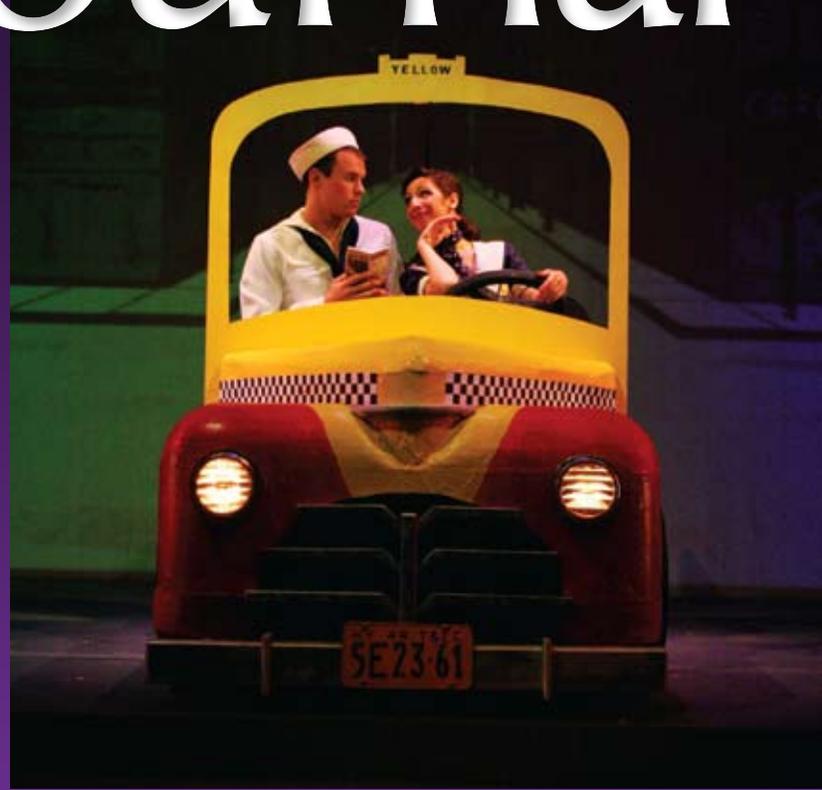


NEW HAMPSHIRE Arts Journal

Volume II, Number 1 – SUMMER 2010



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New Hampshire
State Council on the
Arts

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*How to Eat Like a Child and
Other Lessons in Not Being a
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of Concord, photo courtesy of
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*You Can't Take it with You,
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About the *New Hampshire Arts Journal*

The *New Hampshire Arts Journal* offers information and perspectives on the arts, artists, and the creative economy. Made possible through funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, this publication is meant to inspire creative solutions to the times we live in and to serve as a reference for the times we lived through.

The *Arts Journal* is a publication of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources. Our enabling legislation charges us to ensure that the arts play a significant role in the welfare of people in the Granite State. Our mission is to promote the arts in order to protect and enrich New Hampshire's unique quality of life.

The State Arts Council provides a wide variety of services, competitive grants, and technical assistance to not-for-profit organizations, schools, health care facilities, and individual artists, helping to ensure that the arts thrive in New Hampshire and are accessible to all. Funding for our grants and services is provided by the New Hampshire Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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Production Team: Shelly Angers, Jane Eklund, Cassandra Erickson,
Lynn Martin Graton, Julie Mento, Catherine R. O'Brian

Contributing Writers: Dana Biscotti Myskowski, Rebecca Rule

Graphic Design: Brian Page — Dharma Creative

Printing: Evans Printing

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
2 ½ Beacon Street, Suite 225, Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 603/271-2789 Fax: 603/271-3584
TTY/TDD: 800/735-2964
www.nh.gov/nharts

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Welcome!



This issue of the *New Hampshire Arts Journal* comes to you at a time when,

throughout the country, individuals, families, businesses, and governments are all stretching their creative muscles to find solutions to our economic and environmental challenges – challenges we must meet with courage and creativity.

It makes me consider the challenge a potter faces when trying to center an unruly lump of clay on a wheel. The clay, like life, often insists on its own wobbly path. But steadily, a potter's hands coax it through the air bubbles and the imperfections, finding the center – not so much by pushing with force, but by exerting inner certainty and a focused determination.

We can learn a lot from potters.

In fact, we can learn a lot from participating in any of the arts. They offer us a way to express and understand what at times can seem inexpressible

and incomprehensible. But the artistic process is also about problem solving – assessing materials, seeing potential, coming up with Plan B when Plan A doesn't work out. In this way, participating in an art, whether it's a craft, painting, music, or dance, helps us to nurture a mind that is nimble enough to respond creatively to changing circumstances.

In the pages that follow, you are invited to learn more about the range of arts programs in New Hampshire that the State Arts Council invests in and the benefits they bring to the lives of individuals and communities. Our not-for-profit organizations offer up a wide variety of quality arts experiences throughout the year, ensuring that they are accessible to people with diverse interests and needs. While their programs nurture us, they also play a vital role in fueling our economy. The creative sector in New Hampshire supports many jobs both directly and indirectly, helping us to meet the challenges of recovering economic prosperity.

A special focus of this *Arts Journal* is on theatre, one of the liveliest aspects of our summer arts scene. A play offers us a powerful way to explore human nature, allowing us an inside view into the personalities we all find ourselves dealing with in life. Perhaps most importantly, characters in a play can awaken empathy for others. Understanding life from another's point of view seems like a good place to start in our quest to address the extraordinary challenges of the times, doesn't it?

So take in the arts this summer and enjoy the fullness of the experience. And while you support and engage in the arts, please be assured that the State Arts Council empathizes with the challenges faced by all sectors of our state. We are stretching our resources and our creativity to serve New Hampshire citizens through — and with — the arts, and we thank you for your support.

Lynn Martin Graton
*Acting Director & Traditional Arts
Coordinator*



New Hampshire's New Artist Laureate

By Shelly Angers

David Lamb is a New Hampshire native: resourceful and independent, steeped in tradition. He does his own maple sugaring each spring. He ties his own flies to catch his own trout. He roots for the Red Sox.

But Lamb is also part of another New Hampshire tradition. Lamb makes finely crafted, exquisite, breathtaking furniture — tomorrow's treasured antiques and heirlooms — that incorporate various period forms, Shaker sensibilities, classic re-interpretations, and

contemporary styles. He's a mentor and a businessman running a one-man shop. He's also one of the founding members of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters, a select group of artists that promote their work and are committed to educating the next generation of New Hampshire's fine furniture craftsmen.

In recognition of Lamb's extraordinary artistry, his commitment to excellence, and his unwavering dedication to promoting the legacy of New Hampshire's fine furniture



Photo by Bill Truslow

heritage, Governor Lynch and the Executive Council recently named him New Hampshire Artist Laureate. His term runs through March 2012.

Lamb was born in New Hampshire and grew up here, spending some of his formative years living at Canterbury Shaker Village. His stepfather, Bud Thompson, helped transition the Village from a home for the last living New Hampshire Shakers to a not-for-profit museum.

Master European cabinetmaker Alejandro de la Cruz was a neighbor. He saw something in Lamb as a youngster and invited him, along with his own nephew, to become apprentices. De la Cruz taught Lamb the basics of furniture making — what woods to use and what tools are best for what tasks, what types of surface treatments to use, etc. — and he also taught Lamb the essential philosophy behind the art of being a craftsman: “Do what’s good.”

Lamb embraced this ideal, finding a style he describes as “classical... Shaker tradition with a contemporary approach.”

Tradition inspires Lamb — he surrounds himself with it. The bench room in his workshop is the same one he used when he apprenticed to de la Cruz. The rest of his shop was built in 1896 as a warehouse for the Gilmanton Mills in Belmont, N.H. He works on 1880-1910 vintage machinery — mostly made by the John A. White Company of Concord and Dover, N.H. — and his goal is to get much of it running on the old line-shaft, pulley, and flat belt system that was prominently in use before electric power was so available.

“I work in a building built in the 1800s and think of the [Shaker] Brothers working there. You have a sense of people looking over your shoulder. De la Cruz was the previous master of this shop and sometimes he’s here making sure I’m toeing the line.”

Some in the arts community have been reluctant to identify furniture makers as artists, and Lamb takes exception to that.

“There’s an ongoing tradition of furniture making in New Hampshire. There’s art in craftsmanship: art and function and proportion and color and relationships and texture go into what we do as craftsmen,” he explains. “It’s architecture in miniature.”

Although he works primarily alone in his shop — his wife, Janet, is a big help with the business — Lamb knows the importance of craftsmen joining together to promote their work. Together with Tony Hartigan, a businessman who saw the market potential for New Hampshire-made furniture, and fine furniture makers Brian Braskie, Lenore Howe, Terry Moore, Jere Osgood, and William Thomas, Lamb founded the New Hampshire Furniture Masters in 1992. He’s been with them ever since.

Over the years, the Furniture Masters has become an international phenomenon. Their signature event, an

annual auction of member-created works, has raised New Hampshire’s profile as the place where finely crafted furniture is made and valued. They keep an eye on nurturing the next generation of furniture makers as well. In conjunction with the New Hampshire Institute for Art, they’re developing an education program where studios become school settings.

“How often do you have the opportunity to work with a nationally, internationally known craftsman at the top of his game?” asks Lamb.

New Hampshire continues to attract and nurture a skilled cadre



Photo by Bill Truslow

Upholstery cloth by MAQ

of craftsmen. “New Hampshire is one of those unique places,” explains Lamb. “We’re near Boston, New York, Montreal. We have the ocean, mountains, rivers, and hard-working people — a tremendous mix of things that are inspirational. We can go places to show our work but also export things easily.”

“People talk about ‘the New Hampshire Advantage,’” he continues. “The arts and crafts

in New Hampshire are a huge part of that. New Hampshire is tradition; we hold on to what's important. The United States looks to New England, and then to New Hampshire, for what's important when it comes to traditional crafts."

For Lamb, being named Artist Laureate after nearly 35 years at his craft is a kind of validation for him. "It's hard to put into words," he says. "When your work is based on tradition, some don't see the work you put into it, your

eye being reflected in the work, and to look at a craft as being recognized as an art."

Being named Artist Laureate is "like you've been discovered."

During his tenure as Artist Laureate, Lamb hopes to further promote New Hampshire as a key source for fine-made traditional arts and crafts. He wants even more people to know about the state's legacy of craftsmen and the supportive environment offered to self-employed artists.

And Lamb will go on creating furniture, all the time continuing to nurture his skills according to the ethics he learned growing up at the Shaker Village, by "doing what I can do with my hands and heart and head."

For more information about David Lamb, go to: www.davidlambfurniture.com.

For more information on New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association, go to: www.furnituremasters.org. ■



Color and polish by R. Mark Adams; upholstery by Joseph Portinari.

Photo by Jim Seroskie

Arrivederci e grazie, James Aponovich!



As David Lamb begins his term as New Hampshire Artist Laureate, painter James Aponovich of Hancock steps down after four years in the role.

First appointed Artist Laureate in 2006 and reappointed in 2008, Aponovich is an internationally renowned painter whose works are found in public and private collections around the world. He began his career as a portraitist and figure painter, but for decades has been known for his elaborate still

life compositions painted in a contemporary realist style akin to the great European masters of the Renaissance.

Aponovich has exhibited widely throughout the United States, including: the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Portland Museum of Art, and others. He was honored with a one-man retrospective exhibited at Manchester's Currier Museum of Art in 2005.

The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts designated Aponovich a Lifetime Fellow

in recognition of his receiving multiple competitive Fellowship Awards over three decades. In 2009, Aponovich was accepted to the prestigious American Academy in Rome's Visiting Artist program.

Previous New Hampshire Artists Laureate are:

2002-2004: Marguerite Mathews, Portsmouth, theatre

2000-2002: James Bolle, Franconstown, music

1998-2000: Gerry Williams, Dunbarton, pottery

Private Lives, *The Barnstormers*
Theatre, photo by Bradley Bell



N.H. Theatre

Through the Years

By Jane Eklund

Theatre has been entertaining, educating, and provoking discussions across cultures throughout history.

Before the Revolutionary War, theatre was so controversial that New Hampshire's House of Representatives noted plays had a "peculiar influence on the minds of young people and greatly endanger their morals by giving them a taste for intriguing, amusement and pleasure." Pretty heady stuff!

Times changed. Around 1900, vaudeville and other traveling shows began popping up all over New Hampshire. An influx of summer people brought with it the flourishing of small community and family theatre productions in homes, barns, town halls, and pastures.

Some of the state's most venerable professional theatre companies got their start in the early 1930s.

The Barnstormers Theatre holds a special place in the history of the craft – it's the oldest



The Pain and the Itch, The Players' Ring, photo by Jasmin Hunter

professional summer theatre in the country.

Founded in 1931 by Francis Cleveland (son of President Grover Cleveland), The Barnstormers originally consisted of young graduates from elite colleges in and around Boston. In those days, theatre-goers were not expected to drive for miles to see a play, so the Tamworth thespians "barnstormed" from town to town, performing in Wolfeboro, Franconia, Conway, Holderness, and as far away as Poland Spring, Maine. They permanently settled in Tamworth after World War II, and while they no longer "barnstorm," they are still a true summer stock company,

performing a new production each week.

The Monadnock region was also a hub of theatre activity during the Depression, with several amateur and professional theatres operating there: the Chanticleer Barn Theatre in Hancock, the Yonder Farm Theatre in Dublin, the Mariarden Theatre-in-the-Woods, and the Peterborough Players (originally called "Our Playhouse" and still around today) are just a few.

In the years since then, numerous professional and community theatres have sprung up in all regions of the state. Some last for a season, some for many years, and many are going strong today.

Both community theatres and professional theatres in New Hampshire have formed associations, and 2010 marked the eighth year of the NH Theatre Awards, a gala annual event that recognizes excellence in all aspects of drama, from writing to acting to set design and more. ■

On New Hampshire's Stage

By Jane Eklund

The lights dim, the curtain rises, the characters are arranged on the set. Whether you're in the audience watching the action, up on stage looking out toward the bright lights, or literally behind the scenes keeping things running smoothly, you are about to become part of something very special. A story. A piece of living, breathing art. An opportunity for pondering human nature, for experiencing new worlds, for pure enjoyment.

The theatre offers up its own brand of magic – and you can find it in every region of New Hampshire.

Professional, Community and Youth Theatre

The benefits theatre brings to the state and its residents are numerous and far-reaching. Live drama boosts local economies, employs stage professionals, provides social and artistic opportunities for theatre-lovers who earn their livings in other fields, affords top-notch

entertainment to residents and visitors, uplifts and enlightens audiences, and feeds our individual and collective souls.

What's the difference between professional and community theatre, you may ask? As theatre people will tell you, there is some overlap between the two groups and there is debate on where the distinguishing line between

them falls. Craig Faulkner, artistic director of the Seacoast Repertory Theatre in Portsmouth, notes that one way to look at it is, "If you work in a theatre and you don't get paid, then it's a community theatre. If you get paid, then you're a professional."

Keith Stevens, managing director of the Peterborough Players, offers another slant. In



professional theatre, he says, what's most important is the product. In community theatre, the process is key.

Actors, directors, stage crew, managers, and other staff at professional theatres typically earn their livings in the

theatre, some in steady jobs and some by piecing together various short-term opportunities. Some professional theatres do occasionally bring in actors from local community theatres to fill out large casts or to serve as "extras" in crowd scenes.

When you go to a community theatre production, the people you see on stage and those you don't see working back stage are your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow townspeople who hold non-theatre jobs. Drama is extracurricular for them; they participate for no pay in

their spare time because they love theatre. Many community theatres do offer a small stipend to directors, and some hire professionals for certain tasks like musical direction.

There's also a third category, youth theatre, where most of the cast and crew positions are filled by young people, under the direction of experienced adults. A few theatres in New Hampshire, like Andy's Summer Playhouse (Andy's Inc.) in Wilton and Children's Stage Adventures, a professional theatre that tours nationally but is based in Sullivan, are devoted entirely to youth theatre. Youth theatres are often complemented by youth and internship programs run by many of the state's professional and community theatres.

Professional Theatre

People who frequent both professional and community theatre in New Hampshire will tell you they've been delighted on occasion to experience a community theatre production of the same high quality as a professional show. They'll also tell you that when they go to see

a play at a professional venue, where the actors, directors, and crews are trained and experienced, they expect top-notch work.

They get it. New Hampshire audiences can find productions of all sorts – musicals, mysteries, comedies, tragedies – that are as good as shows mounted in Boston or New York City, but without the long drives, parking hassles, and big-city prices.

"You have an expectation that the quality of the work is going to be good," says the Stevens.

Quality work is important to actors as well, and those who work on New Hampshire stages enjoy many benefits, not the least of which is a modest income in a field where it's tough to make a living. Among the other boons for actors and stage crews here is the opportunity to gain experience and to land plum roles in an arena that's less competitive than the big city theatre meccas.

At the Winnepesaukee Playhouse in Laconia, the professional company that's in residence during the summer is



Rent, Palace Theatre, photo by Jeff Dachowski of Dachowski Photography

a non-Equity troupe, meaning the actors are not members of the national theatre union. Actors Equity sets high standards for membership and also sets salary and other requirements for what are called “Equity theatres,” those that do hire union members. Bryan Halperin, executive director of the Winnepesaukee Playhouse, notes that his theatre has been able to hire exceptionally good actors just before they qualify for Equity status. That means the audiences get to see fine performances and the actors can take on great roles that they ordinarily wouldn’t be offered in New York or at Equity theatres.

Some professional theatres also offer chances for local actors and apprentices to hit the stage alongside the pros. The Peterborough Players’ contract with Actors Equity allows the theatre to hire non-union members as long as it has a certain number of roles slotted for Equity members. The Players look to college-age interns and local actors, sometimes from Peterborough’s community theatre group, to fill out supporting roles.

People who work in New Hampshire’s professional theatres get another benefit: a close-knit, supportive atmosphere. That



goes along with a lot of extremely hard work. As Stevens notes, “We’re doing everything on a summer stock schedule, which is about the hardest schedule you can do.” At the Players, that means launching a new show every two weeks, and it means that actors are often rehearsing next week’s show during the day

and performing this week’s in the evening. “The work is too hard to not treat each other well and not get along,” Stevens says.

Seacoast Rep, a year-round professional theatre, provides an environment that’s healthy, nurturing, and safe so that the artists can play around with their crafts, says Faulkner. That

Where to find great theatre in N.H.

Outstanding theatre takes place all over New Hampshire! Whether you’re interested in a show put on by folks you know (community), people who make their living in the industry (professional), or those who hope to (youth), you’re bound to find a performance that has what you’re looking for.

Here is a partial list of theatres operating in the Granite State. *C=Community, P=Professional, Y=Youth.*

Heartbreak House, Peterborough
Players, photo by Deb Porter-Hayes



means a terrific experience for audiences.

The value of professional theatre goes beyond the benefits to staff and the audience, of course. The economic value is tangible.

“People are coming here to see theatre,” says Faulkner, who adds that in an arts community

like Portsmouth, the more theatre the better. “We must all do everything we can to do the best quality work that we can possibly do. ... We truly all need each other.”

Communities also often benefit from the theatre buildings themselves. While some of the state’s summer theatres shutter their doors and windows in the off season, many now have winterized buildings that can be rented for concerts, community theatre plays, and productions by other local organizations.

Then there are the less-tangible benefits of theatre. “I think human beings are social creatures,” says Stevens. “I think we’re not built to be isolated all the time. We need places that we can come together and share an experience. I think the theatre and the performing arts do that.”

Community Theatre

Mariah Herlihy Sefel, a vice president of the New Hampshire Community Theatre Association who is involved with two community theatre organizations in the state, is a living example of the social benefits for people who participate in community theatre. She did some acting in high school and then, after graduating from college and

taking a job as a sales supervisor in the Monadnock Region, she landed a part in *Kiss Me Kate* with Peterborough’s Actors’ Circle Theatre. It was an opportunity to explore her interest in theatre, but also a great way to meet people and make friends. She ended up marrying one of the people she met. Her husband, John Sefel, is artistic director of another community theatre organization, Ghostlight Theater Company of New England, based in Salem.

Another plus for community theatre people: they can try their hands at any or all of the



The Life & Death of that Dastardly Villain, Richard III (aka The Bunch-Back’d Toad), *Advice To The Players*, photo by Monika O’Clair Photography

Dartmouth/Lake Sunapee Region

New London Barn Playhouse, New London — P, Y
NorthEast Shakespeare Ensemble, New London — P, Y
OperaNorth, Lebanon — P, Y
S.K.I.T., New London — C

Lakes Region

Advice To The Players, Sandwich — P, Y
The Barnstormers Theatre, Tamworth — P

Franklin Footlight Theatre, Franklin — C
Hampstead Stage Company, Center Barnstead — P, Y
Lakeside Players, Strafford — C
Pittsfield Players, Pittsfield — C
Streetcar Company, Laconia — C
The Summer Theatre in Meredith Village, Meredith — P, Y
Village Players, Wolfeboro — C
The Winnepesaukee Playhouse, Laconia — C, P, Y

available jobs. Acting, directing, stage managing, producing, publicity, fundraising, lighting ... the list goes on and on, and includes skills that translate into other areas of life, from public speaking to management to marketing. While most community theatre people don't aspire to be pros, a significant number of professionals note that they got their start in community theatre.

Audiences benefit from community theatre as well, in some ways that are distinct from professional theatre and in others that overlap. In some parts of the state, particularly during the times of year when summer theatres are closed, community troupes offer the only local opportunity for residents to access live theatre. Community theatres also offer very affordable tickets, along with the priceless opportunity for people to see their dentist or cousin or next-door neighbor perform a song-and-dance routine.

Like professional theatre, community theatre gives audiences a chance to access their hearts and minds. "Theatre is a great chance for people to get into emotional spaces and have permission to do that," says Wayland Bunnell, president of Concord Community Players.

It satisfies an almost primal need. He continues, "Theatre is incredibly basic. It's exactly the same as sitting around the campfire during the Paleolithic days and telling the day's stories. ... People want to gather together and hear stories. It's incredibly fundamental; it's a reflection of the human experience."



Lysistrata, New Hampshire Theatre Project, photo by Sofia Piel

The Winnepesaukee Playhouse has a community theatre arm – the Winni Players – that operates from fall to spring and also runs a youth theatre program. Halperin notes that audiences in the cold-weather months are much more willing to experience shows that are experimental or dramatic in nature than summer theatre-goers are. Also, while it's critical that the summer professional shows are financially successful, the community troupe is more about the experience for actors

and audiences. As a result, the Winni Players often take on plays that deal with social values or controversy. They recently staged *The Laramie Project*, a series of dramatic monologues about the real-life murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard. "We didn't know how our audience would respond to that,"

Halperin said. As it turned out, every show sold out. Shows the Winni Players have produced, including *The Laramie Project*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and *Our Town*, contribute to greater bonding among the cast, Halperin says, because the actors feel like they are working on something important. Such shows also help spark larger conversations about the issues at hand in the community.

Like people who attend professional productions, community theatre audiences

Where to find great theatre in N.H. (cont.)

Merrimack Valley Region

Acting Loft, Manchester — C
 Actorsingers, Nashua — C
 Bedford Off Broadway, Bedford — C
 Bedford Youth Performing Company, Bedford — Y
 Best Foot Forward Productions, Hooksett — C
 Community Players of Concord, Concord — C
 Ghostlight Theater Company of New England, Salem — C, Y

Hope Light Opera Company, Derry — C
 Kids Coop Theatre, Londonderry — Y
 Majestic Theatre, Manchester — C
 Manchester Community Players, Manchester — C, Y
 Mayhem and Murder Productions, Hudson — C
 Music and Drama Company, Londonderry — C
 My Act, Merrimack — C
 Nashua Theatre Guild, Nashua — C
 New Art Theatre, Manchester — P
 New Thalian Players, Manchester — C

frequent restaurants and pubs before and after the show, and out-of-towners who come for a show might stay overnight at a local inn. Many theatres in both the professional and community categories have developed partnerships with dining establishments to offer special “dinner and a show” deals.

Youth Theatre

Youth theatre is all about learning by doing. Young actors and technicians work alongside experienced adults in a theatre setting, with the goal of putting on a play. The programs serve many functions: they offer an outlet for pre-teens and teens, they groom young people for roles in professional and community theatre shows, they provide training in skills that can be put to use in any number of career fields, they give young people a taste of life in a theatre, and more. Youth programs that are run by community or professional theatres help extend those theatres’ reach in the community. Those that are tuition-based help bring in income for the theatres, too, and provide work for theatre professionals. They can also bring in new audiences for mainstage productions. Parents who come to see their child in a youth play, for

instance, might decide to come back for another show.

There’s a big demand for such programs. Seacoast Rep’s youth opportunities outgrew the theatre’s space in Portsmouth, so they purchased the Mill Pond Center in Durham, where classes and programs for young people are run. Many programs for summer 2010 were full in early spring.

The Peterborough Players offers Ascending Stars, an annual production open to actors from several area high schools. The students audition for onstage and backstage parts, and those who are selected put on a play, directed by an experienced adult, in three weeks.

Similarly, the Community Players of Concord runs a Children’s Theatre Project every October, and a February Vacation theatre camp.

Other groups have opportunities for college-age students. Many have intern or apprenticeship programs for students weighing theatre careers. Ghostlight Theater of New England has formed a partnership with nearby Chester College. It’s a perfect pairing, as the College is just starting up a theatre program, and Ghostlight offers the kind of edgy drama that frequently appeals to young people.

Take a Seat and Enjoy

Professional, community, and youth theatres in New Hampshire form a web of opportunities that go far beyond a night of entertainment. The value they bring is social, economic, educational, intellectual, emotional, and community-building. They create opportunities for reflection and for deep conversations. They provide a creative outlet for young people and adults. They attract visitors to the state and bring people from one region to another. They bring revenue into our cities and towns.

Some people would say they make life more worthwhile.

Whether you’re hankering for a well-known musical, a quirky one-woman play by a local playwright, a dark existential drama, or one of Shakespeare’s comedies, you’ll find it in New Hampshire. So take a seat, peruse the playbill, and wait for the curtain to rise. The magic is about to begin.

For more information about New Hampshire community theatre, go to:
www.nhcommunitytheatre.com.

For more information about New Hampshire professional theatre, go to:
www.nhprotheatre.org. ■

Palace Theatre, Manchester — C, P, Y
Peacock Players, Nashua — C
Second Stage Professional Company, Manchester — P
Stage Coach Productions, Mont Vernon — C

Monadnock Region

Actors Performance Studio, Alstead — C
Actors’ Circle Theatre, Peterborough — C
Andy’s Summer Playhouse (Andy’s Inc.), Wilton — Y
Antrim Players, Antrim — C

Children’s Stage Adventures,
Sullivan (tours nationally) — P, Y
Milford Area Players, Milford — C
Old Homestead Association, Swanzey — C
Peterborough Players, Peterborough — C, P, Y
Pleasant Pond Players, Franconia — C
Riverbend Youth Company, Milford — Y
Small Pond Productions, Marlborough — C
Temple Drama Club, Temple — C

Arts Council Supports New Hampshire Theatre

by Cassandra Erickson

Through several of our competitive grant programs, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts provides funding to help not-for-profit organizations deliver services to New Hampshire citizens: **Operating grants** recognize excellence in administration and help to leverage private investment by requiring a match of ten to one; **Arts in Health Care project** grants help bring artists into health care facilities, nursing homes, and in centers serving the elderly, to improve the quality of life for vulnerable populations; **Conservation grants** are made possible through the sale of “Moose” license plates and help to protect publicly owned collections and facilities; **Arts Jobs grants** support the retention of jobs and were made possible by one-time funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA).

Many theatre companies are among our grantees and here are some who received funding in FY2010:

Andy’s Summer Playhouse (Andy’s Inc.), Wilton FY2010 Operating Grant, \$6,000

Entering its 40th season, Andy’s Summer Playhouse educates local youth about theatre and instills in them the importance that the arts play in local communities. The young participants have the opportunity to act, apprentice in technical and business aspects of theatre, study playwriting with professionals, and team up with directors who serve as mentors.

The Barnstormers Theatre, Tamworth FY2010 Operating Grant, \$3,500

Founded in 1931, The Barnstormers originally trouped throughout the region five nights a week, performing a new play each week. While it no longer “barnstorms,” it continues to bring both local and regional talent to the stage and captivate audiences with great summer productions.

New Hampshire Theatre Project, Portsmouth FY2010 Operating Grant \$9,200 FY2010 Arts Jobs Grant, \$20,000

New Hampshire Theatre Project brings high-quality productions of classical and contemporary drama to the seacoast community through a professional season of productions at its home venue in Portsmouth. Incorporated in 1988, it is dedicated to creating innovative, excellent, and educational theatre that serves as a catalyst for personal transformation and community dialogue.

North Country Center for the Arts / Papermill Theatre, Lincoln FY2010 Operating Grant, \$3,500 FY2010 Arts Jobs Grant, \$20,000

A non-union professional theatre, North Country Center for the Arts presents a variety of artistic, educational, and entertaining programs for all ages. It provides performance experiences for local adults and children, allowing them the opportunity to perform and work side by side with professional performers.

Where to find great theatre in N.H. (cont.)

Seacoast Region

Garrison Players, Dover — C

Leddy Center for the Performing Arts, Epping — C

New Hampshire Theatre Project, Portsmouth — P, Y

Nottingham Theatre Project, Nottingham — C

The Players’ Ring, Portsmouth — P

Pontine Theatre, Portsmouth — P

Prescott Park Arts Festival, Portsmouth — P

Rising Star Theatre Company, Newton — C

Seacoast Repertory Theatre, Portsmouth — P, Y

Stranger than Fiction Improv, Exeter — P

The Sad Café, Plaistow — C

**Palace Theatre Trust, Manchester
FY2010 Operating Grant, \$9,200**

Established in 1915 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Palace Theatre Trust is a professional performing arts center. In addition to hosting touring performances, the Palace Theatre produces seven professional shows per season, known as the “Citizens Bank Performing Arts Series,” and annually hosts the NH Theatre Awards.

**Peterborough Players, Peterborough
FY2010 Operating Grant, \$15,000**

Founded in 1933, the Peterborough Players is one of the oldest summer stock theatres in the country. It provides high-quality theatre for 16 weeks of the year, June through September, and serves as a venue and local resource for many schools and organizations year round.

**The Players’ Ring, Portsmouth
FY2010 Cultural Conservation Grant, \$7,000**

The Player’s Ring Theatre was formed in 1992 and uses a historic city-owned building, constructed in the 1830s for the Portsmouth Marine Railway, as its performance space. The Players’ Ring, which leases the building from the city, provides a venue for local production companies and produces original work by local playwrights.

**Pontine Theatre, Portsmouth
FY2010 Operating Grant, \$7,000
FY2010 Arts in Health Care Grant, \$2,500**

Both a resident and touring company, Pontine Theatre creates original productions that celebrate the history, culture, and literature of New England. Pontine’s two principal artists take on a full range of challenges — including researching, playwriting, directing, designing, and building — to put together productions that invite audiences to engage with their own cultural heritage.

White Mountains Region

Mt. Washington Valley Theatre Company, North Conway — P
North Country Center for the Arts/Papermill Theatre, Lincoln — P
Resort Players of Mount Washington Valley, North Conway — C
Theatre Under the Stars, Waterville Valley — P, Y
Weathervane Theatre, Whitefield — P, Y

**Seacoast Repertory Theatre, Portsmouth
FY2010 Operating Grant, \$3,500**

The Seacoast Repertory Theatre is a not-for-profit professional theatre company located in downtown Portsmouth. Founded in 1987, they produce a mainstage season, provide classes and performance opportunities for youth, and offer a program that affords senior citizens the opportunity to share stories and experiences through theatre.

**Weathervane Theatre, Whitefield
FY2010 Operating Grant, \$10,500**

Founded in 1965, the Weathervane Theatre produces mainstage performances featuring a resident Actors’ Equity company, children’s theatre productions, training for college-age students, and a summer day camp, all during an eight-week summer season. Community-based performers sometimes work alongside seasoned professionals, learning and expanding on skills and interests in the performing arts.

For more information on State Arts Council grants, go to: www.nh.gov/nharts/grants.

Note: State Arts Council grants are funded through appropriations from the New Hampshire State Legislature, the sale of Conservation “Moose” License Plates, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

So, how do you spell it?

You may notice that we’re using “theatre” in this issue when describing the dramatic arts. Perhaps you’ve seen it as “theater” in other publications. In the industry, “theatre” is the preferred spelling; look at the list of venues in this issue of *New Hampshire Arts Journal* and you’ll see many choose to incorporate this into their names. *American Theatre* magazine and other professional publications also use this spelling.

What Theatre Means to New Hampshire

"The arts bring millions of dollars of revenue into [our] community."

—Craig Faulkner, Seacoast Repertory Theatre, Portsmouth

"For me the audience is everything. The play exists in the energy between the audience and the performers."

—Wayland Bunnell, Community Players of Concord

"From a quality of life perspective, having a professional company in a community is something that can be pointed to as a value to the region. It helps bring business to the region, it helps bring people in to see the shows and helps drive the economy. It's an education resource for not just secondary schools but colleges as well."

—Keith Stevens, Peterborough Players, Peterborough

"Theatre is a great way of getting the generations together."

—Mariah Sefel, New Hampshire Community Theatre Association

"We want to be a year-round organization that, one, keeps us busy, and, two, serves the community year-round."

—Bryan Halperin, The Winnepesaukee Playhouse, Laconia

"We know from studies that young, creative people want to come to places rich in cultural activities. Portsmouth has five professional theatre companies, plus a presenting hall. If those all went away, what would happen?"

—Van McLeod, commissioner of the N.H. Department of Cultural Resources

Online calendars with listings of performances in New Hampshire abound.

Here are a few:

www.artspider.net
www.nh.com
www.nh365.org

www.nhpr.org/calendar
www.visitnh.gov

Altar Boyz, Seacoast Repertory Theatre, photo by Jag Fotoz Photography



Driving Miss Daisy, The Winnipesaukee Playhouse, photo by Lesley Pankhurst



Theatre producing organizations are in every part of the state and offer productions all year round. A partial list of professional, community and youth theatres can be found on the footer of the theatre articles.

Many facilities in N.H. are “presenting theatres”—they present a variety of touring productions, including theatre and music. Here are just a few:

Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Region:

- Claremont Opera House, Claremont
- Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College, Hanover
- Lebanon Opera House, Lebanon
- Newport Opera House, Newport

Lakes Region:

- Middle New Hampshire Arts & Entertainment Center, Franklin

Merrimack Valley Region:

- Adams Memorial Opera House, Derry
- Capitol Center for the Arts, Concord
- Dana Center, St. Anselm’s College, Manchester
- The Palace Theatre, Manchester

Monadnock Region:

- Colonial Theatre, Keene
- Court Street Theatre, Keene
- Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College

Seacoast Region:

- Rochester Opera House, Rochester
- The Music Hall, Portsmouth

White Mountain & Great North Woods Regions:

- Silver Center for the Performing Arts, Plymouth State University
- St. Kieran Community Center for the Arts, Berlin

Many arts organizations are members of the Arts Presenters of Northern New England.

Visit: www.apnne.org for more information.



Van McLeod, commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources (the State Arts Council is a division), calls himself “an old theatre guy.” Prior to serving as commissioner, he worked in summer stock, taught acting, started theatres, and did lighting for rock concerts.

Interview with the Commissioner

By Jane Eklund

Jane Eklund: *How important are partnerships for creative businesses like theatres?*

Commissioner Van McLeod: Partnerships are critical.

When I was working with the North Country Center for the Arts/Papermill Theatre, I was one of a group that wanted to exchange information with other theatres about our seasons and schedules, to avoid repeating an unfortunate situation in which two theatres produced the same play on the same weekend. That led to the formation of the Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire, which gave theatres the opportunity to share information and marketing. We created a display and brochures that were specific to each theatre, but also included the other theatres in the Arts Alliance. It was a way to say to audience, “This is who we are, but if you like theatre, check out the other local venues.” In the years since, the Arts Alliance has grown beyond theatre to encompass all manner of artistic and cultural activity in the northern part of the state.

Up until a few years ago, the community theatres in New Hampshire had an association,

but the professional theatres did not, so the Department of Cultural Resources hosted a roundtable just for professional theatres. That group of people continued to meet for a couple of years; then we encouraged them to create the New Hampshire Professional Theatre Association, which is going strong.

JE: *Can you talk a bit about one of the New Hampshire Professional Theatre Association’s newer partnerships, the Auditions and Job Fair?*

VM: In February at Plymouth State University, we held the third annual Auditions and Job Fair for college students and others who are interested in theatre careers. One of my goals has been to provide opportunities for New Hampshire college students and graduates to find work in their home state. [This event] began as a way to link up those young people with theatre jobs. [It’s] just one project to come out of the Governor’s Jobs Cabinet, which focuses on creating and identifying job opportunities statewide.

JE: *What’s the importance of theatre to New Hampshire?*

VM: Theatre’s importance to the state is multilayered.

It is about jobs. New Hampshire summer theatres create over 1,100 summer jobs. The benefits of those jobs spread into the community.

[Theatres] are little economic engines that plug into the creative economy and help build community. [A theatre] employs a number of people, but it also attracts people to come to shows. On nights when they do their shows, the restaurants all around them are open, and have the theatres’ audiences in them.

Theatres are small businesses that drive an economic component. [They] help build a creative economy that can attract new businesses and new residents to a city or town.

Creativity is our future, a key to our wellbeing. Arts are about problem solving. Businesses today want creative thinkers, which is why a lot of CEOs are looking for people with arts degrees rather than business degrees. Is there an economic element to theatre’s value to the state? Absolutely. Is there a social element? Absolutely. ■

Dana Biscotti Myskowski — screenwriter, playwright, professor, producer, mom — teaches scriptwriting at UNH Manchester and serves on the New Hampshire Film Commission. Her blog can be found at <http://greenchairpictures.blogspot.com>.

Stage Play, Screen

Play: A Writer's View



By Dana Biscotti Myskowski

As we explore theatre in this issue of New Hampshire Arts Journal, we at the State Arts Council began to think about points of intersection between theatre and film. Like us, the New Hampshire Film & Television Office is part of the Department of Cultural Resources. Because we encourage writing of all types, we invited Dana Biscotti Myskowski, a noted writer in our community, to comment on her experiences of writing for stage and screen.

A playwriting friend of mine marvels when I pen a character's subtle movement — a furrowed brow, for example — into a screenplay. Until he pointed that out, I hadn't carefully considered the differences between the writing platforms in which I frequently work.

In stage plays, actors' movements must be seen from the back row. In film, the camera can pick up the smallest motions. When a father grimaces at his son's profane language, the film audience sees his reaction in close up. When I wrote a similar scene for stage, I had the mother hide behind the pages of her foul-mouthed son's skateboarding magazine — a gesture that we were all able to see and interpret from the balcony.

Dialogue construction is another key difference between writing for the stage and the screen. In a play, if a character

gazes over the audience, a hand shading her eyes, the audience needs the character to announce the arrival of the Queen Mary II to understand she's searching the water — otherwise, she could be searching for anything, anywhere. In film, the visuals create the setting. The audience sees the luxury ocean liner: the screenwriter has written it into the script.

Yet there can be interesting and unlikely parallels between the two arts. In screenwriting, description should be kept to a minimum. While the script may call for an interior barn scene at night, the screenwriter's job is to detail only those parts of the barn's interior that are crucial to the story. If the character will use a pitchfork to defend herself from a rabid dog, that tool must be detailed in the script. Perhaps she uses it to fork hay into the horses' stalls, or maybe it hangs unused on the wall. As for the

rest — the old tractor, the hay bales, the dusty saddles, etc. — the art director, working with the film's director, will decide what is needed to create the look in this scene.

For me, it's the same with plays. Beyond minimum set requirements, I only list the props that would be needed to tell the story. I've penned a handful of full-length stage plays and about a dozen one-acts and have yet to write one with a detailed set, not because of any bias against a great set design, but simply because my inner screenwriter won't allow me to elaborate further.

Yet for all the subtle differences and sometimes surprising similarities between the two writing platforms, they share one important element in common: a good story must be told with believable characters who chase do-or-die goals, face dramatic obstacles, and ultimately lead the audience on a journey that will please, distract, and entertain.

For more information on filmmaking in New Hampshire, visit the New Hampshire Film & Television Office website at: www.nh.gov/film. ■

Poetry in Its

Arturo Jaras Watts,
Oyster River High School

Photo by Clair Degutis



Ben Meuser, 2009 Graduate,
John Stark Regional
High School.

Photo by Lynn Martin Graton

From the famed oration of Daniel Webster to the stories Fritz Wetherbee tells us nightly on *New Hampshire Chronicle*, New Hampshire has long embraced stories well told and lines well delivered. In our citizen legislature, poetry was once recited on the floor of the State House. At our annual town meetings, we do our best to express our points of view and to persuade our neighbors to vote for that new fire truck — or not. Though the sight of three Yankees on the porch of a general store swapping yarns all afternoon has become all too rare, the pleasure we take in swapping words is

a New Hampshire tradition. It shows in the success of the City of Portsmouth's Hoot, a long-running open-mic series, and the equally long-running Writer's Night held monthly in little bitty Effingham.

Californian Robert Frost found his muse here in New Hampshire. Even during the years he deserted us for Vermont, he wrote while looking across the river at the New Hampshire hills. Frost's beloved poems "Mending Wall," "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," and, of course, "The Road Not Taken" are among those that high school students may choose for the national recitation contest held in New Hampshire called Poetry Out Loud, sponsored by the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts.

Poems by our own Donald Hall, Jane Kenyon, Maxine Kumin, and Charles Simic are also represented in the long list of poems students can select from. And while some of us may shake our heads at the mix of poetry and competition, this year Poetry Out Loud engaged nearly 8,000 students from 31 schools in New Hampshire. Each participant selected at least three poems to memorize and recite from the Poetry Out Loud National website. These students not only read poetry but studied it, made it their own, and performed it for enthusiastic audiences, continuing our rich spoken word tradition.

Natural State

By Rebecca Rule



Poetry Out Loud was born in 2005, the brainchild of Dana Gioia, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The competition encourages the nation's youth to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance, and helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary and cultural heritage.

Nationwide, the program involves 150,000 students annually and awards \$50,000 in scholarships. Funding comes through multiple partnerships, beginning with the Poetry Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts, and is awarded to each State Arts Council to carry out a statewide program. In New Hampshire, any high school — public, private, or parochial, as well home school groups — is welcome to participate. There is no charge to compete.

Finalists from each high school advance to regional competitions. This year, the enthusiasm from schools resulted in the need to hold three regionals — one each in Manchester,

Henniker, and Plymouth — up from two last year. The top four participants from each regional went on to the final competition held this year at Keene State College.

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and a host of local businesses and institutions also helped out. New England College and Southern New Hampshire University offered generous scholarships to all school champions and alternates. Colby-Sawyer College did the same for the state winner and runner-up.

Poet and teacher Rodger Martin has coordinated Poetry Out Loud in New Hampshire since its inception. He said, "Poetry has always been first an oral tradition. It's meant to be heard first, read later. Its natural state is the word expressed as sound or music. Its state on the

*Kerry Gaudreau,
Bishop Brady High School*



The Grumblin Rustics, Tim Mowry (left) and Ellen Carson, provided music while judges scored the Plymouth Regional Competition.

Photos by Lynn Martin Graton

page is a recent phenomenon. It's like reading sheet music and imagining the musical sounds rather than hearing the instruments themselves."

Learning a great poem by heart — taking it into your heart and then putting it into the air, returning it to its natural state — enriches your life. No question



*Cote Laramie,
Concord High School*

Photo by Clair Degutis

about it. But hearing a great poem recited with passion and understanding — that's enriching, too, as any of those who attended the Poetry Out Loud competitions in New Hampshire this year will attest. Students consistently entertained, moved, and surprised listeners: "So that's what this poem means." I get it!

Arturo Jaras Watts, 18, of Durham won this year's state competition reciting Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," Cornelius Eady's "The Empty Dance Shoes," and Diane Thiel's "The Minefield." He received a \$200 prize, as well as \$500 for his school library to buy poetry books. Runner-up Natalya Tausanovitch, a sophomore at Windham High School, also received a cash award and book stipend for her school. As a finalist, Arturo represents New Hampshire in Washington, D.C. for national finals.

At his school, Oyster River in Durham, the program is part of the Language Arts curriculum. "Everybody had to memorize one of the poems in the Poetry Out Loud web anthology and perform it for the class," he said. Class winners move on to the school competition. To prepare for the regional and state competitions, he read all the poems in the anthology — a three-week task. He noted those that struck a chord, then narrowed his list to 25, then to his final three.

Catherine O'Brian, Arts in Education coordinator at the State Arts Council, loves the idea that students are exposed to so much quality poetry through having to make choices. "Choosing," she said, "is an act of awareness. When teachers and students across the state participate in Poetry Out Loud, they become aware of each other as well. The program connects people who care about poetry. When poetry-related opportunities come up — scholarships, conferences, chances to write or perform — this network provides a way to get the word out."

Jaras Watts, who was born in Chile, says, “Poetry connects people from all over the world from all times. One of the poems I recited was written in the early sixteen hundreds in England, yet that author and I share the same brain when I recite his poem. And aesthetically speaking, it’s awesome. It’s an art composed of words. Think about all the things words can do! They can propose. They can cuss out an enemy. They can make jokes and tell ghost stories. Now take words and arrange them in an order where they sound naturally musical and jazzy and slick and have them continue to serve a purpose, and you get a really cool thing — a poem.”

Cynthia Robinson, N.H. Poetry Out Loud 2010 assistant, appreciates the surprises: “I’m surprised at how the kids can bring a fresh perspective to some really old poetry and some new poetry as well. Here’s a part of our English education that might go off the map if we don’t really show why it’s important,” she said. “Poetry Out Loud is a great way of learning about the English language, and the best ways to express and present the poem. I’m thrilled when I hear the same poem from different students and get something completely different out of it. I think, ‘Look at the gift that student just gave me.’”

At one school competition, a young woman whose father had died a few months earlier recited Walt Whitman’s “O Captain! My Captain!” Robinson didn’t know about the student’s loss, but from the passion of the presentation and the reaction of the audience — “jaws on the floor” — she felt

the student’s profound connection to the poem. “She had dug into the words and she knew what that poem was about. The Poetry Out Loud experience benefits students in the moment and down the road, whatever career they choose,” Robinson says. The program “opens new doors.” Students learn how to present ideas “in a really clear way,” a useful skill in any field.

Some students have built upon their Poetry Out Loud experience, expanding to new horizons. At age six, Ben Meuser of Warner memorized Robert Service’s long poem “The Cremation of Sam McGee.” From first through fifth grade he learned a poem a week. At John Stark Regional High School in Weare, Poetry Out Loud allowed him to pick up where he’d left off. He won the school competition twice and made it to the state finals. The competition inspired his senior project — to invigorate poetry at John Stark. Through a grant from the State Arts Council, he brought in Baron Wormser, former Maine Poet Laureate, to his school. He also started an open-mic series and arranged for the New Hampshire Poetry Slam Team to perform.

As a freshman at Goucher College in Baltimore, Meuser did it again. Noting his experience, administrators recruited him to organize and host an open-mic

*Salamarie Frazier,
The Holderness School.*



*Michael Farkas,
Belmont High School*

Photos by Lynn Martin Graton

series there. The Baltimore Slam Team kicked the series off at an underground café called The Gopher Hole. “We packed that place,” Meuser said. Nearly two years later, the open-mic series continues to thrive and Meuser continues to host.

A history and political science major, Meuser says the challenge of Poetry Out Loud has served him well. In any field there are road blocks to jump over, lines to learn, scores to earn, judges to please.

His advice to fresh competitors: “Don’t miss a syllable, but try to enjoy the poem. Memorize it so it’s something you know like the Pledge of Allegiance. Once you have the words, then delve into the deeper meanings. I still recite

poems in the car — if there’s nothing good on the radio.”

Jill Pinard was Meuser’s teacher at John Stark. Like other teachers involved with Poetry Out Loud, she’s integrated poetry into curriculum. In her American Studies class, team-taught with a U.S. History teacher, a poem a day has become a ritual. To get students hooked on poetry, she says, “I usually start out by reciting some of my favorite poems. I also show some favorites from the ‘Def Poetry’ video series to show them how dynamic and contemporary poetry can be.”

At first, she said, some of the students “might have thought I was nuts,” but “they bought in fairly quickly.” By midyear, the students themselves were bringing in the daily poems. “It’s been delightful to have the students take ownership of this and it enables them to think about and share poetry they like. It also gives them a little public speaking practice in a large group, which is so valuable.”



Hanna Zdrnja, Kingswood Regional High School



Amanda Comeau, Plymouth High School

*Photos by
Lynn Martin Graton*

“These young people present themselves with poise, show a deep love of the English language and can hold up to competition,” said State Arts Council Acting Director Lynn Martin Graton. “Our country has many challenges ahead of it and Poetry Out Loud is helping prepare the next generation to meet them with courage and grace.” ■

Rebecca Rule tells and gathers stories. Her books include Could Have Been Worse: True Stories, Embellishments, and Outright Lies; and Live Free and Eat Pie: A Storyteller’s Guide to New Hampshire. She writes regularly for the New Hampshire Troubadour and UNH Magazine. She also hosts an interview show, the New Hampshire Authors’ Series, on New Hampshire Public Television. She sometimes performs a touring program called Crosscut, with photographs and stories on logging, the mills, and the community of Berlin.



Above: N.H. Poetry Out Loud Project Director Rodger Martin with Jillian Peters, Hopkinton High School

Right: Natalya Tausanovitch, Windham High School

Photos by Wendy Cahill



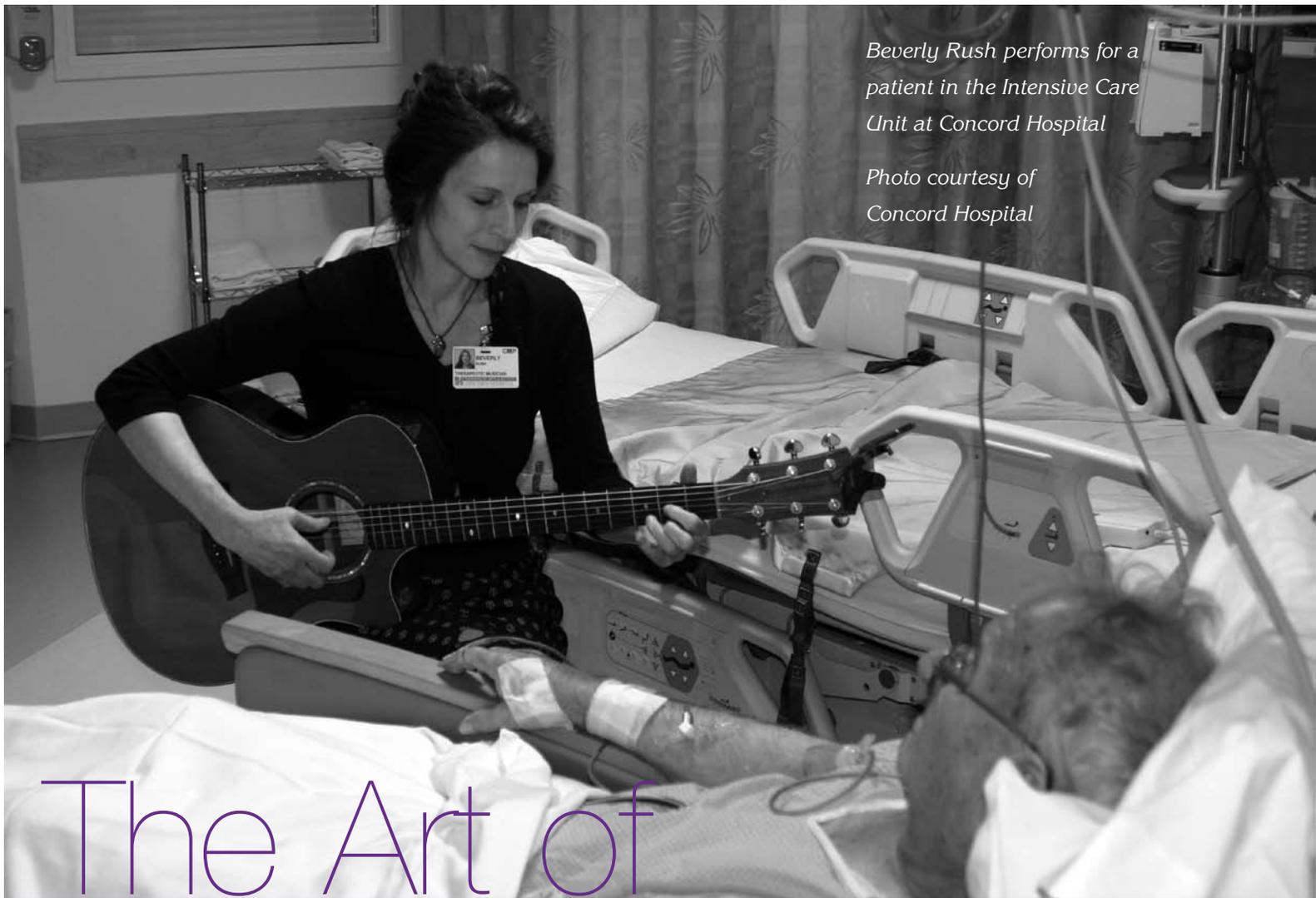
For more information on the National Poetry Out Loud initiative, go to: www.poetryoutloud.org.

For more information on how to participate in Poetry out Loud, go to: www.nh.gov/nharts. Click on program services and then on Arts in Education.

Kate McNally, host of New Hampshire Public Radio’s Folk Show, served as emcee at the Plymouth Regional Poetry Out Loud competition.

Photo by Lynn Martin Graton





Beverly Rush performs for a patient in the Intensive Care Unit at Concord Hospital

Photo courtesy of Concord Hospital

The Art of Health Care

By Shelly Angers

Realizing the powerful effect that the arts can have on healing, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts initiated Arts in Health Care Grants in 2006, funding projects that bring arts activities, artist residencies, and arts training programs to health care facilities, nursing homes, and centers serving the elderly.

These programs allow patients, residents, clients, and staff to directly engage in the creative process with professional

artists who are experienced in working in health care settings. In some cases, the experience of working with an artist can expand the possibilities of what can be accomplished while patients are in treatment; with other projects, people in the later stages of their lives and those with limited physical and mental faculties are able to find fulfilling and creative ways to express themselves.

Since the program began, hundreds of lives across New

Hampshire have been affected by the healing power of the arts. As one grants administrator put it, “This project has fundamentally changed how we view the arts here at the agency — it is the whole reason why [Arts in Health Care] grants are important. We formed an art committee with some of the participants in this group and they are very vocal about using the arts as a path to recovery and healing.”

NH Veterans Home: Weaving Teams and Drumming Circles

The New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton has been a residential health care provider since 1890 and provides high quality, professional long-term care services to the Granite State's elderly and disabled veterans. More than 90 percent

residents felt happy and proud to be creating together and the impact on their quality of life was amazing. While some residents were initially reluctant to join in the activities, they soon were keeping the schedule of weaving and drumming classes with them so that they wouldn't miss a session, and were reluctant to



Weaving project at the N.H. Veterans Home, Tilton

Photo by Jackie Bonafide

of its residents are men and half suffer from dementia.

The Veterans Home received a State Arts Council Arts in Health Care grant in 2009 for new programs designed to engage residents and improve their quality of life by involving them in two different arts programs: African drumming presented by Michael Wingfield and Japanese weaving (SAORI weaving) presented by Bobbie Herron.

The projects involved three-person teams that worked on weaving projects, and making music together in drumming circles. Staff commented that

leave when classes were done.

Joan Griffin, a Therapeutic Recreation Assistant, described the reaction to the program by a resident with dementia: "I have never seen him so focused. He didn't want to leave because he was so involved — he was participating. In his mind he was working again, and he felt like he was accomplishing something."

Concord Hospital: Music in the ICU

Concord Hospital, the second busiest acute care facility in the state, understands the important role the arts can have in healing.

In 2008, Concord Hospital's pilot therapeutic music program received an Arts in Health Care grant that funded live music in its 20-bed Intensive Care Unit. Anne Bewley (harpist), Emily Mills (pianist), and Beverly Rush (guitarist), all Certified Music Practitioners, spent up to an hour at a time individually with patients to provide comfort and palliation through live music.

The visits often resulted in recordable improvement in patients' respiration, heart rate, and blood pressure. In addition, family members and staff benefited from the live bedside music, which created opportunities for empathy during stressful situations, and an environment of compassion while families faced the process of healing and grieving. The grant also funded a series of in-service workshops at monthly staff meetings, further educating staff members about the role music can play in healing.

"An unexpected benefit of this program was that, because of the music's soothing effects, patients' pain and anxiety could be attended to — and often alleviated — non-medically," said Alice Kinsler, manager of Therapeutic Arts and Activity Services. "When this happens, it can free nursing staff to attend to other critical duties, and even have a positive financial impact."

The program raised awareness and affirmed the message that engagement with art in any of its forms is healthy for the body, mind, and spirit of patients as well as for the community of people caring for a patient — the family, doctors, nursing care staff, and the

institution as a whole. Having seen the program's impact, Concord Hospital hopes to continue funding this and other Arts in Healing programs in the future.

To learn more about music and healing, visit the Music for Healing & Transition program website at: www.mhtp.org

Crotched Mountain: Adaptive Dance & Rehabilitation

Crotched Mountain provides special education, rehabilitation, community, and residential support services to more than 2,500 children and adults, annually, at its Greenfield campus, throughout New Hampshire, and in bordering states.

The arts are a cornerstone of Crotched Mountain's

programs and Adaptive Dance is a popular weekly class for teens and young adults, many of whom are nonverbal and who use wheelchairs.

Funded in part by a 2009 Arts in Health Care grant, Adaptive Dance at Crotched Mountain involved workshops held by juried New Hampshire dancers. The program reached out to dancers of all abilities, giving them the opportunity to collaborate, choreograph solo and group routines, learn the importance of music choice, and strengthen their social skills. Dance emphasizes memorization, sequencing, and innovation. The self-confidence that comes from dancing empowers youngsters with disabilities: they see themselves differently, affecting their emotional, academic and personal growth.

Led by Addy Gantt, a dance therapy professional, Adaptive Dance is one of the

programs at Crotched Mountain that is tracking the effect of arts programs on people with disabilities. She recently spoke of one student's progress.

"When Kaitlin and I dance together," said Gantt, "she exudes joy! The world would say that Kaitlin doesn't speak and that's hard for me to say because the language she speaks so clearly — and I understand quite well — we express through dance."

Community Partners: Painting, Poetry and Psychiatric Care

Community Partners is a non-profit community mental health center and area agency for developmental services in Strafford County.

In 2008, Community Partners received an Arts in Health Care grant for a project that incorporated both painting and poetry as therapy methods for individuals suffering from mental illness. The organization's goals were threefold: to engage clients in a recovery-based project, to familiarize staff with basic art therapy concepts, and to increase awareness of mental illness in Strafford County.

The results impacted both clients and clinical staff, who noted that painter June Latti and poet Mimi White "are both extremely gifted artists and teachers and clearly knew how to work with this population. They taught participants how to create a painting and how to structure a poem, but more than that, they taught them that they are people."

Impact was felt outside of the



Dance therapy professional Addy Gantt performs an original dance with Kaitlin, a member of Crotched Mountain's Adaptive Dance and Rehabilitation Program.

Photo by Michael Havey, Yasvin Design

classroom as well. A permanent gallery, with rotating art created by participants, has been set up at a Community Partners office. Selected artwork from the program was displayed at the Governor's Inn in Rochester, and the opening reception brought artists and the public together, eliminating the stigma often associated with mental illness.

Calendars incorporating poetry and artwork created by members of the program, as well as proceeds from the sales of original artwork, have gone into a fund to help finance future art therapy programs, which the staff at Community Partners now hopes to permanently integrate into its offerings. ■



Painting by D. Ross

For more information about the State Arts Council's Arts in Health Care grants, go to: www.nh.gov/nharts/grants

Lights

by Pam Brownell

Lights of color
a piece of sand
small smiles
small parts
of who I am
Water blue
white as snow
small parts and pieces
of what I know
Life above is watching me
lights and guides
huge as the sea
Yellow sun and dark the night
deep inside my soul is light.

Lady Lavish

by Amy Kindler, Joseph Bodnar, Gayle Cosgrove, D. Ross and Mimi White

I am the fire in the forest.
I am the agitated atmosphere.
I am the peaks of the purple mountains.
I am winking.
I am lost in rainbow daydreaming.
I am intoxicated.
I am venting my anger.
I am the ebb and flow of my time.
I am letting you know I know.
I am she who is no one, but everyone.
I am the ruby red lips.
I am the eyes of the jade dragon.
I stand here bold
and I am not coming home.

New Hampshire supports public art!

The New Hampshire Percent for Art Program is one of many public art programs established by state arts agencies and cities around the United States that brings the power of art into our public spaces. New Hampshire's Percent for Art program was established by the N.H. Legislature in 1979 as part of RSA 19 and requires that one-half of one percent of the bid contract price of construction and significant renovations of state buildings supported with general funds be used for the inclusion of art/craft work. This enlightened legislation ensures that all forms of visual arts and crafts have an integral and important role in state construction projects and that public spaces supported through public dollars are both functional and beautiful.

The selection of artwork is an open and inclusive process that brings together the voices of architects, engineers, planners, artists, state employees, arts professionals, and private citizens who utilize the services provided in the building.

Where to find Public Art?

Thirty-one years after its creation, the State Arts Council's Percent for Art program is still enhancing our public buildings and contributing to the creative economy. Artwork is located in buildings around the state. The previous issue of *New Hampshire Arts Journal* provided a tour of artwork in Concord. In this issue, we offer a self-guided tour of state-owned Percent for Art projects in the Seacoast region. Summer is a perfect time to visit the beach and visit our public art!

New Hampshire Fish and Game, Durham

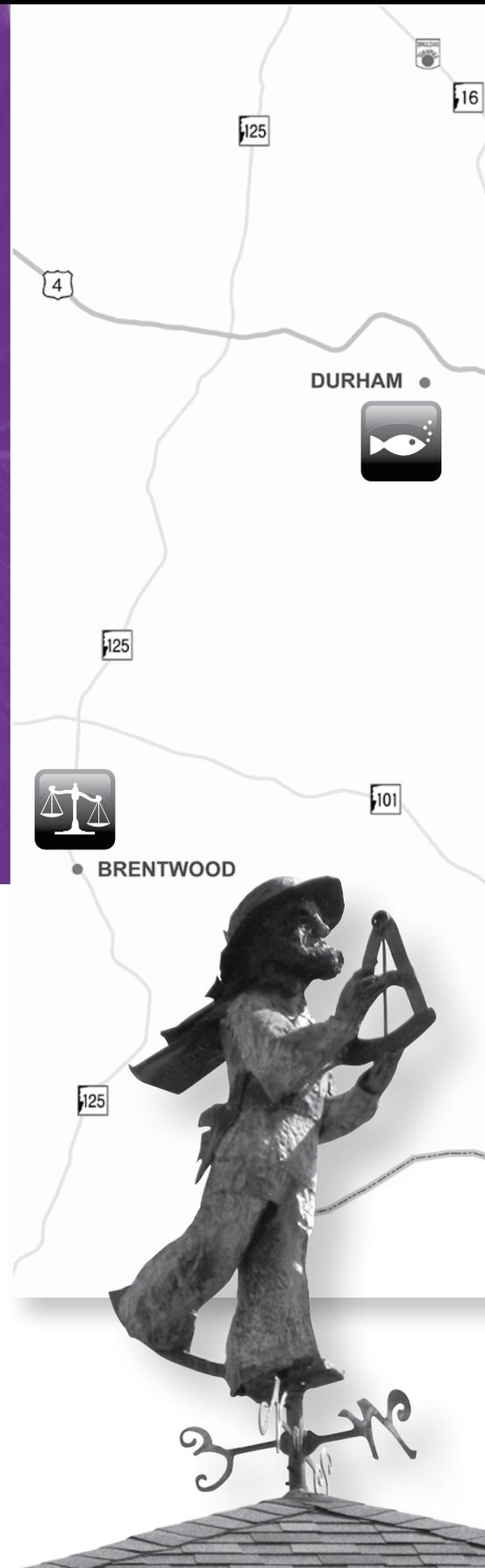


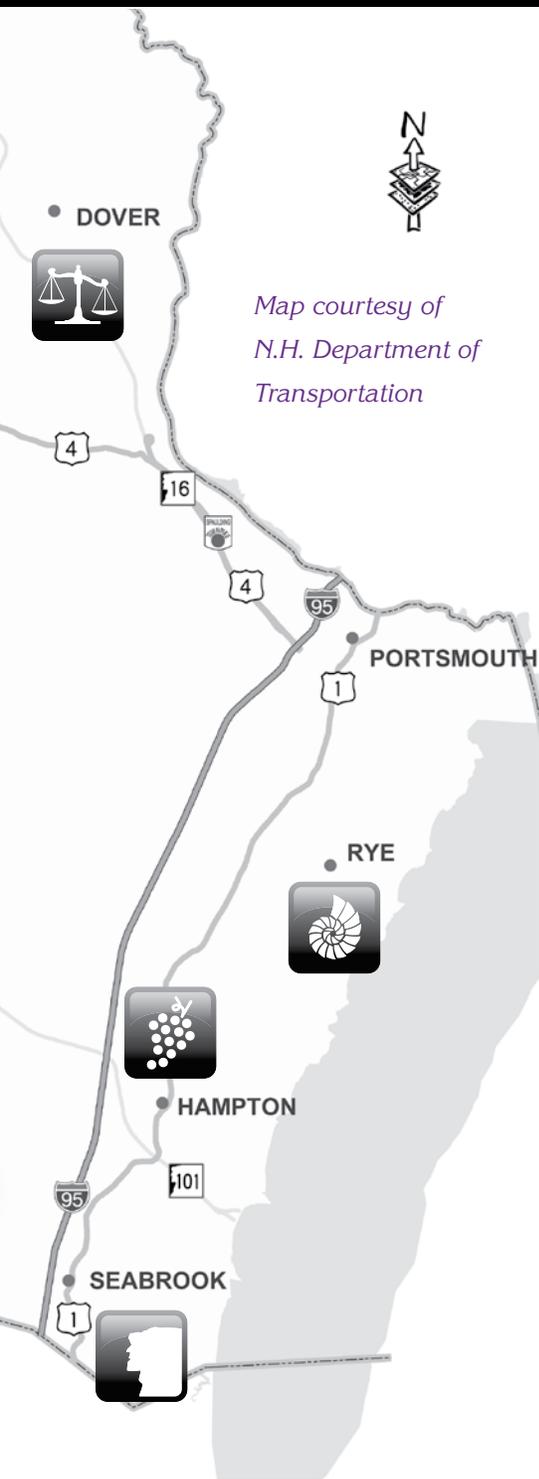
There is one piece of Percent for Art artwork at the Durham branch of N.H. Fish and Game, which is located in a small complex of buildings on Main Street. John Hatch's 1989 painting *Great Bay Estuarine Habitats* is a perfect fit for this state agency, with its depiction of a salt marsh and the plant and animal life it sustains.

Dover District Court, Dover



In the Dover District Court, four Percent for Art pieces hang in the lobbies. Be prepared to buzz through the metal detector on your way in. Dustin Knight's large triptych, *Cochecho Falls*, hangs in the staircase. Upstairs you'll find Jeff Brown's untitled ceramic piece, a collection of textured tiles rising like a pyramid around the 90-degree angle of a corner. Nearby you'll see *Meadow Stream*, a landscape by Carol Aronson Shore. Downstairs, a painting by Amy Brnger, *Still Life of Justice, Life, Charity*, adorns the wall by the clerk's window.





Sighting the Course for Seacoast New Hampshire by William Barth Osmundsen.

Photo by Carey Johnson, N.H. Department of Cultural Resources

Seacoast Science Center at Odiorne Point, Rye



In the Seacoast Science Center at Odiorne Point, a Percent for Art project was recently restored through the use of Conservation “Moose” License Plate funds. Christopher Gowell’s diptych bas relief, *Salt Water Bounty*, originally commissioned for the building in 1992, explores the indigenous sea life of New Hampshire’s salt waters including starfish, sea kelp, squid, and mussels. You can view this newly restored artwork in the Science Center’s main lobby.

For more information about Conservation “Moose” license plates, visit www.mooseplate.com.

Seabrook Welcome Center, Seabrook



The Seabrook Welcome Center is not part of New Hampshire’s Percent for Art program, but it does offer public artwork and regional displays that were created through a partnership with the State Arts Council and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. So while you’re in the neighborhood, why not stop by? It’s located on the north-bound side of Route 95.

The Welcome Center features a granite sign, with a depiction of a lighthouse perched on a rocky outcropping, by Gary Haven Smith. Echoing that theme, a weathervane, *Sighting the Course for Seacoast New Hampshire*, by William Barth Osmundsen, sits atop the building’s cupola. Six feet tall and made of copper, the weathervane is a sculpture of an ancient mariner.

There’s more copper artwork inside: flying above a brick fireplace is a flock of ducks created by J. Donald Felix. While you are visiting, take a look at the other displays that explore the art, culture, and natural beauty of the state.

State Liquor Store, Hampton



Just up the highway you’ll find more Percent for Art projects. The Hampton Liquor Store boasts more weathervanes by William Barth Osmundsen: *Crescent Moon* and *Rising Sun*. The grounds of the store are dotted with 29 life-sized steel bird sculptures by Walter Liff.

Rockingham County Court, Brentwood



You’ll find Percent for Art creations just about everywhere you look in the Rockingham County Court — starting on the north end of the parking lot. Mary Boone Wellington’s metal sculpture, *Mt. Meru*, stands sentry over the courthouse that was built in the mid-1990s.

Inside, the first-floor lobby features Al Jaeger’s clay mural, *Earth Forms*. The second-floor waiting area offers representational images of the New Hampshire landscape, with watercolors by Byron Carr and oil paintings by Carol Jowdy, Carol Aronson Shore, Dorine Gross, and Katherine Doyle. One flight up, the walls are covered with Peter Randall’s color photographs of New Hampshire’s outdoors. ■



Stained Glass Window, Derry Public Library

Photo courtesy of Derry Public Library

Moose: Symbol of New Ham

The moose you see on New Hampshire's Conservation License Plates isn't just a work of art. It also helps to support the conservation of great art around New Hampshire.

All funds raised through the Conservation License Plate program — also known as the "Moose Plate" program — go toward the promotion, protection, and investment in New Hampshire's natural, cultural, and historic resources. This volunteer program allows New Hampshire citizens to get involved and proudly display their commitment to cultural conservation.

The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts receives a portion of the "Moose Plate" funds and distributes them through competitive Cultural Conservation grants. These grants are awarded for the conservation of publicly owned documents and/or artwork, as well as for the conservation of publicly owned cultural facilities that contribute

to New Hampshire's arts and cultural heritage. They help protect New Hampshire's artistic and cultural legacy and in doing so contribute to the vitality of our state: a wonderful place to live, to do business, and to visit.

Here are some examples of State Arts Council conservation projects:

Bradford Town Hall: theatre curtain restoration

In May 2006, the Bradford Town Hall discovered it had a historically important hand-painted theatrical stage backdrop, done by Charles W. Henry (1850-1918), in storage. The town received a 2008 Cultural Conservation grant to have the curtain restored by Curtains without Borders. A nationally recognized textile restorer living in Bradford, Deborah Bede, worked on the project. Community members also participated under professional supervision to bring the imaginary street scene,

reminiscent of Concord, back to good condition. The theatre curtain has been installed in the Town Hall for public viewing.



Bradford Town Hall Theatre Curtain

Photo courtesy of Town of Bradford

Derry Public Library: stained glass window restoration

Philanthropist Henry MacGregor, descendant of the Reverend James MacGregor (one of the founders of Derry), bequeathed a stained glass window to the Derry Public Library in 1927. Measuring 44" x 90", the window features the full achievement of the MacGregor coat-of-arms and supporters,

and is flanked by side panels depicting claymores crossed under shields. 2005 Cultural Conservation grant funds were used for professional restoration of this historic artifact.

Franklin Opera House: multiple-stage renovations and movable seating

Built in 1892-1893 and designed by William Butterfield, one of New Hampshire's foremost architects of the time, the Franklin Opera House has been a

Company of Berlin from the late nineteenth century through the mid-1960s. The project, called *Beyond Brown Paper*, preserved photos that chronicled the social, cultural, and recreational lives of the company's workers, their families, and their place in the



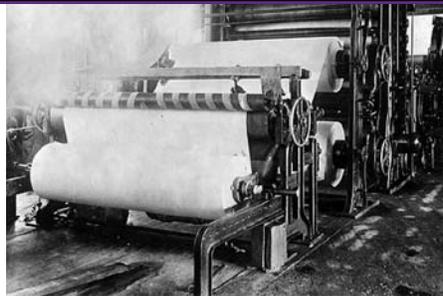
houses designed by Rollinsford architect George Gilman Adams; it utilizes a mechanism to raise the orchestra floor to an incline for theatrical performances and to lower it level for dances. The building's murals and intricate stenciling were discovered under several layers of paint and, using 2004 Cultural Conservation grant funds, have been restored to their former grandeur. ■

You can learn more about the State Arts Council's Cultural Conservation grant program at

ppshire, Supporter of the Arts

By Shelly Angers and Cassandra Erickson

venue for balls, dances, lectures, plays, musicals, vaudeville shows, concerts, school productions, graduation ceremonies, and Red Cross programs. The Opera House received Cultural Conservation grants in 2004, 2005, 2007, and 2008 to renovate the balcony and bring it up to building code, to upgrade the electrical system, to restore the front entrance, to purchase orchestra seating that can easily be added and removed when necessary, and to fund ceiling and roof repairs, as well as new interior paint. The venue recently changed its name to Middle New Hampshire Arts & Entertainment Center and hosts a variety of programs attracting people from around the Lakes region.



Above: Historic photos of logging, *Beyond Brown Paper*.

Photo courtesy of Plymouth State University

life of Berlin itself. Awarded funds were used to make preservation-quality resolution scans of 250 of the 11,000 photographs. Funds were also used to purchase and set up a computer workstation in Berlin that provided both public access to the images and a way for users to share valuable information concerning the images.

Plymouth State University: photo archiving & accessibility

In 2007, a Cultural Conservation grant was awarded to Plymouth State University to conserve the history of the Brown

Rochester Opera House: mural and stenciling restoration

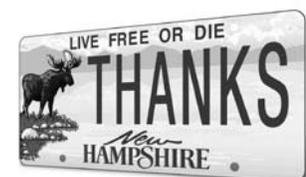
The Rochester Opera House, built in 1908, is the sole survivor of five city hall and opera

www.nh.gov/nharts/grants, and more about Conservation License Plates at www.mooseplate.com.



Mural, Rochester Opera House

Photo courtesy of Rochester Opera House



We bid farewell...

The State Arts Council said goodbye to three long-time employees and two Councilors this past year: Rebecca L. “Becky” Lawrence, director; Judy Rigmont, creative communities coordinator; Marjorie Durkee, grants and contract technician; Karen Burgess Smith, council chair; and Robert “Bob” Duff, councilor. We could fill up many issues of *New Hampshire Arts Journal* with stories of the wonderful work they did and contributions they made to the New Hampshire’s Arts community and the state as a whole. We wish them the very best in their new adventures.

Get State Arts Council News—in your In Box!

The State Arts Council has several e-news services that will keep you up to date on issues, events, and opportunities of special interest to the arts community in and around New Hampshire:

- **Friday News Flash** includes news items and is sent out via e-mail most Fridays.
- **E-Opps** is a listing of professional development opportunities for New Hampshire artists and arts organizations. It is posted on a bi-weekly basis.
- **E-Clips** is a collection of links to local, national, and international news stories, helping you connect to what’s going on in the arts, especially in New Hampshire.

You can sign up for these services by visiting our subscription center at www.nh.gov/nharts/newsandcalendar/e-news/index.htm

“Culture Cares” website touts community service

In November 2009, the New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources launched a new service that makes it easier for the public to learn about community service projects our cultural organizations perform as their way of helping those in need.

“Culture Cares” lists art supply drives, scholarship programs, reduced ticket prices for underserved populations, food drives and more. If you know of a cultural organization that is performing this type of community programming, please ask them to submit it for posting on “Culture Cares.”

For more information, go to: www.nh.gov/nhculture and click on the “Culture Cares” link in the “Quick Links” box on the right.

Disaster relief assistance available to flood victims

The Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) has funds available to any professional craft artist in New England who was seriously affected by flooding in Spring 2010.

CERF’s programs include:

- Grants up to \$1,500
- Loans up to \$8,000
- Booth fee waivers at craft shows
- Discounts on materials and equipment from suppliers and manufacturers
- Assistance with business development through referrals to consultants and other low or no-cost resources
- Disaster forums to facilitate craft community disaster preparedness and recovery.

For eligibility requirements and more detailed information, contact the Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) at: www.craftemergency.org or call 802/229-2306.

Helpful Links:

In New Hampshire:

- New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources: www.nh.gov/nhculture
- New Hampshire State Council on the Arts: www.nh.gov/nharts
- New Hampshire Folklife website: www.nh.gov/folklife
- New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources: www.nh.gov/nhdhr
- New Hampshire Film & Television Office: www.nh.gov/film
- New Hampshire State Library: www.nh.gov/nhsl

In New England:

- New England Foundation for the Arts: www.nefa.org
- Matchbook: www.matchbook.org
- Culture Count: www.culturecount.org
- New England Common Assessment Program: www.education.nh.gov/instruction/assessment/necap/index.htm

National:

- National Endowment for the Arts: www.arts.gov
- National Assembly of State Arts Agencies: www.nasaa.org

New Hampshire State Arts Councilors

The council shall consist of 15 members, broadly representative of all fields of the performing and fine arts, to be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the council from among private citizens who are widely known for their professional competence and experience in connection with the performing and fine arts. (RSA 19-A:2)

The Council meets at least four times a year to review and approve grants and advise the State Arts Council and Commissioner.

Chair

Dr. Roger C. Brooks, Concord

Vice Chair

Jacqueline R. Kahle, Wilton

Randy Armstrong, Barrington
Richard W. Ayers, Sanbornton
Robert Begiebing, Newfields
Wendy Cahill, Concord
Sara Germain, Dublin
Peter McLaughlin, Hanover
Elizabeth Morgan, Amherst
Toni H. Pappas, Manchester
Tim Sappington, Randolph
Grace Sullivan, Deerfield
Edra Toth, Farmington
Dorothy J. Yanish, Peterborough

Division of Arts Staff

Lynn Martin Graton
Acting Director & Traditional Arts
Coordinator
603/271-8418
lynn.j.graton@dcr.nh.gov

Cassandra Erickson
Chief Grants Officer
603/271-7926
cassandra.erickson@dcr.nh.gov

Jane Eklund
Programs Information Officer
603/271-0791
jane eklund@dcr.nh.gov

Catherine O'Brian
Arts Education Coordinator
603/271-0795
catherine.r.obrian@dcr.nh.gov

Julie Mento
Visual Arts Associate
603/271-0790
julie.mento@dcr.nh.gov

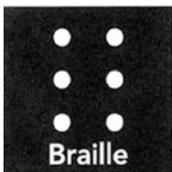
The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts is a division of the New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources

20 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603/271-2540

Van McLeod, Commissioner
Shelly Angers, Communications
Coordinator

*Detail of work
by David Lamb.*

*Photo by
Bill Truslow.*



New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
2½ Beacon Street, Suite 225
Concord, NH 03301-4447

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*Promoting the arts to protect and enrich New Hampshire's
unique quality of life since 1965.*

*Hall table by David Lamb;
stone work by Chance Anderson*

Photo by Bill Truslow



Phone: 603/271-2789
Fax: 603/271-3584
TTY/TDD: 800/735-2964
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