



St. Lawrence Power & Equipment Museum

A Newsletter for Members of the St. Lawrence Power & Equipment Museum, a 501(c)(3) Education Corporation

Events 2025

Feb. 28, Sat.,
1:30: **Annual Meeting of the Members**, Madrid Community Center.

May 23, Sat.
10:00-2:00:
Opening Day Open House.

June 13-14, Sat.-Sun.: **Old Tyme Spring Exhibition.**

June 27, Sat.: 10-2:00: **Open House, Program TBA.**

July 11, Sat., 10-2:00: **Open House, Program TBA.**

July 25-26, Sat.-Sun.: **Civil War Weekend.**

Aug. 8, Sat., 10-2:00: **Open House, Program TBA.**

Aug. 22, Sat., 10-2:00: **Open House, Program includes Stealin' Country music.**

Sept. 12, Sat., 10-4:00: **SL County Chamber of Commerce, Craft, Food and Wine Open Air Market.**

Sept. 19-20, Sat.-Sun.: **Old Fashioned Harvest Days Show.**

Oct. 10, Sat., Noon-3:00: **Kids Pumpkin Patch Party.**

Fall Show Brings Great Weather and Lots of Visitors

Days ahead of the Museum's 34th Annual Old Fashioned Harvest Days Exhibition, there were dire warnings about the weather. But the skies cleared and the visitors came. Everything was up and running with volunteers at every exhibit, in the kitchen, at the parking lot, even picking up trash and policing the johns. The event has a long tradition, going back to the days before becoming reincorporated as today's Museum. Back then, the events were held at the Hutchinson Farm near Heuvelton. Engines and tractors ruled, with great interest in things that could be driven by them like stationary balers or washing machines. At that time, no one dreamed of the broader story of how these wonderful machines impacted the growth of the North Country and the lives of its people - much less how broad our own mission might become.



Dave Gibson leads the parade at the Fall Show.

Craft, Food and Wine Open Air Market Sets Record

The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce held its 6th Annual Craft, Food, and Wine Fresh Air Market at the Museum on September 20th. The bright sunny day brought out over 2,000 visitors shopping at 80 vendors offering a wide variety of yummy, neat, wild, tasty, cool and lovely items. Museum volunteers had much of the Museum open for visitors and provided food at the Pavilion Building for hungry folks. The Chamber organizes and promotes the event, attracts sponsors and vendors, provides portable toilets and trash management, and manages the gate. The Museum receives a stipend for use of its campus facilities and volunteer support. It has been a great win³ for the vendors, Chamber and Museum. 🍷



A great crowd showed up for the Craft, Food and Wine Market. Photo by SLC Chamber of Commerce.

A Note from Our President

Speaking for the entire Board of Trustees, we want to thank you all for your continued support, especially those who have volunteered countless hours to ensure our museum is operational and able to be enjoyed by all. We had a successful season and we couldn't have done it without so many of our member volunteers who come together to open our buildings at events and open houses, operate our food related services, sell our museum merchandise, take membership, set up and take down for our events, mow the lawn, handle admissions, and parking, maintain our website and social media, and so much more too numerous to list.

We also thank those who have responded to our annual appeal. Your generosity has helped keep us in the black. If you haven't responded to the appeal, there is still time. Your contribution will assist us with ongoing maintenance, increased insurance costs, and planning for the future. I hope you will consider making a gift to our annual appeal. The value we hold for our museum through our donation - whether its \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 or more - ensures that we can continue to keep our museum well into the future.

Your Board's focus is on increasing membership; ensuring the financial viability of the Museum short and long-term; continuing long-term planning of the Museum's maintenance and infrastructure; and having vibrant and engaging events. Your museum relies on your support to continue preserving, protecting and sharing thousands of extraordinary artifacts which are in our collection and the buildings which hold them.

Please feel free to reach out to me with your thoughts, questions or anything Museum-related by calling or emailing me. My contact information is on the last page of this newsletter. Let's continue to move forward together to ensure our museum continues to be a wonderful place to enjoy and learn. I look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting of the membership in 2026.

Scott

Nominations and Elections of Trustees and Officers for 2026

Nominations for election of officers and trustees for 2026 begins December 10, 2025. Positions open for nomination include each of the four officers which are elected for one year. Ron Sheppard will likely run for the 1-year trustee position normally reserved for a former President. Two 3-year trustee positions will be open with Ted Ritzko and Aaron Gravelle completing their 3-year terms. Note that 3-year Trustees are allowed to stand for reelection for a single additional term. The names of candidates for Nomination should be submitted to the *Nominations and Elections Committee* by email (slpeminfo@gmail.com) or by mail at SLPEM, PO Box 400, Madrid 13660 by January 10, 2026. Ballots will then be mailed out at the end of January. A candidate's recommendation for nomination must be accompanied by a short sketch of the individual's training, skills, and experience, justifying how they would serve the Museum. In January, the Committee will review the submissions, taking into consideration how they would best fit the needs of the Museum. The combined members of a balanced Board should support the broad interests and activities of the Museum and reflect the regions and interests it serves. Board membership requires substantial time and effort attending meetings, working at events, hosting visitors, and meeting the public. A kind and respectful spirit is essential. ★

Why a Good Cash Position is Necessary

At the end of October we had to purchase a new connecting rod for the 15-foot gang mower, costing nearly \$2,000. The Museum's lawn looks great, because it is mowed every week, with help from the new Bobcat zero-radius mower, our new DR string trimmer, and a hand-held string trimmer. It requires a dedicated crew of volunteers to get the job done. But repairs of the big mower are growing so frequent and require so much skill and effort, that it's getting unsustainable. New mowers can cost as much as \$25,000 or higher, so we are doing some serious shopping and searching for funds



Dave Gibson, lead mower and mechanic at work.



Spencer Thew and Anne Clarkson are to the right of Terry Niles.



Sitting around the campfire at Fort Tribute at twilight in September.

to keep the hit to our cash position manageable. Help would be very welcome. 🍷

Lewis & Clark Expedition, Fort Tribute

Our second in a Series of three Camp Fire Talks, *Westward Bound* was presented by Terry Niles on September 22nd at Fort Tribute. The Series celebrates the 220th Anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The evening's talk explored the second year of the expedition. Watching the fire burn and embers glow as twilight fell, the audience was given a hint of the sight and smell of the Expedition. We thank Terry for an enjoyable and enlightening evening. We also thank Niles Wealth Management for the continued financial support they provide the Museum to support this program. In 2026, the third program will be presented entitled *A Long Way Home*. Learn why this expedition is considered one of the most important chapters in American history, carving out a nation that will stretch from "sea to shining sea." 🗺️



SeaComm contributed \$10,000 to the SLPEM through a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York for capital improvements/construction projects. The funds will be used to do upgrades to Fort Tribute and for the purchase of a building to permanently operate a store to sell Museum souvenirs and merchandise.

We have enclosed an envelope for you.

Large or small, All Gifts are Important

The fund drive that got underway in July has been successful in helping maintain our bank balance, and we thank those who generously contributed. We have enclosed an envelope for those who have not had a chance to help. Thanks! 📧

How about using the envelope to give a gift membership to a relative or friend. Only \$25, \$30 for a couple, and \$5 for a junior membership (under 18). Act soon, and we can get it there before Christmas. 📧

And why not use the envelope to catch up on dues or get ahead. The number after the V next to your name is the last year paid for. Thanks again! 📧

A Whole Lot Going On During Old Fashioned Harvest Days



Old Fashioned Harvest Days - Need Both Days to See It All!



Can't Wait Until Next Year!



Craft, Food and Wine Fresh Air Market Crowds



While the 80 vendors drew crowds, Museum volunteers fed them tasty snacks and meals in the Pavilion kitchen.



The Pumpkin Party

on October 3rd drew hundreds of kids painting pumpkins, having faces painted, making apple cider, riding on the tractor wagon, getting lost in the corn maize, playing games, and more. Our volunteers also offered popcorn, pizza, and hotdogs. Lots of grandparents were there too.



Over at Fort Tribute

the **US MILITARY TIMELINE MEET** was underway

with historians, collectors, and reenactors exchanging information and memorabilia of US wars. The Timeline begins with the Continental Army in 1775, followed by the War of 1812, and the Civil War. It extends through World War I, World War II, and the Cold War era, which included the Korean War and the Vietnam War. More recent major conflicts include the Persian Gulf War and the War in Afghanistan, and the Iraq War.

Water Project Triggers Reimbursement Grant

Financing for a portion the Potable Water System Expansion Project will be provided by a grant approved by the St. Lawrence River Valley Re-development Agency administered by the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency. The grant provides for reimbursement of \$10,000 or 45.5% of the projected project cost of \$22,000. Expenses to date total approximately \$14,100 plus in-kind work worth \$2,200, resulting in an anticipated reimbursement of $\$16,300 \times 0.455 = \$7,417$. Filling, grading, and seeding work will be completed in the spring with future reimbursements continuing at the same rate. In-kind work completed includes more than 500 hours of volunteer work and use of borrowed equipment including tractors, heavy wagons, and skid steer loaders. It was an amazing job done by our own members.



One of a dozen new hydrants added to our original four, not including the two at the public toilets. This one and one at Fort Tribute will be hidden by wooden well covers.

Photos this issue by Roger Austin, Dennis Barr of Two Guys and a Camera, Kirke Perry, Thomas Robarge, and Scott Wilson.



Journeyman Steve Mankowski teaches NYSAB blacksmiths techniques of the art during the All Hands meet of the New York State Artisan Blacksmiths.

at the Museum, and it is a favorite of the NYSAB members. SLPEM member Kirke Perry is Forgemaster of the Adirondack Chapter and organized the meeting.

NY Artisan Blacksmiths All Hands Meet

The Adirondack Chapter of the New York State Artisan Blacksmiths was host to an annual meet on October 11th and 12th at the Museum. The special meet is held twice a year. All five chapters gather to watch a professional demonstrate his craft, hold a business meeting, and have an auction of items they've made to raise money for the scholarship fund which gives \$1,000 scholarships to a blacksmithing school.

This year Steve Mankowski of Williamsburg, VA was demonstrator. This professional of 45 years has done work for Colonial Williamsburg, the Farmers Museum at Cooperstown, and the Genesee Country Museum in Mumfordsville, NY. He demonstrated making a latch, tasting spoon, spatula, axe, and a nail header for making nails. About 25 blacksmiths from the state attended. The meeting was held in the Equine Pavilion. Its dirt floor, bleachers, and excellent ventilation make it a great demonstration area. The visitors also had a tour of the Carriage Barn, the Blacksmith Shop, and Fort Tribute. This was the third time the *All Hands* has been held



Dry Goods Shop To Get Home

The arrival of grant money (see page 2, lower left photo to caption) and a gift from a kind donor have made it possible to build a home for the sale of soft goods such as caps, T-shirts, and other Museum souvenirs. The 16X24 foot building will be up in time for the Spring Show. There will be space for display cabinets and hanging racks, allowing Alie Rivers to unpack her dozens of suitcases and boxes containing loads of soft goods just one time for the entire season. Displaying them will be simpler and trying things on will be more convenient. The need dates back many years. Nancy Garrand, formerly in charge of sales, well remembers years of lugging around the heavy cases and setting up. Alie is ready to move in. ☺

On September 7th we were visited by the Vermont Mountain Slow Spokes. There were 29 on tour, driving 15 classic automobiles



Carol Austin, Robert Crump, Aaron Gravelle, Robert O'Marah, Sue Parisian, Ted Ritzko, and Gilbert Rivers,



The visitors shared their picnic lunch at the Open Pavilion with the hosts. They said they had had a great time and donated \$400 to the Museum. ☺

The Homeschool Co-op of Massena, coordinated by Cheryl Hazelton, spent the morning of October 8th at the Museum. There were 50 parents and children



ranging from babes in arms to 9th graders. They were divided into groups by age and given tours of much of the Museum, focusing on what life was like between 1850 and

1950. The visit ended with a picnic lunch at the Open Pavilion with ice cream cones donated by the Museum. Hosts included Carol Austin, Bob Crump, Bob Marshall, Peggy Murphy, Sue Parisian, Sue Scott, and cart driver Roger Austin. The Co-op donated \$50 to the Museum. ☺



The 5th Annual Karen's Memorial Scrap Weekend was held September 6th and 7th. There were 30 crafters and visitors throughout the weekend. The proceeds of about \$600 were donated to the Open Pavilion fund. Wonderful weekend. Great project. ☺

ST. LAWRENCE POWER & EQUIPMENT MUSEUM
1755 State Highway 345
PO Box 400
Madrid, NY 13660-0400

Temp-Return Service Requested

US Postage Paid
Permit No. 8
Non-Profit
Organization
Madrid, NY
13660

Let us know if
you prefer to
receive your
Newsletter by
email - in full
color.

Museum Trustees

President/Trustee: Scott A. Wilson, 18 Meadow St., Massena, NY 13662. Cell (315) 250-0025.

Vice-President/Trustee: C. Curtis Smith, PO Box 185, Bombay, NY 12914. Cell (518) 521-9549.

Secretary/Trustee: Roger S. Austin, 410 Stevenson Road, Rensselaer Falls, NY 13680 or Winters: 179 Lakecrest Dr. NE, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061. Cell phone (315) 250-9141. Email: rsaustin123@gmail.com.

Treasurer/Trustee: Lee W. Dezell, 1648 County Route 31, Lisbon, NY 13658. Phone (315) 393-6328.

Trustee: Robert W. Crump, 3684 County Rt. 14, Madrid, NY 13660. Phone (315) 244-4150.

Trustee: Aaron C. Gravelle, 61 Park St., Norwood, NY 13668. Phone (315) 244-6566.

Trustee: Theodore (Ted) Ritzko, 1080 County Rt. 31, Lisbon, NY 13658. Phone (315) 322-4058.

Trustee: James E. Scott, 599 Bagdad Rd., Potsdam, NY 13676. Phone (315) 265-7692.

Trustee: Ronald E. Sheppard, 45 Old State Road, Heuvelton, New York 13654. Phone (315) 323-5349.

Trustee: Bruce Thompson, 56 W Stockholm Southville Rd., Potsdam, NY 13676. Phone (315) 244-1355.

Trustee: Terry A. Tiernan, 488 Brady Rd., Madrid, NY 13660. Phone (315) 322-8946.

Newsletter Editor: Roger Austin
Electronic Media: Allie Rivers

Visit: <https://slpowermuseum.com> and
<https://forttribute.org>

Contact us at: slpeminfo@gmail.com
Send photos to slpemphotos1@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook at

St Lawrence Power and Equipment Museum
and at Fort Tribute



AN OUTSTANDING GIFT

In October, the Museum received a fantastic gift, a 1926 Chevrolet Touring Car - a 4 door, soft top convertible with wooden wheels, meticulously restored. It was donated by the family of the late Real "Frenchie" Coupal of Massena.

In the photo to the right are Scott, Nichole, and Thelma Coupal with Scott Wilson, Museum President at left.



Looks snappy from the back and a big 4 cylinder up front. Who could ask for more? 🇺🇸

