

Press Release
December 20, 2010

2011 Schenectady Colonial Festival - February 4-13 Schenectady's Early History at the Center of Attention

With coordination through the City of Schenectady Heritage Area, the Schenectady/Nijkerk Council, the Community Archaeology Program of Schenectady County Community College, the Schenectady County Historical Society, the Stockade Association and First Reformed Church of Schenectady are several of the community organizations planning the range of activities to take place during Schenectady's 2011 Colonial Festival.

Artist Len Tantillo, renowned for his vivid illustrations of historic sites and themes throughout the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys, will be a featured presence. Mr. Tantillo will begin his participation in the Colonial Festival at 11:15 am, February 6, with a presentation at the Heritage Sunday First Forum at First Reformed Church in their Assembly Hall/Poling Chapel. He will speak on how he recreates historical scenes, specifically how he painted *Schenectady Town, View from Cowhorn Creek, circa 1690*, which has Schenectady's and that congregation's first church building at its center.

The next event with Tantillo will be at the Annual Colonial Festival Dinner to be held at the Glen Sanders Mansion on February 8, the 321st anniversary of the 1690 Schenectady Massacre by the French and Indians.

At 4:00 pm there will be a special opportunity to meet and discuss with Len Tantillo ways Schenectady might further develop its historical legacy. A showing of Tantillo's works, maps of early Schenectady, and the latest findings of the Community Archaeology Program excavations in Schenectady's Stockade Historic District, will provide starting points for conversation pursuing clarity on key facts (*or are they myths?*) in Schenectady's history.

A 6:00 pm Social Hour will begin the Dinner. Attendees may view an exhibit of works by Len Tantillo and items mentioned above. Prints by Tantillo may be purchased throughout the evening. Following a colonial themed dinner, Tantillo will present a select grouping of his well-known historical illustrations of life and places in early upstate New York, *Historical Painting: Schenectady Works and Others*.

Combination tickets for Conversation with Tantillo and the Colonial Festival Dinner begin at \$60. Opportunities for individual and corporate sponsorship for the conversation and dinner tables are available. Separate tickets are \$20 for the pre-dinner event and \$50 for the dinner. Proceeds will support the annual exchange program of the Schenectady/Nijkerk Council and our community interest in furthering the history of the founding of Schenectady.

A steering committee led by Maureen Gebert, Director of the Schenectady Heritage Area, is active in planning these and other Colonial Festival events. For more information contact Maureen at 382-5147 or mgeb09@yahoo.com, Laura Lee Linder at 882-6866 or lleelinder@gmail.com, or Joe Doolittle, Chair of the Dinner at 384-1700 or aldenjoe@nycapp.rr.com.

Watch for the Festival's Calendar of Events and Dinner invitations on websites, in information racks and newsletters of participating organizations. All Colonial Festival Events are open to anyone interested in attending. Find Colonial Festival signs or greeters at event locations directing you to rooms where programs are happening.