

ADIRONDACK COAST CULTURAL ALLIANCE (ACCA) YEAR END REPORT 2015

Activities and projects sponsored by the Adirondack Coast Cultural Alliance:

1. Fourth year participating in the annual hospitality 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. 8th 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. In 2015, 2193 visitors were reported by 13 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.
 - c. For a complete list of participating venues and prizes visit: www.adkcoastculturalalliance.org
3. Lake Champlain Weekly Museum Column, Coordinated by Ellen Adams, ACCA President
 - a. Monthly Museum Column offered through the editor of local publication Lake Champlain Weekly. Museum/Cultural Institutions have an opportunity to sign-up as authors for the column focusing on a topic of their choice. The program has been very successful with more than 5 museum representatives acting as contributing authors for the publication.
4. Macdonough Monument – Outreach Activity
 - a. Representatives from local museums on behalf of ACCA and their organizations worked together to open the City of Plattsburgh's Macdonough Monument on three community-related occasions in 2015. The offering generated over 600 visitors combined.

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. In 2015, we also added a Twitter page to our social media marketing initiatives in addition to 2 new webpages on the ACCA website that highlight professional development opportunities and grant announcements.
2. The ACCA website is updated daily with information kept current by submissions to the coordinator from ACCA members and other organizations.
3. We continue to share grant, workshop, and job opportunities with our members through email marketing.
4. Continue to look at promotional tools:

ACCA worked closely with the Adirondack Visitors Bureau to develop the 2015 annual Museum Days/Summer Passport. The Adirondack Visitors Bureau assisted ACCA with this program in 2014 and 2015 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 Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau

Bilingual Responsive Website – Updated goadirondack.com to be a new responsive website with better and richer information about our historical and cultural offerings.

Bilingual Travel Guide - Updated and reprinted our 64-page travel guide.

Vacation Map - Updated and reprinted our 64-page travel guide, showing where all our historical and cultural attractions are.

ACCA Passport –Worked with Adirondack Coast Cultural Alliance to update, print and distribute the Arts & History Passport.

Adirondack Coast Street Banner - Using the current Adirondack coast branding, we created a series of street banners to replace the Battle of Plattsburgh Bicentennial street banners. The banners will be branded with our “The Adirondack Coast” logo and feature an icon to showcase the strengths of that town/city or business, including history. Were hung throughout the county.

Blogger Fam Tour – Hosted an international blogger fam tour, where we showed bloggers our historical offerings, including a historical step-on guide.

Travel Writers – Worked with a variety of national and Canadian travel writers to encourage publicity on the historical offering the area offers visitors.

Hospitality Training - In the spring, we held our 5th annual Hospitality Training giving front line staff the opportunity to learn firsthand about local and regional attractions.

Adopt a Museum Program - We worked with local hospitality businesses to “adopt a museum” and lend a hand on various projects throughout the year to build goodwill in the tourism community.

Sample Itineraries – We created at least one vertical, or group-specific, itinerary per month geared toward student or senior groups, soft adventure, farm tours, history, etc.

E-Newsletter - “Coastlines,” specifically targeting the motorcoach industry, is sent out quarterly featuring sample itineraries, new attractions and events.

Group Travel Planner – We updates our planner focused specifically on the lodging properties, restaurants and attractions catering to groups. They were distributed at ABA as well as sent out to all leads received via goadirondack.com and visitadirondacks.com.

eFam Tour – We invited tour operators to a virtual fam tour in June to witness first hand our attractions, lodging and restaurants and suggested itineraries that they, in turn, can offer to their customers.

Report from the Alice T. Miner Museum:

The museum received a grant from the New York Council on the Humanities Speakers in the Humanities program to have Hallie Bond give a talk about Adirondack quilts. Hallie also documented all the quilts in the collection for Traditional Arts in Upstate New York (TAUNY), and two quilts will be part of an exhibit at the TAUNY Center in Canton, opening in April 2016.

We had one of our most well-attended Museum Weekends in June, with 150 visitors. Book signings/author events, concerts, and talks continued to be popular with the local community. The second annual Holiday Ornament Workshop, held in December, was also a great success with both children and adults, and brought new visitors to the museum.

The stone wall and fence on the south side of the museum was rebuilt and the garage at the back of the property was torn down; this was phase one of a multi-year exterior site upgrade project which will also include a new parking area and space for outdoor events.

Report from the Babbie Rural Farm and Learning Museum:

The 2015 Season was a very successful one for the Babbie Rural & Farm Learning Museum. We had our largest yearly attendance since the museum opening with almost 2200 visitors! We welcomed our first bus tour and they enjoyed themselves so much that they have already booked for the 2016 season. We had our first Halloween Scarefest Fundraiser during two weekends in October 2015. The Candy Harvest was geared toward younger children and included fun, games, pumpkin painting, face painting and candy. The Soul Harvest - not for the faint

of heart - included a moonlit tour of the museum with plenty of zombies, ghosts and jump scares. There was a bon fire and hot chocolate once you made it through the tour. We hope to make this an annual fundraising event at the museum. Once again we welcomed area students and teachers from Peru Central School, Plattsburgh City Schools, Northeastern Clinton Central School, Saranac Central School, Chazy Elementary, Seton Academy and Chateaugay Elementary as well as a few preschools for school field trips. Our school program continues to be very successful. In the summer, we partnered with the YMCA Teen Camp. Once a week for an 8 week period, 6-8 teen volunteers worked at the museum with their supervisor. They did weekly tasks such as sweeping, dusting exhibits, washing windows, etc. In addition, they painted all the picnic tables and benches, sanded and added two coats of poly to the entrance doors, thresholds and fence in front of the museum's mural. The teens were excited to explore the museum once their tasks were done. It was a mutually beneficial partnership and we hope to have the opportunity to work with the YMCA Teen Camp again in Summer 2016. Our Homesteading and Woodworking Weekend included Woodcarving demonstrations by Champlain Valley Woodcarvers. Other demonstrations included the shingle mill, antique chain saw, composting, container gardening, grub control, goat soap making, and basic chainsaw safety/protective gear. Hands-on activities included using a washboard and vintage ringer washer. Visitors were able to visit the herbal and vegetable garden. Our Hay & Grain Harvest Weekend included harvesting of buckwheat and oats using antique farming equipment and loose hay being gathered and stored. There were ongoing demonstrations in the granary and the Blacksmith Shop. Hand forged items were available for purchase. On Sun. the Friends Union Band provided some good old fashioned fiddling music. The kids were able to make cornhusk dolls, visit the animals, play in the corn box and ride the stagecoach and Thomas the Train. Kat's Katering was at the museum providing lunch.

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

In 2015, the Clinton County Historical Association held over 30 free to low cost programs, was awarded a Community and Conservation Grant and an Education and Outreach Grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program/Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership for a school outreach program, military heritage publication and permanent collection conservation materials. Examples of the 2015 programs include CCHA's monthly Monday Night Lecture Series, a walking tour series with City of Plattsburgh Historian, John Krueger, two Clinton County Art Show and Book Sale fundraisers, 3 Youth Camps and a Cemetery Tour with the Town of Saranac Historian, Jan Couture. 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 Kent-Delord House Museum

The Kent-Delord House Museum has continued to upgrade existing displays/exhibits and implement new initiatives. In 2015 there were new exhibits detailing the Adirondack treks of Reverend Frank Hall and the story of Plattsburgh Academy. Also, one room displayed portraits and possessions of Connecticut's Webb Family who were linked to the Delords by marriage. On Open House on Veterans Day proved very successful as did the 2nd annual Delord Christmas that attracted many visitors. The Battle of Plattsburgh drew a number of re-enactors and hundreds of visitors.

Report from North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association:

- Major upgrade was done to the John Thomas exhibit.
- Hosted the first 5K Freedom Run at Ausable Chasm.
- Don Papson published his first book, Secret Lives of the Underground Railroad in New York City.
- Received 10 prints from 2 members that had learned about slaves on Confederate bills.
- Our Saturday bus tours significantly increased and we had to book tours for the following week.

Report from the Plattsburgh State Art Museum:

- Increased attendance to the Museum's educational programs. Our attendance totaled 2934 for 103 programs. This is a 49.92 % increase in program attendance when compared to the past reporting period where we had 1957 people attend 46 programs. This is partly because the number of public program we offer has more than doubled.

- We achieved our goal of welcoming more college classes during this reporting year. The number of college classes that utilized the museum as a teaching resource increased to 31 visits. This is 20 more than the past reporting period which only had 11.
- The number of School tours has also increased by 143%. There were 17 in the current reporting year, which is up from 7 in the past reporting period. Attendance for these programs likewise increased from 283 to 498 participants.
- The number of family programs increased by 114%. There were 15 in the 2014-2015 reporting year, which is up from 7 in the 2013-2014 reporting period. Attendance for these programs likewise increased from 161 to 269 participants.
- Usage of museum space for rental events has tripled (an increase of 374%). There were 185 event rentals in the current reporting year, which is up from 39 in the past reporting period.

Report From Samuel de Champlain History Center

- Continue to work with students of all ages from providing experiential learning for young students to mentoring opportunities for college students (Franco-American and Quebec history)
- The Samuel de Champlain History Center continues to be the venue for the Village of Champlain Historical series of lectures and presentations. It also serves as a venue for the Champlain Literary Club (continuous club since its founding in 1923).
- Major exhibit this year was on St. Mary's Academy (1905-2015 when it was destroyed by fire in January, 2015).
- Assisted with publication of annual Champlain Historical Calendar by David Patrick (annual calendar since 2003).
- Many visitors and many guided tours. Major participant with school reunions and Champlain Community Day.

Additional Updates from Historians (members) of ACCA:

Report from John Krueger, City of Plattsburgh Historian

Making of Nations: Served as master of ceremonies and narrator in character as William Bailey (1763-1840) at the various Battle of Plattsburgh Commemoration events, including the Riverside Cemetery Memorial on September 10, the street battle reenactment at the Macdonough Monument on September 12, and the naval battle reenactment at the Champlain Monument on September 13.

Corridor of Commerce: Conducted walking tours of the Old Base for mixed groups of children and adults and assisted the Visitor's Bureau as a step-on guide in historic character for a group of international bloggers.

Conservation and Community: Shared stories of local history with the region's young people, including presentations in historic character for Plattsburgh, Keeseville, and Keene Valley students.