

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs sponsors 14 special events during February 2020

-Eight of the programs celebrate African American History Month-

(DOVER, Del.–Jan. 22, 2020)–During the month of February 2020, the [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs](#) will be offering 14 special events at sites across the state. Eight of these events will be presented in commemoration of African American History Month, an annual observance celebrating the invaluable contributions that the black community has made to the culture and history of the United States. A full schedule is included below. Except where noted, all programs are free and open to the public.

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs special events, February 2020

Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020

“Lost By One Vote.” Inter-active historical theater presentation that features the pros and cons of Lincoln’s Compensated Emancipation Plan of 1862 that would have abolished slavery in Delaware and the nation. Presented in celebration of African American History Month. [First Saturday in the First State](#) program. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020

“The Big Bang.” Screening and discussion of episode one of the three-part PBS documentary [“American Epic”](#) which explores how the ordinary people of America were given the opportunity to make records for the first time. Presented in celebration of African American History Month. [First Saturday in the First State](#) program. [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover. Screenings at 10 a.m., Noon and 2 p.m. in the 2nd floor gallery (entry via staircase; no elevator). Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3262.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020

“The Summers Family: A Generational Story.” African American History Month guided tours explore the true story of the manumission (granting of freedom) of two slave children—Ruth and Thomas Summers—which took place in 1797 in the Kent County Recorder of Deeds office, located in what is now called The Old State House. The children were manumitted by their own father, James Summers, a free African American, who had obtained them from their former owner. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020

“Blood and Soil.” Screening and discussion of episode two of the three-part PBS documentary [“American Epic”](#) which explores how the ordinary people of America were given the opportunity to make records for the first time. Presented in celebration of African American History Month. [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover. Screenings at 10 a.m., Noon and 2 p.m. in the 2nd floor gallery (entry via staircase; no elevator). Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3262.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020

Demonstrations by the Thistledown Fiber Arts Guild. Program explores spinning, weaving, knitting and other fabric arts. [John Dickinson Plantation](#), 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover.

Program 1-3 p.m. Museum open 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
302-739-3277.

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020

“With Malice Toward None: Abraham Lincoln in Words and Pictures.” Historian Dan Pritchett will discuss Lincoln’s love of language and his ability to use words to influence and inspire people and to transform the nation. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. 6 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Free admission. 302-744-5054.

Friday, Feb. 14, 2020

Concert by Ronn McFarlane. [Lute player](#) presented in partnership with the [Delaware Friends of Folk](#) and the [First State Heritage Park](#). [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. 7:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020

“African Americans on the Eastern Shore.” Lecture by Jim Blackwell of the Seaford Museum exploring Eastern Shore history, slavery, the Ross family and Harriet Tubman. Presented in celebration of African American History Month. [Lewes Public Library](#), 111 Adams Ave., Lewes. 2 p.m. Free admission but, due to space restrictions, reservations are required by calling 302-645-1148 no later than Feb. 14, 2020. **Note: Due to overwhelming demand, the venue for this program has been changed from the Zwaanendael Museum to the Lewes Public Library.**



Harriet Tubman
will be one of
the subjects
explored in the
program,
“African
Americans on the
Eastern Shore,”

at the Lewes
Public Library
on Feb. 25,
2020.

Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020

“Out of the Many, the One.” Screening and discussion of the final episode of the three-part PBS documentary [“American Epic”](#) which explores how the ordinary people of America were given the opportunity to make records for the first time. Presented in celebration of African American History Month. [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover. Screenings at 10 a.m., Noon and 2 p.m. in the 2nd floor gallery (entry via staircase; no elevator). Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3262.

Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020

The African American Experience in Delaware.” Historic-site interpreter Dennis Fisher explores Delaware’s rich African American culture, history and legacy from the 18th to the 20th century. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Monday, Feb. 17, 2020

Presidents Day. The following museums of the State of Delaware will be open: The [Johnson Victrola Museum](#) and [The Old State House](#), open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The following museums will be closed: The [John Dickinson Plantation](#), the [New Castle Court House Museum](#) and the [Zwaanendael Museum](#). 302-744-5054.

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020

“Revisiting the Founding Era.” Presentation by Bob Vander Decker, historical interpreter for the [New Castle Court House Museum](#) and Boy Scouts of America district leader. Presented in partnership with the New Castle Public Library. Boy Scouts can earn requirements for several

scout-related merit badges by attending the program. Girl Scouts and all interested youths (ages 12-18) are also welcome. [New Castle Public Library](#), 424 Delaware St., New Castle. Program 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by a tour of the New Castle Court House Museum at 1:30 p.m. Lunch provided. Free admission but registration required by calling the library at 302-328-1995 or the museum at 302-323-4453.

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020

“The Women’s Suffrage Movement: Below the Color-Line.” African American History Month program by historian Syl Woolford explores the struggle for women to gain the right to vote and the role played by black women in the movement. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.



Ida B. Wells will be one of the leaders explored in the program, “The Women’s Suffrage Movement: Below the Color-Line,” at The Old State House on Feb. 22, 2020.

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020

“Coffee, Cross Stitch and Conversation.” Stitch-along program with guidance from museum historical interpreter and cross stitcher Madeline Golden. One of two original patterns featuring the Zwaanendael Museum will be available for participants as they enjoy refreshments and conversation while working on their chosen design. Appropriate for both beginners and advanced cross stitchers. [Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Program at 2 p.m. on the museum’s 2nd floor (entry via staircase; no elevator). Museum open 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Admission fee of \$10 includes materials for visitors to create their own cross stitch. Due to space restrictions,

reservations for the workshop are required by calling 302-645-1148 no later than Feb. 15, 2020.

Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020

“George Washington’s Unique Skill in Picking Top Talent.” Presentation by Dr. Sam Hoff of Delaware State University and museum historical interpreter Tom Welch on the men that Washington chose to serve in the military, in his spy networks, in his Cabinet and on the Supreme Court. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 2 p.m. Museum open 1:30–4:30 p.m. Free admission but, due to space restrictions, reservations are suggested by calling 302-744-5054.

Exhibits and displays, February 2020

Ongoing

“[Delaware Railroads: Elegant Travel and Timely Transport.](#)” Exhibit explores the history of rail travel and transport in the First State emphasizing the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad (1832), the Delaware Railroad (1852), the Junction and Breakwater Railroad (1857) and the Queen Anne’s Railroad (1896). [Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Nov. 1–March 31: Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Oct. 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-645-1148.

Ongoing

“[Five Stories.](#)” Display explores the varied lives of people who lived on the plantation including Dickinson family members, tenant farmers, tradesmen, free blacks, indentured servants and enslaved individuals. [John Dickinson Plantation](#) Welcome Center, 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover. Oct. 1–March 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Sept. 30: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.



Panel from the “Five Stories” display

Ongoing

“[Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania.](#)” Online exhibit explores the life of Founding Father John Dickinson and the publication of his essays that described Colonial American grievances with the British government.

Ongoing

“[New Castle: Three Forts, One Community.](#)” Exhibit examines the 17th-century struggle for control of New Castle by the Dutch, Swedes and English, and the strongholds that they built to maintain their power. [New Castle Court House Museum](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-323-4453.

Ongoing

“[The Old State House: A True Restoration 1976-2016.](#)” Display explores preservation work that has been conducted since Delaware’s first permanent capitol building in Dover was restored to its original appearance in 1976. From the collections of the State of Delaware. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Mon.–Sat., 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

Ongoing

“[The Path to Freedom: A History of the Underground Railroad in Delaware.](#)” Exhibit explores Delaware’s role in the clandestine network that transported American slaves to freedom including the true journey of the Hawkins family from bondage in Maryland, through Delaware, to freedom in Pennsylvania. Part II of the display explores some of the challenges faced by African-American Delawareans after the Civil War, and showcases Delaware trailblazers who helped break racial and gender barriers. [New Castle Court House Museum](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission. 302-323-4453.



Image from “The Path to Freedom: A History of the

Underground Railroad in Delaware" on display at the New Castle Court House Museum.

Ongoing

[Sculpture by Charles Parks](#). Display of works by the noted Wilmington artist featuring historical and political figures including a Minute Man, and presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and George W. Bush. [New Castle Court House Museum](#), 211 Delaware St., New Castle. Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-323-4453.

Ongoing

["A Seaborne Citizenry: The DeBraak and Its Atlantic World."](#) Exhibit utilizes artifacts recovered from His Majesty's Sloop of War DeBraak, a British warship that sank off the Delaware coast on May 25, 1798, to tell the story of the vessel, its crew and the historical context within which it operated in the Atlantic World of the late 18th century. [Zwaanendael Museum](#), 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Nov. 1–March 31: Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Oct. 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-645-1148.

Ongoing

["Simple Machines."](#) Display demonstrating the six "simple machines"—incline ramp, screw, wedge, pulley, lever and wheel—that constitute the elementary building blocks of which many more-complicated machines are composed. [John Dickinson Plantation](#), 340 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover. Oct. 1–March 31: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m. April 1–Sept. 30: Tue.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sun., 1:30–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.

Ongoing

["When Janie Comes Marching Home: Women's Fight to Serve."](#) Display explores the participation of women in America's armed conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the present, and their fight to be allowed to serve their country during wartime. [Legislative Hall](#), 411 Legislative Ave., Dover.

Mon.–Fri., 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission but passage through security checkpoint required. 302-744-4114.



The Johnson Victrola Museum showcases Victor recordings of many of the greatest African American musicians of the 20th century including Jelly Roll Morton, Marian Anderson and Duke Ellington.

Administered by the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the [five museums of the State of Delaware](#)—the John Dickinson Plantation, the Johnson Victrola Museum, the New Castle Court House Museum, The Old State House and the Zwaanendael Museum—tell the story of the First State’s contributions to the history and culture of the United States. Through tours, exhibits, school programs and hands-on activities, the museums shine a spotlight on Delaware’s unique history and the diverse people who came to live there. The museums are [accredited by the American Alliance of Museums](#). The New Castle Court House Museum and the John Dickinson Plantation are partner sites of the [First State National Historical Park](#). The Old State House is located on the Dover Green, another partner site of the park. Go to the following for a [comprehensive, long-term calendar of division-sponsored events](#).

The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is an agency of the State of Delaware. The division enhances Delaware’s quality of life by preserving the state’s unique historical heritage, fostering community stability and economic vitality and providing educational programs and assistance to the general public on Delaware history. The division’s diverse array of services includes operation of five museums which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, administration of the State Historic Preservation Office, conservation of the state’s archaeological and historic-objects collections, operation of a conference center and management of historic

properties across the state. Primary funding for division programs and services is provided by annual appropriations from the Delaware General Assembly and grants from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, a federal agency. However, the contents and opinions expressed in the division's programs and services do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior.



-End-

Contact:

Jim Yurasek

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Phone: 302-739-7787

E-mail: Jim.Yurasek@delaware.gov

Web: <http://history.delaware.gov>