



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie: \$100,000 Will Help Upgrade Exhibits At Safe Haven Museum

PATTY RITCHIE July 13, 2017

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State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing that she has secured \$100,000 in state funding for the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum at historic Fort Ontario in Oswego.

The grant funding to the museum will help keep alive the stories of nearly 1,000 World War II refugees—mostly European Jews fleeing Nazi persecution—who were brought into the United States as “guests” of President Franklin D. Roosevelt between 1944 and 1946.

“In the face of so much terror, heartbreak and despair during WWII are many stories of hope and bravery—like those the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum seeks to tell,” said Senator Ritchie.

“This museum is key to ensuring that we keep alive the memories of the nearly 1,000 refugees who made their home at Fort Ontario, as well as to remembering the important role Oswego played in our nation’s history. I am pleased to provide this funding, which will help the Safe Haven Museum continue to work toward both of those goals.”

“We have a responsibility to preserve the memories of Fort Ontario refugees not only for today, but also for future generations,” said Kevin Hill, who serves as president of the museum’s board of directors. “We would like to thank Senator Ritchie for recognizing how important it is that we continue our efforts to improve the Safe Haven Museum and look forward to utilizing these funds in a way that helps us to pay tribute to our history and the resiliency of the human spirit.”

In addition to securing funds, Senator Ritchie also sponsors legislation (S.2773) that would establish the Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter as a state historic site. Earlier this year, she sponsored a Senate Resolution honoring photojournalist, U.S. Government official and author Ruth Gruber, who accompanied refugees from Europe to Fort Ontario. As she did so, she chronicled her experiences, interviewed refugees and later told their stories in a book, which later became a television mini-series.

Attn. photo editors: Pictured from left to right in the above photo with Senator Ritchie are museum board members David Granoff, Banna Rubinow, Audrey Hurley, Kevin Hill, George DeMass and David Roman.