

The Connective Corridor

News: Museum Grand Reopening Expected to Spark Growth

By Francesca Merwin, staff writer



Did you know that a Syracuse family and Syracuse money built Broadway as we know it today? It's true! The Shubert brothers, three impoverished immigrants in a family of seven, moved to New York City and broke the monopoly on theater companies to eventually transform Broadway into the theater hub in the United States. This rich, Syracuse history often times goes unnoticed by the public, which is something that the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA) is in business to change.

The OHA exists to “inspire people’s understanding that the history we share as a community is the foundation for our future together.” To highlight that history, in the OHA you can take a ghostwalk through Oakwood Cemetery, read a Civil War diary on Twitter, or check out authentic photos from 160 years ago. And that’s before you even *step foot* into the OHA Museum and Research Center, a building that has existed since it was the Bell Telephone Building in 1906. The museum is bursting with everything Syracuse – china, art, sports paraphernalia, autos... The list goes on. It shows that Syracuse is chock full of culture and personality.

Thankfully, the museum will finally get its chance to shine! It lately underwent a major facelift and will reopen on July 14 with even more Syracuse secrets to reveal. The renovations were possible, in part, due to the [Connective Corridor Façade Improvement Program](#), which recently approved a \$25,000 grant to the OHA. Some of the renovations include revealing eight once-bricked windows, opening a new museum store, creating a fresh permanent exhibit called “The Heart of New York,” and remodeling the foyer.

“I’m really excited about all of the projects together,” says Gregg Tripoli, executive director of the OHA. “It’s all about using the historic perspective to add value to our community and spur economic development.” It’s not hard to see how these projects will positively impact Cathedral Square. They’ll not only enhance the look of the street, but they’ll also showcase the unique and interesting history that the Salt City has to offer.

“I feel that we have a role to play in strengthening the urban core,” Tripoli notes. “Community is like a person – without a strong heart, it begins to die at the extremities. We are at the heart of helping our entire community.” This once undernourished body of Syracuse is thriving, thanks to the initiatives of campus and neighborhood organizations. “We are thrilled and grateful to the Connective Corridor, the Chancellor and SU for what they’re doing.”

Once construction is complete, the building will be an historical and cultural homage to Syracuse life and will feature more inspirational stories like the tale of the Shubert brothers, who saw an opportunity for change and made it happen.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place on Wednesday, July 13, at 3:30pm. This will be followed by the grand re-opening from 4 to 8pm and a gala fundraising event. The OHA is at 321 Montgomery Street and is just steps off the bus route of the [Connective Corridor](#). For more information, please call 315-428-1864 or visit www.cnyhistory.org.