



MHS Miscellany

Number 97 / Fall 2009

JQA, TWITTER CELEBRITY

On 5 August 1809, John Quincy Adams began a journey across the Atlantic that would end in St. Petersburg; he succinctly described the day within one of his diaries: “Sailed in Ship Horace, Benjamin Beckford, from Charlestown to St. Petersburg.” On 5 August 2009, those 11 words were broadcast to over 2,600 readers as a “tweet” on the popular micro-blog website Twitter. Since then, JQA’s online audience has increased at least six-fold, and excitement about the sixth president’s tweets has appeared in print, online, and on television.

The recent appearance of JQA’s briefest diary entries online grew out of a casual observation that a visitor made during a tour of the MHS: shown a digital facsimile of Adams’s line-a-day

diary, a Simmons College graduate student remarked, “It’s like he’s using Twitter.” The comment referred to the social networking website Twitter.com, on which users post updates about their activities in a minimalist format: no more than 140 characters. The idea made its way to Assistant Reference Librarian Jeremy Dibbell, who noted the serendipity of the timing—August 2009 would mark the bicentennial of Adams’s voyage to Russia to serve as the first U.S. minister. Determined to turn that casual observation into a novel venture for the MHS, Jeremy and other library staff began transcribing the diminutive entries in order to release one per day through JQA’s very own Twitter page, http://twitter.com/JQAdams_MHS.

The Society sent out a press release on Monday, 3 August, in the hopes that the convergence of historical manuscript and hypertext publication would interest some news outlets—

and it did. The Associated Press took up the story that day, and by the next evening at least three dozen online news and media sites had reproduced the



“tweet”

“John Quincy Adams may be the best thing to happen to Twitter. This just made my day.” ashleywiers



article. In Boston, Fox 25 News and WBZ-TV 4 News filmed special segments for their night-time broadcasts. The next day, WBUR (*Here and Now*) and the *New York Times* brought out short pieces, and in the coming days, JQA was a featured topic with Linda Wertheimer on NPR, Charlie Gibson on *ABC World News*, Rachel Maddow on MSNBC, and Wolf Blitzer on CNN. During that same time, Adams's "followers" on Twitter increased from 2,682 on the fifth to 8,661 at 7:30 AM on the seventh. On Tuesday, 11 August, just a little more than a week after the initial press release, 12,888 Twitter users had subscribed to JQA's daily updates. The audience also had an international aspect: approving comments appeared in Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and Russian, and one "re-tweet" located the sender in Seoul, South Korea.

The breadth of the response attests to the appeal of these "immediate" messages from the past—and from a critical figure in critical events in American history. In 1809, when the 42-year-old Adams embarked for Russia, he had already spent more than a decade of his life in diplomatic and congressional service. After completing his appointment in Russia in 1814, Adams remained abroad until 1817 as the nation's minister in Great Britain. In less than 10 years, he would assume the executive office. His skill and productivity as a writer may also account for some part of JQA's cyberspace celebrity. From 1779 until his death in February 1848, JQA kept

"I'm now following you, John Quincy Adams, which is awesome because 1) you are awesome, and 2) you're not alive, but Twittering." branthansen

not only a diary but sometimes several concurrent diaries. The complete 51 volumes, part of the Adams Family Papers in the Society's holdings, amount to nearly 15,000 pages. In his line-a-day books—those being transcribed for the Twitter postings—JQA recorded each month on one page, writing a single-line notation for each day. He wrote longer entries in other volumes, where he could expand the richness of his thoughts on a day's occurrences. Between these two extremes, he also kept other kinds of notes, from lists to short entries and even draft entries that he made in "rubbish" notebooks. For several years now, digital facsimiles of every page of his diaries—long style and short—have been online in *The Diaries of John Quincy Adams: A Digital Collection* (www.masshist.org/jqadiaries) and transcriptions of entries he wrote from 1779 to 1788 are included in the digital edition of the *Adams Papers* (www.masshist.org/ff).

The Massachusetts Historical Society is an independent research library that collects, preserves, makes accessible, and communicates manuscripts and other materials that promote the study of the history of Massachusetts and the nation—a mission it has pursued since 1791.

The Officers & Board of Trustees of the
Massachusetts Historical Society

<i>Chair</i>	Lia G. Poorvu
William C. Clendaniel	G. West Saltonstall
<i>Co-Vice Chairs</i>	L. Dennis Shapiro
Nancy S. Anthony	Joseph Peter Spang
Sheila D. Perry	Judith Bryant Wittenberg
<i>Secretary</i>	Michael R. Yogg
John F. Moffitt	Hiller B. Zobel
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Life Trustees</i>
William R. Cotter	Leo Leroy Beranek
<i>Trustees</i>	Henry Lee
Charles C. Ames	<i>Trustees Emeriti</i>
Bernard Bailyn	Nancy R. Coolidge
Levin H. Campbell	Arthur C. Hodges
Amalie M. Kass	James M. Storey
Pauline Maier	John L. Thorndike
Catherine S. Menand	<i>President</i>
Frederick G. Pfannenstiehl	Dennis Fiori

MHS Miscellany, no. 97
Periodical Newsletter of the
Massachusetts Historical Society

Address:
1154 Boylston St. Boston MA 02215
617-536-1608 www.masshist.org

Masthead illustration:
"Plan & Elevation of the Tontine
Crescent, now erecting in Boston." From
the *Massachusetts Magazine*, 1794. All
images are from the MHS collections
unless otherwise credited. The MHS
occupied the Tontine Crescent from 1794
until 1833.

JQA profile on front page, from
Silhouettes of John Quincy Adams and
His Family, by Jarvis F. Hanks, Meridian
Hill, Washington, 25 March 1859. Photo-
graphs on facing page by Laura Wulf.



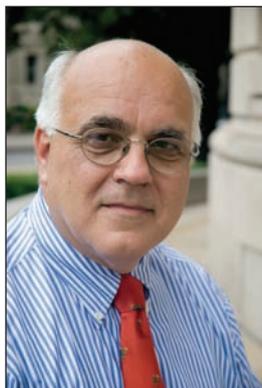
Hours:
The MHS reading room is open
to the public free of charge, 9 AM
to 4:45 PM Mondays, Tuesdays,
Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9 AM to
7:45 PM on Thursdays, and 9 AM
to 4 PM on Saturdays.

For more information:
Please call ahead or check the website
for directions, information about col-
lections, reading room policies,
holiday hours, and special events.

His historical significance and even the online availability of his words do not fully explain the excitement over JQA's entrance into the blogosphere, since both of those were in place before 4 August 2009. Rather, the attention that spread so suddenly in early August appears to be due to the perfect synergy of message and medium: before 5 August, the social web had nothing else quite like JQA's 200-year-old shorthand diary entries, unedited, and Twitter's daily and instantaneous distribution around the globe. JQA was a good tweeter: the wine he decanted fills these new bottles perfectly. A message from one supporter testifies to just how the project has captured the imagination of so many: "I wanted to express my admiration for the fantastic and creative way your organization leveraged new technology to make history 'come to life.'" We are especially excited that this project takes primary source material to where readers—especially younger readers—are today, engaging them in a format they use but without having to mediate the words of the original author.

* * *

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Fall is the second season of beginnings, vying with spring for that sense of fresh opportunity and renewed energy. At research institutions like the MHS, it marks the commencement of the programming year, which always brings a certain bustle and excitement into the building. And this fall we are rolling out a comprehensive and varied roster of programs—despite the challenging economy and a reduced operating budget and thanks to support from friends and funders.

The Society makes the majority of its programs open to the general public at no charge because we want to see our audience continue to expand. The support of a committed membership, however, is vital for our survival, and for that reason we have been seeking opportunities to reinforce the importance of becoming a Member of the Society and to express our appreciation to those who already are. Consequently, this season's schedule includes an increased number of lectures and events especially for our Members and Fellows. These include a special opening reception on 29 October for the exhibition *Atlantic Harvest: Ellery Sedgwick and The Atlantic Monthly, 1909–1938*, a one-act play about the Saturday Club on 14 November to honor the bicentennial of Oliver Wendell Holmes's birth, and the Members and Fellows Holiday

Party on 9 December. These special events will have refreshments of a calibre reminiscent of the past.

If you are a Member or Fellow already, I invite you to help us bring new friends into the fold. Consider giving an MHS membership to a friend or relative during the upcoming holiday season. It is a gift that gives twice—to a friend or relative and to the MHS. And, of course, I can think of no better gift than that of history.

—Dennis Fiori, President

* * *

A UNANIMOUS VOTE

Slate Including New Officers & Three New Trustees Approved

The Fellows of the Massachusetts Historical Society, in their role as its governing body, unanimously approved at the 20 May 2009 Annual Meeting the proposed slate of officers, including a new Chair of the Board of Trustees, as well as three new Trustees. MHS President Dennis Fiori said, "Our new officers and Trustees bring a wealth of knowledge about the Boston-area cultural and historical community and a record of strong support for its institutions. They are just the infusion of talent we need to meet future challenges with success."

Trustee William C. Clendaniel succeeded Amalie M. Kass, who will remain on the Board, as Chair of the Board of Trustees on 1 July 2009. Mr. Clendaniel has spent over 30 years managing private nonprofit organizations dedicated to preserving and providing public access to the natural and cultural heritage of Massachusetts. The other officers approved at the meeting were Co-Vice Chairs Nancy S. Anthony and Sheila D. Perry, Secretary John F. Moffitt, and Treasurer William R. Cotter.

The new Trustees elected to the Board, who started their four-year terms on 1 July, are Charles C. Ames, G. West "Westy" Saltonstall, and Judith Bryant Witten-



The officers, from left to right: Secretary John F. Moffitt, Co-Vice Chair Nancy S. Anthony, Chair William C. Clendaniel, Co-Vice Chair Sheila D. Perry, and Treasurer William R. Cotter.

berg. Each contributes distinctive skills and expertise to the leadership of the MHS, including extensive experience serving on the boards of other area medical, social service, educational, and cultural institutions. Mr. Ames is a retired lawyer who specialized in real estate investment and finance at the Boston firm of Hill and Barlow, where he was managing partner from 1992 to 1996. Mr. Saltonstall is President of Eaton Vance Investment Counsel, where he also serves on the Management Committee. Mrs. Wittenberg is Professor Emerita of English at Simmons College, where she also served as Academic Dean of the Undergraduate College and Chair of the English Department.

Attendees at the Annual Meeting also learned that longtime MHS Trustee and former Treasurer Arthur C. Hodges would be stepping down from the Board at the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Hodges, a retired Executive Vice President of Welch & Forbes, was honored during the business meeting for his many years of dedication and service to the MHS. In addition to his work with the MHS, he is a board member of the Essex County Greenbelt, Huntington Theatre Company, and The Trustees of Reservations.

Since its founding, the MHS has benefited from the wise guidance of its elected stewards. The dedication and expertise of the new Board leadership, with the counsel of the Trustees, will ensure this tradition continues as they direct the Society into a new chapter of its history. For short biographies of the newly elected officers and Trustees, please visit the Society's website at www.mass-hist.org/news/trustees.

* * *

NEW MHS PUBLICATION



The Society unveiled its newest print publication, *Collecting History*, at the Annual Meeting on 20 May. The Fellows and Members in attendance, all of whom received complimentary copies, expressed their satisfaction with how well the book—diminutive but substantial—showcases the breadth of the Society's collections. The launch was celebrated with a special talk by Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey, the catalog's main contributor. Copies will be available at select MHS programs through the end of the calendar year.

The idea for the book came about when Pres. Dennis Fiori realized that the Society had no publication to give potential members or funders illustrating its nationally important collections. It also struck him that even some

individuals and foundations already involved with the MHS did not truly understand the breadth and depth of our holdings. The project became a reality when Trustee and Collections Committee Chair Joseph Peter Spang generously decided to underwrite it. The resulting 88-page catalog serves as a broad introduction to the Society's rich and diverse collections. Handsomely designed and illustrated, the publication features a foreword by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and MHS Fellow David McCullough.

Four thematic sections group the items in *Collecting History*. The first section focuses on selections from the heart of the Society's manuscript collections—the personal papers of Presidents John and John Quincy Adams and Thomas Jefferson. The remaining three sections are derived from an educational scheme that John Adams set out in a 1780 letter to his wife, Abigail. For the benefit of future generations, he wrote, "I must study Politicks and War that my Sons may have liberty to study Mathematicks and Philosophy. my Sons ought to study Mathematicks and Philosophy, Geography, natural History Naval Architecture, navigation, Commerce and Agriculture, in order to give their Children a right to study Painting Poetry Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine."



The section "Politics & War" tells the political and military history of the United States through personal papers and artifacts. "Mathematics & Philosophy, Navigation & Commerce" covers the broad sweep of American social and business history. The final section, "Painting, Poetry, & Architecture," contains examples from the Society's art collection, as well as the writings and drawings of authors and artists.

The 17-century flint pouch with striking iron, once belonging to the Winthrop family, appears in Collecting History. The object was a bequest of Clara Bowdoin Winthrop in 1969.

Dennis looks forward to using the book to help new members and donors cultivate an appreciation for the national importance of the Society's collections and inspire them to support its mission.

* * *

REMAKING BOSTON

Since the publication of the first *Collections* volume in 1792, most titles associated with the Society have appeared under our own imprint. But not all of them. In November, the University of Pittsburgh Press will bring out an innovative essay collection that has its origins in a 2006 MHS conference.

Remaking Boston: An Environmental History of the City and Its Surroundings, edited by Anthony N. Penna of Northeastern University and Conrad Edick Wright of the Society, comprises an introduction and 12 essays grouped in sections on the history of Boston Harbor, Boston and the surrounding countryside, and Boston's climate and weather. Interdisciplinary in its approach, the collection includes contributions by historians, botanists, geologists, and urban planners as well as a cartographer, an environmental engineer, and a geographer. In accessible prose, the essayists trace aspects of the city's environmental history from the most recent glacial age to modern global warming.

For information on this important contribution to the history of Boston and the environmental history of North American cities, see the University of Pittsburgh Press's website, www.upress.pitt.edu. The retail price is \$40.

* * *

BRAVE EDITOR

What does an editor of the Adams Papers do when he's at home? Apparently, write a book about 17th-century British castaways. Hobson Woodward, an MHS staff member since 2002, published *A Brave Vessel: The True Tale of the Castaways Who Rescued Jamestown and Inspired Shakespeare's The Tempest* with Viking last July. Hobson, a graduate of Hobart College who more recently completed a dual degree in history and archives management at Simmons College, is an associate editor at the Adams Papers editorial project where he has contributed to six volumes.

During the two and a half years he devoted to *A Brave Vessel*, Hobson traveled to complete archival research in London, Virginia, and Bermuda—the locales in which his history took place. Remarkably, Hobson took no extraordinary time from his “day job” while he pursued this work. He did, however, rise regularly at 4:30 AM to read and write before embarking on his morning commute. He also used that time—two hours a day on the

train—and his lunch hours to work on his manuscript. His wife, Beth, and their two young daughters are proud of his accomplishment, but happy that the long research hours are over.

The book has been favorably reviewed in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Boston Globe*. Hobson has been invited to speak about his work in several places in New England and participated in two MHS “Brown Bag” lunches—the first in 2008 to discuss the manuscript as a work in progress and more recently to entertain the attendees with a report on the finished book. At his 23 July talk, three of the most important 17th-century texts that Hobson used in his research, including William Strachey's *For the colony in Virginea Britannia* (London, 1612), were on display for the event.

Hobson has yet to reveal his next research project, but given the breadth of his interests, his colleagues are waiting anxiously to hear.

* * *

GOING UNDERGROUND

The Massachusetts Historical Society has been accepted as a member of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. The Network is a diverse collection of historic sites, facilities, and programs across the United States that have been evaluated by the National Park Service on the basis of their significance to the Underground Railroad story. The logo below acknowledges that, as a research and educational facility, the Massachusetts Historical Society has met the criteria for inclusion in the Network.

Two online collections give a hint of the richness of relevant material held at the MHS: *African Americans and the End of Slavery in Massachusetts* (www.masshist.org/endofslavery/) and *Images of the Antislavery Movement in Massachusetts* (www.masshist.org/online/abolition.cfm), two digital resources prepared by the Collections Services staff with funding from a Library Services and Technology Act grant administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The Education Department has received funding from the Library of Congress to develop online curricular materials and workshops around these collections, as well as related documents from the LOC, in a project called *The End of Slavery: Documents and Dilemmas*.



NATIONAL
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

ONCE & FUTURE CONFERENCES

John Adams & Thomas Jefferson: Libraries, Leadership, & Legacy

If you were not in Boston from 21 to 23 June or in Charlottesville from 25 to 27 June, you missed the Society's most ambitious conference to date. In collaboration with the Boston Public Library and the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello, the MHS held a six-day conference on the libraries of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson that took an in-depth look at how their books shaped their lives.

Jefferson and Adams were among their era's most active book collectors. Adams's collection of more than 3,000 books spanned almost every area of intellectual inquiry in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Jefferson's holdings, more than twice the size of Adams's, were so extensive and comprehensive that when British troops burned Washington in 1815 his books served as the basis of the reborn Library of Congress. For each man, books were a passion: "I cannot live without books," Jefferson wrote to Adams in 1815, and no one understood this sentiment better than his predecessor in the White House.

At each venue, a major keynote address opened the proceedings. In Boston, Ted Widmer, the Director and Librarian of the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, asked why both Adams and Jefferson included the Koran in their collections. In Charlottesville, Sen. Gary Hart drew connections between the ideas both discovered in their books and their public lives. At each site, four sessions followed, each with two or three essays on aspects of the presidents' book collecting and the intellectual consequences of their bibliophilia. The size and enthusiasm of the audiences in both Boston and Charlottesville demonstrated the appeal of the program's topic; all told, more than 100 people attended the conference.

The idea for *John Adams and Thomas Jefferson: Libraries, Leadership, and Legacy* began with MHS Fellow Robert Baron, who supported the venture throughout its development and execution. Mr. Baron and Conrad Edick Wright of the Society's staff are editing a collection of essays from among those presented at the conference. Fulcrum Publishing of Golden, Colorado, plans to bring out the volume in 2010.

Margaret Fuller & Her Circles

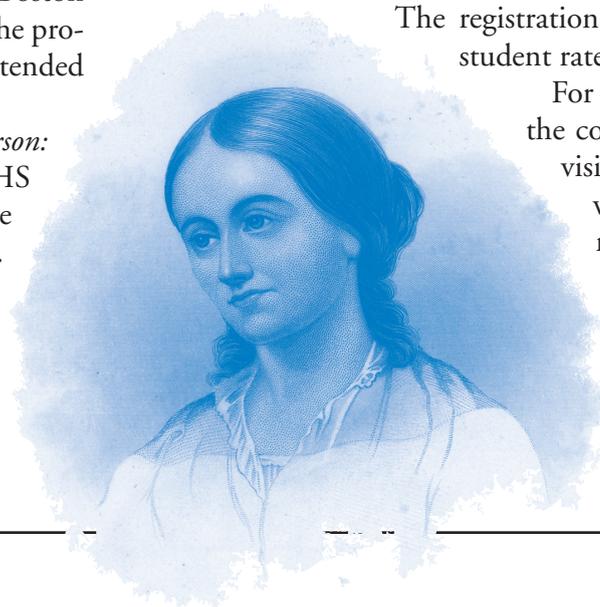
Since Margaret Fuller's "rediscovery" by scholars in the 1970s, she has become central to a striking new account of antebellum literature, history, and culture. Fuller's significance as a writer and public intellectual in the 1830s and 1840s in New England, New York, and Europe has become visible even as a fresh understanding of this formative period in American culture has emerged in recent years; indeed, scholarly interest in her work has helped to drive the emergence of this understanding. As a Transcendentalist, translator, feminist theorist, book reviewer, teacher, editor of a literary journal, surveyor of reform institutions, traveler, journalist, political activist in the 1848 European revolutions, and foreign correspondent, Fuller made substantial contributions to her culture during this period, and she was among those who most fully articulated its meanings.

This coming spring, the Society will recognize Margaret Fuller's contributions to American culture and observe the 200th anniversary of her birth with a conference. *Margaret Fuller and Her Circles* will bring more than 20 prominent scholars of Fuller and Transcendentalism to the Society 8–10 April 2010 to consider aspects of her life and work. Following a keynote address by Prof. Mary Kelley of the University of Michigan, the conference will turn to sessions on Fuller's place as a feminist leader, her role in antebellum reform movements, her involvement in the development of American urban culture, and the transatlantic aspects of her career. At each session, pre-circulated papers will serve as the basis of discussion.

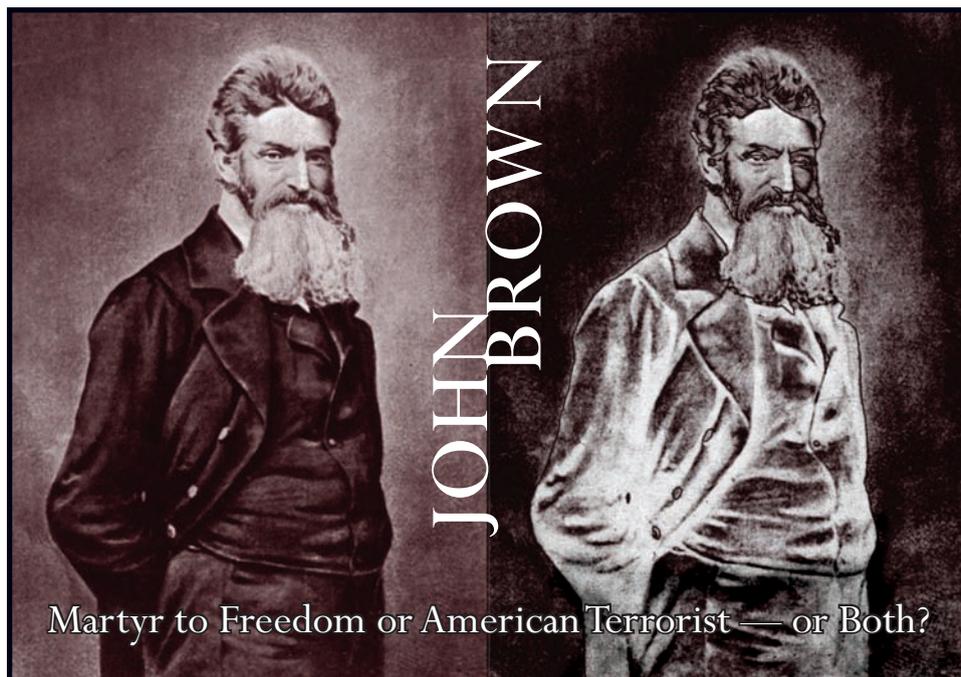
The conference is open to everyone.

The registration fee is \$75; the student rate is \$50.

For information on the conference, please visit the Society's website, www.masshist.org.



*Margaret Fuller,
engraving by
H. B. Hall, Jr.*



Martyr to Freedom or American Terrorist — or Both?

FALL EXHIBITIONS

Atlantic Harvest

Ellery Sedgwick and
The Atlantic Monthly,
1909–1938



John Brown
12 October 2009 to
23 December

Atlantic Harvest
30 October 2009 to
30 January 2010

Open
Monday through
Saturday, 1 to 4 PM

JOHN BROWN

Martyr to Freedom or American Terrorist — or Both?

On 17 October 1859, abolitionist John Brown and 21 followers made an armed attack on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in what is now West Virginia, taking townspeople as hostages, seizing arms, and hoping to incite a slave rebellion. Opening on the 150th anniversary of the raid, the Society's exhibition will present a selection of personal papers, photographs, engravings, and artifacts that document the raid and Brown's trial and execution, all of which catalyzed powerful and sometimes extreme reactions from the American public. The debate that began then about the morality and meaning of Brown's actions continues today, and the display will include examples of the ongoing argument.

ATLANTIC HARVEST

Ellery Sedgwick & *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1909–1938

When Ellery Sedgwick became the editor of *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1909, the event brought together the imprimatur of a Massachusetts family known for its intellectual leadership and a Boston-born periodical valued for cultural, literary, and political trail-blazing. This exhibition will celebrate the contributions that Sedgwick made during his three decades as owner and editor with a display of related documents and photographs, including examples of his voluminous personal and editorial correspondence with an extraordinary range of 20th-century literary and political figures, such as Winston Churchill, Jane Addams, Sinclair Lewis, and Virginia Woolf.

John Brown design derived from photomechanical of John Brown, Portraits of American Abolitionists, photo. 81.81. Ellery Sedgwick, unidentified photographer, ca. 1938, Ellery Sedgwick Papers.

EVENTS SPRING 2009

NATHANIEL GOULD LECTURE & EXHIBITION PREVIEW



On 4 February the MHS and the Seminarists, an American decorative arts study group, co-hosted a special evening devoted to Nathaniel Gould (1758–1781), one of America's preeminent furniture makers. Researcher Kem Widmer described his and assistant Joyce King's findings in the previously unstudied Gould business ledgers, which are part of the Society's collections. The ledgers were on display with two fine examples of Gould's craftsmanship, courtesy of Historic New England and a private collector.



Above left: Joyce King points out an interesting entry in one of Gould's ledgers to Life Trustee Leo Beranek as Trustee Peter Spang examines a second ledger.

Above: Kem Widmer explains the hallmarks of Gould's furniture construction to guests. (Photographer: Michael Lutch)

A FELLOWS EVENING

Over 50 Fellows of the MHS gathered on 24 March for a Fellows Evening that featured light refreshments, congenial company, and a presentation by two MHS-NEH Long-Term Fellows about how they are using the Society's collections in their research.



Fellow Toni Norton and Trustee Sheila Perry join newly elected Fellow Louis Menand and his mother, Trustee Kay Menand, for a photograph.

Class of 2008 Fellow Margaret Winslow pauses from an animated discussion to pose with Fellow Ellen Moot and newly elected Fellow Susan Ware. (Photographer: Laura Wulf)



Fellow George Lodge and John Norton are photographed deep in conversation in the Douse Library. MHS-NEH Long-Term Fellow Michael Hoberman tells the audience about his research.



Over 160 guests visited the MHS on 4 April for the Society's annual Open House, which featured the exhibition "With Hayseed in My Hair": Abraham Lincoln and Massachusetts and a gallery talk by Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey. The day also included tours of the building, a National Historic Landmark, and refreshments.



OPEN HOUSE

Above: three generations of the Freiberg family view the ledgers of 18th-century Salem furniture maker Nathaniel Gould. Malcolm Freiberg is a Fellow and Editor of Publications Emeritus at the MHS.

Left: Anne Bentley, Curator of Art, explains the significance of a portrait of Peter Chardon Brooks III by John Singer Sargent during a tour of the MHS. (Photographer: Stephanie Baker)

ANNUAL MEETING

Approximately 90 Trustees, Fellows, Members, and staff attended the MHS Annual Meeting on 20 May. The evening included a reception, business meeting, and remarks by Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey on extraordinary items in the MHS collections that were not selected for the Society's new publication, *Collecting History*.



Left: Trustee Art Hodges accepts a citation from Chair Amalie Kass on behalf of the Board of Trustees during the business meeting. Hodges, who retired from the Board at the end of the fiscal year, was honored for his many years of service to the MHS. Kass was also honored at the meeting since she has stepped down as Chair. She will continue to serve as a Trustee.

Curator of Art Anne Bentley and Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey, pictured here with Pres. Dennis Fiori, were recognized for their respective 35 and 30 years of service to the MHS.



Above right: Fellow Adelaide Cromwell and Member Ann Louise McLaughlin enjoy the pre-meeting reception in the Dowse Library. Right: Trustee Bill Cotter, who was elected Treasurer at the business meeting, shares a laugh with newly elected Trustee Westy Saltonstall. (Photographer: Laura Wulf)



EDWARD M. KENNEDY, 1932–2009



In August, the Trustees and staff of the Massachusetts Historical Society lost a dear friend and staunch supporter with the passing of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy. Elected a Fellow (then known as a Member) of the Society in 1968, Sen. Kennedy made himself available to participate in key events at the MHS over the ensuing decades. With Leverett Saltonstall, he was a featured speaker when the Society inaugurated the campaign to build an addition in 1969. More than 20 years later, he gave the keynote address at the Society's bicentennial dinner at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences on 17 May 1991, where he presented the John F. Kennedy Medal to Oscar Handlin.

The Kennedy Medal—awarded occasionally by the Society to a person doing outstanding service for history and the highest honor it confers—naturally connected Sen. Kennedy to the MHS in a more personal fashion. Another Kennedy Medal event, in October 2006, prompted a particularly fine performance from the senator. He arrived for the dinner honoring the recipient, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., directly from a campaign rally for gubernatorial candidate Deval Patrick. Observing the senator's entrance, MHS Pres. Dennis Fiori noted that he still had “plenty of the Kennedy fight in him.” The congressional veteran then displayed his famed across-the-aisle conciliatory style by personally greeting all of the guests, including noted Massachusetts Republicans George Lodge (his opponent in his first senatorial campaign in 1962) and the late Bill Saltonstall. He followed the greetings with a poignant presentation that encouraged the great Massachusetts political clans to extend the hand of friendship and resolve old differences.

Sen. Kennedy also helped train a spotlight on the Society in 2004 when he chose 1154 Boylston Street as the location for a *Today Show* interview about “his” Boston, which was being filmed in

conjunction with the Democratic National Convention. Most recently, he and his wife, Victoria, gave a spirited reading from the letters of John and Abigail Adams as part of an evening celebrating the publication of *My Dearest Friend: Letters of Abigail and John Adams*, edited by Margaret A. Hogan, managing editor, and C. James Taylor, editor in chief of the Adams Papers. The event, held in November 2007, drew a crowd of over 700 people to Boston's Faneuil Hall and included Gov. Deval and Diane Patrick and Gov. Michael and Kitty Dukakis as the other readers. (To see the event in its entirety, visit the WGBH Forum online at <http://forum.wgbh.org/lecture/letters-john-and-abigail-adams>.)

In a more private moment, he once mentioned to MHS staff that he had a book that had belonged to his brother John—a copy of Charles Francis Adams, Jr.'s addresses—which included the president's annotations. He promised to look for it for the MHS, but there was the feeling that there would always be time to turn back to the task—that there always would be another program or event that would bring one of the Society's most senior Fellows back to Boylston Street, but now that elusive volume has “gotten away.” In some ways, the sense of loss captured in that image distills the loss that we have all suffered with Edward Kennedy's passing. As Dennis Fiori stated when the public first learned the news, the senator “not only displayed a keen interest in our nation's history, but helped form it. He appreciated the need to have history inform our understanding of the problems we face as a nation today and to educate the citizens of tomorrow.”



Above, left: Victoria and Edward Kennedy read from Adams letters at Faneuil Hall in November 2007. Before the reading, Kennedy with (left to right) MHS Trustee Amalie M. Kass, Gov. Deval and Diane Patrick, Gov. Michael and Kitty Dukakis, Victoria Kennedy, Mary Richardson, and MHS Pres. Dennis Fiori. (Photographer: Michael Dwyer)

MHS Annual Fund Reaches Goal in Spite of Recession

Despite an economic recession marked by decreased giving, the MHS ended its 2009 fiscal year having reached its ambitious Annual Fund goal of \$375,000. As of 30 June, the Society raised \$375,490.46 from 469 donors, a 9.5 percent increase over its fiscal 2008 Annual Fund total. This accomplishment was due in large part to a challenge that Trustee Dennis Shapiro issued to his fellow Trustees: he offered to match dollar-for-dollar any increase over their gifts from the previous year. The staff of the MHS would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Annual Fund's success, which helped the Society maintain its core services and programs in this difficult financial climate.

Now that a new fiscal year is well underway, the MHS will need your support once again. If you are interested in contributing to the mission of the Society, please visit www.masshist.org/support.

NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2009–2010 Seminar Season Opens

The Society will sponsor or co-sponsor four seminar series in 2009–2010: the Boston Area Early American History Seminar, the Boston Environmental History Seminar, the Boston Immigration and Urban History Seminar, and the Boston Seminar on the History of Women and Gender (co-sponsored with the Schlesinger Library). Each session provides an opportunity to discuss a pre-circulated scholarly essay. The recently mailed Events Calendar lists sessions taking place through the end of the year. For a full schedule and for information on how to subscribe to the series, please see our website (www.masshist.org) or contact Conrad E. Wright at 617-646-0512.

Research Fellowship Competitions

Each year the Society participates in four research fellowship competitions. Through long-term and short-term grants we are able to bring scholars to the Society for as many as 10 months and as few as 4 weeks. Our collaborations with the Boston Athenæum and the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium underwrite the research of scholars who spend a portion of their tenures at the MHS and also travel to some of our sister institutions. If you are interested in applying for one of our grants, you will find the information you need on the posters inserted in this issue of the *Miscellany* as well as on our website, www.masshist.org. Good luck! We are looking forward to reading your proposal.

Recent Grants Awarded to the MHS

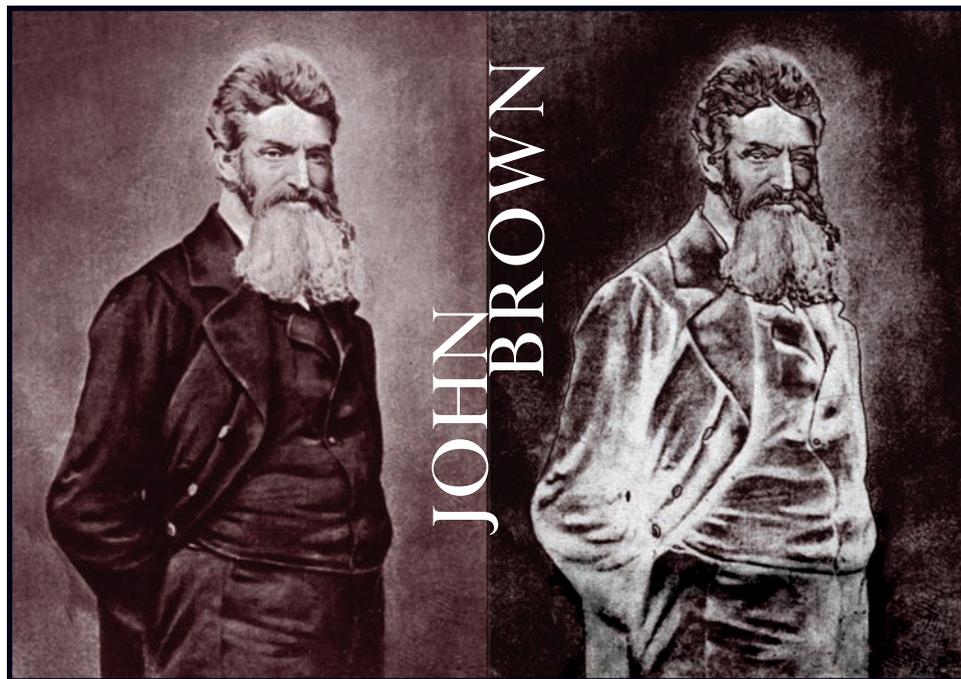
Every year, the Society is able to pursue new or maintain ongoing projects thanks to support from federal, state, and private grants. Awards announced in the last six months include

- » a \$450,000 two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and a \$317,800 contract from the Packard Humanities Institute for the Adams Papers to continue its work of publishing the papers of John and Abigail Adams and their extended family, in book and digital format;
- » a \$160,000 Landmarks of American History and Culture grant from the NEH to underwrite two one-week sessions of a 2010 workshop for teachers;
- » a \$16,771 Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for MHS Library Collections Services to microfilm the diaries of Sarah G. Putnam;
- » a \$15,000 grant from the Library of Congress to develop integrated curricular materials and programs around primary source documents from the collections of both the MHS and the LOC, focusing on the theme of the end of slavery;
- » and a \$12,500 grant from the Ruby W. and LaVon P. Linn Foundation to provide funding for the purchase of a new microfilm scanner station for the library.

In addition, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education selected the Society to provide a history-based summer institute for teachers—an honor it shared with the American Antiquarian Society, the only other institution chosen for this partnership. The department provided funding for the program.

LATE BREAKING PROGRAMMING NEWS

In October and November, the MHS is part of a team of organizations presenting *John Brown and New England*, a series of public programs commemorating the anniversary of the raid at Harpers Ferry. The MHS will contribute two lectures to the series, which is funded in part by Mass Humanities. Bruce Ronda, professor and chair of the Department of English at Colorado State University, will present the first lecture, "The Kaleidoscope of History: John Brown after Fifteen Decades," on 27 October. On 7 November, David S. Reynolds, distinguished professor at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, will discuss "Warriors for Freedom: John Brown and Henry David Thoreau." For more information on these events, visit the MHS online calendar at www.masshist.org/events.



For a description of the Society's fall exhibition of materials related to John Brown's life and the Harpers Ferry raid, see page 7 here.

MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1154 Boylston Street
Boston MA 02215

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Boston, Mass.
Permit No. 53