged with second-degree murder, pled guilty to manslaughter, and were sentenced to probation and fines. The light sentence outraged the nation's Asian-American community and led to changes in hate-crime law and minimum sentencing, along with recognition of victims' rights.

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