



March 11, 2016

Dear New York Folklore Society Member:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the New York Folklore Society, I want to invite and encourage you to attend the upcoming 2016 conference of the New York Folklore Society, to be held at the Cooper Union in Manhattan on Saturday, April 2nd. Titled “Crisis in Place,” this year’s meeting is focused on the importance of place in folk culture – please visit www.nyfolklore.org for further information and to register.

In addition to the engaging topic, presentations and panels of the meeting, the day is also the occasion of our annual membership business meeting. As a member, you have a right to attend, to be heard, and to vote on crucial matters of NY Folklore Society governance.

Ever since our founding in 1944 under the leadership of Harold Thompson, the New York Folklore Society was intended to serve the folklore community, whether in academia, in applied or public sector work, among folk artists themselves, and any and all person with interest in the subject and its related fields.

The Board of Directors is made up of your colleagues who are elected by the membership, and those of us currently serving are working hard to maintain the organization and to help bring it into the 21st Century. We encourage all members in the society to take on interest in its activities and to become more engaged, so that we can better serve your interests. Any member is eligible to serve on the board, and we welcome inquires about that.

Since 2009, when we pulled together to save the organization from the financial stress of the recession, we have faced the challenge of working with bylaws written six decades before, when physical attendance at a business meeting was required to vote and there was, of course, no internet. This provision for voting is still in the bylaws, and we feel it is time to review and update them so that members can participate where they are, and by all the means available with today's communications technology.

However, to hold that discussion and vote for that change, we still need to do it at the upcoming meeting. We propose now to change the existing bylaws to allow for maximum participation. You can read the current by-laws and proposed amendments at: www.nyfolklore.org. We hope you can make the meeting, which will be held at noon, on Saturday, April 2nd at the Cooper Union. If you have questions, and especially if you cannot attend and wish to register a comment, please contact: Ellen McHale at emchale@nyfolklore.org or by phone at (518) 346-7008. We look forward to seeing as many of our members as possible at the New York Folklore Society Conference.

Sincerely,

Tom Van Buren, PhD

President, NYFS Board of Directors



