**Seeking Photos for Veterans Honor Wall**

Museum L-A is looking to honor all veterans in a new exhibit in its main gallery that will be on display between November 10th and December 31st. “The exhibit celebrates the veteran’s courage, struggle, and patriotism during the wars as well as speaks to the history of Bates Mill in reference to war time. We hope to give family, friends, and the community the opportunity to honor these men and women who have fought for our country.” says Emma Sieh, Collections and Exhibit Coordinator. “The Museum is accepting photos to be scanned from all branches of the military and all conflicts. We want to ensure that no generation of veterans is forgotten.”

We will be accepting photographs on Tuesdays through Fridays from 12:00 - 4:00 pm and Saturdays from 12:00 - 3:00 pm through October 30, 2017. If you cannot visit the Museum during those hours, you may call 207-333-3881 to set up an appointment to bring in your photograph at another time.

The exhibit titled “The Work of War: Honoring Veterans and the Ones They Left Behind” will include five displays: “Sharing Our Stories”, a review of Bates publications showing how they kept in touch with their employees on the front; “Our Own Soldiers”, using Oral History excerpts and local veteran’s artifacts to tell their individual stories; “Our Threads of Support”, showcasing the extent of Bates manufacturing support in war; “Giving our Thanks”, paying tribute to our Fallen Warriors, displaying photos of veterans on an Honor Wall and a place to fill out Thank You cards; and, “Our Wider World”, where we discuss changes at home during and after the wars.

Each donor will be limited to one photo per veteran. The photos can be of yourself, a family member or loved one, or a friend who you would like to honor or memorialize on our Honor Wall for their service to our Country.

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**Visit from Family of Former Bates Mill President, Herman Ruhm**

The family of a former Bates Mill President Herman Ruhm visited Museum L-A in August to learn more about their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Marny Smith (daughter), her sons Ed, John and Shep Bryan, her daughter-in-law, Nancy Bryan, and her grand-daughter, Carlyn, spent an emotional time listening to the stories shared about the Bates Mill workers and the impact that Mr. Ruhm had on the lives of the people who worked in the Bates Mill buildings. The family reflects on their visit to Museum L-A below. It was a pleasure and honor to bring them on this journey of connecting generations.

It was really rewarding to come tour the mill and see the roots of our Maine connection. Had our grandfather not come to Maine to work for Bates seven decades ago, a number of family members who have enjoyed living, building careers and raising families in Maine since, may never have discovered it.

The visit filled in needed connections for us all. Our grandfather was very successful, and we all had an lingering thirst for details about his work life in textiles. After all, we knew him as Pop, who loved to spend his own time on his cattle farm in Cumberland, and more often weeding doggedly on his hands and knees in the dirt of his massive farm garden.

Learning about Pop’s tenure at the Mill and how he cared for and interacted with his workers came as no great surprise to us. We had had the privilege of growing up under his guidance and took the lessons he taught us about hard work and how to make a difference in the world into our own lives. The lessons still resonate loudly. In effect, what we all took away from our tour of the Mill was that “Pop” treated his workers just as he did his own family. And then we understood fully his impact on the Bates Mill during his tenure there. It made us all feel very proud to be his progeny!

Mr. Ruhm’s great-granddaughter, Carlyn, commented with great emotion, “I have been hearing stories of my great-grandfather for years, but today, I feel like I am living it with him.”
Excitement is in the air at Museum L-A as we look to a bright and very active future. Our ancestors claimed that working in the mills, shoe shops and brickyards was “hard work”, but they carried on with pride. Facing many challenges in the economic downturn, it has been a long and hard road; however, Museum L-A’s board, staff and volunteers continued to persevere where many might have given up.

“The Museum is presently housed in temporary space where our hands are tied from developing innovative programs, new income streams and a move out of the Bates Mill looms in the near future. So, Time is of the essence!” stated Rachel Desgrosseilliers, Executive Director. “The challenge of being squeezed out of temporary space along with the opportunity given us by an anonymous donor with a leadership gift towards the new building and operations, provided the impetus needed to once again become Bold, Audacious and Daring,” says Desgrosseilliers. Indebted for the use of donated space, the Museum is both grateful and nervous because it realizes that it will soon have to move out of its present quarters. With sights on relocating to a structurally and environmentally sound building, Museum L-A has already invested over $1.45 million towards the acquisition, environmental cleanup, demolition and stabilization of the structure and site. The former 1850 Camden Yarns Mill is now owned free and clear and despite severe financial challenges, through good governance and decision making, the Museum always remained debt free.

Museum L-A has spent the greatest part of its $5.5 million in operating expenses in the local economy thereby having great economic impact for the area. It has ‘weathered the storm’ of surviving a major economic downturn, loss of major grants and unavoidable staff cuts.

Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining

The anonymous gift helped Museum L-A by inspiring the organization to resume its steps in moving towards renovation of the Camden Yarns Mill building into a state of the art museum. “Museum L-A’s Board of Directors could not be more pleased and excited about the future of our organization. New and significant financial support has allowed the Museum to increase its professional staff, expand its programming and complete a Strategic Master Plan to continue the progress toward developing a new Museum building.” said Board Chair, John Cleveland.

Museum L-A shares its excitement as large barren neighboring spaces re-energize with new business fronts in the Bates Mill. However, as businesses move in, Museum operations and storage spaces shrink, calling for the Museum’s staff and volunteers to react quickly to changes in programs, services and preservation efforts which lead to lots of wasted energy.

Dump Truck Dive

Stories of Museum staff working to save our heritage are legendary. In 2005, over 300 original bedspread artwork designs were discovered ready to be hauled to the landfill. Silkscreens in the basement of the mill were being sold for scrap. Today both of these collections are in position of becoming national treasures.

The Museum’s current collections are stored in unprotected and borrowed spaces where environmental factors such as light, temperature, humidity, and rodents speed up deterioration of artifacts. Museum staff and volunteers continue to work to save what artifacts they can to protect pieces of Lewiston-Auburn and Maine’s past from an unnecessary demise.

“The Museum is here to not only remind people of who we were as a people, amazing and innovative but, even more important, that we still are amazing and innovative today.” What happened in these mills, industries and communities isn’t intended to stay within their respective walls. It is meant to be heard, experienced and shared. Connecting generations of workers, the Museum will continue to learn from challenges faced and endure the test of time as it continues to serve as a catalyst of knowledge and growth for the communities of Lewiston and Auburn and beyond. We hope you will join us in our journey!

Photo by Erin M. Dunn-Kimball

Sun-lit silk screen. Photo by Sun Journal

Desgrosseilliers believes that “Museum L-A is here to not only remind people of who we were as a people, amazing and innovative but, even more important, that we still are amazing and innovative today.” What happened in these mills, industries and communities isn’t intended to stay within their respective walls. It is meant to be heard, experienced and shared. Connecting generations of workers, the Museum will continue to learn from challenges faced and endure the test of time as it continues to serve as a catalyst of knowledge and growth for the communities of Lewiston and Auburn and beyond. We hope you will join us in our journey!
New Mission and Vision Approved by the Board of Directors

As part of working on a three-year Strategic Master Plan and wanting to bring new vigor to the future of Museum L-A, the Board of Directors moved forward with updating its Mission and Vision.

An organization’s mission is that which provides the roadmap to achieve its vision. In reviewing its mission, board members and staff focused on its reason for being and what makes the Museum different! They then reviewed the Vision which provides a clear destination for the future.

After lots of “hard work” which included a full Board retreat, several Board meetings and lots of soul searching, the Board of Directors on September 19th approved its new Mission and Vision which will now become the guiding light for all to follow in moving forward.

The next steps are working on the Museum’s values to identify its principals and ethics as a Museum and on developing an impact statement to help identify its effect and influence on the community. An impact statement is fairly new in the museum world, and Museum L-A has been pushing to craft such a statement since it believes it to be of great importance for accountability to one’s community.

NEW MISSION
Museum L-A connects generations and cultures, fosters a spirit of discovery and human ingenuity, and helps people experience the rich history of work, arts and community.

NEW VISION
Museum L-A will be:
- The center of a vibrant community.
- A cornerstone that celebrates the history, creativity, character, and cultural diversity of Maine’s working people.
- A beacon for innovators and artists.
- A catalyst for community resurgence.
- One of Maine’s most compelling cultural destinations.

Museum L-A Welcomes New Board Members

The Board of Directors of Museum L-A is pleased to announce that Steven Huber, and Mark Tanous have recently joined the Board. Welcome, Steve and Mark!

Steven Huber is the Private Practice Owner and Clinician at Huber Associates Physical Therapy and Orthotics in Auburn, Maine. He has worked in our local Lewiston-Auburn community for more than 30 years and is involved as a volunteer in many local, state-wide and national organizations. Steve has a Bachelor’s Degree in Physical Therapy from Temple University. He has authored many publications and taught several courses throughout the United States. Steve’s experience with small business, strategic planning and fundraising will greatly assist in the operations of both present and new Museum. Steve resides in Turner, Maine.

Mark Tanous is the Managing Partner at The Synergy Search Group, a boutique search firm based in Maine. He has more than 20 years’ experience in professional services and business management. Before joining SSG, Mark served as Director of Client Services at Career Management. He has also held senior level positions at Financial Institution Services Corp., Executive Search Group, The Auburn Group International, Management Recruiters International and International Insurance Services. A graduate of the University of Southern Maine, Mark holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Technology Engineering and an Associate of Science Degree in Business. Mark’s knowledge of Human Resources and experience in fundraising will enhance the Museum’s operations. Mark resides in North Turner, Maine.

Memorial Tributes

Tributes made in lieu of flowers prior to or at time of death of a loved one not only create a legacy for a dear family member or friend; they also continue a tradition of connecting generations for future years. Museum L-A thanks the individuals listed below and their families for choosing to support the important work of the Museum while paying tribute to their loved ones. To learn how to leave a legacy, contact Kathy Becvar, Director of Development, at 207-333-3881 or email kbecvar@museumla.org.

2009 - Aime Foisy
2009 - William Burns
2010 - Cyrille Baillargeron
2011 - Ray D’Amour
2011 - Emma Pelletier
2013 - Phil Isaacson
2014 - Harvey Desgrosseilliers
2014 - Ann Geiger
2014 - Mike Goff
2017 - Emma Baillargeron
New Patterns: Planning the Future of Our New Work

Museum L-A invites you to join guest curator Janice L. Moore for a panel discussion to talk about the role of the mills in Maine’s economic future. Panelists will include business owners, creative entrepreneurs and nonprofit workers who will talk about how mills are being reused and their role in supporting creative enterprise. The panel is free and open to the public.

“With the ‘Structures & Patterns: The Remnants of Our Work’ exhibition at Museum L-A serving as the backdrop, the discussion will gather community members of different backgrounds and ages to share their knowledge and ideas around the future of the mills. Participants will discuss how finding new uses for old buildings can positively impact the community.

When: Wednesday, October 18th
5:30 - 6:30 pm
Where: Museum L-A
35 Canal Street, Lewiston
Work Underway on Kids’ Innovation Station & Reading Nook

As its educational programming expands, Museum L-A will dedicate some of its permanent space to visiting families and students in the form of an **Innovation Station and Reading Nook**. The Innovation Station will include hands-on activities and challenges to help kids of all ages learn through play. The Reading Nook will be a colorful, comfortable, quiet space with books that relate to the Museum’s mission and stories.

“We know it’s important to give kids the space and tools to learn through play,” said Kate Webber, Director of Education & Outreach. “The men and women who worked in these mills may not have thought of themselves as inventors or engineers, but over the years they tinkered with equipment and processes to make them better and more efficient. A child building a tower of blocks learns the basics of that same spirit of invention. If the tower falls over, they make an adjustment, and try again.”

If you would like to help these spaces grow, there are a few easy things you can do:

- We are accepting book donations through an Amazon Wish List at [https://tinyurl/MuseumLAbooks](https://tinyurl/MuseumLAbooks). Just add a book from the list to your cart and select our address for shipping—it should appear as an option in your cart.

  NOTE: If you have other items in your cart, please mark them as “Save for Later” so that you can select our address.

- We are looking for crafters who can sew, knit, or crochet big pillows and poufs for the Reading Nook. The Museum would love to host a craft group! Please contact Kate Webber, Director of Education & Outreach, at 207-333-3881 or email kwebber@museumla.org if you are interested.

- Donate to our annual fund to support the Innovation Station.

- Volunteer for Museum L-A’s education programs!

From Three Months Old to Young Miss

We are honored to be part of watching our local children grow as we see them returning to participate in various events and activities. Here we have Corrina Williams, who as an infant of 3 months old, came with her grandfather, Gerry Raymond, her Mom, Jennifer and sister and brother to leave us her footprints in 2009 during our Mudmobile event to honor our brick workers.

The photo on the left is Corrina having a footprint made in clay as a keepsake. On the right, she is seen with her Mom at our Maine Innovation Expo held in May after being creative with cupcakes and enjoying the fruits of their labor. We look forward to watching Corrina grow through college and who knows, someday bringing her children back for some fun and learning.

Origin USA Celebrates with a Grand Opening in Farmington!

On August 23rd, Rachel Desgrosseilliers, Executive Director, and Kathy Becvar, Director of Development, attended the grand opening of an exciting new business in Farmington, Maine.

Origin USA is a martial-arts wear manufacturer that began selling jiu jitsu apparel in 2011. They recently opened a 20,000 square foot plant on High Street in Farmington.

Owner Peter Roberts partnered with Rachel to purchase one of Museum L-A’s extra looms that helped bring his textile business back from Pakistan and fulfilled another goal of Museum L-A—participate in the economic development of this area.

Museum L-A is honored to be part of the success of a young start-up company. Peter Roberts is a very driven and dedicated business leader. We wish Peter and his team at Origin USA the best of luck!

Visit [www.museumla.org](http://www.museumla.org) and select the image titled “The Making of an Axion” to view a wonderful video that explains more about the beginning of Origin USA.
New Employees and Changes at Museum L-A

We are extremely pleased and excited to have three highly qualified staff joining Museum L-A. These individuals bring additional resources and experience in the areas of fundraising and marketing, education and outreach, and collections and exhibits that are crucial to bringing us to the next level of who we want to be as an organization. We have also established a new position for Visitor and Volunteer Services. Our community can expect to see many changes over the next several months and beyond. A warm welcome to our new team!

Kathy Becvar
Director of Development

Robert Caron
Visitor Services and Volunteer Coordinator

Emma Sieh
Collections and Exhibits Coordinator

Kate Webber
Director of Education and Outreach

Museum L-A Is Growing! We Have a Wide Range of Opportunities for Volunteers!

Our visitors learn more about the world around us through touch, observation, interaction, and play. Their experiences are made substantially more meaningful through the dedication of our enthusiastic core of volunteers who are an integral part of the Museum community.

Volunteers support the Museum in activities that range from interacting with visitors to providing support for staff. In all that they do, their commitment enables Museum L-A to provide a lively, fun, and educational experience for everyone.

Museum L-A’s Volunteer Needs Include:
- Greeters
- Tour Guides
- Data Entry
- Researchers
- Retail/Gift Shop Experience
- Writers & Composers
- Graphic Design & Marketing
- Light Cleaning...and so much more!

For more information on volunteering for Museum L-A, please contact Robert Caron at 207-333-3881 or email rcaron@museumla.org.

Our New Website in Progress!

Museum L-A is thrilled about the launch of its new website! Check it out often as we become more creative and add events and other information.

FACEBOOK LIKES FROM 25 COUNTRIES!

VISITORS FROM 44 STATES & 12 COUNTRIES!
Museum L-A has expanded its hours of operation to accommodate the schedules of its local community and visitors. Rachel Desgrosseilliers, Executive Director, explains: “We have experienced an increase in the number of visitors to Museum L-A, including bus tours and large groups of people who are interested in touring our historical exhibits.” The new hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday from 10 am to 4 pm and Saturdays from 10 am to 3 pm. Special tour requests and large group tours outside of these hours are available by appointment.

Bates Dance Festival Collaboration a Success

The Bates Dance Festival is a summer season staple event in the Lewiston-Auburn area, and it was celebrating its 35th year in 2017. Always trying to push the envelope of site dance experiences, Festival Director Laura Faure and Mill Town choreographer Steven Koplowitz took inspiration from Museum L-A Executive Director Rachel Desgrosseilliers and created the “Mill Town” project. This immersive performance event featured 50 dancers and video installations in and around the Bates Mill Complex in early August 2017. The “Mill Town” experience was well received by all in sold-out crowds.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20TH at Museum L-A
35 Canal Street, Lewiston, ME
7:00-8:00 PM—BEHIND-THE-SCENES
SCARY MILL TOURS
8:00 PM—PERFORMANCE

Admission $15, price includes tours, performance, and seasonal refreshments.

This is a PG-13 event.

Limited seating available. Reserve in advance at 207-333-3881 or register online at www.museumla.org

Net proceeds will be used to create a Kids’ Innovation Station
Holiday Appeal

We look to our local community and beyond to help us continue the wonderful work that happens every day at Museum L-A. We have so many amazing stories to share, and we need your help to keep our Museum alive and well. Every dollar counts, and no gift is too small. Without you, we could not do this important work.

As you’ve read throughout this newsletter, there are many exciting things happening at Museum L-A. We are working on so many other programs and events for 2018! Watch your mail in late October or early November for our annual mailing asking you to join us in our excitement!