

# Making His Mark

*Artist Puts On 'Really Great Show' At Grove Estate, Sells 24 Pieces*

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Local artist Dennis Downes, who celebrated 17 years of hosting shows at the Redfield Estate of The Grove in Glenview last weekend, discussed the potential for installing a permanent work in Cook County.

Downes told the Journal his "Golden Anniversary" show "never had a slow moment," with 200 to 500 attendees counted over the four-day run from March 30 to April 2.

Over the past two decades, Downes has developed a following of fans from all over the country. Local elected officials and local ABC affiliate news anchor Janet Davies, who wrote the foreword to Downes' book "Native American Trail Marker Trees: Marking Paths Through the Wilderness", were in attendance.



Visitors flood The Grove's Redfield Estate for Downes' recent art show.

Downes' relationship with The Grove, a historic prairie facility maintained by the Glenview Park Dist., goes back to the 1970s, he said. For each of the past 17 years, he has made the Redfield Estate, a

house built on the site in 1856, the destination for his annual art showcase.

"It was a real undertaking, but it turned out to be a really great show," he said of this year's event. "It was the best



Dennis Downes and Janet Davies at The Grove in front of one of the artist's Native American Trail Marker trees.

show in a decade, in terms of sales and attendance."

Works in the show included nine bronze pieces. Of these, one was a seven-foot-tall statue of a Indian Trail Marker Tree. Another was a re-creation of

"Morning Flower", one of Downes' earlier paintings. Altogether, 24 pieces of art were sold.

Research into Indian Trail Marker trees has inspired **(Continued on page 15A)**

## Downes

**(Continued from page 13A)** much of Downes' work. These trees were formed as saplings by Native American tribes to direct travellers to important locations.

During the show on Saturday, April 1, Downes was honored with an eagle feather from Hilda "Little Fawn" Williams and her family for his research. They are tribe descendants of Chief Pontiac from the Ottawa tribe, a major influence in Illinois and Michigan, where many trail marker trees can be found.

Previously, Downes was honored for his work by the Ojibwe tribe.

This past year, Downes went through seven months of intensive chemotherapy on his road to the showcase at The Grove. Focusing on his work for the upcoming show helped him get through the difficult process, he explained.



Examples of Downes' artwork on display at The Grove Redfield Estate in Glenview March 30-April 2.

"I never stopped working," he said. "I'm just as happy as could be because I'm doing what I love."