

II. Community Resources

Many New Jersey communities have historical resources, some dating back to the American Revolution. Any study of the Revolution should be considered in terms of local history, which requires use of local historical resources. Some of these sources can be found in local or college libraries, historical societies, and museums. Volumes of state, county, and community history are usually available. Government documents, land deeds, tax rolls, records from the city treasurer's office, photographs, buildings, paintings, etchings, crafts, tools, vehicles, memoirs of community leaders, heirlooms, school records, family histories and biographies, military records, directories, maps, atlases, anniversary addresses, business records, and many other resources can serve as research materials.

In any research endeavor, one should be aware of the differences between primary sources, which include all materials that have been preserved from a period—written documents and all other physical artifacts such as buildings, furnishings, etc.—and secondary sources, which are writings by persons who lived after the events they describe but studied the original sources.

A. Valuable Community Resources

Perhaps the most valuable resources are the local historical societies, museums, houses, and villages. Personnel from the sites may offer services such as loans of exhibits, library services, history clubs, films, slides, newsletters, demonstrations, speakers, fairs, conferences, conventions, suggestions for visit preparations, follow-up activities, and reading lists.

The use of institutions provides a visual and tactile experience, which imparts a sense of reality, enriching opportunities for exploring American history. An excursion is one way of using these institutions as

an opportunity for serious experiences in learning from the concrete. While pupils should be taught to observe accurately and evaluate what they see, they should also be encouraged to assist in planning museum excursions and participate in discussions after they return. The real test of the success of an excursion can be measured in continued pupil interest as expressed in their compositions, discussions, and later voluntary visits to other historic sites.

B. Activities Related to Using Historical Museums and Societies

Even national history is based on generalizations made from close-up views of local history. For this reason we should develop activities in and out of school to encourage students to do research and to express themselves on their findings. The recreating of history may take the form of compositions, artwork, dramatizations, models, maps, and numerous other activities. Thus local historical resources offer opportunities for developing skills, ideas, and information about the past and present that are vital to education.

As an incentive for pupils to research and write, we should encourage publishing articles in the school newspaper or in a statewide junior history magazine. The local newspapers, radio stations, and service clubs are other means of presenting information which students have gathered.

Because educationally successful excursions require careful pre-planning and follow-up activities, preliminary visits by adult leaders will help to ensure a successful group visit. In any case, only the excursions which offer knowledge, understandings, and appreciations not usually available in the school should be considered. Pupils should be encouraged to become members of the statewide student history program (the Jerseymen) of the New Jersey Historical Society (230 Broadway, Newark 07104) or a local association.

Exhibitions planned by adults and pupils might include old photographs, letters, household utensils, clothing, and other historic articles. These objects may be borrowed from historical museums and societies and, at times, from pupils' homes.

Learning facts, developing generalizations, and increasing vocabulary as well as reinforcing appreciation should result from such visits and the use of other museum services and materials. Moreover, the full use

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of museum resources can initiate and enrich discussion, writing, reading, and art.

We should also consider the possibility of history fairs, perhaps calling upon historical museum and society personnel to assist and including exhibitions made by pupils and authentic artifacts. Articles written by pupils and adults can be displayed and distributed.

There is a need for our schools to increase the use of community institutions qualitatively and quantitatively. The use of local family history and folklore also offers opportunities for active enjoyment and intellectual understanding. Because local cultural history is filled with colorful facts and legends which explain an earlier way of life, field trips to historical sites and museums, Indian burial grounds, and older, private homes may enhance such study. If this folklore is not studied, a significant portion of local culture may be lost. Using local history will enable pupils to learn to think critically and carefully, to develop a feeling for their community and nation, to understand the world about them in terms of cause and effect, and to develop ideals of loyalty, integrity, and responsibility.

History may be viewed as a way of finding out, asking and refining questions, and developing hunches and explanations. Pupils who use historical museum resources can participate directly in the process of ferreting out source materials, render their own account of events, develop resourcefulness, scrutinize objects, and undertake interviews.

An active affiliation with a historical society can further stimulate pupils. Early satisfying experiences with history will keep children interested and responsive to later, more advance contacts. Thus, preplanning, clarification of purposes, teacher and pupil planning, guidance in the use of resources, and evaluation are essential to the successful use of historical museum resources.

C. Evaluating Historical Museums and Societies

Before using any museum service, one must review what can be achieved. The instrument printed below can assist the educator in evaluating the resources of a museum in terms of various objectives. For the most effective learning situation this device should be used prior to student involvement. The knowledge, understandings, appreciations, and activities listed should stimulate exploration of many other possibilities. The skills of locating, gathering, and organizing data must be taught and developed as well as the related skills involved in interpreting documents, pictures, paintings, graphs, globes, maps, and other graphic materials.

Taking notes at the museum, using the local library, making sketches or diagrams, using a camera and/or tape recorder are a few of the ways of gathering information. Obviously all readily available museum announcements, pamphlets, bulletins, and posted information related to exhibit materials should be used.

The following evaluation instrument may serve as a guide to educators who wish to visit museums and preplan excursions or utilize other museum resources.

Evaluation Instrument

- 1. What knowledge and/or understandings will be developed by students?
 - a. Generalizations
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 - b. Facts
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 - c. Vocabulary
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 -
 - d. Others
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- 2. What appreciations will be reinforced and/or developed by students?
 - a. Our heritage
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b. Preservation of historic sites

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c. Preservation of historic realia including documents, furnishings, pictures, paintings, etc.

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3. What activities will be initiated and/or enriched to communicate what has been learned?

a. Arts

Creative writing

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Drama

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Music

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Visual arts (painting, sculpture, drawing, etc.)

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Others

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- b. Committee work
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- c. Discussions
-
- d. Reading
-
- e. Research reports
 - Oral
 -
 - Written
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- f. Others

4. What services or materials will be available for use at the school?
What services or materials will be available for use at the museum?

Museum School

- | | | |
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| | | dioramas |
| | | loan kits or exhibit cases |
| | | models |
| | | photographs |
| | | maps |
| | | records or tape recordings |

E. Appreciations

Because the further development of affective or emotional skills including appreciation is, according to behavioral scientists, at least as important as the cognitive or intellectual skills, considerable attention should be given to this aspect of the pupil's learning and developmental process.

Question three on the evaluation instrument deals with activities initiated or enriched to communicate what has been learned through using museum resources. Research shows writing to be the activity most frequently used. Many educators use no follow-up techniques and teachers give discussion and reading only tacit attention.

F. Services and Materials

The evaluation instrument used as a check list of services and materials available should aid educators since it lists the types of resources that museums offer. This instrument should encourage careful evaluation and planning prior to student involvement and a comprehensive follow-up. The following list of organizations and agencies will assist the teacher in that evaluation and planning.

1. Agencies and Organizations

American Association for State and Local History, 1400 Eighth Ave., South, Nashville, TN 37203. Publishes *History News* each month, a series of technical leaflets, a national directory of historical societies and a variety of books and pamphlets dealing with many topics in state and local history.

American Historical Association, 400 A St., S.E., Washington, DC 20003. Publishes a series of paperbacks for teachers of history on such pertinent topics as *The Nature and Practice of State and Local History*, *United States History: A Bridge to the World of Ideas*, *The American Revolution*, *New Interpretations of American Colonial History*.

Association of County Cultural and Heritage Commissions of New Jersey. Formed in 1975 this organization is an alliance of the seventeen county commissions that exist in New Jersey. The list below gives the mailing address and telephone number of each. The commissions are sources of useful information on local historic sites, historical programs aimed at students and the general public, and programs in history and the arts.

Atlantic County 739 Guarantee Trust Building, Atlantic City 08401; (609) 344-3579

Bergen County Bergen Community College, 400 Paramus Rd., Paramus 07652; (201) 447-1500

Burlington County 49 Rancocas Rd., Mount Holly 08060; (609) 267-3300

Camden County County Court House,

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- 10th Floor, Camden 08101; (609) 757-8191
- Cape May County* 36 Main St., Dennisville 08214; (609) 861-2388
- Cumberland County* 300 Cherry St., Apt. 12, Vineland 08360; (609) 691-8572
- Essex County* County Hall of Records, Room 123, 470 High St., Newark 07102; (201) 961-8273
- Hunterdon County* R.D. 1, Annandale 08801; (201) 735-7358
- Mercer County* County Administration Building, 640 S. Broad St., Trenton 08607; (609) 989-6701
- Middlesex County* County Administration Annex, 841 Georges Rd., North Brunswick 08902; (201) 246-5788
- Morris County* County Court House, Ann St., Morristown 07960; (201) 285-6198
- Ocean County* 33 Brooks Rd., Toms River 08753; (201) 349-2506
- Passaic County* c/o Paterson News, News Plaza, Paterson 07509; (201) 274-2000
- Salem County* County Court House, 90 Market St., Salem 08079; (609) 935-1776
- Sussex County* Information unavailable
- Union County* McKay Library, Union College, Springfield Ave., Cranford 07106; (201) 272-3140
- Warren County* County Court House, Belvidere 07823; (201) 475-5571

Although Hudson County does not have a cultural and heritage commission, its very active *Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs* provides similar services. Address c/o Planning Department, Hudson County Administration Building, 595 Newark Ave., Jersey City 07306; (201) 659-5062.

Historic Sites Section, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, John Fitch Plaza, Trenton 08625; (609) 292-2023. Information on historic sites in general with special reference to state-owned structures and sites.

National Council for the Social Studies, 1201 16 St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Publishes bibliographies, yearbooks, bulletins, and a curriculum series. The "How to Do It Series" includes bulletins on such topics as community resources, daily newspapers, local history, government publications, group discussions, and related topics.

New Jersey American Revolution Bicentennial Celebration Commission, 379 W. State St., Trenton 08625; (609) 292-6576. Official Bicentennial agency for New Jersey. Information on local, state and national Bicentennial programs. Newsletter published five times per year; no charge.

New Jersey Historical Commission, 113 W. State St., Trenton 08625; (609) 292-6062. State agency charged by statute with promotion of public interest in and awareness of New Jersey history. Publications, annual teachers' workshop and symposium in New Jersey history. Newsletter published September through June carries news of meetings, programs, and on-going projects dealing with New Jersey history; no charge.

New Jersey Historical Society, 230 Broadway, Newark 07104; (201) 483-3939. Museum and library facilities. Publication of *New Jersey History*, the only scholarly journal devoted exclusively to the state's history. Jerseymen Student History Program encourages study of New Jersey history at secondary level; publication *The Crossroads* presents a different topic for student consumption periodically throughout the academic year.

2. Publications

Dehoney, Martyvonne. "A Resource Guide to Art and Architecture in New Jersey from Pre-Columbian Times to the

Services and Materials

Civil War," 1968. Unpublished doctoral dissertation providing teachers and students with a reference work which includes several hundred collections in the state of furniture, glass, ceramics, textiles, prints, paintings and sculpture, a portion of which was produced in the late colonial and revolutionary eras. May be purchased from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; order no. 69-10,537.

Lindemer, George C. *Guide to the Educational Uses of New Jersey Historical Museums*. South Orange: Seton Hall University Press, 1974. A well developed, thoroughly documented handbook which highlights fifteen of the principal historic houses and villages in New Jersey, and includes an excellent examination of the educational purposes underlying the utilization of historic museums and a lengthy geographic listing of historical museums and societies in the state.

Museums Council of New Jersey. *Directory*. Trenton: Museums Council of New Jersey, 1975. Compiled by Karen G. Cummins. \$.25. Write c/o New Jersey State Museum, 205 W. State St., Box 1868, Trenton 08625. A compilation of the programs and services offered by member institutions, including Newark Museum, New Jersey Historical Society, State Museum. Information by county and includes address and telephone number.

New Jersey Environmental Times. Special Historic Sites Edition. Vol. 6, no. 2, February, 1974, 12 pp. Pictures and text of publicly-owned Bicentennial related historic sites. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Room 805, Labor and

Industry Building, John Fitch Plaza, Trenton 08625.

Scenic and Historic Tours. New Jersey Department of Labor and Industry, State Promotion, Division of Economic Development, P.O. Box 400, Trenton 08625. Delineates a series of historic and recreational motor tours of the state.

Stember, Sol. *The Bicentennial Guide to the American Revolution*. Volume II: *The Middle Colonies*. New York: Saturday Review Press/E.P. Dutton & Co., 1974. Excellent combination of detailed descriptions of the battles, skirmishes, forts and encampments of the American Revolution, and specific travel guide explaining how to reach their sites and describing their current appearance as well as how they looked two centuries ago. Written in a readable, stimulating style, half of this volume is devoted to New Jersey.

What to Do in New Jersey. Published annually by What to Do County Publications, P.O. Box 84, Chappaqua, NY 10514. Includes, besides a wide variety of other subjects, listing and locations of landmarks, museums and libraries.

Wright, William C., comp. *Directory of Historical Societies of New Jersey* (League of Historical Societies of New Jersey, 1972). Order from New Jersey Historical Commission, 113 W. State St., Trenton 08625. Alphabetical listing of nearly two hundred local, county and statewide organizations. Lists services, collections, library and museum hours, address and telephone number.