



Bley House News

Dorset Historical Society

Summer 2009

A Quarterly Newsletter

Dorset Historical Society Presents a New Exhibition

THE ARTISTRY AND COLLECTION

OF

JESSICA H. BOND

Opening Reception for Friends and Members

Friday, May 29 from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Gallery Talk by Kathie Wall Evans

Protégé of Jessica H. Bond

EXHIBITION RUNS THROUGH 2009

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Museum Summer Hours

10 AM - 12 noon Weds.

10AM-2PM Thurs—Sat.

& by appointment

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www.dorsetvthistory.org

The Curator's Notebook

New Exhibition – "The Artistry and Collection of Jessica H. Bond"

A native of Providence, Rhode Island, Jessica H. Bond moved from Baltimore to Dorset in 1955 with her husband, Eugene. Her interest for many years had been the study of techniques used in painted stenciled designs found in 18th and early 19th century furniture, tinware, clocks, mirrors, reverse glass painting, theorems and more. But it was not until she moved to Vermont that Jessica saw another form of decoration: the designs stenciled or painted freehand on the walls of some early New England houses. From that point on she devoted much of her time to photographing and tracing these walls, making documentary records of the designs in color on sheets or poster board and categorizing them according to the state and town in which they were found. She also restored old stenciling. Her documentation is a study in early American design and she always encouraged people to preserve and protect their walls as another link to the cultural tastes of our ancestors. "Anyone who sees a stenciled wall will get an impact that is hard to describe. I wanted to find more and more and trace where the itinerant stencilers went..." (Jessica Bond).

Background: Jessica H. Bond stencil pattern for a Christmas card

The Curator's Notebook (cont'd)

Kathie Wall Evans, Jessica Bond's longtime friend and protégé, and I began working together in January reviewing the extensive Bond materials we are fortunate to have in our collection. After several weeks of going through everything in the various decorative arts media represented, choices of objects that would be in the new exhibition, *The Artistry and Collection of Jessica H. Bond*, began to emerge. What fascinated me and what I wanted to learn more about was Jessica's process, both as an artist and as a collector. In both areas she always seemed to work with an eye toward the future and those who would be interested in what she had been able to do in her creative endeavors, and the techniques she had been able to record and preserve. In that sense she was always active as a teacher and clearly wanted the work to continue. Kathie and I have tried to translate these ideas into the focus of the exhibition while showing the outstanding skills this woman achieved in her work as a whole.

Jessica was a charter member of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration and among the first four people in the United States to receive a Master Craftsman Award from the Esther Stevens Brazer Guild of the Historical Society of Early American Decoration. I hope many people will see this exhibition and learn more about Jessica H. Bond and her extraordinary artistry and collection.

New in the Collection

I am very pleased to announce that due to the generosity of Susan Richardson there are two new paintings by Arthur Jones in the collection: *The Old School House* and *Bird's Nest with Flowers*. Both paintings hung in the Jones Retrospective exhibition at the Elizabeth de C. Wilson Museum at the Southern Vermont Arts Center during the fall of 2008. Previously DHS had only one painting by Arthur Jones of the Dwight Barnard House in Deerfield, Massachusetts. Many readers have known Arthur for several years and have followed his career but I have just begun to get to know him and his paintings. I find his work genuinely unique and accessible to the viewer. Although he received advice and encouragement from many well-known Dorset artists, he is self taught and over the many years he has been putting brush to canvas he has developed a vernacular language that is truly his own. I find looking at his paintings an inviting and friendly experience much like having a conversation with him. The two new works are presently on exhibition in the Venetian-Red Gallery.



Arthur Jones: Bird's Nest With Eggs



Arthur Jones: The Old School House (1953)

Also worthy of mention is the fact that this year we have had two of our important paintings cleaned and conserved by Randy Smith of Middlebury: *Church Street – Dorset (circa 1925)* by Edwin B. Child and *Untitled Landscape* by Harriet de Sanchez (a gift from Libby Sturges). There are many good reasons to visit the Bley House Museum and I hope you will do so often.

Susanne Rappaport

Curator

Rideout Family Collection Comes to Dorset Historical Society

Every year the Dorset Historical Society is the recipient of numerous gifts of materials related to the town and local families that enhance the Society's collection at Bley House. The year 2008 was no exception with some 70 such acquisitions. One remarkable collection is a store of memorabilia-including some 500 photographs and 1,500-plus letters saved by members of the Rideout family.

Timothy A. Ridout (one early spelling), born in Weston in 1814, was, according to the 1860 U.S. census of Dorset, a lumberman, whose \$6,000 of real estate holdings outstripped those of virtually everybody else in town. Timothy's son, Samuel Eugene Rideout (born in Landgrove), joined Company C of the 14th Vermont Regiment for nine-month duty in response to Lincoln's second call for volunteers in 1862. He survived the Battle of Gettysburg to return to Dorset. After the war he married Sarah Baldwin, a descendant of one of the town's first settlers, and ran a business here for some years.

Included in the Rideout Folio is a hide-bound ledger (with entries dated from 1871 to 1893) of Samuel's Dorset store, which sold sawmill products and services (sawing and planing), as well as tobacco, nails, shoes, flannel, and "shirting" by the yard. Other sales listed in the ledger range from "clap boards" to quinces, tea, and pork. Some purchases are entered as "trading for a day's work." Apparently the store was something of a non-institutional bank, evidenced by the entry, "amount due on mortgage note." One local buyer got goods in exchange for "1/2 day digging potatoes." Another toted up a credit of \$109.75 "by laying cellar wall." A third entry lists payment of a dollar for "one day's work timbering."



Portrait of Samuel Eugene Rideout, taken at a Hudson, Ohio photography studio

Among the children of Samuel and Sarah Baldwin Rideout were two daughters, teachers of Native Americans in the Nebraska Territory. Adelaide Rideout joined the faculty of the Santee Normal Training School in 1891. There she met Frederick Riggs, grandson of Rev. Stephen Riggs, who founded that school at the Santee Mission, which was devoted to the Mandan Sioux people of the area. In contrast to prevailing U.S. government policy, the Santee Mission was intent on *not* suppressing the Indian language. Rev. Riggs was an author of the first dictionary of the language as well as a Sioux translation of the Bible. Addie and Fred were married in 1893, but she would die less than two years later at age 28. A Web site devoted to Adelaide Rideout Riggs can be accessed at <http://www.hudson.lib.oh.us/hudson%20website/Archives/Archives/AdelaideRideoutRiggs/AdelaideRideoutRiggs.htm>. Her sister Bertha, who similarly died at a young age, was another Mission worker. The Rideout Folio has a sizable collection of views of the Mission, the Normal School, and its faculty and students.

All three children of Samuel's first marriage (Addie, Eugene Glazier and Bertha) were born in Dorset between 1866 and 1872; his wife died here in 1873. Afterward the family relocated, initially to Chicago, and later to Hudson, Ohio, where Samuel had an agricultural business dealing in farm implements and animal feed. The Folio includes records and photographs of his second wife, Mary Lane Rideout, whom he married in Ohio, and their sons. Portions of the Rideout Folio treat related families such as Baldwin, Burdick, Deane, Glazier, Hardy, Matzke, Snyder, Treffrey, Veasey, Whitford, some with Vermont roots.



S. E. Rideout living the soldier's life at the Grand Army of the Republic 50th anniversary encampment, Gettysburg, PA 1913.

In Ohio, the Rideouts were keenly interested in such new inventions as photography and the bicycle. One son's collection of late 19th-century views of his hometown is housed in the Hudson Library and Historical Society. A photograph (now in the DHS collection) of a Rideout family group of eight with their bicycles is an extraordinary study in design. A number of interesting photos give views of the shop known as Rideout Brothers Linotype Composition, founded in Chicago by two of Samuel's sons. One remarkable postcard in the collection pictures the Corn Palace, centerpiece of the 1892 Corn Belt Exposition in Mitchell, South Dakota. With wooden towers, turrets and spectacular geometric designs, all faced with local agricultural products, the original building was a brilliant marketing device. (A successor structure exists today as an exhibition hall that draws 500,000 visitors a year.) **cont'd on p. 4**

The Rideout Collection (cont'd)

Among the myriad letters of the Rideout Folio, many were written by people here reporting to former residents in the Midwest on Vermont happenings. There are also examples of turn-of-the-century Christmas, birthday, and other-occasion cards, all postcards. Two letters have lengthy discussions of Russellism, one of the many evangelical Protestant offshoots of the late 19th century.

Samuel's son, Eugene Glazier Rideout married Stella Burdick who had a connection with the Treffry Family of England. There's a photo of a stone building in Beer Barton, a place linked to Roger Treffry, writer of a historic scientific paper in 1792, which identified the cause of "smut-balls," a wheat and grain blight, and provided a method of prevention.

The Rideout Collection was presented to DHS by Sara O'Brien of Jacksonville, Oregon, a great-granddaughter of Samuel Rideout. The premier guardian of the family records was her aunt, Adelaide Rideout Johnson (1911-2008), who had visited Dorset with her father, Eugene G. Rideout. One postcard sent in 1960 from San Francisco by Adelaide Johnson to her hospitalized father in Ohio, reads, "Hi-Popsie-I thought you might like to see this picture of your favorite spot in Dorset...." It's a photo of the water-filled Dorset Quarry with swimmers.

DHS welcomes this trove of Rideout Family history with its Dorset base and wide-ranging family tentacles. Volunteers at DHS recently completed the work of cataloging the Rideout Folio, now safely stored in five sizable archival boxes.



"The Land-Locked Mariner" This cartoon by artist Orson Lowell from the Rideout folio, (set in Dorset, Vt.), shows an ocean-going horseless carriage in earliest automotive days. *The Dusty Mermaid*, complete with captain and crew, boasts elliptical wheels for a genuine "at sea" sensation.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Calder, Gordon and Donna

Chandler, Henry and Robin

Elliott, Cynthia Sterling

Gilbert, James and Peg

Hardy, Luane

Jones, Steven and Lee

King, W. L., Jr.

Lynch, David and Evelyn

Phillips, Erwin and Carol

Salk, Jonathan and Shepherd, Elizabeth

Wood, B. Robert

Please Join Us !

Volunteers are the backbone of the Dorset Historical Society. They range in age from High School students to Senior Citizens and include anyone with an interest in history and a desire to share it. Please call if you are interested in any of the following volunteer activities:

MUSEUM GUIDES

DATA ENTRY

SPECIAL EVENTS

WORKING ON COLLECTIONS WITH CURATOR

MANAGING THE GIFT SHOP

COMMITTEE SERVICE (many varied opportunities)

Dorset Historical Society Undertakes Vermont Barn Census for Dorset

On April 1 the Dorset Historical Society began its seven-month initiative to document, measure and photograph barns and agricultural structures more than 50 years old in Dorset as part of the Vermont Barn Census. The state-wide census is being funded by a Preserve America Grant through the National Park Service to the State of Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and is being conducted locally by volunteers from Dorset and students from Burr and Burton Academy. To participate in the census, Dorset residents need to sign up at the Dorset Historical Society or with volunteers outside the Dorset Post Office. The census will be conducted throughout the spring, summer and fall of 2009.

The purpose of the census is to record trends in Vermont's agricultural heritage, record former uses and current conditions of out-buildings, learn agricultural and family histories of properties as they are available and identify how many significant structures the State is losing. The results will be shared with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and be a permanent community resource for the Dorset Historical Society. According to Nancy Boone, Vermont State Preservation Officer, this first-time barn census is an opportunity that will lay the foundation for further efforts to preserve important agricultural structures throughout the State. More information about the state-wide census can be found on the www.historicvermont.org web site.

Do you have an English Barn, Yankee Barn, Bank Barn, Pole Barn, Connected Barn or Carriage Barn? Is Dorset's current agricultural trend equine and equestrian? If so, will this encourage restoration of barn structures? The DHS hopes to document and uncover stories such as these. Corn cribs, chicken coops, ice houses, milk sheds, mills and mill foundations, sugar houses, apple barns, piggeries, sheep sheds, mink sheds, blacksmith sheds, carriage houses and livery stables are as important as barns in documenting these trends. Old photographs of structures will also contribute to the Bley House Museum's historical records. Old photographs can be scanned and returned to the owner.



Dick and Ginny Freeman with their 1780's blacksmith shop from the original Baldwin Farm in Dorset Hollow

Foundations of old structures are important to the census as well as agricultural structures which may have been converted to living spaces or service sheds. Many structures have been moved within Dorset and the history of their origin is equally important to documenting Dorset's history

"I am pleased the Dorset Historical Society can contribute to this state-wide initiative," said Dorset Historical Society president, Dick Hittle, in April. "There is an interest and conversation about the project that is encouraging in its early stages. The census brings to mind the many existing structures in the Dorset area that should be included. We look forward to having a permanent record for the Society to be used by future generations."

MAY IS VERMONT BARN CENSUS MONTH

Come hear Nancy Boone, Vermont State Preservation Officer, speak about the Vermont State Barn Census, Wednesday, May 20 7:45 PM at Long Trail School — FREE,

SAVE THESE DATES!

Friday, May 29 5-7 pm "*Jessica Bond Exhibit*" opening reception

Saturday, June 20 10-12am: "*History and Many Faces of Stenciling*" by Kathie Wall Evans, Bley House Museum (sign up at opening reception)

Saturday, June 27 9:30-Noon: "*Quarry Walks for families — Gettysburg Quarry*" Art Gilbert and Susanne Rappaport-Meet at museum to carpool FREE

Saturday 7/18, 7/25 and 8/8 "*Quarry Walks for Families*" Gettysburg, Folsom and Freedley Quarries, 9:30-Noon. FREE

Saturday July 25, 1:00—4:00 pm "*Ice Cream Social*" Free ice cream and activities on Bley House Museum lawn

Saturday Sept. 5 Opening: "*Dorset Church—100th Anniversary Celebration*"; 2nd floor Red Gallery, Bley House Museum (To Oct. 12)

May 30 "*Auction on Church Street*"

wed Sept 23 or Thurs. Sept. 24 7:30 pm "*The Pottery and Life of the Enslaved American Potter—Poet Dave*" Arthur Goldberg, Long Trail School.

Membership

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Yes, I want to join the Dorset Historical Society.

Please enroll me at the level indicated:

Enclosed is my check, payable to **Dorset Historical Society -Membership**

Membership runs from January 1 to December 31

Membership Levels (please check one):

Regular - \$35 Supporter - \$50
 Sustaining - \$100 Patron - \$250
 Benefactor \$500 Other \$ _____

Mail to: Dorset Historical Society PO Box 52, Dorset, Vermont 05251

Name _____

Address _____

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Phone () _____ E-mail _____

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