I have been here a little more than a year. We have made many changes in that time, and have more great things planned for 2014. How do all these changes fit together? Where do we want to be in five and ten years? How can this museum best serve the Bennington community and our visitors from away? How can it best serve you?

My vision for Bennington Museum’s future can be summarized in five simple goals: 1) We will be the foremost collecting institution in Southern Vermont. 2) We will showcase and model the creativity of Vermont in all its forms, and throughout its history – indeed, creativity is the connection between history and art, the cement that unites these two major components of our mission. 3) We will be so essential and deeply integrated into your life that you will not be able to imagine Bennington without the Bennington Museum – just as you cannot imagine New York City without the Met, MoMA, or the NY Historical Society. 4) Our exhibits will be so varied that everyone will find something of interest here. 5) This museum will be constantly changing. We will not sit still but will continue working hard for you in the coming year – changing not for the sake of change itself, but changing in order to be a vital, living organization, constantly relevant to you and to a changing world.

If you have not seen the recent developments, please come visit – and be surprised!

The new Bennington Museum – Get into It!

From the Director

With the proliferation of Internet resources in recent years, the Bennington Museum’s research library has seen a decline in visitors, yet its importance has always been found in its vast collection of unique material not found on the Web. “We have the numbers to back up some pretty bold claims,” says Collections Manager Callie Stewart, who has overseen the ongoing cataloging of books, a task only partially complete. The museum’s internal catalog has records for 1,615 books on family history, 134 books that cover the Civil War, 119 books printed by or related to the early Vermont printer Anthony Haswell, and 1,616 classified as “special collections” including rare books and Vermont imprints. Perhaps the library’s most unique resource is the twenty-four file drawers packed with family research and correspondence that exists nowhere else.

The weekly Bennington Banner from the newspaper’s origin in 1841 to 1886 is available on microfilm and DVD. Indexed scrapbooks like the Day Papers and the museum’s years of historical newspaper columns are easily accessible. Subject files on regional topics and biographies, plus thousands of cards on early inhabitants, help construct family trees and connect patrons to other library resources. An in-house database offers access to the museum’s huge collections of archives, images, and relevant objects.

While genealogy and family history remain a prime interest for our patrons, many historical subjects can also researched. Recent examples include the Sedition Act of 1798; a biography of Vermont statehood negotiator Moses Robinson, architectural work of 19th-century “joiner” Hiram Waters, early Connecticut Congregational Separatists, the Bradford knitting mills, Vermont’s first constitutions, the Carthusian Monastery on Mt. Equinox, Sunderland’s Chiselville, and the 1936 Green Mountain Parkway dispute.

Ancestry searches, for which this library is best known, definitely continue according to librarian Tyler Resch, who has handled thousands of them in person and by e-mail. Colonel Samuel Herrick’s fifth great grandson was here seeking his ancestor and we helped a descendant of Rev. Hiram Bingham, early Sandwich Island missionary, look for family lore. Please feel welcome to join these questers. The research library is open weekdays from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and a knowledgeable staff will be pleased to help you in your search.

Exploring the Research Library

Unique Material Not Found on the Web

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ABOVE: On October 18, Bennington Museum held its annual Members’ Dinner in the Ada and Paul Paresky Wing. (above; clockwise from top left.) Dr. Judith Fellows-Miller shares a light moment with Consie West; Hiland Hall Award recipients Pat Adams and R. Arnold Ricks (far left and far right respectively) with Bennington Museum Curator Jamie Franklin and Trustee Edie Sawitsky; Mary Geannelis with Ed Cotter and his wife, Judy; The 2013 Walloomsac Society Award recipient Jonah Spivak (2nd from right) with his parents Ron and Inga Spivak and wife Elizabeth Ganger.

BELOW: This year’s Festival of Trees Gala welcomed the holidays in style. (below, from left) Darlene and Jeffrey Munson in holiday attire enjoy the music at the Festival of Trees Gala; Nancy Coseo and Steven Korn spend time with the museum’s Director of Development Jeanne Conner. Laura Wilkinson shares a moment with Bennington Museum Trustee Laraine Smith. (Photos by Jillian Conner)

BOTTOM: Festival of Trees Family Day welcomed several hundred visitors who enjoyed crafts, visits with Santa and a jump on their holiday shopping. (bottom from left) Carol O’Dell assists a shopper at the Children’s Holiday Boutique; After sharing time with Santa, this visitor decides what gift she wants.
Exciting Changes in Permanent Galleries

Visit the redesigned Grandma Moses Gallery featuring masterworks on loan and never before on view at the Bennington Museum.

On view in the Ada Paresky Education Center: Wall Drawing by Jarvis Rockwell.

Iconic Paintings by Helen Frankenthaler, Paul Feely and Jules Olitski are newly installed in the Bennington Modernism Gallery.

February 14 through March 30

Annual Student Art Show – Celebrating the art created by students from public and private schools in Bennington and surrounding communities, this annual exhibit brings the artwork of the region’s elementary, middle and high school students to the museum in a display ranging from whimsical projects by the young students to more advanced work of older students.

Faces of Bennington, 1972-1978: Photographs by John Hubbard – Over twenty photographs taken by John Hubbard of people he encountered in the Bennington area during the 1970s, while he was a sports reporter and photographer at the Bennington Banner, have been selected to go into this wonderful black and white exhibit. These silver gelatin prints are on view in the Limric Gallery.

April 12 through June 17

Three Vermont Impressionists – This exhibit documents the work of Clifford Adams Bayard, Arthur Gibbes Burton and George Lofts Noyes, all artists who painted the southern Vermont landscape in an Impressionist vein during the early to mid-twentieth century. These paintings will be on view in the Limric and Parmalee Galleries.

Throughout the Year

Regional Artist Exhibits – Every twelve weeks throughout the year, different regional artists have their work displayed in the museum’s Regional Artist Gallery. In 2014, view works by Karl Mullen, February 15 through May 4; Angus McCullough, May 10 through July 27; Jonathan Brand, August 2 through October 19; and Margaret Kannenstine, October 25 through December 30.

Exhibitions made possible in part by the S. Lane Faison Jr. Exhibition Fund.


4. Student art work.


Alice Neel (1900-1984), 1934 Isabella. Oil on canvas. Private Collection.
The Ins and Outs of Museum Loans

Devoted to the history and culture of our own geographic region, Bennington Museum cares for close to 50,000 objects of local and regional relevance in our permanent collection. In many instances, these objects are of such quality or rarity, or relate to larger historical or artistic issues, that they are of national, or even international, interest. On the other hand, countless objects significant to our region are held in other public and private collections throughout the world. In order to share our riches with a wider public and enhance the depth and breadth of our own collections, the Bennington Museum frequently loans objects to other museums and borrows objects to share with our own visitors.

In order to fill gaps in our permanent collection and better tell a continuous narrative of the history of Vermont culture, the museum has borrowed numerous works. Throughout 2013 the museum’s newly installed Center Gallery was augmented by three paintings by Rockwell Kent. Kent was one of the most famous artists in America during the 1920s and 1930s, and lived in Arlington for six years, yet the museum has only a single drawing by him in our collection. Lent to us by its current owners, Deer Season (c. 1921-23) depicts the view looking south from the artist’s studio into the Valley of Vermont. On loan from another private collection are two smaller “impressions” including Vermont Study, a view of Mt. Equinox believed to be the artist’s first Vermont painting.

In July, another major gap in the museum’s collection was filled when a new gallery devoted to Bennington Modernism, the work of avant-garde artists active in and around Bennington during 1950s and 1960s, was opened. Every work currently on view in this gallery is on loan to the museum. As we begin to add work by these artists to the museum’s permanent collection – we recently acquired two paintings by Paul Feeley who spearheaded Bennington College’s art department during this period – we will continue to be dependent on loans from both public and private collections to keep this gallery vibrant. Currently on view are iconic works by Helen Frankenthaler, Jules Olitski, Paul Feeley, Pat Adams, Sir Anthony Caro, and Vincent Longo.

Also opened in the summer of 2013, Gilded Age Vermont was initially filled exclusively with objects from the museum’s permanent collection. Shortly after opening, the gallery was augmented with an important loan from Historic Park-McCullough. The Repose (c. 1895) by Henry Siddons Mowbray depicts two elegant women resting in a lavish, quasi-Middle Eastern interior. Likely purchased by John G. McCullough, the Governor of Vermont, 1902-1904, and his wife Eliza “Lizzie” McCullough, the painting has hung in their North Bennington mansion ever since. Taking its long-term well-being into consideration, Historic Park-McCullough is sharing the painting with the Bennington Museum’s guests in our climate-controlled galleries during the winter months. This loan demonstrates the museum’s continued interest in collaborating with other local cultural institutions, an arrangement that is often mutually beneficial.

Even in areas of strength, our collections may be supplemented by loans. This winter the museum worked with Galerie St. Etienne in New York City to bring an additional four masterworks by Anna Mary Robertson “Grandma” Moses owned by the Kallir Family Foundation and a private collector, to the museum. For the first time, this allowed us to present Moses’ work in thematic groupings that convey the full breadth of her imagination. In Harvest Time (front and back covers) now lets the museum’s visitors experience this important subject through a magnificent example.

The stories of some of the museum’s recent outgoing loans will be told in a subsequent issue of INSIDE Bennington Museum.
Planned Giving

Did you know there are ways to support Bennington Museum and generate income for yourself? Planned giving allows you to minimize your tax liability while maximizing the benefit to you and your beneficiaries. Several options offer ways to meet your own financial needs and provide much needed capital for the museum at the same time. You won’t have to choose between your family and your charitable organizations — you can target specific assets or giving vehicles in order to have the greatest possible impact. Bennington Museum appreciates all gifts, regardless of size.

Make a Bequest
Create an estate plan that includes a charitable bequest to Bennington Museum and make a difference - forever. An endowment bequest generates annual income for the museum in perpetuity. A $5,000 bequest generates a gift of $250 per year; $100,000 provides $5,000 per year. You can designate your bequest to a particular purpose and, if you wish, there are many naming opportunities — a gallery in the museum, a particular staff position, an educational program, exhibitions, or acquisitions fund. If you already have a bequest for the museum in your estate plan, please let us know. If the museum is not in your estate plan, consider naming this deserving institution as one of your beneficiaries.

Leave us your IRA
Setting up an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a wise investment strategy, but a highly ineffective way to leave resources to your children and grandchildren because of the taxes they will pay. Museums are tax-exempt charitable organizations and pay no taxes when they inherit your IRA. Careful planning can minimize tax liability and allow for charitable giving from these assets, while other investments can benefit your heirs.

Create a Charitable Remainder Trust
Do you have highly appreciated assets that are not generating income, yet you don’t want to liquidate them because of the capital gains tax you will pay? A Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) can provide a tax benefit now and generate annual income for you or a beneficiary after securities or other assets are placed in trust. After a certain number of years, or upon the death of the beneficiary, the remainder in the trust will be donated to Bennington Museum.

Since its founding in 1852, Bennington Museum has become woven into the fabric of the community and surrounding area. Those of us who appreciate the tangible and intangible benefits of the museum have the responsibility of ensuring that it continues long into the future.

Please consult with your estate planner or lawyer to create a plan that meets your unique needs and wishes.
Upcoming Events

**Saturday, March 29**
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Appraisal Fair** – Bring family heirlooms or the odd, quirky piece you always wanted to know about, and let an expert panel of art and antique appraisers explain and evaluate your items. $5/item with a limit of 5 items.

Programs for Adults

**Third Sunday of Each Month**

*Bennington Historical Society* presents programs in the Ada Paresky Education Center of the Bennington Museum. In March, “The Hubbard Photographs” presented by Jamie Franklin. Programs are free and open to the public.

**Saturday, April 12**

**Slow Art Day** has visitors joining the global experience of viewing art slowly. Participants look at works of art for ten minutes each and then meet together to discuss their experience. Go to www.slowartday.com for information and registration.

**Saturday, May 3**

*“Outsider” Art Panel Discussion* – A panel of experts including creators of “outsider” art will gather to discuss the complex task that has become an increasingly pressing concern among today’s art historians, critics, and institutions – the reinterpretation of modern and contemporary self-taught art. Reservations are not required.

Programs for Kids and Families

**March 20, April 24, and May 15**
1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**Museum ABCs** – storytime in the galleries for preschoolers and their families.

Free, sponsored by The Bank of Bennington.

Designed for children ages 3 to 5, this pre-school story hour includes stories on the month’s topic, visits to the galleries to observe and talk about a piece of art or object, plus an art or craft activity.
On View

Newly installed masterworks by
Anna Mary Robertson “Grandma” Moses

The largest and most complex Wall Drawing by Jarvis Rockwell (detail, left)

Iconic paintings by Helen Frankenthaler and Jules Olitski

Looking Ahead …

February 14 through March 30

March 29

April 9

April 14 through April 18

April 12 through June 17

May 2

May 3

Annual Student Art Show

Faces of Bennington 1972-1978: Photographs by John Hubbard

Appraisal Fair

Volunteer Luncheon

Drop-in Family Activities

Three Vermont Impressionists

Stoneware Collectors’ Meeting

“ Outsider” Art Panel Discussion