



*Friends of Rockwood
Fall 2011*

You are invited

To the annual Friends of Rockwood

Family Holiday Party

Saturday, December 10th, 2011

5:30-8 PM

Museum tour at 5:00 PM

Enjoy Hors d'oeuvres, desserts and drinks

Tour the museum

Have photos taken with Santa

Bring your children, grandchildren and friends

Reservation Requested

RSVP by December 5th

info@friendsofrookwood.org

or

302-762-2075

Message from Philip Nord, Museum Director

At the museum we are gearing up for our annual Holiday Open House, putting lights on the trees, decorating the rooms, making sure we have plenty of hot chocolate and scheduling the wonderful, not to be missed, community entertainment. Mark your calendars for December 2, 3 & 4 Friday, Saturday and Sunday and join us for this special family celebration.

Speaking of celebrations...Dr. Lou and I have been doing the Ghost tours for 8 years and a few months ago we were flown to Hollywood, California to be interviewed for an A&E Network, Biography Channel, "My Ghost Story" episode. The film crew came out a few weeks later to film the façade and interiors. We do have the "trailer" to advertise the program...but we do not know when our 15 minutes of fame will be aired. Stay tuned.

New Castle County's IT Department has installed a "server" in our office so we can finally access "Past Perfect" software which has our information on most of our collection. We are installing it on several computers so we can access all the information related to our artifacts. The data needs to be updated and photographs added so we have the complete archival inventory in a retrievable safe place. We have a volunteer that has offered to take digital photographs to compliment the files where needed. The file folders are also in need of some organization... Another great volunteer project for someone. Call if you are interested.

If you have not already visited our new interpreted rooms in the museum be sure to check out the "Estate Office" and "Edward's adult bedroom". We also have plans to open a "servant's bed room" in the near future.

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The Friends have been busy this year. A lecture series was sponsored in appreciation for our members. The series was a big hit and the last three lectures "sold out" quickly. I say sold out but the lectures are free to all members. The Board is busy applying for grants to help fund the restoration of the Conservatory at Rockwood. It's been on the job training for those of us who are directly involved, but a rewarding experience nonetheless. Thus far, we have applied for five grants. We expect decisions by year's end. We have also sponsored several fundraisers for the restoration and thank everyone who has supported those efforts.

Our thanks to all the members who answered questions from the telephone survey. We learned about your concerns and now have a better grasp on how to better serve our membership. Kimberly Bohannon is the new Friends' volunteer coordinator. Expect a call from her about helping with upcoming events.

And, please, don't ever hesitate to contact us, on your own, if you see something of interest that you would like to volunteer for.

We are hosting the Victorian Costume Ball on February 25, 2012. This event was a big hit last year. We anticipate another sell out and another great event. More will follow on this exciting event in the Monthly News Bulletins...keep your computers on and eyes open for information. This year the event is limited to 100 people. So, get your tickets early.

In closing, thank you for your generous support. Our success, in large part, is due to your continued help and support. I know there isn't much leisure time anymore, but do consider giving a few hours a week, a month, or even over the course of a year to volunteer at Rockwood. I've never known such a fun loving, warm, considerate and dedicated group of people as The Friends of Rockwood.

June Zappa, President

Rockwood and the Bringham Family have a connection to the Delaware Art community.
Edward Bringham III took photos of the Bancroft Pre-Raphaelite Collection.
Mary Bringham was on the committee that celebrated Howard Pyle's birth in 1953.

2011 is the 100th anniversary of Howard Pyle's death. The Delaware Art Museum
is having a major exhibit opening in November, 2011.

On 3/5/1953, the Wilmington Society of Fine Arts celebrated Pyle's 100th anniversary of his birth
with a dinner. Special guests included Frank Schoonover who spoke on "The Chadds Ford
School" and Thornton Oakley on "The Writings of Howard Pyle".

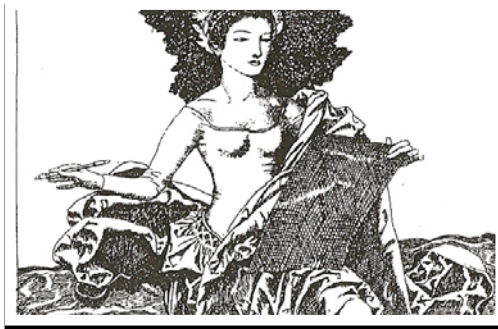
Special guests included

Mr. & Mrs. Howard P. Brokaw (Pyle's grandson), Mr. And Mrs. Gayle Hoskins,
(Mr. Hoskins was a student of Pyle's) and Mrs. N.C. Wyeth.

A small booklet (in Rockwood's collection) was written about Pyle's influence on his own
generation and succeeding generations.

"Admirers still find refreshment in his books which opened visions of fancy and valor in the days
of their youth - students of Pyle's should know of his intense drive for perfection of composition
in line and color, of his unique ability to set down a simple literary phrase from his rich
storehouse of knowledge.... The fine craftsmen with lively imagination, enthusiasm, and
idealism.... From pen and pencil and ink to oil, from sketches and illustration to murals and
allegory...from fables to fairy tales...from pirates to medieval to colonial....

From the booklet..



From Debbie Andrews: Director, Center for Material Culture Studies, University of Delaware

I'm writing to let you know that we have selected the recipient of the John H. Sweeney Rockwood Summer Fellowship. He's Jamin Wells, a doctoral candidate in history and the unanimous choice of the selection committee or the public engagement in material culture summer stipend the Friends of Rockwood so generously support. As the committee reviewed the applications we were intrigued by Jamin's topic, especially its time-period, which fits the criterion of "Victorian," and its relationship to transatlantic commerce, which was what Joseph Shipley, of course, engaged in and which depended on ships for both products and personal passage. I've attached his resume.

The title of the pertinent chapter of his dissertation is "The Shipwreck Shore: Maritime Disasters and the Creation of the Modern American Littoral," Here's what he has to say about it:

"Despite its title, my project began aboard a perfectly sound vessel at sea. After surveying the remains of a submerged schooner as a research assistant for an archaeological investigation, I was asked by my advisor to examine related archival materials, warning I probably would not find much as it was a pretty "mundane wreck." The phrase struck me as an oxymoron, and what I found proved there was more to be said—the romantic-sounding United States Life-Saving Service, professional "wreckers" who salvaged ships, and a plethora of local and national newspaper stories covering dozens of shipwrecks during a single week in 1899. Archives, too, contained troves of logbooks, correspondence, and court cases. Evidently there was much said and, I suspected, a lot more to say about "mundane wrecks." A don't-waste-your-time assignment thus evolved into a dissertation about the thousands of vessels that wrecked along the greater New York littoral during the entire nineteenth century.

Many have studied shipwrecks. My interest is in using shipwrecks as objects to illuminate broader themes in American history, including the development of the American state, the emergence of mass culture, and the commodification of disaster. A shipwreck is also interesting: a Trojan horse that appeals to both scholarly and non-academic audiences, revealing vital insights about our collective history while subtly reshaping how we think about it.

My dissertation examines shipwrecks as both physical objects and cultural narratives in order to understand how everyday disasters have shaped the American experience. I take a cultural materialist approach by focusing on how dialectical relationships between culture and society, ideas and objects, and local and outsider created the modern American littoral.

Along the way, I seek to trace how the cultural landscape of one section of the coast—the greater New York littoral—changed during our nation's formative century. Shipwrecks are central to this story. As daily disasters, shipwrecks underwrote the expansion of state power into the neglected coastal periphery, and they helped assimilate the coast, its residents, and its visitors into a westward-moving nation, changing all involved in the process. By the end of the nineteenth century, shipwrecks, like the littoral itself, had become an ingrained component of the urban industrial landscape they helped create."

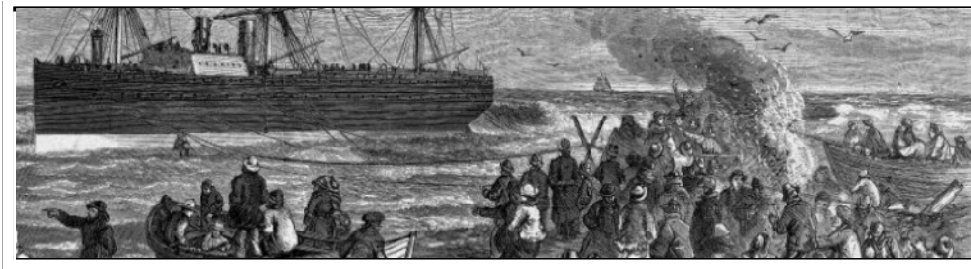
He'll use his summer stipend to travel to archives in Massachusetts and to visit the St. John and City of Columbus wreck sites (he's a diver) to understand the geography of shipwreck disasters and collect visual, archival, and experiential evidence for his dissertation and for the presentation he'll give to the Friends.



Jamin Wells grew up on (and under) the water—diving, sailing and working on boats of all shapes and sizes. Little surprise, then, that he decided to study maritime history when he entered graduate school at the University of Delaware as a Hagley Fellow in 2007.

His dissertation examines shipwrecks, surprisingly frequent disasters along the American shore, and how they shaped the development of the coastline between Cape Cod, Massachusetts and Barnegat, New Jersey. Like all disasters, shipwrecks do things—think about *Exxon Valdez* and environmental devastation or the *Titanic* and the establishment of groundbreaking safety regulations. But less spectacular disasters have also changed the wider world, oftentimes doing so in subtle, if profound ways. The thousands of vessels that wrecked along the coast between Cape Cod and Barnegat helped turn an isolated frontier into to an essential part of modern America.

On Sunday, April 22, Jamin will be discussing the shipwrecks that profoundly shaped Joseph Shipley’s mid nineteenth-century century America. Come hear thrilling stories of wreck and rescue and learn about the horrific disasters that created the “shore” we all know today.





Thanks to Jill Seideman (middle) & Maddy Block (left) to volunteer their face painting skills.

Second picture from the bottom left is-
from left to right:

Marcus Henry, Community Services - John Cartier, NCC Councilman -
Paul Clark, NCC Executive and
in front, Betsy Wenny, Secretary of the board of the FOR

THE ANNUAL MEETING was held on Sunday, June 5, 2011. We have a new board member, Linda Gray and new secretary(ies) Betsy Wenny and Donna Fox, as alternate, when Betsy is away. Paul Clark, County Executive, Marcus Henry, Director of Community Services and Councilman John Cartier attended. Mr. Clark was kind enough to say a few words encouraging the Friends of Rockwood to continue doing such great work and thanking us for being such a dedicated group of volunteers.

The meeting lasted about one hour and everyone adjourned to the south lawn for a picnic. It was a total success. We had music by The Craig Satchell Experience. They played some great jazz and Dixieland which had everyone tapping their toes and swaying to the gentle rhythm of the beat. The children had their faces painted; we played badminton and croquet on the lawn and, of course, ate ice cream. It was much like the old days and Rockwood came alive once again. We had wonderful attendance and I thank everyone who helped set things up and put things away. The ice cream was provided by Hy-Point Dairy who was the original ice cream provider of yesteryear and it was delicious.

From Robin Goldstein, Docent:

Robin has spent many hours researching documents about the family -

- Two party books detailing seating arrangements, menu, floral decorations, etc:
 - Reddish/tan leather book (approx 7 1/2" H x 5" W x 1/2" D). June 1920 to January 1929. Straight pinned to the back of the book is a newspaper recipe for cheese soufflé. Many times the seating arrangement for Rockwood's residents was EGS and MTB at opposite heads of the table, or Edward at one side with MTB-EGS opposite.
 - Red leather address book (approx 7" H x 4 1/2" W x 1/2" D). "Parties. 1929." From 1/16/1929 – 3/17/59. Mostly lunches. In later years a round table glass or mirror in center was used
- Booklet in verse celebrating Edward V's July 4, 1884 birth "Lines on the arrival of Our Boy"
- Calling cards for Edward Bringhurst (in Chinese!), Nancy Sellers, Edith Bringhurst, Edward Bringhurst Jr, Sarah Bringhurst and Mary Bringhurst.
- Bookplates for John Galt Smith and Edward Bringhurst
- Lastly, I've added Bessie's May 1920 New York Social Register listing, along with a brief history of the association.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF HATPINS

The 2011 Victorian Lecture Series given by The Friends of Rockwood

Beth Morgera, docent, is a member of the American Hatpin Society, shared selected items from her collection of hatpins and holders. These illustrated not only the beauty of such objects but also their importance in Victorian and Edwardian society.

“To us today, the hatpin appears merely as a relic of a bygone time. However, the hatpin was far more than just a necessary tool of the day used to keep a lady’s hat in place. It was used as a fashion statement, yes, but also a political statement, a visual indication of one’s interests such as the clubs one belonged to and indication to where the lady had travelled. The fashion styles were many and varied during the hatpin era encompassing Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Arts and Crafts, Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman revival and more. Almost anything could be made into a hatpin but some of the most common types were rhinestone, facet glass, signets, painted porcelain, and enamel. Society looked benevolently on the hatpin when it was first introduced. It was a weapon of defense readily available to ladies. But as fashions changed, the perception of the hatpin changed as well. It was all too often used as a weapon of offense by women whether in an uncomfortable meeting with the police or vying for a seat in public. As the Victorian era ended and the Edwardian began, fashions became flamboyant as did society. Hats became huge. These gigantic hats were at first viewed with amusement having fun poked at them and their wearers by popular culture as the postcards displayed showed. They were met with annoyance by those upon whose vision or personal space they infringed. But most alarming was the hatpins unintentional infliction of harm. This was the age before antibiotics and a wound from a dirty hatpin could lead to infection and even death. Frequently eyes were poked out as women were venturing out more and more in public to work and for pleasure and using public conveyances such as elevators and trains. In the Western world, a hue and cry began over the use of hatpin which now could be as long as 12 to 18 inches and protrude far beyond the brim of the wearer’s hat. In many places, laws were passed forbidding hatpins to be over an inch beyond the brim and in extreme cases, banned totally. Women did not like these new laws as they truly believed their hatpins properly used protected them. The solution was a compromise in most areas which allowed long hatpins beyond the brim of the hat as long as a point protector, a small blunt metal cap attached to the pointed end of the pin, was used. But like our laws on cell phone use today, it was a law that was difficult to enforce. The debate raged on but then suddenly stopped due to the outbreak of World War I. The horror, death and destruction of the war put the debate in perspective. Additionally, fashions changed becoming more sober. By the time the war ended, the hatpin era was over. Those who survived the war wanted nothing to do with the Victorian and Edwardian ideas and fashions which were held responsible for the conflict. Skirts were shortened, hair bobbed and the hats in style were cloche hats worn close to head and requiring no hatpins. The pins used in these hats were purely decorative. So the long hatpins were relegated to the back of drawers, closets and trunks if they could not be refashioned into other types of jewelry or shorted to be useful on a cloche hat. And there the hatpins stayed until another generation of women discovered them, often the granddaughters of the original owners. That’s what hatpins are today, a collector’s item, a reminder of a lovely bygone era. Hatpins are avidly sought after by a dedicated group of collectors who had written books, established several collecting clubs and produce a quarterly newsletter about them. The saying of the collectors is “Grandmother had them, mother gave them away and I’m buying them back.”

Sunday, September 18, the Friends hosted a lectured on Victorian Jewelry presented by Thomas Tear

Tear spoke primarily about the middle Victorian years, 1837-1907 was considered the span of the Victorian era.

There is a myth that there were many wealthy people in this era, the truth being most were agrarian.

This was the first generation to have photographs taken.

During the Civil War, many men left locks of hair with their families and in case of their death, were made into mourning jewelry.

This was a world of bright clothing until Queen Victoria went into mourning and fashionable women began to wear black.

Tear spoke of “hair” jewelry that was a token of affection, symbol of a new business and also as a memory of loved ones after their death. Hair jewelry was made two ways, on a loom type device and as a lanyard was made by twisting or braiding the hair. He showed us a brooch made from 5 different colors of hair - it seems that hair color and hair does not disintegrate. Hair jewelry was more valuable during this period than silver.

There was a metal called “Pinchback” named after the man who invented it that did not tarnish and was used for holding paste jewelry - the real thing was kept somewhere at home safe while traveling, in case of robbers.

Portraits were often put onto ivory or other materials to use as brooches. Cameos were reliefs carved into material, the opposite being the intaglio process where the image is cut into stone. Shells were often used as was lava, terra cotta and gutta percha. The subjects often Greek or Roman goddesses or scenes from myths like Diana or St. George Slaying the Dragon.

In these cameos, you can see how the idea of beauty in women has changed over the decades from a long nose, thick neck, hardy women to a finer neck with a turned up nose with a softer look to even a finer look in the later 1800's.



The Friends of Rockwood were represented at a Civil War Memorial Service and Celebration at the Mount Salem Church in Rockford Park on Sunday, May 29th, 2011.

Nancy Schanes and Judy Filipkowski greeted guests and shared Rockwood information from noon to 2 PM.



June 25 and 26th, Rockwood celebrated Edward III/V's Birthday Party with special tours with costumed actors portraying young Edward and older Edward with his sisters.



Bonnie Baggett, & Paulette Clemens, docents along with Loretta Spigel, our acting curator, set up a lovely display at the Brandywine Hundred Library in their display case for the month of September.

It looked great!

CHANGES IN THE MUSEUM

Over the last several months, a number of collection pieces have been taken out of storage and put on display in the Museum. These additions will provide additional details about the life style of the Bringhurst Family while they lived at Rockwood.

Four portraits of John Galt Smith's (Bessie Bringhurst Smith's husband's) ancestors from the 18th and 19th century have been hung in the Entrance Hall. In the Reception Room and in the Drawing Room are 2 china vitrines filled with family memorabilia. Bessie brought these from Kilwaughter Castle, where she lived until 1922. As you enter the Ante Room and look on top of the bookcase, you will see two more china vitrines; one has statues of Richard the Lionhearted and his wife, Berengaria. The second one remains to be filled.

The former Butler's Room, is now being interpreted as the Estate Office which was used by Mr. Bringhurst Jr.; family furniture including some from Kilwaughter Castle has been installed in this room.

Upstairs, on the beds in Mr. & Mrs. Bringhurst's bedroom and in Mary Bringhurst's bedroom, are two beautiful silk Chinese bedspreads which were purchased by Edward Bringhurst V in the 20th century. In Edward III/V's childhood bedroom, a quilt which dates to the 1890's has been placed on his bed.

The North Bedroom is interpreted as Edward V's bedroom as an adult. The headboard of this four poster bed has a wood carving of a phoenix bird in the center. In the display case is the presentation suit, with accessories, that Edward wore when he was presented to the King and Queen of England in 1911 at the Court of St. James.

In the Monte Carlo Room, Bessie's presentation gown and shoes are in the tall display case. She was presented to the King and Queen of England at Dublin Castle in 1903. Photographs of Kilwaughter Castle are on the walls and the room furnishings are pieces that Bessie brought back with her when she returned to Rockwood in 1922 from Ireland.

There are ongoing changes and exhibits in the Museum.

October is the Mourning exhibit: the bereavement of the family at the loss of Edward Bringhurst, Jr.'s beloved mother, Sarah Shipley Bringhurst.

The Holiday Open House theme this year will be "A Winter Holiday" and will be decorated for the entire month of December.

I invite you to visit the Museum over the next few months to see these changes and the new exhibits.

***Loretta Spigel,
Rockwood Acting Curator***

**The Friends of Rockwood
610 Shipley Road
Wilmington, Delaware
19809**

HELP US SAVE POSTAGE.....

We would like to have your e-mail address so we may send you notices about upcoming events and the Newsletter.

If you no longer wish to receive this Information, e-mail Beth Morgera, Membership Chair, membership@friendsofrockwood.org.

Please put FOR in the subject box.

Or

The Friends address on this newsletter