

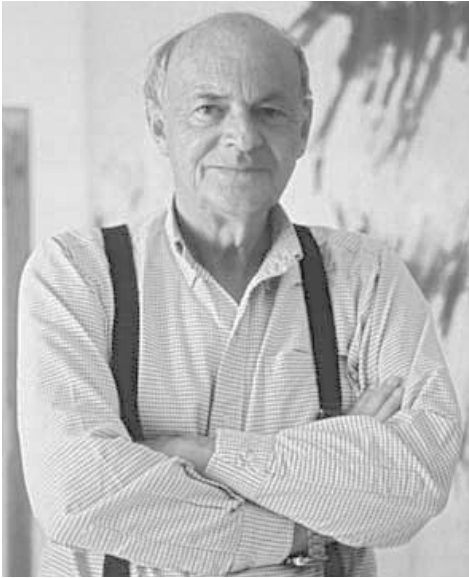
NEWS - NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 2014

January Program

Life and work of famed Rockbridge artist Cy Twombly



Cy Twombly, 1928-2011, shown in 2008 when his work appeared at the Tate Modern in London (photo by Francois Halard, retrieved from theguardian.com).

In its continuing series of presentations about famous artists with local roots, the RHS program for January will focus on Cy Twombly. He was born in Lexington in 1928, where his father was a renowned swim coach at W&L. As early as twelve, his artistic inclinations became obvious and he began working with painting kits obtained from Sears & Roebuck.

After two years at the Boston Museum School, Twombly returned to W&L to study art. The next year he moved to New York to continue his studies, associating with several artists whose work, like his, would gain great acclaim in the latter half of the 20th Century. One of those friends, Robert Rauschenberg, persuaded Twombly to join him at the avant-garde Black Mountain School in North Carolina in the early 1950s.

A travel grant from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in 1952 allowed Twombly to visit Italy for the first time, and it soon became his primary home, though he also maintained a residence and studio in Lexington. Twombly said that Italy reminded him of “the faded grandeur of Lexington.” “Virginia is a good start for Italy,” he once commented.

Twombly’s paintings were often very large and reflected a vision uniquely his own, not connected to any of the art styles popular during his career. He was frequently inspired by the history and geography of the Mediterranean, Greek and Roman mythology, and epic poetry.

The artist's work is represented in all the important museum collections in the U.S. and Europe. Rooms at the Philadelphia Museum and London’s Tate Modern are permanently dedicated to some of his large-scale works, and Houston's Mendil Collection constructed a separate building to house its collection of his art.

This program is the second in a three-part series focusing on famous 20th-century artists who spent significant parts of their lives in Rockbridge County. The series began in December with an examination of the personal and artistic career of Jean Hélión, a notable French artist who lived at Rockbridge Baths during the 1930s, and will conclude in March with a talk on Pierre Daura, a Spanish artist who lived for decades with his American-born wife at the Baths. The three artists are closely connected: Daura was Hélión’s brother-in-law as well as one of Twombly’s early art teachers.

Natural Bridge is changing hands

The Natural Bridge and its associated hotel will be closed for most of January during their transition from private ownership to a nonprofit conservation group. The name of the latter will not be released until the sale is complete, but it is understood that the the group’s goal is to get the land into the national or state park system.

January Program at a Glance

Topic: Cy Twombly

Date: Jan 27, 2014

Location: Hillel House
W&L University
204 West Washington St.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

RHS programs are open to the public at no charge.

The RHS thanks Carolyn Tolley of the
University Florist and Greenery

for the flower arrangements that brightened Campbell House during the October open house associated with the dedication of the "Eastern Legacy" Lewis and Clark marker in Lexington.

Memberships for 2014

Be sure you have paid RHS dues for the new year.

Membership growth is vital to our efforts, so please consider the mutual rewards of a gift membership for a friend, a neighbor, or even a favored guest to the area.

Check your mailing label to see whether your dues are current; this may be a good time to catch up on dues for past years, too.

For details on payment by check or on line, visit rockhist.org

and click on "Support" followed by "Membership" to pay on line or download a form to print and mail.

Volunteer Profile

Richard Hubbard

Rich hails from Wilmington, Delaware, and has degrees in English and law as well as an MBA.



Richard Hubbard

He worked for the Department of Health and Human Services in the DC area and then for 28 years in the Delaware Attorney General's Office, specializing in securities regulation, prosecution of fraud, and defense of the state in civil liberties cases. He retired in 2012 and says he is glad to be away from all that.

A Civil War buff from childhood, Rich was a member of the Delaware Historical Society and has a strong interest in history that attracted him to Lexington and the RHS.

Rich remarried in 2011 to Wilmington teacher Patty Haughton. They bought a house in Lexington and moved here in 2012. Rich says that he is now happily focusing on Rockbridge County, Stonewall Jackson and General Lee. He volunteers at Campbell House and serves on the RHS Property Committee.

Spotlight on partner museums

Museum of the Shenandoah Valley

Valley Heritage Day, Winchester, Jan.25: Enjoy featured exhibit, "Becoming Patsy Cline," presentations by research experts in Genealogy, a variety of displays by regional historic and heritage associations... and pay a visit to RHS' featured table!

<http://themsv.org/event/shenandoah-valley-heritage-day-preserving-family-dreams>

Botetourt County Historical Museum

Tour the impressively stocked artifacts and displays in this historic home in our neighbor county, and institutional partner in the ongoing Lewis and Clark projects.

<http://www.bothistsoc.org/inside-museum.htm>

And don't forget the standing history and art collections at area academic institutions, including the newly remodeled **VMI Museum** , **SVU Main Hall Galleries**, and **WLU Art on Campus** <http://www2.wlu.edu/x23296.xml>.

Museum Advocacy Days

Richmond, Jan. 16 -- Washington, DC, Feb. 24-25

Support the missions of local, regional, state and national museums in a time of budget cuts and shifting institutional priorities. To learn more and to contribute to these efforts see

<http://www.vamuseums.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=31>

<http://aam-us.org/advocacy/museums-advocacy-day/support>

December Open House brings a crowd to Campbell House

A dreary and icy December Saturday couldn't deter the steady stream of people who stopped in at Campbell House to enjoy the period decorations, music, and homemade refreshments at the RHS annual Holiday Open House. Visitors included RHS members as well as local families with children and others from farther away.



Josh Harvey (at the organ) and Eric Wilson (playing the flute) provided seasonal music for the Holiday Open House (Patte Wood photo).

The Lexington Garden Club provided artful arrangements of interior and exterior greenery, also decking the tree with our unique collection of hand-painted Christmas ornaments that chronicle the 100+ churches of Rockbridge County, Lexington, and Buena Vista.

Organist and Conductor Josh Harvey took to the pedals and stops of our 1880s Packard Pump Organ. Eric Wilson joined on flute for a range of seasonal carols and Appalachian tunes, and the assembled guests gave chorus to a rousing finale.

Displays this year featured published excerpts from contemporary Rockbridge authors, along with a popular reprise of the historic, handprinted miniature pamphlets produced by the Lauck family. Historian Ed Dooley welcomed visitors to the Remsburg Gallery for their final look at his exhibit "Main Street Lexington, 1867." Following its outstanding 2013 run at Campbell House, the exhibit will be moving to the Marshall Foundation on the VMI campus.

2013 was a busy year of both exploration and movement for the RHS: that included a grounding review of the organization's constitution, memorializing the landmark expeditions of Lewis and Clark, and the Main Street exhibit. The Open House was a fine way to celebrate our continued voice in the community before the normal winter-long closure of Campbell House.

A note from the RHS president

Dear Friends of RHS,

It has been a pleasure for me to serve this past year as President of the Rockbridge Historical Society. My thanks to all of you who have helped with our lovely gardens and grounds, appealing exhibits, valuable collections, and our publications and programs. Thanks, also, to volunteers who have come to the Campbell House and welcomed visitors from around the state and the country.

We will be scheduling a number of events in the coming year to celebrate our 75th anniversary, so watch for the announcements that will follow. Thanks to our Executive Director, Eric Wilson, for his commitment to RHS and to members of our Board of Directors, trustees, and officers, both past and present. I remember with grateful thanks the people who established our society in 1939.

My best wishes to all of you in the meaningful year ahead.

Thomas W. Davis

The Righteous and Rascals of Rockbridge

Visit rrockbridge.org to see how you can support an innovative way to put the achievements and quirks of Rockbridge history at the feet of our residents and visitors on Main Street.

Use the website to "Create a Legacy" for our distinguished and distinctive local stories. You will find there opportunities to nominate candidates or help fund the marker for your favorite among the three-dozen people already listed.

Rockbridge Historical Society www.rockhists.org

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