

## Membership Libraries Group

1. Redwood Library & Athenæum (1747)  
redwoodlibrary.org | Newport, RI
2. Charleston Library Society (1748)  
charlestonlibrarysociety.org | Charleston, SC
3. New York Society Library (1754)  
nysoclib.org | New York, NY
4. Boston Athenæum (1807)  
bostonathenaeum.org | Boston, MA
5. Salem Athenæum (1810)  
salemathenaeum.net | Salem, MA
6. Athenæum of Philadelphia (1814)  
philaathenaeum.org | Philadelphia, PA
7. Portsmouth Athenæum (1817)  
portsmouthathenaeum.org | Portsmouth, NH
8. Mechanics' Hall Library (1820)  
mechanicshallmaine.org | Portland, ME
9. Center for Fiction (1820)  
centerforfiction.org | New York, NY
10. Institute Library (1826)  
institutelibrary.org | New Haven, CT
11. Mercantile Library (1835)  
mercantilelibrary.com | Cincinnati, OH
12. Providence Athenæum (1836)  
providenceathenaeum.org | Providence, RI
13. Mechanics' Institute Library (1855)  
milibrary.org | San Francisco, CA
14. Lanier Library (1890)  
thelanierlibrary.org | Tryon, NC
15. Timrod Literary & Library Association (1897)  
thetimrodlibrary.org | Summerville, SC
16. Athenaeum Music & Arts Library (1899)  
ljathenaeum.org | LaJolla, CA
17. Folio: The Seattle Athenæum (2014)  
folioseattle.org | Seattle, WA

## What is an athenæum?

The word *athenæum* (pronounced a·tuh·nee·uhm) is derived from Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom. In 1731, Benjamin Franklin founded the Library Company of Philadelphia, a membership library that pooled the resources of multiple readers, and the idea spread worldwide. Of the thousands of membership libraries that flourished in America in the nineteenth century, fewer than twenty survive. However, the membership library's purpose remains the same: to encourage self-improvement and promote intellectual curiosity. Help preserve local history and become a Friend of the Portsmouth Athenæum.



## Portsmouth Athenæum

Open Tuesday–Saturday,  
1 to 4 p.m., and by appointment

9 Market Square  
P.O. Box 366  
Portsmouth, N.H. 03802

603.431.2538  
portsmouthathenaeum.org

# PORTSMOUTH ATHENÆUM



*Become a Friend*

Collect | Preserve | Share

## Support the Athenæum

Incorporated in 1817, the Portsmouth Athenæum is a nonprofit, member-supported organization. For more than two centuries, it has preserved and provided access to an extensive collection of manuscripts, rare books, photographs, artworks and artifacts, and digital collections related to local history and genealogy. An intellectual center of the Seacoast community, the Athenæum sponsors exhibitions, concerts, lectures, and other educational and cultural programs.

- ◆ Research Library
- ◆ Gallery
- ◆ Reading Room (open to the public select Thursdays and Saturdays at 1 p.m.—check our website)

We're supported by people like you!



David J. Murray | ClearEyePhoto.com

## Membership Benefits

Continue the Athenæum's legacy and become a Friend. Benefits include:

- ◆ Subscription to the Athenæum's quarterly newsletter, with up-to-date information on events and activities as well as notice of recent acquisitions of books, special collections, and curatorial objects
  - ◆ Free admission to lecture series
  - ◆ Advance notice of lectures, programs, and volunteer opportunities
  - ◆ Invitations to exhibition openings
- Your contribution is tax deductible.

## Vision

The Portsmouth Athenæum is a welcoming collaborative of curious minds dedicated to enriching the lives of its members and the broader community through spirited dialogue and cultural engagement.

## Mission

The Portsmouth Athenæum is a membership library that welcomes all who seek knowledge to experience culture and share in the history of the Piscataqua region so that together we may find meaning in the past to illuminate the present and the future.

I would like to show my support as a Friend of the Portsmouth Athenæum. Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$40 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Portsmouth Athenæum P.O. Box 366 Portsmouth, N.H. 03802