

# Letter *from the* President



Taking a break from mounting *"American Treasures from the Permanent Collections,"* Associate Curator of Exhibitions Chris Rossi, Assistant Curator of Exhibitions Nisha Bansil, and Curator of Exhibitions Michelle Murdock pose with Steve Elliott and the only known portrait of Abigail Adams from the 1790s, when she was First Lady of the United States.

In these trying times, how are the New York State Historical Association and The Farmers' Museum faring? What is the outlook?

As Anne Older describes in her message, we're moving forward with plans that will strengthen the lakeside experience for visitors, and as Jane Clark notes, The Farmers' Museum will hum with activity. Families will love *"Wild Times! A New York Animal Road Trip,"* a refurbished Doctor's Office, and all the fun that goes with our animals, Empire State Carousel, and wide array of interpretive encounters.

We're holding our own operationally, tightening our belts, and moving ahead with exciting exhibitions and programs. We are focusing on mission, those we serve (and hope to serve), excellence, and value.

Most of our performance indicators held up well, or reasonably well, through 2008. Heading into 2009 we are aiming to deliver the quality experiences our varied visitors, members, and program participants anticipate and are taking steps to strengthen our

already growing educational outreach, anticipating that it may be more difficult for educational groups to come to us.

We have a wonderful exhibition schedule in place for the Fenimore, traveling exhibitions touring the country, and a major exhibition drawn from the remarkable *Thaw Collection* being readied to tour major venues beginning in 2010.

We understand that we'll need to approach 2010 with the same care, and I assure you we will. We'll continue to be fiscally responsible stewards but also energetic, creative, and substantive program deliverers, sensitive to the world around us, but I hope so inviting, enticing, and affordable that old friends will return and new friends find us.

We can use your help. Your feedback, suggestions and ideas, and constructive criticism are helpful. Talk us up to friends and family; bring them with you. Tell people what a great value membership is. Volunteer to help! And support us with an additional gift; include us in your estate planning. These are the ways we can do better and do more – for more people, who, in these hard times, need us and places like us more than ever.

Thanks for your support.

Appreciatively,

D. STEPHEN ELLIOTT

*President & Chief Executive Officer*

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