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NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM

SUPPORT THE ATHENÆUM BY CELEBRATING!

Friends, members, lend me your ears: we have survived one tough fundraising year only to enter a tougher one. In response, we ask for your continued investment, and we promise - and will deliver - a high yield on that investment: excellent books, exceptional programs, unsurpassed service - and festive ways to support the library! FUNdraising events are an essential part of our development plan, we craft them carefully to stand out from mundane money-raisers. We hate to come to you in May having fallen short of our income goals, so please give these uniquely Athenaeum events priority on your calendar - invite friends, too - you'll raise not only support but your spirits as well!

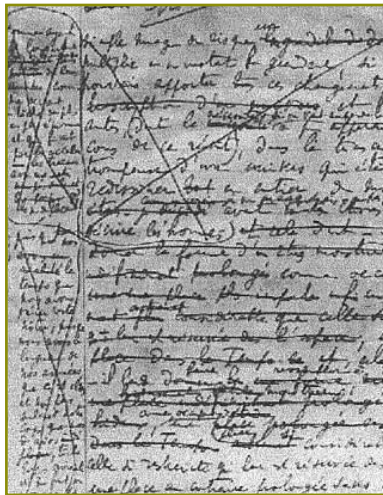
Thanks to Fall Season Sponsor Butterfield, butterfieldprovidence.com, for support of these events.

PROUSTFEST!

On November 14, 1913, after much travail, Marcel Proust finally published *Swann's Way*, first in the series of seven novels that would comprise *In Search of Lost Time*, his life's work. This fall we honor the 95th anniversary of that original hard-won triumph of publication with a two-part celebration, *Proustfest!*

Friday, November 14, 5 - 7pm, we host a celebratory Salon, *Proust and His Publishers*, at the Athenaeum, free and open to the public. Noted literary historian Anka Muhlstein details the 15-year saga of publishing the series, complicated by a world war, constant re-editing of the text, the ailing writer's habit of sleeping all day and working all night, and then his death - with six volumes still to go! Did the publisher go mad? Come find out!

On Sunday, November 16, 4 - 6pm, at the Music Mansion, 88 Meeting Street in Providence, we present *Music and Wine from the World of Marcel Proust*, a concert by The Aurea Ensemble plus a Champagne tasting, to benefit the Athenaeum. Aurea's musicians



A page of Proust's manuscript



Proust (back row, 3rd from left) and friends celebrate.

and actors weave selections from Ravel, Fauré, Franck, and others whose compositions influenced Proust, with passages from his writing that highlight music's essential role in his book (a recurring musical theme unites characters

across generations), and his life (composers were among his friends and lovers). As he loved to order Champagne all around at the Ritz, Campus Fine Wines introduces sparkling wines he would have loved to lavish on friends. French hors d'oeuvres by Blackstone Caterers round out this elegant entertainment. Space is limited to 75 people - don't delay! Tickets are \$75 and MUST be purchased by November 1!

Could there be a more delightful way to support the Athenaeum, your center for all things Proust?



Charles Dickens dreaming of festivities at the Athenaeum.

HOLIDAY HIGH SPIRITS!

Join us Wednesday, December 3, 7 - 9pm at the Athenaeum, to warmly welcome upcoming winter holidays - and support the Athenaeum! Enjoy Dickens, lively music, delicious food, and a Port tasting, too! At our final event of 2008, actor Robb Dimmick conjures the world of Dickens with readings from *A Christmas Carol*, fiddlers extraordinaire Cathy Clasper-Torch and Mike Fischman (who last brought down the house at our Robert Burns Birthday Celebration) play spirited accompaniment, Blackstone Caterers serve seasonally sensational appetizers, and Campus Fine Wines pours a variety of Port wines to toast the merriment! Space is limited to 75 people, tickets are \$75 per person and MUST be purchased by November 15! Proceeds benefit the Athenaeum. Generously sponsored by Hegeman & Company Fine Jewelry, hegemanandco.com.



THE OWLET

News From The Children's Library
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2008

NOVEMBER

Want to know what to do with left over Halloween candy? Bring it to the Children's Library to be saved for our new Candy House workshop in December!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8 AT 2:30PM

Fun with Felting Workshop with Nicky Visser and her daughter Rosa. Using brightly colored naturally dyed wool we will learn the basic technique of wet felting, a craft and skill that is sure to come in useful for the creation of holiday gifts and decorations.

Ages 7 and up and adults. Limit 12. \$8 material fee per person. Early RSVP an absolute must!

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 4PM

Hawk Hill: Our friends from the Audubon Society of RI will host an exciting story hour program about birds of prey! Possible special guest star: a live hawk! Ages 3-7 with an adult.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AT 2:30PM

The Tom Turkey Workshop with Nancy Whitcomb. Each year Nancy shares this terrific Thanksgiving craft tradition, guaranteed to thrill the grandparents and wow the aunts and uncles at the holiday table!

Ages 3 and up with an adult. Limit 12.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 4PM

Get the Whole Story at Whole Foods! Thanks to Bonnie Freschette at Whole Foods we been invited to share our story hour once a month at the market! The Fawns' story hour will be held in the Café at Whole Foods Market on North Main Street.

Ages 3 and up with an adult.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 5:30PM

Family Movie Night: *Meet the Robinsons*

Come to the library for an evening adventure with the wacky Robinson family! As usual, pizza, Hoodsies, and juice boxes will be available for your dining pleasure.

Ages 5 and up with an adult. Limit 15.

\$5 snack fee per child (adults free). RSVP a must.

Happy Thanksgiving!

DECEMBER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 AT 9:30AM

Opera in the Morning! Once again Opera at Brown will delight us with an opera designed for the young and the young at heart. This year is very special because not only will they present an adaptation of the Frog Prince but they will have a chamber orchestra in attendance as well.

Because of the size of this production, it will be held at the Grant Recital Hall at Brown University. There is a slight possibility that the reservation of the recital hall may be changed so please RSVP with your telephone number in the event that we need to call with an alternate date.

FREE! All Ages (young children must be accompanied by an adult). Limited Space. RSVP a must!!!

*The Grant Recital Hall is behind the Orwig Music Center on the corner of Hope Street and 1 Orchard Place.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 4PM

Candy House Workshop and Fundraiser! Thanks to the inspiration and thoughtful efforts of our good friend Marcy Wemple we are able to offer the opportunity to make charming candy houses! Complete with cookies, candy, and of course frosting. Designed with little hands in mind, the construction will be as much fun as eating will be! Dress for a mess!

Ages 3-10 with an adult (volunteers needed to assist).

\$5 per child. Limit 25. RSVP by 12/6 a must!!!! Please call to cancel if unable to attend, there will be a waiting list.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12 AT 5:30PM

Family Movies Night: Jim Hensen's Muppet adaptation of Russell Hoban's *Emmet Otter's Jug-band Christmas*

Pizza, Hoodsies, juiceboxes, and some candy-canes too!

Ages 5 and up with an adult. Limit 15.

\$5 snack fee per child (adults free). RSVP a must!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 AT 2:30PM

Recycled Bookends: Bookends make a wonderful holiday gift for friends or relatives who love books. Using painting and collage techniques we will jazz-up our old library bookends, creating a great gift and helping the environment, too! GO GREEN!

Ages 3 and up with an adult. Limit 12. RSVP a must!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 4PM

Whole Foods Story Hour: Whole Foods Market North Main Street, Providence. Ages 3 and up with an adult.

STORY HOURS

BEAR CUBS - TUESDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM

Songs, rhymes, and clapping games for the very young. Infants to age 2.

FAWNS - WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS AT 4PM

Stories, songs, and craft activities for children.

An exciting new opportunity! Whole Foods Market on North Main St. has offered to host our Story Hour at the market once a month.

Dates so far are 11/19 and 12/17 at 4PM.

Ages 3 and up with an adult.

CHIPMUNKS - THURSDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM

Songs, rhymes, stories, and craft activities. Infants to age 2.

SATURDAY MORNING MOVIES AT 10:30

(running time approx. 40-60 minutes) Ages 3 and up.

11/8 *There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly and Other Stories...*

11/15 *Curious George Rides a Bike and Other Stories...*

11/22 *Hello Kitty Tells Fairy Tales*

11/29 *Pete's a Pizza and Other Stories...*

12/6 *Madeline the Best Episodes Ever*

12/13 *Children's Stories from Africa*

12/20 *Trust Thomas and other Stories*

NO MOVIES 12/27 & 1/3/09

BIG HUGS ALL AROUND! Each year at this time, as the days grow short and cold, I meditate on the moments here in the Children's Library that reflect our membership's commitment to community and family. So many of you enrich our experience by volunteering your time and talent to assist with children's programs and support us by faithfully attending them.

Like Leo Lionni's Frederick, the mouse who warmed his comrades all winter with his stories of the warm summer, Nancy Whitcomb and I look back and thanks to your efforts, are warmed by many wonderful memories of a lively year in the Children's Library. Thank you and Happy Holiday from Lindsay!

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Don't let the economic downturn put a crimp in your style - you are a member of The Providence Athenaeum! For a mere \$15 a month for a household membership and \$13 for an individual, you have a plethora of opportunities which are yours for the taking. Books - old and new, fiction or non, light or heavy - are yours to borrow. Films of all sorts await your selection. Check out the newly released or your favorite classics - dip into the foreign collection or a PBS mini-series. Then there are the CDs to liven up your morning and mellow your mood in the evening. And included in the package there are the Friday Salons where you can chat with friends and indulge in hors d'oeuvres and wine, and then listen and converse with presenters from the famous to those still under-the-radar. As if this wasn't enough, at least one other extraordinary program will be offered each month. The children also have their own program schedule. Visit the children's site at providenceathenaeum.org to see the opportunities for your youngest to oldest. The Children's Library is rich in colorful story books as well as the latest chapter books and films. Along with story hours and movie nights there will develop the roots of wonderful memories of early years at the Athenaeum. All of this encased in a wonderful 19th century jewel of a building - it's reassuring to know that some investments don't depreciate!

Alayne Barnicoat

A REDWOOD LIBRARY EXHIBIT - FEATURING AN ATHENÆUM BOOK!



Peter Harrison, Gentleman

Our Newport sister, The Redwood Library and Athenaeum, has a fascinating exhibit on display through November, *Peter Harrison: The Gentleman's Library*. Librarian Elliott Caldwell, who spent months researching Harrison's book collection, describes the exhibit as "an attempt to define Peter Harrison (1716-75), America's first architect and the architect of the Redwood, through his library."

Harrison was a man of means with an enviable library; sadly, on the eve of the American Revolution in 1775, it was destroyed by a Patriot mob. Only a sketchy inventory of his books survived. Caldwell's arduous research in the Redwood's Original and Special Collections turned up some of the same books owned by Harrison, which Caldwell used to recreate part of the lost library for this exhibition. The most prominent book on display is the beautiful *Eboracum, or the History and Antiquities of the City of York* by Francis Drake; this volume was loaned by your very own Providence Athenaeum! We were delighted to be able to contribute to this show, and hope that our members will take a trip to Newport to see it - it's an especially relevant sojourn this fall as we start our program series *The Once and Future Library!* The Redwood is the oldest lending library in the country, the oldest library building in continuous use in the country, and another rare treat for book and library lovers!

A NOTE FROM CAROL TATIAN, REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

Carol Tatian and Kieran Ayton, the Reference staff at the Providence Athenaeum, would like to welcome you to our corner of the library. We are here to answer any question you might have, library-wise or otherwise. We're even happy to play Stump the Librarian, so bring us your questions, simple or complex!

Over the summer, we completed projects to keep us running smoothly for the coming year. We now have access to Contemporary Literary Criticism online, so were able to give our 194+ volumes (9 and ½ shelves!) to a new home, a grateful high school in Smithfield. We then dusted and shifted the reference collection to make space for new reference volumes as they arrive.

Once we have exhausted the information in our collection, especially on Genealogy, RI History, and House History and Architecture, Kieran and I refer interested patrons to the RI Historical Society Library, the Providence City Archives, the Providence Public Library, the RI State Archives, and the Providence Preservation Society. Over the summer we visited all these libraries to meet their librarians and view their collections. We now have library guides with contact information that we can give to people who need referrals.

We continue to receive new reference material almost daily. One of my favorites is the *Atlas of Human Migration* (Q R 304 A84), showing the "epic story of civilizations and their movement - of ideas and cultures that travel, and of people leaving home in search of a different and better way of life." For any family with a prospective college student, the U.S. Department of Education annually sends us *Funding Education beyond High School; the Guide to Federal Aid, 2008-2009*. Free copies are available in the Reference Room. We've also received the 2008 edition of the *College Handbook* (Q R 378.1 C686), "an easy way to find and compare schools - FAST!" It includes every accredited community college, college, and university in the U.S.

ATTENTION, RISD LIBRARY BORROWERS!

Are you an Athenaeum member with current borrowing privileges at RISD? If so, please stop at the circulation desk to have your barcode added to your card. Also, the number of RISD books allowed has been increased to five items for four weeks.

"PROTECTING THE PAST"

Our Collections Librarian Kate Wodehouse has been named to the Steering Committee of "Protecting the Past - Rhode Island", an initiative to develop a disaster response plan for statewide cultural heritage institutions. The project is federally funded with a \$40,000 "Connecting to Collections" grant by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, in response to a joint proposal from the RI Office of Library and Information Services and the RI State Archives. Kate joins representatives from around the state to create this essential protocol.

WE'RE PROUD TO PARTNER!

The Athenaeum has served as a place for citizens learn from one another since its earliest days. Our programming, in particular the Salon Series, reflects that heritage. So we quickly said "Yes!" when two organizations approached us this summer about collaborative programs on the salon model.



Photo: Rufus Abdullah

Storyteller Valerie Tutson

The RI Foundation's Expansion Arts Program supports sustainability in small, culturally-specific, community-based arts organizations. This program year we will present a series of four Salons with EAP members, starting with Valerie Tutson of RI Black Storytellers on Friday, November 28; in spring we'll feature ECAS Theater, RI's only Spanish-language theater; Oasis International, serving the African community in Providence;

and Tomaquag Indian Memorial Museum in Exeter, focused on the history of native peoples New England. We hope to offer some field trips as well! RIF Community Philanthropy Officer Daniel Kertzner explained the RIF's outreach to the Athenaeum, "We're interested in collaboration as a way to bolster the capacity of these organizations by helping create interest in them beyond their communities and increasing awareness of cultural traditions among the general public. We're excited that the Athenaeum audience is one that these groups don't usually reach. The salon format in particular lends itself to people getting to know these organizations and the people who make the work happen. That kind of engagement is a great model."

We also heard from Rosie Branson Gill and Meg Rotzel, students in Brown's graduate program in the public humanities, creators of *Art+History*, an exhibition / program series on the processes of interpreting history. Three artists will make site-specific work influenced by the John Nightingale-Brown House and garden, offering a model to historic sites and arts organizations for incorporating new voices and audiences in creating narratives about our shared pasts. The Athenaeum is co-sponsoring three salon-style lunches where the artists will discuss their works-in-progress. Says Rosie, "Working with the Athenaeum was an easy decision. The Salon Series is a hugely successful, quality program for adults, and our topics – the production of history and knowledge, rethinking preservation – seemed a good fit for Athenaeum members. It all works together to create a collaboration greater than the sum of its parts!" Lunches are at noon at the Nightingale Brown House, 357 Benefit Street (entrance on Williams Street). Next up is Jill Sosberg-Ackerman, October 12, who is interested in how the combination of places and things extend or alter meaning; she will develop sculptures that ruminate on, or reveal material transitions within the house. On November 17, Kianga Ford explores the dynamics of contemporary social identity, proximity, intimacy, and relationship; she will develop varied narratives for the house and garden. Bring a lunch and join us; dessert, drinks, and the program are free!

MAKING PROGRAMS POSSIBLE!

One of our goals at the Athenaeum is to bring people together, creating relationships that connect across organizations, neighborhoods, ages, occupations, and interests. A key component of our community building mission is the network of small businesses that support our programs through sponsorships and donations. We are especially grateful in this uncertain economic time for the continued generosity of our fall sponsors and donors, including Marian Clark, Benefit Street Antiques; Kerri Quinn Jaffe and Karen Conley, Blackstone Caterers; Jane Flowers, Borders; Mindy Matouk, Butterfield; Greg Matta and Liz Steely, Campus Fine Wines; Matthew Bird, The Curatorium; Richard Hegeman, Hegeman & Co. Fine Jewelry; Kas DeCarvalho Business Law; Dan Siegel, M&S Rare Books; Jillian Siqueland, Residential Properties; Dr. Jodi Glass, Audiologist; Daniel Kertzner, RI Foundation; Matthew Johnson, risdworks; Nina Tegu, Studio Hop; Lisa Nofi, Variable Data Printing; and Candy Adriance, Yankee Travel. We hope that you will make them and their businesses part of your network, too – and be sure to let them know how much you appreciate their contributions!

A CELEBRATION IN GRATITUDE

On September 8 we held our Annual Major Donors' Reception at the breathtaking Botanical Center at Roger Williams Park. As the sun set over the park, guests wandered the frond-filled paths, admired the myriad plantings (and the koi pond) in the soaring greenhouse-style structure, and enjoyed delectable hors d'oeuvres and an array of wines, generously donated by Blackstone Caterers and Campus Fine Wines respectively. The centerpiece of the evening was a memorable concert by Athenaeum favorites, the Providence String Quartet (aka our "house band"), graciously donated by Kin Howland and Meredith Swan. Our thanks once again to all those who gave so generously to the Athenaeum, including those individuals and businesses who helped us show our donors how much we appreciate them!



Photograph by John Ciafalo

Glamorous Gals at a Recent Salon: sponsor Jillian Siqueland and presenter Janet Carlson, author of *Quick, Before the Music Stops*, a ballroom dance memoir.