

May/June 2014



SAVE THE DATE
Guild of Volunteers' Annual Meeting and Luncheon
June 3, 10:15 a.m.
Bedford Village Inn featuring a Currier Art Center Panel Discussion
Invitations to come

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Spotlight

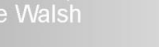
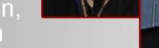
Zimmerman House Class 2014

On February 20, training began for a new class of Z-House docents aided by a dedicated group of docent mentors. Upon graduation, the class will receive a warm welcome into the Currier's Guild of Volunteers.



"I'm thrilled to have a new class of Zimmerman House docents on board. These students bring a rich variety of professional experience and personal interest to volunteering that I know will enhance tour programs. Most importantly, this group is committed to providing an excellent experience for visitors that is, I believe, our greatest goal. They also seem to intuitively understand the value of strong working relationships with fellow docents and with security. I know these individuals will be a great addition to our dedicated and talented docent corps."

- Jane Seney



The 2014 Z-House class members are: Brad Archambault, Wayne Cardoza, George Comtois, Laurie Conrad, Emily Cook, Karen Cronin, Pat Moreinis Dodge, Diana Godin, Dianne Grattan, Fran Hall, Randall Harris, Beth Kimberly, Susanne Larkham, Arlene Letourneau, Barbara Liesenbein, Kathryn Massey, Sandy Minnick, Jeanne Smith-Cripps, Elizabeth Volpone, Diane Walsh

Z-House Class of 2014 by the Numbers

20
Class members

Currier Museum docents **5**

3 Retired librarians

Have art-related college degrees **5**

15 Retired

Live near the Seacoast **3**

5 Live in Manchester



The Wearin' o' the Green

Special Projects and Ambassadors volunteers met on St. Patrick's Day in the Winter Garden Café for their monthly lunch meeting. Green was the color of the day. It was a pleasure to meet the members of the group who shared wonderful stories of museum service after years of countless volunteer hours. Discussion then looked to the future and how this group can continue to enrich the Currier's mission. Lunch meetings take place once a month in the Currier café. All Special Projects and Ambassadors volunteers are encouraged to join us and share ideas. For the next meeting date or more information, please email Fran Nutter-Upham at frannu@gmail.com.



Pictured, left to right, rear: Anne Milne, Dot Farley, Fran Gray, Fran Nutter-Upham, Barbara Shepler; front: Pat Goss and Flo Fitzgerald.

Special Projects Report

Many thanks to those of you who have helped with various programs in recent months, including a busy February vacation week with more than 800 people attending. Volunteers also labeled videos and books in the Guild closet located in the yellow classroom, and helped out at the Heart of the Arts fundraising event. Special Projects, as well as Ambassadors, are needed for Family Saturday, Story Time in the Galleries and Currier After Hours. Check the [Volgistics](#) schedule for openings.

Lynn Thomson
Guild Liaison and Associate Educator for Adult and Family Audiences
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**Guild of Volunteers
2013 - 2014
Executive Committee**

Executive Chair:

Barbara Shepler

Executive Vice Chair:

Dennie Dyer

Treasurer:

Angela Hoke

Secretary:

Richard Russell

Committee Chairs

Guild Communications:

Judy McKenna &

Pauline Bogaert

Guild Meetings and

Programs:

Nancy Johnson

Guild Membership:

Nancy Baker

Museum Docents:

Roberta Lavey

Zimmerman House

Docents:

Victoria Duffy

Museum Shop:

Sandra Chandonnet

Library:

Charlotte DeBell

**The Currier Guild of
Volunteers newsletter**

is published 5 times a year.

Editors: Judy McKenna,

Peeps Bogaert; Design &

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Staff Advisor: Karen

Graham. Special thanks to

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McKenna, and Sandy

Minnick for photos in this

issue.

Executive Chair Report

Closing Thoughts

In June, I cheerfully conclude chairmanship of the Guild with appreciation for the outstanding volunteers and staff at the Currier Museum of Art. I honor the contributions and commitment of such fine colleagues and friends. Please accept my gratitude for the goodwill and good humor with which each one has fulfilled the creative, mundane and repetitive tasks designed to maintain this valuable community. Thanks for the clear insights each committee chair has contributed to our deliberations, and to everyone who has said 'yes' to the Guild.

I readily relinquish leadership to our ably prepared Executive Vice Chair Dennie Dyer, who knows this Guild to its finest detail. Dennie's longstanding volunteer service and Guild experience are a great asset.

Truly, I love this place. Thank you for being part of that love.

'Any day at the museum is a great day.'

Barbara Shepler

Executive Chair

Currier Guild of Volunteers

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Executive Vice Chair Report

Guild Executive Committee Adds New Chair

The Guild Executive Committee is the interface between volunteers and the Currier. The committee is made up of chairs that support the work of the Guild. For example, they produce newsletters, plan meetings and collect membership information. They act as representative voices for different groups of volunteers, such as museum docents, Zimmerman House docents, and Museum Shop. Over the years, chair positions on the executive committee have changed as the number of volunteers working in different areas increases and/or decreases.

Due to museum staff responsibilities and technology changes, the Special Projects/Ambassadors Chair has been eliminated. However, the need to represent all volunteers on the executive committee continues to exist. As a result, the committee has replaced this position with a Representative-at-Large Chair. This chair has no responsibilities to fill special project jobs, but will

represent volunteers who are currently not represented by another Guild chair. This will include Ambassadors; volunteers who work solely on Special Projects; library volunteers; volunteers who help at the Currier Art Center; and volunteers involved in future activities. This position will be on the slate of candidates to be elected at the annual meeting.

This change was made to ensure all volunteers have a specific voice on the executive committee. As a volunteer, this means you may be represented by more than one chair person. Volunteers with ideas, comments and concerns may address them with their specific representative chair, or with any executive committee member listed in the Enews.

Dennie Dyer

Executive Vice-Chair

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*Zimmerman House Docent Report***Refreshing the Z-House**

I am delighted to welcome 20 new enthusiastic Zimmerman House docents to our ranks. It's been a pleasure getting to know them as they discover the Z-House and its architect. Their keen and thoughtful observations reveal how unique the house is -- everyone sees it a little differently.

Not only did Jane Seney's engaging nine-week training prepare new docents to give tours, it was also a boon to seasoned docents who want to focus more on the visitor experience. She taught us to be open, empathic and curious, and to ask questions that connect to "big ideas" instead of simply delivering information.

Occasional brown bag lunches extended the training by bringing in guest facilitators. Fran Hall reprised her excellent "Mindset Matters" presentation, and Director of Interpretation and Audience Engagement Leah Fox led an exercise in dealing gracefully with difficult situations.

Several current docents volunteered to be mentors. Pam Harvey, Angela Hoke, Nancy McGaan, Judy Ransmeier, Jo Russavage, Jim Townsend, Marilyn Watson and I helped support and encourage new docents in training and will share their graduation tours. We will also be available to answer questions as they begin giving tours on their own.

A graduation celebration will take place at

the Zimmerman House May 15 at 5:30 p.m. As the season gets underway, all Z-House docents are invited to come enjoy the beauty of the garden and meet our new colleagues.

While we're there, we'll have a chance to see the new air conditioning condenser tucked behind the shrubbery on the east end of the house. What we won't see is the sleek new air handler that now occupies the space above the utility room. All new insulated ductwork, discreetly concealed by the slatted screens, will distribute cool air to the Garden Room, Guest Room and Workspace. The light openings along the gallery will once again serve as air vents. No wood was harmed in the installation of this system even though it was hidden from view. The only visible interior change is a copper condensate pipe leading to the floor drain in the utility room.

At last the air conditioning contemplated by the Zimmermans and prepared for by the 1988 restoration team has finally arrived. Many thanks and great respect goes to Director of Facilities Operations Nelson Goddard for shepherding this project with such assiduous care.

Here's to a cool 2014.

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New docent training class



Z-House docents and volunteers gather at the Boston Typewriter Concert



*Museum Docent Report***Lines Between Work and Play**

Just how busy have the past few months been for docents at the Currier? Certainly, we have spent our meetings in many fruitful and diverse ways. For example, at one meeting we had lively conversation for close to an hour on the logistics of school tours and the best ways to approach them. At another meeting, Art Center Director Bruce McColl led a tour of the exhibit *Transforming Lives Through Art: 75 Years at the Currier Art Center*. This gave us an opportunity to reflect on both current and past students who have attended the center and the great diversity of the arts and crafts taught there. Docents who had never been to the school also explored the Pearl Street facility with Bruce.

Later in the month we were delighted to review some of the items in the May Gruber bequest.

Additionally, through the continuing generosity of the Van Otterloo family, the Currier has two more paintings on loan from their extensive collection of Dutch and Flemish art. These works not only increase the depth of the museum collection, but also allow docents new and exciting tour options. Yet another learning opportunity we enjoyed was viewing a video of Susan Strickler interviewing James Aponovich as he worked on his painting *Parrot*.

Tulips/Saco River Valley for raffle at the Currier gala.

In March, docents visited Mass MoCA. Divided into two tour groups led by the museum's very capable and enthusiastic docents, we saw art that we loved (James Middlebrook's *Falling Water*) and art that made us think (Izhar Patkin's survey of works *Izhar Patkin: The Wandering Veil*). We also enjoyed art that was comfortable (Guillaume LeBon's *Under My Shoe*) and art that posed questions (Darren Waterson's installation *Filthy Lucre*, a re-imagining of John McNeill Whistler's *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room*).

In addition to the above activities, docents helped out during a busy and well-attended school vacation week by conducting tours for school groups and the public. We also provided help at the following events: a kick-off for the Young Professional Group; theatre KAPOW's play reading of *Red*; two Alzheimer Cafés; and Currier After Hours.

How can a Currier Museum docent ever be bored?

Roberta Lavey
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James Middlebrook's "Falling Water" inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's house by the same name



A Conversation with . . . Leah Fox



Leah is from a small town in Rhode Island overlooking Narragansett Bay. She graduated from Clark University, where she studied art history and psychology. After graduating, she worked concurrently as an assistant at the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University and as a case manager in a group residence for men with developmental disabilities. She received a graduate degree in Museum Studies at John F. Kennedy University in Berkeley, Calif., where she met her husband Martin. She moved to Manchester nine years ago to work at the Currier. When not working as Director of Interpretation and Audience Engagement, Leah enjoys being outdoors and playing with daughter Emmy.

My favorite piece of art is...William Stanley Haseltine's [Rocks at Narragansett](#), of course.

The art I like best is...Definitely modernist photography. I love pausing to take a look at the details of the world around us -- shapes, shadows, patterns -- manmade or natural. These photographers broke new ground, so I enjoy seeing these often-abstract images outside of their original contexts and what they represent.

If I weren't an art educator I would

be...I am thrilled with the career I've chosen. I am a firm believer in the power of art as a tool for people to learn about themselves and the world around them. A little secret: I'd love to have a side gig as a drummer in a band -- an interest sparked back in school that I haven't shaken. Anyone want to start a band?

My least favorite type of art is...I find that any time I don't like a particular type of art, it is because I don't understand it well -- the process, the artist's intention, the context. Once I learn more about it, I typically come away with more appreciation, or at least more questions.

The best museum I've ever visited was...Can I say the Currier? I love that our museum is so committed to exploring creative ways to engage visitors in participatory experiences. I'm thrilled to work in a museum that encourages experimentation.

I'm most proud of...Hearing the museum filled with the sounds of students eager to share their thoughts about an artwork. I like watching people enjoy a new acquisition or exhibition, and watching a family connect with each other to make memories through art. Thank you to all of our volunteers for being such an important part of this experience.

Continued on p.7

Museum Shop Report

Spring Discounts

Don't forget to 'shop the Shop' for Mother and Father days. Staff and volunteers will receive a 30 percent discount from May 4 to 11, and again from June 8 to 15. Discounts will not apply to sale items. Members will receive an extra 10 percent discount during May on scarves and on ties during June.

Come see the new Frank Lloyd Wright merchandise. On the back wall are puzzles, coloring cards, playing cards and more. In

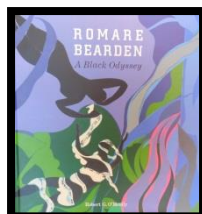
the front case is jewelry inspired by the distinctive designs of Wright homes.

New items relating to the Currier's exhibit *Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey* include CDs, DVDs, children and adult books, T-shirts and colorful totes constructed from recycled materials. Don't have time to read Homer's *Odyssey*? Discover CliffsNotes on Homer's epic, which is under 100 pages.

Welcome to our new shop

volunteers, E.J. Warren and Meghan Cochran. Farewell to shop volunteer and Z-House docent Richard Russell, who has relocated to North Carolina and will be greatly missed by all.

Sandra Chandonnet
Museum Shop Chair
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A Conversation with . . . continued from p.6

My most memorable moment visiting a museum was... Last summer when our family visited Mass MoCA. We had been before when Emmy was three. It was a bit of a challenge at that age, but we enjoyed the Sol LeWitt retrospective. Returning a year later, our daughter led us up to the LeWitts and proudly showed us around the exhibit. I was thrilled to see how comfortable she was in the space. Perhaps we have a future docent among us.

A quote I live by is... My father told me, "There is nothing in the world you can't accomplish if you put your mind to it and try hard enough." I didn't think about it much then. Later, I thought about this and it influenced my excitement for embracing challenge and exploring new places and ideas. I don't think my father knew how that would resonate with me in such a profound way.

Staff News

Director of Development Christine Louis has accepted a position at Tilton School in Tilton. While at the Currier she led the way in growing all areas of contributed income -- from handling the annual funds for the museum and art center to providing program and exhibition support. She helped launch the Fuller Legacy Society and has increased membership in the Currier Society. Christine's last day was April 11, the day of the Heart of the Arts fundraiser for which she provided support.

Ryan Sanborn has been hired as a guest services representative and will work primarily on weekends. He is a history student at University of New Hampshire, Manchester, with an interest in culture and museum studies. He's a member of "Milling Around," a coed a cappella group at UNH, and has been a Boy Scout volunteer.

Corey Sylvia has been hired as a Winter Garden Café busser and came to us from

Easter Seals. He currently works Mondays and Fridays with his coach, Sam Souza. He works in the Easter Seals kitchen other weekdays. He has been a big help to the café's Executive Chef Joe Sylvester in prepping food, cleaning, bussing and dishwashing.

Jeff Valluzzi is a part-time security officer. Jeff recently returned to New Hampshire after spending the last few years in Baltimore, working as a security supervisor for the Baltimore Museum of Art. Jeff brings a great deal of prior museum security experience to the position, and is a welcome addition to the staff.

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Regional Museum Exhibitions of Interest**Guggenheim Museum**

New York City
"A Long Awaited Tribute: Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian House and Pavilion"
Ongoing

Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts

New York City
"Goya and the Altamira Family"
Now through Aug. 3

Museum of Fine Arts

Boston
"Boston Loves Impressionism"
Now through May 26

Museum of Modern Art

New York City
"Frank Lloyd Wright and the City: Density vs. Dispersal"
Now through June 1

Museum of Russian Icons

Clinton, Mass.
"The Tsars' Cabinet: Two Hundred Years of Russian Decorative Art under the Romanovs"
Now through May 24

Peabody Essex Museum

Salem, Mass.
"Golden Light: Selections from the Van Otterloo Collection"
Now through May 30

*Museum Seen***A Whimsical Look at Taliesin West**

In March, my husband and I visited Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio, Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Ariz., where Wright wintered between 1937 until his death in 1959. We were led down a path to a grand and multi-unit home nestled in the Sonoran Desert with views of the McDowell Mountains. Wright used local materials. We saw giant, almost boulder-size desert rocks, embedded in the concrete walls. The front of this expansive home blends into the desert and mountains, and features an angular pool. The house includes an architecture school, Wright's office, a cabaret theater, a music pavilion and a "kiva," a chamber built wholly or partly underground by Pueblo Indians. Living spaces are connected by pools, terraces, lawns, and stairways arranged at various angles and distances.

The original ceilings were made of canvas flaps attached to redwood beams, making tent-like structures. These canvas flaps continued to the ground on one side, creating an open-air effect. Raised during the day, they allowed wildlife to wander through the living area. Wright's wife pleaded with him to put up permanent walls. He had glass installed; however, he wanted a certain ceramic jar to remain in its place so a hole was cut in the glass window.



Wright had two beds. His architecture students knew if Wright was sleeping in the left bed, they could wake him to talk; if he was sleeping in the right bed, they could not disturb him.



He loved Chinese porcelain and brought pieces back from Asian trips and strategically placed pieces at transition points of Taliesin West.



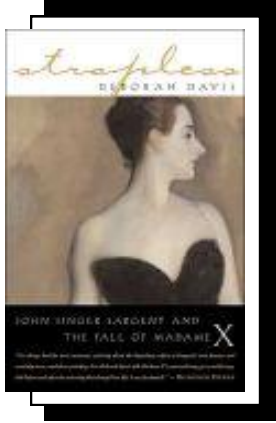
When designing a house, Wright would give the client his signature red tile to embed on one of the walls, if no changes were requested of his design. Of course, Taliesin West has a tile since it is Wright's own house. A residence in Pennsylvania called Kentuck Knob (also known as Hagan House) and the Guggenheim Museum have tiles. The Zimmerman House does not have one.



Wright's winter home, an architectural masterpiece, is well worth the visit.

- Sandy Minnick

Bookshelf

Strapless: John Singer Sargent and the Fall of Madam X

Loudly denounced as “indecent” and “scandalous” by the 1884 Paris Salon, John Singer Sargent’s portrait of Virginié Amelié Gautreau, entitled *Madame X*, was anything but the triumph he had hoped for. As Deborah Davis chronicles in *Strapless: John Singer Sargent and the Fall of Madame X*, the reception of the work was nothing short of a disaster for both the artist and his sitter.

Strapless provides the context for the most controversial and, ultimately, the most famous of Singer’s works. In his life-sized portrait of society belle Madame Gautreau, Singer presents her face in profile while her body, dressed in a chic black gown whose left jeweled strap has fallen off her shoulder in seemingly careless abandon, faces fully forward in what critics and public deemed an inappropriately seductive pose.

After the Salon, Sargent returned the portrait to his studio, repainted the offending strap in an upright position, and left for London and America to fulfill the few commissions he still had. Madame Gautreau retired for a time from *Belle Époque* Paris before then commissioning

three portraits by different artists in the hope of re-establishing her position as reigning society beauty. Unfortunately for her, these later portraits were met with indifference.

The juxtaposition of the rise and fall of Sargent and Amelié Gautreau makes for lively and interesting reading. From Amelié’s New Orleans childhood through her ascendance to the height of Parisian society and her final evolution into a middle-aged recluse, hers is a cautionary tale about the changing nature of the cult of beauty and celebrity. Sargent’s burgeoning career, temporarily sidetracked by Madame X, ultimately rebounded to one of international acclaim, positive proof of the changing nature of both artistic and moral sensibilities.

When John Singer Sargent turned 60, he sold Madame X to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for what would be the equivalent of \$5,000 in today’s currency. Since then viewers have extolled the virtues of the work and lauded the painter while the sitter has been all but forgotten.

- Liz Keroack

From the Library Corner

The Records of Robert M. Doty

Visitors to the Currier’s library will not only find an assortment of art related periodicals and books, but also hundreds of correspondences and printed material belonging to past Currier directors. As a volunteer, I have been responsible for the arrangement and description of the records of former Currier Director Robert M. Doty.

Doty served as the museum’s director from 1977 until he retired in 1987. The records from his ten-year term are significant archival materials, for they provide information about the museum’s daily activities, acquisitions, exhibitions, and fundraising campaigns throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Equally important are Doty’s correspondents, which included art museum leaders, private collectors, scholars, curators and artists.

My goal is to create accessible and detailed “finding aid” of Doty’s records. In the context of archival studies and management, finding aid is a technical term referring to a document that contains pertinent information regarding the material within a certain archive. Researchers and Currier personnel can use such an aid to know the size of a specific archive and decide whether it contains sources that would benefit their research. This multi-faceted aid will detail the scope of Doty’s materials within the Currier’s archives and provide information on his records, which will narrow the search for information.

Much like a work of art, Doty’s records should be collected, preserved, interpreted and made accessible to the public.

Rose Zevos King
Library and Curatorial Volunteer
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Robert Doty pictured with Lotte Jacobi and Lucille Zimmerman