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New Hours

As of October 1, 2014, the Boston Athenæum will have new, expanded hours and be open Thursday evening until 8:00 p.m. and Sunday from noon until 4:00 p.m. The full schedule is listed below:

Monday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Noon - 4:00 p.m.

Follow the Athenæum!



Director's Letter

How auspicious! My first note to you falls during American Archive Month, a time eminently suited to the Boston Athenæum. Our institution, after all, holds irreplaceable documents of the histories of libraries, art museums, the city of Boston, and American letters. And each of those records is available for you, as a Member, to see. The only credential we require is curiosity. Our staff would be delighted to help you identify suitable documents (or prints, photographs, or rare books) to explore, and to share the simple procedures for using the Vershbow Room. **Make an appointment this month** and taste for yourself how "sweet are the fruits of letters." I look forward to seeing you here.



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

Credit for image above: In the Vershbow Special Collections Reading Room, Elizabeth E. Barker examines archive material: the original prospectus of the Anthology Society for the reading room that would become the Boston Athenæum (Shane Godfrey, 2014).

American Archive Month

October is **American Archives Month**, sponsored by the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and what better way to participate than by telling our members about the Athenæum archive. The archive is the repository for the records created by the Athenæum as well as the Boston Library Society (founded in 1792 and merged with the BA in 1939), and consists of reports, records, correspondence, photographs, publications, event invitations, department files, and even items that were available for sale, and, much more. The goal is to keep a record of the history of both institutions have



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Featured Events

Please check the [calendar](#) or your booklet for the full autumn schedule. If you find these events interesting, you may wish to browse these [books related to events](#).

Children's Book Talk: Sara Hoagland Hunter, *[Every Turtle Counts](#)*

Saturday, Oct. 4,
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Lecture: TC Squared Theatre Company, *[The Great War Theatre Project](#)*

Sunday, Oct. 5,
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Book Talk: Nick Bunker, *[An Empire on the Edge: How Britain Came to Fight America](#)*

Tuesday, Oct. 7,
Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Concert: *[Asylum Quartet](#)*

Wednesday, Oct. 15,
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

materials available to researchers, and to grow the collection. The SAA states: "the primary task of the archivist is to establish and maintain control, both physical and intellectual, over records of enduring value." Archivists collect, arrange, describe and make materials available for research. Archivists are professionals and amateurs, family archivists who have the archive in their home (under the bed or in a closet).

As an archivist and a reference librarian there is not a typical day for me because there is not a typical researcher. Each researcher comes with his or her view and question which allows me the wonderful opportunity to see the archive through a different lens. In essence though, I do the same job every day: save what the Athenæum creates and make materials accessible to the public. No departmental collection is typical. The archive shows how individuals and departments over the years have created today's Athenæum.

The archive always grows because departments shift, professions change, the Library expands, etc., and being human, we create records of what we do. How I decide on what to save or discard is, firstly, guided by our Library's mission statement. Information about collections and how they are used by researchers is vital as well. Some materials fall under federal and state laws which I obey. I ask myself when evaluating materials, "will these proceedings, receipts, objects assist in answering queries about the Athenæum. And if so, the material is kept. As a professional archivist, my Masters in Library Science, Archive Management and my Masters in History inform my work every single day. Furthermore, I follow the [Code of Ethics for archivists](#) and the [Code of Ethics for librarians](#), both central to this profession.

What I find captivating about this job is not only the preservation of the history of the Athenæum and the Boston Library Society but the contribution to the fascinating and vast history (and future) of libraries. I inherited 207 years of Athenæum material and 147 years of Library Society material that my predecessors kept in good faith for the future. It is exciting to think that the archive will persist in another another 207 years, at least, and will contain items we have not yet imagined.

Carolle R. Morini
Archivist / Reference Librarian

Credit for image above: Jean McBeath Parker, hired in 1949 to work at delivery desk, gift of Alexander Parker, 2005 (circa 1950).

Good Housekeeping in the Archive

Children's Event: **My Athenæum Day**

Saturday, Oct. 18,
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



Concert: **Irina Muresanu**

Wednesday, Oct. 22,
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion: **A Conversation with Mark Bradford**

Thursday, Oct. 23,
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Book Talk: Mary Sarotte, ***The Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall***

Wednesday, Oct. 29,
Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Archive Reading List

Members will find, on the **book recommendation** webpage, a list of books about archives in general, caring for archival material, and even fiction involving archives.

Thank you!

Members like you helped the Athenæum reach its ambitious goal of raising \$1,000,000.

Preventive conservation is a broad-based approach to collections care that concerns the stabilization of collections through effective environmental management. In August, Archivist Carolle Morini and I conducted



preliminary cleaning of the bookshelves in the archive. This included removing items from the shelves and using a museum quality HEPA vacuum to collect and trap fine dust particles. Dust can be acidic and abrasive and sometimes food for pests. It was not only an opportunity to manage these agents of deterioration but also to inspect and assess risks in the collection. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

As a general rule, your treasures are most comfortable when you are most comfortable, out of areas that experience extremes and drastic fluctuations in temperature and humidity such as those in basements and attics.

Dawn Walus
Chief Conservator

Credit for image above: Carolle Morini and Dawn Walus in the archive stacks (Emily Anderson, 2014).

New staff member: Technical Coordinator of Events

The Events Department welcomes its new Technical Coordinator of Events, Alexandra Winzeler. She earned her Bachelors in Fine Arts from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 2012, focusing on printmaking, paper making, and book making. During much of her studies, Alexandra served the Athenæum on her own time as an Events volunteer. She went on to



work as the Circulation and Reference Intern while attending the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College, helping many Athenæum patrons find their way through the book stacks in the library's drum and basement. (Another example of Alexandra's efforts appears elsewhere in this newsletter.) Now she puts a different set of skills to work in the fast-paced Events Department. As Technical Coordinator of Events, she helps assemble and



The staff expresses its appreciation of your support.

Volunteer: Athenæum Encyclopædists wanted

Enjoy researching history? Ferreting out the facts? Whether you like tracking information online, taking home a stack of books to devour, or settling into a seat to study archival materials, the Athenæum wants you. Here is an opportunity to volunteer for the Athenæum which seeks people willing to help fill in some gaps regarding history and collections of the Athenæum among the extensive listings of Wikipedia.

You can carry through the process from beginning to end or volunteer for one (even small) part of the process of creating an entry: researching, writing, editing, proof-reading, linking, or updating. We have compiled a list of possible research projects.

If you are interested, contact **Mary Warnement**, Head of Reader Services

Elevator Renovation Complete

The Boston Athenæum is pleased to announce that installation is finished. The elevator has passed inspection, and the basement through the fifth floors may again be reached by elevator.

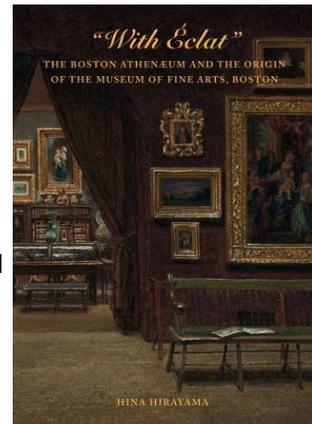
carry out our busy events schedule each season, along with maintaining registration. With her varied history assisting the Athenæum, Alexandra is excited to be a part of the full-time staff.

Victoria O'Malley
Director of Events

Credit for image above: Alexandra Winzeler, (Dace Treize, 2014).

Winning "With Éclat"

Historic New England has announced that its **Book Prize for 2013** has been awarded to the Boston Athenæum's publication, **"With Éclat": The Boston Athenæum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**, by Hina Hirayama, Associate Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the Athenæum. *"With Éclat"* chronicles the extraordinary role that the Athenæum played in the founding of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in the late nineteenth century.



Historic New England (formerly SPNEA) awards this prize annually to "a monograph or exhibition catalogue that advances the understanding of the architecture, landscape, and material culture of New England and the United States from the seventeenth century to the present."

Inspired by the celebration of the Athenæum's bicentennial in 2007, Hina began her research by delving into the Athenæum's own archive, which contains hundreds of records of various types, both complete and fragmentary, related to her subject. She then conducted in-depth research in the archives of the MFA, Boston, as well as those of numerous other institutions throughout New England and beyond. At times, words scribbled on a snippet of paper stored in a far-flung archive would remain a mystery for years before Hina uncovered their meaning in light of records found in another depository. Many hours spent in multiple archives yielded a rich cache of largely forgotten facts, which, according to the press, Hina wove into "an engrossing history" (*New England Quarterly*) with "an admirable blend of respect for accuracy and vivacity" (*Maine Antiques Digest*).

David Dearing
Susan Morse Hillis Curator of Paintings & Sculpture



We appreciate the good humor with which members have approached this inconvenience.

Share Your Memories

Take a moment to share your Boston Athenæum memories by completing the [online form available on the Archive webpage](#).

Your memories will contribute to the long history of the Library and add a twenty-first century viewpoint for future researchers.

Credit for image above: Cover of Hina Hirayama, "With Éclat": *The Boston Athenæum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, (Boston Athenæum: 2013).

On Loan: Athenæum's *Los caprichos* by Goya at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The upcoming exhibition (October 12, 2014 through January 19, 2015) at the Museum of Fine Arts, *Goya: Order and Disorder*, will provide an excellent opportunity to study one of the Athenæum's rare books, *Los Caprichos* by Francisco Goya, in relation to other prints and paintings by the artist who created it. In 1830 the Boston Athenæum became the first institution in the United States to acquire a copy of this book which consists of 80 full-page



etchings that convey Goya's cynical and unforgiving reactions to the human failings and cruelty that he observed around him. The Athenæum's copy is bound in red morocco leather with an elegant Greek key border on the front and back boards and a handsome richly gilt spine. It was purchased at Cunningham's Auction Rooms in Boston from "the Private Library of a Gentleman going to Europe" who has never been identified.

Stanley Ellis Cushing
Anne C. and David J. Bromer Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts

Credit for image above: Plate *Hasta la muerte* from Goya, Francisco, *Los caprichos* (Madrid: 1799). Athenæum Purchase, 1830.