

friends OF SAINT-GAUDENS

CORNISH | NEW HAMPSHIRE | FALL / WINTER 2012

IN THIS ISSUE

Early Concerts at Aspet | 1

The Playhouse at Blow-Me-Down Farm | 4

Sculptural Visions 2012 | 6

Third Annual Star Party Success! | 7

Owl Awards: Best Musical Series | 8

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are pleased at the rich array of programs we were able to offer at the park this year. Among these were the well-received exhibitions in the Picture Gallery; Sunday concerts in the Little Studio; 19 Sculpture Workshops for participants at all levels; the Memorial's new Transportation Grants, which so far this year have made it possible for an additional 250 school children to visit the park; as well as the Sculptural Visions and Stargazers events (see inside for more on these programs).

During the "off season" the park staff will be busy with conservation work, maintenance, research, and planning for future educational programs, among other things, and both organizations will be working on programs and some special events for 2013. One of these will be a special exhibition and event to mark the 150th anniversary of the Battle at Fort Wagner, where Colonel Robert Shaw and many of his 54th Massachusetts Regiment died. These men were later commemorated by Saint-Gaudens' incomparable *Shaw Memorial*.

We appreciate the support of all of our Friends, near and far, who have made possible these programs and other work that enhances the park and the legacy of Saint-Gaudens. We hope to see you next year.

Byron Bell
PRESIDENT OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Saint-Gaudens Memorial

Rick Kendall
SUPERINTENDENT
Saint-Gaudens

National Historic Site

EARLY CONCERTS

AT

Aspet

By Fern K. Meyers

It's possible that I attended the very first public concert at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. I recall running across an expansive lawn toward the perennial gardens near a big, white house with impressive columns and a decorative fence. I was too young to remember any details about the concert but it made a lasting impression.



I've often wondered who performed and what they played. Could that have been in 1948 when, it was believed, the concert series began?

I delved into the concert archives at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. Curiously, there are no reports of any musical activity before 1951. This is explained in the minutes for the annual meetings of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, located in Rauner Special Collections at the Dartmouth College

A music program at Aspet started with a piano recital in 1951 has grown into a series of nine free concerts throughout the summer.

Library. According to those archives (MS1209), Mr. Arthur Quimby became a Trustee of the Memorial in 1951.

Coincidentally, I knew Arthur Quimby. He was my accompanist when I played

(*"Early Concerts at Aspet" cont. on page 2*)

• 1952 •

PIANO RECITAL

Denoe Leedy

FEATURED COMPOSERS

Soler, Albeniz, Chopin,

Schumann, Milhaud,

De Falla, Fauré and Copland.



'cello at my family's church and the organist at my wedding. Arthur had grown up in Windsor and taught music in the Cornish schools. He was a fine musician who studied in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. He became curator of musical arts at the Cleveland Museum of Art and chairman of the music departments at Western Reserve and Connecticut College. Arthur retired from academia in 1963 and returned with his wife, Marguerite Lewin, to her family home in Plainfield. He was a gentle, impeccably groomed and well-dressed man with thick, white hair who had a gracious way with people. He was a Trustee of the Memorial for 36 years, serving as Chairman of the Music Committee for much of that time. He passed away in 1987.

Under the heading "Music Project" in the Memorial archives of July 14, 1951, the minutes stated: "Mr. Platt [Mr. William Platt, President of the Memorial] asked Mr. Quimby to discuss the suggestion that has been made that the Memorial have a music program, with the idea of holding some concerts next year. Mr. Quimby gave his estimate of the approx-

imate cost of renting chairs, printing programs, moving piano, etc. as in the neighborhood of \$62.00. The fee for musicians would depend on those chosen, or available, and the cost of the publicity was not considered. It was of the opinion of the Board that something of this sort should be attempted if the financial backing could be obtained."

At the Trustees meeting of March 4, 1952, Arthur Quimby suggested a concert and proposed a budget of \$32.00 to cover rental chairs and programs. He discussed three ensembles; the Hanover Trio, (violin, 'cello and piano), Denoe Leedy (piano), and Suzanne Bloch, songs with lute, recorder and virginal. The Trustees voted as follows: "On motion duly seconded, Mr. Denoe Leedy, pianist, was chosen as offering the most desirable program of the three..." Mrs. John Burling underwrote the concert in memory of her mother, Mrs. Taylor, who was active in promoting music in Cornish, and who had been Mr. Quimby's piano teacher. Mrs. John Ames (Mary F. Goodyear), a Trustee of the Memorial, loaned her piano.

A press release dated July 19, 1952 reads: "A music program is a new departure for the Saint-Gaudens Memorial but it is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the man whose work is commemorated here. One of Saint-Gaudens' favorite relaxations was music and he would have enjoyed knowing that people could

• 1953 •

SONG RECITAL

Arthur Quimby

Suzanne Der Derian

FEATURED COMPOSERS

Handel, Mozart, Schubert,

Ravel, Puccini, Giannini,

Niles and Lippe

listen to it in the studio where he once worked so hard at his sculpture. If this recital is a success the trustees of the Memorial hope to make future concerts a feature of the summer season...Tickets are now on sale...The admission charge is 75 cents."

The first program occurred on July 27, 1952 at 5:30 PM. Composers featured were Soler, Albeniz, Chopin, Schumann, Milhaud, De Falla, Fauré and Copland. At the Trustees meeting on July 11, 1953 Quimby reported that it was "a reasonably successful first concert." For the second concert, on August 23, 1953, Arthur Quimby accompanied the lyric soprano Suzanne Der Derian in a song recital. The press release described that concert as "an interesting program of classical and modern music." Featured composers were Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Ravel, Puccini, Giannini, Niles and Lippe. Total expenses for that song recital were \$326.64.

• 1954 •

PIANO RECITAL
Zosiz Jacynoivic

FEATURED COMPOSERS

*Bach, Mozart, Brahms,
Debussy and Chopin*

On August 15, 1954, Zosiz Jacynoivicz (assistant Professor of Music at Connecticut College) performed solo piano works by Bach, Mozart, Brahms, Debussy and Chopin. The program cost \$245.19. Apparently, the concerts at Aspet were gaining popularity. In 1955 the *Hanover Gazette* reported that “music is getting to be an institution at the Saint-Gaudens Memorial.” Those people who attended that concert heard the Melville Smith Quartet perform on the loggia of the Little Studio. The *Gazette* reported: “music is rarely played against a finer backdrop than Mt. Ascutney at sunset.” Smith, who played harpsichord, had been Arthur Quimby’s good friend since their student days at Harvard. Other members of the ensemble played violin, oboe and ‘cello. They presented 17th and 18th century works by Couperin, Handel, Corelli, Bach, Byrd and Bull.

Concerts were a natural addition to the exhibitions and other events at the Park. Saint-Gaudens loved music. He hosted private concerts in his New York studio and there were impromptu musical gatherings at Aspet and throughout the Cornish Colony. In 1965 the Memorial conveyed the property and collection to the National Park Service. The Legislation states: “In order that the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site may achieve more effectively its purpose as a living memorial, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to cooperate with the Saint-Gaudens Memorial...in the

• 1955 •

CONCERT
Melville Smith Quartet

FEATURED COMPOSERS

*17th and 18th Century Works
by Couperin, Handel, Corelli,
Bach, Byrd and Bull.*

• 2012 •

NINE CONCERTS

European and American Works
in Flute, Guitar, Piano
Violin, Violoncello & Song

FEATURED COMPOSERS

*Copeland, Debussy, Gershwin,
De Falla, Gottschalk, Chen
Brahms, Bach, Schubert,
Britten, Bernstein.*



presentation of art expositions and festivals and other appropriate events that are traditional to the site.” The earliest cooperative agreement between the Park and Memorial provides for the use of the Little Studio and grounds for a weekly concert series.

The Sunday “institution”, established by the Trustees, has grown over the past 60 years to a program of nine free concerts, with a loyal following. Many peo-

ple have made a tradition of Sunday afternoon at the Park. Some bring lawn chairs, a folding table, picnic and bottle of wine to share with good friends. Others spread a blanket in a quiet, shady spot and read a book. “Regulars” arrive early to claim front row seats in the Little Studio or on the vine covered pergola where they can see the musicians while catching the summer breezes. Sometimes visitors happen

(“Early Concerts at Aspet” cont. on page 4)

(“Early Concerts at Aspet” cont. from page 3)

upon these concerts unexpectedly and only want a short sample. They sit outside on the loggia half wall and then, discreetly, steal away. In this place of beauty it is easy to drift into reverie admiring the white columns and pastel hollyhocks that frame a bucolic view of verdant, rolling meadows and evergreens which draw the eye to Mount Ascutney; revered by Cornish Colony artists who painted the same vistas more than a century ago.

From a musician’s perspective, the Little Studio is an ideal concert hall; the venue is intimate, the audience is receptive to a wide range of repertoire, the acoustics are lively, and the setting is incomparable. One rarely performs surrounded by some of the finest sculptures in the world.

Which of those early concerts I attended at Aspet may always be a mystery, but it’s interesting to know who performed them and what they played. My hope is that many generations to come will have the opportunity to hear fine music at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site.

Fern K. Meyers is the director of the Memorial’s concert series at the Park. She is author of the books *America’s Musical Pioneers and the Cornish Colony* and *Beyond a Gilded Cage*, an adaptation of *Recollections* by Laura Marquand Walker. She is coauthor of the book *New Hampshire’s Cornish Colony* with James B. Atkinson. Meyers has released three recordings with the ensemble SilverWood that feature previously unrecorded chamber music by Cornish Colony composers: *At Fox Meadow, Dawn*, and *American Music Sampler*. She has written several articles about the Cornish Colony, led courses on that topic at the Institute for Lifelong Education at Dartmouth College and produced reenactment scenes for the documentary *Augustus Saint-Gaudens Master of American Sculpture*.

THE PLAYHOUSE AT BLOW-ME-DOWN FARM

The complete history of the ca. 1850 playhouse that today is located at Blow-Me-Down Farm is not known. What is known is that the structure was originally located at the Evarts Estate across the Connecticut River in neighboring Windsor, Vermont.

Senator William Evarts and his wife Helen had twelve children, so one can imagine that the playhouse received considerable use by the Evarts family and their children’s friends. Its use as a playhouse in Windsor likely lasted into the 1870s.



The playhouse in the meadow viewed from Dingleton Hill, 1891

In 1874, Charles Beaman married Hettie Evarts, daughter of William Evarts, and they had their first of four children, Mary, in 1875. In 1882, Beaman purchased the Blow-Me-Down Farm in Cornish, New Hampshire and began building a home there, Blowmedown Cottage, which was completed in 1884. The Beamans moved into the house that summer and began constructing out-buildings including the magnificent red barn. The playhouse was moved to Blow-Me-Down Farm on September 19th, 1885, on the same day that a

birthday celebration was being held at the property for seven-year-old Margaret Beaman, the couple’s second youngest child. Charles Beaman recorded the event in the *Blow-me-down Record*. The playhouse was “brought from Windsor with two yokes of oxen.” According to the *Blow-me-down Record*, the children attending the birthday party met the playhouse at the Blow-me-down Bridge, which would have been the wooden bridge that preceded the Stone-Arch-Bridge that was constructed in 1891. The playhouse is only mentioned

on one other date in the Blow-me-down Record, Monday, July 2nd, 1888. This record states that the playhouse was cleaned and that trees were planted, although it is not distinguished whether there is a relation between the two events. Current information about the Beaman family's use and positioning of the playhouse is limited to a photograph of Blow-Me-Down Farm taken from Dingleton Hill in 1891. In that photograph, the playhouse is clearly seen out in the open meadow, to the northwest of the Beaman Barn.

The playhouse was “brought from Windsor with two yokes of oxen” to Blow-Me-Down Farm on September 19th, 1885.

By the time that the Saint-Gaudens Memorial donated the Blow-Me-Down Farm to the National Park Service in 2010, the playhouse had been moved a number of times from its 1891 location and was in severely deteriorated condition, with much of the historic fabric of the building, including the porch, lost to decay due to years of moisture infiltration and neglect. In an effort to restore the structure to its original appearance, members of the Saint-Gaudens NHS staff met with Judy Hayward of the Preservation Education Institute in Windsor, Vermont and members of the Cornish Historical Society to discuss strategies for restoration. The Cornish Historical Society also provided a small grant to help defray the cost of the restoration. Based on this conversation, the NPS initially hoped to partner with a local technical school to accomplish



The playhouse at Blow-Me-down Farm before (left) and after (right) restoration over the summer of 2012.

much of the hands-on restoration efforts; however, due to a number of logistical considerations, including the need to remove lead paint from the structure, the decision was ultimately made that park preservation staff would restore the building.

Prior to initiating the restoration effort, the park enlisted the help of Student Conservation Association intern Colette Kinane, a student in historic preservation at the University of Pennsylvania, in preparing an historic structures report for the building. After Colette completed her analysis, the park requested and received funding from the NPS Cultural Resources program to remove lead paint from the building. This work was completed by a contractor during the first part of the summer. The park also acquired custom-milled lumber from a local vendor, to replace structural elements beyond repair. Park preservation staff began restoring the playhouse in

August. This initially entailed taking apart the entire structure and rebuilding it from the ground up, utilizing as much of the original historic fabric as possible.

Prior to the lead paint removal from the playhouse, extensive paint samples were taken and analyzed by NPS Northeast Regional personnel. The analysis revealed the playhouse had been painted on five separate occasions since approximately 1885. The target date set for color matching for restoration purposes was 1927, the year marking the end of the period of significance for Blow-Me-Down Farm as was recently determined during the process of preparing National Register documentation for the farm.

The park is presently in the process of completing finishing touches on the wood restoration as well as repainting the playhouse based on the recent paint analysis. The work on the playhouse should be completed in October.

SCULPTURAL VISIONS

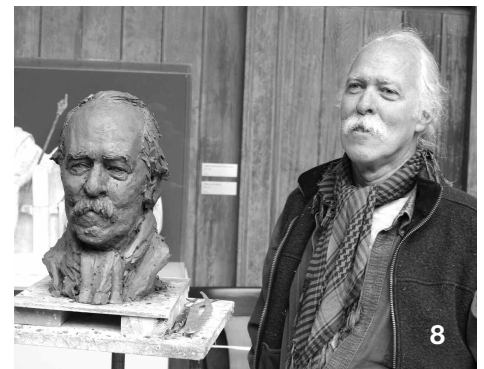
On Saturday, September 29, the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site held its seventh annual **Sculptural Visions** event celebrating the many forms of sculpture.

Ten artists demonstrated different sculptural techniques, such as modeling with clay, carving of wood and stone, metal working, assemblage and using cast paper. Glen Campbell, owner of an artist foundry, utilized a portable furnace to cast two bronze sculptures on-site using the ancient “lost wax” bronze casting method. Children engaged in several hands-on sculpture activities including making a three-dimensional plaster cast of their hand. Throughout the afternoon there were performances by Antoinette Jacobson on her *Fire Organ*, a sculpture that can be used as an instrument.



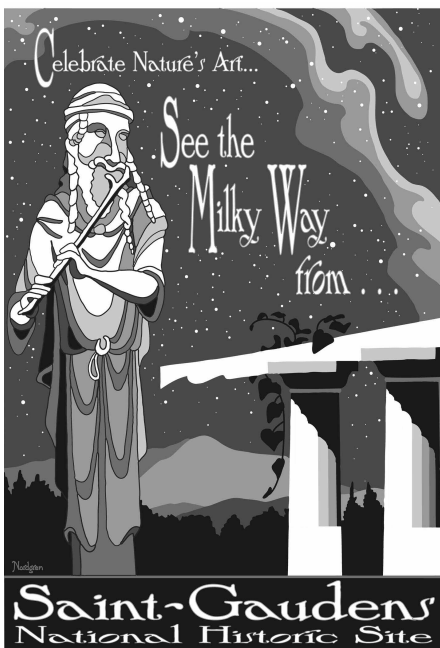
1. Bronze bust created by this year's Sculptor in Residence Amanda Sisk. 2. Former Sculptor in Residence Lee Happapuro demonstrates paper casting to visitors. 3. Antoinette Jacobson's *Fire Organ*. 4. A demonstration of wood carving techniques. 5. Glen Campbell bronze casting on-site. 6. A young visitor makes a cast of his arm.





7. Sculpting workshop classes showing-off their work. 8. A bust completed by former Sculptor in Residence Lawrence J. Nowlan

THIRD ANNUAL STAR PARTY A SUCCESS!



Though the northeastern United States is one of the most light-polluted areas in the country, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site is fortunate to be located beneath some exceptionally dark skies in New England.

The park is located only a half-day's drive away from more than 10 million people, many of whom have never seen a truly dark starscape in the sky before.

On September 15, Saint-Gaudens NHS hosted its third annual Star Party. These Star Parties are a partnership between the park and the Springfield Telescope Makers of the Stellafane Observatory in Vermont. The group specializes in making their own telescopes, including grinding and polishing their own mirrors, and their members have a passion for sharing astronomy with others. This year's event brought out our largest group of telescopes yet, with nearly two dozen set up in front of Aspet. During the day, park staff trained a telescope with a special filter at the sun and visitors were able to observe sunspots and other solar features. After dark, visitors were treated to a presentation on the history of astronomy in the Upper Connecticut River Valley before spending several hours looking through telescopes trained at galaxies, nebulae and star clusters. Our third annual event was a great success and we are looking forward to another great event next year.

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OF
SAINT-GAUDENS

All members receive a twice-yearly newsletter and announcements of exhibits, lectures, concerts & other programs.

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- ☐ I would like a FREE annual park pass to the Saint-Gaudens Site. (\$25 value. This part of your membership fee is not tax deductible.)

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- ☐ I do not wish to join at this time but would like to make a contribution.
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Family concert in the Little Studio - Stephen Stearns, *Laugh Me to the Moon*

**OWL AWARDS:
BEST MUSICAL SERIES**

The Complete Hoot, an arts and entertainment publication of the Upper Connecticut River Valley in New Hampshire and Vermont, recently awarded their 2012 Owl Awards for achievement in the arts between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012.

We are pleased that the Memorial's Sunday concert series at the park won for the best Musical Series. At the award reception, the 9-concert program was noted for this year's diversified offerings, including jazz and family performances. The award was particularly gratifying given the quality of other nominated series.

In addition, three other programs were nominated for Owl Awards. These included the park's Sculptural Visions event; the Memorial-sponsored exhibition, Sensitive Chaos: Paintings, by Jessie Pollock in the Picture Gallery; and the park's overflow, special event featuring noted author David McCullough speaking about his recent publication *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris*, which has a lengthy section on Saint-Gaudens.



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National Historic Site

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit corporation chartered to advise and support the National Historic Site and sponsor programs and activities that promote public awareness of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, his work and sculpture in general.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
The site is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior,
National Park Service

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