The winning artwork of the Commission’s first annual Winter Plein Air, painted by artist Ellen Gavin.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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COMMISSION & COMMITTEES

Cultural & Heritage Commission

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John Garrison, Secretary

Ella M. Boykin
Penny Watson, AIA
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Grants Review Panel

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Erika Gardner, Gloucester County Cultural & Heritage Commission
Kevin Gibala, TD Bank
Deborah Oglesby, Community Activist
Alfonso Luna Jimenez, Tattoo Artist
Pamela Weichmann, WheatonArts

ADA Advisory Subcommittee

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Lydia Keller, County Disabled Advisory Council
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Annette Franceschi, County Disabled Advisory Council

Budget Subcommittee
Ella Boykin
Maria Cerda-Moreno
Penny Watson, AIA

Nominations Subcommittee
Suzanne Merighi
Maria Cerda-Moreno
Penny Watson, AIA

West Jersey Time Traveler Subcommittee
Meghan Wren
Lisa Jester
Penny Watson, AIA
Mission

The mission of the Cumberland County cultural & Heritage Commission is dedicated to the development and promotion of public interest in the arts and history of local and county cultural traditions.

Long Range Plan

In 2013, the Commission updated its five-year long-range plan due to four key findings revealed since the last plan had been completed:

1. The Great Recession: Between 2007 and 2009, Cumberland County suffered a precipitous economic decline, with unemployment peaking at 14.4%. This resulted in declines in donations, grants, memberships, and other revenue for local arts and cultural organizations;

2. Philanthropy: At the same time it was determined that Cumberland County actually ranks in the top 18% of U.S. counties in terms of generosity, with donations and philanthropic giving with over $3 million annually provided by local residents;

3. Collaboration: Collaborative action is growing in the county, including tourism development packages, advertising co-ops, countywide events, and shared services;

4. Growing Disparities: Cumberland has become a minority/majority county with growing ethnic diversity. While populations and audiences diversify, cultural community leadership has lagged behind, and there is a growing need to build diversity to promote organizational health.

Consequently, the long-range goals of the Commission were expanded and clarified to concentrate on two main areas:

1. Help arts and heritage organizations achieve long-term stability: While the previous plan concentrated on strategic planning and governance, this new plan expands on these goals with the intent to build vitality, relevancy, and financial sustainability into the cultural and history organizations throughout the county;

2. Build Cumberland County into a culture/eco destination: Utilize the rural and natural attributes of the county to build economic activity and tourism which links culture, history and the environment.

From these two goals came four objectives:

1. Build Consistent Branding;
2. Support Effective Fundraising;
3. Implement fundraising metrics;
4. Build diversity in governance

Several strategies were formulated to accomplish these goals by 2018 with metrics to guide the path to successful completion.

The Cultural & Heritage Commission mission and vision statements were revised and updated in October 2013 as a result of the long-range planning process.
### Strategies & Implementation Schedule

**Online Toolbox:** The Commission should establish an online portal where its grantees can access current materials in fundraising, marketing and impact assessment materials. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress.

**Regular Get-Togethers:** The Commission should establish regular social events for cultural and history organizations in order to build trust and spark ideas for collaborations. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

**Matching Grants:** The Commission should establish a program of matching grants to motivate fundraising professionals and allow donors to effectively double their donations. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

**Cultural Hub:** The Commission should establish a cultural hub, or central meeting place where arts and heritage providers can find research supplies, periodicals and assistance. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

**Cultural Coach:** The Commission should establish a program of sustained nurturing through a “cultural coach” who can work with groups on a regular and ongoing basis. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

**Eco- and Agri-Tourism:** The Commission should establish a collaborative program of promoting the County’s natural resources and commerce derived from natural resources, linking it with the region’s arts and cultural offerings. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

**Cultural Trust:** The Commission should establish a trust or fund to support cultural organizations in the county. **2018 Implementation goals:**
- Evaluate progress

Green indicates completion while Red indicates either not accomplished or still in process.
In 2018, the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission re-granted $100,000 of State Council on the Arts Local Arts Programming block grant funds to 23 non-profits. The awards ranged from $1,000 to $8,750, which funded events and programs in all three urban cores (Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland) as well as several rural communities.

The funding included 20 special projects or general programming, such as Bay Day, Festival of Lights, Bridgeton’s Cinco de Mayo, Deerfield Harvest Festival, Jewish Film Festival, a Jazz Cabaret, and the Obon Festival among others. Three of the re-grants went towards general operating support of the Cumberland Players, Gallery 50 in Bridgeton and the Off Broad Street Players.
In 2018, the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission re-granted $21,000 in re-grant funds to 6 history non-profits. The awards ranged from $824 to $6,676, which funded events and programs throughout the county.

The funding included an historic structure analysis of the nail house in Bridgeton, a photographic exhibit of the county’s past economic powerhouses, programming at East Point Lighthouse, an oral history project, a celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., and operating support for the Mauricetown Historical Society.
**Winter Eagle Festival:** The 2018 Eagle Festival was held on Saturday, February 3rd. The Commission in collaboration with Clay College and the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts provided children’s activity tables of Sculpey clay and other crafts. Jackie Sandro of Clay College and Diane Roberts of RRCA, along with several members and staff of the Commission supervised the day’s activities.

**Traveling Meetings:** The Commission traveled to Mauricetown in April, WheatonArts in May and Landis Theater in September to showcase some of great programming happening throughout the county.

**Encore Awards:** The 2018 Encore Awards were held on May 14th at Tuckerton Seaport Museum in Ocean County. The Commission selected Lisa Stewart Garrison, a community advocate and cultural programmer. The Commission always supports this event with a strong attendance.

**Senior’s Month Concert:** The Commission provided funding to offset the costs of the Senior’s Art Contest held in Cumberland County organized by the County Office on Aging.

**Artists’ Day:** Artists’ Day was held on Saturday, September 8th in Mauricetown. Partnering with the Mauricetown Historical Society, the event included performances by The Snake Brothers and Steve Byrne along with twelve artists conducting plein air painting, a “Paint Mauricetown” tent for visitors and children to try their hand at plein air painting and open house tours of the Compton House and Hoy House.

**Plein Air Competitions:** Two plein air competitions were held in 2018, the Cohansey Riverfest Plein Air Competition was held on September 1st and included over 20 artists while the Winter Plein Air Competition was held on December 29th with 17 brave artists. A collaboration with Gallery 50, Inc., the Winter Plein Air limited artists to 4 colors of their choosing.

**Near and Far – Arts and Cultures of East Asia:** The Commission partnered with WheatonArts and Atlantic County on a multi-year series of events celebrating East Asian culture. Programming will continue into 2019.
CULTURAL PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY

**Website:** The Commission continued refining and adding to its website in 2018, [cumberlandnjart.org](http://cumberlandnjart.org). The website generated over 5,000 unique pageviews in 2018.

**Brochures:** Working with Cape May and Salem Counties and the Southern Shore DMO, the Commission assisted with the creation of a historic trail brochure, which includes sites in Greenwich, Bridgeton, Mauricetown, and Heislerville. Nearly all of the sites listed are also in the West Jersey Time Traveler podcast program.

**Social Media:** 2018 saw expansive use of the Commission’s multiple social media accounts. The Facebook page, which was originally created in 2014 and had 176 followers at the end of that year, at the end of 2016 was up to 427 and by the end of 2018 was up to 606. The Commission posted 20 Tweets in 2018 and attracted 234 followers on Twitter. The Commission currently has 11 videos on YouTube, mostly of workshops and educational programming. On Instagram, the Commission has 170 followers and 28 posts.

**Advocacy:** The Commission continued its advocacy in 2018, with memberships in the South Jersey Cultural Alliance, ArtPrideNJ, PreservationNJ, Americans for the Arts, and the Association for Cultural and Heritage Commissions.

**Signage:** The Commission began a two-year process of translating all the West Jersey Time Traveler podcasts into Spanish, so that each site will have podcasts in English and Spanish along with transcripts in both languages.
Special Requests: The Commission received several special requests in 2018. The Friends of India Society requested funds for their Holi Kite and Color Festival, the County Black Hall of Fame requested funds for a teen talent program, funds were provided to the Boys & Girls Club for special programming relating to Hispanic heritage month, and the County 4-H requested funds for a butterfly art tent at the County Fair. This program is a great way to introduce new organizations to the re-granting program and to fund new initiatives that come up in the year.

Workshops: Three workshops were held in 2018, including Disaster Planning & Preparedness Workshop on July 12th, Intro to Emergency Preparedness for Arts and Cultural Organizations on August 30th, and a Grant Writing Workshop on September 19th. In all three cases, audiences exceeded expectations and there was interest in additional workshops on the topics.

PNJ Roundtable: Partnering with Preservation NJ, the Commission held a preservation roundtable at the historic Landis Theater in Vineland on September 27th. This was the first such roundtable in the state.

Teen Arts: Partnering with Levoy Theatre in Millville, Teen Arts was revived in 2017, and grew exponentially in 2018. Around 600 students from throughout the county participated in the one-day event on April 13th.

Art EveryWhere Public Arts Program: The Commission continued expanding the County’s public art in 2018 with the completion of an indoor mural at the County Administration Building and a new outdoor mural in Bridgeton. The mural in Bridgeton’s pocket park was designed by Anne Feinstein and completed by a robot using dot matrix technology, a unique method in South Jersey. The interior mural in the County Administration Building were completed by MaryAnn Cannon and remind Freeholders and staff of the importance of public art.
Governance: Merle Silver resigned in 2017 at the end of her 5-year term and both Roy Kaneshiki and John Garrison indicated that due to health concerns they would not want to serve another 5-year term when they came up for re-appointment in 2018. These three seats were quickly filled at the end of 2018 by Michael Cagno of the Noyes Museum, Robert Dragotta, a Broadway producer and local resident, and Sharon Yoshida, a community volunteer from Upper Deerfield.

Budget: The Commission’s total income in 2018 (not including staffing contributions) came to $177,665. A full 77% of this income was from grant sources and an additional 6% provided through the trust account. 100% of this income was expended in 2018, not including the trust account. There were two line items that came in over budget: West Jersey Time Traveler nad WheatonArts Asian Programming, but since these indicated expansions in programming and since several other line items came in well below budget, these overages are not considered problematic.