



The Livingston County Historical Society (LCHS) Fundraiser in Geneseo, N.Y. will present an inside glimpse of The Statue of Liberty, the beloved, iconic symbol of American freedom, through the musical drama, ***Liberty: A Monumental New Musical***, with performances Oct 19-22 at The Riviera Theater in Geneseo. Written by Jon and Dana Leslie Goldstein, this 90 minute family-friendly and educational show ran off-Broadway for over two years, appealing to audiences of all ages.

Coming to the United States in the middle of a national immigration debate and a terrible recession, political forces are aligning to deport Lady Liberty. With a strong resolve and a mighty spirit, she battles to gain acceptance and becomes the iconic symbol of our country. Characters include French sculptor Auguste Bartholdi, Lady Liberty, poet Emma Lazarus, publisher Joseph Pulitzer, immigrants, minorities, and urchins.

Director, writer and costumer Ruth Henry is no stranger to the stage, and together with LCHS in 2016, successfully presented ***Wicket Ways***, a musical drama about an 1895 celebrity croquet match at Letchworth. During rehearsals at the museum, Museum Administrator Anna Kowalchuk, showed Ms. Henry some highlights of the LCHS Museum collection, including the trowel used by Master Mason William A. Brodie (on loan to the Museum from Dr. Donald Munger of Geneseo Masonic Lodge #214) to lay the cornerstone of the Statue of Liberty. Upon seeing the trowel, Ms. Henry related her interest in the ***Liberty*** play and her desire to see it produced in Geneseo.

Further connecting Geneseo to the Statue of Liberty is Richard Morris Hunt who not only designed the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, but was also the architect of the Memorial Bear Statue Fountain on Geneseo's Main Street (to be restored this summer, reportedly). The granite for both these significant structures likely came from the same Connecticut quarry and vein of stone.

The role of Emma Lazarus has been cast with Finger Lakes Opera actress and local vocal instructor Betsy Kimball, who will be assisting with the musical direction. Ruth Henry is directing with Lin Callahan assisting. Remaining roles will be auditioned late July, and rehearsals will be held at the Livingston County Museum beginning early September. Four performances are scheduled: Thursday Oct 19 matinee at 10am, Friday Oct 20 and Saturday Oct 21 eves at 8pm and a Sunday matinee at 4pm. The weekend shows will offer pre-event Patron Champagne Receptions. Tickets (\$12-40) will go on sale early September.

LCHS Administrator Anna Kowalchuk is excited about co-producing the production, saying, "Education theater or "edu-tainment" is an effective and engaging way to bring history to life, and this family-friendly show connects the audience with the past. *Liberty: A Monumental New Musical* tells the story of immigration which is as relevant today as when the Statue of Liberty was erected in 1888. If we have strong school interest and generous sponsors, we can add in a Friday matinee for local students."

The production is a benefit for the LCHS. For group rates, volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Ruth Henry at 518-495-4503 or Anna Kowalchuk at 585-243-9147 or [Ichistory@frontier.com](mailto:Ichistory@frontier.com).