

Annual Report – Programs and Publicity for 2012-2013

Although we did host interesting and well-received speakers this year, we also branched out from our standard format.

Making Sense of the Civil War. Winning a grant from the NYS Council for the Humanities, the Association hosted a series of community discussions about the Civil War. Readings provided by the Council formed the backbone of discussions, which were led by Jim Howard of Peru, a former teacher and principal who mentors young teachers-in-training at PSU.

An average of 15 people participated in the five discussions, between late February to late April. Five community partners hosted the sessions, in addition to the North Star Museum: the Peru Community Church, the Keeseville Methodist Church, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Plattsburgh and the Clinton County Historical Association.

Upcoming, we are partnering with the Clinton, Essex, Franklin Library System, and John Brown Lives! on a community discussion series called "Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle." These will revolve around four films, supplied by the National Endowment for the Humanities, over the next two years.

Amy Godin. Adirondack scholar Amy Godine presented new research in late June on the amazing story of a Gerrit Smith deed for a North Elba plot of the land that was granted to a man still enslaved in Maryland before the Civil War. It is the only known case of a slave named on such a deed. June 14 at the Peru Free Library.

NYS Historian Robert Weible spoke on June 1 to a packed house at the Keeseville Grange about the Civil War exhibit at the NYS Museum in Albany. The exhibit, which focuses on anti-slavery activities in NYS as an important pre-War development, is winning national awards and is being extended into 2014.

Library Talks. Libraries around the North Country have invited the Association to present a slide talk about the Museum and the Underground Railroad history of the region. Two programs were held this year, and more are scheduled, with the aim of promoting Museum attendance and broadening awareness of the region's abolitionist history.

PUBLICITY

*Continuing use of electronic calendars and press notices continued to help build attendance at Association events and promote the Museum.

*Travel writers are beginning to show interest. Several have published favorable reports urging readers to attend. One which appeared in the Huffington Post recently included the Museum among the top attractions in the entire region.

*We significantly increased our use of social media and other internet-based efforts to promote the Museum and related events, with an active Facebook page, an improved website and the Constant Contact email service.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Slocum

2nd Vice President

Program and Publicity Chair