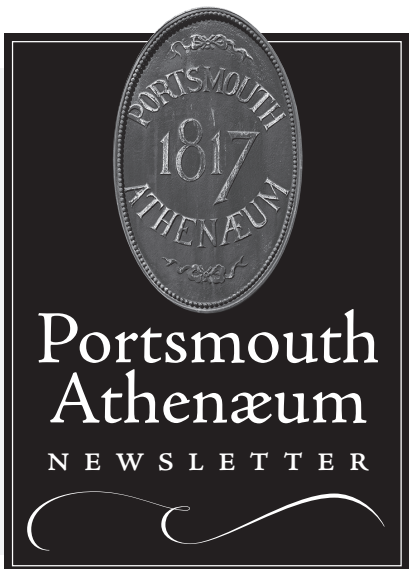


Spring 2019

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

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENÆUM
9 MARKET SQUARE
P.O. BOX 848
PORTSMOUTH, N.H. 03802
603.431.2538
www.portsmouthathenæum.org



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ATHENÆUM RAISING MONEY FOR ARMSDEN PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

JAMES SMITH
Photographic Collections Manager

In January, the Athenæum received a \$1,500 grant from the Rosamond Thaxter Foundation. This money will be used to purchase archival supplies for the new Armsden collection, which will nearly double the Athenæum's entire photographic collection.

Prolific commercial photographer Douglas J. Armsden (1918–2009) of Kittery Point, Maine, captured the essence of the mid-20th-century Seacoast region of New England and beyond. His work varied from weddings and portraits, early documentation of historic houses, scenic images of Maine and New Hampshire to work for local newspapers and magazines such as *New Hampshire Profile* and *Down East*.

Armsden also served in World War II and documented his years of service in the Pacific. The photographic images in the collection include print photographs, color transparencies, 35 mm film, and both medium- and large-format negatives.

The archival supplies for the collection are estimated to cost over \$6,500. So

far, the Athenæum has raised nearly half of the money. Checks may be made out to the Portsmouth Athenæum with "Armsden" in the memo line, or donors can go online to the donation page at www.portsmouthathenæum.org.

Rosamond Thaxter is seen in the picture top right wearing a white gown along with Dorothy Vaughan (left) and Joe Frost (right) and an unidentified man in the Lady Pepperrell Mansion in Kittery Point, Maine. Below is Rosamond Thaxter's house on Cutts Island in Maine. More Armsden images can be viewed at portsmouthathenæum.org.



DAVID SANDERSON DONATES ANOTHER TREASURE

DON MARGESON AND TOM HARDIMAN

Late last year the Athenæum received another trove of treasures from David Sanderson. Over the years David has donated many wonderful discoveries culled from his seemingly inexhaustible files, from the important Marvin-Peirce manuscript collection

given in 1997 to the 2005 gift of an epic poem on the siege of Quebec printed in Portsmouth in 1762 by Daniel Fowle. The most recent delivery from David included the 1763 will of one of the most

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

DESCRIBED AND DIGITIZED: THE JOHN EVANS PAPERS, 1784-1789

KATY STERNBERGER
Research Librarian

When I first arrived at the Athenaeum a year ago, I embarked on a project to describe one folder of 18th-century correspondence that was awaiting translation from French. When the Athenaeum acquired the letters, it was supposed that they were written by Nicholas Rousselet, a Portsmouth merchant. With no confirmation of the letters' provenance, however, I was tasked with translating them in order to identify names and subjects.

I quickly realized the complexity of describing this collection. The letters were challenging to decipher, not only because of the miniscule, 18th-century handwriting, but because they were written in French by an evidently non-native speaker. By giving the collection a close reading and doing some genealogical research, I slowly began piecing together

the puzzle and discovered that the letters were, in fact, written by John Evans.

John Evans was a merchant from Portsmouth born on September 17, 1737. On July 27, 1772, he married Susanna March of Newbury, Mass., and the couple had 10 children together. The Evans family were longtime members of South Church. Evans spent a good deal of time in the West Indies, beginning around 1758 and especially between 1768 and 1771. He ran a plantation in Grenada and owned many ships, which he either bought locally or had built in Portsmouth.

Back in Portsmouth in the spring of 1771, he sold goods out of his store on Captain Janvrin's wharf and was an active member of the Portsmouth Freemasons. He conducted extensive trade with England, losing several of his ships in the Revolutionary War. The Evanses supported the Patriot cause during the American Revolution, and John became

a commissary and contractor for army supplies for George Washington's troops. He served as the Portsmouth town clerk from March 25, 1785, until his death on December 14, 1791. John Evans is buried in the Pleasant Street Cemetery.

The John Evans Papers, dating from September 1784 to April 1789, contain 30 "letters." The collection more closely resembles journal entries where Evans, referring to himself as "Ange," writes in the second person, as if from the perspective of a conscience or guardian angel. While unusual in form, Evans's letters document his life experiences, his family, his business affairs, and Portsmouth history.

The collection is now described in the Athenaeum's catalog. I also digitized the letters in order to reduce the need to handle them, as some are rather fragile. If you have any questions or information regarding the Evans family, you may email ksternberger@portsmouthathenaeum.org.

Portsmouth Athenæum Newsletter is published three times yearly. Deadlines for articles are March 1, June 1 and October 1.

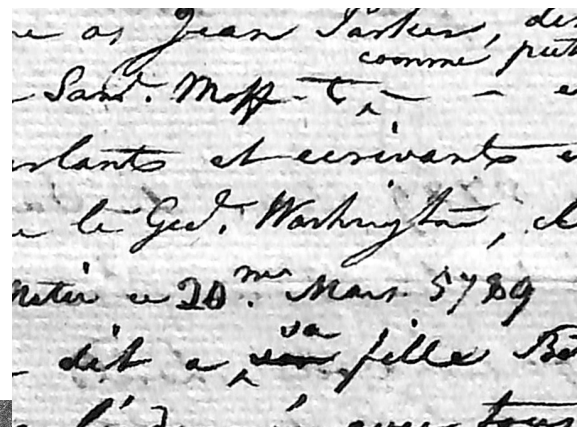
Contributions and queries may be directed to Publications Committee Chair/Editor Sherry Wood at sixswords@aol.com.

EDITOR:
Sherry Wood

DESIGNER:
Susan Kress Hamilton

CONTRIBUTORS:
Tom Hardiman, Dick Adams,
Katy Sternberger, Sherry Wood,
Peggy Hodges, Don Margeson,
Doug Aykroyd, Sandra Rux, Ann
Beattie, Bill Wieting, James Smith

Right: John Evans supported the Patriot cause during the American Revolution. A letter from March 1789 reads, "le Gen[era]l Washington, clairement saviour de son Country."



Below: John Evans's grave is located in Pleasant Street Cemetery in Portsmouth along with other prominent merchants.



REVISITING THE CULT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

SHERRY WOOD

Following is a Q and A with Sandra Rux, Chair Arts Athenaeum Exhibit Committee.

Q. What was the inspiration for “The Many Faces of George Washington,” which runs through April 13 in the Athenaeum’s Randall Gallery?

A. In a time of very partisan politics we thought it would be nice to remember a brief time without partisanship and to make use of the Portsmouth Athenaeum collection of George Washington prints.

Q. Washington spent four days in Portsmouth, arriving in the city on Oct. 31, 1789. His visit culminated in a gala ball on Nov. 3. What will the exhibit tell us about that?

A. The exhibit will have a shoe worn by Sally Brewster when she rode with Washington to the ball (on loan from Portsmouth Historical Society), a photograph of the Assembly Hall where the ball took place and some description of the ball.

Q. What were the highlights of Washington’s address to the citizens of Portsmouth?

A. It is very brief and was presented at Brewster’s tavern in response to an address from the citizens of Portsmouth presented by John Pickering. He thanks the citizens for their kind welcome and congratulations on his election to the presidency. He expresses fear that he is not worthy of their devotion, but pledges “unremitting attention to the duties of my office.” It is often thought that he made this address at the State House (then called the Town



1932 celebration of the bicentennial celebration of George Washington’s birth by St. John’s Lodge of the Masons in Portsmouth. George Washington joined the Masons as a young man. Portsmouth Athenaeum Collection PS 2667.

House on Market Square) when he was reviewing troops and the craftsmen on Saturday, the day he arrived. However, the address was on Monday, with few people present.

Q. The myth of Washington grew from the time of the Colonial Revolution and almost became cult-like after his death in 1799. Can you elaborate?

A. The first stage was immediately after his death, when mourning pictures, printed handkerchiefs, Liverpool jugs and an assortment of other items featured grief about the loss of Washington. Parson Weems, creator of the cherry tree story and several others, published the first edition of his biography in 1800 and added the cherry tree story in 1806. The more cultish behavior began in 1832 with the 100th anniversary of his birth. The Mount Vernon

Ladies Association began their work at Washington’s former home in 1857. The nation’s Centennial in 1876 heightened the fervor over all things Washington.

Q. In addition to portraits of our country’s first president throughout his life, what can visitors to the exhibit (open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 4 p.m.) expect to see?

A. Some great objects related to Washington’s death and the continued worship of his memory—some serious and some more irreverent—T-shirt anyone? A coffin fragment (he got a new one in the 19th century and pieces of the old were sold), a piece of the Cambridge Elm under which Washington took command of the troops in 1775

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Half-Hull Models Offer
Slice of Portsmouth's
Shipbuilding History



No doubt most people would regard the Athenaeum's collection of half-hull models as being far less interesting than the full ship models *America* and *Clovis*. Still, the half-hulls represent a very special slice of Portsmouth's history and warrant a few words in their defense.

Mounted on the walls of the back hallway of the 1805 building and along the walls of the stairways from the first floor all the way to the gallery three flights above, the 52 models on display (two more are in storage) convey the hull design of a wide array of Portsmouth-built ships, including barks, schooners, merchantmen, and clippers.

They are of a type known as "lift models" and relate to locally built ships between 1825 (*Ann Parry*) and 1886 (*Lizzie Call*), the only exception being a solid-type model of the 1941 submarine *Marlin*, built at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Lift models were occasionally created on speculation in order to entice prospective buyers to commission the building of a vessel, but more commonly they were used to aid in hull design of a ship with a known buyer.

All five of Portsmouth's major shipyards in the 19th century built the ships represented in the model collection: Toby and Littlefield,

George Raynes, William Fernald, Samuel Badger, and William Badger each built many ships, with Raynes probably leading in output.

Creation of a lift model began with the fastening together of a half-dozen or more flat boards with screws. These were referred to as "lifts." The resulting solid block of wood (pine, mahogany, cedar, maple, and oak most commonly used) was then shaped to conform with the plans of the ship's designer.

Using a series of measurements from reference lines to vertical and horizontal lines at set intervals, a so-called "table of offsets" was created, and lines were then drawn on the model according to the desired scale.

The model was then taken apart and each board's offsets were then translated to a full-scale plan drawn on the floor of a very large room called a loft, in a process known as "lofting." If the planned ship was too long to be accommodated in the available floor space the lofting was done in sections.

Carpenters then had the requisite information to create templates

based on what had been drawn on the loft's floor and then to use the templates to cut the ship's timbers to the size and shape as called for in the ship designer's plans.

Superficially, the models in the Athenaeum's collection don't look much different from one another, but closer inspection reveals significant variations. For example, the *Witch of the Wave*, a famous clipper ship built by George Raynes in 1851 at the North Mill Pond, has a pronounced rake to its bow and a relatively shallow hull and narrow beam.

This is because Raynes' primary objective was to build a ship distinguished by its speed rather than by large cargo-carrying capacity.

In contrast, the *Ann Parry* was a plodding whaler, as reflected in the half-hull model's comparatively blunt bow, broad beam, and deep hull.

Additional information relating to the half-hull models can be found in an essay by Proprietor Pat Breslin in the 2017 book *Portsmouth Athenaeum: The Story of A Collection Through the Eyes of Its Proprietors*.



THE 2019 ANNUAL LIBRARY CONSERVATION FUNDRAISER IS HERE

PEGGY HODGES

We know you've been asking. We know you're ready to help. Here are candidates for the 2019 Annual Library Conservation Fundraiser.

This year, staff has brought to our attention a veritable smorgasbord of imperiled historical materials whose care is a priority. While the Library and Special Collections Committees have not yet finalized the fortunate few that will receive treatment this year, these items have made the short list:

1737 Order by King George II of England appointing a committee to assemble at Hampton to adjust the boundaries between the Provinces of New Hampshire and Massachusetts Bay; **AND the 1760 Order by King George III of England**, commissioning Benning Wentworth as Governor of the Province of New Hampshire. *These large vellum charters, which hold pride of place in the Reading Room, need their current condition and housing assessed.*

1823 Portsmouth Bicentennial Celebration Guest List, which contains the signatures of dozens of early 19th-century Portsmouth luminaries who attended the gala 200th anniversary celebration of Portsmouth's founding at Franklin Hall. *This large scroll currently hangs in the 1805 building stairway with a shade over it. An enhanced digital copy of this document will replace the original in its current location, and the original will be placed in the vault.*

1822 New Castle Bridge Association Papers, including meeting minutes and a survey map "Road to New Castle through Shapley's and Amazeen's

Islands" by Benjamin Ackerman. *These documents are brittle and torn, and are in need of bathing and repair.*

Badger-Neal Collection, 1830–1900. Just gifted to the Athenaeum in January, these 23 account books are a rich source of information for the study of mid-19th-century shipbuilding in the Piscataqua region. *Many of the volumes suffer from warping and mold growth due to old water damage. Treatment is estimated at \$75 to \$300 per volume, depending on condition.*

20th-century Kimball's Department Store Jingle. Kimball's was a fixture in Market Square for decades. *The cost for laser transfer of the currently unplayable vinyl recording to digital audio is estimated at \$750.*

Several rare books, 16th-19th century. Gifts of Proprietor Joseph W.P. Frost, these valuable volumes contain the bookplates and inscriptions of important historical local figures, including William Pepperrell and George Jaffrey. *They suffer from old water damage, loose covers and deteriorated spines and need cleaning, flattening and custom boxing.*

Last year's Library Conservation Fundraiser was a thoroughgoing success. With your help and generosity, we were able to rescue and digitize four important 19th-century Portsmouth maps. The Library and Special Collections Committees hope that we can once again count on your appreciation for our historic library collections and their critical preservation needs.

More information on this year's fundraiser will be available soon. In the

meantime, if you would like to contribute to our efforts, we would be most grateful. Checks payable to the Portsmouth Athenaeum can be sent to the attention of Robin Silva, Librarian, at 9 Market Square, Portsmouth NH 03801. Please be sure to indicate that your gift is to support the 2019 Library Conservation Fundraiser.

For more information, please call Robin at (603) 431-2538 or email info@portsmouthathenaeum.org. And thank you.

Support the Library Conservation Fundraiser — and Discover Your Family History

Has your great-great grandmother's maiden name been lost to time? Wonder whether those old family stories about Great-Uncle George were true? Here's your chance to get some answers and support this year's Library Conservation Fundraiser.

Library Committee Chair Peggy Hodges, who has (nearly) completed a certificate program in American Records from the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, will donate 100% of her earnings, up to \$500, from researching Athenaeum members' genealogical questions.

This offer is good through June 2019. Call Peggy at (603) 431-2545 or email her at mhodes_62@comcast.net to learn more—or to begin that search for records of your ancestor's career as a sword-swallower!

Scripting the Seacoast with Words, Beauty, Learning and Laughter

ANN BEATTIE

Creativity abounds on the Seacoast. The Portsmouth Athenaeum Program Series 2019 brings writers of many genres—mysteries, songs, food and more. The series also features a photographer who is poetic, a storyteller who will make you laugh and playwrights who entertain and enlighten.

Each program begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Research Library. Reservations for each program are required, as seating is limited; please call (603) 431-2538, ext. 2.

Attendance at programs is free for Athenaeum Proprietors, Subscribers and Friends. Guests and members of the public are welcome to attend the entire series by becoming a Friend of the Athenaeum for as little as \$25 per year, payable at the door. Admission to an individual program is \$10.

.....
ON MARCH 20, Brendan Dubois, an award-winning mystery/suspense writer, will present his work. DuBois is a former newspaper reporter and a lifelong resident of New Hampshire. His publications include 11 books in the intriguing Lewis Cole mystery series, loosely set on the New Hampshire seacoast. DuBois is also a one-time "Jeopardy!" game show champion.

.....
ON APRIL 17, Rebecca Rule entertains. She is well known for her live presentations of humorous New England stories. Her books include

Live Free and Eat Pie: A Storyteller's Guide to New Hampshire. She also conducted an interview show *The Authors Series*, for 10 years and currently hosts *Our Hometown*, which airs on NH Public Television.

.....
ON MAY 15, Rachel Forrest will reveal insights from her career as a journalist who wrote two weekly columns about food and drink for the Portsmouth Herald for over a decade. She has also written more than 2,000 feature stories, including interviews with authors and musicians, and pieces about science, music, interior design, architecture, tattooing, theater and classic cars.

.....
ON SEPT. 18, photographer and poetic writer Alexandra de Steiguer will share her photographs and prose. For more than 20 years, she has moved out to the Isles of Shoals during the long winter months to work as the caretaker on Star Island, where she revels in its beauty. De Steiguer's book *Small Island, Big Picture: Winters of Solitude Teach an Artist to See*, captures her intense love of the natural world.

.....
ON OCT. 16, meet talented playwrights, actors and puppeteers Marguerite Matthews and Gregory Gathers. They have created more than 50 original works that have been presented both at their venue, Pontine Theatre in Portsmouth, and in hundreds of communities throughout New England. Much of their work delves

into the fascinating history of New England.

.....
ON NOV. 20, John Perrault, balladeer, poet, lawyer and teacher, leads the program. As a talented musician and former Poet Laureate of Portsmouth, Perrault has written many songs about historical people and events and is the author of *Jefferson's Dream*, *Here Comes the Old Man Now* and *The Ballad of Louis Wagner*."

URGENT NEED!

SANDRA RUX

David Ewing, who has done an excellent job of coordinating the Randall Gallery Greeters for our exhibits for several years, is stepping out of this position. We need a new coordinator.

The coordinator keeps a monthly schedule for Gallery Greeters, reminds volunteers to sign up and recruits new volunteers. David has done an excellent job of recruiting new people so that scheduling is a bit easier now.

If you are interested, please contact Sandra Rux, Exhibits Committee Chair (sandrarux@comcast.net or 203-654-0552).

A big thank you to David, who has encouraged the Gallery Greeters and made the scheduling process appear seamless.

Rainbow Reflections Opens May 3

SHERRY WOOD

"Seacoast LGBT History: 50 Years of Rainbow Reflections" opens May 3 in the Randall Gallery. Seacoast NH LGBT History Project founder Tom Kaufhold is working on the exhibit with a team of volunteers. "The project was formed in June 2015," Kaufhold said. "Our goal is to document and preserve the history of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people on the Seacoast, with emphasis on Portsmouth. We recognized the community was making great strides with things like same-sex marriage and wanted to be sure people knew about the struggles in the past and the work that was done to get to where we are today."



Tom Kaufhold

The 50-year window for the exhibit is two-fold. Kaufhold said most of the artifacts collected for the exhibit date from the 1970s on. And this June is the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City's Greenwich Village. "The Stonewall Riots are considered the beginning of the gay rights movement in the United States," Kaufhold said. "It was a night the patrons of the Stonewall Inn bar fought back against the police raids and corruption. From it stemmed Pride celebrations across the country in June to commemorate the riots." Buttons, posters, art work, books, videos, awards and other ephemera will be included in the exhibit, he said.

"We have a number of videos that have been converted to digital that we are working on presenting in some fashion. We will have maps highlighting places and events significant to the Seacoast LGBT community." The exhibit will focus on six categories: arts/culture, health, politics/activism, commerce, social and spirituality. "And in June we will be unveiling a special Pride exhibit with artifacts from Prides around New Hampshire and more recently, Portsmouth, which will celebrate its fifth annual Pride on June 22," Kaufhold said. "Rainbow Reflections" will be open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 4 p.m., though early July.

ATHENAEUM LEGACY SOCIETY GETS NEW NAME

PEGGY HODGES

As part of its efforts to renew and grow legacy giving at the Portsmouth Athenaeum, the Development Committee has rechristened the Nathaniel Adams Society, our original legacy program, as the Portsmouth Athenaeum Legacy Society.

Speaking for committee members Jeff Keefe, Ellen Fineberg, Alan Bennett, David Borden, CJ Cogswell and Peggy Hodges, chairman John Rice explained: "The Society was named for the Athenaeum's first President, Nathaniel Adams, who served from 1818 to 1828 and held Athenaeum Share No. 1. This was certainly a fitting namesake, but we wanted the Society's name to be more

self-explanatory, so that its meaning and purpose would be clear to our members who are perhaps less steeped in Athenaeum lore."

Rice said that past Athenaeum President Ellie Sanderson, who proposed the original Society name, has given the name change her blessing. Current members of the Nathaniel Adams Society will automatically become members of the Portsmouth Athenaeum Legacy Society.

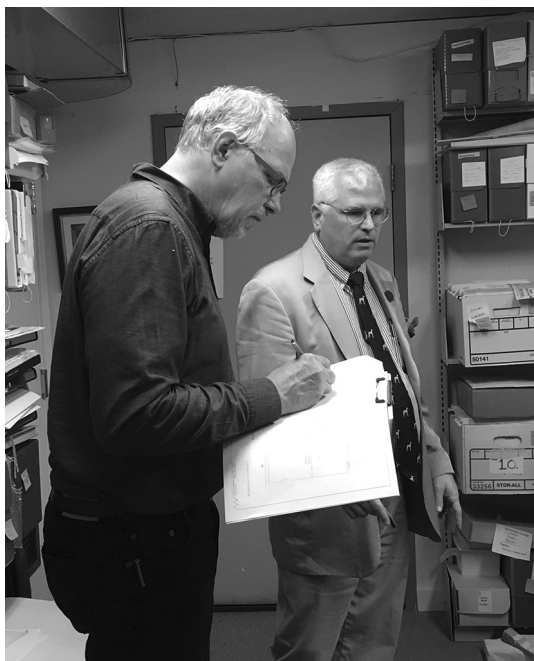
Legacy Society donors build the Athenaeum's endowment through gifts and bequests of \$10,000 or more, guaranteeing the Athenaeum's financial strength for years to come. The Development

Committee is planning a recognition program for Society members that will include an invitation to an annual Society lecture and luncheon, and name inscription on a decorative volume displayed in the Athenaeum.

Legacy Society gifts can be made in many forms tailored to the donor's estate planning, including cash gifts paid on installment; Charitable Gift Annuities; bequests; gifts of stocks and securities; and Qualified Charitable Distributions from retirement investments. More information on the Portsmouth Athenaeum Legacy Society and how you can become a member will be forthcoming—stay tuned!

Collections Preservation and Space Use Study Underway

PEGGY HODGES



Left: Keeper Tom Hardiman and museum space planner Jeff Weatherston discuss space needs at the Athenaeum.



Right: Archivist Susan Kindstedt and conservator Barbara Moore measure collections in the manuscript vault.

In mid-November, Athenaeum staff, board and committee members welcomed two museum consultants—and over two days gave these experts an earful about our current operations, how we use our spaces and our aspirations for the future.

Many notes were taken as discussions revealed needs and sparked ideas for solutions. These activities were the initial steps in a grant-funded study project aimed at exploring options for reorganizing our spaces to improve environmental conditions for our collections and better support daily operations.

Jeffrey Weatherston of Weatherston-Bruer, a Toronto-based museum space planner, and Barbara Moore, an independent collections conservator from New Castle, gathered information about how our members and the public access and use our spaces, and how our staff works with and cares for our collections on a daily basis. Board and committee

members provided insightful and passionate thoughts on how our historic buildings both complicate our efforts to fulfill our mission and offer our greatest resource for doing so. It was an inspiring several days.

Since then, conservator Barbara Moore has spent many hours with curator Elizabeth Aykroyd, Librarian Robin Silva, Archivist Susan Kindstedt, and Photographic Collections Manager James Smith, working with them to evaluate and measure collections, and to project future needs for collections, collection management activities and supply storage. This detailed information is now in Jeff Weatherston's hands; he will use it to reorganize and re-equip our collections' storage and processing spaces.

Over the winter and early spring, the consultants will work with our museum HVAC engineer to develop several alternative facility concept plans for space reorganization and collections

storage improvements to present to the board. A cost analysis will be done of the final plan chosen by the Athenaeum board and staff. At the end of this project, the Athenaeum will be well-positioned to approach federal, state, corporate and private funding sources to make the concept plan a reality.

This ambitious study project is fully funded by a \$49,875 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) *Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections* grant, awarded to the Athenaeum this past summer. The project is part of a grant-funded process, guided by nationally known museum consultants working with Athenaeum staff and board members, that began in 2014.

To date, we have raised more than \$80,000 in federal funding for this ongoing study project, which has allowed us to benefit from multiple museum consultants' expertise at no cost to the Athenaeum.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Douglas Aykroyd
oakscouter@comcast.net

It was great to have the Holiday Gala back in our house in December. Those who attended enjoyed the food and beverages, but spending time with friends in such a welcoming space was the highlight of the evening. There was a lot to see in the Proprietors' Show, again demonstrating the wide spectrum of skills available in the Athenaeum family.

As great as the event was, we need to remember why we were not able to hold it here in 2017. Over the past decades we did not keep up with advancements in fire prevention methods to the point that it was deemed that our facilities had unacceptable risks should a fire occur. We have already noted the efforts that were made in 2018 to upgrade our buildings, work which increased the number of people who could be in our buildings at one time. We were excited and set to hold the Gala. The invitations sent to Proprietors and Subscribers asked for a reply by Nov. 20, asked for the help of attendees to note the room occupancy limits, and highlighted the fact that the maximum occupancy for the event was 165 people. The Social Committee planned to expand the availability of food in the Reading Room in order to reduce concentration in the Research Library, Old Library, and the gallery.

The first challenge was the number of replies sent after the deadline. Not only did these make it difficult for our caterer to ensure that adequate quantities of food were prepared, but the increasing numbers caused concern that we would not be in compliance with the newly established limits. Our second challenge was a small

number of people who decided to come to the event without responding to the invitation. Fortunately, we had enough food and beverages, and we stayed below the occupancy limits. However, we will need your help in 2019 to ensure that we do a better job with RSVPs. We need to ensure that there continues to be enough food, and we hope that we do not exceed our occupancy limit. But hope is not a plan.

Volunteers. At our 2019 Annual Meeting, we recognized Elizabeth Aykroyd and Jan Dinan for five years of service on the Social Committee. Kimberly Alexander, Peggy Hodges, Jeff Hopper, and Don Margeson were recognized for five years on the Publications Committee. Don was also recognized for five years serving as a Wine Steward. Finally, Peggy Hodges was recognized for all of the grants she has written to improve the facilities of the Athenaeum.

It was very appropriate that all of these Proprietors were recognized, since volunteerism is at the very heart of what makes the Athenaeum the special place that it is. Why were these the only volunteers recognized? I would suggest that there are many others who merit similar recognition.

Understanding that we have one full-time employee and six part-time employees, it is difficult to imagine how we get so much done while being open to the public five days a week. The answer lies in our volunteers. As Keeper Tom Hardiman put it, "Our volunteers leverage the ability of our staff and our modest budget to produce programs that would be unheard of in other organizations."

Being a volunteer at the Athenaeum provides a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment and is a great way

to meet new people. It also gives the sense of contributing to what makes the Athenaeum so successful. I asked Tom Hardiman how one can find out about available volunteer opportunities. This is an area we are working on to improve. A volunteer page on the website is coming soon. Stay tuned!

Naming Rights. Just before the end of the 2019 Annual Meeting, Peter Randall rose to make note of the fact that the name of the Reference Library had been changed from the Copley Research Library to the Shaw Research Library and asked how that had come to pass without the approval of the Proprietors.

He made a motion that "The naming of any room or space, or the renaming of any room or space in the Portsmouth Athenaeum shall be approved only by a vote of the Proprietors at the annual meeting." Peter made it very clear that he was not questioning the contributions made by John Shaw which led to the change, nor was he asking that the change be revoked. His concern was that the Proprietors be involved in any future changes.

After considerable discussion the motion passed, but President Steve Roberts suggested that a Committee be formed to determine how naming should be done in the future and to decide if the procedure should be defined in the Bylaws or the Handbook for the Board of Directors. Peter Randall volunteered to be on the committee. If you are interested in helping to form our policy, please contact Steve Roberts or Tom Hardiman.

A Final Thought. When you consider that the average time our Proprietors have been members of the Athenaeum is 17 years, we must be doing something right.

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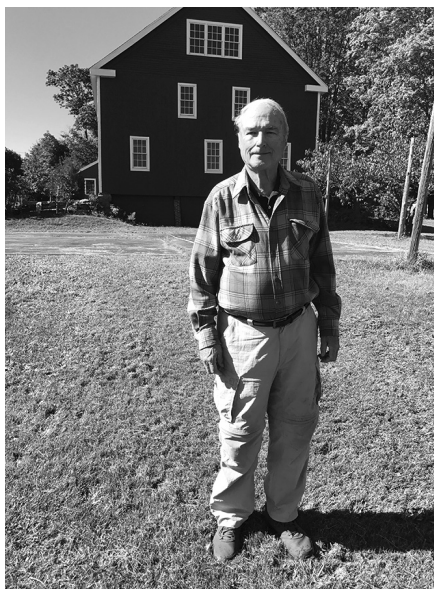
David Sanderson....

important figures in the colonial history of New Hampshire: John Thomlinson (d. 1767).

Many people might not recognize Thomlinson as a key figure in New Hampshire history because he never lived here. He was a prominent London merchant and member of Parliament who was hired as the agent for the Province of New Hampshire in 1734, replacing John Rindge. He was a key defender of the Wentworth family's timber interests and was appointed as mast agent for the Royal Navy.

He was instrumental in getting King George II to settle the border with Massachusetts in 1740 and set up New Hampshire as a separate Royal province with Benning Wentworth appointed as Royal Governor and Surveyor General of the King's Woods. Thomlinson and his business partner, Barlow Trecothick (1718–1775), were also key figures in the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766. Thomlinson's 23-page will outlines in great detail provisions for his wife, his son, the Trecothicks and other associates, as well as for the "poor of East Barnett."

David Sanderson has over many years greatly enriched the Athenaeum's document, book, map and photographic collections with his donations, virtually all of them tied to Portsmouth or the immediately surrounding area. Now in his 55th year as an Athenaeum Proprietor, David was born in Cambridge, Mass., and grew up in the Littleton, Mass., home that



David Sanderson at home in Portsmouth.

had been in his family since Moses Sanderson built it in 1750.

After schooling in Weston, near Waltham, he graduated from Yale University and Harvard Law School. For five years he practiced law with his father and his father's then-partner Ted Hale. In 1958 Hale entered into partnership with a Portsmouth attorney whose prior partner—Robert E. Marvin, a former Portsmouth mayor—had just died, and Hale brought David with him as an associate. After the death of the two senior partners, David succeeded to the practice, buying the entire contents of the firm's office, including the business files from which the manuscript collection, epic poem and Thomlinson's will came.

The will, needless to say, is not the work of the firm. During World War II, Robert Marvin served with the U.S. Armed Forces in England, and David believes that Marvin

may have spotted the will there and, noting its connection with New Hampshire, he acquired it, brought it home, and filed it at his office. Whatever the true history of the document's passage over the "pond," the Athenaeum is fortunate to have been able to add it to our collection.

Contract archivist Roland Goodbody is currently processing Sanderson's gift. Thank you, David!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Revisiting the Cult....

(pieces of it were sold and given away when the tree died), and a manuscript with Washington's signature are all included. Visitors can also learn about Ona Judge, an enslaved woman from Washington's family, who ran away and ended up in Portsmouth. She married and lived in Greenland. While folks in Portsmouth did know she was nearby, they denied all knowledge in letters to agents of Washington.

Q. What are some of the unexpected things you learned about George Washington as you, Elizabeth Aykroyd, Joan Graf and Barbara Adams assembled the exhibit?

A. We are all learning we did not know as much about Washington as we thought we did. Since we grew up in America in the 1950s and 1960s, we were immersed in American history and civics but are learning that these courses (and sometimes later ones in college and graduate school) left out a lot (or it didn't stick).

Events at the Portsmouth Athenæum

FEBRUARY – JUNE 2019

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free and open to the public. Reservations are requested since space is limited. Please call 603-431-2538x2 at least 48 hours in advance. For more current listings, check www.portsmouthathenaeum.org.

FEBRUARY 15, FRIDAY: Opening reception for the exhibition “The Many Faces of George Washington,” exploring the myriad ways Washington has been depicted and memorialized, 5–7 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

MARCH 1, FRIDAY: The Randall Gallery will be open for Art 'Round Town.

MARCH 20, WEDNESDAY: 2019 Portsmouth Athenaeum Program Series: Scripting the Seacoast with Words, Beauty, Learning and Laughter. Brendan Dubois, mystery/suspense writer, 5:30 p.m. in the Research Library.

APRIL 5, FRIDAY: The Randall Gallery will be open for Art 'Round Town.

APRIL 13, SATURDAY: The exhibit “The Many Faces of George Washington” closes.

APRIL 16, TUESDAY: Athenaeum Open House and Tea for new members, 4:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

APRIL 17, WEDNESDAY: 2019 Portsmouth Athenaeum Program Series: Scripting the Seacoast with Words, Beauty, Learning and Laughter. Rebecca Rule, humor writer, 5:30 p.m. in the Research Library.

APRIL 19, FRIDAY: Book launching for *Money, Revolution, and Books; a Multi-Generational Perspective on the Portsmouth Athenæum's Library of John Fisher of London*, by Athenaeum Keeper Tom Hardiman, 5:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

MAY 3, FRIDAY: Opening for the exhibit “Seacoast LGBT History: 50 Years of Rainbow Reflections,” 5–7 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

MAY 4, SATURDAY: A concert by students in the music program at University of New Hampshire, 3 p.m. in the Reading Room.

MAY 8, WEDNESDAY: Author Julie Dobrow will talk about her new book, *AFTER EMILY: Two Remarkable Women and the Legacy of America's Greatest Poet*. This critically acclaimed work explores the overlooked history of Emily Dickinson's sister Lavinia and Mabel Loomis Todd, who edited and promoted the trove of over 1,800 poems discovered after Emily's death. The talk is at 7 p.m. in the Research Library.

MAY 15, WEDNESDAY: 2019 Portsmouth Athenaeum Program Series: Scripting the Seacoast with Words, Beauty, Learning and Laughter. Rachel Forrest, food writer, 5:30 p.m. in the Research Library.

MAY 23, THURSDAY: Book talk and reception for Kevin Lafond's new book: *New Hampshire Merchant Scrip, Along with a Brief History of Its Use and Biographical Sketches of the Merchants*, 6 p.m. in the Research Library.

JUNE 7, FRIDAY: The Randall Gallery will be open for Art Round Town.

JULY 6, SATURDAY: The exhibit “Seacoast LGBT History: 50 Years of Rainbow Reflections” closes.



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ATHENAEUM PRIZE IN THE HUMANITIES

BILL WIETING

Elisa Dhanger lives in Portsmouth and is now a senior at Portsmouth High School. At the end of her junior year she was recommended for the Portsmouth Athenaeum Prize in the Humanities by a committee of faculty and staff members at PHS, and based on her submitted artwork, writing, two-year reading list and a required philosophic essay, Elisa was selected as one of two finalists by the PAPH awards committee.

After a wide-ranging interview, Elisa was selected as the winner of the 2018 Portsmouth Athenaeum Prize in the Humanities by unanimous vote of the selection committee. The \$1,000 prize was announced and presented during a Portsmouth Symphony Orchestra concert at the Music Hall on Nov. 4, 2018.

Elisa is an academically successful student, and a gifted artist as well, studying and working in a wide range of media, from pastels, oils and watercolors to assemblages and woodcuts.

She is widely read, and her ambitions for the future include creative writing, both prose and poetry. Well aware of the importance of the liberal arts in the development of an educated citizenry and a functioning democracy, Elisa plans to include poetry, creative writing, and the graphic arts in whatever profession or occupation she ultimately elects.



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