

UP

FRONT



The Craft Season

by Kirsten Gehlbach

You know the onset of summer is official when village greens across the region fill with tents that house a treasure trove of artisan delights. The first booth might burst at the seams with one-of-a-kind clothing stitched from colorful hand-woven fabric. The next harbors trays of gemstones and delicately crafted jewelry. Across the aisle, the sun dances along dovetail joinery and an intricate inlaid tabletop. Just beyond, the potter's wheel whirls in a demonstration of hands on patience and grace.

Craft events and festivals dot the landscape in and around the Upper Valley come summer, from weekly farmers' markets to large festivals or small gatherings. Crafters and their customers create a true sense of community with friendships made and grown over the years and across generations.

Profiled here are a few of the larger venues, favorites for both shoppers and artisans alike.

Quechee Balloon Festival, Fine Art, Music and Craft Fair **June 15, 16 and 17, 2007**

When the skies fill with hot air balloons, the Quechee Village Green fills with fine crafters and vendors. Over 50 crafts vendors, many from the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen and Vermont Handcrafters Association will be in residence with displays of jewelry, woodworking, stained glass, paintings and photography, quilts, specialty foods, clothing,



ceramics, dried flowers and herbs. Add to the craft fair balloon ascensions at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. (weather permitting).

FESTIVAL FACTS

When: June 15, 16 and 17, 2007. Gates open at 3 p.m. on Friday

Who: 50 craft vendors

What: Balloon ascensions and rides, live entertainment, food court and beer tent, rain or shine.

Where: Quechee Village Green
Admission for the weekend is \$10 for adults, \$5 for ages 6 to 12. Children under age 6 are free.

Balloon rides may be booked in advance or by chance at the balloon ride RV at the festival.

800-295-5451, web: www.quechee.com.

802-425-3399, web:

www.craftproducers.com/festivals/summer-vermont.htm.

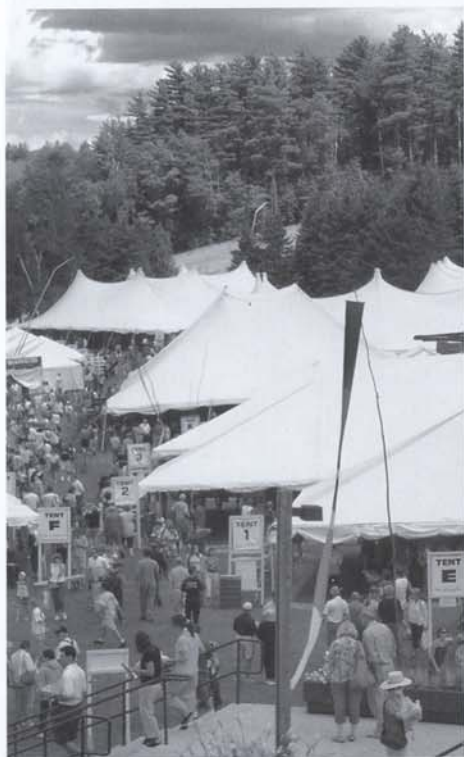
74th Annual League of New Hampshire Craftsmen's Fair

The oldest craft fair in America, the League of N.H. Craftsmen's Fair is considered to be one of the most prestigious craft events in the country. The annual nine-day event,

from August 4 through 12, features both traditional and contemporary fine crafts by juried members of the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen. Located at Mount Sunapee Resort in Newbury, N.H., over 200 individual craft booths feature jewelry, wood accessories, decorative glass, pottery, fiber arts, metalwork and furniture will be on display.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the League, this year's fair will include a screening of a documentary film of the League's history, *A League of Our Own: New Hampshire and the American Craft Movement*. Also new this year, visitors can attend special one-on-one craft workshops with master craftspeople including glassblowing with Harry Besset and blacksmithing with Garry Kalajian.

In addition to the craft booths, exhibits include the museum-quality *Living with Craft*, with room-like vignettes filled with handcrafted furniture and decorative home accessories and *CraftWear*, showcasing handcrafted wearable art with one-of-a-kind clothing and fashion accessories. The *Sculpture Garden Exhibition* weaves an inspirational collection of outdoor furnishings, sculptures and garden accessories into the landscape at the base of the mountain.



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FESTIVAL FACTS

When: August 4 through 12, 2007, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Who: 200 Craft Booths, Exhibits, Tours, Demonstrations and Workshops.

What: Live entertainment, picnic areas, food tent, two building cafeterias and outdoor Garden Café on site, rain or shine

Where: Mount Sunapee in Newbury, N.H. General Admission; \$8, Seniors, Students and Groups of 20 or more; \$6, Children 12 and under free. All General Admission tickets are valid for two days. Childcare is available for a nominal fee. Free parking and free shuttle bus service.

603-224-3375, web: www.nhcrafts.org/annualfair.htm.

Sixteenth Annual New England Crafts Fair

Cap off the summer with the New England Crafts Fair at the Quechee Gorge Village in the beautiful Quechee Gorge area. Artisans and crafters from throughout New England display and sell their work at one of the longest running crafts fairs in the area. The traditional Labor Day Weekend event should see close to 100 artisans. Look for the harbinger of fall colors in the artwork and crafts displayed. The Quechee Gorge Village also offers an Antique Mall, Craft Center, Country Store, Ottauquechee Winery, Toy & Train Museum, Farmer's Diner and specialty shops. Scale steam engine and carousel rides make this a one-stop destination for the entire family.

FESTIVAL FACTS

When: September 2, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and September 3, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Labor Day Weekend.

Who: Approximately 100 artisans displaying crafts.

What: On site antique mall and craft center with diner plus steam engine and carousel rides.

Where: Quechee Gorge Village on U.S. Route 4 in Quechee, Vt.

Admission: Free. 1-800-438-5565 x 110, email: quechee@quecheegorge.com or visit www.quecheegorge.com. ♦