

FORMING PARTNERSHIPS AND **alliances**

Collaboration lies at the heart of every successful Cultural Heritage Tourism endeavor. Most single CHT resources depend on the hard work of volunteers and the dedication of staff to function. And in its broadest sense, CHT requires the expertise of many individuals throughout the area to attract and serve visitors effectively.

There are many reasons to build partnerships. They can provide flexibility, different ways to access new markets, a competitive advantage, and an economy of scale. When engaged in appropriately, partnerships can make a significant cultural and economic impact in and on a community.

Creating heritage trails, heritage areas, special programs, special events, or offering unique packaging concepts are some of the ways cultural heritage attractions can leverage their resources through the collaboration process. By combining several experiences unique to an area or region, communities are encouraged to focus on product development that is distinctly their own. In so doing, the partnership has the potential to become a destination driver in its own right.

Good partnerships draw on the special abilities of each participant, and create an environment in which everyone is on equal footing. The kind of partnership created, however, is important if you want to stay in step.



Fanny Allen, courtesy of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum.



Icarus Stained Glass, traditional architectural stained glass windows, Rochester, courtesy of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce, photo by Mark Favreau.

mission-allied partnerships

Collaboration with fellow cultural heritage resources is known as *mission-allied partnerships*. That means all parties are united by a commitment to professional standards (such as the *Vermont Cultural Heritage Tourism Standards and Guidelines*) and to public service. In other words, everyone is dancing to the same tune, viewing themselves as partners and not competitors, and understanding that if cultural heritage resources work together to promote their community, all will benefit.

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING EITHER CREATING OR JOINING THIS TYPE OF PARTNERSHIP, YOU MAY WANT TO:

- Obtain information about the other programs/sites/resources.
- Get to know the people involved in other organizations that promote cultural heritage tourism (see Contact section).
- Explore the advantages of pooling advertising dollars to promote your region as a heritage destination.
- Seek creative ways to share and/or support programming efforts.

market-allied partnerships

The second theme related partnership model is called *market-allied partnerships*. As the name implies, the primary focus here is advertising, and the membership often consists of various business interests. Participants can be from both the public and private sector, and will often include representatives from the hospitality industry. As the latter is said to form the foundation of the tourism industry, it is essential to include these entities in any market-allied plan. A leveraging point for a cultural heritage resource seeking entry into, or creating this kind of partnership is the fact that their attraction has the demonstrated ability to increase the length of the traveler's stay.

indicators of a good partnership

The following provides most of the components that comprise a good partnership. Your specific situation may vary according to the needs of the project, the community, and/or your collaborators. For example, some partnerships will require a sunset clause, or language specifying who can make decisions. For most collaborative relationships, however:

- There is a common, well-understood goal/outcome, usually articulated in writing.
- Everyone truly understands, if not embraces, each other's values and opinions.
- Disagreement can occur without it becoming personal and/or counter-productive.
- There are clear, well-defined written rules and responsibilities. Each participant understands what is expected of themselves and others.



The Steamboat Ticonderoga, docked at St. Albans Bay, circa 1900. Almost destined to be scrapped, the Ticonderoga was hauled 2 miles in the winter of 1955 to the Shelburne Museum. This tremendous undertaking took 65 days. The Steamship is now a National Historic Landmark for all to enjoy. Photo courtesy of the St. Albans Historical Society.

- There is open, honest, on-going, easy communication. Disagreements, when they occur, do so without becoming personal and/or counter-productive.
- There is a sense of fairness in responsibility.
- There is a mutual respect of and by all participants. Each understands and accepts that different stakeholders have different perspectives.
- All involved are committed to the success of the project and would say they benefited from the partnership.

The strength of such cooperative relationships will rest squarely on the foundation on which they are built. To ensure the partnerships you create are successful, and provides all participants with the opportunity to share in process and outcome:

- Have a written, detailed goal that clearly articulates an anticipated result.
- Have a start-up meeting for all involved partners. This affords an opportunity to develop awareness of the concept, educate the public, and foster relationship building.
- Establish ground rules and partnership parameters.
- Establish guiding principles (a value set to guide the project).
- Have written rules and responsibilities that include activities/work, contributions, financial arrangements, public relations, and marketing.

- Determine exactly how all the partners define success, both individually and collectively.
- Determine the one thing that is most important to each partner.
- Identify the one area of greatest concern for each partner.
- Determine in advance how conflict will be resolved.
- Outline on-going communication strategies.
- Look for ways to build a rapport.
- Discuss the relationship and process in as much detail as the project.

How, and with whom you establish your alliances will determine the breadth and scope of your work, and the recognition it receives. One does not have to think big to be effective. Can you create a display for a lodging facility lobby, or one of the State of Vermont Welcome Centers? Ask the management of a local inn if they will supply information on your site or event in their guest rooms, or on their website. Approach a lodging facility about hosting a craft demonstration, or workshop. Arrange a special reception for different groups to familiarize them with your site. Work with downtown revitalization efforts, economic development organizations, local Chambers of Commerce and Regional Marketing Organizations. All of the aforementioned can partner with you to promote your product.



examples of successful partnerships

Some good examples of successful partnerships include the following best practices.

225TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION—SUMMER AND FALL 2002

Partners: All the historic sites in Vermont and New York in the Lake Champlain, Mohawk, and Hudson valleys, the Adirondack Regional Chambers of Commerce, and local organizations. The historic sites in Vermont are the Mount Independence, Hubbardton Battlefield, and Bennington Battle Monument State Historic Sites. This cooperative effort grew out of the enthusiasm and good will of all the partners, and was not part of any other organized program.

Purpose: To develop a coordinated publicity campaign to plan and promote the activities throughout these three valleys commemorating the events of 1777, leading to the Battle of Saratoga.

Initiated: The effort was initiated by reenactor David Bernier of the Living History Association and many of the sites and friends groups, through informal discussions during the Revolutionary War reenactment events in 2001. Everyone agreed it would be beneficial to do joint planning and promotion to present a coordinated effort.

Collaboration: Representatives from the historic sites where major reenactment and commemorative events were to take place met monthly to plan the publicity, with more creativity than budget. A central web site with the calendar of events and links to participating sites and organizations was created, containing information and photos about each site and the role it played in the Northern Campaign (www.thenortherncampaign.org). A poster was produced (with the events, a central phone number, and the website), as was a brochure. The Adirondack Regional Chambers of Commerce assisted in mailing a press kit to 250 media outlets.

PRESIDENTIAL SUMMER WHITE HOUSES AND RETREATS TOUR

Partners: Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (www.historicvermont.org), Historic Windsor (www.historicwindsor.org), Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation (www.calvin-coolidge.org).

Purpose: To develop a 3 day bus tour of sites of summer presidential White Houses in Vermont and the Adirondacks in August 2001.

Initiated: Individual groups had been raising awareness about the number of summer presidential White Houses in this area, and it was suggested that it would be an interesting idea to link all of them with a bus tour, guest speakers, and overnight accommodations at historic hotels.

The tour raised awareness about all of these sites, as well as raised money for the participating organizations. Many of the partners had worked together with another partner, but all the partners had never worked together as a whole before.

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VALLEY QUEST

Partners: League of Women Voters, Institute for Community Environmental Management of Antioch New England Graduate School, Upper Valley Community Foundation, Vermont Community Foundation, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Mascoma Savings Bank Foundation, Anne Slade Frey Charitable Trust, Stettenheim Foundation, Newfound Foundation, Friendship Fund, teachers, educators, community members, business owners, and students.

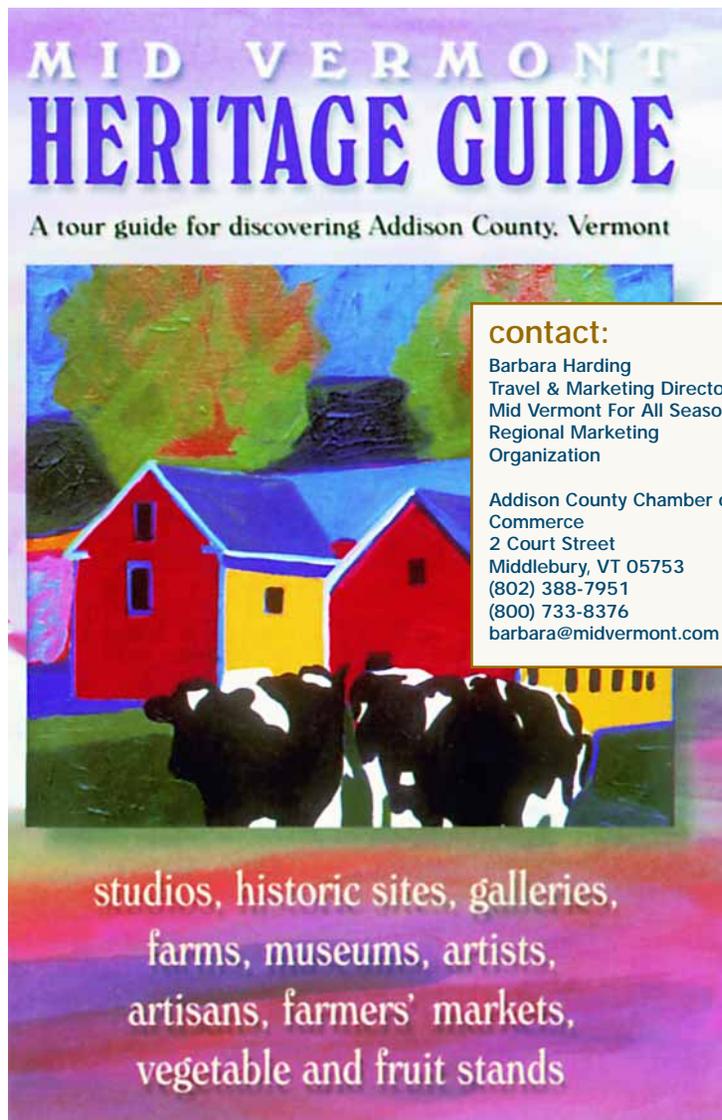
Purpose: Goal place-based education. Participants are invited to experience the features that make this area so unique by walking the landscape. “*Questers*” are given a map, and a set of clues to locate the site where they will find a check-in box containing additional information (www.vitalcommunities.org/Pages/vcquest.htm).

Initiated: Valley Quest began in 1996 as a joint project of the League of Women Voters of the Upper Valley, and the Antioch New England Institute for Community Environment Management. It is modeled after an English tradition called *letterboxing*.

Collaboration: Valley Quest boasts over 100 quests in 31 different Upper Valley communities. Many of these expeditions were created by schoolchildren during their classes on local history, mapping, and the environment. A curriculum for schools, museums, and nature centers, it is also a project for conservation commissions, historical societies and other organizations, as well as for families and individuals. Through creating permanent treasure hunts to special places in their area, participants celebrate and strengthen community life and forge lasting connections to the various landscapes and cultures of the region. Students visit their site for hands-on lessons before hiding a check-in box complete with riddle clues, rhymes, or other puzzles designed to accompany their map.

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MID VERMONT HERITAGE GUIDE

Partners: Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing, Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Crafts Council, Vermont Farms! Association, Vermont Department of Agriculture, Vermont Information Center Division, Vermont Historical Society, Mid Vermont for All Seasons Regional Marketing Organization (RMO), a division of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce.

Purpose: To provide visitors with a network of sites that offers an intimate experience of the Vermont lifestyle, either contemporary or historic, and contributes to the economic development of the state, while at the same time increasing the awareness of the fine Vermont-made craft and agricultural products produced within the region. These goals were met through the development of a publication that offers a listing of the outstanding historic sites, artists and craft studios, galleries, farms, museums, farmers markets, and vegetable & fruit stands open to the public in the Addison County region.

Initiated: This project was first introduced by Martha Fitch, Executive Director of Vermont Crafts Council, who learned of a similar venture undertaken by a non-profit organization in North Carolina called *HandMade in America*. Using the *HandMade* guide as a prototype, the Vermont statewide partners applied to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing for a grant. The purpose of the pilot project was twofold: to create the publication described above, and to provide a model that could be easily replicated in other parts of the Vermont. The ultimate objective was/is to have a similar guide in each region of the state, and to combine them all into a single publication.

Collaboration: The Steering Committee developed criteria and guidelines integrating those used by *Handmade in America*, and including language on accessibility. Using partners mailing lists, invitations were sent to potential participants. Three community meetings were held to educate the public as to the intent of the project, and to increase participation. Four driving loops were

developed based on the location of potential participants, and on topography. Applicants were evaluated against each guideline to ensure that all criteria were met. Through the shared effort of the steering committee, a 56-page booklet, entitled the *Mid Vermont Heritage Guide*, was developed. The guide is available at a nominal cost - \$2.00 + VT state sales tax, \$1.50 shipping. The proceeds will be used to update and reprint the piece. Press releases, story ideas and copies of the Guide have been distributed to Vermont freelance writers. The piece is featured on the RMO/Chamber website (www.midvermont.com/guide) and the Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing website (www.vermontvacation.com). Other points of distribution consist of properties featured within the guide, and local libraries. Marketing is an on-going effort that includes steering committee members promoting the piece to and through their own constituencies.

THE EXNER BLOCK

Partners: Exner Block Housing Limited Partnership, Rockingham Area Community Land Trust, Housing Vermont, First Vermont Bank, Chittenden Bank, Rockingham Arts and Museum Project, Town of Rockingham, Village of Bellows Falls, Vermont Community Development Program, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Vermont Housing Finance.

Purpose: To provide affordable living/working spaces for artists, and to create six retail spaces for businesses that focus on the arts.

Initiated: Housing Vermont purchased a vacant building in downtown Bellows Falls called the Exner Block at a 1998 auction. Property opened in 2000.

Collaboration: Rockingham Arts and Museum Project (RAMP) (www.ramp-vt.org) presented a vision of creating affordable housing for artists to Housing Vermont, a general partner in what is now known as the Exner Block Limited Partnership, the owners of



The Exner Block, Bellows Falls, courtesy of the Rockingham Arts and Museum Project.

the property. The cost of renovating the structure was approximately 1.2 million dollars. The funds for the project were provided by the Town of Rockingham and the Village of Bellows Falls through the Vermont Community Development Program, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Vermont Housing Finance Agency through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, and also from the limited partners, First Vermont Bank, and Chittenden Bank. Williams and Freshee, Inc. was the architectural firm hired for the project, and Wesfield Construction Co., Inc. was engaged as the general contractor. RAMP assisted in the development of the artist's lease agreement which requires tenants to: host two open studios a year; contribute four hours of community service per month; and attend monthly resident-artist meetings.

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*The Vermont Crafts Council
P r e s e n t s*

Vermont Studio Tour Map 2 0 0 3



*Including directions to
The 11th
Open Studio
May 24
10 am. -*

*Visit 228 Artisans in 211 locations
across Vermont*

*Sponsored by Cabot Creamery,
The Point, VT Arts Council*

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OPEN STUDIO WEEKEND

Partners: Vermont Crafts Council staff and committee, thirty regional coordinators, 12 Regional Information Centers, Vermont Arts Council, Cabot Creamery, Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, The Point, and over two-hundred Vermont craftspeople.

Purpose: To educate the public about artisans' work, to sell craft, and to assist craftspeople in embracing self-promotion prospects, and in identifying tourism opportunities.

Initiated: Project was begun by the Vermont Crafts Council and its members in 1992 to invite visitors into the environment where craft is created, and to offer them the opportunity to see and discuss the process involved in making the work.

Collaboration: Individual sites kick off the season by promoting themselves within the context of this event. Vermont Crafts Council staff secures funding for the project. Wayfinding methods—website, paper map, and road signs—are implemented. The map, which is available both on the web (www.vermontcrafts.com) and in printed form, clearly marks participating locations, and provides directions to each site.

A DAY IN THE KINGDOM

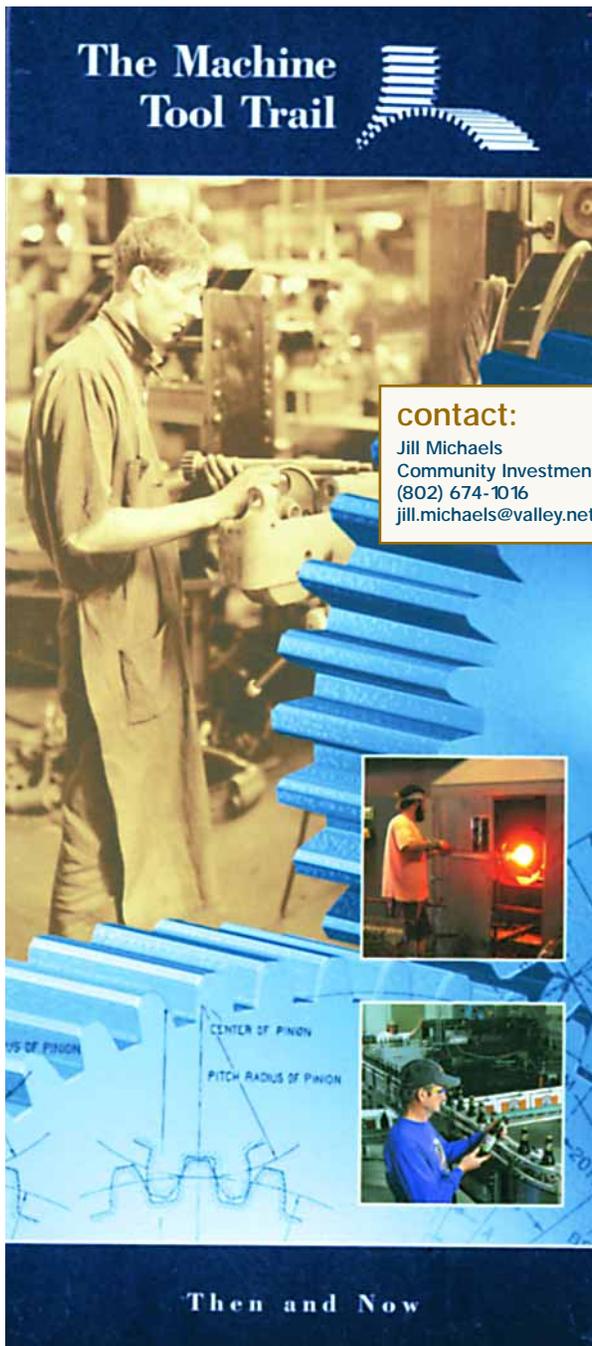
Partners: Catamount Arts, Northeast Kingdom Travel and Tourism Association (NEKTTA) an RMO, Highland Lodge, Mountain View Creamery, Vermont Public Radio, Community National Bank, Alice M. Ward Memorial Library, Bailey-Hazen Country Store, Bread and Puppet Museum, Burke Mountain Ski Resort, Cabot Creamery, Coutures Maple Shop, Craftsbury Outdoor Center, Daniels Farm, Ethan Allen Furniture Mill, Essex County Court House, Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium, Haskell Opera House and Free Library, The Inn at Trout River, Island Pond Museum, Jay Peak Ski Resort, Lyndon State College, Maple Grove Farms of Vermont, Maple Leaf Llamas, Missisquoi Historical Society Museum, Montgomery Historical Society Museum, Nelson's Store, Old Stone House Museum, Orleans Agricultural Sales Barn, Quimby Country, Robillard Farm, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Shores Museum, Vermont Arts Council.

Purpose: To increase tourism in the Northeast Kingdom by creating a brochure containing five self-guided driving tours, each incorporating a theme that characterizes the area, and to enhance that experience through the use of a cassette tape produced to showcase the sounds and voices of Kingdom artists and residents.

Initiated: Project began in 1998. Original program design was to integrate cultural heritage resources into existing tourism activities, and to include a local familiarization effort.

Collaboration: Partners worked together to produce a four-color brochure and an accompanying audio tape. The five *Day in the Kingdom* self-guided driving tours outlined in the brochure provide a means of exploring the rich cultural heritage of the region. Themes in the 17”x 22” tri-fold piece include: *Victorian View*, focusing on the cultural and architectural legacies of the late 1800’s; *Route Through History*, tracing the Baley-Hazen Military Road, which was built during the Revolutionary War; *Border Culture*, offering a taste of the rich Franco-American culture peppered throughout the Kingdom; *Farms and Barns*, providing a panorama of farmscapes; and *Kingdom Forest*, presenting a glimpse into the resources that have sustained so many for so long in this neck of the woods. The audio tape, narrated by Vermont Public Radio personality, Steve Delaney, is composed of 18 tracks, and consists of music, songs, stories and reminiscences from, or relating to, the area. Tour brochures were made available through all partners, and were used as fulfillment pieces. The audio tapes were on sale at key sites, and retail and hospitality locations throughout the region. This project provided the inspiration and basis for the *Northeast Kingdom Heritage Guide*, published in 2003.





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THE MACHINE TOOL TRAIL

Partners: The partners consisted of the sites themselves and the communities and institutions where those sites are located, including: Town of Windsor, Windsor/Mt. Ascutney Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Region Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Regional Development Corporation, American Precision Museum, Springfield Art and Historical Society, Vermont State Craft Center at Windsor, Historic Windsor, Inc., Ascutney Mountain Resort, Depot Station, Simon Pearce Glassblowing, the Constitution House, and several other local businesses.

Purpose: To celebrate the rich history of manufacturing in the Windsor/Springfield region of Vermont, to acknowledge those contemporary businesses that have grown up in its shadow, and to connect the more heavily attended, larger attractions with the smaller sites.

Initiated: The project began in 1998 with a grant from the Vermont Arts Council. A brochure providing a broadly interpreted, multi-faceted self-guided tour was available the following year. The piece identified twelve different sites that captured the ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit of the region.

Collaboration: Partners worked together to develop the self-guided tour brochure, and to create four packages around specific activities within Precision Valley/along the Machine Tool Trail. These weekend events included the celebration of a brewery's first anniversary, the 15th anniversary of a preservation institute, the opening of a historic exhibit, and the christening of snowmaking at a local ski resort. Historic Windsor, Inc. supported a website for this one-year project, another group assisted with product identification and organized tours of appropriate industrial sites. Success of this project was measured by the number of attendees at events, hits on the website, calls for information, and fulfillment pieces (brochures) used.

THE VERMONT HISTORY EXPO

Partners: At the invitation of the Vermont Historical Society, nearly 120 of Vermont's 184 local historical societies, 42 museums and heritage-related attractions, 15 non-profit service organizations, several agencies of Vermont state government, over 60 private and corporate businesses, as well as Vermont related historians, living history reenactors, performers, authors, and craftspeople.

Purpose: The Vermont History Expo is the first and only heritage celebration in the country to be held with the singular purpose of extoling the history of a state and the people, places and events that have shaped it.

Initiated: The week-end long event was launched in 2000 to raise awareness of the work done by the state's local historical societies, and to reinforce for residents and visitors alike the documentation, value and accessibility of Vermont's history.

Collaboration: The collaboration of local historical societies with exhibitors from Vermont's major museums and heritage attractions provides Expo visitors with the opportunity to sample more than 140 historic sites at one time and in one place. In the first three years since its inception, over 22,000 people have taken advantage of this unique opportunity. The event has a dedicated website (www.vermonthistory.org/expo), and is also promoted annually in 200,000 sixteen-page newspaper inserts. It is also advertised during a three-week public radio campaign, and through print and broadcast media.

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LAKE CHAMPLAIN WAYSIDE EXHIBITS

Partners: Lake Champlain Basin Program, Lake Champlain Byways, various historic sites, local communities, regional planning commissions, non-profit organizations, and state and provincial government agencies interested in interpreting the natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Champlain region within Vermont, New York, and Quebec.

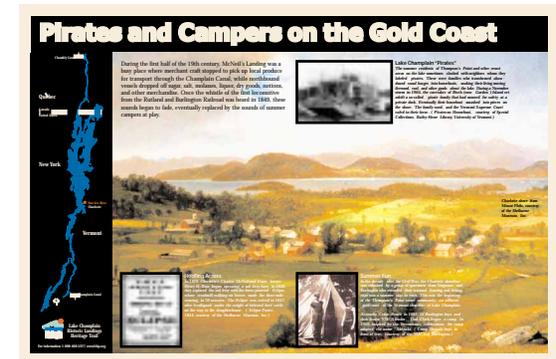
Purpose: To facilitate the development of a unified interpretive wayside exhibit system throughout the Lake Champlain Valley.

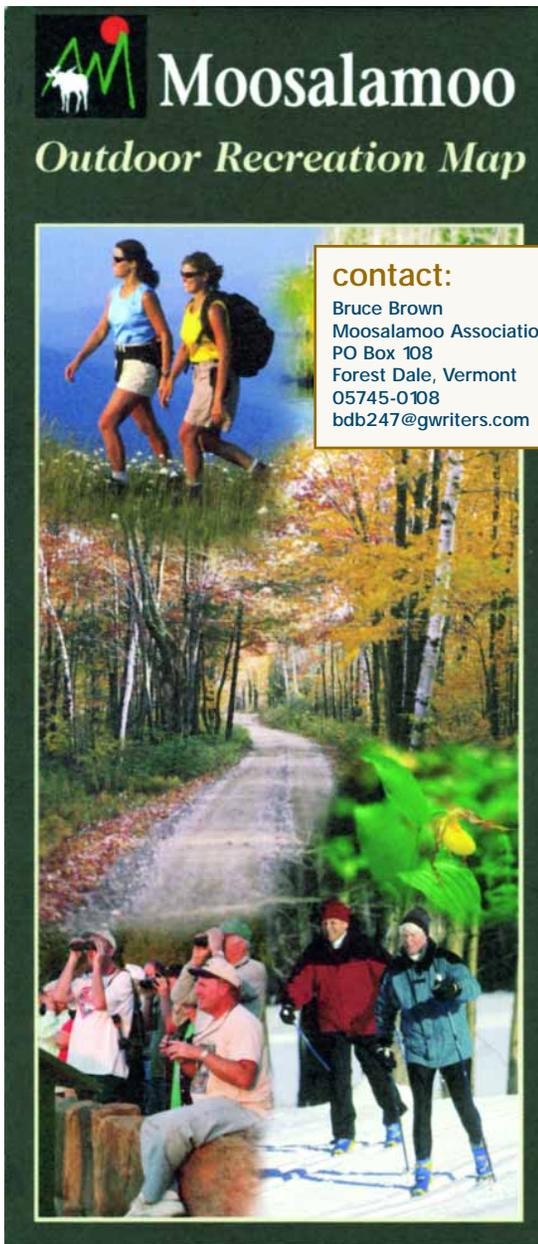
Initiated: The Lake Champlain Basin Program, with input from its many partners, created an outdoor wayside exhibit template and planning manual for use by local communities. Interpreting natural and cultural heritage—as well as environmental issues—this unified system helps communities place their unique stories in the broader context of places and events around Lake Champlain. The result is a richer sense of history, ecology, and regional identity.

Collaboration: As of 2003, 96 exhibits have been produced and are installed all around the Lake in Vermont, New York, and Quebec. The Lake Champlain Basin Program provides free design assistance, while local organizations draft copy and select photographs for the exhibits. To obtain a copy of the wayside exhibit manual, visit: www.lcbp.org/wayside.htm.

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MOOSALAMOO ASSOCIATION

Partners: Green Mountain National Forest, Vermont State Parks, Brandon Chamber of Commerce, Addison Chamber of Commerce, Mid Vermont Regional Marketing Organization, Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Catamount Trail Association, Blueberry Hill Inn and Ski Center, Judith's Bed and Breakfast, Lilac Inn, Churchill Inn, Otter Creek Audubon, Green Mountain Club, Spirit in Nature, Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, Vermont Department for Historic Preservation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the National Forest Foundation.

Purpose: The Moosalamoo Association (www.moosalamoo.org) was formed to promote land stewardship, conservation, interpretation and education as it relates to the recreational, environmental, cultural and historical resources within the region.

Initiated: A series of interpretive signs were created and located along roadways within the region, relating to early residents (Abenaki), European settlement, and early industry including farming, mining, lumber, and hospitality. Programs, displays, and guided walks with emphasis on the past are routinely scheduled. A regional map and driving tour emphasize the natural and cultural history of the area.

Collaboration: The partners—along with volunteers from within the region, surrounding communities, schools, colleges, and corporations—demonstrate the unique capabilities of public and private partners working together to promote responsible participation and awareness of the land stewardship initiatives. Their individual and collective energies are applied to education, interpretation, preservation, resource monitoring, conservation, and/or trail and habitat enhancements.

resources

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EPIC. 1993. *The EPIC Project*. Burlington: University of Vermont. Videocassette.

Wireman, Peggy. *Partnerships for Prosperity*. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1977.