THOMAS GOLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

2013 ANNUAL REPORT







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Dear Friends,

2013 was in every way one of our best years yet, with record attendance (ticket sales doubling from \$20,000 to over \$40,000 in one year), record fundraising (a summer party netting almost \$100,000 plus a successful new December event), traveling our exhibition to another venue for the first time, moving into brand new office space, officially acquiring over 400 collection objects from the Greene County Historical Society, and more. I feel a tremendous momentum propelling this organization and it is because of the motivated team of staff, trustees, members, donors, volunteers and community members who are behind it. It is a privilege and a joy to work with you all. American art deserves to have its own epicenter, and together we are creating this resource for generations to come.

Celut K. fla

Elizabeth B. Jacks Executive Director

THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is the place where American art was born in the early 19th century, as it was the home and workplace of Thomas Cole, founder of America's first major art movement, now known as the Hudson River School. The board, staff, supporters and volunteers comprise a rapidly growing organization that embraces change and continually pursues excellence. At its core, the organization's purpose is to facilitate the connection between Cole's vision and the people and ideas of our own time. We pursue this purpose by breathing new life into the historic site where such pioneering events took place, regenerating Cole's revolutionary creativity so that it touches people's lives in the present, and providing an opportunity for the public to engage with a story that sheds light on both our personal and national identity.

As the birthplace of American art, the Thomas Cole National Historic Site has the potential to serve as the first stop and primary source for the exploration of American visual culture. In the coming decade, we imagine moving toward a fuller realization of that vision by pursuing the following:

- 1. **Historic Restoration and Preservation:** recreating to the greatest possible extent the physical setting where the groundbreaking and remarkable historic events took place.
- 2. **Exhibitions**: mounting exhibitions on American landscape painting that travel the country and open the eyes of ever-growing audiences to the startlingly beautiful paintings that launched our nation's first art movement.
- 3. **Publications:** producing publications both printed and online that can grow to serve as the worldwide source for information and inspiration on the Hudson River School.
- 4. **Education:** launching local and regional education programming that nurtures awareness and appreciation for the Hudson River School with children and adults alike.
- 5. **Scholarship:** supporting new research about the Hudson River School and the next generation of professors and curators in the field through initiatives such as the Cole Fellows program as well as a study center with a complete archive of digitally accessible research materials on Thomas Cole and the art movement that he founded.
- 6. **Audiences:** increasing the number of people who are touched annually by the organization from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands.







EDUCATION & INSPIRATION

What a feeling it is to see such a great crowd -- 175 people, for example, this past April -- gather in a room to hear a talk on American landscape painting. The lectures at the Thomas Cole Historic Site are attracting ever-larger audiences to hear some of the great minds and premier art historians of our time. The 2013 lineup included Kevin Avery, Senior Research Scholar of The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Jean Dunbar, the accomplished historic interiors expert; the professor and author Christopher N. Phillips; Paul Schweitzer, the recently retired director of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute; Annette Blaugrund, independent scholar and former director of the National Academy Museum; and the legendary Barbara Novak, the Helen Goodhart Altschul Professor of Art History Emerita at Barnard College

and Columbia University.
Our 2013 exhibition was "Albert
Bierstadt in New York & New England", guest curated by Dr. Blaugrund, which helped propel the
organization to its all-time high
in attendance and ticket income.
We hosted 22 group tours in October alone, many of whom are now

arriving by cruiseliners that land at Catskill Point. Other examples include a busload of architects from Denmark, three giant groups of Catskill 3rd graders totaling 127 children, and one truly amazing group: the spouses of ambassadors – and a few of the ambassadors themselves – from all over the world. The group

also included the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban-Ki Moon, and his wife Soon-Taek from Korea.







OUTREACH & COMMUNITY

The Hudson River School Art Trail, created by the Thomas Cole Historic Site in 2005 and expanded each year with the help of many partners throughout the region, grew again in 2013. Site #9 was added in the City of Hudson right along the waterfront,

where a view of Mount Merino and the Catskills can best be seen. Guests at the dedication included Congressman Chris Gibson, Assemblywoman Didi Barrett, Hudson Mayor William H. Hallenbeck, Jr. and Sara Griffen from Olana. The plaque is located in Promenade Park, also known as Parade Hill, right at the foot of Warren Street.

In September, our third annual Community Day again drew over 400 people to our site, including many first-timers and families. The day included an exhibition of nearly 150 paintings for our second round of "Postcards from the Trail", a community art exhibition of small landscape works. In between musical acts, we presented "People's Choice Award" certificates to the twelve artists whose works from last year's show were most highly rated on our website. This event was conceived as a way to bring in new audiences and

to further integrate the Thomas Cole site into community life, and it has grown each year.

After many planning meetings and working sessions, our school program initiative was launched in the fall. The children did lesson plans in the classroom, rendering them well-prepared for their trip to the

Cole House over the course of three visiting days. Going forward, 2nd graders will learn the basic "who was Thomas Cole", the 3rd-graders will make the class trip, and the 4th graders will continue their learning with a group mural project. This program, now that it is set up, can be rolled out every year.





mous boost from our dreamy "Dream of Arcadia" summer party, topping all previous records for total revenues number, which was the largest event and total profit. The party brought in \$137,940 and the expenses were \$40,050, only 29% of the total, so

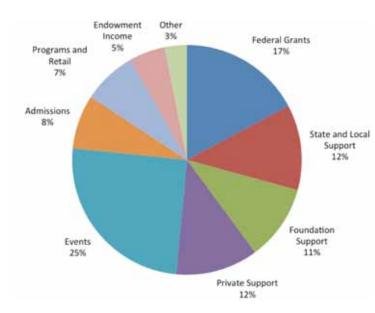
Our fundraising this year got an enor- our net profit was nearly six figures. To put this in perspective, last year we brought in \$94,000 as the gross we had ever had. Nonetheless, on June 29th 2013 we grew this event by 47% in one year.

In early September, the Thomas Cole Historic Site was swarmed with technicians, a flag-man directed traffic along Spring Street as Verizon installed the phone lines, and our new server was set up in the McCord House - now affectionately called "207" - the location of our new staff offices. The renovation was designed by the renowned interior designer, our trustee Stephen Shadley. We now have a beautiful space in which to work, directly across the street from the 1815 Main House.

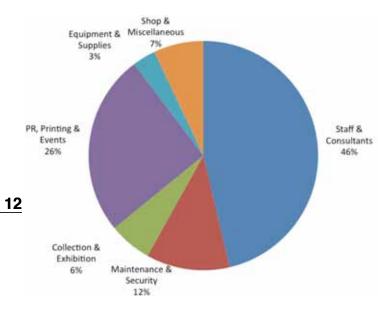




Total Income: \$589,505



Total Expense: \$588.554



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"...the enlightened of all ages and nations have found pleasure and consolation in the beauty of the rural earth."

— Thomas Cole