



BOSTON ATHENÆUM

JULY-AUGUST 2017

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

What would the world be like without music or rivers or the green and tender grass? What would this world be like without dogs?
—Mary Oliver, *Long Life* (2004)

As the dog days of summer descend, canine dreamers claim cool spots beside the feet of readers here in 10½. Surprisingly, this hasn't always been the case. In March 1862, the Library Committee voted "that no dogs be permitted in the Library, or reading rooms," a policy upheld through 1946. Then, during the tenure of Walter Muir Whitehill—a Director and Librarian who shared my own fondness for 'nearly all dogs'—the prohibition slipped unremarked from the Rules & Regulations. Policy caught up with practice in 2005. Since then, members have been permitted to bring well-behaved dogs into the Athenæum, where much awaits their human companions. This summer, every Tuesday morning at 10, our librarians will recommend books and provide other reader services *al fresco*, on the second floor terrace. In the Long Room, six members will share their research, teen writers will read new work, and an author will speak about Thoreau, and in the galleries, curator Catharina Slautterback will offer tours of the current exhibition. By the time autumn arrives, our staff's summer projects (outlined within) will be completed, increasing members-only hours, and providing all patrons with a safer, clearer entrance.



Detail from William Holbrook Beard, *Neglecting Business*

Elizabeth E. Barker, Ph.D.
Stanford Calderwood Director

NEW HOURS!
CLOSED
Monday-Thursday, 9 am-8 pm
Friday, 9 am-5:30 pm
Saturday, 9 am-4 pm
Monday, July 3
Tuesday, July 4



Boston Athenæum
10½ Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108



To register for an upcoming event, contact us at 617-720-7600 or events@bostonathenaeum.org.

NEW DISCUSSION GROUP TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 28

Longevity in Literature, Science, and Society

Meets monthly on last Thursday from 6-7:30 pm at the Union Club of Boston (first meeting September 28)

Longevity—a demographic trend, timeless human obsession, and one of the hottest areas for venture investment by Silicon Valley billionaires. Longevity experts predict that one third of babies born this year will celebrate their 100th birthday, and some will live to be 150. But what impact would a quantum leap in longevity have on our society? Is it wise to devote resources to the quest to prolong life at the expense of other causes?

Longevity in Literature, Science, and Society will explore literary, scientific, and ethical perspectives on longevity, considering the wide-reaching implications of life extending beyond a single century. To learn more, or register to join this group, please contact Arnold Serapilio at serapilio@bostonathenaeum.org.

Did you know? More than 20 discussion groups cover topics including cinema, mathematics, poetry, and philosophy. All Athenæum members are welcome to join (or start) a discussion group. If space isn't available at your preferred time in one of the Athenæum's meeting rooms, we would be happy to make arrangements for your group to meet around the corner at the Union Club, where in-meeting refreshments are available to group members.

2017-2018 RESEARCH FELLOWS

The Boston Athenæum is pleased to announce the following recipients of our competitive short-term fellowships for research, publication, curriculum and program development, and other creative projects. Watch the events calendar: recipients will present on their projects near the conclusion of their residencies in the months ahead.

Mary Catherine Mooney Fellowship

Gabrielle Dean, William Kurrelmeyer Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts, The Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins University, "Portrait of the Artist: Photography, Publication, and American Authorship, 1839-1946"

Leon Kogan, Ph.D. candidate, Brown University, "Allan Rohan Crite and Alexandre Jacovleff: Beyond Realism"

Caleb Loring, Jr. Fellowship

Scott Martin, professor, Bowling Green State University, "The Psychoactive Civil War: Alcohol and Drugs in the American Civil War and Its Aftermath"

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Fellowship

Nicole Mahoney, Ph.D. candidate, University of Maryland, College Park, "Liberty, Gentility, and Dangerous Liaisons: French Culture and Polite Society in Early National America"

American Congregational Association-Boston Athenæum Fellowship

Nicholas Bonneau, Ph.D. candidate, University of Notre Dame, "Unspeakable Loss: North America's Invisible Throat Distemper Epidemics, 1735 – 1765"

Mudge Teacher Fellowship

Christina Graves, teacher, Martha Ellen Stilwell School of the Arts, "They Ought to Wear Petticoats!: The Necessity of Male Support in the American Women's Suffrage Movement, 1840-1920"

Allison Lange, assistant professor, Wentworth Institute of Technology, "Should Women Vote?: Resources for Teaching the Woman Suffrage Movement"

Suzanne and Caleb Loring Research Fellowship (offered jointly with Massachusetts Historical Society)

Kathleen Hilliard, associate professor, Iowa State University, "Bonds Burst Asunder: The Revolutionary Politics of Getting By in Civil War and Emancipation, 1860-1867"

New England Regional Fellowship

Chris Babits, Ph.D. candidate, University of Texas at Austin, "To Cure a Sinful Nation: A Cultural History of Conversion Therapy and the Making of Modern America, 1930 to the Present Day"

Laura McCoy, Ph.D. candidate, Northwestern University, "In Distress: Family and a Marketplace of Feeling in the Early American Republic"

Tyler Sperrazza, Ph.D. candidate, Pennsylvania State University, "Defiant: African American Cultural Responses to Northern White Supremacy, 1865-1915"

Donald Yacovone, associate, W.E.B. Du Bois Institute of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University, "The Liberator's Legacy: Memory, Abolitionism, and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1865-1965"

CIRCULATION AREA ENHANCEMENTS

The Board of Trustees has now approved the vestibule and circulation area updates shared with members via email on June 6th and reviewed with members during drop-in presentations on June 9th, 15th, 16th, and 23rd. Work will begin after the Independence Day weekend and is scheduled for completion by Labor Day.

During construction, circulation activities will move temporarily to the first-floor Bow Room. *All services will continue to be offered.* Members will still be able to request, renew, and check out books, and pay for and pick up printing requests. We ask members to pardon our appearance and excuse any noise.

To learn more, please visit bostonathenaeum.org/first-floor-renovations.

The updates include:

I. A security professional will be posted in the vestibule, observing the lockers and entrance, and reviewing bags.

II. An opening in the glass wall that separates the vestibule from circulation will create separate entrance and exit pathways.

III. A traditional semi-circular library desk will replace the current circulation desk, providing better functioning work spaces and room to assist more than one patron at a time.

IV. A visitor services coordinator, positioned at the new desk, will greet guests and collect the forthcoming public admission fee: \$10 for adult visitors unaccompanied by a member or unaffiliated with a sister organization.

V. Sculpture from the collection, new coat racks, and benches will enhance the vestibule.

VI. Additional light fixtures and the removal of walls blocking the original window wells will brighten the circulation area.



Our inspiration: the classic library desk (Pomona Public Library, ca. 1900)

PROJECT TIMELINE

July



August



September

Construction begins after the July 4 holiday behind a temporary wall. Temporary circulation desk in Bow Room offers all services.

All services continue to be offered from temporary circulation desk in Bow Room as construction advances.

Construction completed by Labor Day Weekend.

The Boston Athenæum strives to be an essential participant in Boston's cultural conversations with an engaged, vibrant membership, an approachable, expert staff, and active, accessible collections for research and enjoyment.

Our organization's first vision statement, adopted by the Board of Trustees 2017

Summer Reading Recommendations



HOURS OF OPERATION

As we announced to members by email in June, we have modified our hours of operation to contain costs and strengthen the quality of the services we provide. Beginning in July, we will be closed on Sundays. Beginning on September 5, we will offer limited visitor hours, introduce a general admission fee of \$10 for visitors, and extend member hours on Saturdays. These adjustments will increase members-only access to 30 hours per week (when members may continue to bring guests); strengthen member and visitor services by concentrating staffing to six days per week; introduce a new admissions income stream to offset the costs of providing services to visitors; help to contain rising utilities costs; and provide staff with a day to conduct back-of-house projects that currently take place overnight.

Member hours, effective July 2

Monday-Thursday, 9 am-8 pm Friday, 9 am-5:30 pm Saturday, 9 am-4 pm
Gordon Newspaper Room will open at 8:30 Monday-Friday

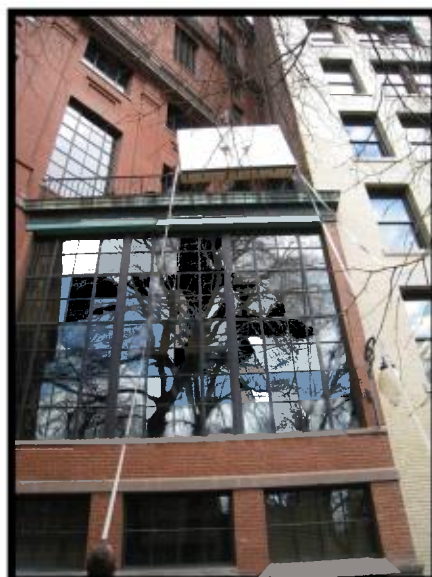
Member hours, effective September 5

Monday-Thursday, 9 am-8 pm Friday-Saturday, 9 am-5 pm
Gordon Newspaper Room will open at 8:30 Monday-Friday

Visitor hours, effective September 5

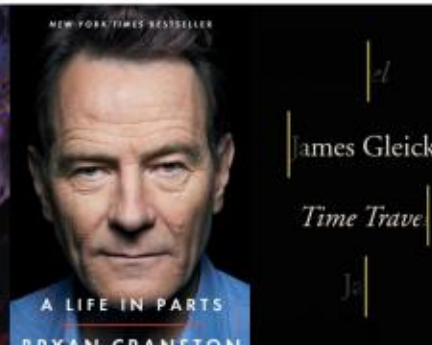
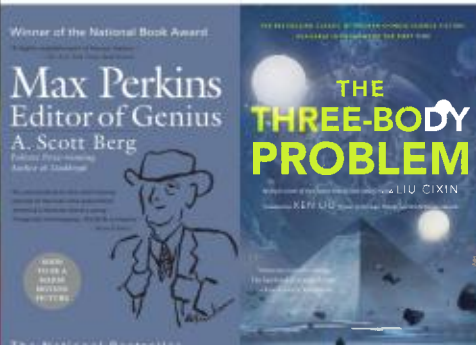
Tuesday, 12-8 pm Wednesday-Saturday, 10 am-4 pm

Also effective in July, we will complete the implementation of new security policies. Members will now be permitted to bring moderately sized bags into the building, provided that the bags do not pose an inherent risk to people or collection items. All bags will be searched by security professionals upon departure. To learn more, please visit bostonathenaeum.org/visit/plan-your-visit.



MASTERPIECE IN MOTION

On Tuesday, April 18th, fine art handlers removed a rare and important painting from the wall of the Vershbow Special Collections Reading Room: Giovanni Paolo Panini's colossal *Interior of St. Peter's with the Visit of the Duc de Choiseul* (1756-57). After a thorough examination by conservators and curators, the work was secured in a packing crate; lowered by pulley from the second-story terrace; wheeled through the Old Granary Burying Ground into an awaiting climate-controlled vehicle; and transported nonstop to the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, California, where it is featured in the special exhibition *Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth-Century Europe*. Too large to leave the second floor by either the stairwell or elevator (!), the painting will return through the front doors in 2018, following stops at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Art.



NEWS

YOU CAN USE

NEW FACES

Please welcome Hannah Ovaska, Human Resources Manager; Rebecca Philio, Preservation Intern; Christopher Silva, Director of Facilities; and Athena Zhang, Development Intern.

TUESDAYS ON THE TERRACE

Come to the second floor terrace on Tuesdays at 10 am throughout the summer to discuss your latest read. Reference librarians will advise on what to read next, how to track your reading, and ways to connect with fellow readers.

CONSERVATION EVENING

Thanks to all who attend our Conservation Evening. In its new silent auction format, we raised \$38,600 to conserve Special Collection items—more than double the \$17,900 raised in 2015!



MEMBERS' TRIP OCTOBER 5-17

Limited space remains for the upcoming excursion to Dresden and the Czech lands. Tour participants will enjoy a private concert in a baroque hall of Lobkowitz Palace, the only private facility within Prague Castle. To learn more, please contact Dawna Burrus at 617-720-7629.

RECORDING LIVES

Libraries & Archives in the Digital Age

Boston University Center for the Humanities Fall Forum
Co-sponsored by the Boston Public Library & the Boston Athenæum

Mark your calendar! October 5-7, 2017

- I Setting Directions for Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age
- II Digital Scholarship and Practice
- III Preservation Spaces, Open and Closed
- IV The Global Politics of Archives

The role of libraries and archives in our digital age is a pressing concern for humanists, scholars, and citizens. Now, more than ever, the accessibility of historical information, the sharing of resources, and the uses of digitization raise questions central to democratic society. This forum brings together specialists from academia, libraries, government, and philanthropic and commercial archives to pursue common questions about value across the institutional boundaries that typically separate us.

JUST *for* KIDS

For a complete calendar of regularly scheduled children's programs, please visit our website.

SUMMER READING

Book by Book, Brick by Brick

June-August

M F Registration now open

Sign up in the children's library before July 15 to participate in summertime reading challenges, enter raffles, and win prizes! Monthly hands-on building events (below) challenge children to repurpose materials creatively.

SHOEBOX HOUSES

Ages 5+

Saturday, July 29, 1-2 pm

Registration begins July 13, 9 am

P Members *Free* and Non-members \$5 (adults and children over 5)

Design and construct a detailed miniature house for your favorite toy! We'll work with shoe boxes, fabric scraps, paper, beads, pompoms, pipe cleaners, and found objects to create all the comforts of home.

TAPE TOWN

Ages 2-4

Saturday, August 26, 1-2 pm

Registration begins August 10, 9 am

P Members *Free* and Non-members \$5 (adults and children over 5)

What happens when the library becomes a miniature city? Bring your favorite vehicle to drive around the colorful tape roads criss-crossing the children's library. Explore different locations around town, each with its own activities and numerous ways to play. Help the town grow by adding new places to stop.

SELECT JULY-AUGUST EVENTS

Visit our website for a complete calendar of upcoming programs.



Members only



Reception to follow



Open to the public



Free

CURATOR-LED GALLERY TALK

Wednesday, July 19, 11 am-12 pm

M **F** Registration begins July 5, 9 am

Join **Catharina Slutterback**, the Athenæum's curator of prints & photographs, for an engaging, interactive gallery talk on our current exhibition, *New England on Paper: Contemporary Art in the Boston Athenæum's Prints & Photographs Collections*, to discover a wide range of artistic responses to New England's built and natural environments.

Gallery talks are limited to 10 participants.



MEMBERS SHOWCASE, POWERED BY PECHAKUCHA

Thursday, July 20, 5:30-7:30 pm

Registration begins July 6, 9 am

P **R** Members \$15 Non-members \$30

Six Athenæum members—**Joyce Bowden, Emily Levine, Scott Oleson, Abraham Schechter, Kate Sullivan, and Nancy Upper**—will present on their research projects and artistic endeavors in a compelling, dynamic slideshow format: 20 images for 20 seconds each. The PechaKucha 20x20 format was first developed in Tokyo by a team of architects as a way to share content with concision and speed. These succinct presentations allow a range of perspectives on a single theme and are sure to spark spirited conversation between presenters and audience members.

A cocktail reception at 5:30 pm will precede the presentations.

FREE FUN FRIDAY

Friday, July 21, 9 am-5 pm

P **F** Registration not required

We are pleased to participate for the second year in Free Fun Friday, supported by the **Highland Street Foundation**. The day's free activities for children and adults will include gallery talks, guided tours of the first floor that highlight the Athenæum's history and special collections, and stories and crafts in the children's library.

Free Fun Friday was created to increase access and enrichment opportunities for children and families during the summer, offering visitors no-cost admission to many of the most treasured cultural venues in Massachusetts. For a complete list of participants, visit highlandstreet.org.

A SPECIAL READING FEATURING 2017 YOUNG ADULT WRITERS PROGRAM (YAWP) SUMMER TEEN FELLOWS

Thursday, July 27, 6-7:30 pm

P **F** **R** Registration not required

A special reading by **GrubStreet's** summer teen fellows in celebration of their accomplishments. GrubStreet's summer teen fellowship immerses high school students in the writer's life of creative craft and publishing. During three weeks at GrubStreet, teens work with published authors on original prose and poetry, meet with literary agents and editors, and more.

By rigorously developing voices of every type and talent and by removing barriers to entry, GrubStreet fosters the creation of meaningful stories and ensures that excellent writing remains vital and relevant.



THOREAU'S WILDFLOWERS AND ANIMALS

Wednesday, August 2, 12-1 pm

P **F** Registration not required

Some of the most vivid writings in Thoreau's journals were inspired by the plants and animals that inhabit the sprawling fields, forests, and wetlands of Concord and nearby communities. An inveterate year-round Rambler and keen and thoughtful observer, Thoreau wrote frequently about these creatures, faithfully recording each sighting or encounter with the accuracy of a scientist and the deep spirituality of a transcendentalist and mystic.

In this lecture, **Geoff Wisner** will present Thoreau's profound spirituality and belief in the earth-human connection as revealed through his explorations of Thoreau's best nature writings.

This event is held in celebration of the bicentennial of Henry David Thoreau's birth. For more events celebrating Thoreau's 200th birthday, visit thoreaubicentennial.org.



CURATOR-LED GALLERY TALK

Wednesday, August 15, 10-11 am

M **F** Registration begins August 1, 9 am

Join **Catharina Slutterback**, the Athenæum's curator of prints & photographs, for an engaging, interactive gallery talk on our current exhibition, *New England on Paper: Contemporary Art in the Boston Athenæum's Prints & Photographs Collections*, to discover a wide range of artistic responses to New England's built and natural environments.

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