Cumberland County
Cultural & Heritage Commission

2012 Annual Report
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Cultural & Heritage Commission

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West Jersey Time Traveler Subcommittee
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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.

Organizational Goals

Objective #1: Expand financial and staff resources available to the cultural sector. The Commission is ready to build its budget through taxes, grants and other sources.

Rubrics
- Increase in Commission grants from non-county sources.
- Passage of Open Space Referendum.
- Increase in Commission dollars awarded to local groups.

Objective #2: Re-align Commission investments to maximize impact. While it is important that the Commission continue to support organizations without other means of support, it should also begin to more strategically invest in key areas.

Rubrics
- Increase in the number of ethnic organizations receiving support.
- Increase in disabled patrons at cultural events.
- Completion of study of Commission-sponsored events.
- Decrease of Commission staff time devoted to events production.

Objective #3: Help the cultural community mature. The Commission can provide a range of assistance to those organizations ready, willing and able to attain higher levels of managerial acumen and aesthetic quality that will lead to ongoing support by State level cultural agencies.

Rubrics
- Increase in number of cultural providers receiving State operating support.
- Increase in private dollars to arts and heritage groups in Cumberland County.
- Increase in attendance at Council-sponsored training workshops.
- Increase in number of initiatives like new cultural venues and artist housing.

Objective #4: Increase the visibility of arts and heritage events and attractions. Local arts, cultural and heritage attractions need to build visibility within and beyond the borders of the County. A wide range of tactics are needed to increase and diversify audience, donors, volunteers, and members, including linking with tourism and economic development agencies.

Rubrics
- Increase in number of listings, features, and reviews in regional press.
- Increase in collaborative initiatives among Cultural Council members.
- Increase in regional and national print, broadcast, and web-based media coverage of County as a rural cultural destination.
- Increase in numbers of new residents on cultural boards and as volunteers.

The Cultural & Heritage Commission mission and vision statements were revised and updated in October 2007 as a result of the long-range planning process.
In 2012, the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission re-granted $95,000 of State Council on the Arts Local Arts Programming block grant funds to 21 non-profits. The awards ranged from $10,050 to $800, which funded events and programs in all three urban cores (Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland) as well as several rural communities.

The funding included 18 special projects, 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 Cumberland County College’s theater arts program, Gallery 50 in Bridgeton and the Off Broad Street Players.

Re-grantee organizations included theatre troupes, music ensembles, visual arts galleries, music theatre, dance groups, municipalities, ethnic organizations, religious entities, libraries, education systems, and social service non-profits.
In 2012, the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission re-granted $12,000 in N.J. Historical Commission GOS grant funds to 6 history non-profits. The awards ranged from $800 to $3,000, which funded events and programs throughout the county.

The funding included a photography exhibit of Cumberland County synagogues, the publication of *Bridgeton, New Jersey: City on the Cohansey*, a celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s history and significance, and Founder’s Day in Vineland. As well, the funding provided general operating support to the Mauricetown Historical Society. The Cumberland County Library received funding to conduct four American Historical Theater portrayals of Edgar Allen Poe, Phillis Wheatley, Mary Read, and Harriet Tubman.
Winter Eagle Festival: The 2012 Eagle Festival was held on Saturday, February 11th. The Commission in collaboration with Clay College provided a children’s activity table of Sculpey clay. Jackie Sandro of Clay College along with several members and staff of the Commission supervised the day’s activities.

Senior’s Month Concert: The joint Senior’s Month concert was presented by the Bay-Atlantic Symphony at Cumberland County College on May 12th, with the Commission providing funds to allow 50 seniors from Cumberland County to attend. This program is a collaborative effort between the Commission, the County Office on Aging and Bay-Atlantic Symphony. The Commission also provided funding to offset the costs of the Senior’s Art Contest held in Cumberland County.

Disability Awareness Day: A collaborative effort with the Disabled Advisory Council, this event was held on Saturday, October 22nd. The Commission presents a display of cultural activities in the county which are fully accessible and speaks about its dedication to accessibility in its programming.

Encore Awards: The 2012 Encore Awards were held on Thursday, May 17th at the Landis Theater in Vineland. The Commission selected Bob and Alan Woodruff to receive the award and between Commission members and guests of the Woodruffs, almost 20 people attended the awards through the Commission’s effort. The Commission made a strong effort over the previous 18 months to have the Encore Awards relocated to Cumberland County. With the change of venue, the format of the event was changed to a more Oscar-like vibe, which was highly praised by the attendees.

East Point Artists’ Day: East Point Artists’ Day was held on Saturday, September 17th and included performances by The Snake Brothers and Steve Byrne along with ten artists conducting plein air painting, a “Paint the Lighthouse” tent for visitors and children to try their hand at plein air painting and open house tours of East Point Lighthouse. This event is a collaboration of the Commission, Barn Studio of Art, Maurice River Historical Society, Maurice River Township, and Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River.

Plein Air Competition: The Plein Air Competition, a joint program with Gallery 50, was held on August 25th and included 9 artists and included nearly twenty works of art. Judging was performed by Glenn Rudderow and Ellen Gavin won first place for the second year in a row.
Website: The Commission’s website, ccculturalheritage.org, received 1,330 site visits in 2012, which is a **30% decrease** in website traffic from the previous year. Additions to the website in 2012 included the increase from 54 artists included in the Artists’ Directory to **59 artists** (8% increase) registered as of December 31, 2012. However, analysis shows that the least visited pages of the website are the artists directory, calendar of events and newsletter archive, while the most visited are the grant opportunities page. Work was also directed to a new historic architecture website, which is planned for release in 2013.

Advocacy: On May 22nd, the Commission hosted the N.J. State Council on the Arts in Millville. The Council’s regular meeting was held at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts followed by a luncheon at WheatonArts sponsored by the Commission. This was an opportunity for Council members to familiarize themselves with the county and provided a venue for Commission members to network.

In July 2012, the Commission passed a resolution supporting a grant application to NJDOT for the Broad Street Bridge Keeper’s House.

The Commission wrote a letter of support in August to the State Historic Preservation Office for the repairs to the Bridgeton Raceway embankments.

Paid Advertising: The only paid advertising the Commission participated in during 2012 was a full-page dedication in the Encore Award playbill.

Newsletter: The Commission’s electronic newsletter produced 12 monthly editions in 2012 covering in-county cultural events, programming updates of the Commission and cultural interest stories. All newsletters are archived and available on the Commission’s website, and are emailed to all County government employees and individuals who have provided their email addresses via the Commission’s website or sign-up forms at Commission events. Between the two groups, this totals a monthly email distribution of just over 800 people, which is a reduction from last year to the sale of the Cumberland Manor resulting in a reduction of the County workforce.
SSRDMO Marketing Grants: Starting in 2012, the Commission partnered with the County Tourism Advisory Council to secure annual marketing/tourism funding from the Southern Shore Region Destination Marketing Organization. A grant of $15,000 was partially re-granted to 8 non-profits within Cumberland County with a portion used to fund new Commission banners and East Point Artists’ Day signage. The two new banners are available to re-grantees and were used extensively in 2012 (see page 6 for image).

By-Laws and Strategic Long-Range Plan Updates: The Commission began the process to update its 5-year strategic plan in 2012 and included in the work program an update to its by-laws and the creation of protean by-laws to be used as a template for other organizations to improve their governance. Nancy Moses was selected for the strategic plan update and the law firm of Montgomery McCraken Walker & Rhoads was secured for the work on the by-laws.

County Aerial Photos Conservation and Digitization: The Commission made application to the N.J. Historical Commission for a special project grant to converse water damaged mylar aerals of the county from the 1970s and to digitize them. Although the grant application was unsuccessful, the damage was assessed to be minimal and a program of digitization will most likely commence in 2013.

West Jersey Time Traveler: The Commission continued its work on the $12,500 grant-funded project to produce audio podcasts of 15 historic sites throughout the county. The associated website, www.cumberlandhistorical.org was created and the architectural firm of VSBA, Inc. of Philadelphia was selected to produce the site signage. The timeline was extended to December 2012 with the installation of the signage to extend into early 2013.

County on Canvas Artwork Inventory: The Dept. of Planning & Development’s summer intern, Rebecca Ziefle, inventoried, labeled and photographed the artwork held by the county through its County on Canvas program. 105 individual works of art were catalogued in the process.

Workshops: On September 15, 2012, the Commission hosted a Grant Writing Workshop in Millville facilitated by Rachel Dukeman, a next-generation cultural marketing specialist from Philadelphia.

Special Requests: The Commission funded one special request in 2012 to the County Office on Aging to offset the costs of the Older Americans Art Exhibit and Competition.
Budget: The Commission’s total income in 2012 came to $158,520. A full 86% of this income was from grant sources and an additional 0.6% provided through the trust account. 99.2% of this income was expended in 2012, with the remaining 0.8% returning to the County general account (100% of grant funds were fully expended). The Commission’s Trust Account balance on December 31, 2012 was $999.48 with no income and $932.93 in income posted in the year. There were five line items that came in over budget: website maintenance expenditures, Encore Awards, and Long-Range Plan – all other items either came in at or below budget.