

Onondaga historical association's HISTORY

OHA *highlights*

spring 2006

FIRST QUARTER • VOLUME 19 • NUMBER 1

ENRICHING
HISTORY
WITH ART:

Portraits

On March 18th a new exhibition, the first in a series, opened in the Conference Room Gallery at OHA. Entitled "Enriching History with Art: Portraits", the exhibit features portraits drawn from OHA's extensive fine art collection. Designed to show visitors how art can function as a historical document, subsequent exhibits in this series will feature themes such as Children, Landscape and Transportation.

Exhibit labels encourage visitors to look for historical clues that are gathered visually but also provide factual information on artists and subjects from OHA's records.

Artwork included in the exhibit, most by regional artists depicting local citizens, spans much of the 19th and 20th centuries (1809 to the 1980's). While oil paintings comprise the bulk of the exhibition, drawings, crayon portraits and wax miniatures are also included. Associated three-dimensional objects and documents add to the understanding of some portraits such as Native American moccasins, a letter from Sir Winston Churchill, and artist John Winter's palette and brushes.

Functioning as a kind of centerpiece to the exhibition, a life-sized portrait of Reuben Wood greets visitors. It is unusual in that it was painted by three of Central New York's most prominent landscape painters; James Cantwell, Fernando Carter and Henry Ward Ranger. The story circulated that as

-cont'd on back cover



An avid fisherman, Reuben Wood's portrait was painted in by three prominent landscape painters and features a detailed landscape background.

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Your Destination

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

It has been over five months since OHA suffered what was probably the most challenging crisis in its 143 year history, the Great October 2005 Water Main Break. We shared with you the great physical destruction wrought by the basement inundation in our last newsletter. Since that time, much has happened. The basement has been cleared of all debris from the flood. Work has begun on removal of mold covered and water compromised asbestos heating pipe insulation which will be replaced with currently acceptable materials. Layers of peeling lead-based paint compromised by hours of water immersion will be removed from the walls. The entire basement will be thoroughly cleaned, inspected and certified by a licensed laboratory and then all surfaces will be completely covered by a sealant, leaving OHA with an essentially "new" basement. Upon completion of this work, a new heating system and associated accessories will be installed as well as a completely new electrical service. The final act in this drama will be the installation of a new elevator which has just been ordered. Due to a long manufacturing lead-time, the final installation will not be completed until late July or early August. But then OHA will be whole again.

Response from our membership, the community at large, foundations and other funding sources has been very reassuring. We received \$7,500 almost immediately in unsolicited gifts and our Water Main Appeal in November produced \$25,000. We have currently launched a corporate appeal and another general appeal will be mailed at March month-end. OHA is very grateful for this demonstration of community support.

However, the negative impacts of this event (expenses, lost revenue, diversion of staff time

taken from other efforts, operations with diminished capacity, e.g. no elevator), coupled with other national events (Katrina with the resulting spike in oil prices causing cutbacks in school use of busses for field trips) and the long growing trend of elimination of operating support funding from the agenda of most funding sources and grant providers is bringing to a head an even more significant crisis for OHA. That is our ability to continue to identify and secure a sustainable source of operating revenue to support our service to our community. This issue has been building for a long time and has been discussed in many forums in the past. It is now reaching crisis proportions. Unless your OHA can generate a significant and substantial increase in overall community provided financial support for operational expenses, we will be forced to consider major changes to operations that would most likely lead to significantly reduced service to the community.

Your help is needed. Your continued as well as expanded personal financial support is critical. And we need your personal involvement as OHA ambassadors in the community to convince your friends, neighbors, business associates, employers and municipal representatives to support OHA financially. You know what OHA does for the community. We need you to help spread the word and generate financial support.

The Lions will thank you.



Paul H. Pflanz

IS PLANNED GIVING FOR YOU?

"But what do you mean, planned gift? Aren't all my gifts planned?"

Perhaps you plan your family's giving every year, to coincide with the tax and/or calendar year. But have you considered the benefits of making a truly "planned gift" to OHA... one that might benefit you as much as the Association? Options run the gamut, from a bequest to a charitable gift annuity to a charitable remainder trust and each has different tax and income implications. Oftentimes, planned giving is as easy as the stroke of a pen, by designating OHA as beneficiary of a life insurance policy or qualified retirement account.

For more information on making a planned gift with cash, appreciated stock, real estate or other assets, call Development Director Gary Melchiorre at 428-1864, ext. 314.



Guests mingle Under the Eye of Gambrinus on October 14th, 2005.



Above: A Lockheed Martin representative leads a tour for (from left) OHA Board member Christine Lopez, Vaughn Lang and OHA Board members Bill Burrows and Mary Elisabeth Lang at Our Glorious Workplaces, November 5th, 2005.



Judy Harris, playing Matilda Joslyn Gage, leads a group of "Ghostwalkers" in October, 2005.

Though our catastrophic water main break was the focus of our last issue, OHA's three great fall events: Under the Eye of Gambrinus, Ghostwalk and Our Glorious Workplaces, did happen right on schedule!

CORPORATE CARING MAKES HISTORY

Westlake Conservators, Ltd., The Dominick Falcon Insurance Agency and Plan & Print Systems, Inc. are the newest companies to join the ranks of OHA Corporate Members.

New Corporate Members can choose from one of three annual membership levels: \$250, \$500 and \$1,000. In return, Corporate Members receive recognition in OHA's quarterly newsletter and on its website. Corporate Members also receive discounts on various items including tickets to OHA's three major fundraising events.

For more information on becoming an OHA Corporate Member, call 428-1864, ext. 314.



Upper left inset: (left to right) OHA Board President Warren Young, Carl Bannar of Lockheed Martin and OHA Executive Director Paul Pflanz at the traditional presentation of an Our Glorious Workplaces commemorative plate designed especially for and generously donated to the event by Syracuse China Corp. Right: OHA Board member Lisa Hoeschele enjoys the event!



for Inspiration!

ENRICHING HISTORY WITH ART

-cont'd from front cover- James Cantwell, the primary artist, painted Wood's portrait, Fernando Carter told Cantwell that he wished to contribute to the painting. Then while both Cantwell and Carter were working on the painting, Ranger paid a visit to the artists. While in Cantwell's studio, Ranger applied his brush to the canvas and contributed to the final portrait. The Angler's Association of Syracuse donated the portrait to OHA in the early 20th century.

Reuben Wood was born in Greenbush, NY on December 10, 1822. At thirty, he moved to Syracuse. He owned a store on S. Salina St., which sold confectionery and fancy goods. Wood was a member of the First Baptist Church, where he served on the Board of Trustees until his death. However, Wood was most prominently known as a fisherman. He participated in many tournaments and was always a strong competitor at the State Sportsmen's Annual Conventions. He was also the president of the Onondaga Fishing Association, a predecessor to the Onondaga Anglers Association. Wood was an expert fly caster and proved it at the International Fisheries Exposition where he won first place in a fly casting contest for distance, delicacy, and accuracy; his cast was 108 feet. Although most known for his fishing knowledge and skill, Wood was a member of many organizations including Central City Lodge, the Central City Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Masonic Relief Association, the Knights Templar and the Sumner Corps, which named him honorary president just a week before his sudden death on February 16, 1884.

OHA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April 22, Tea & Sympathy: Women of the North Star Conspiracy. 1pm at the OHA Museum. Cost is \$5 per person.

July 10-14, July 24-28 & August 7-11, 2006 Kids Summer Break Camp: Playing in the Past. Ages 9-12, 8:30am to 4:30pm. Cost is \$125 per camper/non-member or \$100 per camper/member.

OHA 2006 Program Series: Curator Talks & Walks

April 23 Talk, Cultural Currents. 2pm at the OHA Museum. The history of arts and cultural activities in Syracuse.

June 4 Walk, An Abolitionist Amble. 2pm from the OHA Museum. A downtown tour of sites from the anti-slavery era.

History Highlights

Official quarterly newsletter of the Onondaga Historical Association

Subscription is available as a benefit of membership

Onondaga Historical Association chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Its programs are supported, in part, by funds provided by Onondaga County, New York State, the City of Syracuse and our members

J. Warren Young, President

Paul H. Pflanz, Executive Director

Onondaga Historical Association gratefully acknowledges Ansan Graphics for the printing services and Mark-Paul Serafini for the design and layout of the newsletter.

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Visit our website at:

www.cnyhistory.org

or email us at:

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A WORD OF THANKS

Historic Oakwood Cemetery Preservation Association has generously donated to our Water Disaster Appeal Fund. Given in honor of the 15th Anniversary of the founding of the HOCPA and coming from a "kindred spirit", the donation is especially appreciated. On July 15th, an anniversary picnic is planned by the association at the historic cemetery. For more information, call 446-7377.

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315.428.1864 Museum

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