



Mini-facts and Anchors

Keeping you up-to-date on all things old and new at the . . .

Kittery Historical & Naval Society

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"American Eagle: The Bold Art & Brash Life of John Haley Bellamy

A definitive biography of John Haley Bellamy is soon to be published, and its author, James Craig, will be the guest speaker at the March 11 meeting of the Kittery Historical & Naval Society.

Widely considered to be the pinnacle of American woodcarving, the Bellamy Eagle vies with such hallowed icons as the Statue of Liberty, the Great Seal, and Old Glory itself in representing the United States. Yet what of its creator? Who was the man responsible for giving flight to this most celebrated piece of Americana? Recounting more than five years of investigative findings, author James Craig answers these and other questions concerning the art and life of the immortal John Haley Bellamy, Kittery's favorite son and America's greatest woodcarver.

An independent curator and lecturer specializing in American marine art, James A. Craig became enamored with New England's maritime saga while studying Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts. Having by his own admission "fallen" into the world of fine art, Craig was first employed at the House of Seven Gables Museum in nearby Salem, MA, where he served as a curatorial assistant and museum educator.

He went on to serve as Associate Curator for Collections at the Cape Ann Museum in Gloucester, where he published an award winning biography on the great American marine painter Fitz Hugh Lane. Besides "*Fitz H. Lane: An Artist's Voyage through Nineteenth-Century America*" (The History Press, 2006, he has published "*100 Essex Road: An American Treasure*" about the George Cabot Lee estate in Newton, Massachusetts (2008) and "*Frank Vining Smith: Maritime Painting in the 20th Century*" (Hard Press Editions, 2010). In 2011, he contributed to the Portsmouth Historical Society's "*Maritime Portsmouth: The Sawtelle Collection*", describing the artistic relationship of George S. Wasson and John Haley Bellamy.

When not performing his duties as an independent consultant to fine art collectors, antique dealers, and museums, he can be found along the granite shores of the ancient fishing port of Gloucester, Massachusetts, where he resides with his wife Katie, their two cats, and that irascible scoundrel, George the Turtle.

If my body was a car, this is the time I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish and my paint job is getting a little dull ...

But that's not all ...

My headlights are out of focus and it's especially hard to see things up close.

My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather.

My whitewalls are stained with varicose veins.

It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns inefficiently.

But here's the worst of it,

Almost everytime I sneeze, cough or sputter, either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires!



Now Hear This!

We've got four terrific programs planned for our meetings this year!

Just a reminder that our regular meetings are held on the SECOND Tuesday of March, June, September and December, starting at 7 P.M. (unless otherwise noted), at the Lions' Club Building on State Road in Kittery

March 11 - James A. Craig, Author
"American Eagle: The Bold & Brash Life of John Haley Bellamy"

In anticipation of the huge exhibit of Bellamy works opening April 3 at the *Discover Portsmouth* center, and the simultaneous publication of his new book about Bellamy, James Craig will be the featured speaker at our first meeting of the new season. After five years of extensive research, Craig will be able to answer your questions about Bellamy's life and work, debunking some popular beliefs, and substantiating others.

June 10 - Gary Hildreth
History of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Gary Hildreth works in the Public Relations Office of the Shipyard, and is an expert when it comes to the history of our local facility. He offers his expertise freely, giving classes at the Adult Education Program at Traip Academy, and offers an insightful bus tour of the facility on special occasions. Be sure to bring your questions!

September 9 - Kevin Gardner
"Discovering New England Stone Walls"

Kevin Gardner has been a stone wall builder for nearly forty years, and is particularly known for restoration of antique structures. His talk covers a few of the main topics of his book about New England stone walls, *The Granite Kiss*, touching on history, technique, stylistic development, and aesthetics. He explains how and why New England came to acquire its thousands of miles of stone walls, the ways in which they and other dry stone structures were built, how their styles emerged and changed over time, and their significance to the famous New England landscape.

December 9 - Dana Benner
"Winter Preparations of Native Americans"

Just how did the Native Americans of this region prepare for, and survive, New England winters. It's a question certainly worth asking, especially after the winter we're hoping is nearing an end. Dana Benner has made a study of the ways of the local tribes, and offers great insight into their customs and habits. Being of Native American ancestry himself, he speaks firsthand of the preparations necessary to ensure survival in New England's harsh winter climate.

SOCIETY CHATTER



PONTINE FUNDRAISER

Once again, the Society is teaming up with the Pontine Theatre Group of Portsmouth, for a matinee performance fundraiser, this time featuring "*Isles of Shoals: The Eternal Sound of the Sea*". M. Marguerite Mathews and Greg Gathers reprise their critically acclaimed original production about the history and legends of the Isles of Shoals.

Based on the writings of Celia Thaxter and Nathaniel Hawthorne, *THE ETERNAL SOUND OF THE SEA* combines shadow puppets, toy theatre and live action to tell of ghosts, shipwrecks, natives and "rusticators," and languid days in bygone summers by the sea.

A limited number of tickets will be available at the next meeting of the Society on March 11, and subsequently at the Museum on Wednesdays, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

YARD SALE TIME (Almost)

It won't be long before we'll be collecting things once again for our annual YARD SALE. This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, May 17 with a raindate (heaven forbid) for the next day.

This is always our biggest fundraiser of the year, and it never ceases to amaze us how much "stuff" we are able to collect in such a short time. We only have to thank our members and many supporters for their generosity. If you have **usable** items ... old or new ... that need a new home, you can drop them off at the Museum on Wednesdays, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. Items that need to be picked up? Call the Museum at (207) 439-3080 and we can make arrangements for that, too!

Please ... no large appliances. They usually don't sell, and it costs us to dispose of them. Thanks!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you might be interested in donating a couple hours a week as a Museum greeter, please give us a call. There's always a need for new faces at the front desk, and you meet a lot of interesting people. Call 439-3080 and leave your name and number. Thanks!

