

For interviews, please contact  
Lainey@portsmouthhistory.org / (603) 436-8433  
For images, please visit  
<http://portsmouthhistory.org/2017-furniture-media/>

## **Portsmouth Historical Society Announces 2017 Exhibitions at Discover Portsmouth, John Paul Jones House**

*Back-to-back exhibitions feature  
Seacoast history, arts & culture*

*Portsmouth, New Hampshire...* Following record-breaking attendance at last year's acclaimed art exhibitions, Portsmouth Historical Society plans another blockbuster year at Discover Portsmouth and the John Paul Jones House.

"Four Centuries of Furniture in Portsmouth" kicks off the 2017 spring season (April 7-June 18) with 50 fascinating works from the colonial and federal periods. This classic exhibition will demonstrate why the fine craftsmanship of Portsmouth artisans is universally respected and sought after. Featured objects in the historic 1810-era Academy Gallery will be drawn from a wide range of private and public collections. Upstairs in the balcony, the exhibition includes unique contemporary works by members of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters. Participants include expert woodworkers Jon Brooks, Jeffrey Cooper, David Lamb, Richard Oedel, and many more.

A second major exhibition, "Seacoast Sculpture, from Material to Masterwork," (July 7-October 1) will focus on works by three renowned locals in three different media--ceramics by Jane Kaufmann, metal sculpture by Sumner Winebaum, and woodworks by Michael Stasiuk. The companion exhibition in the balcony will feature the works of two dozen ceramic sculptors, all members of the New Hampshire Potters Guild.

"We couldn't resist making 2017 another banner year," says Portsmouth Historical Society executive director Kathleen Soldati. "This is, after all, the 100th anniversary of the Portsmouth Historical Society--and we're just getting started!"

This fall the Academy Gallery welcomes back the popular New Hampshire Pastel Society Show (October 20-November 25) with colorful works by juried artists vying for over \$5,000 in prizes. Then comes the 27th Annual Gingerbread House Contest (December 1-23). This year the edible exhibition will be surrounded by large photographs depicting "Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth" by acclaimed photographer David J. Murray and photographs of trains in New Hampshire winters by Andy Dolph. Upstairs in the balcony gallery, visitors will discover Jay Goldsmith's third annual exhibit entitled "What Artists Look Like 2017" (November 3 - December 23). Once again, Goldsmith peeks inside the studios of local artists to create a gallery of distinctive portraits combining handmade darkroom work with digital techniques; each portrait is paired with two works by the artist.

Discover Portsmouth also offers changing displays in its Special Events room upstairs. The current exhibition presents seacoast landscapes and scenery from the collection of Robert Chase and Richard Candee, through April 7. A new display of art and artifacts (May 4-September 1) honors the Portsmouth Athenaeum, now celebrating its 200th year on Market Square. This flexible rentable space then hosts a free Star Island exhibit (October 19-November 19) sponsored by the Star Island Corporation. The 2017 series wraps up with "Quilts of the Season" (November 21 - December 23) by fabric artist Pam Weeks.

And there's even more. Through its Portsmouth Marine Society Press, Portsmouth Historical Society will publish an illustrated catalog of the spring furniture exhibition. The press will also release the latest in a series of black history books by author Patricia Q. Wall. *Lives of Consequence: Blacks in Early Kittery and Berwick* pushes aside the language of slavery to reveal the true stories of men, women, and children of African descent.

Meanwhile, the centennial celebration continues at the John Paul Jones House Museum across the street. (The Portsmouth Historical Society was founded May 4, 1917 to save this 1758 colonial mansion from demolition.) Beyond the special 100th anniversary events, tours, and lectures, the museum continues its strangest exhibition ever, "The Odd and the Elegant." Curator Gerry Ward offers an amazing amalgam of curious artifacts added to the museum collection in its 100 year history.

**\*\*\*Save the Date!\*\*\***

***John Paul Jones Fall Jubilee and Silent Auction***

**Thursday, September 7, 2017, 5:30 - 8:30pm**

The party features live music, hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. The event also includes a silent auction with fabulous items such as dining, lodging and theater packages, tickets to sporting events, and historic private tours!

**Portsmouth Historical Society @ Discover Portsmouth**

Portsmouth Historical Society will open its Welcome Center and Museum Shop at Discover Portsmouth on Saturday March 18, 2017; the Academy Gallery on Friday April 7; and the John Paul Jones House on Memorial Day, Monday May 29. Open to the public from 9:30-5pm daily, Discover Portsmouth is located at 10 Middle Street. For more information please call [603-436-8433](tel:603-436-8433) or visit [www.portsmouthhistory.org](http://www.portsmouthhistory.org)