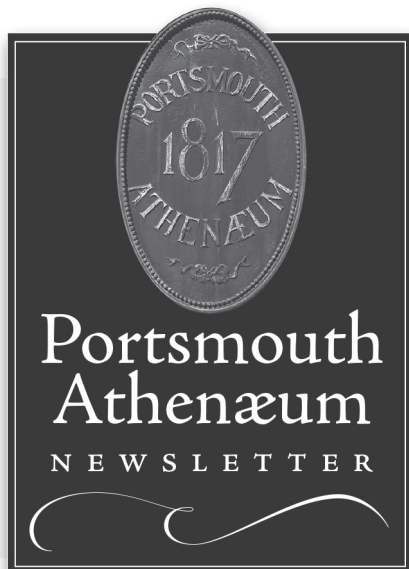


SPRING 2022

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

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENÆUM
9 MARKET SQUARE
P.O. BOX 366
PORTSMOUTH, N.H. 03802
603-431-2538
www.portsmouthathenæum.org



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REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

By TOM HARDIMAN, Executive Director

AT THE ATHENÆUM, we collect, preserve and share history because it shows us there is nothing new under the sun and assures us that we have weathered trying times before. Of course, this is a bit easier for those of us of the grey-haired persuasion.

In the summer of 1979 I was in driver ed and working at the local IGA for \$1.25 per hour. The OPEC oil embargo caused a second gas crisis and long lines at the pumps. Inflation was skyrocketing, with mortgage rates in the high teens. The nation was still deeply polarized after the Nixon impeachment hearings and the resounding catch phrase of the era from the movie "Network" was: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore." Sound familiar?

My friends and I expressed our rage by embracing punk rock: Anarchy in the UK, London Calling, etc. Then, in the summer of '79, Ian Dury, a British punk rocker who was afflicted by polio and who couldn't walk without steel leg braces and crutches, had a number-three hit with the improbable "Reasons to be Cheerful." It was a random ramble sprinkled with Cockney slang of things that just made Ian smile. It was impossible not to smile along with him.

More than two score years hence, the



PHOTO BY JAMES SMITH

misery newsfeed seems to skip like a sun-warped 45, but we can still find reasons to be cheerful. We seem to have weathered the worst of the pandemic and our program committees are bursting out of their cocoons, planning marvelous lectures, exhibits, concerts, and social gatherings for you when you are ready for them.

As I mentioned in my annual report, we

were surreptitiously evicted from our offsite storage space, but Athenæum board member Mark McNabb generously stepped in to offer us free, short-term storage in one of his downtown buildings. This gives us the breathing space to properly evaluate what we need, not just react to the crisis of the day.

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These spears identified as being "used by the natives of Toobuai" appear to be among the collection given to the Athenaeum by Navy Lt. John C. Long in 1827. Tubuai (or Toobuai) is 400 miles south of Tahiti. The HMS Bounty mutineers holed up on the South Pacific island for two months in 1789.

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS AYKROYD

A TALE OF TWO SPEARS

By DOUGLAS AYKROYD oakscouter@gmail.com

TWO WOODEN SHAFTS were recently discovered atop the main lateral beam during the Building Committee's cleaning of the attic.

That they had been there a long time was indicated by the cut nail which prevented them from rolling off. The longer of these two shafts was nearly 18 feet long. The shorter one was just over 14 feet.

Both showed signs of having been carved in ways similar to many of our objects from the South Seas collection.

Curator Elizabeth Aykroyd recognized them as spears and suggested that the two objects be photographed and measured so that we could catalog them and find out more about their origin. During the measurement process a label was discovered on the longer shaft which was in a handwriting similar to some other objects in our collection. The label read "590".

Comparing this number with a mid-1830s list of our holdings (MS001, Box 47, Folder 16), we found that object 590 was a "Spear used by the natives of Toobuai." Object 589 has the same description and appears to be the shorter spear.

These objects were a part of a much larger collection of items given to the Athenaeum by Navy Lt. John C. Long in 1827. He acquired the bulk of these items from various islands in the South Pacific and Peru while serving the U.S. Navy in the Pacific 1823-1824.



Two spears were hiding in plain sight on top of this horizontal beam in the Athenaeum attic for years.

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS AYKROYD

The spears were probably acquired from the crew of the USS Dolphin which was protecting American interests as a part of the Pacific Squadron.

We must thank the Building Committee for discovering two missing objects

from our collection that were hiding in plain sight for so many years. The next mystery will be how we move the spears to the Gallery where they will be able to be seen by all visitors to the Old Library.

CHEERFUL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Your indefatigable Building Committee, Dick Adams, Diane Manson, Peter Rice and Ken Wolf, has taken advantage of the slow winter days to make innumerable improvements: patching, painting, cleaning, organizing, and upgrading lighting.

If none of these gives you a reason to

smile, just listen to Ian from 1979:

*Summer, Buddy Holly, the working folly
Good golly, Miss Molly and boats
Hammersmith Palais, the Bolshoi Ballet
Jump back in the alley and nanny goats*

"Reasons to be Cheerful" ... gets me every time.

A FAREWELL TO PHINEAS

By SUSAN KRESS HAMILTON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Proprietor Susan Kress Hamilton recently decided with business partner Bill Hamilton to retire their Portsmouth company, Phineas Graphics, and donate its ephemera archives and books to the Athenaeum's collections. The editor asked her to write some words about Phineas for this issue.

IN 1970, while I was at Dartmouth, we bought an 1860 Gordon jobber platen press that was advertised on a bulletin board at the Hopkins Center.

We started to teach ourselves letterpress printing and were influenced by Rocky Stinehour at nearby Stinehour Press. I also studied with Dartmouth Professor Ray Nash at his Broadbrook Mountain School in Royalton, Vt.

While doing research on our platen press, we were trying to come up with a name for the business. At the time I was rereading John Knowles' *A Separate Peace*, whose main character is named Phineas, and discovered our press was designed by George Phineas Gordon. The name was meant to be!

We set up the press in 1972 in an 18th-century cape in Lempster (Goshen), N.H. Our early clients included the Sharon Arts Center, the Apple Hill Chamber Players, the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, the Harris Center in Hancock, galleries in Keene, the Newport Public Library Arts Center, etc.

To really make a go of it, we needed a more populated area. Everything fell into place for us in Portsmouth in late 1979 -- we found our space at 108 Penhallow St, and a house to rent in the South End. We were even offered the chance by Strawberry Banke Director Peggy Armitage to set up shop at the Banke to demonstrate early printing.

But we stuck with our vision to do what we had been doing. People seemed to be hungry for personal connection and for quality graphics and we wanted to keep the business small. We did not want to be quick printers and as designer and



One line of this handset metal type says *Ground Hog Day*, the title of a letterpress book Phineas printed.

PHOTO BY BILL HAMILTON

printer we WERE Phineas.

"Here is an office whose pleasure lies not in commonness or in profit, but in the pursuit of word and line rendered beautifully" was our credo.

My father served champagne at our opening in January 1980. He encouraged us and wanted Phineas to succeed but told me he had just read a NY Times article that reported a large percentage of small businesses fail in the first year. We ignored the warning. People like Mary and Booth Hemingway came to that opening, and they brought friends!

Early on, individuals, nonprofits and businesses including the Dunfeys, Bill Hart, the NH Charitable Fund, the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation, Charles Bickford at the NH Humanities Council, Buddy Haller at the Blue Strawberry, Peter Rice of the Dolphin Striker, Denny O'Toole at Strawberry Banke, Jane Porter at the Portsmouth Athenaeum, Dick Gallant at the Oar House and the Portsmouth Marine Society and Joe Sawtelle all supported what we were trying to do. We embraced

our community.

Through the years we added offset and digital presses. Being able to offer in-house color printing was a plus. When we started *The Art Guide* in 2012, we saw a need for a regional arts magazine with reasonably priced color ads for artists and good, solid content. Our long-term connections with the arts community made it happen.

Phineas has been at the same location on Penhallow Street since 1979 and we have seen the city change priorities from support of small local shops, historic houses, museums and artist studios and galleries downtown to hotels-hotels-hotels, condos and tourist-type knick-knack businesses. What is more important to a community than the day-to-day compatibility of a city to its residents?

All our needs were met when we first moved here. We rented a house on Washington Street in the South End and put our car away as we could walk to a grocery store (A&P), hardware store (Peavey's), drugstore (Green's), and sta

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MARK TWAIN COMES TO PORTSMOUTH

ON JUNE 30, 1908 Mark Twain visited Portsmouth to attend a memorial function celebrating the dedication of the Thomas Bailey Aldrich Memorial Museum. While no proof exists that he visited the Athenaeum – the visitor log for that day makes no mention of him – it is nevertheless a pleasing thought that he might have paid the Reading Room a brief visit as he made his way from the Aldrich House on Court Street to the Music Hall.

Or maybe not, as nothing he has to say about Portsmouth in his autobiography is in the least favorable, beginning with his ordeal at the hands of the Boston and Maine Railroad. The cars, as he called the railroad coaches, “had been employed in the railroad’s early business fifty years before. Water was passed around in a teapot and tin cup, and soft coal vomits [its] gritty product ... at every window and crack and joint. A memorial museum of George Washington relics could not excite any considerable interest if it were located in that decayed town and the devotee had to get to it over the Boston and Maine.”

His suffering continued unabated at the ceremony at the Opera House, as Twain called today’s Music Hall. Seated near stage center alongside his close friend William Dean Howells, a resident of Kittery Point, Twain endured two hours of speeches and poetry reading in sweltering heat. One of the speeches was delivered by Portsmouth mayor Wallace Hackett, “a big, hearty muscular animal, just the ideal municipal mayor of this present squalid century.” [Hackett was a long-time Athenaeum Proprietor, holder of share #2.]

Hackett, according to Twain, “thundered forth a vigorous and confident speech in which he said many fine and deservedly complimentary things about Aldrich. He compared the gentle and dreamy remote Portsmouth of Aldrich’s boyhood of sixty years ago, compared to the booming Portsmouth of today [i.e., 1908]. He didn’t use that word; it would have been injudicious. The Portsmouth of today doesn’t boom; it is calm, quite calm, and asleep.”

After several “happy, interesting, animated, effective speeches” by dignitaries, the last by Howells, who returned to his seat looking like a “pardoned convict,” it was Twain’s turn. He remembered it as having been “twelve minutes of lawless and unconfined and desecrating nonsense.” The memorial function over, it was to Twain “dreary, devilish, and hard to

endure” in two hours of blazing heat, but he “would not have missed it for twice the heat and exhaustion and Boston and Maine travel it cost, and the cinders [he] swallowed.”

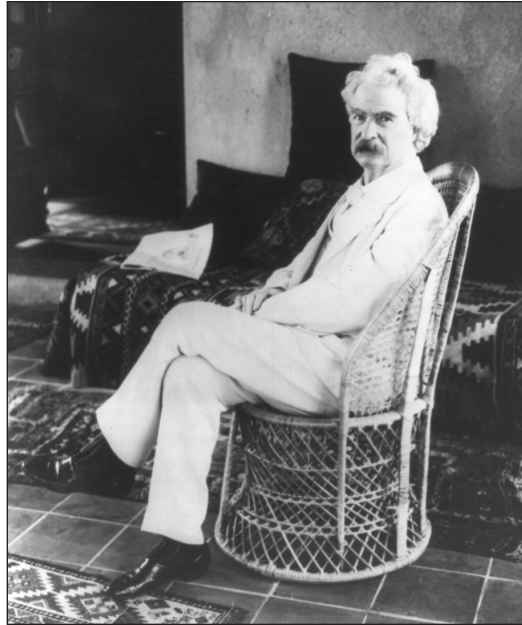
But it is Twain’s intense dislike of Aldrich’s widow, Lilian, that most inflamed his pen in his account of his visit to Portsmouth. Calling her “a strange and vanity-devoured, detestable woman,” he wrote “I do not believe I could ever learn to like her except on a raft at sea with no other provisions in sight.”

We can’t know for certain, but it’s very likely that Twain’s loathing of Lilian arose from his first encounter with her. Thomas Bailey Aldrich had invited Twain home as a dinner guest, without his wife’s knowledge. Mrs. Aldrich at once concluded that Twain was drunk, and received him with icy formality. Dinner was deliberately delayed, and eventually Twain got the

hint and departed. When Aldrich asked his wife the reason for her cold reception she said, “How could you have brought a man in that condition to your home? Why, he was so intoxicated he could not stand straight; he stammered in his speech.” Aldrich replied, “...did you not know who he was? What you thought was wine was but his mannerisms and idiosyncrasies, characteristics of himself, and born with Mark Twain.”

Lilian was mortified at her faux pas and begged Aldrich to bring Twain back. But it was too late, and it was not until years afterward that Twain was told of the reason for his disagreeable reception.

As for Lilian Aldrich, we can only assume that she attended the memorial ceremony, though she makes no mention of it in her 1927 book *Crowding Memories*. In that book she refers to Twain only a few times, never unfavorably. Clearly she was of a forgiving nature, as she almost certainly would have been fully aware of his most unflattering depictions of her.



Samuel Clemens wasn't a fan of the city or its people after his visit to Portsmouth in 1908.

PHOTO BY PAUL THOMPSON/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

MEET SALLY GAYER, OUR NEW PRESIDENT

By DON MARGESON

AT ITS 203RD annual meeting on Jan. 16, the Portsmouth Athenaeum elected and installed Sally Gayer as our 37th president, succeeding Brad Lown.

Sally is well-prepared to assume the presidency. She has served for the last two years as vice president, been an active member of the Performance Committee for the last eight years, and been a leading member of both the Long-Range Planning Committee (four years) and the ad hoc committee on governance that met this past summer and fall to draft the bylaw changes adopted at the annual meeting.

Sally is a native New Englander, hailing from Milton, Mass., just south of Boston. Her father was an English teacher at the private Milton Academy, which Sally attended as a student. Through her mother, she is a collateral descendant of founding father and James Madison Vice-President Elbridge Gerry, of redistricting renown. Her parents frequently took Sally and her sister on trips to historic sites. At home, the family and the academy teachers who boarded with them discussed books at dinner. She credits those trips and discussions, as well as her fascination with the Gerry



ATHENAEUM PRESIDENT
SALLY GAYER

connection, with having kindled her early interest in history.

After graduating from Milton Sally attended Connecticut College, graduating with a BA in European history. Her first job was with the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University,

where she met Alan Gayer, a graduate student in the Economics Department. After their marriage she followed Alan to Oxford, where she worked first at the Magdalen College Library and later in the University placement office.

After returning to the U.S., she studied for a master's in education and taught fifth grade until the birth of their son Charlie. He, their daughter-in-law and four children live in Durham, N.C.

Alan's work as a management consultant took the couple to Mexico for five years and later to Atlanta, where Sally continued her teaching and earned a master's in English from Emory University. She became director of education for Young Audiences of Atlanta, directing an arts-integrated learning program for early learners in the Atlanta public schools. Her work there led to a partnership with the Alliance Theatre, where she became the associate director of development, strategizing and implementing plans for major gifts and special projects.

After leaving Atlanta the Gayers spent five years living and working in Toronto, then retired to New Castle in 2007. Sally and her husband became UNH marine

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

An Ambitious Agenda

WORKING WITH THE BOARD and with the executive director, Sally Gayer's aim for the next two years is to set a clear vision and clear policies for the Athenaeum in the following areas:

- Improve communication, planning and accountability among the volunteer working committees by implementing the goals of the standing committees.
- Set a clear direction for the Athenaeum's research services and decide whether research activities belong in the present Athenaeum building or in an annex facility.
- Review the Athenaeum's acquisition policies for books, collections and archives to identify possible changes that might help resolve our growth-related storage problem. Set a clear direction for book storage.
- Strengthen the Athenaeum's connection to the greater

community through innovative programming and exhibits and promote the organization so that people living in the Greater Portsmouth area know who we are and what we do.

- Further expand the activities that welcome new members (the Social Committee already does a wonderful job). A "Welcome to the Athenaeum" booklet would help.
- Identify the skills of new members and encourage them to join working committees.

This is an ambitious agenda, but with Tom Hardiman and his extensive experience as the new executive director, a talented staff, a dynamic board and the remarkable efforts of the volunteer members, Sally believes that we have an outstanding opportunity in the next two years to move this unique and valuable institution toward a positive vision for the future.

WELCOME TO THE NEW ATHENAEUM BOARD MEMBERS

By SALLY GAYER, Athenaeum President

ANN BEATTIE

Ann has been a Proprietor of the Portsmouth Athenaeum for over 15 years. She chaired the Program Committee for close to a decade and has previously served on the Board of Directors. In keeping with Ann's fascination for the Isles of Shoals and its rich history, she serves as the Star Island Historian and is a former president of the Isles of Shoals Historical and Research Association. We know Ann will give her valuable ideas to Athenaeum's programs.

SUSAN "SOOKY" LASSEN

Sooky is a relatively new Proprietor, inheriting her share transferred from her husband Charles, who died in 2020 and was well-known and dear to many of us. Sooky has spent much of her career in philanthropy and international development, including work focused on malaria prevention in sub-Saharan Africa. She led a private foundation and worked for the Episcopal Relief and Development organization. She also worked for a multinational corporation. Sooky lives in the South End and is a former resident of Round Island, where she lived for many years. Sooky will chair the new Standing Committee for Programs.

ANNE WEIDMAN

Anne is a relatively new Proprietor and is the director of business development and community engagement for JSA Architects. Anne brings a true love of community and connection. She helped set up the pop-up plan during

the pandemic and assisted with designs for outdoor cafes at that time. As a seven-year trustee of Strawberry Banke Museum, she oversees the outdoor ice-skating rink. Anne will chair the task force for the Athenaeum's participation in Portsmouth's 400th birthday celebration in 2023.

Rear Admiral CRAIG STEIDLE, USN (Ret.)

Craig became a Proprietor in 2016. He is a senior adviser/past president of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation, having spent 32 years as a naval aviator, test pilot and vice commander of all naval aviation systems. Following the Navy, he worked at NASA and as a professor of aerospace engineering at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis. He lives in Kittery Point with his wife, Marcia. With his valuable experience in administration, Craig will help the Athenaeum in many areas.

CURT SPRINGER

Curt became a Proprietor in 2019, and is very familiar with the Athenaeum and local history. He is a graduate of Portsmouth High School and Dartmouth College. He joins the board after working his way up the ladder from holiday party wine steward. A New Castle native, he worked for the Smiths at the Wentworth by the Sea. He is recently retired after many years at Harvard in IT. His interests include land and woodland conservation management and the New Castle Historical Society. Curt helped set up the Zoom connection for the annual meeting in January.

PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM NEWSLETTER

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

EDITOR: Sherry Wood

DESIGNER: Tom Lynch

CONTRIBUTORS:

Tom Hardiman, Dick Adams,
James Smith, Don Margeson,
Sherry Wood, Jane Tyska,
Sally Gayer, Susan Kress
Hamilton, Douglas Aykroyd,
Chris White, Ronan Donohoe

PRESIDENT

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docents and ran the Floating Lab, a marine science program for middle school students, for seven years.

Sally served on the board of the NH Women's Foundation for six years and chaired their Grants Committee. Her interest in history led her to the Portsmouth Athenaeum and its lecture series. Encouraged by Proprietors Ellie Sanderson and Kate Murray, she later joined its Performance Committee.

Asked which aspects of her experiences will be helpful in serving as president, Sally points to her work with Atlanta's Alliance Theatre developing initiatives and raising money for the organization.

She also mentions her leadership in pro-

gram planning and problem-solving in both her professional and volunteer work over the years, her experience in interacting with diverse groups of people, and the flexibility developed in the course of living in many different places.

In setting her priorities as president, Sally has been guided by the Strategic Framework document adopted by the Board of Directors in September 2020. The document identified four core areas on which the Athenaeum should focus over the next three to five years: (1) ensure effective governance, (2) strengthen connections to the community and individuals, (3) maintain and develop the facilities and collections and (4) ensure sustainability.

From the PORTSMOUTH PRESS COLLECTION

By JANE TYSKA

EDITOR'S NOTE: Photographer Jane Tyska wrote this after being interviewed recently about The Portsmouth Press photo collection, which is being archived by Athenaeum Photographic Collections Manager James Smith.

I KNEW IT WOULD BE a good fit when this Jersey girl walked into The Portsmouth Press office in the summer of 1990 to apply for my first real photojournalism job.

Huge Bruce Springsteen lyrics jumped out at me from high above on the newsroom wall: "Well we made a promise we swore we'd always remember, no retreat, baby, no surrender."

During my interview, then-editor Jerry Schrier asked why I wanted the job. I replied: "There's no bad picture, they'll all be important history someday and we can learn from them."

Thanks to succeeding editor Tom Field, and local environmentalist and historian Tom Morgan, they helped make this possible by saving The Portsmouth Press' photo archives so people can view them online today on the Portsmouth Athenaeum website.

It was a thrill to look back upon the black-and-white images that I had shot so long ago at the start of my career. Thousands of photo assignments and several newspaper jobs later, some of the pictures and the people I remembered vividly, others not at all — they could have been shot by someone else.

What a treasure trove and time capsule of a really cool period to live in Portsmouth. When artists and musicians weren't driven out of town by high rents, there were plenty of jobs and there was hardly any traffic downtown.

When you'd drink Rolling Rocks in the tall green bottles at The Press Room and they didn't have a cocktail menu. And us musicians would all jam upstairs after hours.

There were such characters back in the day.

The ladies at J.J. Newberry's on their last day of business. Ace, a Market Square fixture with long silver hair, on his funky bicycle. Emilio with his trademark beret dishing out Italian food on Daniel Street.

Jay Smith, owner of The Press Room, journalist, musician, local philanthropist and renaissance man. Mayor Eileen Foley and her cheerful Irish demeanor. The feisty Evelyn Marconi, assistant mayor, co-owner of Geno's Chowder and Sandwich Shop and straight shooter.

From locals to presidential candidates cruising through town during the New Hampshire primary, there was never a dull moment. I had both a boat and motorcycle and



In this image published in The Portsmouth Press on Feb. 27, 1992, Pic n' Pay owner George Amergian takes a midday break from his register at 800 Islington St., Portsmouth, now Hanaford supermarket. Some 1,300 images from the newspaper were donated to the Athenaeum.

PHOTO BY JANE TYSKA

would venture out with intrepid former reporter Bob Tis to seek out stories by land and sea.

I still have a deep love of Portsmouth and hope to return at least part-time one day to the place I call "Kindergarten for Adults," since I learned almost everything I know how to do there. Photojournalism, music, sailing offshore, working in restaurants, driving cabs, delivering pizza.

It's the wonderful sense of community that prevails, both in the 1990s and now.

'STANDING TOGETHER' COMING TO RANDALL GALLERY

"STANDING TOGETHER: Seacoast LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups" opens June 3 in the Randall Gallery.

Curator Tom Kaufhold sees it as a natural outgrowth of a 2019 exhibit at the Athenaeum which ended with a special event commemorating the life of Charlie Howard. The Portsmouth High School graduate was 23 in 1984 when he was killed in an anti-gay attack in Bangor, Maine, thrown from a bridge by three teens who ignored his cries that he could not swim.

Kaufhold and the group he founded, Seacoast NH LGBT History Project, have helped raise money to create two memorial benches for Howard in Portsmouth, one in Commercial Alley and the other at Portsmouth High School. The benches will be dedicated in June and July.

Kaufhold said the exhibit builds on 2019's "Seacoast LGBT History: 50 Years of Rainbow Reflections."

"Seacoast Outright, AIDS Response Seacoast, Seacoast Gay Men, Women Singing Out! and Out and About are among the local groups that formed starting in the 1970s as part of the social movements across the United States to fight for LGBTQ+ rights," Kaufhold said.

For the last several years, he has



"Standing Together" curator Tom Kaufhold

worked with the Athenaeum to archive materials related to this movement -- posters, photos, banners, buttons, brochures, newspaper clippings -- and document and preserve the stories of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in the Seacoast.

Hershey Hirschkop, executive director of Seacoast Outright, is one of the groups working with Kaufhold on the exhibit.

"Not only did LGBTQ identity not exist until recently, but finding each other and community has always been a challenge," she said.

"That's why exhibits like this are so important for all of us -- our allies need to understand our struggles and celebrations; LGBTQ adults need to remember how far we've come (and how much further we have to go), and our LGBTQ youth, especially, need to see positive role models who have succeeded spectacularly not in spite of whom they are, but often because of it."

The exhibit will run through July 15 and is open Tuesdays-Saturdays, 1 to 4 p.m. Kaufhold is planning a gallery talk on June 16.

"Not only did LGBTQ identity not exist until recently, but finding each other and community has always been a challenge. That's why exhibits like this are so important for all of us ..."

HERSHEY HIRSCHKOP
Seacoast Outright

PHINEAS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

tionery store (Hoyt's). Now, they are all gone and there is very little that's vital to a thriving local community downtown. Sadly, big money, developers, restaurants and tourists reign in Portsmouth.

It is an honor that the Portsmouth Athenaeum has accepted our ephemera archives and books.

+++

About Susan Kress Hamilton: A Proprietor since 1989, Susan designed the Ath-

naeum newsletter for several years, and served on the board and the Arts Athenaeum committee. She was both curator and designer of the exhibit and catalog for "A NH Treasure: Wood Engravings by Herbert Waters" in 2003 as well as for "Selections from the Ogunquit Museum of American Art" 2009; and was co-curator and designer with Research Librarian Carolyn Marvin of "Ephemera: The Art of Everyday Printed Matter" in 2013.

She worked as designer on many exhib-

its including "Coming Home: Treasures of the Warner House" in 2006; "Abandoned in the Arctic" in 2007; "Downton Abbey, A Portsmouth Family Connection" in 2012 and the four-part exhibit "Treasures of the Portsmouth Athenaeum" with various curators in 2017. She also designed and produced the bicentennial book that year, "Portsmouth Athenaeum: The Story of a Collection Through the Eyes of its Proprietors."

BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE

By RONAN DONOHOE



IT MUST BE more than 25 years ago that I served as president of the Athenaeum, and during that time I received a call from then Proprietor Arthur H. Thornhill Jr.

After retiring as President and CEO of Little Brown and Company, the prestigious publishing house founded in Boston in 1837, Arthur and his wife Dorothy bought a condo in the Haven School and divided their time between Portsmouth and Florida and Martha's Vineyard.

Dorothy had won a boudoir chair as a door prize at some charity function at the Museum of Fine Arts and it did

Proprietor Ronan Donohoe considers this chair on the top floor of the Athenaeum perfect for "woolgathering, storm-gazing, hiding out, and falling sound asleep."

PHOTO BY JAMES SMITH

not fit well into the space they had on South School Street. I felt that it might seem rude to say I would like to inspect the chair before accepting it — he was a member of the Union Club, the Century Club, the St. Botolph Club, and the Edgartown Reading Room and if he thought it appropriate for the Portsmouth Athenaeum, I did too.

Well, it wasn't really, so we put it up on the balcony in the left hand corner where it proved to be just perfect for woolgathering, storm-gazing, hiding out, and falling sound asleep.

Some of the frayed white silk upholstery has been removed, exposing a more beige hopsacking beneath, and it now appears a bit more New England — just a bit. It has been moved from the front window to a back window, but for my money it is still the best seat in the house. And it has wheels. Hmm.

Seen on Social Media

By JAMES SMITH, Photographic Collections Manager

So who else could cut a rug on April 1st with the release of the 1950 census?

Pictured are Connie Veilleux, left, and Connie Pendergast [Holt], right, both of Kittery, Maine, dancing at the "Teen-Age Canteen" sponsored by the Wallingford Harris American Legion Post No. 89 in Kittery, Maine, dated October 1950.

Douglas Armsden, of Kittery Point, was the staff photographer for *Shoreliner* magazine, and the image was used for the article "They Knew What They Wanted" about a weekly informal dance that kept "teen agers 'hep' and happy" at the American Legion.

"Although the jitterbug runs hot in a bobby-soxer's veins, most dancers in this locality seem to prefer the good ole waltz or fox-trot."



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2022 ATHENAEUM CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

By CHRIS WHITE, Performance Committee

Drumroll, please!! The Portsmouth Athenaeum is pleased to announce its 2022 Chamber Music Series. This is an annual series of concerts held in historic properties in the Portsmouth area. The public is invited.

Sunday, Aug. 28, 3 p.m. The Noree Chamber Soloists will play works for piano, cello and violin at the Dance Hall in Kittery, Maine. New York Concert Review speaks of the ensemble's "musicality of a high order" performed with "exquisite sensitivity."

Sunday, Sept. 18, 3 p.m. The Boston-based Rasa String Quartet will play string quartet music at St. John's Episcopal Church, Portsmouth. Rasa describes itself as "passionate about performing powerful, engaging, and unconventional programs."



The Boston-based Rasa String Quartet will perform at St. John's Episcopal Church in Portsmouth on Sept. 18.

Sunday, Oct. 2, 3 p.m. Music Haven will perform at South Church in Portsmouth. The string quartet is sought after for both its command on the concert stage and mastery as teachers. Haven String Quartet has been described as "exquisite" by the New Haven Register.

Sunday, Oct. 16, 3 p.m. ASMI Chamber Ensemble will perform at St. John's Episcopal Church. Besides violinist Emil Altschuler, there will be pianist Thomas Pandolfi and cellist Allison Eldredge. The ensemble performs as a collaboration between ASMI's world-renowned faculty and up-and-coming young artists.

There is a charge at the door of \$25 per person for individual concerts. Patron sponsorship for \$250 per person is also available. Patrons receive a ticket to each of the four concerts in the series, and are invited to post-concert receptions with the performers.

Please make checks payable to the Portsmouth Athenaeum and send to the Portsmouth Athenaeum, P.O. Box 366, Portsmouth, NH 03802. Kindly note PACM on the check memo line.