

Arts & Culture

The artistic and cultural offerings in southwestern New Hampshire, known as the Monadnock region, are rich and varied. Some muse that that is a well-guarded secret, but the recent launch of “**Discover Monadnock**” (www.discovermonadnock.com) plans to help get the word out! Longstanding arts organizations, such as Arts Alive, also plan to help promote the many unique artistic events in the region. (www.monadnockartsalive.org)

For those who enjoy fiber arts, there is an annual **Wool Arts Tour**, which takes place during Columbus Day weekend. Its stated intent is to share the love and knowledge of fiber and the animals that produce it. The farms and studios on the tour have something for everyone, “whether you knit, spin, weave or just appreciate quality handiwork; whether you like watching the artistry of ages-old



home industries in a modern setting; or whether you just want to watch a demonstration or see the animals that produce the fiber.” (www.woolartstournh.com)

Contra dancing is another special activity in the region. This traditional dance, with origins from 17th century England and France, is a partnered folk dance in which couples dance in two facing lines or in a group of four. People of all ages enjoy this dance, which is always done to live music. The dances are held in the town halls of many towns in the Monadnock region on various nights of the week. (www.monadnockfolk.org)

The Pumpkin Festival in Keene is always a tremendously popular event which takes place in October, (this year on October 18). Jack o’lanterns are carved by area school children and students of all ages, the bandstand comes alive, seasonal foods abound, and a tower of pumpkins line the streets. Last year, the World Record was reclaimed with a total of 30,581 pumpkins! (www.pumpkinfestival2011.org)



Photo by Mickey Pullen

2013 Keene Pumpkin Festival.



Photo courtesy of the Met

The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD at the Peterborough Players theater.

The Peterborough Players, one of the oldest summer stock theaters in the country, has live professional theater performances each summer. During the rest of the year, it brings exceptional opera, dance, and theatrical performances from New York City and European stages that can be viewed on an oversized screen in its historic theater. A favorite series is The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD, which runs from fall through spring with 10 spectacular operas, streamed on screen directly from the Met's stage in New York city. (www.peterboroughplayers.org)

The Sharon Arts Center in Peterborough is a prized source for the visual arts. Its gallery in downtown Peterborough features the artwork of regional and nationally acclaimed artists, rotating every seven to eight weeks. Its Craft Gallery houses the work of more than 100 local juried craftspeople in a variety of mediums. Classes from book arts to sculpture are offered, from one-day workshops to in-depth programs. (www.sharonarts.org)

The Monadnock International Film Festival (MONIFF) is an exciting new festival that takes place in Keene during the month of April. Coming up on its third year, the festival not only gives film lovers the opportunity to see movie premieres that are not normally available, but one of the best parts is that festival goers can attend panels of film professionals. Film makers and actors who are panelists sit up close and personal with festival attendees, offering unique educational and networking possibilities. (www.moniff.org)

This is just a smattering of some of the fun and interesting artistic and cultural happenings in the Monadnock region available to Franklin Pierce students – and their family and friends when they come to visit!

For general information about the region, go to these websites: (www.monadnocktravel.com) or (www.nhlodging.org). 