

Spring 2012

## Norumbega News, No.16 (Spring 2012)

Osher Library Associates

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# NORUMBEGA NEWS

No. 16

NEWSLETTER OF THE OSHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

Spring 2012

## *Letter from the President*

This has been a productive year for the Osher Map Library thanks in large part to three grant-funded, temporary staff positions. A gift from the Sam L. Cohen Foundation permitted OML to hire Renee Keul, a recent graduate of USM's program in American and New England Studies, to expand outreach services to the K-12 community. Ms. Keul had participated in OML's outreach support as a Graduate Assistant from 2009 to 2011. This past year she extended OML's reach to include the communities of Home Schoolers and she initiated a pilot program conducted in senior housing facilities. Her lesson plans can be viewed under the "Education & Research" tab on OML's website, [www.usm.maine.edu/maps](http://www.usm.maine.edu/maps).

OML doubled its digitizing capacity with the installation of a second camera station in the Digital Imaging Center with support from the Bernard Osher Foundation. This grant also funded two year-long positions for a camera technician to run the new camera and a metadata librarian to create the information needed to explain the digital image files to the public.

The collections have grown significantly since OML reopened late in 2009. John B. Gibb, a New Jersey resident who summers on Mt. Desert, donated his collection of over 1,200 atlases dating from 1844 to the present. Highlights from the Norman Morse Collection of trans-Atlantic ocean liner memorabilia will be shown in OML's summer exhibition. (See page 4 of this newsletter.) Richard Auletta, a linguistics professor based in New York with a summer home in Calais, has transferred over 3,000 books from his travel guide collection that date from the mid-nineteenth century to the present; some examples were displayed in OML's recent exhibition, *The Grand Tour and the Development of Tourism*:

1600-1900, and can be viewed online in the Guide Book section at [www.maine.edu/maps/exhibition/19/home](http://www.maine.edu/maps/exhibition/19/home).

These gifts are fortuitous since their acquisition coincides with the inauguration of this coming Fall of a new tourism and hospitality B.A. program at USM. OML will be well positioned to provide curriculum support for this new program in large measure to the generosity of these donors.

The Sam L. Cohen Education Center has become a popular conference site. The first conference, in October 2009, was *New Directions in the Study of Early American Cartographies*, organized by Prof. Matthew Edney. Last Fall, OML hosted the three-day meeting of the Society for the History of Discoveries ([www.sochistdisc.org](http://www.sochistdisc.org)). Some SHD members fondly recalled OML's original facility, from when OML hosted their annual meeting in 1996, and commented on the dramatic improvements made to the facilities.

We are very pleased that two of OML's graduate students from USM's program in American and New England Studies participated in the SHD program. Lucinda Hannington demonstrated the Route 66 website that she produced with materials drawn from OML's road map collections ([www.usm.maine.edu/maps/web-document/8/home/](http://www.usm.maine.edu/maps/web-document/8/home/)). Holly Hurd introduced her book, *The Moses Greenleaf Primer*, funded by the Osher Library Associates, and described how it has been incorporated into Maine Studies units in local elementary schools. In addition, recent History graduate Samuel Shupe, who was a work study student in OML, used period maps and sketches drawn by John Calvin Stevens to narrate the architectural bicycle tour of France he led in 1892.

This coming Fall, from October 10 to 13, OML will host the annual meeting of the International Visual Literacy Association ([www.ivla.org](http://www.ivla.org)). Since IVLA's last visit to New

England was to Boston in 1973, this will be an opportunity to introduce its members not only to OML but to the sights of Portland as well. Discussions are also underway with representatives of the Eastern Historical Geographer's Association to hold their annual meeting at OML in Fall 2013. We hope you will join us for some of the upcoming events.

—James A. Buchanan



TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012

6:30 P.M.

Guest Lecture

Sam L. Cohen Educational Center  
Osher Map Library  
16 Bedford Street, Portland

### *The Largest Moving Man-Made Creatures in the World*

Lincoln Paine, maritime historian and guest curator, will provide an overview of the development of the ocean-going passenger ship. He is the author of *Down East: A Maritime History of Maine* and *Ships of the World: An Historical Encyclopedia*.

Open Exhibition: *The Triumph of the Passenger Ship: Highlights of the Norman H. Morse Ocean Liner Collection, 1870-2010.*

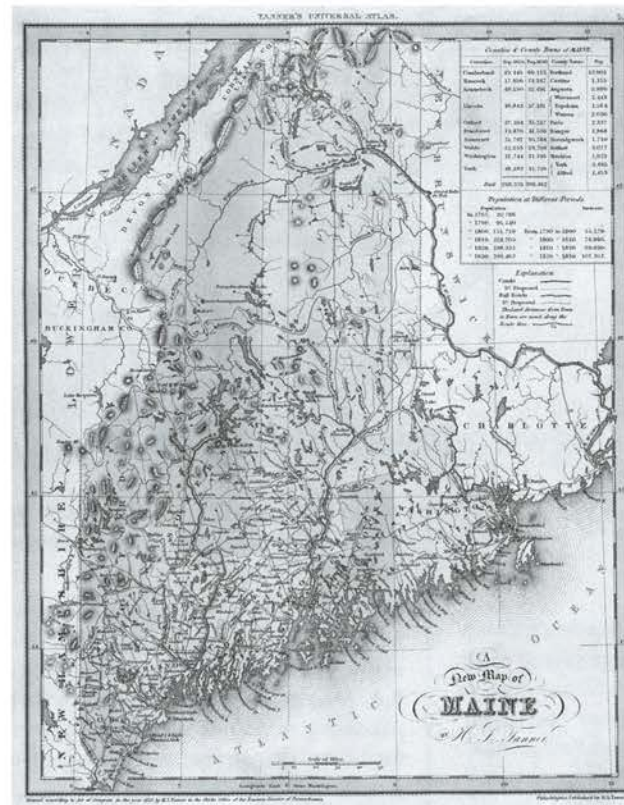


## Creating a Book about the Maps of Maine by Edward V. Thompson

The idea for *Printed Maps of the District and State of Maine, 1793-1860: An Illustrated and Comparative Study* grew from an auction catalogue I wrote during 2002-2003. In 1972, while still employed full-time as a professor of chemical engineering at the University of Maine at Orono (1966-2001), I had started a part-time business, Nimue Books and Prints. At some point in the late 1990s I realized that I had a huge inventory of Maine material containing some rare and significant items and I decided to prepare an auction of these materials. I set out to augment the auction by buying every further rare item I could find. The auction took place in Bangor on July 10, 2003; in support, I prepared, *Catalogue Raisonne: Important Maine Maps, Books, Prints and Ephemera*, which described in detail each item on offer. The auction was a great success and all the Maine maps were gone within five hours.

Soon after the auction, I thought to expand the chapter on Maine maps in the *Catalogue Raisonne* into a book, but I did not get back to the project seriously until late 2008. While my original idea was for something like an annotated checklist of maps of Maine, I came to realize that the subject deserved a much fuller treatment. That being the case, I needed to define the bounds or limits of such a book. Being a map dealer and quasi-collector, I naturally thought in terms of what would be most useful to other collectors and dealers.

By early November 2008 I had crystallized in my mind the form of the book I intended to produce based on my previous experience with Maine maps. That winter I made many visits to the Special Collections Department in the Fogler Library at the University of Maine and to the Maine State Library to research the maps that fit my categories. During the remainder of 2009 I took many other trips to special collections throughout the United States. A high point of my out-of-state travels was a trip in early November 2009 to San Francisco to explore the vast collection of David Rumsey. His enormous collection, especially the atlases, allowed me to compare map by map the output of various publishers such as Henry S. Tanner, Augustus Mitchell, Charles Desilver, and Joseph Colton. Mr. Rumsey personally scanned about twelve maps for my use that were not yet available on his website, davidrumsey.com. I am much



While researching this book, I became amazed by the number of variant states of many of these maps. The largest number of variants I identified was for Henry S. Tanner's "A New Map of Maine" which went through 28 states between 1833 and 1860, about one new variant per year.

Illustration: State I of "A New Map of Maine" from Tanner's Universal Atlas (Philadelphia, 1833).

indebted to him for his help.

In late October 2009 I made my first visit to the Osher Map Library (OML) which had reopened a week or so earlier after being closed for major renovations. On my initial visit to the OML, I was greeted by its curator, Yolanda Theunissen who recognized my name from the *Catalogue Raisonne*. Although the purpose of my visit was to find out how to obtain high resolution images of some of the maps on the OML website, she wanted to know more about my new book. Soon she called in Prof. Matthew Edney, and, later in the day, Dr. Harold Osher. It was a very encouraging meeting for me, the upshot being that OML would support my project in every way possible. And indeed they did.

Although OML was literally still unpacking the collections placed in storage during the renovation works, over the next five or six months the staff arranged for me to examine every available map of Maine in the OML collections that fit my categories. They then, if necessary, digitally photographed the maps in OML's new Digital Reproduction Center. I made many trips to OML in Portland and soon learned not to reject viewing any map, no matter how well I thought I knew it. As a result I discovered several rarities and subtle variants that I might otherwise have missed. I very much appreciate the willingness with which the OML staff entered into this research.

From my first visit Prof. Matthew Edney took an interest in the production of my book. Over the course of 2010 he offered many suggestions concerning both style and content which have much improved the final form. At the end he critically read the entire book for which I am most grateful. The Associates of the Osher Map Library also showed their support of the book, not least by purchasing one hundred copies. I am much indebted for this financial "grant."

The book was completed in November 2010, almost exactly two years after I started. Since it turned out to be twice as long as I had originally expected, two years was probably just about right.

In his *Foreword* to Thompson's book, Prof. Matthew H. Edney states that this is "the first true bibliography of maps of the state [that] provides a visual and historical feast for generalists and scholars alike."

The book can be ordered for \$65.00 plus \$5.00 shipping (plus \$3.25 sales tax if shipped within Maine):

Nimue Books & Prints,  
117 Norfolk Street,  
Bangor, ME 04401



## Ruth Lepper Gardner, 1905 – 2011

Ruth Lepper Gardner — an artist, illustrator and cartographer based in Southport, Maine — received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the University of Southern Maine at its 2004 Commencement when she was ninety-nine years young. We had been introduced to this remarkable woman earlier that year by her great nephew, Gordon Workman, then a USM student. Gordon had come to OML with a Geography class and now suggested we meet his “auntie” who had been very involved with mapmaking earlier in her life. During our visit to her home in Southport shortly thereafter, Mrs. Gardner donated a series of pictorial maps of Maine that she had published in the 1950’s and 1960’s, together with some of the preparatory materials she used to make them. These are now part of OML’s map collections.

A tour of Mrs. Gardner’s clapboard home was like taking a trip back in time. The walls and bureaus were decorated with examples of work she had created during her long, productive career including maps, drawings, paintings, and photographs together with the artifacts she had collected during her extensive travels. This was a home was brimming with personal memories. A lively raconteur, she could recall a story associated with the history of each object.

Born in Norwood, Massachusetts, from age three she spent summers at her grandparents cottage in Southport. Her father George had established the first Ford dealership in Norwood just as the model T caught on with the public. An early talent and interest in drawing was encouraged by her father’s sister, Annie Lepper Cox, who had studied art in Paris and maintained a studio there. In her mid-twenties Ruth accompanied her father’s younger sister, Susan Lepper, on the grand tour of Europe with side trips to Egypt and the Panama Canal. Some of the sketches she created during her tour were published in the travel section of the *Christian Science Monitor*. After she returned to the U.S., she continued her studies at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. In the 1930s she moved to New York City, where she sold hats in Macy’s Department Store to support her studies at the New York School of Art. She recalled seeing the construction of the Empire State Building from the window of her Greenwich Village apartment.

The pivotal change that allowed Mrs. Gardner to expand her repertoire from artist to map maker occurred during the Second World War.



*In this 2004 portrait of Ruth Lepper Gardner she holds the gift wrap she designed, featuring the puffin, her favorite sea bird. Over the course of her career she produced a variety of publications, illustrating several books (both her own and for other authors), a series of calendars, pictorial maps, numerous postcards, and maps, as shown in the background. For family and friends she created an annual Christmas card.*

COURTESY OF JACK HANSON AKA JACK MACKY OF SOUTHPORT, MAINE. ARCHIVAL REPRODUCTION PRINTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE ARTIST AT JACK@JACKMACKY.COM.

Along with other women, she was recruited during the man power shortage to work in the cartographic drafting room at the navy base in Newport, Rhode Island. There she was trained in the cartographic techniques that she would later employ in her commercial maps.

In 1947, Ruth and her husband Cornelius Gardner, whom she had married in 1942, transitioned from seasonal Southport visitors to year-round Maine residents and became active in the town’s civic affairs. Reflecting her many interests, Mrs. Gardner also participated in local art, theater, and music organizations; she played the cello in a local orchestra until well into her eighties.

She also began to self-publish her art beginning with pen-and-ink postcards of Boothbay, Wiscasset, and Camden. Then she branched out into sketch work for business calendars. In the 1950s she added a series of distinctive maps of the Maine coast that showcased the state’s history, architecture, and literature. In addition to the map series, she published a number of

illustrated books including the *Boothbay Region Sketch Book*, *anchors to Windward*, the *Maine Coast Picture Book*, and the *Southport Historical Series*. Printed locally in Augusta, these books and maps found a ready market with summer visitors in gift shops. Ruth distributed these publications herself driving up and down the Maine coast, delivering her maps and cards to gift stores, visiting old friends, and sketching in her notebook.

Aside from artist, author, mapmaker, musician, and publisher, the title that was most dear to Ruth Lepper Gardner was that of “auntie” to her many nieces and nephews. In celebration of her ninety-fifth birthday in 2000, she joined her family on a cruise on the QE II sailing from New York to Southampton, England. After the ocean-liner cruise the indefatigable Mrs. Gardner accompanied them on a two week tour of England in a camper van.

In the dead of winter each year, binoculars in hand, Mrs. Gardner would watch a hardy group of swimmers brave the icy waters on the beach across the road from her home. This annual Special Olympics fund-raiser which she hosted for the “Polar Bears,” typifies her joie de vivre and the sense of adventure with which she lived her life for nearly 106 years.



*In her pictorial maps, such as this example of the Maine Coast from Kittery to Cape Elizabeth, she combined the technical drafting skills she had acquired during the war with carefully rendered line drawings of regional flora and fauna. Accuracy was critical, especially in the depiction of ships. She noted that “when you live in a place where everybody knows boats, you have to draw them carefully.”*



# *The Triumph of the Passenger Ship: Highlights from the Norman H. Morse Ocean Liner Collection, 1870-2010*

MAY 15 TO AUGUST 23, 2012

Three years ago Norman Morse (1919-2011) donated his collection of ocean liner memorabilia comprising some three thousand documents representative of the history of the North Atlantic passenger ship. Assembled over eight decades, the Morse Collection offers a comprehensive overview of the development of the ocean-going passenger ship from the 1870's, through its heyday in the 1920's and 1930's, and its demise in the last half of the twentieth century. The collection includes ship plans, brochures, pamphlets, postcards, rate cards, menus, passenger lists, snapshots and postcards, and a selection of reference books.

His interest in ocean liners began as a child on his first voyage from New York to Rotterdam to visit relatives in the Netherlands. This ignited what would become a lifelong passion to document the evolution of the Atlantic ferry, as the North Atlantic service was widely known. After studying architecture at the College of William and Mary, Mr. Morse joined, and eventually headed, the real estate offices of the Astor and Whitney families, a position that required him to travel the world in his preferred mode of transportation. With Southport, Connecticut as his home base and an apartment in New York City (which housed



*Photo of Norman Morse taken in 1957 on the Holland America Line's Statendam. His interest in transatlantic passenger shipping began as a child with a family trip to the Netherlands. Over the following eight decades he collected nearly 3,000 documents pertaining to the history of the "North Atlantic Ferry."*

the bulk of his collection for the convenience of researchers), he summered at his cottage at Christmas Cove, Maine and cruised the Northeast coast in his sailboats. In 1988, he retired to a Gothic Revival house in Portland and generously supported non-profit cultural institutions in the area such as Maine Historical Society, Portland Museum of Art, and Greater Portland Landmarks to which he donated his

collection of architectural history books.

After the transfer of the Morse Collection to OML was completed in summer of 2009, maritime historian Lincoln Paine was brought in to inventory and catalog the documents and guest curate this exhibition. Planning for this exhibit began shortly before Norman Morse's death last summer allowing him to put his imprimatur on its design and content. We are also fortunate to draw on four hours of recorded interviews prepared for his oral history.

His expressed wish for his collection was to make it accessible to students, historians and others interested in travel and passenger shipping. In particular he was delighted that the collection would be digitized in its entirety and made freely available on the internet. We regret that he did not live to see the public debut of his collection this Spring and sincerely hope that it lives up to his expectations.

## OSHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER NO. 16

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

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