

From 1991 Crandall Library Annual Report

## Folklife Programs

### **Staff Folklorist**

This is Todd DeGarmo's second year as Crandall Library's part-time staff Folklorist and his sixth year as the library's Folk Arts consultant. The program is sponsored in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

He is a member of the Board of the New York Folklore Society and in May chaired the session Upstate Material Culture for the annual New York State History Conference held at Bard College.

DeGarmo is also writing his dissertation on The Tradition of Adirondack Tourism for an American Studies Ph.D. from George Washington University, tutoring courses at Empire State College-SUNY, and consulting for other regional organizations.

### **Balsam Traditions**

With assistance from the Crandall Library Folk Arts Program, the Adirondack Museum received a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts Folk Arts Program to package Crandall Library's Folklorist's research on Balsam Fir and regional traditions. This included funds for a series of thematic posters and participatory workshops with folk artists at the museum. Working with the museum's Education Department, Todd DeGarmo acted as Guest Curator on the project.

### **Growing Up in the North Country**

Over 1,100 children and adults took part in this year's series of workshops, gaining firsthand experience with our region's many cultural traditions.

This past Spring programs included making *May Baskets* with the Moreau Seniors, sharing *local ghost stories*, and visiting an abandoned *garnet mining hamlet*.

Children played outside in July with friends from neighboring cities: *Bocce* with the Mechanicville Italian Fraternal Society, *Street Dancing* with the Troy Boys and Girls Club, *Skateboards* with Jah of Saratoga Springs, and *Double Dutch Jump Rope* with Albany's Arbor Hill Community Center.

A dance program was held in September, featuring an *Iroquois Social Dance* with our Mohawk guests from the St. Regis Reservation.,

This winter holiday season, children made *Christmas wreaths*, celebrated a *Swedish Christmas*, and shared the family traditions of *Hanukkah*.

### **Research and Archives**

All programs are based on field research conducted by Todd DeGarmo and housed in our Archive of Folk Culture. This year, materials have been added on the Hooper Garnet Mine, organized play from neighboring cities, and Adirondack tourism and souvenirs, including information on early twentieth century Balsam pillow industry and the nineteenth century Indian Encampments.

This past Spring, Crandall Library participated in a statewide assessment of folklife archives, sponsored by the New York Folklore Society and the New York State Documentary Heritage Program.

The Library of Congress, New York State Archives, and the Adirondack Museum have added several of Crandall Library Folk Arts publications to their holdings, including the program booklets, *1990 Festival of the Adirondacks* and *Growing Up in the North Country Summer 1991*.

### **Future Directions for the Folklife Program**

Plans for 1992 including computer cataloging of the Archive of Folk Culture, expansion of *Growing Up in the North Country*, and researching and planning the Indian Encampment Project.

Most funding for the Folk Arts Program continues to come from the New York State Council on the Arts Folk Arts Program, partly matched with a line item in the library's budget. As these funds become increasingly limited, applications have been made to other sources, both at the state and national levels and from the private sector for money to continue these wonderful programs.