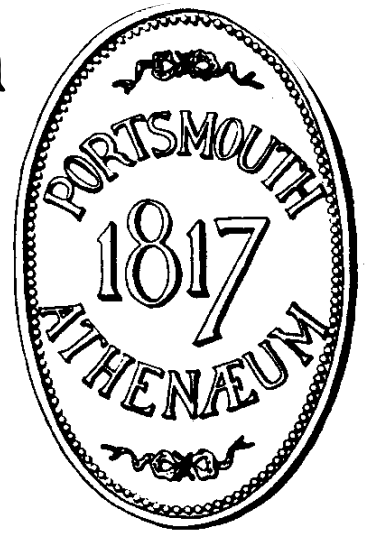


# The Portsmouth Athenæum Newsletter

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Winter, 2016

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## "The North End: A Lost Portsmouth Neighborhood"

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From early colonial settlement through the 1960s, the North End was an ever-evolving neighborhood. Beginning along Market Street, much of it was laid out from Lt. Gov. Vaughan's orchard and was the site of ropewalks and shipyards, with many of Portsmouth's earliest houses lining the narrow streets serving as the homes of prominent Portsmouth families. In 1789, George Washington attended a gala ball at the Assembly House on Vaughan Street and described it as one of the best he had seen in the United States.



Courtesy of Hugo E. Riciputi, North End Neighborhood Collection, Portsmouth Athenæum, P45\_194.

During the 1800s, the North End introduced many visitors to Portsmouth as it was the site of the train station on Deer Street with bustling hotels, saloons and shops that catered to travelers. The Irish were the first wave of immigrants to call the neighborhood home. By the 1900s, the North End was primarily known as Little Italy for the number of Italian immigrants that lived along Russell and Deer Streets; however, it was a true melting pot, populated by Yankee-born as well as Italian, Greek, Polish, Chinese, Russian and other immigrants. The photo above includes all of the Bizzocchi family with visiting relations at their home at 36 Jackson Street. Back row (l to r): Lina Bizzocchi Riciputi, Rosa Moroncelli Bizzocchi, Maria Bizzocchi Genestreti, Gianina Riciputi.

## Inside:

**2016 Program Series**  
**Book Sale Discovery**  
**Proprietors' Exhibit**

**Book Review:**  
**"Man in Profile"**

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Front row (l to r): Enrico Bizzocchi, Luigi Bizzocchi, Anna Bizzocchi, Silvia Riciputi.

During the late 1960s, the entire 26-acre site was re-developed as part of the federally funded Vaughan Street Urban Renewal project. While a few houses were saved, becoming part of The Hill or moved off-site, nearly the entire neighborhood was dismantled, destroying a vibrant, ethnically diverse community living in historically rich colonial homes. For over forty years, the land was covered with parking lots and large singular structures, and has since been redeveloped and re-branded as the Northern Tier.

This exhibit looks at the area from the colonial era up to the modern day, with an emphasis on the immigrant story of the 1900s through the urban renewal of the late 1960s. Opening reception will be held February 12. See the calendar on page 2 for further details.

*Events and News for Proprietors, Subscribers, & Friends of the Portsmouth Athenæum*

## ATHENÆUM EVENTS

NOVEMBER, 2015 — FEBRUARY, 2016

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

- NOV. 1 Historic Portsmouth Chamber Music Series presents Omer String Quartet. 3:00 p.m., Rye Congregational Church. \$20 suggested donation; \$75 series subscription; series Patron seating \$250 per person/\$500 per couple.
- NOV. 6 Art Around Town. 5:00 p.m., Randall Gallery.
- NOV. 6 "Elegant Embellishments" exhibit closes.
- NOV. 12 Historian and author Jessica M. Parr discusses the subject of her new book, *Inventing George Whitefield*. Drawn from Whitefield's writing and sermons and from newspapers, pamphlets, and other sources, Parr's research explores one of the most influential figures in Anglo-American religious culture. 7:00 p.m., Research Library.
- NOV. 18 Wendy Lull presents "The Wreck of the Lizzie Carr," the dramatic tale of the 1905 wreck of NH's last shipwrecked schooner when a January storm broke her anchor chains and drove her onto the rocks. Hear first-hand accounts of the Wallis Sands Life Saving Station surfmen's attempts to rescue the craft and crew in the bitter cold. 7:00 p.m., Research Library. Free to Athenæum Members. \$10 General Admission. Sponsored by UBS Financial Services.
- A Past-President of the Portsmouth Athenæum, Wendy Lull has been the President of the Seacoast Science Center in Rye, NH for over 20 years. She earned her Master's Degree in Zoology at UNH, and has been recognized as one of NH Business Review's Outstanding Women in Business, and one of New Hampshire's Women of Distinction by New Hampshire Magazine.
- DEC. 4 Annual Holiday Gala!
- DEC. 5 The 20th Annual Proprietors' Art Show opens. 1:00 p.m., Randall Gallery.
- JAN. 16 197th Annual Meeting of the Proprietors of the Portsmouth Athenæum. 4:00 p.m., Research Library.
- JAN. 21 Memorial Concert honoring Proprietors who passed in 2015.
- FEB. 12 Opening reception for the exhibition "The North End: A Lost Portsmouth Neighborhood." 5:00 p.m., Randall Gallery. Snow date February 13.

## First Proprietors' Art Show: The Birth of a Tradition

The first Athenæum Proprietors' Exhibit opened Dec. 12, 1996, making this its 20th appearance in the Randall Gallery (see page 5 for entry form). To honor those unsung heroes who have hung this show year after year, this newsletter turned to retired Athenæum Keeper Jane Porter, who recalls that the late Patricia Heard headed the Exhibits Committee when the event was first conceived.

"We thought it would be good to have it coincide with the annual Holiday Festivities and to continue until mid-January so it could be viewed by those attending the Annual Meeting," Porter wrote in a recent email. Then as now, Proprietors and their spouses were invited to bring in written works as well as painting, sculpture, needlework, and even flower arrangements. Kitty Clark, Joan Graf, Barbara Adams and current Exhibits Committee Chairman Sandra Rux have been instrumental in making sure Proprietor works are properly arranged in the gallery, and returned to their rightful owners when the show is done.

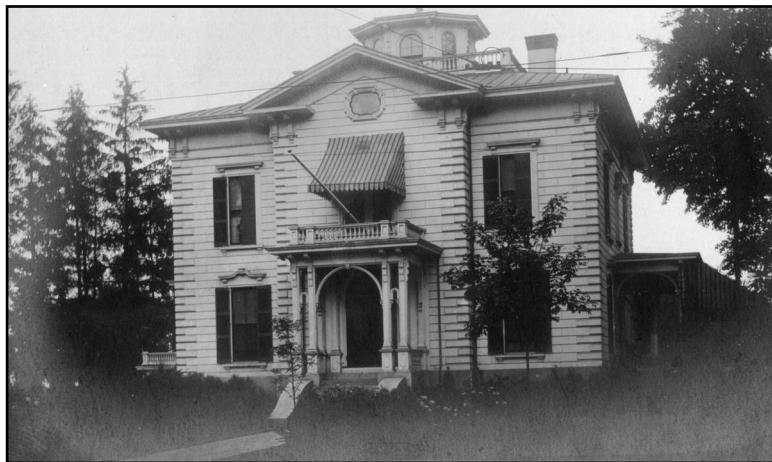
Keeper Tom Hardiman and the staff are also essential to the event. Jane Porter said the inaugural show came at an exciting time in the Athenæum's history.

"Joseph and Jean Sawtelle in 1995 made available to the Athenæum as an exhibition space the third floor of the Pierce Block, which adjoins the Research Library and was named the Randall Room in honor of Peter Randall's contributions as publisher, especially of Portsmouth Marine Society volumes on local history," Porter said in an email. "The wall between the two spaces was broken through in November of that year."

Former Exhibits Committee chair Peter Narbonne describes the Proprietors' Art Show as "a serendipitous coming together."

# Who Knew?

## A Book Sale Discovery



In sorting through materials donated for this year's book sale, we discovered a series of real photo postcards dating from circa 1908 showing an unidentified Italianate house and its elaborate gardens.

The house resembled the Charles Davis house on Miller Ave and the Henry F. Gerrish house on Middle Street, but it couldn't be matched with any existing house in the city. Our photographic Collections Manager, James Smith, started digging through maps and cataloged photos, eventually identifying it as the house of Calvin Page, formerly on the corner of Middle Street and Miller Ave. The house had been built prior to 1864 for banker J. J. Pickering.

John Pickering was president of the Rockingham Bank, and afterward, the house was owned by Judge Calvin Page who updated the property in 1906. Page had been one of the executors of Pickering's estate, whom he succeeded as bank president. In 1900, Page's daughter Agnes married John Henry Bartlett, a local lawyer originally from Sunapee, and they had one child, Calvin Page Bartlett.

John Henry Bartlett was governor of the state from 1919 -1921, and for many years this house was known as the Bartlett residence. Upon Gov. Bartlett's death in 1952, the house passed to his grandchildren.

A vandalism spree in the 1950s indicates that the house might have been vacant, and in 1958, the property was sold to the masonic lodge across the street and torn down for the present parking lot.

An ornamental tree in the back of the parking lot is all that remains of the property's vast, formal garden.

## Et cetera



**A holiday message from Fezziwig:**  
Here comes the tinker's wagon for yet another holiday

party! This year's selection includes caps, totes, and wine and beverage glasses, for whatever pint drink you consume. To meet the great demand, I've sold the hat off my head three times and am now chapeau free, but fear not, more caps and totes are on their way.

I can report that there are now 100 Athenæum caps visible as far away as Brooklyn. Nearly 50 totes are also gainfully employed throughout the region. At the holiday party on December 4, see the man in the kilt for your holiday purchases.

### **Portsmouth's 2015 Illuminated Parade**

This year's parade kicks off the Seacoast's holiday season on December 5th with the theme of Unity, honoring the African Burying Ground Committee. Last year, the Athenæum won the prize for best non-profit. We need your help to continue that spirit! If you'd like to be part of the walking unit or would like to be involved in some other way, please contact James at [jsmith@portsmouthathenaeum.org](mailto:jsmith@portsmouthathenaeum.org).

### **We Want to Hear from You!**

If you'd like to include something in a future issue of the newsletter, please email Publications Committee Chairman Sherry Wood at [sixwords@aol.com](mailto:sixwords@aol.com). Our next deadline is March 1, 2016.

# Keeping the Past Alive: The 2016 Athenæum Program Series

The 2016 Portsmouth Athenæum Program Series, "Keeping the Past Alive: An Inside Look," begins in mid-February when we delve into the collections of some of the most fascinating repositories of our region's history and determine how the stories these artifacts tell resonate with us today. Hear from those who treasure our collective past and discover how they plan to keep our history alive into the future.

On February 17, 2016, join Cynthia Walker to hear of the "Impressions of a World Traveler." Learn of Edith Barry, the remarkable founder of the Brick Store Museum located in Kennebunk, ME, who was born in 1884, trained in France as an Impressionist artist, and spent the remainder of her life traveling as a single woman. Never married, Barry visited every continent in the world (except Antarctica) before her death in 1969. View Barry's photograph scrapbooks showing Africa, China, and the Middle East at the turn of the century, as well her souvenirs (now somewhat strange to us.) Discover what is being done today to continue Barry's forward-thinking legacy.

Cynthia Walker is the Executive Director of the Brick Store Museum. She earned her B.S. in Public History at Northeastern University and M.A. in Museum Studies from Cooperstown Graduate Program. She champions the use of history to bring an understanding to today's events and inspire change for a better future.

March 16, 2016 brings Julie Hall Williams to tell the story of the American Independence Museum in Exeter, NH, the holder of New Hampshire's first copy of the Declaration of Independence and one of the few remaining original purple hearts that George Washington

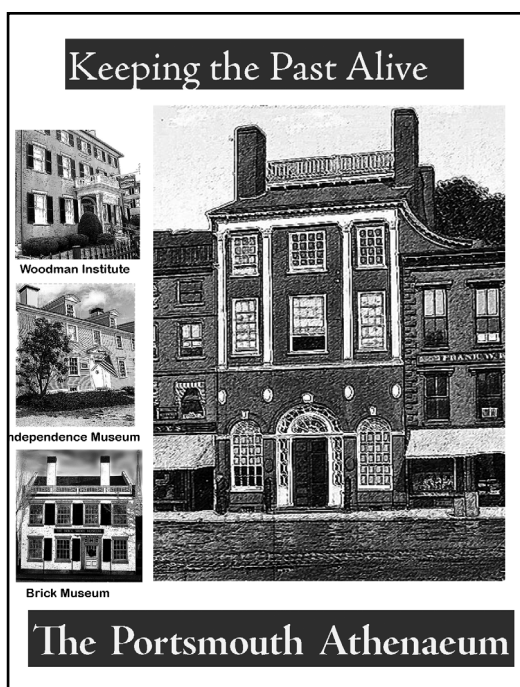
awarded during the War.

The museum has seen a rebirth of interest and excitement after a closure due to financial difficulty in the fall of 2012. With the energy and the assistance of new volunteers, a new Board of Governors, the introduction of new events, and a new Strategic Plan, the Museum has once again become an important member of the community. Learn about the Museum's new approach on a path toward a more stable future.

Julie Hall Williams, Executive Director of the American Independent Museum, has an A.L.M. in Museum Studies from Harvard University's Extension School and an undergraduate B.A. in Art from Colby College. She has over 15 years of experience working in museums such as The Trustees of Reservations, Historic New England, the National Heritage Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Uffizi Galleries.

On April 20, 2016, Thom Hindle will discuss one of the most expansive and eclectic collections in the region, housed at the Woodman Museum in Dover, NH. Dedicated to history, science and the arts, the four buildings comprising the Museum display an abundance of oddities and small treasures, including a 10-foot stuffed polar bear and a saddle used by Abraham Lincoln. As the museum celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2016, join its Curator to hear the story of how this remarkable collection of natural and cultural historical sundries came to be.

Thom Hindle is the Curator of the Woodman Museum, served on the Museum's Board of Trustees



# 20th Annual Proprietors' Art Show and Exhibition! December 4, 2015 Through January 16, 2016

## Portsmouth Athenæum Proprietors' Exhibition

The Proprietors' Art Show is open to all proprietors and their spouses or domestic partners with an interest in being part of this exciting event. The opening will be on December 4 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., concurrent with the Annual Holiday Festivities, and the show will be open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. through January 16. Entries may be any original work including books, paintings, sculpture, photography, woodwork, needlework, ceramics, metalwork, floral design,\* and prints.

All work (except floral designs) should be delivered to the Randall Gallery Sat., November 28, from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Where appropriate, it should be framed and wired, and ready for hanging (no saw-tooth hangers, please). If you are submitting 3-D work, please supply a pedestal if possible. Entries are limited to two/person; at least one will be displayed. Please pick up your piece on Sat. January 17, between 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

There will be no insurance coverage or gallery sitters for this show; work is exhibited at the artist's own risk. Prices will not be listed with the titles; any inquiries regarding purchase will be directed to the artist.

Please fill out both forms below with the information on your artwork. Attach one to the back of each piece and bring the other when you deliver your work to the gallery.

\* Floral designers should be in touch with Deborah Richards (603-433-4792) for instructions.

### ENTRY FORM

(Should accompany each entry)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #  
(home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of work: \_\_\_\_\_

### IDENTIFYING FORM

(Should be affixed to each piece delivered  
to the Athenæum on November 28)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #  
(home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of work: \_\_\_\_\_

# Welcome to the Athenæum's Latest Subscribers!

**Ted Alex** is a Property Manager, a Past President of Portsmouth Rotary, and lives in Rye with his wife Cynthia.

**Marjorie Beck** is a Travel Agent and Product Development Director in Exeter. She has interests in theater, dance, travel, and history.

**Patricia Caron** is retired from the U.S. Department of State. She is very interested in local history and has been a volunteer in the Athenæum Reading Room. She lives in Dover.

**Ronald Charles (C.J.) Cogswell** is President of Cogswell Enterprises, Inc., dba "All Makes Sew and Vac" in Portsmouth. C.J. is interested in history and has been on the boards of several community non-profits.

**Barry Hennessey** is a librarian at the University of NH with a passion for book history, especially 15th century translation. He lives in Durham with his wife Janis.

**Jason Patrick Kroll** is managing partner in Bank W. Holdings and has an interest in learning about history. He lives in Stratham with his wife Rachel.

**David Michael McPhail** is an author/illustrator who has published many children's books. He lives in Rye with his wife Jan.

**Richard Morgan** is a retired Navy Electronic Tech, Nuclear. His family has been associated with the Athenæum since 1914. He and his wife, Chris, live in Portsmouth.

**Charles Petlick** is retired as New Castle Building Inspector. He is recommended by Clint Springer, Joan Lockhart, and Charles Tarbell.

**Janet L. Polasky** is the Presidential Professor of History at UNH. She is an award-winning historian and author who lives in Portsmouth.

**Kenneth W. Robbins** is an engineer in the waste to energy field and lifelong resident of Portsmouth, where he lives with his wife Ann.

**Carolyn Parsons Roy** is Collections Manager of the Saco Museum and a noted authority on historic ceramics and textiles. She lives in Kittery Point with her husband Tim.

**Raegan Ruedig** is an historian and historic preservationist with a specific interest in Portsmouth history and architecture. She and her husband Adam live in Portsmouth.

**Eric Spear** is a database programmer and former Portsmouth Mayor with an interest in history. Eric and his wife, Jean, live in Portsmouth.

**Admiral Craig Steidle** is a Naval aviator who worked at NASA before becoming VP of the Aerospace Industries Association. He lives in New Castle with his wife Marcia.

**V. J. Strehl** is a retired Wall Street investment banker with a strong interest in community and civic organizations. She lives in New Castle with her husband Craig.

## FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Douglas Aykroyd; oakscouter@comcast.net

### Welcome Back Old Friend

Many of you will remember our archivist Susan Kindstedt who stopped working here when her daughter Amy was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. After many months of treatment, Amy's cancer is in remission. Susan is back with us working two days a week. While we are certainly very glad to have her on the staff again, we rejoice at Amy's recovery. It is great to have Susan back at the helm of our archives.

### Looking Toward December

We had a great turnout at our annual picnic under the tent at the Seacoast Science Center. Many thanks to Wendy Lull for the location and to Cindy Knapp for the organization. Now it is time to turn our attention to our fall events. We have a "doubleheader" for Friday the 4th of December. First of all is the opening of the Annual Proprietors' Exhibit where you will be able to see paintings, photographs, needlework, written works and other creations of our Proprietors. The exhibit showcases the many and varied talents of our membership. Take a moment to consider how you might be able to add to this display of talent. An entry form with more details is included with this newsletter.

As in years past we will hold our annual holiday party on the same day as the exhibit opening. The Social Committee is hard at work to make this year's event the best ever. They are planning for a variety of delicious foods and beverages to satisfy each attendee. Invitations will be sent to Proprietors and Subscribers in early November with your reply requested by November 24th. Please put December 4th on your calendar now!

### Update on Driving Down the Debt

I am happy to report that we have made significant progress in reducing the debt we incurred to acquire the Foster property in the Foye Block which is currently being rented to "Ireland on the Square". Our initial debt was

\$672,000. I want to thank all of you who have given to the 1817 Campaign. Your generosity has been the primary reason we have been able to reduce our debt to about \$279,000. As we reduce the principal, less of the rental income is needed to cover the interest and more is available to pay down the loan. Once the principal is retired, we expect to have around \$40,000 per annum to go toward a part-time Program Director and the maintenance of our buildings. Tom Hardiman told me that he is looking forward to having a Program Director so he will have more time to focus on his other duties.

### News From the Reading Room

As you walk in the front door of the Reading Room, you face the portrait of Nathaniel Adams, our first president, hanging over the back door. In preparation for our bicentennial in 2017, the Art and Artifacts committee had the frame of this painting conserved, removing years of dirt, soot, and other filthy stuff. The result is a more vibrant frame which enhances the painting itself. Now the frame of the Honorable John Frost is away for conservation. Initial investigations have revealed that the original gilding was silver and gold, making it a very unusual object. A final bit of news involves the portrait of George Raynes, the man responsible for the construction of many Portsmouth ships. We have received a letter from its owner, Mrs. Jean Palfrey, that she intends to give the portrait to the Athenæum. It has been on loan since 1957.

### Going Away?

If you are going to be away long enough to have the Post Office forward your mail, please give the Athenæum your temporary address and how long it will be in use. We use bulk mail to send most of our mailings and the Post Office will not forward it. If we have the temporary address, you will keep up to date, and the Athenæum will avoid paying a fee to have your mail returned to us. Win, win!

## The Resolution of the Athenæum's Staffing Woes

As noted in the last Arcana article (Summer, 2015 Newsletter), the resignation of longtime volunteer Curator Joseph Copley in 1980 threw the directors into a state of confusion and dismay. Their minutes reflect this: "[Copley's resignation] landed an almost lethal blow and all were shocked to silence for he has been the most productive link in the entire chain of the production line. Many volunteered to talk with him to dissuade him or to reconsider after a calming period."

Their efforts were only temporarily successful. Copley agreed to continue as Curator for another year, but in August 1981 he resigned for good.

Richard Candee and Robert Thoresen, authors of the 1982 Master Plan, both recommended the hiring of an Executive Director whose job it would be to "plan and implement the operation and promote the scholarly endeavors of the Library." A national search yielded 92 applications for the position, and of these Dr. Ed Cass, previously chief archivist at West Point, was hired in August, 1982. Director Winthrop Carter generously offered to underwrite Cass's salary for two years.

Cass was terminated after just one year. Reviewing his performance, the directors observed that "Dr. Cass's goals and the Athenæum's goals have diverged significantly and that communications between the two parties have been growing increasingly difficult."

Efforts to find a suitable replacement for him were fruitless, and after the sudden death of sponsor Winthrop Carter in 1983, the search was abandoned.

In January, 1986 the directors again recognized the need for a competent individual to interface with the Board of Directors, the proprietors, and the public. Since insufficient funds were available to hire a full-time director, the decision was made to hire a part-time

"assistant to the board." Perhaps wary of granting excessive power of the sort wielded by Ed Cass, the directors chose to assign the title of "Keeper" to Jane Porter, who was hired in March, 1986.

Ms. Porter, a Radcliffe graduate who had earlier worked at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and had later done National Register work in St. Louis, proved to be a highly effective assistant to the board. During her tenure she helped to implement many of the recommendations of the 1982 Master Plan as well as those of three successive five-year plans. She also instituted the quarterly issuance of a

newsletter, regular social functions for Proprietors, and the establishment of a monthly lecture series, among many other first-time initiatives.

With the exception of Jeannette Mitchell, who served as librarian from 1981 through 1993, other part-time staff assistants had rarely lasted more than a few months. This began to change during Ms. Porter's tenure and has continued with the hiring of Tom Hardiman in 2000 as her replacement. Hardiman, who was hired out of a pool of unusually well-qualified applicants,

came to the Athenæum from the Dyer Library and York Institute (now the Saco Maine) Museum, and has succeeded in establishing stability in staffing for the first time in the Athenæum's long history.

Proprietors and the public can now enjoy the exceedingly competent assistance of Keeper Hardiman (who has yet to be stumped by any query relating to any aspect of the Athenæum), Research Librarian Carolyn Marvin, Librarian Robin Silva, and Photographic Collections Manager James Smith. Also, Patty Kosowicz recently joined us as Office Manager, taking the reins from the incomparable Nancy Mulqueen, who retired after long service. Together, this devoted team has elevated the institution's operations to a level unprecedented in over 200 years.

**Ms. Porter,  
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## Keeping the Past Alive, cont from page 4

for 15 years, is past-president of Dover's historical society and has taught at the University of New Hampshire. A professional photographer, Hindle owns the "Images of the Past" gallery and has a collection of over 100,000 historic New England glass plate negatives.

After a summer break, the series resumes on September 21, 2016 with "'A Museum for Curiosities, 'Both Natural and Artificial' - The Early Athenæum Collection," related by Elizabeth Rhoades Aykroyd. In 1820 the Athenæum of Portsmouth, NH sent out a letter to local sea captains and merchants, soliciting donations of any "curiosities" that they might encounter in their travels around the world. The response was immediate, and all sorts of "specimens" were given to the young institution, many of which are still in the collection. At the same time the "curiosities" were being collected, some of the Athenæum's most important paintings and busts were being placed in the building, which was purchased in 1823, laying the foundation for the remarkable collection of today.

Elizabeth Rhoades Aykroyd is the Curator of the Portsmouth Athenæum. She is a native of the Seacoast and received her BA from Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts, and her MA from the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture at the University of Delaware. She has worked in a number of museums, including a U.S. Army museum in Germany.

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## BOOK REVIEW:

*Man in Profile: Joseph Mitchell of The New Yorker* by Thomas Kunkel  
Random House, 2015

I first read the writing of Joseph Mitchell when "The New Yorker" printed Chapter One of his unpublished memoir in February, 2013. I was hooked! This writer of all things "New York" and the accompanying 1950s photo spun me back to my father who grew up in Queens and introduced me to the city as a little girl. His love of New York mirrored Mitchell's and I began to remember places he had taken me—the New York Public Library, Rockefeller Center, the Cloisters, Gage and Tollner (a restaurant on Fulton Street in Brooklyn and one of Mitchell's haunts), past miles of wetlands at Flushing Meadows, over the bridges, Radio City Music Hall. All the smells and bustle that was New York City.

This new biography of Mitchell by Thomas Kunkel is a must read for anyone who loves "The New Yorker", writing and publishing, and especially New York in the '30s, '40s, and '50s. The array of characters and places Mitchell wrote about as he walked his beloved city are all there—the bearded lady, the Fulton Fish Market, crazy Joe Gould, the gypsies, the Oyster Bar at Grand Central and old John McSorley, founder of New York's most famous saloon.

Mitchell, the eldest son of a prosperous North Carolina cotton and tobacco farmer, headed north to New York City to be a writer in October 1929, just in time for the stock market crash. He stayed, yet

never really lost what he loved about the South and visited family there often, cherishing the swampland around the farm. His southern upbringing, one with an enlightened perspective on racial tolerance that treasured the written word, had served him well.

Mitchell's style was both journalistic and literary, writing that was sensitive but heaped in detail. Mitchell was considered a staff writer at *The New Yorker* for 58 years and Dunkel delves into the puzzle of Mitchell's lack of productivity for the last thirty of those years—what was he doing? Writer's block? This prolific artist/reporter still dreamed about writing the great New York story but in fact, had already written it in all those years of New Yorker stories and in his books: *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*, *Old Mr. Flood*, *My Ears Are Bent*, *Joe Gould's Secret*, *Up in the Old Hotel*.

Joseph Mitchell died on May 24, 1996 at age eighty-seven. The "New Yorker" wrote in its tribute on June 10, "...his death is not merely a personal loss to his colleagues, or a loss to the magazine. He was an essential figure in modern writing and in the history of the city."

And so too is this Mitchell biography essential reading, for just those reasons.

— Susan Kress Hamilton

The Portsmouth Athenæum  
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