

**Crandall Public Library's
Center for Folklife, History and Cultural Programs
January – December 1995**

MISSION

The Center for Folklife, History and Cultural Programs is committed to original research and documentation, special collections, cultural programs, and scholarly discussion on the living and historical heritage of the region. The Center serves Warren, Washington, Saratoga and Hamilton Counties, as a part of the library's mission as the Central Library of the Southern Adirondack Library System.

STAFFING

Director of the Center, Todd DeGarmo became full-time professional staff in 1994 to continue shape and form the Center. DeGarmo has worked for the library since 1986, first as a consultant and later as staff folklorist. As director of the Center, he is one of 3 department heads at the library, a part of the library director's management team. Todd is a doctoral candidate in American Studies at George Washington University in Washington, DC, a board member of the New York Folklore Society, a member of the advisory committee to the Capital District Library Council's Documentary Heritage Program, a member of the Saratoga History Roundtable, and adjunct faculty at Skidmore College. He has 10 years experience in research, grantsmanship, and public programming.

Librarian/Archivist, Albert Fowler was hired over the summer as part-time professional staff for the Center to help run the daily operation of its reading room and to organize the archives and special collections. He has master degrees in library science and history with experience in both public and academic libraries/archives around the country.

Assistant, Katherine Philip Chansky was hired with grant funding from a variety of sources to help with the move into the new Center, and has taken on many diverse tasks, such as developing finding aids for the collections, mounting displays, working with the public in the Reading Room and in programs.

Internships by Julianne Thompson, Skidmore American Studies major, for 4 hours/week, Feb-May; and Frieda Weber, SUNY-Albany graduate student in the library school, for 140 hours, Feb-July.

Folklife Advisory Board, begun in 1994, meets twice a year to strengthen our planning process and to keep open the lines of communication among regional organizations interested in folklife.

GRANTS

In addition to funding by the library and NYSCA–Folk Arts (\$24,750), specific programs and activities are funded by specific grants. This past year we received funding from the NYS Archives and Records Administration's Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (\$6,772), the New York State Documentary Heritage Program (\$8,198), and Washington County Youth Bureau via SALS (\$750).

CENTER RENOVATION

On May 24, 1995 the library officially opened its Center for Folklife, History and Cultural Programs. Over \$125,000 had been raised in state, federal and private foundation funds. Architect plans were realized after months of construction, providing staff work spaces, exhibit area, centralized archival storage, secure reading room with reference desk, on-line catalog, computer, audio and video stations. Plans were based on many hours of discussions with representatives of the Vermont Folklife Center, Saratoga History Roundtable, NYS Archives, Documentary Heritage Program, CPL Folklife Advisory Board and Management Team.

PROGRAMS

Folklife Music and Dance Series

(6 programs • 6 groups • 2043 attendance)

Publicity included press-releases, two-sided, 3-fold interpretative flyer/mailer, bulk-mailed to targeted families; feature story in the Post-Star of Glens Falls; and related Chautauqua program flyers and press materials. Funding came from NYSCA-Folk Arts and Crandall Public Library programming budget line.

Summer Evenings at the Bandstand, with 4 programs featuring 4 groups in 4 days in Glens Falls' City Park, as the opening for the library's Chautauqua program (audience total: 1665):

- Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann
Irish music and step dancing
Wednesday, July 12, 6 - 7:30 pm
audience: 575
- Glens Falls City Band
Concert Band
Thursday, July 13, 6:30 - 7:30 pm
audience: 400
- Rymanowski Brothers Orchestra
Polish Polka music
Friday, July 14, 6 - 7:30 pm
audience: 320
- Alex Torres and Los Reyes Latinos
Latin Dance music
Saturday, July 15, 6 - 7:30 pm
audience: 370

Roots and Branches of Bluegrass

3 sessions over 2 days (audience total: 164)

musicians John Rossbach and Dave Kiphuth (Fri only), with folklorist Daniel F. Ward:

- concert: Friday, October 20, 7 pm
CPL auditorium
audience: 115
- workshops: Saturday, October 21
CPL Brown Room
10 am: 28 participants
11 am: 21 participants

Adirondack Fiddling

3 sessions over 2 days (audience total: 214)

musicians Vic Kibler and Paul Kibler, with folklorists George and Vaugh Ward (Fri only)

- concert: Friday, October 27, 7 pm
CPL auditorium
audience: 148
- workshops: Saturday, October 28
CPL Brown Room
10 am: 37 participants
11 am: 29 participants

Folklife Lecture Series

(3 programs • 3 speakers • 275 attendance)

Jewish Communities Upstate, was the second of a continuing series of public lectures by

scholars on research related to folklife studies held at the library. An interpretative publicity flyer was bulk mailed; introductions were made by the Director of the Center; a formal presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

- The Jews of Northeastern New York
by Walter Zenner, Professor of Anthropology, SUNY-Albany
Monday October 23, 7 pm
CPL auditorium
attendance: 118
- The Jewish Catskills
by Shalom Goldman, Professor of Hebrew Studies and Comparative Literature, Dartmouth
Monday, October 30, 7 pm
CPL auditorium
attendance: 67
- Adirondack Diaspora
by Amy Godine, independent scholar and freelance writer
Monday, November 6, 7 pm
CPL Brown Room
attendance: 90

Growing Up in the North Country (1 program with 6 sessions • 1 artist • 165 attendance)

Adirondack Garnet with Judy Brown of Queensbury (Warren Co.)

165 people participated in this year's workshop series (ongoing since 1989), featuring 1 program in 6 sessions, travelling to 3 sites. Publicity included a 3-fold interpretative flyer, "Adirondack Garnet", press release, and a feature story in the *Post-Star*, Glens Falls. Handouts included the 3-fold flyer, a 2-sided sheet, "The Garnet Story" and a piece of garnet jewelry.

Granville 6th grade at Pember Library (Washington County)
Tuesday, November 14
2 sessions: 45 participants
Salem 6th grade at Bancroft Library (Washington County)
Wednesday, November 15
2 sessions: 80 participants
Whitehall Library
cancelled due to weather
Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls (Warren County)
Saturday, November 18
2 sessions: 40 participants

Exhibits

Displays around the library since Fall 1995:

in the gallery: *American Folklife: A Commonwealth of Cultures* (from Library of Congress);

in free standing cases:

origami by Dan Bush; Adirondack Pack Basket by Jack Leadley; Balsam Pillows;
Tyed fishing flies by Marc Francato; and Adirondack Garnet by Judy Brown;

on the gallery wall:

scenes from our children's workshop series, *Growing Up in the North Country*;

in the gallery's fixed cases:

Photographs and maps from the collections, and Glens Falls Community Theatre.

Speaking Engagements (6 programs • 150 attendance)

Todd DeGarmo presented 6 public talks:

"Folklife Studies and Indian Camps in Saratoga Springs", guest lecture for Skidmore College's senior seminar, *Saratoga Landscapes*, Feb 16.

"Balsam, Baskets and Bootlegging, or How to Tell Mom You're a Folklorist",
slide talk to Salem Senior Citizens, April 6.

"Folklife Studies and Oral History" discussion for Lake George Arts Project, April 17.

"Growing Up in the North Country", for the panel, "Across Generations, By and For Youth—New Perspectives on Young People's Folk Arts Programming", for the NYSCA-sponsored conference, *ArtWORKS for Young People*, Brooklyn Academy of Music, May 11.

"Indian Camps and Upstate Tourism", paper presentation, while chairing the scholarly panel, "Folklife and the Study of Community", at the American Association and Local History's annual conference in Saratoga Springs, Sept 7.

"The Folklife Center at Crandall Public Library", presentation at the meeting of the Warren County Department of Tourism, Sept 18.

ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

As director of the Center and the library's Records Management Officer, DeGarmo manages the library's institutional archives and special collections.

Collection Development

Guided by the Board-approved Collections Development Policy, DeGarmo is responsible for acquisitions, using a \$5000 budget in 1995 to purchase a non-circulating research collection on the history and culture of northeastern NY, with additional special emphasis on folk arts and folklife studies:

Purchases: 205 titles at a cost of \$4267
Donations: 45 titles processed

We also receive donations of other types of materials (maps, manuscripts, photos, etc) that are being processed by Center staff, interns, and volunteers for use in the Reading Room.

Use of the Collections

The Reading Room had a total of 1222 users for 1995, even with the disruptions associated with the renovation, move and scheduled hours of the new Center:

Jan	114	July	93 (open 10 hr/wk)
Feb	113 (Tech Serv, too)	Aug	92 (open 10 hr/wk)
Mar	107	Sept	122 (10 to 15 hr/wk)
Apr	77 (move)	Oct	141 (15 hr/wk)
May	44 (move)	Nov	126 (open 15 hr/wk)
June	97 (to 10 hr/wk)	Dec	96 (open 15 hr/wk)

The collections were also used for a variety of exhibits, publications and other specialized projects, including Ron Peshe and his media students at Adirondack Community College; New York State Newspaper Project by the NYS Library returned borrowed newspapers and provide service copies of microfilms created; First Presbyterian Church of Glens Falls provided with a photographic copy of the original 1803 subscription list; Glens Falls Middle School special session to look at history of city schools; Saga City, Japan sister city delegation (July 7); photographs for Finch Pruyn and Company, Inc's 130 year anniversary supplement to *The Chronicle*, vol. 15, no. 586, June 22-28, 1995; Historical Children's Book Collection for exhibit, "Dream Blocks: American Women Illustrators from the Golden Age (1890-1925) (June); sent DeGarmo's Festival of Adirondack Folklife booklet for WMHT program, Songs from the Heart of the Adirondacks; photographs of Charles Evans Hughes feature story in the *Post-Star*, Sunday, July 10; Glens Falls-Hometown USA slide show to school reunion (Sept 16); leads to folk artists for Finch Pruyn's 1996 annual calendar, *Adirondack Character*; among others.

Arrangement and Description

- CPL Archives Project, funded by SARA-LGRMIF (1995-96), provides staff time and supplies to organize the Library's records;
- Special Collections: work on maps, photographs, biographical files, etc. has allowed for better protection and greater public access to these materials;
- Inactive Files Room, now located in the Cage, provides staging area to follow formal procedures in maintaining records according to NYS retention schedule, including the timely destruction of obsolete records, and the transfer of appropriate records to the Library's archives.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Several topics of special interest have begun to be researched by DeGarmo and hired consultants. This research will lead into collecting relevant materials for the special collections (ie. recorded interviews, photographs, fieldnotes, etc) and will be the basis of public programs over the next three years:

Warren County Tourism: archives consultants Ellen McHale and Albert Fowler, with advisory group and project director Todd DeGarmo, to survey and inventory business records related to the tourist industries (ie. amusements, summer camps, dude ranches), input on database/retrieval system, publish guide to records, and plan for appropriate acquisitions, funded the Documentary Heritage Program, 1994-95, 1995-96.

Indian Camps and Upstate Tourism: DeGarmo with an advisory group, will continue research, write grants, and plan an exhibition and related public programming; looking to the restructured NEA.

Saunas of Washington County: DeGarmo with historic preservation consultants, is collect personal narratives and documenting some 20 sites built by the Finnish community in Washington County.

African American Domestic Yards and Gardens: consultant Martha Lyon will research, document sites in Saratoga County, and develop public programming.

PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH

As director of the Center, DeGarmo has also participated in the following conferences, publications and other activities, supporting the Center's committment to the scholarly exchange of information, and to stimulate interest in our region's heritage:

Memberships

Board of Directors, New York Folklore Society, 1990-.

Advisory Board, Documentary Heritage Program-Capital District Library Council, 1994-.

Library representative, Saratoga History Roundtable, 1994-.

Adjunct faculty, Skidmore College, American Studies Program.

Workshops/Conferences

New York Folklore Society Fall Conference, held in cooperation with the Cooperstown Graduate Program, Cooperstown, NY, November 11-12.

New York State Folk Arts Roundtable, Syracuse, NY, May 25-26.

New York State Folk Arts Forums:

- "Heritage Movement in New York", Schenectady, Nov 30.
- "Folk Archives Project", Colonie, June 27.

Cooperation within the local network

- Adjunct faculty, American Studies Program, Skidmore College:
 - Spring 1995: *Scope and Methods* (team taught with Prof. Greg Pfitzer)
 - Tourism in the United States* (Liberal Studies course)
 - Summer 1995: *American Studies, Post Civil War*.

- Information for TAUNY's Take 5 Exhibit program, including use of photographs and "Balsam Traditions" poster series.
- Interviewed for magazine article, "Repositories in the Adirondacks" by Lynn Woods, for *Adirondack Life*, pending.
- General Services: to help to those interested in folk arts by providing names of artists and programming suggestions to individuals and organizations, including Adirondack Life (magazine), Adirondack Museum, Albany Institute, Elder Hostel, folklorists Karen Taussig-Lux, Ellen McHale, Vaughn Ward, Saratoga Springs Historical Society, Traditional Arts in Upstate New York.