

Fall 2010

Norumbega News, No.15 (Fall 2010)

Osher Library Associates

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NORUMBEGA NEWS

No. 15

NEWSLETTER OF THE OSHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

Fall 2010

Letter from the President

With its reopening last October, the newly expanded Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education (hereafter referred to as OML) has regained the spotlight as a center of public history and educational outreach in southern Maine. During the past ten months, over 3,000 people have visited the library to view the exhibition and globe collection, to conduct research, or to participate in public lectures.

Off campus, OML's two facsimile traveling exhibitions, *Heavens on Earth* and *Mapping the Republic*, provide opportunities to introduce the map collections to new constituencies. This past year three institutions displayed these exhibitions in their galleries: the University of New Hampshire in Durham (Fall 2009), the Museum of Old York in York (Winter 2010), and the Knox Museum in Thomaston (Summer 2010). [need data for number of viewers]

The Osher Library Associates (hereafter referred to as OLA) funded the upgrade of OML's website (www.usm.maine.edu/maps). The most important innovation of the new site is that the public can now view over 2,000 digitized maps, most from before 1800. OML will eventually digitize most of its collections. The staff are now scanning entire books, literally from cover to cover; these will also be made freely available through the website.

The new Sam L. Cohen Educational Center has become a popular venue with outside organizations. About a dozen groups have already held meetings in this new multi-

purpose facility; these events allow OML to incorporate a tour of the map library as part of the visitors' schedule. Participants include: Maine Antiquarian Booksellers, Maine Council for the Social Studies, Maine Archaeological Society, Boston Map Society, Southern Maine Library District, and Yarmouth Historical Society.

The Cohen Center has also served as a meeting site for mid-sized conferences. In June OML hosted a two-day meeting for members the North East Map Organization (NEMO) and a one-day meeting for the Boston Map Society. Two national organizations, the Society for the History of Discoveries and the Eastern Historical Geography Association, have already reserved the space for their events in Fall 2011.

This has been particularly busy year for OML's K-12 outreach programs. With the help of three dedicated graduate students, Holly Hurd, Renee Keul, and Jamie Kane, OML staff taught 22 classes for K-12 students in three counties. In addition to schools in the Greater Portland region, visiting classes were drawn from Bath, Cumberland, Thomaston, and Windham. Home schooling families have also discovered OML's online educational resources.

In May OML collaborated with a team of fifth and sixth grade teachers from King Middle School to develop instructional support for an experiential program on the history of Deering Oaks Park. OML's team conducted four sessions for 80 students with a more in-depth project. The hands-on activities documented the dramatic changes for this land from an industrial site to a park over two hundred years. Maps and illustrations for the Deering Oaks unit are now



Save the Date

Thursday, October 21, 2010

5:00–6:00 p.m.

**Annual Meeting of Osher
Library Associates**

6:00–6:30 p.m.

Reception and book signing

6:30–7:30 p.m. Guest Lecture

Presentation by Henry Wendt, co-curator of traveling exhibition *Envisioning the World: The First Printed Maps, 1472-1700*, drawn from his personal collection. He will also be available to autograph copies of the exhibition catalog during the reception.

mounted on OML's new website so other school districts can access them.

Based on incoming group reservations and the outreach programs scheduled to date, this coming year promises to be just as busy. We hope you will join us for some of these events and remember to check OML's web site for updated events listings.

—Harry R. Pringle



The old OML Gallery (1994-2007) before being converted and the interior of new imaging center in 2009 (above).



Sam Shupe, a student worker, shown here digitizing the cover of a map from OML extensive oil company road map collection with the 11" x 17" flatbed scanner.



David Neikirk shown here at digital processing station monitoring quality control after transferring an image from the capture computer. The dual screen processing station contains both a calibrated monitor for matching output to the original artifact as well as a standard digital desk top monitor.



David Neikirk shown here operating the Digital Transitions camera to photograph the title page of Homann's Grosser Atlas (Nuremberg, 1711).

Imaging Center Update

After a year of fundraising and planning, OML's new imaging center is up and running. Last year we had reported on the OLA's support to purchase digital imaging equipment for a new, state-of-the-art imaging center. OML selected the Phase One P65+ camera by Digital Transitions, a leading integrator of digital imaging systems for rare collections. Its Division of Cultural Heritage is well known among the fine arts community. Several major cultural institutions along the eastern seaboard rely on its equipment: the National Archives; the University of Pennsylvania's Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image; Princeton University; Pierpont Morgan Library; New York Public Library; and Harvard University. OML is currently the only site north of Boston equipped with the Phase One camera system.

The Phase One system is based on a 60 mega-pixel digital camera, which produces uncompressed files of approximately 390mb each. (We are exploring long-term storage solutions!) Several Apple MacPro computers are required to capture and process the images,

using several different programs, including Capture One, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Bridge, and other utility programs. Lighting is provided by ProFoto electronic flash.

The imaging equipment was installed in OML's former exhibition gallery, now retrofitted as a black-box studio. The walls were covered with black fabric, the ceilings with black paint, and the floors with black rubber mats. Only the pendulum lights remain to recall the room's former life.

To staff the new center, USM created two new positions. In July 2010, Ron Levere, former head of USM's Instructional Technology and Media Services, became the new manager and David Neikirk, the half-time library imaging assistant. (David just graduated from USM in history.) Undergraduate seniors Adinah Barnett and Sam Shupe assist Ron and David, gaining valuable experience and skills in the process.

To date, fifteen atlases have been digitized from cover to cover. To convey a sense of each work as an artifact, their spines, covers, and

blank pages are digitized as well as their content. There are several options for viewing the images: an interactive 3-D recreation of the original; images by category; or images in sequence.

To integrate this new resource into the university curriculum, OML will offer two new services beginning this fall. During OML's open hours on Tuesday afternoons, the digital reference room will be staffed by Vinton Valentine, director of USM's lab for geographic information science, who will conduct GIS Clinics for students, faculty, staff, and the public. On Thursday afternoons, Tim Lynch, a GIS-certified reference librarian, will provide reference service for digital resources.

The imaging center and its operations would not have been possible without the support of the Osher Library Associates, an anonymous donor, and the Bernard Osher Foundation. We invite you to view these atlases as well as over 2,000 digitized sheet maps via Historic Map Works: www.historicmapworks.com/RareBookLibrary/.



New Gift Collection of Transportation Games

In September, Mrs. Peggy Osher acquired on behalf of OML the Paul Fink Transportation Collection of games. This gift comprises 191 highly decorative board games dating from the 1880s to the 1940s that are all concerned with travel by car, train, ship, and plane. Most are map-themed. Along with the board games there are boxed puzzles and examples of ephemeral toys such as a ring toss, catapult, and bagatelle. Game manufacturers include both publishing giants such as Parker Brothers, Milton Bradley, and McLoughlin Brothers and more obscure companies such as Charles Hubbell, Chas. S. Muir, and Klee and Offset-Gravure Corporation. The collection was assembled over twenty-five years by Paul Fink, an antiques dealer and veteran collector from Kent, CT, who specializes in vintage board games and puzzles.

This gift will add new and exciting dimensions to the cartographic collections. It covers American modes of transportation beginning with high-wheel bicycles, it documents the transition from horseless carriage to the automobile, and it follows the progression from dirigibles and air ships to airplanes and space travel. Popular fads are reflected in topical games. After Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic in 1927, manufacturers quickly produced games that dealt with the flight. But because none had the license

to use Charles Lindbergh's name, they were given names such as "Trip to Paris" or "Transatlantic Flight."

The graphic art of the cover illustrations is an important part of the history of commercial art. Before mass advertising, the cover art or box art of games provided a visual draw for prospective buyers. In games dating from the 1920s and 1930s, a strong art-deco influence is apparent in the art work.

The games and their imagery give new insight into the social history and popular culture of the period. As leisure time increased, these games entertained as well as indoctrinated American families. For example, instructions for the early games often addressed social mores and safety issues. The device of following a tour or route reinforced a factual approach to learning geography.

To help researchers interpret the history of these games, Mr. Fink has donated to OML his personal reference collection of ninety books, together with price guides and auction catalogs. We hope that the Paul Fink Transportation Collection will offer a fertile field for study for our faculty and students and be a source of rich material for future exhibitions.

Upcoming Guest Lecture



Sebastian Münster, *Novae Insulae XXVI Nova Tabula* (Basel, 1545)

Wednesday, December 8, 2010,
in the Sam L. Cohen
Educational Center of the
Osher Map Library

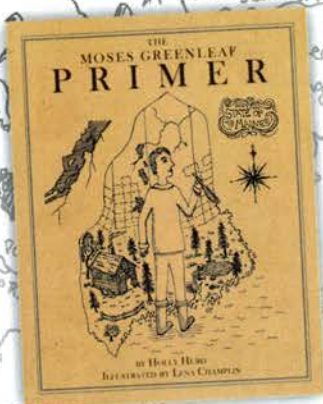
6:00–6:30 p.m.

Reception and book signing

6:30–7:30 p.m.

Guest lecture

Toby Lester, acclaimed author and contributing editor for *The Atlantic*, will present the story behind the creation of the 1507 world map by Martin Waldseemüller. He will be available for a book signing for his recent publication, *The Fourth Part of the World: The Race to the Ends of the Earth, and the Epic Story of the Map that Gave America Its Name* (N.Y.: Simon & Schuster, 2009)



The Osher Map Library Offers New Online Lessons and a New Children's Book for Maine Studies

OML has just published online a set of twenty-one K-12 lesson plans to support Maine Studies units in grades six to eight. With funding from the Osher Library Associates, the lessons were developed by a team of teachers under the supervision of Joel Eastman, USM professor emeritus of history, with support from Dixie Hayes and Holly Hurd. The materials have been rigorously field tested and include worksheets, maps, and assessment rubrics. The lessons are now freely available on OML's website, www.usm.maine.edu/maps (Education and Research | K-12 Lesson Plans).

Designed to compliment Walter M. Macdougall's book, *Settling the Maine Wilderness: Moses Greenleaf, His Maps, and His Household of Faith, 1777-1834*, published by the Osher Library Associates in 2006, the lessons focus on the settlement of the interior regions of Maine in the years following the American Revolution. They are particularly well-suited to Maine studies classes addressing broad themes such as settlement, economics, statehood,

community organizations, transportation, land use, and mapping.

The lessons also introduce young students to Moses Greenleaf, Maine's first map maker. Over a thirty year period, beginning in 1804, he surveyed parts of the Maine wilderness. To promote settlement, he published his findings in the form of statistical surveys, atlases, wall maps, and geographies. Greenleaf was a visionary whose life exemplifies historical themes that are still relevant today, such as the improvement of public education, the expansion of the economy through industrial growth, the development of sustainable land-use practices, and the building of a modern transportation network.

A separate publication, *The Moses Greenleaf Primer*, will also be available this fall. This illustrated paperback book adapts concepts from *Settling the Maine Wilderness* at a reading level and in a format that is age-appropriate for grades three to five. This book is the result of a remarkable collaboration between a mother and daughter team in Yarmouth. The text was written by Holly Hurd. The illustrations were drawn by her fifteen-year-old daughter, Lena Champlin. They hope their story about Moses Greenleaf will help other students appreciate his life and contributions to Maine. Individual copies are priced at \$10 plus shipping and handling and can be ordered from Barbara Kelly,

trade book manager, at the USM Bookstore. (207) 780-4072 and bkelly@usm.maine.edu.

Ms. Hurd, a graduate assistant at OML, is scheduling school visits during this fall and spring to demonstrate both the online lessons and the *Primer*. For more information, please contact the Osher Map Library at oml@usm.maine.edu or call 207-780-4850.

OSHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER NO. 15

Published by the Associates of the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education at the University of Southern Maine.

President: Harry R. Pringle
Vice President: James A. Buchanan
Secretary: Frances R. Frost
Treasurer: Stacy Stevens

Osher Library Associates
c/o Osher Map Library
P.O. Box 9301
Portland, ME 04104-9301

Contributions are invited and welcomed. Please submit in double-spaced, typed format or on computer disk. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with OLA membership. For access inquiries contact the OML at (207) 780-4850 or oml@usm.maine.edu.



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Osher Library Associates

Osher Map Library and the
Smith Center for Cartographic Education
University of Southern Maine
P.O. Box 9301
314 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04104-9301