Spotlight: Barbara Shepler

“Any day at the museum is a great day.” That’s Barbara Shepler’s beloved mantra, but her day is also richer when it’s filled with music, worship, exercise and helping those who are less fortunate.

Art, music and church have been part of her life since she was a child growing up in Albany, N.Y. She took classes in art, sang in the church and high school choirs, and studied violin. “My nightly lullaby was my father’s piano playing … I would lie awake and listen as long as I could, not wanting to miss a note of Beethoven or Bach,” she says. While earning her degree at Boston’s Simmons College, she sang in the college choir and loved to visit the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. She also sang with the Trinity Episcopal Church chorus, where she met “my college sweetheart,” Harry Shepler, her husband.

The Sheplers have shared their love of art, music and faith with their children Christopher, Robert, William and Sarah. “We love to sing around the piano, especially at holidays,” says Barbara, who lives in Bedford. “Our children all sing and play musical instruments, and have a keen eye for fine art. They are passing on this love” to their four grandchildren, and one that is soon-to-be born.

Barbara and her husband - a longtime Currier trustee, Finance Committee Chair and Strategic Planning Committee member - have visited “numerous art museums in our worldly travels” and “have always enjoyed the Currier.” Barbara has been a museum docent since 2005, and has taken acrylic painting with Linn Krikorian at the Currier Art Center.

Museum Director and CEO Susan Strickler feels the Currier is lucky to have Harry and Barbara so deeply involved in the museum. “They are a real Currier leadership couple with incredible dedication to the museum.” She listed Harry’s contributions and notes Barbara is one of “our most devoted and enthusiastic docents.” She has served on the Guild board and in 2012 became the executive chair. “This shows real commitment on the part of each of them,” she says. “Together it is quite extraordinary, especially as they are active elsewhere in the community. They give generously of their time and funds, but quietly and thoughtfully.”

Barbara values “our excellent training” and her “exposure to changing exhibitions.” She feels it’s a privilege to work with the “many wonderful and interesting Currier volunteers.” She gets energized sharing her love of art with visiting students, she says, and giving each visitor a unique experience with the Currier’s art treasures.

Continued on p. 2
A New Year Begins

I welcome 2013 by wishing you all a healthy and prosperous New Year. The winter season is here and the Zimmerman House will close in a few days. Anticipation is building for the coming exhibit Lethal Beauty: Samurai Weapons and Armor. Please join me in thanking Nancy Johnson, Kim Tyndall, Karen Graham and all those involved for a delightful Semi-Annual Meeting. The glass sun-catchers by Chris Salmon were a unique commemorative gift for our 30th year. I admire our volunteers’ artworks displayed so handsomely in the Community Gallery. Please be mindful of dangerous roads or school and museum closings due to bad weather, which might affect any tours for which you are scheduled. All volunteers should have new photo ID’s for 2013. Please contact Guild Staff Advisor Karen Graham if you still have the 2012 ID. New security procedures require that all bags must be checked as you enter through the security entrance. We hope this change poses but a minor inconvenience.

I look forward to seeing you in the galleries. “Any day at the museum is a great day.”

Barbara Shepler,
Executive Chair, Currier Guild of Volunteers
494-6015
barbara.shepler@yahoo.com

Currier Staff News

Lynn Thomson is the new Associate Educator for Adult and Family Audiences. She has 11 years experience at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln, Mass. She is responsible for leading the development of programs and experiences that engage adult and family audiences with our collection and special exhibitions. She will also be Guild staff liaison.

Lynn, a Nashua resident, holds a bachelor of fine arts in Photography from the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University, and a masters in Museum Education from Tufts University. She is certified in early childhood education.

Another new hire is Korrena Cowing. She has been interning in the library, and will now work in the Museum Shop as a museum shop clerk.

Spotlight…continued from p. 1

Before joining the Currier, Barbara held board positions at Aglow International of N.H., Split Rock Yacht Club, and Youth With a Mission Boston. She worked as bookkeeper in various organizations, and for The Shepler Financial Group in Bedford. She manages the Sheplers’ two condo apartments in Florida.

Her favorite hobby is making quilts, but being involved in her church - Believers Christian Outreach, 140 Wilson St. - is a "source of strength and joy." The Sheplers were instrumental in the start-up congregation housed in an inner-city, storefront building they bought in 1998. Believers Christian Outreach hosts other organizations including the Sudanese Evangelical Church. The Kidz Club, sponsored by Life! Church in Hooksett, offers the opportunity to serve this multi-national neighborhood. It provides activities, gospel messages and feeds 75-110 children, depending on the time of year. Believers Christian, with Bethany Covenant Church in Bedford and Child Evangelism Fellowship, recently prepared a Christmas dinner for 150 neighborhood residents.

A dynamo, Barbara has recently become a tri-athlete, a single-day contest of swimming, biking and running. "I find I don’t mind sweating … crossing the finish line in a race, and meeting my personal goals is a great reward," she says. "Keeping my body fit, my spirit energized, my family relationships vibrant, and my soul satisfied has made my latter years fulfilling."

- Pauline Bogaert
Museum Docent Report

The museum docents have experienced an eventful October and November with varied trainings, despite Hurricane Sandy’s impact.

In October, Martin Fox returned to discuss the development of printmaking from “Dürer to Rembrandt.” His concentrations on the interplay of Dutch history and printmaking and on the ways in which prints served to convey information visually to observers were useful points for docents to express to museum goers.

In November, the focus changed to furniture; first to the White Mountain Breakfront, familiarly known as Lambovich IV, and then to Victorian furniture. The Breakfront presentation preceded the Guild’s semi-annual meeting. It focused on the amazing carving and marquetry techniques the piece embodies, and introduced docents to the New Hampshire references in both Lamb’s carvings and Aponovich’s triptych.

The second furniture presentation was more closely tied to the Currier’s furniture collection. Nancy Carlisle, senior curator of collections at Historic New England spoke on “Victorian Furniture: Design Run Amok or Inspired Creativity?” She offered a humorous, but invaluable, introduction to Victorian tastes and various styles that dominated the decorative arts from the 1840s to the 1900s. This was accompanied by the rare opportunity to examine the construction and interiors of some of the more important pieces of furniture in the Currier collection. Carlisle’s talk was a significant follow-up to the decorative arts experienced by the docents on our trip to Hartford.

The field trip to Hartford included visits to the Mark Twain House, Harriet Beecher Stowe House, and Wadsworth Atheneum. The Twain and Stowe houses are filled with just the types of furniture that Carlisle discussed. This gave docents an opportunity to think back on what they had seen in Hartford, especially the varied revival elements found in the entrance hall at the Twain house and in the furniture of both houses.

While the houses gave docents an opportunity to see Victorian furniture in an original setting, the Wadsworth was an experience all will remember because of the breadth and depth of the collection. Among the many highlights were some that allowed docents to reflect on our own collection. It was amusing to see the Atheneum’s various Sol Lewitt Whirls and Twirls, some of which were in more muted colors than our own. Their far more extensive American landscape collection complemented our own with many of the same artists represented in much greater number. Their William Merritt Chase portraits expanded the docents’ view of his work, since some of the Atheneum’s portraits, such as The Apprentice, are of working people rather than the wealthy.

Late in November, the Museum Docent Steering Committee met and discussed future training sessions, especially those in preparation for the coming exhibition Lethal Beauty: Samurai Weapons and Armor. These next sessions should help docents feel comfortable with art that may be unfamiliar and which is certainly outside the scope of the Currier collections.

Alan R. Slotkin, Museum Docent Chair 244-2805 aslotkin@nttech.edu

Z-House Doors and Windows Refurbished

The conservation of the front and back exterior Zimmerman House doors, as well as some treatment on window sills and other surrounding trim is finished. Marc Williams of the American Conservation Consortium, an expert on wood conservation, completed the treatment. I would like to thank Nelson Goddard, Ron Sklutas, Matt McMahon and the Building and Grounds and Security departments for their help in preparing and securing the site. Thanks also to Jeff Allen, Sky Shaw, Karen Papineau, Cindy Mackey for coordinating the door swaps; Barbara Case for informing our visitors; Jane Seney, Public Programs and the docents for their patience during the project.

P. Andrew Spahr, Director of Collections and Exhibitions 669-6144, ext. 114 paspahr@currier.org
Get More Involved in 2013

It’s that time for New Year’s resolutions. Perhaps this is the year to become more involved with the Currier Guild of Volunteers. Each year the Guild forms a nominating committee to fill any open seats on the executive committee. Committee chairs serve for two years attending monthly meetings as representatives/liaisons of every volunteer group in the museum. The committee exists to address all volunteer concerns, plan Guild functions and set volunteer policy.

Do you have ideas on areas the Guild could improve upon? Do you have energy to work issues for the benefit of all volunteers? Would you like to become more involved? Consider filling a vacant seat on the Guild executive committee as a 2013 resolution.

Here’s to a productive and prosperous year for the Currier and all volunteers. Please contact me if you are interested.

Dennie Dyer, Executive Vice Chair 603-434-8794 dennie.dyer@comcast.net

From the Library Corner

Many dedicated volunteers perform tasks that support the routine functions of the library, such as shelving, locating lost books, and identifying duplicate copies when materials are donated. However, these volunteers also perform a wide variety of special projects which assist the Currier Museum librarian in organizing, cataloguing and preserving archival materials. These projects include reviewing and organizing materials donated to the library. For example, Henry Melville Fuller left his personal papers to the Currier. One project involves reviewing and organizing those papers. Future newsletter articles will share details of some of the special projects being performed by our volunteers.

Charlotte DeBell, Library Chair 746-6077 charlottedebell@comcast.net

Meetings and Programs Report

Semi-Annual Luncheon Roundup

The Semi-Annual Luncheon was enjoyed by 87 attendees. Guild Staff Advisor Karen Graham was most helpful in seeing that the event went off without a hitch.

The committee -- Muriel McMillan, Ann Richardson, Florence Merrill, Nancy Stewart, Sally Douglas, and Yvonne Dunham -- was ready to do all that was needed, coming early to prepare centerpieces and be hostesses. Thanks to Bob McMillan who was our sommelier.

To celebrate the Guild’s 30th year, sun-catchers were created by our guest speaker Chris Salmon, and given as favors to attendees. Three Guild members also spoke: Fran Gordon, a Guild charter member; Jim Bennett, Distinguished Service Award 2011; and Sally Douglass.

Guild members brought their artwork which is currently displayed in the Community Gallery. Contributors were Nancy Colageo, Marilyn Davison, Denise Dyer, Nancy Johnson, Judy McKenna, Jim Townsend, Sally Shea, Alan Slotkin, Nancy Zadravec, Barbara Shepler and Sally Douglass.

Nancy Johnson, Meetings and Programs Chair 472-2040 amj-art@comcast.net

Henry Melville Fuller

Sun-catcher Chris Salmon
Design a Fused Glass Panel FLW Style

In a class with fused glass artist Verne Orloks at the Currier Art Center, students will look at the geometric patterns that filled Frank Lloyd Wright's houses. They will then design their own hanging panel in colorful fused glass. A brief tutorial of the fused glass process will get students started, and they will finish with a kiln-fired piece. Orlosk received her bachelor of fine arts in Graphic Design from Boston University. Teaching in a variety of media, while primarily working in fused glass, she currently exhibits her work at East Colony Fine Art Gallery, Manchester. To sign up, call the Currier Art Center 669-6144, x122. Or, download the winter catalog here.

A Conversation with… Karen Graham

Karen Graham, the Currier Guild’s staff advisor, came to the museum in November 2006 as Manager of Human Resources and Benefits. She later was promoted Director of Human Resources, and in April 2012 took over as Director of Operations and Human Resources. Karen brought 20 years of experience in operations and human resources in the supermarket industry, first with Waldbaums Foodmart in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and later the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company.

Karen “retired” in 1997 after bringing home infant son Zachary from Seoul, Korea. “I had worked very hard and waited a long time to become a mom, and was miserable leaving my son at home with a nanny while I worked 12 hour days at A & P.” Daughter Zoey arrived from Korea the next year, and for the next six years Karen was a part-time consultant until the 2004 move to New Hampshire.

Karen lives in Bedford with husband Joe; her children; and two shih tzu. She enjoys being with family and friends, watching her kids play sports, dance, and perform in a band. She delights in early morning exercise, book club, walking in breast cancer fundraisers, being by the ocean and travel.

My favorite piece(s) of art: As so many of our visitors to the Currier, I have always loved Impressionist artwork, so it’s no surprise that I’m drawn to the The Seine at Bougival by Claude Monet, and the works of American Impressionists, Mercie Cutting Flowers by Edmund Tarbell, and The Goldfish Window by Childe Hassam. But my very favorite piece in the collection, the one that I leave my office to go visit on harried afternoons, is Antonio Rossellino’s Madonna and Child. I love its history, that it was created in the 15th century, the beauty of the Madonna, the bold colors, the worm holes, and most of all, the story behind proving it was a genuine masterpiece.

My least favorite type of art: My quick answer is Modern, and yet as I say that, I know it’s no longer entirely true. I love the bronze Seated Nude by Henri Matisse, the photography of Lotti Jacobi, and I am, of course, fascinated by the works of Pablo Picasso.

My favorite museums: I’ve visited Italy three times and am in love with everything about the country. We spent a week in Tuscany with our children in 2008, and I enjoyed touring the museums of Florence with them. My favorites…loved the history, the architecture and the art of the Uffizi, and my kids loved the statues and the Museum of Musical Instruments at the Galleria dell’Accademia. I particularly enjoyed all of the altarpieces and Madonna and Child artwork…reminded me of our very own European Gallery at the Currier.

If I weren’t Director of Operations & HR I would be: I majored in Legal Studies in college, and always thought that I’d be a lawyer someday. Do I have any regrets? Absolutely not…if I’d pursued my original path, I would never have arrived at the Currier Museum of Art. I’ve so enjoyed my experiences here over the last six years - with the work that I’ve been able to do, the art education I’ve received, the wonderful staff and volunteers that I’ve had the pleasure to work with. These days I’m even learning to run a restaurant. No, I wouldn’t change a thing.

What I’m most proud of: I have framed paintings by my children Zack and Zoey hanging in my office. As Andrew Spahr has said, “Your kids will always be able to say that they once had their artwork hanging in an internationally renowned art museum.” On your next visit to the Currier, stop by to see their work!
At a recent docent training, I surprised the group by revealing that when I was growing up I was very shy. I guess I don't come across that way today. I am very interested in shyness and its cousin introversion. I often wonder how these things are encoded in us as individuals and how difficult they can be to overcome. I also wonder how being introverted or extroverted might affect how you lead a tour or how members of your group participate in a tour.

The current book I am reading relates perfectly; it is called *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking* by Susan Cain and it speaks about many of these issues. Cain presents a fascinating look at the way extroversion is valued in our culture today (and visits places like Harvard Business School, Saddleback Ranch, and a Tony Robbins seminar for concrete examples of this).

She argues the way introverts think and react to stimuli should be valued in the same way, but America today is literally shaped by extroverts -- look at today’s modern cubicle offices designed to enhance communication. Cain’s book dives deep into what makes us tick and determines our behavior. If you’re interested in these issues, you can take a quick quiz by clicking here to see if you’re an introvert or an extrovert. As it turns out I’m an ambivert, having both the qualities of an extrovert and an introvert. I’d be interested in hearing what you learn about yourself if you read the book or take the quiz.

Jane Seney, Educator for Tour and Docent Programs
603-669-6144, ext. 149
jseney@currier.org

---

Several volunteers have been active with many different museum requests since the last newsletter. These have been a roller-printing activity at the Currier Art Center and a photography session.

Volunteers have shown guests into the auditorium on Sunday afternoons when there has been a featured speaker.

The last Family Saturday had over 100 kids and parents in attendance. The four volunteers were kept busy furnishing supplies for the art activity. Some of the dads seemed to have as much fun as the kids and got into the spirit of things with their creations. Family Saturdays are held on the second Saturday of each month.

Sean McGovern assisted with the recent Storybook Time in the galleries. These are offered monthly on the fourth Monday. Children listen to a story being read, share their own thoughts and ideas with the group.

Thanks to Pat Howard, the Ambassadors are meeting once a month. They are a small, but enthusiastic group. The Ambassadors may be used as chaperones in the galleries when we have large school groups in attendance. Each month they participate in a museum tour led by various docents. Jim and Sandra Townsend led a “Forces of Nature” tour and Ted and Pam Parrot spoke about the Currier’s glass collection.

Flo Fitzgerald was recently welcomed back to the group after taking some time off.

Thanks to all who have volunteered recently. If anyone has an area they feel is particularly suited to their talents and interests, please let me know.

Marilyn Davison, Special Projects Chair
623-0148
davison1021@aol.com
Looking at 50 Years of Glass

We were in awe watching master glassmakers working their amazing creations. Glass making was not always something an artist could hope to do until the Toledo Museum of Art sponsored workshops 50 years ago. Glass workers then learned kiln construction, glass composition and glassblowing, among other techniques in the American Studio Glass (ASG) movement.

The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, N.Y., celebrated this event last October at their 51st annual glass seminar. Glass artists, scholars, and others attended the seminar and it was a good learning experience.

Glass artist, Toots Zynsky, who has created her own “filet de verre” glass technique, spoke on women in glass making. She recalled Linda McNeil, wife of Dan Dailey (not the actor, but a fellow glass artist), who makes fine glass jewelry. Paul Marioni, a founder of the studio movement, spoke about his life as a glass artist. Italian glassmaker Lino Tagliapietra, who with his highly specialized crew of helpers, demonstrated glassblowing by creating a 20-pound vessel in elaborate colors. Born and trained in Murano, Italy, Lino has been a major influence on American glass workers.

Corning Museum’s curator of modern glass, Tina Oldknow, told about the founding of Dale Chihuly’s Pilchuck Glass School in Washington. Zynsky and Dailey were early participants in Chihuly’s school. In 1972, the would-be glassmakers lived in primitive hippie conditions, but learned more about making and manipulating glass.

The Currier’s glass collection has works by Chihuly, Howard Ben Tré and Dailey. Noted glass paperweight artists in the Currier’s collection are Paul Stankard, Rick Ayotte and Josh Simpson.

This was our fourth seminar, and the most exciting. Hearing from, and talking with the people who created the ASG movement, and influential artists who are now the next generation of glass artists, was a superb experience.

- Pam and Ted Parrot

The Screening Room

Many of the titles in the Volunteer Video Collection relate to works in the Currier’s collection. This is just a small sample.

DVD#001 – Pursuing His Passion: Edmund C. Tarbell. Tarbell was a member of a group of impressionist painters from Boston. He and his family spent many of their summers in Newcastle, N.H. Considered one of America’s most accomplished artists at the turn of the 20th century, Tarbell produced works acclaimed for their exquisite beauty and craftsmanship, from vividly colored outdoor scenes to elegant interior views, formal portraits, and lush still-life compositions.

DVD#005 – Andrew Wyeth, Self-portrait: Snow Hill. Incorporating the artist’s great works of art along with family photographs, home movies, personal letters, never-before-seen footage of Wyeth and the first interview ever granted by famed model Helga Testorf, this program lends insight into Wyeth’s very private world.

DVD#015 – Three NH Artists: Aponovich, Abeles, and Granucci. Fritz Wetherbee takes you to the studios of these three artists. As they work, they explain their art.

DVD#020 – Lampwork of Rick Ayotte. The camera follows Ayotte as he employs the process of lampwork, which is a type of glasswork that uses a gas fueled torch to melt rods and tubes of clear and colored flowers, birds, lizards, snakes, and other such things. (See photo above, right)

DVD#022 – The Dreams of Peter Milton. Milton describes and demonstrates the process he uses to make his etchings and prints. Some believe his work in shades of black and grey are outstanding because of his color blindness. In addition the Currier owns a rare color painting (The Rehearsal) which he, with the help of his wife, did to prove he could paint in color.

-Theia Fischer

Note: The titles in the Video Library have been assigned an identification number. The entries in the three-ring-binder (in the closet) are more detailed.
Museum Seen
The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Visiting the new Barnes Foundation is like meeting an old friend after a long hiatus. On the outside there are visible changes, but on the inside everything is just as it always was. What a joy to pick up where you left off.

Those of you who viewed The Art of the Steal may wonder whether the Barnes justifies the trust-busting that brought it about. My response is a resounding, yes! The original Barnes collection -- one of the finest collections of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and Modern paintings in the world -- is displayed exactly as it was in Merion, its original home in Montgomery County. Today, the art works are housed within the architectural masterpiece created by Tod Williams and Billie Tsien.

Outside the building, there are calm reflecting pools and a landscape punctuated with sculptures by the likes of Ellsworth Kelly. The interior offers massive areas, high ceilings, and intimate classrooms that fulfill the Barnes Foundation’s educational mission. There are also areas that accommodate exhibits, workshops, concerts, and receptions. My favorite space is a small interior atrium, with a simple wood bench. It’s the perfect place to sit in Zen-like contemplation of a tree that grows several stories tall within the building.

The day I visited, I arrived early and used the time to enjoy an extensive exhibit of old photographs and memorabilia on the life of Dr. Albert C. Barnes. I also had time to browse in the modest, but quality, gift shop on the lower level.

The Barnes is centrally located on Benjamin Franklin Parkway, near the Rodin Museum, Free Library of Philadelphia, and Philadelphia Museum of Art. The parkway is within walking distance of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art. Parking is available at the museum and, less expensively, at some of the nearby parking garages.

It is important to note that entrance is reserved ticket at specified times. Plan your visit ahead to get the timing you want, especially if you are trying to visit other museums. Take note of all museum hours, too. The Barnes is open Mondays, when the PMA and PAFA are closed. The Barnes is closed Tuesdays, when the PMA and PAFA are both open.

- Fran Hall

Experiencing Wright’s Work from Within

My mother, Pat Morrison and I, both Zimmerman House docents, attended the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy conference October 10-14 in Mason City, Iowa. This is home to the Historic Park Inn and City National Bank (1909-1911), the only remaining hotel of six Wright-designed hotels built. Since the hotel has only 27 guest rooms, a lottery was held for the coveted accommodations. We were thrilled when we won the chance to stay in this newly restored building. (See photos of Suite 306 in the slide presentation.) Our small, two-room suite with attached bath was comfortable and had art glass windows giving a wonderful look to the room. Before the conference, we traveled to Owatonna, Minn., to see the Elam House, a sprawling 1950 Wright Usonian with a triangular module built of limestone mined near Taliesin; the exquisite National Farmers’ Bank designed by Louis Sullivan in 1908; and a Frank Gehry’s whimsical 1986 Winton Guest House.

Iowa claims eight Wright-designed homes and we toured six of them, including the Alvin C. Miller House, the Douglas and Jackie Grant House, both built in 1946, and the wonderful 1945 Lowell and Agnes Walter House, also known as Cedar Rock, a Usonian with a boat house. The garden room has 9 skylights and glass walls, which flood the room with natural light. The walnut dining room furniture and buffet can be set in various patterns. Corning Glass Company’s glass culls are placed around the room as decorative elements, which we know well from the Z- House.

Post-conference we visited two more Wright Usonians: The 1955 Robert Sunday House, which has a Wright-designed mailbox, and the 1956 Paul and Ida Trier House, still occupied by the children of the original owners. We also saw the marvelous Des Moines State House and Des Moines Art Center, designed by Eliel Saarinen in 1948, with later additions by I.M. Pei and Richard Meier.

- Mary Morrison

For Mary’s slide show of the conference and many FLW buildings, click here
If you are not a member of Snapfish, log in as a guest to view slide show.