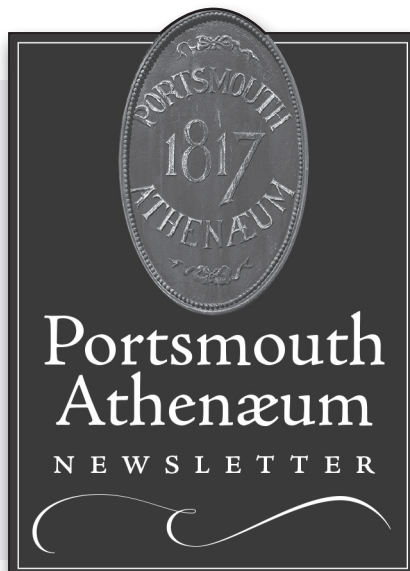


FALL 2024

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

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INSIDE

- Portsmouth Archive Project • 2
- Staff Check-In • 3
- Athenæum Arcana • 4
- Maine Exhibit has
Athenæum Roots • 5
- New Staff Members • 6
- Researcher Profile • 7
- Seen on Social Media • 8
- The Spear Carriers • 9
- Athenæum Calendar • 10

UPDATE ON STATE STREET

By SHERRY WOOD

THE THREE-YEAR LEASE signed January 2023 for 2,700 square feet of storage space at 150 State St. is paying off, Athenæum Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman said.

The single-floor layout and garage entry make for easy unloading when materials are brought over from the Athenæum building, Hardiman said.

Steve Fowle, Jon and Joanne Wyckoff, Ira Schwartz and Lynne Crocker have helped move the Athenæum's newspaper collection, which is shelved by title and date. Proprietor Steve Carling is working with the rare books.

Requests can be made for materials that are housed there; a staff member (usually Tom) goes to State Street and brings items back to the Athenæum.

Librarian Robin Silva said when researchers search the online catalog, the record states if a title is off-site. "Many members have already requested off-site items," Silva said.

The items require up to three business days' notice for retrieval.

"The only time we have problems is when a researcher wants newspapers and hasn't perused the catalog, so does not know about the advance notice," she said.



Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman returns a book requested by a researcher to the Athenæum's State Street storage space.

PHOTO BY SHERRY WOOD

"But even before we had off-site, we would try to use the digital newspaper services first before dragging the newspapers out because of the wear and tear on them."

Some circulating and reference materials and eventually most of the rare books will be housed at State Street, Silva said. ¶

PORTSMOUTH ARCHIVE PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

By TOM HARDIMAN

EDITOR'S NOTE: In September 2022, Portsmouth City Council voted to create a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study the establishment of a private/public partnership that could properly archive historical documents related to the city.

IN ITS FIRST year of work, the committee created a report outlining the more than 40-year history of efforts to establish an archive, identified key initial stakeholders, described the longstanding need and recommended best practices for how such an archive should be run. It also identified potential funding sources and made clear recommendations of next steps forward.

This year committee members have dug into the work of making a private/public archive a reality. They have broken off into dedicated work groups focused on building the legal framework, identifying funding sources, and constructing a realistic timeline for getting from discussion to building and operating a proper archive.

The legal work group has hit the ground running. They have worked with Deputy City Manager Suzanne Woodland and Deputy City Attorney Trevor McCourt to craft a memorandum of understanding between the four initial stakeholders: the city, the Athenaeum, the Portsmouth Historical Society, and Strawberry Banke Museum. All four institutions have adopted and signed the memorandum.

The legal work group also drafted a fiscal agency agreement with the Athenaeum so that it can accept funds to be directed to the private/public archive, once it is formalized.

We have received several private donations to fund the initial \$3500 deposit on the legal work to develop formal bylaws and complete all of the regulatory filings necessary to create a 501(c)3 partnership organization. We will need an additional \$6500 to complete the legal work, with a goal to have the new organization established early in 2025.



The Athenaeum Board of Governors held its July meeting on Wood Island, where members discussed stewardship of the Wood Island Life Saving Station Association (WILSSA) archives. The Gundalow Company provided transportation. Proprietor Sam Reid, president of WILSSA, issued the invitation to the board. After nearly 60 years of neglect, Wood Island opened to the public in August after a massive fundraising and restoration effort.

COURTESY OF SAM REID

The committee is excited and energized by the positivity of the group, the public comments, and the support of the city council and the partnership boards. After 45 years of effort on this vital issue, we finally have a signed agreement

among the initial stakeholders committing to move forward.

This progress was unimaginable 10 years ago. If we can stay the course, Portsmouth will finally get the historical archive it so needs and deserves. ¶

LET YOUR CREATIVITY COME FORTH

By JUDY GROPPA | Exhibits Committee Chairman

The Proprietors Art Show opens Dec. 6 in the Randall Gallery as part of the holiday party at the Athenaeum.

Proprietors, Subscribers, Friends and spouses/partners are invited to submit fine or decorative art, crafts, and published writings. Past shows have included paintings, photographs, sculpture, fiber works, jewelry, pottery and wood-working.

Items should be delivered to the Athenaeum from Nov. 20 to Nov. 27. If the Randall Gallery is not open, please leave your art near Librarian Robin Silva's desk. Be sure to fill out the paperwork, which can be found next to the copy machine. Wall art should be ready for hanging.

Robin creates a display of all the publications by Proprietors from the previous year. Email her to see if she has your work: rsilva@portsmouthathenaeum.org.

The show will be up until the Athenaeum's Annual Meeting on Jan. 12.

Please email Judy Groppa if you have questions (judygroppa@gmail.com).

AFRICAN SCHOOL RESEARCH BREAKS NEW GROUND

AN EXPLORATION of Athenaeum records about the African School in Portsmouth by Athenaeum Photographic Collections Manager **James Smith** resulted in a Page One article in the Portsmouth Herald.

Smith began with researching the private school founded around 1806 by Dinah Chase Whipple to educate Black children. She was an emancipated slave and leader in Portsmouth's free Black community. The town of Portsmouth began funding the school in 1827; it closed in 1855.

The new information and research is about the city-funded African School, and the South Parish Sunday School being used for the African School.

The article included an image from the Portsmouth, NH: School Records, 1846-1958 showing tuition paid to African School teacher Lavinia Clark.

Roll call

Assistant Librarian/Cataloger **June Spezzano** is making the Portsmouth School Records (1846-1915) more accessible.

"**Joan Hammond**, one of our volunteers, created an Excel spreadsheet with year, name and birth date; 4,616 names in total," Spezzano wrote in an email. "I'm using that spreadsheet to create a bio page and link to book in athenaeum.pastperfectonline.com."

The names are very useful in genealogical research.

Take a tour

Archivist **Katy Sternberger** recently provided a virtual tour of the Athenaeum with local videographer Garret Pray for his YouTube channel, the Bard's Archive. She takes viewers through our beautiful historic building and public spaces, discussing the history of the Athenaeum, sharing highlights from the collections, and explaining how to use the Athenaeum's vast resources for research. View the virtual tour at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8H8r2SdkRM>,



A Davis Brothers carte-de-visite of Esther Prince Mullineaux (c.1782-1868), daughter of Prince and Dinah Chase Whipple, who were both formerly enslaved people and leaders in Portsmouth's Black community. Mullineaux taught at the African School in late 1838 into early 1839.

NORTH CHURCH PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION/
ON DEPOSIT AT THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM

Merchants and more

Librarian **Robin Silva** notes that Proprietor Joan Hammond has indexed the Nathaniel A. Haven Account Book (1798-1808).

"I am trying to track down the approximately 650 people, businesses and ships listed," Robin wrote in an email. "Most are merchants (local and non local), ship builders and captains. Many of the names are known, but many are new additions to us. I work on that in between doing all the other stuff and answering researcher questions."

A special request

Robin is looking for the donation of two titles:

- *A Visual History of Seabrook*: It is available from the Seabrook Historical Society at the Seabrook Library, which is only open on Thursdays.
- *Kittery's Maine Ingredients*, by Betsey Wish, which is sold out and no longer available.

Coordination counts

Special Projects Archivist **Susan Kindstedt** is still working on the Rockingham County Court Records.

"I also coordinated with **Janet Polasky** to bring in some additions to the South Church collection which I am working on, as well as a new collection of Oscar Loughton letters and photographs," Susan says. (See related story, Page 7.)

Archives highlights

The Athenaeum often receives gifts of historical resources from donors. Here's a selection of new research materials in the Athenaeum's archives from Archivist **Katy Sternberger**:

- **S0650: Samuel Larkin diaries, 1839-1848.** Three diaries formerly on loan from the state of California record Larkin's social, religious, and political life in Portsmouth. The digitized volumes are now available to read online in the Athenaeum's catalog. [Courtesy of California State Parks - Monterey District]
- **S1806: Ann Hall Adams penmanship booklet, 1805-1806.** Handmade journal with floral wallpaper covers. Includes a

Continued on Page 6

A TALE OF TWO LARKINS

ATHENAEUM PROPRIETOR Alfred Otis Larkin (1847-1917) was a longtime Portsmouth resident who had an inveterate love of travel. Having been born into immense wealth, thanks to the business success of his father, he was free to enjoy his interests without needing to seek gainful employment.

Dozens of newspaper accounts convey the sense of a traveler constantly on the move, ranging both domestically and abroad. Even in his last days he was in China, dying in Hong Kong. His final journey saw his remains return to Portsmouth, where he is buried in the South Cemetery.

A modest, unassuming man, his life pales in comparison with that of his father, Thomas O. Larkin, whose single-minded determination to become wealthy resulted in his having become one of the richest men in America by the time of his early death in 1858. His is a story frequently told of 19th-century entrepreneurs, rising from modest means (if not poverty) to vast wealth. And beyond his amassing of a fortune, he played a key role in transitioning Mexican California into statehood.

In his case, prosperity did not come without multiple setbacks. He left his birthplace of Lynn, Massachusetts in 1822 at the age of 20 and settled in Wilmington, N.C. There he tried several ventures, none particularly successful. After concluding that he could do better by going into partnership with a half-brother in Monterey, California, he set sail for the West Coast in 1831.

Aboard the cargo vessel bound for Monterey was a 24-year-old married woman named Rachael Holmes. Details of their relationship will probably never be known in full, but whether she conceived aboard ship or very shortly after docking in Santa Barbara, the fact



Alfred Otis Larkin's home on Middle Street is considered one of the finest classical Federal buildings in Portsmouth.

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS AMSDEN

remained that she was now in a terrible fix, because her husband, master of a sailing vessel, was scheduled to arrive in California soon and she was visibly pregnant.

It must have been with enormous relief that Holmes and Larkin received the word that Rachael's husband had died at sea. Having dodged a bullet, there is no record of Larkin ever again indulging in such reckless behavior. He and Rachael married in 1832 and went on to have nine children, five of whom survived to adulthood.

Thomas rapidly established himself as an astute businessman whose entrepreneurial success included disparate initiatives such as maritime trade, mercantile operations throughout California, and land speculation. He seems to have had a remarkable gift for gaining the trust and

admiration of a wide range of important people, both American and Mexican.

He had been named U.S. Consul by president John Tyler before the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Mexico, and in that capacity he attempted to broker the secession of California from Mexico. The war in 1846 settled that issue, and Larkin emerged as one of the most powerful politicians in the state.

Known for his lavish entertainment of a wide array of business and political leaders, his exceptionally successful life was cut short at 56 when he contracted typhus and died a week later. Among many other streets and buildings, Larkin Street in San Francisco was named after him.

Continued on Page 8

ATHENAEUM EXHIBITS PLANT A SEED

THE SCHOLARSHIP that flowered into a current exhibit at the Ogunquit Museum of American Art has its roots at the Portsmouth Athenaeum.

Former Athenaeum President Joseph W. P. Frost (1923-2008) was a collector of mid-century American artist Russell Cheney's work. Frost provided several canvases to Proprietor Patricia L. Heard (1930-2011), whose exhibit on Cheney opened the Peter Randall Gallery at the Athenaeum in June 1996.

Heard's public lecture on "Russell Cheney: Artist of the Piscataqua" lives online (slightly updated) on the website RussellCheney.com designed by his great-niece Carol L. Cheney, and Proprietor Richard Candee.

The website has inspired many people to send photographs of his works, which now total some 1,179.

In 2008, Candee curated two exhibits of 87 paintings, "Russell Cheney — A New England Master; Northern New England Paintings 1910-45."

The Athenaeum's Randall Gallery exhibited 38 works from Kittery and Southern Maine, while the Portsmouth Historical Society's then-new venue in the city's old public library held the remaining 49 works of Portsmouth and the New Hampshire Seacoast.

These paired exhibits, along with a one-day symposium in 2008 that offered access to Cheney's home and studio in Kittery, Maine, explored the artist's evolution from Impressionism to Yankee Modernism.

"Nearly all the subsequent research into Cheney's art has been undertaken by those 2008 participants and their students," Candee said.

This season's exhibit in Ogunquit, which runs through Nov. 17, is a good example. It was organized by Kevin D. Murphy, once one of Candee's Boston University graduate students, who is now head of the art history department at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. There he offers a seminar on exhibiting works of



Russell Cheney's "Bow Street" was painted around 1930. Cheney (1881-1945) would often attract a crowd when he set up his easel in Portsmouth.

PROVIDED BY RUSSELLCHENEY.COM

American art; his students research and organize an exhibition and its catalog.

As the Vanderbilt University art gallery was temporarily closed the last academic year, Ogunquit was the beneficiary of Dr. Murphy and his students' work.

The resulting book, "Domestic Modernism: Russell Cheney and Mid-Century American Painting" includes essays by Murphy, Candee, and Scott Bane.

Bane, who in 2022 published "A Union Like Ours: The Love Story of F.O. Matthiessen and Russell Cheney," had also attended the 2008 symposium in Kittery.

In the intervening years the trio of scholars shared their research into more than

3,000 letters at Yale between Cheney and Matthiessen, plus correspondence with several of their friends. They also tracked the growing list of identified paintings; several large collections of black and white photographs of Cheney's paintings; and the exhibitions where they were shown.

While the Ogunquit gallery holds fewer works than the Athenaeum's earlier exhibitions, it has produced the very first catalog of Cheney's art in full color.

In addition to the 30-some works on exhibit in Ogunquit, the catalog essays include comparative illustrations of dozens of other paintings. ¶

MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Jessica McClain

Jessica is the Athenaeum's new Research Librarian.

I WAS BORN and raised here in Portsmouth and have been interested in the city's history for as long as I can remember. But, like many local kids, I also wanted to get out and see the world.

After a study abroad in London, England and over a year spent teaching conversational English in Tokyo, Japan, I realized there really is no place like home and returned to the Seacoast where I began working in libraries and enjoyed it so much that I went on to earn my MLIS from the University of Rhode Island.

I've worked in large and small libraries and helped users navigate general and highly specialized collections. I've been fortunate enough over my career to assist people in finding new favorite novels, religious education curricula, jazz albums and memorabilia, and more.

As a life-long lover of libraries, it took a while to discern what, precisely, drew me to this kind of work. One of my library professors explained it best when she described our class of librarians-in-progress as Keepers of the Culture. This is also what drew me to the Athenaeum. I love Portsmouth and it is an honor to share its culture, history, and stories with our members and researchers.



Research Librarian Jessica McClain portrays Elizabeth Warner Sherburne at a recent Warner House Gala.



Sharon Nichols is a veteran of political and community outreach.

In my spare time, I manage a busy household of 5. My kids are 15, 11, and 9 and they attend public school here in Portsmouth. When I'm not keeping up with them and their activities, I enjoy fiber arts including spindle spinning, knitting, crochet, and needlepoint.

Recently, I was able to portray Elizabeth Warner Sherburne for the 2024 Warner House Gala. This was incredibly fun and I'm hoping to be able to continue re-creating women of Portsmouth Past to share with our community.

Sharon Nichols

Sharon is the Athenaeum's new Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator.

I WAS BORN and raised in Massachusetts. My career has been working as a certified therapeutic specialist in health care facilities with people of all ages -- from infants to older adults.

I had the opportunity to work with New Hampshire Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter as her Outreach Coordinator and was able to meet with her constituents throughout the 1st Congressional District and help them negotiate the maze of connecting with governmental agencies.

For over 20 years I have been actively involved in local, state, regional and national political issues.

Most importantly, I am a descendant on both my father's and mother's side of ancestors who came to Portsmouth from England, Sweden, and Norway as well as a descendant of Sarah Osborne, who was convicted of being a witch during the Salem Witch Trials.

This job at the Portsmouth Athenaeum feels like a perfect fit for me.

CHECK-IN

From Page 3

history of the life of Rev. Samuel Haven. [Gift of Deborah Patch Wilson]

• **S1807: Portsmouth Naval Prison mail room logs, 1908-1912.** Two volumes logging the letters, money orders, and packages sent both to and from the prison at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. [Purchase]

• **S1811: William Cotton waste book, 1762-1769.** Cotton was a truckman and tavernkeeper in Portsmouth. Ledger records deliveries of building materials for several of the great new houses of the 1760s, including the Wentworth-Gardner house. The volume appears to include an entry for work done by Amos Fortune, a free Black tanner who later rose to prominence in Jaffrey. Also records the sale of

wood, rum, sugar, apples, corn, and other goods. [Purchase]

• **S1816: An eclectic assemblage of correspondence, mainly stampless covers, related to Portsmouth from the collection of Michael O'Traynor.** Dating from 1755 to 1888. Includes an autographed poem by Celia Thaxter, which appears to be unpublished. [Gift of R. Michael O'Traynor] ¶

RESEARCHER PROFILE: JANET POLASKY

By DON MARGESON

READERS curious about prominent local institutions that have shaped Portsmouth and the Seacoast area will be glad to hear that Proprietor Janet Polasky has begun research — mainly at the Athenaeum — for a history of Portsmouth's Unitarian-Universalist South Church. It will be the first full-length history of South Church ever written. The undertaking is a fitting one for her, as she is a longtime member of South Church and, like many of its members, active in social justice movements.

Born in Iowa, she grew up in Michigan and received her baccalaureate degree at Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. At Carleton she got hooked on history through researching primary sources. Two of the most interesting she found during study abroad. In Paris, it was leaflets from May 1968 stating the grievances and demands of students and workers whose protests brought France to a standstill that year. In London, it was a letter from Thomas Paine that had been misfiled and never read before.

After earning a Ph.D. in history at Stanford University, she taught history at Macalester College in St. Paul and at the University of Redlands in southern California. She spent the rest of her teaching career at the University of New Hampshire, retiring as Presidential Professor of History in 2023. The most recent of her six published books is *Asylum between Nations: Refugees in a Revolutionary Era* (Yale Univ. Press, 2023), the story of communities that thrived after accepting immigrants.

Janet discovered the Athenaeum as a teacher at UNH. She had been bringing her students to the Boston Public Library and the Houghton and Schlesinger libraries at Harvard, primarily in the hope that they might experience the excitement of discovering original source



Proprietor Janet Polasky is delving into the Athenaeum's archives to write the first full-length history of Portsmouth's Unitarian-Universalist South Church. This circa-1920s image is a recent addition to the South Church photograph collection.

documents, as she had done. Realizing that such resources were closer to hand, she started bringing them to the Athenaeum. Both she and the students were impressed by the attention and research assistance of Executive Director Tom Hardiman and Librarian Robin Silva.

After finishing the asylum book, Janet decided to act on her longstanding resolve to find answers to questions she'd had about social movements by examining activism at South Church. This gave her a new reason to visit

the Athenaeum; the church records had been brought to our library for secured storage and protection from physical deterioration. These records and those of other Seacoast congregations have been stored and indexed by Special Projects Librarian Susan Kindstedt under a grant from the Piscataqua Savings Bank. Photographic Collections Manager James Smith cataloged all the additional photographs to the South Church collection.

The South Church archives consist mainly of financial

records, minutes of wardens' and trustees' meetings, the ministers' sermons and official correspondence dating back to 1713.

Janet is hopeful of uncovering information that addresses social and political questions, including "Did any pews belong to women?" "When were women able to vote on church matters?" "What was the relationship of church members and ministers to slavery and abolition?" and "How did the Unitarians and Universalists

Continued on Page 8

ARCANA

From Page 4

To return to his son, Alfred Otis Larkin, the probable reason for his settling in Portsmouth in 1899 is that the house built in 1815 by his uncle, Samuel Larkin, had been inhabited for decades by two of Samuel's daughters, both spinsters. Upon their deaths, Alfred acquired it.

The structure, which has been widely regarded as one of the finest classical Federal buildings in Portsmouth, has been attributed by some as the work of Bradbury Johnson, architect of the Athenaeum, though without solid proof.

The graves of father and son can be viewed as summations of their respective lives. Thomas O. lies beneath a huge monument in a highly manicured cemetery in Colmar, California, surmounted by a carved, winged angel of impressive dimensions. Alfred, in contrast, lies beneath an unadorned boulder with a bronze plaque affixed, giving only his name, birth, and death years. Presumably, this is how he wanted to be remembered.

In fairness to Alfred, his newspaper obituary noted that "despite his having lived a very quiet life, he was very charitable, and many people have benefited from his generosity." ¶

SEEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Ice House on Wentworth House Road. Photographer and U.S. Army Corps Engineer William Mather Lamson (1870-1962) captured this glass-plate negative of the Wentworth Hotel icehouse and pond along the Portsmouth and Rye town line, circa 1905. In 1912, the icehouse burned down by suspected arson.

PHOTOGRAPHIC Collections Manager James Smith took a deep dive into what began in the 1800s as the Wentworth Hotel's ice pond. Located near the site of BG's Boathouse Restaurant along the Portsmouth and Rye town line, the pond became a quarry in the 1930s and later a local swimming hole, tragically the site of three teen drownings in the 1950s and 1960s.

What led to this brief history of the ice pond/quarry were several slides of the Portsmouth Fire Department using the old quarry to test its new fire engine in November 1954. Athenaeum Proprietor and amateur photographer Alvah C. Card (1913-1988) took several shots of the fire department at the quarry.

This quarry image is part of the 1,000-plus slides in the Athenaeum's Alvah C. Card Slide Collection (P0054), digitized and added to the Athenaeum's online catalog.

POLASKY

From Page 7

come to merge locally before associating nationally?"

The evidence that she has uncovered so far indicates that, notwithstanding the progressive character often attributed to Unitarianism, change at South Church came gradually and only after bursts of activism.

Janet says that the experience of doing research at the Athenaeum compares to that

of researching at some of the national and municipal archives of Western Europe. It is, of course, superior in being handy — a one-mile bike ride from her home in Portsmouth's greater West End brings her to the building and the archives within.

At the Athenaeum she finds an openness to the public that she doesn't find at many other, larger research institutions and says that as a member, she feels

when she enters the Athenaeum that she "comes into my own domain." And not least among the Athenaeum's assets, she appreciates the learned company of fellow researchers. As she says, "Who needs the internet [to answer local history questions] when you have connections with Tom, James and Robin and with Richard Candee and Peter Randall?" ¶

THE SPEAR CARRIERS

By SHERRY WOOD

TWO fishing spears from Kiribati in the South Pacific made a second epic journey recently — this one from their longtime resting place in the Athenaeum's attic to the old library.

Curator Elizabeth Aykroyd said the spears were part of a collection given to the Athenaeum in 1827 by Lt. John Collings Long, USN.

"He was from Portsmouth and was aware of the Athenaeum's desire to collect objects from around the world," she said.

Due to the length of the spears, moving them was not a simple task, Building Committee member and Subscriber Mark Hubbert said.

"We were not able to take them down from the attic via the stairs," Hubbert wrote in an email. "The window at the base of the stairs is blocked by the elevator shaft, so that is no longer an access point.

"We determined that the



The Athenaeum Building Committee took on the task of moving from the attic to the old library two spears from the South Pacific donated to the Athenaeum in 1827.

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS AYKROYD

best option was to take the spears up to the walkway on the roof of the 1805 building. We needed three people ... spears were then passed to the adjoining roof above the Research Library and finally

to a man on a lift at the rear of the building. We were able to use the lift that was in place for the exterior storm window installation."

Once the spears were on the ground, they were threaded through the stairwell to the old library on the second floor.

The Building Committee is headed by Proprietors Ken Wolfe and Dick Adams.

Hubbert, who is coordinating the window restoration project in the 1805 building, said the lift on site for that work was essential to moving

the spears.

"We have a great contractor who helps us with a lot of repair work at the Athenaeum — Angel Olmo and his assistant, Travis Lacaillade. Angel was available to man the lift at the rear of the building and Travis and I did the rooftop handoff of the spears to Angel."

Douglas Aykroyd reported that on Oct. 1, the spears were hung in the old library with the help of Pat Breslin and Photographic Collections Manager James Smith. ¶

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
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US Postage Paid
Permit No. 51
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Athenaeum Calendar

Friday, Nov 1: Art 'Round Town reception for the exhibition: "First in the Nation." 5 p.m. in the Randall Gallery.

Wednesday, Nov. 6: Franklin Club, 5:30 p.m. in the Reading Room.

Saturday, Nov. 9: Last day of "First in the Nation" exhibit, 1-4 p.m., Randall Gallery.

Wednesday, Nov. 13: The 2024 Lecture series: "Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present" welcomes historian Ann Beattie on "General Benjamin Butler: Rapsallion Reformer," 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library. Reservations required.

Thursday, Nov. 14: "How Findings of Modern Science, Only Four Centuries Old, Unsettled Long-Held Views on Religion, Statecraft and the Law," 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library. Teacher and inventor Dr. Fred Schubert will focus on selected people and events, including Galileo, Hobbes, Darwin, Lysenkoism, the Scopes trial and other landmark court cases relating to science and medicine. Reservations required.

Sunday, Nov. 17: The Portsmouth Athenaeum Chamber

Music Series hosts the ASMI piano trio, 3 p.m. at St. John's Church, Portsmouth.

Wednesday, Nov. 20: The 2024 Lecture series "Political Engagement in New Hampshire, Past and Present" concludes with Jack McGee on "Levi Woodbury: From 'Baby Judge' to U.S. Supreme Court (and the Threshold of the White House)," 5:30 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library. Reservations required.

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

Friday, Dec 6: Athenaeum Holiday Gala. Invitations forthcoming.

Saturday, Dec. 7: Proprietors Art Show opens in the Randall Gallery, 1 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 12: Athenaeum Holiday Concert with the Portsmouth Symphony Brass Quartet, 7:30 p.m., South Church, Portsmouth.

Sunday, Jan 12: The 207th Annual Meeting of the Proprietors of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, 3 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library and via Zoom.