



NOW & THEN
 at the
PROCTER MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
 (Downstairs at the STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY)
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NEW OLD THINGS EXHIBIT



The current exhibit in the Procter Gallery includes several of the donations to the Museum & Archives historical collections during the past year. These gifts range in size from single documents to multiple containers and vary in topic from art to commerce and from individual people to organizations. The unifying factor is that they all relate to Stockbridge. Included is a Royal Arcanum medal (*see page 3 article*) with pictures etc., an oil painting by Benjamin Eggleston (*see page 2 article*), items from J. Murray Tracy about WWII and coaching at Williams High School (*below right*), and photos from WHS (*see 1948 photo below middle*). There are also hand-colored drawings of the Sedgwick Manor (*below left*), the Jonathan Edwards house, and the dedication of the Civil War Monument. There is much more in the exhibit to see. Stop by and enjoy.



STANDING LINCOLN SIGNING

At the Williams High School Alumni Association Executive Board meeting on October 2017, the board passed a motion to donate Daniel Chester French's *Standing Lincoln* statue to the Stockbridge Library, Museum & Archives. The statue, which is in the Jackson wing at the Library, has been at the Library since 1968. On September 22, 2018 the alumni at the Williams High School Alumni Banquet ratified the WHSAA Executive Board's motion. Pictured is WHSAA President, Lawrence Tonini, on January 24, 2020 signing the M&A Deed of Gift to make it official. Also, in the picture, are Pat Flinn, WHSAA Secretary, John Gillespie, President of the Library Board, and Barbara Allen, Curator of the Museum & Archives.



MUSEUM & ARCHIVES MAINTENANCE CLOSING

The Museum & Archives will be closed the first week of February (3RD to the 8TH) for cleaning and reorganizing. During that time housekeeping activities will be performed – dusting, polishing, and washing display cases. There will be ladder work to check lights and vents, and dust the ceiling. There will also be re-boxing of some collections, moving some collection boxes, weeding extra copies of reference books, etc., etc. It will be work, but it will also be fun and there will be cookies. Anyone wishing to volunteer to help, please contact Barbara or Josh at the M&A.

YOUTH

An oil on canvas (34" x 40") entitled *YOUTH* by Benjamin Eggleston (1867-1937) dated August 6, 1931 was a recent donation to the Museum & Archives collection by Tawn Feeney, relative of the model. The painting contains the original label with a price of \$650 on the back. The painting, done at Eggleston's "Old Mill Studio" in West Stockbridge, is a portrait of Florence Louise Davenport at age 11. The Davenports gave a party for Eggleston (*pictured below*) in 1931 at his studio in West Stockbridge. As a thank you Eggleston painted the picture of Florence (1919-1994). Among the photographs and documents accompanying the oil painting was a list of those attending the party which included Joseph and Amelia Franz.



Benjamin Eggleston was a portrait and landscape painter. He studied at the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts (c. 1884) and in Paris (1894-95). According to the internet, "after teaching in Red Wing, Minnesota in the early 1880s, he was an illustrator for the *Minneapolis Tribune* from 1886-87. After returning from France he concentrated on landscape painting, becoming part of the American Barbizon. From the 1900s to the 1920s, he summered at the Old Lyme art colony. Beginning in the 1930s, he spent half of his time in West Stockbridge, MA."

There are several "Stockbridge" connections with these families. Eggleston was an exhibitor at the Stockbridge Casino's art exhibitions in the 1920s (*Note—Many of the paintings throughout the Library were originally exhibited at the Casino by various artists*). Florence's mother, Roxanne Davenport, who was a trained soprano and wife of the West Stockbridge school principal, was also a family friend of Joseph Franz. Franz, when completing the Tanglewood Shed, had Roxanne sing on the Shed's stage to test its acoustics. Her voice was loud and clear all the way to the rear of the Shed and beyond. *Florence Louise (Davenport) Reynolds is pictured below middle at age 18 and below right with the painting in the background.*



LECTURE BY KEN GLOSS ON THE VALUE OF OLD AND RARE BOOKS

Tuesday, February 25 at 6 pm

Kenneth Gloss, proprietor of the internationally known Brattle Book Shop in Boston's Downtown Crossing section, will discuss the value of old and rare books. Ken, who is also a frequent guest appraiser on PBS' *Antiques Roadshow*, will talk in part about the history of his historic bookshop which goes back to circa 1825. He is a second-generation owner. He will talk about the show, some of his favorite finds, and describe some of the joys of the "hunt" as well as explain what makes a book go up in value. He has many fascinating anecdotes to share as well as guidelines for what to look for when starting a collection. There will be a Q&A session before the conclusion of his talk. Following the talk and question-and-answer session, he will give free verbal appraisals of all books that attendees have brought with them.



ROYAL ARCANUM PIN DONATION



The Royal Arcanum, a benefit society, was created in 1877 in Boston by Dr. Darius Wilson. He founded the organization and was the writer of its ritual, constitution, beneficial plan, passwords and even designed the organization's emblem. The order's motto is "Mercy, Virtue Charity". In the early stages it was confined to "acceptable" men between eighteen and fifty five years old who believed in a Supreme Being. These restrictions were later removed. By 1896 the Royal Arcanum had a membership of 200,000. This gradually declined to 135,000 in 1919, 36,000 in 1965, and 28,111 by 1994. As a fraternal life insurance company, by 1970 its benefit categories were listed as "Death, Disability, Old Age Benefits, Educational Loans, Retirement Income Annuities and Weekly Hospital Indemnity Benefits".



A medal from the Royal Arcanum, with the name of Harold P. French and the date of 1921, was donated by his son, Harold P. French, Jr. to the Museum & Archives. In addition to the medal was a brochure for the "Tenth Anniversary Banquet" for the Berkshire "Bill Root" Club of the Royal Arcanum at the Hotel Wendell in Pittsfield dated June 18, 1938. During the term of William C. Root as Grand Regent of Massachusetts the Berkshire "Bill Root" Club was formed. It was made up of different councils of which the Mahkeenac Council, No. 1770 was the local council. Members at that time were Harry Barnes, David D. Buck, *George M. French, *Harold P. French, *Henry V. Rathbun, Leroy E. Tobey and Willis Stannard (*=members for ten consecutive years). The exhibit includes photographs of the members.

CURATOR'S TALK

There will be a Curator's Talk on the exhibit on **February 12 at 3:30 p.m.** in the Museum & Archives' Procter Gallery.

WHAT ARE THEY?

Pictured to the right are two iron molds (3 1/2" x 10" and weighing 5 lbs. each) which were found in the Town Clerk's office at the old Town Hall.

Does anyone have any idea what purpose they might have served?



BERKSHIRE CHAMBER PLAYERS CONCERT

Friday, March 27, 2020 at 6 p.m.

Bement Room

The final Concert of the Season at the Stockbridge Library, Museum & Archives will take place on Friday, March 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. featuring:

Vivaldi Cello Concerto in B Minor
and

Schubert Quintet for two violins, a viola and two cellos.

Tickets, available at the Library's circulation desk, are \$20.

PROCTER MUSEUM & ARCHIVES HOURS

Tuesday 9-8, Wednesday and Friday 9-5, Thursdays 9-1 and Saturdays 9-2

If you plan to spend time researching, it is always a good idea to call (298-8190) to check for availability.