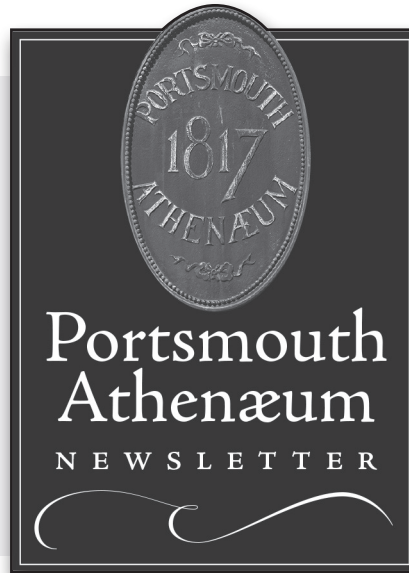


SUMMER 2024

*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



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MEET THE COLLECTOR BEHIND OUR EXHIBIT

By SHERRY WOOD

IT WAS the dashboard dolls that did it.

A circa-1964 set depicting candidates President Lyndon B. Johnson and Sen. Barry Goldwater put Durham attorney Susan Roman on the path of collecting political memorabilia at a young age.

The dashboard dolls were a gift from her uncle, and are on display at the Portsmouth Athenæum's Randall Gallery — right beneath a pair of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' famed mittens. Roman was Sanders' New Hampshire operations director during his 2016 and 2020 presidential campaigns.

Her massive collection of posters, signs, buttons, toys, jewelry — and just about anything else you can think of — is a bipartisan delight.

“My collecting runs the gamut,” she said. “I am not partisan in my collecting.”

This is good news for those who visit the Athenæum exhibit, “First in the Nation: New Hampshire Presidential



Susan Roman visits an American Political Items Collectors' national convention and show in Nashville. She organizes the group's New England shows, held three times a year.

Primaries, 1920-2020,” which runs through November.

“I'm a huge supporter of the New Hampshire Primary and retaining its first-in-the-nation status,” Roman said. “We are small enough that it's possible

to meet all or almost all the candidates in person and hear their ideas directly without the filter of mass media.

“You can stand in living rooms sharing coffee or at neighborhood barbecues with someone

who will become president.”

Athenæum members Mary Jo Monusky, Ceal Anderson and Mara Witzling co-curated the exhibit.

Roman, a member of the University of New Hampshire Class of 1974, campaigned for Democrat George McGovern starting in the summer of 1971. McGovern lost in 1972 to President Richard Nixon.

That year Roman helped organize the first mass voter registration event on the UNH campus. The 26th Amendment, which lowered the eligible voting age from 21 to 18, had been ratified in 1971.

“There was a very large turnout and we were in the (UNH) Field House — I was directing traffic,” she said. “It was an amazing day.”

The exhibit also features photographs of candidates campaigning in the state and a video montage of presidential campaign slogans and songs from 1920 to 2020. It's open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1-4 p.m. ¶

IN NEW HAMPSHIRE, IT'S ALL ABOUT POLITICS

By IRENE BUSH
Lecture Committee

HERE'S A LOOK at Part II of the Athenaeum 2024 Lecture Series, "Political Engagement in New Hampshire: Past and Present."

Each program begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library of the Portsmouth Athenaeum at 9 Market Square (unless otherwise noted). Reservations for each program are required as seating is limited. Make reservations at www.portsmouthathenaeum.org/events. If unable to keep a reservation, please call 603-431-2538 to release the seat for someone else.

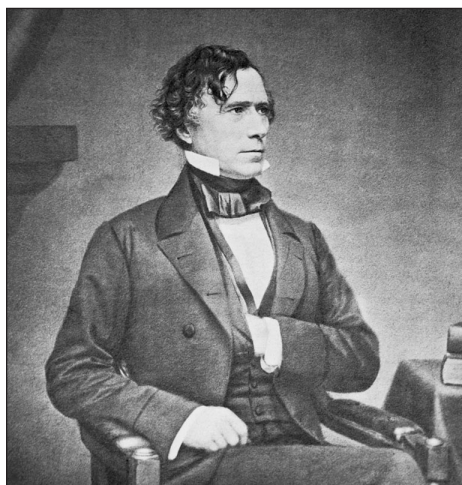
Attendance at programs is free for Athenaeum Proprietors, Subscribers and Friends. Guests and members of the public are welcome to attend the entire series by becoming a Friend of the Athenaeum for as little as \$25 per year, payable at the door. Admission to an individual program is \$15.

The lecture series this year is sponsored by Whole Wealth Management.

Sept. 18: Polling expert David W. Moore presents "**Misreading the Public: The Failed Promise of Public Opinion Polling.**" He will explore the origins of "scientific" public opinion polling, with George Gallup being the iconic representative of the early pollsters whose goal was to provide the voice of the people between elections.

Since then, it has become obvious that the public's voice is not so easy to measure. It's difficult to find samples of respondents who accurately represent the larger population. Question wording is tricky, which often influences the opinions pollsters are trying to measure.

Moore is a senior fellow with the Carsey School at the University of New Hampshire. He is a former managing editor of the Gallup Poll, and author of "The Opinion Makers: An Insider Exposes the Truth Behind the Polls." Prior to working for Gallup, he was a professor of political science at the University of New Hampshire, where he founded the UNH Survey Center.



New Hampshire's Franklin Pierce and his 1852 election as U.S. President is the subject of an Oct. 16 lecture by Paula Fortner and Phyllis Gagnon.

Moore writes that the news media have taken over the polling enterprise with less concern with the quality of the "public opinion" they report than producing compelling news stories. The result is that most public opinion polls about policy issues produce the "illusion of public opinion" rather than a reasonable estimate of how engaged the public is and what it is thinking.

Moore is a two-time winner of the EPPY (Editors and Publishers) Award for his writing about polls on iMediaEthics. He is also a periodic contributor of polling critiques to FAIR.org.

Oct. 16: Paula Fortner, accompanied by Phyllis Gagnon, will present "**'Handsome Frank' Defeats 'Old Fuss 'N Feathers'!**"

In 1852, New Hampshire's Franklin Pierce was just who the Democrats needed to defeat the Whigs' candidate General Winfield Scott, a hero of the Mexican War.

Pierce had it all. He was a young, honest statesman, a top trial lawyer, a loyal party leader and a charismatic orator. As a brigadier general in the Mexican War, Pierce's leadership qualities had become evident. He was a man of integrity and tolerance who seemed untainted by sectional prejudice.

Franklin was loved by his constituents and respected by his peers on both sides of the aisle. He exercised a strict adherence to the Constitution and held a strong commitment to preserve the Union at all costs.

Fortner will discuss Pierce's road to the presidency within the framework of his times. Since 2004, when she began giving tours of the Pierce Homestead in Hillsborough, she has been studying Franklin Pierce and the historical, social, and political events pertinent to his lifetime.

She is a board member of the Hillsborough Historical Society, where she creates exhibits and serves as archivist and recording secretary. She is also a board member at the Franklin Pierce Manse in Concord, where she is co-manager of collections.

Phyllis Gagnon is a published freelance writer, poet and editor. She has written a book on Pierce and his historic Concord home, where she is a tour guide and board member.

Nov. 20: Proprietor Jack McGee presents "**Levi Woodbury: From 'Baby Judge' to U.S. Supreme Court (and Threshold of the White House).**"

Born in Frankestown, Levi Woodbury established a legal practice there in 1812. He was named to New Hampshire's highest court in 1816 at age 26. In 1823 he was elected governor; from there he was elected to the United States Senate.

He served as Secretary of the Navy under Andrew Jackson and as Secretary of the Treasury under Jackson and Martin Van Buren. In 1845 he was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court by James K. Polk.

At his death in 1851, he was the leading Democratic Party contender for the presidency in the 1852 presidential election.

McGee, a name partner in Flynn and McGee, P.A. in Portsmouth, has served as a member of the Order of the Barriers, chairman of the New Hampshire Labor Board of Appeals and Vice President and President of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. ¶

‘NEVER CAUGHT’: THE STORY OF ONA JUDGE

By LINDA POSSON

Editor’s Note: Proprietor Linda Posson was inspired to write this after reading Erica Armstrong Dunbar’s “Never Caught: The Washingtons’ Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge.”

ON MAY 21, 1796, Ona Judge, 21 and determined, walked away from Philadelphia’s presidential mansion to board the sloop Nancy to Portsmouth. Her journey to freedom has come to light through the remarkable work of Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire and local and national historians.

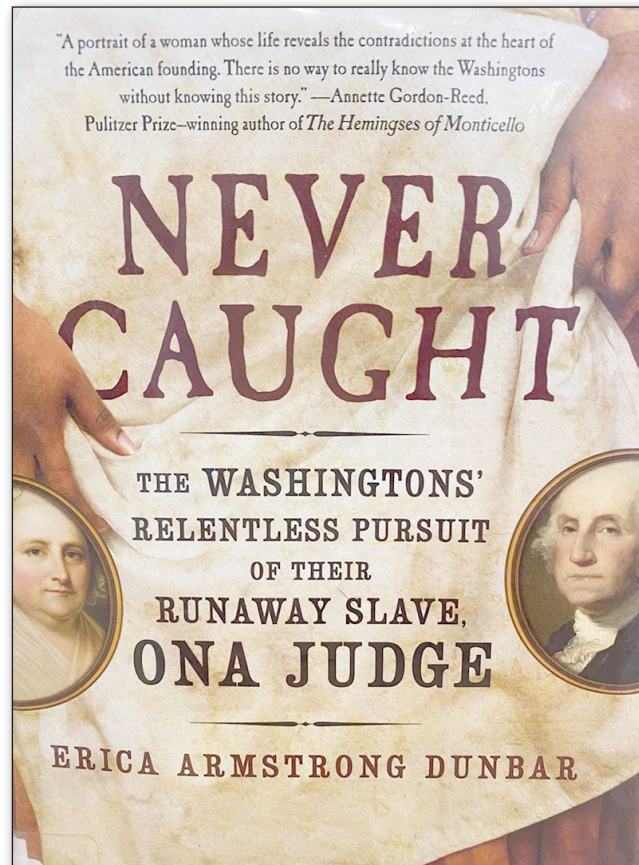
Why was Ona prepared to risk everything to abandon the relatively comfortable life she’d known as first lady Martha Washington’s personal slave?

Her tipping point came when she learned she would be given to Martha’s granddaughter, Eliza, as a wedding present. Eliza had a reputation for being unpredictable, often lashing out in violent temper tantrums. Further, Ona may have seen Eliza’s fiancé as someone who could sexually assault her.

Time was of the essence for Ona to plan her escape. Under state law, slaves could be declared free if they resided in Pennsylvania more than six months. President George Washington had sidestepped this by rotating his slaves between Mount Vernon and Philadelphia every six months. Ona’s rotation would occur in June, and she would be sent back permanently to Eliza at Mount Vernon.

Once she arrived in Portsmouth, Ona kept to herself, remaining ever-vigilant. She knew Washington had advertised a \$10 reward for her capture. What she did not know was the extent to which the president would go to use his power to return her to Virginia. What Washington didn’t know was the strength of Ona’s determination to be free.

One day on the street, Sen. John Langdon’s daughter, Elizabeth, recognized Ona. Her father felt obligated to contact the president, who in turn recruited a



series of agents to capture Ona, beginning with Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott. Washington pointed to a Frenchman, a “boyfriend” of Ona’s who’d not been seen in Philadelphia since Ona left. He told Wolcott he was sure this foreigner had absconded with his slave.

Wolcott enlisted Customs Officer Joseph Whipple of Portsmouth to ship Ona back to Virginia. What Wolcott failed to consider is that Whipple had owned and released through manumission his only slave in 1790 and that both he and his brother William (signer of the Declara-

tion of Independence), were against slavery.

Would Whipple follow Washington’s orders? He began by asking around the Portsmouth docks and saying that he was looking for someone to do housework. Ona applied for the job. But she became skeptical when they met. Whipple knew too much about her.

Whipple then promised Ona he would negotiate with Washington for her eventual freedom if she agreed to board a ship bound for Virginia. But Ona didn’t show up on the ship’s departure date.

Whipple wrote Wolcott: “After a cautious examination, it appeared to me that she had not been decoyed away (by the Frenchman) as had been apprehended, but that a thirst for complete freedom which she was informed would take place on her arrival here had been her only motive for absconding.”

Whipple described to Wolcott how Ona had spoken with respect and gratitude of the first family and had declared a willingness to serve the Washingtons if she could be released on their deaths.

On Nov 28, 1796, Washington wrote to Whipple chastising him for even thinking of trying to negotiate Ona’s freedom. Ona, he wrote, could be “in a state of pregnancy,” due to her alleged relationship with the Frenchman.

Ona’s first child, Eliza, arrived in February 1798 — a year after she married Jack Staines, a sailor and free man. But her story doesn’t end here.

Shortly before his death in 1799, former President Washington remained obsessed with getting Ona back. He sent Sen. Burwell Bassett Jr. (Martha Washington’s nephew) to Portsmouth with orders to retrieve Ona. Bassett stayed with Sen. John Langdon, who had freed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

RARE BOOKS: FROM PSALMS TO PIRATES TO BEASTS AND BIRDS

MOST PROPRIETORS of the Athenaeum are aware that many interesting objects are among the Athenaeum's collections.

Included among them are such oddities as the eyeball of a whale (though subject to question as to what creature it actually came from), a model guillotine, an arm bone from the Waterloo battlefield, and the Smuttynose murder weapon, to name a few.

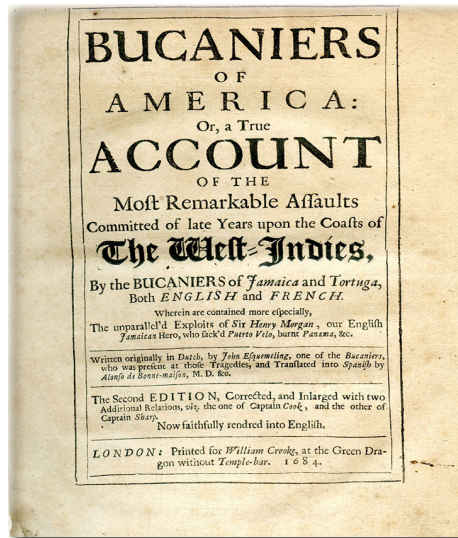
Many of them came to the Athenaeum in its early days, when an attempt was made to create a natural history museum. Proprietors were urged to preserve for the Athenaeum "...curious manufactures, and curiosities of every kind..."

Far less widely known are interesting documents in the Special Collections department, many of which are quite rare and were acquired in the Athenaeum's early days. What follows are a handful of such documents. They convey some sense of the scope and diversity of the Special Collections holdings, though with thousands of examples from which to choose they clearly can give only a suggestion of what remains.

All of the examples cited below can be viewed through the online catalog. Those wishing to see the physical documents can do so by asking a staff member to retrieve them. Since some are in offsite storage, there may be a wait of a few days to have them delivered to the Shaw Research Library.

An early (1824) gift is an example of the rarity of many items in the collection. Titled "The Massachuset [sic] Psalter Or Psalms of David with the Gospel According to John," it is a book of psalms in both English and the Massachusett language of the Algonquins. It was originally composed by John Eliot in 1640 in the Natick dialect, and in 1709 Experience Mathew translated it into the Massachusett dialect.

In 1870 John Elwyn gifted a book titled



"Bucaniers of America, or a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of the late years upon the coasts of the West Indies." The first edition of this book was in Dutch. The Athenaeum's copy is the 1684 edition, the first printing in English. According to summary notes compiled by Robin Silva, this work has served as the basis for countless novels, stories, and dramas, and it established popular legends of many famous pirates.

The oldest book in the Athenaeum's collection is a 1478 Latin Bible donated in 1899 by Proprietor Charles Woodbury. It is in a rare category called "incunabula," which refers to books printed in movable type between Gutenberg's c. 1450 printing press and 1500, a somewhat arbitrary date. Its cover is in white vellum, and many pages feature the initial paragraph capital letters handsomely illuminated in

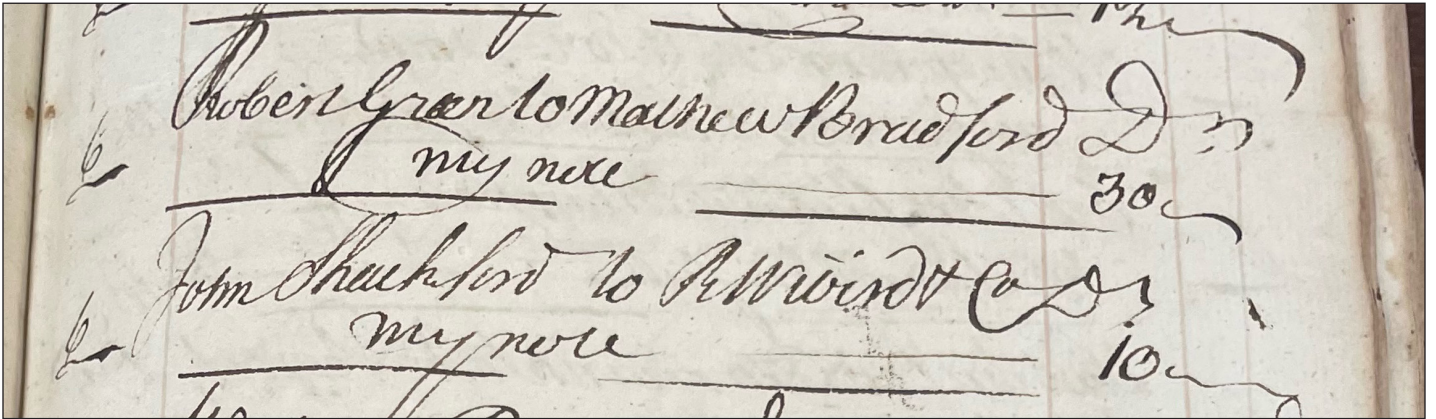
hand-colored ink.

A recent acquisition (2012) is a tiny children's pamphlet titled "A Description of Animals, of Different Countries." Published in 1805 in Portsmouth, it was created "for the amusement of little ones, adorned with cuts." Bound with covers made from an early wallpaper, it is signed in a child's handwriting "Oliver Dow," possibly Oliver Dow of Hampton (1806-1848).

A more serious tome is the 1799 "The East India Pilot Or Oriental Navigator..." an oversized folio book of navigation charts printed for the East India Company. It was gifted in 1908 by a descendant of Michael Hooker (d. 1831), a ship captain of Portsmouth. It came in a custom wooden box with Hooker's name written in ink on the exterior.

Another nautical publication in the rare books stacks is "The Mariner's Magazine; stored with these mathematical arts: the rudiments [sic] of navigation and geometry..." Published in 1679, it is a 472-page oversized text written by Samuel Sturmeay (1633-1669). "Diligently revised and carefully corrected" by John Colson (1680-1760), this second edition contains paper practice "navigation instruments." Still intact and functional after more than two centuries, these ingenious rotating dials apparently were used to solve complex navigation problems.

No account of the Athenaeum's collection of rare publications would be complete without mention of the New Hampshire Gazette. The Athenaeum has a copy of the newspaper's first edition, dated October 7, 1756 as well as many more subsequent editions. The first is in poor condition and is only marginally readable, but a facsimile copy in fine shape is available. ¶



This is an entry from 18th-century Portsmouth merchant Theodore Atkinson's account ledger. Assistant Librarian/Cataloger June Spezzano has been researching the records. One of the richest men in the province, Atkinson also served as a judge and sheriff.

SIFTING THROUGH LEDGERS AND PUBLIC RECORDS

'Lots of buttons'

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/Cataloger **June Spezzano** has been working on Theodore Atkinson's account ledger from February 1732 to April 1735.

Theodore Atkinson (1697-1779) was a Portsmouth merchant. "I'm reading through the ledger and pulling out names to create an index," she said.

She added: "Most entries are quite boring."

One example (pictured above):

Robert Green to Mathew Bradford my note

John Shackford to Richard Wibird my note

"Many entries include textiles," June said. "Flannel, mohair, gingham, calico, cotton, silk, linen, broadcloth — and lots of buttons."

Some of the textiles she had never heard of include drugget, garlix, ozenbrig and roussia.

"I have also seen rum, molasses, salt, sugar, spices, fish, beef, nails, looking glass and grindstones," she said.

Athenaeum receives grant

SPECIAL PROJECTS Librarian **Susan Kindstedt** reports that the Athenaeum received a grant from the New Hampshire Society of Genealogists to support work on two archival collections: Membership Records of the Middle Street Baptist Church and Records of the Rockingham County Court of Common Pleas.

Both collections provide a valuable glimpse into the history of Portsmouth, including the individuals often underrepresented in historical records, such as immigrants, African Americans and women, Kindstedt said.

Dating from 1782 to 1845, the Rockingham County Court of Common Pleas Collection consists primarily of records docu-

menting court cases, including debts or complaints alleging assault or stolen property.

Many of the cases were heard by Nathaniel Adams, first president of the Portsmouth Athenaeum.

"The collection is an excellent resource for both genealogists as well as social and legal historians," Kindstedt said.

Another valuable resource to both genealogists as well as social and religious historians is the Membership Book of the Middle Street Baptist Church dating from 1827 to 1989. The membership entries tell stories of Portsmouth's 19th-century immigrants, women and African Americans as well as providing interesting demographic information related to 19th-century church attendance.

For both collections, grant funds will support indexing and item cataloging of the materials; volunteer help will be sought to scan the materials. When completed, both collections will be indexed and available digitally in the Athenaeum's online catalog.

Anyone interested in assisting in scanning materials can contact Susan Kindstedt at skindstedt@portsmouthathenaeum.org.

This project gets an 'A'

THE HISTORICAL Portsmouth School Records are now completely indexed, digitized and available for research.

The indexing and digitization project was a joint effort of the Portsmouth Athenaeum and the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), coordinated by Board Member **Peggy Hodges**, and Special Projects Librarian **Susan Kindstedt**.

Kindstedt learned of the school records when she began working at the Athenaeum in 2002.

"The collection was large and took up a great deal of shelf space

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

ON THE MEZZANINE: CELIA'S PLATES

By ELIZABETH AYKROYD | Curator

FOR A NUMBER of years the Athenaeum had on loan a group of dishes painted by Isles of Shoals poet Celia Thaxter (1835-1894).

Decorated with pimpernel flowers, the set is made up of a small plate, a cup and saucer, and a serving plate.

Each is signed "Celia Thaxter 1878," and the two plates have the additional inscription "Pimpernel from Appledore."

They were exhibited in the cabinet on the Mezzanine and were popular with visitors, but the loan ended early in 2022.

However, we are fortunate that the owner, Proprietor Sandra Smith, has decided to make the dishes a permanent gift to the Athenaeum. You can see them on the Mezzanine where they will be once again a central part of our Celia Thaxter exhibit. ¶



Proprietor Sandra Smith has permanently gifted plates painted by Isles of Shoals poet Celia Thaxter to the Athenaeum. They remain on display on the Mezzanine.

SEEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

IN PRAISE OF BOB THE BAKER

IN AN ATHENAEUM Facebook post on National Donut Day, Photographic Collections Manager James Smith featured a circa-1982 closeup of Bob the Baker's Cake Shop at 150 State St., next to Richardson's Market in Portsmouth.

Robert "Bob" Earl Swenbeck (1927-1997) opened the bakery in February 1975. A search of city directories found the business listed in 1983, but not in 1987, the next available directory.

Smith asked: "If you know more about Bob or his bakery, please leave us a comment."

Johanna Lyons of Portsmouth wrote: "I babysat upstairs and the first racks of donuts for the next day would be rolled out into the stairwell the next day around midnight. Hard not to sneak one off the rack."

Bob Hersey of Portsmouth commented: "I worked with Bob at Sher's Bakery on Daniel St. until I left in 1972. He was a good baker and an excellent cake decorator. In his spare time, he loved to fish the river off one of the nearby piers."

The post was shared on The (un)Official City of Portsmouth Facebook page and got several responses, including one from David Adams:



The film negative for this photo of Bob the Baker's Cake Shop comes from the Portsmouth Historic District Survey, 1982-1983 report for 148-150 State St., owned by Basil Richardson.

"Bob made a signature breakfast bun called the Frog," Adams wrote. "It was a symmetric, coiled cinnamon-glazed piece of perfection." ¶

FAREWELL TO THE MARVELOUS CAROLYN MARVIN

LONGTIME Research Librarian Carolyn Marvin spent her last day on the job ably assisting the public, as she has done throughout her 18 years with the Portsmouth Athenaeum.

As a steady stream of well-wishers stopped by her desk in the Shaw Research Library on May 25, a family party of seven from six states arrived to do genealogical research.

The family had traced its roots to Boon Island Lighthouse keeper Capt. Eliphalet Grover (c. 1777-1855) and was researching its connections to the Vaughan, Grover and Gookin families of Portsmouth.

“We’re looking for our stories,” said Rosemary Pugh of Irvine, California, who noted that last year the family traveled to North Carolina to do genealogical research.

Carolyn pulled out volume after volume in the research library and assisted the family for several hours.

“Thanks to Carolyn, we learned that our ancestor Samuel Gookin was a tailor,” Pugh wrote in an email. “She gave us maps to the cemetery that made it possible for us to visit his wife’s [Mary Patterson Gookin] grave. And tirelessly helped us try to find our connection to George Vaughan.”

In addition to assisting with research, Carolyn processed new books, catalogued the majority of the ephemera, and entered ship, vertical and artists’ files into the Athenaeum database, making



Athenaeum Research Librarian Carolyn Marvin, right, assists Gookin family researcher Rosemary Pugh of Irvine, California.

SHERRY WOOD PHOTO

them accessible online.

Athenaeum Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman had this to say about Carolyn: “For the past 18 years, Carolyn has been the consummate Research Librarian, always going the extra mile for researchers to dig ever deeper to find that buried nugget of history.

“That terrier tenacity has led to her research being cited in innumerable

scholarly works, including her own book, “Hanging Ruth Blay,” published in 2010. She has also contributed to several exhibits and served on our Long-Range Planning Committee, where she showed that she would not shy away from speaking truth to power. Her strength and persistence will be sorely missed in our library.”

PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM NEWSLETTER

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

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James Smith, June Spezzano,
Chris White, Sherry Wood

JOIN OUR BOOK GROUP

The Athenaeum’s Common Reader Book Group gathers on the first Monday of each month (September through June) from 11 a.m. to noon in the third-floor Research Library to discuss books from an eclectic selection of contemporary and historically significant fiction chosen and voted on by members.

Recent titles include James McBride’s “The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store,” Marguerite Yourcenar’s “Memoirs of Hadrian,” Elizabeth Strout’s “Lucy by the Sea,” and Paul Harding’s “This Other Eden.” In closing out this season, members enjoyed a lively discussion of “First Love” by Ivan Turgenev over lunch at the Southend Yacht Club in Portsmouth.

The Common Reader is open to Subscribers and Proprietors and their spouses. For more information, email Don Margeson at donaldsmargeson@gmail.com



Please join us for
The Thirty-First Annual
Portsmouth Athenæum Pot-Luck Picnic



The Seacoast Science Center
Odiorne Point State Park, Rye, NH
Tuesday, August 27, 2024, 5 - 7 pm
(In the tent, rain or shine!)

Bring a dish to share by last name:

A-E: Main Dish
F-K: Main Dish
L-Q: Salad
R-Z Dessert

Or bring your own and enjoy the company and the scenery!

Appetizers, wine, beer, water, and punch are provided!

No RSVP - just come!

And please encourage a fellow Proprietor, Subscriber, or Friend to join you!

Any questions? Call : Tom Hardiman 603 431 2538

NEAVE TRIO RETURNS TO CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

By CHRIS WHITE
Performance Committee

The Neave Trio returns Aug. 25 to the Athenaeum Chamber Music Series after a couple of years' absence.

Founded in 2010, the trio is currently the Ensemble-in-Residence at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

They have performed worldwide at many well-respected festivals, including in St. Petersburg, Russia and Norwich, United Kingdom, as well as in many U.S. venues including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall and at the Rockport Chamber Music Festival.

The trio will perform at 3 p.m. at Kittery Dance Hall in Kittery, Maine.

Other concerts in the series:

Oct. 6: Piano duo Evren Ozel and Ariel Horowitz, 3 p.m., St. John's



Church, Portsmouth.

Oct. 27: Balourdet String Quartet, 3 p.m., South Church, Portsmouth.

Nov. 17: ASMI piano trio, 3 p.m. St. John's Church.

Athenaeum members and patrons, and the public, are welcome.

Series subscription tickets can be purchased for \$100 for the four concerts. Admission to individual concerts is \$30 at the door (cash, checks, credit cards or Venmo).

Patron Sponsorships can be purchased for \$275 and include a ticket to each of the four concerts and a post-concert reception with performers.

Make checks payable to the Portsmouth Athenaeum, P.O. Box 366, Portsmouth NH 03802. Please note "PACM" on the memo line.

The Athenaeum Performance Committee is in its 30th year of operation. Its emphasis is on presenting both established and emerging chamber music groups of high quality. This year is no exception. ♪

Athenaeum Calendar

Friday, July 12: The ArtsAthenaeum Performance Committee presents an evening of poetry with Tom Carnicelli, whose latest book of poems is "Looking Outward," 5 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room. A reception will follow the reading.

Friday, Aug. 2: Art 'Round Town reception for the exhibition "First in the Nation." 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Wednesday, Aug. 7: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room.

Sunday, Aug. 25: The Portsmouth Athenaeum Chamber Music Series hosts the Neave Trio, 3 p.m., Dance Hall in Kittery, Maine.

Tuesday, Aug. 27: Annual Athenaeum Pot-Luck Picnic at the Seacoast Science Center, Odiorne Point. See Page 8.

Thursday, Aug. 29: Tour of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, led by Shipyard Historian Joe Gluckert, assisted by Proprietor Ken Goldman. Ken will give a short talk about the shipyard

and submarines. Joe will point out various historical points, including the mall, the memorial to the WW II submarine Sailfish, the historic Commander's Residence, the room where the treaty ending the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 was signed (it is necessary to climb two flights of steps to reach the Treaty Room). There will be a brief stop outside Portsmouth Naval Prison, followed by a visit to the Heritage Center, where docents will walk you through the history of PNSY. The bus is limited to 25 people; the tour is not handicapped accessible.

Wednesday, Sept. 4: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room.

Friday, Sept. 6: Art 'Round Town reception for the exhibition "First in the Nation." 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Friday, Sept. 13: The Current Events Lecture Series features a conversation with new Athenaeum member John Roese, chief technology officer of Dell

Computers, discussing: "AI, the Technologies and the Challenges," 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Wednesday, Sept. 18: The 2024 Lecture Series: "Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present" resumes with David W. Moore on "Misreading the Public: The Failed Promise of Public Opinion Polling," 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library.

Wednesday, Oct. 2: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room.

Friday, Oct. 4: Art 'Round Town reception for the exhibition "First in the Nation." 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Sunday, Oct. 6: The Athenaeum Chamber Music Series hosts the piano duo of Evren Ozel and Ariel Horowitz, 3 p.m., at St. John's Church, Portsmouth.

Thursday, Oct. 10: Athenaeum Tea for New Members. 4:30-6 p.m. in the Sawtelle Reading Room.

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM
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ARCHIVIST: Katy Sternberger
ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/CATALOGER: June Spezzano
SPECIAL PROJECTS LIBRARIAN: Susan Kindstedt

STAFF CHECK-IN

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in our vault,” she said. “It was over 100 volumes, each one containing hundreds of names of children who were educated in Portsmouth’s schools from 1846 to 1902. The collection was also completely unprocessed and not available for re-search.

“The story I heard was that the volumes had been ‘rescued’ from possible disposal and placed on deposit at the Athenaeum by the Portsmouth School Department in 1991.”

Kindstedt said the Athenaeum does, on occasion, take valuable local resources “on deposit,” with the expectation that processing funds be provided by the collection’s owner or be raised through grants.

A few unsuccessful grant attempts led to a creative solution for the Portsmouth School Records in 2019 when a partnership with NEHGS was born.

NEHGS’s online presence, American Ancestors, hosts an extensive and growing database of valuable genealogical records. NEHGS agreed to scan, index and add the Portsmouth School Records to their database.

“The Athenaeum was pleased to have the materials, including over 48,000 searchable records, available for researchers,” Kindstedt said.

As the collection is still publicly owned by the Portsmouth School Department, the Portsmouth Public Library graciously

agreed to house the collection following the NEHGS project.

“This deposit collection transfer allowed the Athenaeum to reclaim valuable space in our vault, while ensuring the collection is preserved and available for research,” Kindstedt said.

For more information about the collection and NEHGS visit: <https://dbnews.americanancestors.org/2021/06/24/new-database-portsmouth-nh-high-school-students-1846-> ¶

ONA JUDGE

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his family’s slaves and rehired them as servants.

Ona answered Bassett’s knock on her door in Portsmouth, holding baby Eliza in her arms.

“I am free now and choose to remain so,” she told Bassett.

He left but came back with reinforcements later to discover an empty house. Langdon had sent word of Bassett’s plans to Ona, who fled Portsmouth to shelter with friends in Greenland. She lived there as a free woman until her death in 1848. ¶