

# ADIRONDACK COAST CULTURAL ALLIANCE (ACCA) YEAR END REPORT 2014

## Activities and projects sponsored by the Adirondack Coast Cultural Alliance:

1. Third year participating in the annual front desk training provided by the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau. We manned a table for ACCA and had 100% participation from all members of ACCA. This gives us an opportunity to share our organizations with local hotel staff, marina staff, and campground owners. They are our best tourism advisories.
2. 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Museum Days, co-sponsored by the Press Republican: June 7-8, 2014
  - a. Hosted by ACCA and the Press Republican, Museum Days is a weekend where participating museums, galleries, and other cultural institutions in Clinton and Essex Counties offer free admission and provide special events to all. In 2013, 2290 visitors were reported by 12 participating historical and cultural centers. In 2014, 2754 visitors were reported by 16 participating historical and cultural centers.
  - b. During Museum Days, visitors were able to present an ACCA Passport for a stamp at each participating heritage attraction. Participants who received a stamp from each attraction and filled their passport were eligible to win selected prizes donated by local businesses. The passports were free to participants and effective during Museum Days and throughout the summer to be submitted to ACCA by September 2014.
  - c. For a complete list of participating venues and prizes visit: [www.adkcoastculturalalliance.org](http://www.adkcoastculturalalliance.org)
3. Co-sponsored a workshop on sustaining volunteers: November 5, 2014
  - a. Hosted by Ausable Chasm and lead by Lakes to Locks representatives Margaret Gibbs and Janet Kennedy.
  - b. Workshop consisted of three components; recruiting and training volunteers, meeting and greeting the public, and identifying community stories that link the region's cultural, historic, natural and recreational assets.
4. Activity Books
  - a. In 2014, ACCA produced two additional educational activity coloring books, the first illustrates the history of agriculture in the Champlain Valley, *Fun History of the 10 F's of Agriculture in the Champlain Valley*, and the second focusing on the Battle of Plattsburgh Bicentennial, *Battle of Plattsburgh: 200 Years, September 11, 1814*.
  - b. The two new coloring books were made available during this year's commemoration events for the Battle of Plattsburgh Bicentennial and are distributed at local museums and businesses. There are currently three coloring books in the series. The first in the series was produced in 2013 featuring a history of William Miner and Alice Miner of the Alice T. Miner Museum and the Hearts Delight Farm in Chazy, New York. Profits from coloring book sales are allocated to fund future coloring book projects.

## Ongoing meeting discussions:

1. We continue to use social media as a source to communicate cultural events and announcements with ACCA members and to the public.
2. The ACCA website is updated daily with information kept current by submissions to the coordinator from ACCA members and other organizations.
3. The future of ACCA, especially in relation to the formation of a new ACCA Board of Trustees and also in relation to the North Country Chamber of Commerce's *Destination Master Plan*.
4. We continue to share grant, workshop, and job opportunities with our members.
5. Continue to look at promotional tools:

ACCA worked closely with the Adirondack Visitors Bureau to develop the 2014 annual Museum Days/Summer Passport. The Adirondack Visitors Bureau assisted ACCA with this program in 2014 with their graphic design staff and also paid for the cost of printing. The Adirondack Coast Visitor's Bureau see the program as a great value to the community and visitors to Clinton County.

## **Additional Updates from museum members of ACCA:**

### **Report from the Alice T. Miner Museum:**

The Alice has continued its program of bringing local authors, scholars, and musicians to the museum. In November 2013, Professor Connie Shemo of SUNY Plattsburgh spoke at the Museum. In May 2014, Professor Christopher Wolff, also of SUNY Plattsburgh, spoke about his archaeological research in the North Country. The Alice also hosted book talks and signings with Clinton County historian Anastasia Pratt and with Stephen Woodruff for *Among Friends: A Quaker Boy at the Battle of Plattsburgh*. Speedy Arnold and Alice Knight presented a program of holiday music in December 2013. Thanks to the support of the New York Council for the Humanities, the Alice was able to host "Making Sense of the American Civil War," a reading and discussion group.

### **Report from the Babbie Rural Farm and Learning Museum:**

The Babbie Rural & Farm Learning Museum had a very successful 2014 season. Our attendance on Museum Weekend was up more than 33% over last year. We had over 700 people participate in our school tour program in May and June with more to come in October. We opened our new blacksmith shop and are selling items produced there in our museum store. We acquired a 1901 Studebaker wooden wagon that was used in the Carnes Granite Mine in Ausable Forks, NY during the 1920s and 1930s. The Board of Directors recently adopted an Emergency/Disaster Plan for the museum. We have a popular new exhibit featuring Apple Blossom, a life-sized model of a cow that the children are able to 'milk'. We have petitioned the NYS Board of Regents for our absolute charter and are anxiously awaiting a site visit from the Charter Coordinator.

### **Report from the Clinton County Historical Association (CCHA) and Museum:**

In 2014, the Clinton County Historical Association held over 30 free to low cost programs, opened 3 new major exhibits, was awarded Commemoration and Local Heritage grants from the Lake Champlain Basin Program for two new touchscreen exhibits and much more. Examples of the 2014 programs include CCHA's monthly Monday Night Lecture Series, a new walking tour series with City of Plattsburgh Historian, John Krueger, new Art Show and Book Sale fundraiser, a new Citizen Soldier Youth Camp and a Cemetery Tour with Town of Schuyler Falls Historian, Barbara Benkwitt. New exhibits included Hotel Champlain, Catholic Summer School of America Exhibit (funded by LCBP), Clinton County Early Inns and Hotels, Battle of Plattsburgh Exhibit, and a Tourism Exhibit. On Museum weekend, we had over 300 visitors to the Museum. We have seen a major increase in volunteer activity at the Museum, in addition to program attendance, research inquiries, gift shop sales, museum visitors, and collections donations.

### **Report from the Lyon Mountain Mining and Railroad Museum:**

It's been a very busy season for the museum thus far. Our 57 volunteers support the museum in a variety of ways. The museum is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from June until October. Volunteers develop exhibits, maintain the building and support additional activities. On Mother's Day a successful breakfast fundraiser was held at the American Legion. Over Museum Weekend, June 7th & 8th, more than 100 people visited the museum. Several special events took place. Our newly published activity book for children, "The Lyon Mountain Story", was introduced. On June 7th, Adirondack Story Teller Chris Davis entertained our visitors with poetry and song. On June 8th, Ves Pivetta had his collection of Yankee Baseball memorabilia on display. A summer fundraiser dinner was held at the Legion on July 19th. The museum had a display table at the Chateaugay Lakes Art Show on July 26th. To date over 800 people have visited the Mining and Railroad Museum this season.

### **Report from North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association:**

We started the year with expanding our gift shop items and focusing on local acknowledgement. We had over four articles written about our Museum and three Authors mention us in their books. North Country Chamber (Alyssa Felio) chose us for a FAM tour of 36 community leaders. Our annual street drive and music festival brought us profits. We also have an exciting partnership with Plattsburgh State students will be assisting us with a corporate drive. We have had over 5,206 visitors at the Museum so far and our bus tours have exceeded the number of people compared to last year. And, this year for the first time, we offered 3 tours because we had more individuals requesting a tour than seats on the bus. Our most exciting project was access to the Rowson's

home in Beekmantown, which is said to be an Underground Railroad site. As we enter a new year, we remain focused and confident that we will supersede this year's statistics. Thank you ACCA for your continued support!

**Report from the Plattsburgh Air Force Base Museum:**

The grand opening of PAFBM was in June during Museum Days and was a great success. In the few short months it has been fully operational; PAFBM has attracted customers far and wide and many, many former PAFB alum that were stationed at PAFB at one time or another. In August, retired Air Force Lieutenant General and Morrisonville native Leroy Manor did a presentation on his experiences serving in the Air Force. At ninety three years old, his career as a fighter pilot during World War Two up to his experiences as a Wing Commander and military planner in the Vietnam War made for a provocative presentation that was well received by PAFBM members and the rest of the audience. Other events have included tabling at local venues to increase awareness. The museum is still in its infancy but rest assured there is more to come. Stay tuned!

**Report from the Plattsburgh State Art Museum:**

Attendance to the Museum's educational programs totaled 1957 for 46 programs. This is a 21 % increase in program attendance when compared to the 2012-2013 reporting period. We became official regional partners with the Girl Scouts and plan to expand our program offerings for daisies, brownies, and girl scouts. The Plattsburgh State Art Museum (PSAM) hosted the Chamber of Commerce's Hospitality Training in May 2014 and believes it has resulted in an increase of visitors during the summer.

**Report from the War of 1812 Museum:**

The War of 1812 Museum reports that it had an excellent 2014. The War of 1812 Museum hosted a free screening of the 2011 PBS documentary entitled "War of 1812" in February. Attendance was good and general feedback indicated that people enjoyed the film and found it informative. Joe Bebo, author of "Of Lake, Land and Liberty: The Battle of Plattsburgh in the War of 1812" appeared on two separate occasions (One in April and another in September) to talk about his life and his book and to sign copies, too. Attendance was good and he has been well received by audiences. His books have also sold well, too. The Battle of Plattsburgh Bicentennial Commemoration was a terrific success. The War of 1812 Museum had record numbers of customers throughout the celebration. The History Shoppe also saw a record number of sales during the celebration.

**Additional Updates from Historians (members) of ACCA:**

**Report from John Krueger, City of Plattsburgh Historian**

1. On January 24 I received Volunteer of the Year Award from the Plattsburgh North Country Chamber of Commerce.
2. Throughout the year I continued to play a leadership role in promoting historic tourism as a member of the Lake Champlain Basin Program's executive and steering committees and as the chair of the Heritage Area Program Advisory Committee.
3. Throughout the year I continued to play a leadership role in promoting historic tourism as member of Clinton County's Strategic Tourism Planning Committee.
4. On October 11 I will be the keynote speaker at the 238th Anniversary of the Battle of Valcour at Clinton Community College sponsored by the Saranac Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The topic of my talk is "Pride of Place: Valcour Island and the Preservation of Freedom."

**Enclosures:**

1. ACCA Passport
2. Copy of Museum Days Advertisement featured in the Press Republican
3. Copies of *William and Alice Miner, Fun History of the 10 F's of Agriculture in the Champlain Valley, and Battle of Plattsburgh: 200 Years, September 11, 1814* Activity Books