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NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM

PHILBRICK POETRY CELEBRATION

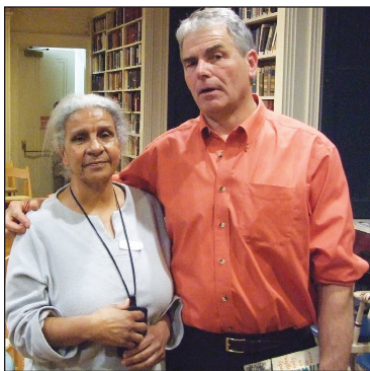
by Tina Egnoski, Weekend Circulation Supervisor



Deborah and Charles Philbrick

On April 25, the Athenaeum was alive with the voices of three generations of Philbricks. The 2014 *Philbrick Poetry Reading: Celebrating the Lives and Legacy of Charles and Deborah Philbrick* showcased not only the poetry of Charles and the humanity of Deborah, but also the wit and wisdom of a family dedicated to words. Charles was a poet and a teacher. He authored several collections, including *Voyages Down and Other Poems* and *New England Suite: Selected Poems*, which won the Wallace Stevens National Poetry contest in 1962. As a scholar and professor, he was a member of the English faculty at Brown University. Deborah contributed her talents throughout her lifetime to help charitable organizations and mentor many of Providence's aspiring young poets. Both of them had long ties to the Athenaeum. Charles was a library shelve in his teens and later served on both the Library Committee and the Board of Directors. Deborah was a member of the Library Committee for ten years throughout the 1970s.

In the evening's tribute to them, the audience was treated to readings and reflections by Stephen, Benjamin, Timothy, and Harry—the four sons of Charles and Deborah—as well as grandchildren Alice, Sophie, Clancy, and Frank Philbrick along with David Burnham, who arrived from all over the country to participate. Interspersed between the readings, we were lucky to hear six recordings of Charles reading his own poetry. These recently digitized pieces brought to life the resonant voice of Charles within the intimate setting of the Reading Room, which houses the library's extensive collection of poetry.



Sylvia Ann Soares and Stephen Philbrick

In the Rare Book Room, Collections Librarian Kate Wodehouse created an exhibit of family photographs and memorabilia, provided courtesy of Tim. On display was a 1960 *Look* magazine article on Charles, a broadside of his poem "Clarities," and poetry collections by his son Stephen, also a poet. One other highlight of the exhibit was a collection of photographs from the celebration of the posthumous publication of *Nobody Laughs, Nobody Cries* held at the Athenaeum in 1976. We are honored that the library was and continues to be so much a part of the Philbrick family's life and legacy.



David Burnham, Nina Rossello, Ben Philbrick, Alice Philbrick, and Luther Gerlach puruse the exhibit



Stephen Coon and Clancy Philbrick

MESSAGE FROM ALISON MAXELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I left my office this morning and slipped away to the Art Room for quiet inspiration. The view from here looking down into the library never gets old. It is the last day of the first week of June...that beautiful season...summer...is soon to follow. In this personal moment of reflection, I marvel at what another amazing year it has been. Last night, from a slightly different vantage point, I watched the kids from Trinity Repertory Company's Shakespeare theater class perform *A Rose by Any Other Athenaeum*, a culminating site-specific performance, after months of preparation. Their voices warmed the room with love and laughter... even the books on the shelves smiled - a perfect example of how this place comes alive in so many different and creative ways. Another

*Then followed that beautiful season... Summer....
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.*

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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poignant moment occurred earlier this spring when I attended the Paper Dolls Project Salon. I was awestruck. This was THE perfect collaboration - SO intrinsic to what we do as a cultural amplifier - artists working with our collections, sharing their creative processes, exhibiting their new, Athenaeum-inspired work both here and at our collaborative partner AS220's Project Gallery, and building new audiences for their endeavors. Bravo!

It is true. Awareness and appreciation of the organization is building and we find ourselves at a pivotal point as we approach the final year of *Vision 2015*, our five-year strategic plan. Without question, there IS a hunger for the Athenaeum's unique services and programs. Over the last five years we have worked diligently to accomplish all the goals outlined in our strategic plan by building a solid foundation of relationships that fuel our mission. And there is eager anticipation among our partners, members, donors, and the community as to what our vision for 2020 will look like. Fortunately, with funding this spring from RI Council for the Humanities we have been able to seed the upcoming planning process by engaging consultant Kathleen Shannon to conduct a series of interviews with external stakeholders and community partners to gauge perceptions of the Athenaeum as a "cultural amplifier." I am pleased to report that 99% of those we contacted for interviews responded and participated! To me, this speaks volumes in terms of the "value" we have created in the community. The results of these interviews will be captured in a report later this month and will serve as a framework for future planning efforts to begin early this summer and continue through the next fiscal year. Preliminary conversations have been extremely encouraging and we are excited about the tremendous opportunities ahead. You can expect to receive a letter from me early this summer summarizing the planning process and encouraging your participation in a variety of personal interviews, focus group sessions, and membership surveys. This planning, like our programming, will be based upon active engagement, spirited discussion, and civic discourse with our members and supporters. Your participation will be essential!

In this exact moment, however, all attention is focused on meeting our financial goals for this year. Ravens encircle the mezzanine, serving as both inspiration and intention, and filling the air with a dreamy and magical light of possibility: each raven bears the names of an individual member or donor who loves and supports the Athenaeum. If you haven't done so already, please claim your raven by joining that circle of supporters with your donation today - help us to meet our goals and lay a fresh new landscape in the months ahead!

Always,
Alyson

NEWS FROM THE CIRCULATION DESK

by Mary Brower, Circulation Supervisor

Stephanie Knox, who has been working this past year with Danielle in Membership and Development, has joined the Circulation Desk staff as well. Stephanie just received her Master of Library Science degree from URI in May.

Kirsty Dain, her husband Ed, and sons William and Lloyd are spending the summer in Bergen, Norway where Ed has a teaching fellowship. We hope they're having a great time and we'll look forward to welcoming them back in late August.



Ah, summer! Time for travel, vacations, or just lying at home in a hammock with all technology silenced – that is, time for books and leisure reading! And when looking for advice on putting together your summer reading list, look no further than the Circ Desk at the Athenaeum, where experts are ready to assist – let's hear from one of them now:

READER SERVICES

by Circulation Clerk and Library Fairy Amy Eller Lewis

It's really just an old fashioned word for book recommendations. This is what I do. I help you connect with the books you want to read. You may not KNOW you want to read them, but that's okay.

I do.

Often, patrons come to the desk and ask, "What have *you* read that you really liked?" Now, my tastes are wider than you might appreciate: Young Adult fantasy, 1960s Gothic Bodice Rippers, violent retellings of Fairy Tales, memoirs of chorus girls, and grisly horror novels. These are what *I** like. Not what *YOU* might like. What makes me so very good at this job is that I can tell the difference.

Make no mistake, I'm no fortune teller -- I'm not Mr. Yang at the old Chinese Store who could look at your hand and tell you your shoe size. You'll have to answer some questions, like: "What are you in the mood for?"

The answer to this might be "Something light, but not too silly," or "something serious without being bleak." Unfortunately, the answer is all too often, "Oh... something *good*."

Well. That's too bad because I had a stack of TERRIBLE books all picked out for you that I didn't think you'd enjoy AT ALL. But I do understand that sometimes, it's difficult to know where to start. That's all right. Because I do.

I'll have a couple of different questions for you. "Name a book you've read that you liked." "What's your favorite book from childhood?" and "What was the last book you picked up and did not finish?" "What's the book you *pretend* to like, but have never actually read?" What I'm trying to get a sense of is not only your particular taste, but also what you want this reading to DO for you.

My friends tease me that I think most problems, from Divorce to Bereavement to Bankruptcy, can be solved through a combination of organic vegetables, learning a hand craft, and a guided reading list. This is not entirely inaccurate. Do you need to "not be here" for a few hours? Do you need to feel smarter when the book is over? Do you want complete immersion? Or do you want a little distance? Do you want to read about someone having the same problems as you? Or some very different ones? Come talk to me. This is the key to my success.

Or if you have no inclination to do so, you can find out what I *am* reading on Goodreads.com (I'm "AmyEllerLewis"), and read my reviews there. I also blog as The Bibliotherapist on Macmillan Publishing's website for Crime Fiction, criminalelement.com.

MESSAGE FROM DANIELLE KEMSLEY, DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Claim your raven! Many of you may have wondered why there is a garland of ravens hanging from the mezzanine level of the library. Well, we wanted to acknowledge the donations that so many of you have made to the Athenaeum this year, and mark the progress towards our participation goal (no clichéd thermometers for us here!), and we thought it apt to use the raven artwork created by our talented Circulation Supervisor Mary Brower, which honors the time that Edgar Allan Poe spent in our library. We are so grateful to those of you who have already made your contributions to our Annual Fund, and have added a raven with your name(s) handwritten on it to represent each gift, no matter the amount of the donation. As we enter the final weeks of the fiscal year, with a goal of 500 participating donors by June 30 (and almost a third of that number still to go), it's in your power to complete the garland and bring it home to Athena by making your gift today!



Claim your raven!



A love letter from Portia Howe

What you are supporting: This is a key period in the Athenaeum's history – awareness and appreciation of the organization is building, large numbers of people are consistently attending Salons and programs, and more people are visiting the building than ever before. There is an obvious hunger for the unique services and programs that the Athenaeum provides to both its members and those in the wider community, and the staff and Board are committed to continuing to meet those needs. With memberships accounting for only 16% of the Athenaeum's revenue, when people like you make an investment above and beyond your membership with a gift of any amount to the Annual Fund, you play a crucial role in supporting the Athenaeum's wide-ranging collections, historic building, dedicated staff, cherished Children's Library, dynamic programs, and robust community partnerships. We couldn't do it all without you, and we are truly so grateful!

Challenge grant: In case you need any further encouragement, if the gifts of Athenaeum supporters reach the Annual Fund goal of \$200,000 by June 30 (we have around a quarter of that still to go as of the beginning of June), the library will receive a \$2,500 challenge grant from the RI Foundation and donor advisor Herman Rose of the Archive, Document, Display and Disseminate

Fund, which Rose created as an incentive to strengthen libraries and other civic and cultural organizations and expand their roles as community centers that can stimulate dialogue around critical issues. So, thanks to your support, if we reach our goal, we will immediately exceed it by a significant margin!

Ways to give: • Call Danielle Kemsley at 401-421-6970 x15 to make a gift by credit card. • Complete and return the enclosed gift envelope, or mail a check to: The Providence Athenaeum, attn. Danielle Kemsley, 251 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903. • Drop off a check or fill in a gift envelope at the library's Circulation Desk. • Make a secure donation via the Athenaeum's website providenceathenaeum.org/donate/donate.html.



CFHS poets Felix Machuca, Sonia Pires, Alvaro Movilla, and Maria Escobar

the visual and literary aspects of the broadsides. They did a brief tour of the library, sat down to a delicious lunch by El Rancho Grande, and then were off to AS220 to learn more about the printmaking process and the youth programming at AS220. Earlier in the spring we hosted a visit by some of the AS220 printmaking students and instructors working on the BroadSides Project; Collections Librarian Kate Wodehouse curated a selection of broadsides and artists books of poetry from the Athenaeum's collections for them to consider as they undertook their own work.

BILINGUAL BROADSIDES, YEAR TWO! After 2013's successful launch of the BroadSides Project, we were delighted this May to welcome the 2014 Central Falls High School/Writers-in-the-Schools, RI participants to the Athenaeum to celebrate their just-published broadsides. Poems written by the CFHS students had been shared with printmaking students at AS220 Youth earlier in the spring; the AS220 students then created original artwork to go with a selection of the poems and printed them in English and Spanish. These bilingual broadsides are now being distributed and displayed throughout Central Falls as well as at the Athenaeum and AS220.

At the celebration launch, CFHS students saw the broadsides for the first time and read aloud from their work, considering the interplay between

We thank the very talented student poets and printmakers along with Writers-in-the-Schools, RI Founder/Director Tina Cane; AS220 Youth Director Anne Kugler; AS220 Youth Instructors Atticus Allen and Gianna Rodriguez; and CFHS Expanded Learning Opportunities Coordinator Elizabeth Ochs for all their work in coordinating this collaborative project! Thanks as well to the RI State Council on the Arts for support of Athenaeum programming.

MAGIC LANTERN SHOW – AND ACCOMPANYING EXHIBIT - INSPIRED BY THE ATHENAEUM!

by Kate Wodehouse, Collections Librarian

The Wonder Show Presents, *The Arctic Theatre Royal*

The inspiration for this project and exhibition was taken from a publication in the collection of the Athenaeum, the *North Georgia Gazette* (London, 1821). The *Gazette* was a shipboard newspaper created to entertain the arctic explorers while they wintered aboard ship, locked in by ice for ten months, two of which were in total darkness. Carolyn Gennari, the artist behind The Wonder Show, first came to meet with me in the spring of 2013. She had been inspired by the story of the *North Georgia Gazette* from a show at AS220 a few years earlier, and she knew that the Athenaeum owned the only copy of this volume in RI. Her grant proposal to RISCA and RICH included creating a magic lantern show with historical material taken directly from the theatrical performances that were published in the *Gazette*, and the construction of a traveling theatre wagon that could double as sleeping quarters for the performers and would feature a projection screen for the performances. *The Arctic Theatre Royal* debuted as an Offsite Salon on 6/9 at the Roger Williams National Memorial in Providence; additional shows will be performed over the summer in New England, New York, and the Midwest. Please consult The Wonder Show website for an up-to-date performance schedule and other information: thewondershow.wordpress.com/.



Carolyn Gennari, creator of the The Wonder Show



The Wonder Show's traveling theater wagon

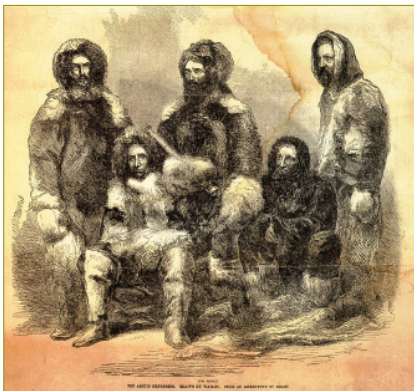


The Wonder Show Offsite Salon in Roger Williams National Memorial, 6/9

"Many of the slides that will be used in the performance come directly from images photographed in the collections, and most if not all of the narrative of the show is direct excerpts from Parry's journal as well as the *North Georgia Gazette*." Carolyn Gennari, artist

A Peep at the Arctic: Visions of Polar Exploration, 1818-1909 on view in the Philbrick Rare Book Room 6/15 – 8/31

To accompany The Wonder Show performance schedule this summer, the Athenaeum will display relevant materials from the collection in the Philbrick Rare Book Room. The Travel and Exploration Collection is one of the most significant holdings in the Special Collections at the Athenaeum, with over 75 titles on the polar regions. Highlighted in the exhibit are the journals of Captain Parry's three voyages to discover the Northwest Passage, and his shipboard publication the *North Georgia Gazette* which were the primary source material for Carolyn Gennari's magic lantern show. In addition to these works published in the 1820s, the exhibition will showcase other 19th century Arctic imagery from the collection along with narratives to discover the Northwest Passage, voyages to find the lost expedition of Sir John Franklin in 1845, attempts by explorers to reach the North Pole at the later part of the 19th century, and books about the Inuit inhabitants and zoology of the Arctic. Also on display are loans from the private collection of RI College Professor of English Russell Potter that include two original 19th century lantern slides of scenes based on illustrations directly from Dr. Elisha Kent Kane's second voyage to locate the explorer Captain Franklin in 1855.



Arctic Explorers, Frank Leslie's Illustrated News, 1855, from Dr. Elisha Kent Kane's Second Grinnell Expedition, Collection of Russel A. Potter.



The Ships Hecula and Griper in Winter Harbor, 1819, from Captain Parry's Voyage [magic lantern slide, copyright Carolyn Gennari]



Polar Bear from Peep at the Esquimaux, 1824. Providence Athenaeum.

FROM THE REFERENCE DESK...

by Carol Tatian, Reference Librarian

I have written before about our quest to update our travel guide section at the Athenaeum. Last year we purchased new, updated versions of our 51 most popular guides. This year we replaced 60 guides covering 40 different countries and cities. Someone recently asked why we don't update our travel collection every year. We wish that we could, but it would be financially impossible to do so. And I have discovered that publishers don't update their publications every year, either, so sometimes we just have to wait.

We do want to provide the best possible service to you, so I would like to encourage you to request a travel guide if you find we don't have what you need. We will happily order it for you.

And, as I mentioned last year, many travel guides are only available in electronic form now. That's nice if you carry your electronic devices instead of books, but we will continue to update our travel guides in hard copy for as long as you want them that way.

Bon Voyage!

NEW Summer Hours

Please note the changes from previous years!

Mon 6/16- Sat 8/2:

Mon-Thu 10am-6pm

Fri 10am-5pm

Sat 10am-1pm

Closed Sun

Sun 8/3-Sun 8/17:

Annual Summer Close

Mon 8/18 – Sun 8/31:

Mon-Thu 10am-6pm

Fri 10am-5pm

Sat 10am-1pm

Closed Sun

Tues 9/2: resume Fall Hours:

Mon-Thu 9am-7pm

Fri & Sat 9am-5pm

Sun 1-5pm

Holiday Closings:

Fri 7/4 – July 4th

Mon 9/1 – Labor Day



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ROLL THE SALON AND PROGRAM CREDITS!

Please make it a point to let these generous businesses, organizations, and individuals know how much their investment in the Athenaeum's 2013-14 program season meant to you! Vincent J. Buonanno; Dr. Joseph A. Chazan; Kate and Arthur Chute; City Kitty Veterinary Care for Cats; Tripp Evans and Ed Cabral; Jodi L. Glass and COMMUNISONG; the Gertrude N. Goldowsky and Seebert J. Goldowsky Foundation; James Brayton Hall; Hope Club; Brian Jones; Allen Kurzweil and Françoise Dussart; M&S Rare Books, Inc; nickynichtern.com; The Pearle W. & Martin M. Silverstein Foundation; The Peck Building; Andrew Raftery and Ned Lochaya; RI Council for the Humanities; RI State Council on the Arts; Susan Jaffe Tane; Variable Data Printing; vintagepens.com; Yankee Travel; and several friends of the Athenaeum who wish to remain anonymous.

Thanks also to our presenting partners: AS220; The Big Read, National Endowment for the Arts; Brown Bookstore; Brown University Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies; Cable Car Cinema; Charles H. Watts II History and Culture of the Book Program, John Carter Brown Library; Community MusicWorks; FirstWorks; Fleet Library at RISD; John Hay Library; John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage; John Russell Bartlett Society; Museum of Art RISD; Not About the Buildings; Pot au Feu; Providence Department of Arts, Culture + Tourism; Providence Preservation Society; Providence Public Library Special Collections; RI Council for the Humanities; RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School; RI Public Radio; RI State Council on the Arts; Roger Williams National Memorial; Southside Community Land Trust; Tomaquag Museum; Trinity Repertory Company; Writers-in-the-Schools RI; and Yellow Peril Gallery.

And we salute our indefatigable as well as supremely able and affable Program Support Committee volunteers, brilliantly led by Board Member Grace Farmer: Ron Bartolini, David Berman, Adele Bourne, Dolores Connelly, Barbara Dunney, Peggy Edwards, Carl Farmer, Ellen Goodlin, Don Harper, Lucia Huntley, Emily Kugler, Lucy Ann Lepreau, Elsie Morse, Jack Nolan, Ray Olson, Peggy Peckham, Lisa Popitz, Lynn Sanchez, Cynthia Shattuck, Regina White. And for assistance in keeping everyone up to the minute on cultural happenings around town, sincere thanks to our dedicated enews volunteers Nick Fox and Rose Jermusyk!



Athenaeum activities are made possible in part by a grant from the RI State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the RI General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Athenaeum programs are made possible through major funding support from the RI Council for the Humanities, an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



THE OWLET

News from The Children's Library

SUMMER 2014

by Lindsay Shaw, Children's Librarian

With a sigh of relief we've said farewell to the long, lingering winter and we welcome the long, warm days of summer!

Despite the ice and snow we were as busy as ever in the Children's Library with story hours, films, critter visits (including an elegant chicken named Lindsay!), and a series of exceptional musical programs. Thank you to all the families who braved the elements and joined us for these lively events.

This summer in the Children's Library we are presenting the first ever *Folk and Fairy Tale Quest* summer reading challenge! Pick up your passports and see how many countries around the globe and in Fairyland that you can visit this summer. For each story you read we will stamp your passport and place a pin on a map locating the tale's country of origin. At the end of the summer we will count your passport stamps and award the prizes!



Ms. Zarafa's story and craft hour

The infant and toddler story times will continue on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10:30 am, with one change: from 6/12 through 7/31 and the last two weeks of August, the Thursday story time will meet at the Gladys Potter Park (also known as the "baby park") on Humboldt Avenue in Providence. In the event of rain we will meet in the Children's Library.

Ms. Z's Story hour for children ages three and up will resume later in the autumn.

Thank you to all of the friendly organizations who partnered with us to create children's programs that were educational, entertaining and above all FUN! The Roger Williams Park Zoo: Our Big Back Yard and the Zoo Mobile; RI Philharmonic Music School; the students from Opera at Brown University; Providence Children's Film Festival; and Trinity Repertory Company.

Happy Summer!



Little peeps with a friend from the Roger Williams Park Zoo Mobile



Nature exploration and play



Jump! ballet dancers in the stacks