



The Litchfield Historical Society

presents

Unlocking the Vault:

*Keys to Use and Access of
Historical Collections*

Monday, October 25, 2010
Litchfield History Museum
Litchfield, CT

Unlocking the Vault is an American Archives Month program designed to raise awareness about the value of archives. See www.archivists.org/archivesmonth for details about the celebration.

Litchfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 385
7 South St.
Litchfield, CT 06759

First Class Mail
United States Post Paid
Litchfield, CT
Permit #23

THE preservation and documentation of historic objects and documents has long been the occupation of the museum community and the foundation for the antique trade and collectors. While some objects are valued for their aesthetic qualities and others for their historical significance, each tells a story.

The majority of museums are founded around the principle of collecting and preserving objects and documents. The mission statement of a museum creates a unique set of parameters that defines the collection based on geography or a specific individual, building or company.

With buildings now overflowing with objects, each clamoring to tell its “story,” museum staff struggle to organize the information into a product that will simultaneously capture the historical significance of the collection and convey it to the public in an interesting and unique way.

Unlocking the Vault: Keys to Use and Access of Historical Collections seeks to provide participants with real world examples of how institutions and individual researchers can go from selecting a collection to research to amassing historical information and creating a finished product.

Registration Form

One person per form. Duplicate as necessary.

Unlocking the Vault:

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Monday, October 25, 2010
The Litchfield History Museum
7 South Street, Litchfield, CT

Name: _____

(Please print full name.)

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Registration Fee:

\$50 Non-members \$15 Lunch

\$40 Members

\$25 Students

Vegetarian Option

Payment:

Check

Visa

Mastercard

Payable to the Litchfield Historical Society

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Cancellation Policy: If notice of cancellation is given prior to October 18, 2010, the participant will receive a full refund. No refunds will be issued after October 18.

How to Register

Phone: 860-567-4501

Monday through Friday 9am - 5pm

Fax: 860-567-3565

Email: kbaldwin@litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org

Mail:

Litchfield Historical Society

P.O. Box 385

7 South St.

Litchfield, CT 06759

Parking:

Parking is available behind St. Michael's Church and St. Anthony's Church, both located just south of the museum on South St.

Meals

Coffee and doughnuts will be provided in the morning. A boxed lunch will be available for an additional \$15 or participants are welcome to bring their own lunch or eat in town. Please let us know if you have any dietary restrictions or a vegetarian preference.

Sponsoring Organizations

The Litchfield Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1856 to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Litchfield, Connecticut. The Society operates the Litchfield History Museum, seven galleries of decorative and fine arts arranged to tell the community's history; the Tapping Reeve House and Law School, the site of America's first law school, 1784-1833; and the Helga J. Ingraham Memorial Library, a research library for local history and genealogy. The Litchfield Historical Society is accredited by the American Association of Museums.

The Connecticut Humanities Council is an independent, publicly supported foundation, established in 1973 as the state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council's Professional Development grants support conferences, seminars, workshops, publications, and other opportunities for museum professionals and Connecticut historians to engage in critical dialogue about issues of scholarship, museum practices, and the interpretation of Connecticut heritage.

Schedule

9:00 Coffee and Registration at the Litchfield History Museum

9:15 Welcome and Introductions

Morning Sessions

Derin Bray

Tales of Fakery, Frenzy, and Family Heirlooms: Discovering Object History through Documentary Research

Join Derin Bray as he breathes new life into old objects. Discover the hidden past of American art and antiques through historical records and modern research tools.

Ann Smith

Letters from the Heart: The Whittemores of Naugatuck and the French Impressionists.

Ann Smith, the author of the newly published book *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Whittemore Collection and the French Impressionists*, will discuss the Whittemores' remarkable collection of French Impressionist paintings, drawing on insights gained through the family's personal correspondence.

12:00 Lunch

Afternoon Sessions

Dr. Shirley Wajda & Anne Farrow

Journeys with Primary Materials and a New Media Encyclopedia

Dr. Shirley Wajda and Anne Farrow of the Encyclopedia of Connecticut History Online, a project of the Connecticut Humanities Council, will make a joint presentation about the ways they dig back into primary sources to illuminate and inform the entries they want to include in the Encyclopedia of Connecticut History Online. They will discuss the kind of work they do, and how it shapes the way they think and live the process of building this new encyclopedia.

Kate Steinway

Stitching a Project Together: Connecticut Needlework: Women, Art, and Family, 1740-1840

Kate Steinway will discuss the evolution of Connecticut Historical Society's upcoming exhibition *Connecticut Needlework: Women, Art, and Family, 1740-1840* from a research project into a public exhibition and accompanying catalog with emphasis on the Society's decision to tailor each product to a different audience.

Julie Frey, Linda Hocking & Jessica Jenkins

The Ledger: A Nineteenth Century Social Network

The staff of the Litchfield Historical Society are creating an online searchable database for the students who attended the Litchfield Law School and Litchfield Female Academy. Learn how they developed the database and used current social networking sites like Facebook as inspiration for the database's design and functionality.

Speakers

Derin Bray

Derin Bray is an art & antiques consultant based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He evaluates American furniture, folk art, and decorative arts for private collectors and museums throughout the country. He is a contributing author to *Harbor & Home: Furniture of Southeastern Massachusetts, 1710-1850* and co-author of *To Please Any Taste: The Furniture and Furniture Makers of Litchfield County, 1770-1830*. He recently co-wrote "The Ingenious Patent Extension Tables of Cornelius Briggs" for *Antiques & Fine Art* (Spring 2010).

Ann Y. Smith

Ann Y. Smith is a museum consultant who lectures and writes about the cultural history of western New England. A long-time director and curator at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, she led the museum's move to its expanded facility on the city Green in 1986 and created its acclaimed exhibit *Coming Home: Finding Community in a Changing World*, which won the Wilbur Cross Award from the Connecticut Humanities Council in 2010. She was the guest curator for the 2008 Litchfield Historical Society exhibit, publication and CD on furniture making in northwestern Connecticut that won a national award of merit from the American Association of State and Local History.

Kate Steinway

Kate Steinway is Executive Director of the Connecticut Historical Society, a museum, research library, and education center. She assumed the job in 2007 with a background in curatorial work, education, and exhibitions. She graduated from Smith College and holds a M.A. in Art History from The University of Chicago.

Dr. Shirley T. Wajda

Shirley Teresa Wajda is the Project Historian for the Encyclopedia of Connecticut History. She is a cultural historian with a specialty in American material and visual culture. She has published essays on children's cabinets of curiosities, nineteenth-century commercial portrait photography, the rise of the bridal shower, and Martha Stewart. With Helen Sheumaker, she co-edited *Material Culture in America: Understanding Everyday Life* (2008), the first encyclopedia on the topic. Exhibitions include *Designing Domesticity: Decorating the American Home since 1876* and *The Kokoon Arts Club: Cleveland Revels!*, both at the Kent State University Museum. She is currently preparing a travelling exhibition on the New Deal and the Great Depression in Ohio. She has taught at universities on the East Coast and in the Corn and Rust Belts.

Ann Farrow

Ann Farrow is a long-time journalist and served as a lead writer on The Hartford Courant's 2002 and 2005 investigations on slavery and Connecticut. She co-authored the book *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery*, published by Random House/Ballantine books in 2005. She is at work on a new book about slavery and memory, based on her work in New England and West Africa. She is currently the Senior Content Editor for the Encyclopedia of Connecticut History.

Julie Frey

Julie Frey is the Curator of Collections at the Litchfield Historical Society. She came to Litchfield in 2005 from the Rye Historical Society where she served as the curator. She received her MA in History and Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program and a BA in History from the University of Dayton. Most recently she curated the exhibit *Goods for Sale! Cash, Credit & Trade in Litchfield, 1790-1850* for the Litchfield Historical Society.

Linda Hocking

Linda Hocking holds a B.A. in political science and history from Marist College and an MLS from the University of Illinois. She has been the Curator of Library & Archives at the Litchfield Historical Society since November 2002. She was admitted to the Academy of Certified Archivists in 2005. She is currently working to create online finding tools for the Society's archival collections through two grant funded projects.

Jessica Jenkins

Jessica Jenkins is the Project Researcher at The Litchfield Historical Society. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History from Quincy University. Jessica recently obtained her Master of Arts degree at Central Connecticut State University in Public History, and is actively involved in the heritage community around the state of Connecticut. She is currently working with the staff of the Historical Society to create and launch *The Ledger*.