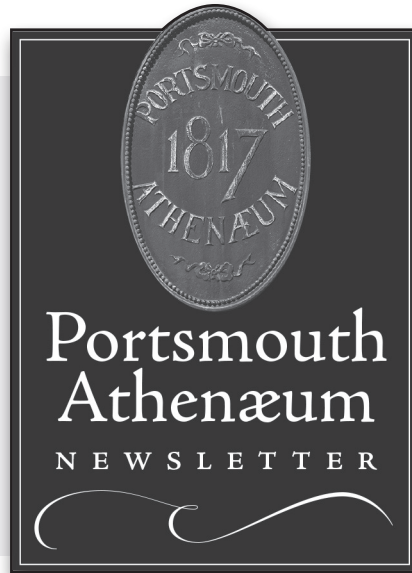


SPRING 2024

*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



CONTENTS

- Meet the New President • 2
- Membership Updates • 3
- Athenæum Arcana • 5
- Mr. Haven Gets Framed • 6
- Memorial Concert | Calendar • 7
- Lecture Series Update • 9
- Current Affairs Lectures • 10

STAFF CHECK-IN

PIECING TOGETHER ‘A PUZZLE OF PORTSMOUTH’

THE PORTSMOUTH Advocates — a nonprofit founded in 1980 to promote the preservation of the historical and architectural heritage of the city — made it a mission to photograph historically significant buildings. For years the images existed in vertical files at the Athenæum, a time capsule that became more valuable to researchers as years passed.

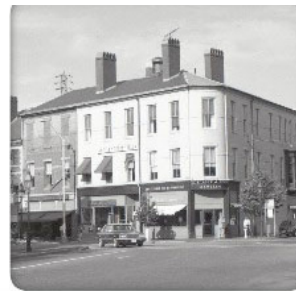
Now thanks to the efforts of Athenæum Photographic Collections Manager **James Smith**, the more than 1,800 images associated with the survey are much more accessible and online as the P0064 Portsmouth Historic District Survey, 1982-1983 photograph collection.

From Atkinson to Wibird, the collection is arranged mostly alphabetically by street name.

The material was brought to the Athenæum by Proprietor Richard Candee, a past president of the Portsmouth Advocates.

While many buildings in the survey are still standing, the downtown section includes images of storefronts that are no longer there. In some instances, this survey is the only evidence in the Athenæum archives of those 1980s businesses.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



There are more than 1,800 images in the Athenæum archives associated with the Portsmouth Advocates' street surveys.

MEET JEFF KEEFE, OUR NEW PRESIDENT

By DON MARGESON

ELECTED PRESIDENT at the 205th Annual Meeting in January, Jeffrey W. Keefe of Portsmouth had already served six years as the Athenaeum's treasurer.

Jeff was born with an entrepreneurial spirit. By age 23 he had established his own welding business, with projects at Portsmouth's Sheraton Hotel, the Portsmouth Tugboat Pier and the Boston Harbor Clean-up.

His success led him to seek financial planning advice, then encouraged him to wonder if he could succeed in that field helping others.

After taking business classes, he was offered a job with a national financial planning firm, where he spent 13 years building a practice and guiding his clients' personal financial interests. Eighteen years ago, he opened his own independent firm in Portsmouth, where he still operates today.

Jeff's involvement in the Athenaeum arose from his interest in Portsmouth history.

His ancestral family moved from Ireland to Boston in the late 1880s and from there to the Portsmouth area; he is a fifth-generation Portsmouth resident. He was born in Portsmouth Hospital and spent his early childhood in Greenland, moving with his family to Exeter when his father became town manager. In the 1970s, his family moved to Rye; he graduated from Portsmouth High School.

His bond with the Athenaeum grew with his use of its resources for research and his realization that supporting the organization was a way of giving back to his community.

Jeff sees the Athenaeum as "moving toward a more 'social' membership – people coming together and sharing ideas." He foresees its evolution into "a gathering spot where discussion creates awareness [that he believes would] have impact on our community."

He sees his entrepreneurship as an as-



set he brings to the job of building and running the organization, helping to set its goals, putting together its budgets and protecting and growing its assets in service of its membership.

He likens the challenges of developing and implementing strategic plans for our nonprofit to those he regularly addresses in preparing financial plans for individuals and families.

Keefe said he is looking forward to the results of a membership survey designed to show what the membership is looking for from the Athenaeum, including how the organization's existing resources can be put to better use, and any need for additional resources. (See article below.)

These may include expanded staffing, technology enhancements, real estate acquisition, new storage capacity and more

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

TAKE THE ATHENAEUM SURVEY

What ignites your curiosity and enthusiasm at the Portsmouth Athenaeum?

In the coming days, you will receive an invitation to participate in a survey designed to capture your impression of experiences at the Athenaeum. Your insights into what you enjoy, what you'd like to see more of, and the possibilities you envision can help shape amenities offered at our beloved institution.

At today's Athenaeum, you can delve into literary works and meet some of the authors. An extensive collection of research materials awaits, unlocking hidden knowledge and unraveling historical mysteries. Inviting spaces for reading, researching, or working are around every corner.

The Athenaeum's Lecture Series, alongside independent talks, offer insights and perspectives that spark thought-provoking discussions. His-

torical exhibits, accompanied by "tour guide" lecturers, take you on journeys through time.

Melodic strains of concerts and chamber music permeate the atmosphere. The warmth of intellectual camaraderie infuses our social gatherings at teas and parties. Tours highlight the elegance of the Athenaeum building, where every step echoes with the whispers of bygone eras.

Your participation is vital in crafting the Portsmouth Athenaeum experience. What can you envision doing at the Athenaeum? By sharing your views on these offerings and contributing your own ideas, you'll help ignite imagination and enrich the soul of our Athenaeum.

Your thoughtful contributions to the upcoming survey for Friends, Subscribers and Proprietors of the Athenaeum are eagerly anticipated. ¶

WELCOME TO THE ATHENAEUM

Recent changes and additions to Athenaeum membership

THE ADMISSIONS Committee reports that:

- Proprietor share 115 from the estate of Edmund Tarbell II was transferred to his son-in-law, **Andrius Keturakis**. Andy is the director of research and development for IDEXX Laboratories. He is an avid sailor and is interested in maritime history and Athenaeum history. He lives in New Castle with his wife, Julie Tarbell Keturakis.

- **Blanton “Roy” Young** is the son of Proprietor George M. Young (share 178) and his wife, Pat. George has been a Proprietor since 1980. Roy is an attorney with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He lives in Durham with his wife and two children and is interested in history, especially governmental history.”

New subscribers

- **Ceal A. Anderson** is retired as operations and supply chain manager for Nike Inc. and is greatly interested in community service, sports and travel. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse Colleen Bean.

- **Stephen Clough Barndollar** is the retired owner and president of Seatrade International and is the father of Proprietor Gil Barndollar. Stephen lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Karin.

- **Stephen C. Buczko** is an inspector with the Massachusetts Water Authority and has a lifelong interest in maritime history, particularly navigational instruments. He lives in the South End of Portsmouth with his wife, Nancy.

- **Jeffrey A. Carlisle** is medical system designer, founder and CEO of Pneuma Systems Corp. He lives in Portsmouth.

- **Anne Catell** is a retired special education teacher interested in sailing, tennis, and cooking. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse George Samuels.

- **Peter Badgley Coddington** is the company owner of PaRaBaL cyberse-



The Athenaeum’s newly formed Franklin Club meets the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room. It is inspired by The Leather Apron Club, founded in 1727 by Benjamin Franklin to debate questions and exchange knowledge. The Franklin Club brings together new Athenaeum members or potential members to share thoughts about current matters of life and town in a casual manner and socialize with people who are part of the Athenaeum.

PHOTO BY TOM HARDIMAN

curity and is interested in reading and writing and is eager to use the library’s resources. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Lisa.

- **Richard Thomas DiPentima** is an epidemiologist with the Manchester Health Department and is interested in health-care, politics, boating, travel, and food. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Catherine.

- **David Phillip Falk** is retired executive vice president of Pinnacle West Capital Corp and is interested in military history, biography and business. He has lectured on legal ethics. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Sally.

- **Will Parker Feld** is 18 years old. He went to Berwick Academy and is in his final year at St. John’s Preparatory School. He has a strong list of academic

awards and has been accepted by Dartmouth College. He likes military and maritime history and lives in Portsmouth.

- **Dr. Lawrence Gray** is a plastic surgeon and is greatly interested in history, travel, and Third-World surgery trips. He is very involved with Rotary International. He lives in New Castle with spouse Ruth Gray.

- **Carol Gruen** is a Realtor with previous experience in financial planning and as a financial analyst. She lives in Portsmouth. A member of several local non-profit organizations, she is interested in historic architecture and preserving historic artifacts.

- **David Higgins** is a portfolio manager

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

CHECK-IN

From Page 1

“There was a shop called Santa’s Corner on the corner of Commercial Alley and Market Street where Cup of Joe’s is now,” Smith said. “It seemed to sell Christmas all year round, which I don’t think could happen downtown today.”

Smith started processing this collection back in 2019 with Athenaeum member and volunteer Kristen Petersen.

“Kristen was making great strides,” Smith said. “She made it to Market Street (the “M” streets) until all our volunteer projects were suspended during COVID.”

Over the years and between other projects, Smith worked to complete the second half of the collection, which slowed down when he realized many of the unprocessed Advocates film rolls found in the outer vault were also part of the survey.

“I scanned all these negatives, and I had to go back in and add all of them to the records,” Smith said, “but it was like putting together a puzzle of Portsmouth to find all the corresponding buildings.”

With the assistance of Librarian Robin Silva, he also attached the survey reports, which include the Advocates’ description of the buildings, with details about their construction and significance.

“This was a massive undertaking, but we finished!” Smith said.

Portsmouth’s Social Butterfly

Librarian **Robin Silva** is nearing completion on the scrapbooks of Portsmouth socialite Marion Hackett Rogers (1886-1971).

“It’s by far the most interesting project I’m working on,” Silva said. “There are so far almost 500 pieces of ephemera.”

Marion, who lived with parents Abbie and Wallace Hackett in a grand house at the corner of Middle Street and Miller Avenue (now home to St. John’s Masonic Lodge No. 1), did not marry until she was 28.

Her life was a mad whirl of dances, bridge parties, concerts,

shopping, and socializing with naval officers at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

“There were times when she was busy every single day of the week,” said Silva, who joked with coworker June Spezzano: “June, this woman is exhausting me.”

The scrapbooks were brought to Silva’s attention by volunteers going through the small manuscript collection.

Silva is cataloging the ephemera — invitations, calling cards, bridge tally sheets, theater and concert programs — while Photographic Collections Manager James Smith is handling the photos and postcards. Archivist Katy Sternberger is processing the letters.



Marion Hackett Rogers (1886-1971) led a very active social life in Portsmouth right up until her marriage at 28 to U.S. Navy Lt. Robert Rogers. Her scrapbooks are being cataloged by Athenaeum Librarian Robin Silva.

Gilman’s Blues

Assistant Librarian/Cataloger **June Spezzano** is busy identifying people in the record book of Gov. John Taylor Gilman’s Blues, a militia group in Portsmouth from 1799-1813.

The Gilman’s Blues met at Jefferson Hall on Pleasant Street.

“It’s mostly minutes from their meetings about electing officers, purchasing uniforms, collecting dues, OK’ing new members, etc.,” Spezzano said. “I don’t recall anything about militia drills, funnily enough.”

Video interviews

Archivist **Katy Sternberger** recently shared the story of Portsmouth’s 1782 smallpox hospital with local videographer Garret Pray for his YouTube channel, The Bard’s Archive.

In February she discussed the history of smallpox in Portsmouth, using her research on the Henzell’s Island inoculation ledger from the Athenaeum’s collection.

In a second interview for Women’s History Month in March, she detailed the life of Portsmouth native Doris Moore, who served in the 6888th Central Postal Battalion during World War II and later became New Hampshire’s first Black social worker.

The interviews can be seen on YouTube.

Lifetime Proprietor Valerie Cunningham of Portsmouth, who laid the foundation for the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire, donated the Moore album to the Athenaeum in 2013. ¶

SPITTING MAD OVER POLITICS IN THE 1830s

IT IS TEMPTING to try to draw strong parallels between today's fraught national political climate and that of the tensions that existed in the late 1830s in Portsmouth. Such an effort can be overdone, as each period has unique characteristics. Still, some similarities are apparent.

In the 1830s nationally, sharp divisions between the Whigs and the Democrats resulted in bitter exchanges in the press. In broad terms, the Democrats favored a strong executive and states' rights, while the Whigs adopted adversarial positions against almost everything the Democrats favored and were perceived by many as being elitist and pro-business.

In Portsmouth the electorate was quite balanced, with each party enjoying fairly equal support. At the Athenaeum, though, the Whigs dominated, and this led to strong resentment.

In a letter to a local newspaper, a Democratic correspondent calling himself "Stark" wrote: "From the manner in which loafers in and about the Athenaeum catch at anything uttered against it, a person would think it was high treason to mention it in any other terms than those of praise and approval. [Its] influence out of its own sphere of action is of the most blighting and withering cast."

A short-lived publication called *The Hornet* directed its scorn at the Athenaeum's Whigs, observing that they were members of the "loafing fraternity" who were "generally rich" and "rated respectable – by their friends."

The Whig-partisan *Portsmouth Journal* countered, "Portsmouth is so far behind the spirit of the age because "of a local political culture that attack[s] both wealth and education," to which the Democratic *New Hampshire Gazette* asserted that Whig members of the town's elite were so "clannish and exclusive that



Artifacts from a century of Granite State campaigns are part of the Athenaeum's current exhibit, "First in the Nation: New Hampshire Presidential Primaries, 1920-2020," open in the Randall Gallery through November, Tuesday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m.

no one who did not share their politics dared to enter the Athenaeum even upon urgent business ...without danger of being insulted and assaulted by some of their bullies."

The *Journal* further claimed that Democrats patronized the Athenaeum "every day, without molestation."

Nothing in the Athenaeum's official records suggest that such assaults ever took place, although the *Gazette* hinted that Democratic Congressman and Athenaeum Proprietor Samuel Cushman experienced some form of abuse.

The Athenaeum records do support the *Gazette's* assertion that a recently-acquired bust of Democrat Levi Woodbury, at that time Secretary of the Treasury, had been "purposely covered with tobacco spittle by some mean, dirty scoundrel, and after it had been cleaned of the filth was grossly abused and disfigured." It further railed against the culprit as having "a base, treacherous,

and malignant spirit."

The perpetrator of the offense was never identified, but in fairness to the Whig majority on the Athenaeum's Board of Directors, a new bust was ordered and an advertisement was placed in the *Portsmouth Journal* in 1837 offering a reward of \$50 for information leading to the conviction of the offender.

Earlier, in 1836, the *Gazette* had observed that the signature of a prominent Democrat (unnamed) had been defaced in the visitors' register.

The national election of 1840 brought about intensified charges and counter-charges between the two major parties.

The Democrat nominee, Martin Van Buren, running for a second term, lost to the Whig candidate 70-year-old William Harrison, in large part because a major depression occurred in 1837 during Van

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

NEW FACES IN ATHENAEUM LEADERSHIP

This year the Athenaeum welcomes:

• **Jan Dinan** will serve as vice president to 2026.

She recently served on the Athenaeum board of directors for six years and has been an active member of the Social Committee since becoming a Proprietor.

She and her husband, Peter, moved to Portsmouth 13 years ago from Nashua. They restored the Capt. John Lighton House on Court Street after purchasing it from Strawberry Banke.

Jan is a longstanding member of the Gundalow Company and is its board secretary. She is passionate about preserving and sharing history in an effort to make meaningful decisions for the future.

• **Elizabeth Farish** will fill an uncompleted term on the board of directors through 2025.

Farish is chief curator at Strawberry Banke and has worked for independent house museums in Portsmouth and as a regional manager for Maine and New Hampshire for Historic New

England.

She has a history degree from George Mason University and a master of arts in historic preservation from Savannah College of Art and Design.

Farish serves on the board of the Piscataqua Decorative Arts Society and the Association of New Hampshire Historical Societies.

• **Michael Labrie** will serve a three-year term on the board of directors through 2027.

Involved in commercial real estate ownership, development and management since the early 1990s, he is a partner in The Labrie Group of hospitality properties, including Jimmy's Jazz & Blues Club, The River House and The Atlantic Grill.

A Portsmouth native, he has worked as a professional photographer, as well as a self-taught artist in graphic and fine arts, a gallerist and a dealer in fine art, as well as an avid collector.

He enjoys the renovation and repurposing of historic properties. ¶

PRESIDENT

From Page 2

space to meet membership demands for potential new services and programs.

Jeff said his focus "will be on moving the Athenaeum forward in a more thoughtful way." As contemplated under our revised bylaws, the board of directors will concentrate on planning and strategy, leaving operational management to our Executive Director and Keeper.

Keefe was recognized in 2014 as Portsmouth Citizen of the Year and later presented with a national Volunteer of the Year Award from the Invest in Others Charitable Foundation.

In his free time, he likes to read, golf and travel; he is currently enjoying the challenges of restoring an historic home in Rye. ¶



A portrait in the Athenaeum's research library of Portsmouth's John Haven (1766-1845) sports a new gilt frame.

NEW LOOK FOR JOHN HAVEN

Curator Elizabeth Aykroyd reports that the Athenaeum's portrait of Portsmouth merchant John Haven is now housed in a period-appropriate frame.

Perry Hopf of Kennebunk, Maine, made the gilt frame and hand-carved the decoration. It is hanging in the Shaw Research Library.

The portrait is a late 19th-century copy of the 1826 painting by Gilbert Stuart.

An inscription on the back of the canvas describes Haven as "a successful merchant, public-spirited citizen, faithful friend, and upright man." ¶

PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM NEWSLETTER

Published three times yearly. Deadlines for articles are March 15, June 15 and October 1.

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

EDITOR: Sherry Wood DESIGNER: Tom Lynch
CONTRIBUTORS:

Dick Adams, Irene Bush, Tom Hardiman,
Susan Lassen, Don Margeson, Robin Silva,
James Smith, Talia Spurduto, June Spezzano,
Katy Sternberger, Chris White, Sherry Wood

MEMORIAL CONCERT MAY 24 WITH CELLIST ELI KAYNOR

CELLIST Eli Kaynor will perform the annual Memorial Concert on Friday, May 24, at 5 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church in Portsmouth.

Kaynor is a touring musician who recently relocated to Portsmouth. He performs locally with both the Portsmouth Symphony and Great Bay Philharmonic Orchestra.

He is an active teaching artist at Portsmouth Music and Arts Center, where he also serves as their director of development.

His professional career encompasses the gamut of musical genres, including chamber, orchestral, solo, ethnic, folk and rock.

The Proprietors being memorialized are: Robert L. Barth, M.D., David Borden, William Kelly Davis, Charles Eldredge, Sarah Paine Ford and Robert Stewart, as well as Proprietor spouses Geoffrey Clark, M.D., and Paul Dubois, and former Share 262 holder John N. Welch. ¶



Athenaeum Calendar

Wednesday, April 17: The 2024 Lecture series: “Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present” features Thomas Rath on “An Insider’s Take on NH’s Presidential Primary.” 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Thursday, April 25: Melissa Paly, the Conservation Law Foundation’s Great Bay Water Keeper and the Great Bay Stewards hosts a book discussion on *Small Town, Big Oil: The Untold Story of the Women Who Took on the Richest Man in the World — And Won*, celebrating the defeat of the Onassis oil refinery proposed for Durham, 7 p.m. at 3S Artspace, 319 Vaughan St., Portsmouth.

Friday, April 26: The Portsmouth Athenaeum Chamber Music presents an ArtsAthenaeum Concert featuring the UNH-based trio, The Like Minds Ensemble with Peggy Vagts, flute; Margaret Herlehy, oboe; and Janet Polk, bassoon. The free concert will be on the first-floor Sawtelle Reading Room at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 1: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

Thursday, May 9: The Current Events

Lecture Series features Emily Schmall, New York Times correspondent, talking about “The Role of the Media and the Modi PR Machine,” 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Friday, May 3: Art ’Round Town reception for the exhibition “First in the Nation: New Hampshire Presidential Primaries -- 1920 to 2020.” 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Wednesday, May 8: A conversation with Proprietors John Lamson and Lou Salome about the work of Rain for the Sahel and Sahara, a local nonprofit that benefits women and children in Niger. John and his wife, Lee, are being honored by Rain for their support, 5:30 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room.

Wednesday, May 15: The 2024 Lecture series “Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present” features James Pindell on “Granite State Politics and First-in-the-Nation Presidential Primary: A Journalist’s Perspective.” 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Friday, May 24: A Memorial Concert remembering Athenaeum Proprietors who passed in 2023 will be per-

formed by cellist Eli Kaynor at 5 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 98 Summer St.

Thursday, May 30: The Current Events Lecture Series features a conversation with Proprietor Dudley Dudley and Ashleigh Tucker, executive vice-president of The Music Hall, celebrating 50 years since the defeat of the Onassis oil refinery proposed for Durham, 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Wednesday, June 5: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

Friday, June 7: Art ’Round Town reception for the “First in the Nation” exhibit, 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Wednesday, June 19: The 2024 Lecture series: “Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present” features Hannah McCarthy and Nick Capodice on “Civics 101: What We’re Taught and What We’re Not,” 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Wednesday, July 3: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

For more information on these events, please check www.portsmouthathenaeum.org

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

From Page 3

with Wells Fargo and is interested in the cultural events and history of Portsmouth. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Julia.

• **Anna Howard** is a senior manager of academic initiatives and is very involved at South Church. She is interested in social justice, history, music and cinema. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse, Steven.

• **Mark W. Hubbert** is a retired executive from Wells Fargo Bank and is interested in historic preservation and decorative arts. He lives in Portsmouth and is an active volunteer for the Athenaeum.

• **Thomas F. Irwin** is the vice president of the Conservation Law Foundation of N.H. and is interested in music and all sorts of outdoor activities. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Lauren Simon.

• **Clare B. Kittredge** is a professional writer and journalist working for the Boston Globe and other publications. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse, Ted Jankowski.

• **Dennis Neil Kleinman** is an educational media producer who has produced features for National Geographic, the History Channel, and other outlets. He is very interested in history and music. He lives in New Castle with his spouse, Darcy.

• **Paula F. Lewinski** is a professional grant writer and volunteers in our photographic archives. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse, Joseph.

• **Katherine Maggio** is an entrepreneur owner of Friendly Pets and sales man-

ager of Central Garden and Pet. She has a background in both business and history. She lives in Barrington with her husband, Craig.

• **Robin Lurie-Meyerkopf** is the educator and walking tour manager at Portsmouth Historical Society and has coordinated third-grade school tours at the Athenaeum for many years. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse Richard Meyerkopf.

• **William Henry “Ledge” Mitchell** is an investment counselor and lieutenant in the United States Navy Reserve and is a history buff. He is also interested in golf, fly fishing, fly tying and oil painting. He lives in Newfields with spouse Jacalyn.

• **John Richard Moore** is a retired electrical engineer in the defense industry and is interested in historic preservation and decorative arts. He lives in Dover with his wife, Elinor Fong.

• **Melissa R. Paly** is a waterkeeper and environmental advocate with the Conservation Law Foundation. She is interested in helping the Athenaeum strengthen community connections. She lives in Kittery Point with her spouse, David Batchelder.

• **Steffen Ronald Poltak** is a forensic anthropologist and illustrator, and is interested in ancient history, science, art and anthropology. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Emma Phillips.

• **Lara Sanders Prescott** is a New York Times best-selling novelist interested in history, reading, family and travel. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, Matthew.

• **John Joseph Roese** is the president and chief technology officer of Dell Technologies and is interested in history, global travel, animal welfare and social justice. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, James Copeland.

• **Diane L. Schaefer** is retired from work at the University of New Hampshire Foundation, NH Public TV and Radio, the Forest Society, and the Seacoast Mental Health Center. She is interested in Portsmouth history and Athenaeum events and lives in Portsmouth with her spouse, Mitch Shuldman.

• **Nathania Sitiwatjana** lives in Dover and is employed in business and commercial lending. She works with organizations that focus on women in business and opportunities for children. She has a variety of interests and looks forward to being a volunteer for the Athenaeum.

• **Sandra L. Smith-Wiese** is a nurse practitioner in internal medicine at Dartmouth and is interested in music, history, quilting, antiques, and gardening. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, Frederick.

• **Talia B. Sperduto** is a New Hampshire and Maine real estate broker and publisher of a monthly newsletter on local historic properties. She lives in Portsmouth.

• **Charlie Wu** is a graduate of Harvard and an executive fellow at Harvard Business School. He recently moved from Boston to live in Portsmouth full-time. He is a board member of Strawberry Banke and is involved in other civic interests. ¶

ARCANA

From Page 5

Buren's administration.

With the slogan “Tippecanoe and Tyler too” Harrison took full advantage of his status as the victor in the 1811 battle of Tippecanoe against Shawnee chieftan Tecumseh's Native American Confederation in the Indiana territory. Harrison's running mate was John Tyler.

Historian Samuel Eliot Morrison (1887-1976) has characterized the election as “the most idiotic . . . in the history of this country,” citing as but one example the campaign slogan of Van Buren's vice-presidential candidate, Richard Johnson:

“Rumpsey dumpsey, rumpsey dumpsey,

Colonel Johnson killed Tecumseh!”

Locally, the election results brought about predictable responses, with fierce salvos exchanged in the press among the competing factions. Passions cooled at the Athenaeum, though, and there is no record of further vandalism or violence in all the decades leading up to the present. ¶

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT, PAST AND PRESENT

By IRENE BUSH • Lecture Committee

EVERY ELECTION YEAR brings challenges, surprises and some stand-out personalities. The 2024 Athenaeum Lecture Series focuses on electoral issues and people of importance to the electoral process, including the voter.

The lectures coincide with the exhibit “First in the Nation: New Hampshire Presidential Primaries, 1920-2020,” which is on display in the Randall Gallery through November.

The lecture series is sponsored by Whole Wealth Management.

Each program begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library of the Athenaeum (unless otherwise noted).

Reservations are required as seating is limited. Please call (603) 431-2538 to reserve. If unable to keep a reservation, call again to release the seat for someone else.

Attendance 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 individual programs is \$15.

• On April 17, **Thomas Rath** will present “An Insider’s Take on NH’s Presidential Primary.” His talk will address what goes on behind the scenes at New Hampshire’s first-in-the-nation Presidential primary. It will include anecdotes from his experience as a seasoned participant in and observer of New Hampshire’s political scene.

Rath served as the 21st attorney general of New Hampshire. The founder of the law firm of Rath, Young & Pignatelli, he has been actively involved in government relations since entering private practice in 1980. He was a delegate to each of the Republican National Conventions from 1984 through 2016.

• On May 15, **James Pindell** will present “Granite State Politics and First-in-the-Nation Presidential Primary: A Journalist’s Perspective.” Pindell will address the differences between New Hampshire voters and those in other states, and the effect that those differences may have on candidates’ approaches.

Pindell is a national political reporter for The Boston Globe’s Washington Bureau. He is also an NBC/MSNBC on-air political contributor. For 15 years, he wrote the politics column for New Hampshire

magazine. Previously he spent nearly five years at WMUR-TV, where he covered New Hampshire politics.

• On June 19, **Hannah McCarthy** and **Nick Capodice**, co-hosts of NHPR’s podcast Civics 101, will present “Civics 101: What We’re Taught and What We’re Not.” McCarthy and Capodice talk about the state of civics education in America for school kids and adults.



Every episode of the podcast uncovers a myth, oversimplification, or flat-out inaccuracy. Civics 101 has won regional and national

awards, including the American Bar Association’s Silver Gavel for a series on landmark Supreme Court cases.

McCarthy has worked with Civics 101 since 2016. She was a State House and Couch Fellow reporter with NHPR and journalist in Brooklyn. Capodice, with Civics 101 since 2017, has worked in the education department of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, telling the stories of American newcomers. ¶

PLAQUES FOR HISTORIC HOMES

LESLYE CAIN, resident of a circa-1874 home on Rockland Street, discovered the history of Arabella Morgan in her research for the rejuvenated Portsmouth Advocates’ Historic House Plaque Program.

From the elegant building, Miss Morgan ran a boarding and day school for ladies. In searching city directories at the Athenaeum, Leslye found this advertisement for the school: “All the branches of an English Education, and special advantages are afforded for the study of French, and German, with native teachers residing at the school.”

In 2023, 49 plaques were purchased and 20-plus residents continue to research.

Thanks go to the Athenaeum’s Robin Silva, Carolyn Marvin, James Smith and Peggy Hodges, along with committee members Mary Thomas, Elaine Apatang and Talia Sperduto.

Contact portsplaques@gmail.com for more information. ¶



Homeowner Leslye Cain is flanked by Portsmouth Historic Plaque Committee members Talia Sperduto and Mary Thomas.

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM
9 MARKET SQUARE
P.O. Box 366
PORTSMOUTH, N.H. 03802
Return service requested

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 51
Portsmouth, NH 03801

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Jeff Keefe
VICE PRESIDENT: Jan Dinan
SECRETARY: Peggy Hodges
TREASURER: Craig Steidle
PAST PRESIDENT: Sally Gayer

BOARD MEMBERS

Ann E. Beattie
Elizabeth Farish
Christine Friese
Alan Gold
Michael Labrie
Susan Lassen
Donald Margeson
Curtis H. Springer
Anne Weidman

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Tom Hardiman
LIBRARIAN: Robin Silva
OFFICE MANAGER: Stephanie Hobbs Tabit
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS MANAGER: James Smith
RESEARCH LIBRARIAN: Carolyn Marvin
ARCHIVIST: Katy Sternberger
ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/CATALOGER: June Spezzano
OUTREACH & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: Stephanie Hewson
SPECIAL PROJECTS LIBRARIAN: Susan Kindstedt

CURRENT AFFAIRS LECTURES BEGIN IN MAY

By SUSAN LASSEN

THE CURRENT AFFAIRS Adhoc Lecture committee members have come together to offer the Athenaeum four lectures in 2024.

On May 9, **Emily Schmall**, New York Times correspondent, formerly based in New Delhi, will talk about India's election, Prime Minister Modi and the PR machine and influence on women in India.

On May 30, **Ashleigh Tucker Pollock**, associate executive director of The Music Hall, will speak with Proprietor **Dudley Dudley** on the 50-year anniversary of the former legislator and executive councilor's successful fight against a big oil pipeline on the Seacoast.

On Sept. 13, **John Roese**, an Athenaeum Subscriber and CTO of Dell Computers, will discuss AI and the challenges for us all.

The fourth lecture is still to be confirmed.



Dudley Dudley is pictured during an Executive Council meeting at the State House in 1976. Dudley will be featured in a Current Affairs lecture on May 30.

COURTESY OF THE DUDLEY FAMILY

The lectures are free to Proprietors, Subscribers and Friends, and \$15 for the general public.

The five-member committee is welcoming lecture ideas for 2025. ¶