



*Haying in North Conway Meadows*, painted by Benjamin Champney (1817–1907), 1870. Linda and P. Andrews McLane Collection.

## A LEGACY OF LANDSCAPES

This spring the New Hampshire Historical Society opened its newest exhibition, *A Legacy of Landscapes: Selections from the Linda and P. Andrews McLane Collection*, featuring White Mountain landscape art. It is the inaugural exhibition in the Society's new gallery in the Park Street building. Both the exhibition and the new gallery were made possible by the philanthropy of Society members Linda and P. Andrews McLane.

Over the course of several decades of careful curating, the McLanes, who have deep ties to New Hampshire, assembled the preeminent private collection of White Mountain landscape art in the world. Now, they have chosen to donate their extraordinary collection, which numbers more than 300 paintings, to the New Hampshire Historical Society.

As a result of this gift, combined with its existing holdings, the Society now has the definitive collection in existence of an artistic style that is at the core of New Hampshire's identity. The McLanes' generosity in donating the paintings to the New Hampshire Historical Society makes it one of the largest and most consequential gifts in the organization's 202-year history.

*A Legacy of Landscapes* presents a sampling of this private collection, showcasing the work of more than 40 different artists, including Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Cole, Benjamin Champney, Thomas Hill, and Jasper Cropsey. Most of the paintings have not been on view to the public in many years. Some of the works are magisterial depictions of New Hampshire's grandest

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30 Park Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**603-228-6688**

**nhhistory.org**

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**President**  
William H. Dunlap

**Editors**  
Joan E. Desmarais  
Jennifer Walton

**Contributors**  
Sonia Booth  
Douglas R. Copeley  
Korrena Cowing  
Elizabeth Dubrulle  
Sarah E. Galligan  
Jonathan Olly

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Bill Dunlap

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### The Concord Coach Comes Home

How does one go about moving a stagecoach from the inside of one building to the inside of another? I found out on a Sunday morning last August, when the Society's Concord coach was relocated from the Hamel Center, our collections management facility at Eagle Square in Concord, to our headquarters at 30 Park Street.

The Society's iconic coach, made in 1852 by the renowned Abbot-Downing Company, has led a peripatetic life. Originally used for mail delivery, it was given to the Boston & Maine Railroad in 1930 and displayed in the lobby of the old Concord train station. In 1957, prior to the station being torn down (lamentably), the B&M Railroad gave the coach to the New Hampshire Historical Society. A parade through the streets of Concord, complete with costumed riders and a horse guard, brought it to its new home across town. It was displayed in our rotunda until 1994, when it was moved to the Hamel Center's exhibition galleries. After those galleries were closed, the coach was held safely in storage.

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**The Abbot-Downing story is one that should be remembered and retold. The Society values its role in keeping this history alive.**

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While temporarily gone from public view, our coach was definitely not forgotten. One of the most frequently asked questions from our members and the public was, "When is the coach going to be put back on display?" The staff were as eager as everyone else to have the coach again on view, but first we needed to finish up the many renovation projects going on at both buildings. And we needed to decide on the best place to display it. Our answer to this question was "back to the future." The coach would once again have a place of prominence in the building's rotunda.

Once this decision was made, the next challenge was to find the right people to move the coach. Filling this bill was Brian Erickson of Hopkinton, who is expert in all things Abbot-Downing, including how to move coaches. Brian has a roster of helpers who were mobilized for the move, as it takes a large group of strong individuals to lift and carry a Concord coach.

Early on the misty morning of August 18, Brian, his crew of helpers, our staff, and a flatbed trailer met at the Hamel Center. Brian oversaw

the removal of the coach's wheels and the heavy chassis, which would be carried separately from the body. The assembled group then lifted the body onto a rolling dolly, slid it to the front door, and with a herculean effort lifted and carried it to the flatbed trailer.

When we reached Park Street the move got even more interesting. The coach needed to be carried up the front steps and into the building through the front door. Complicating this was the presence of an iron railing running up the center of the front steps. The coach needed to be lifted above the railing, then slid along it, then angled down when we reached the doorway in order to clear the door opening. It fit by just a few inches. All of this had to be done without machines—just good old-fashioned human muscle power.

The group breathed a collective sigh of relief when the coach was placed in the rotunda and put back together. Unlike most of us, Brian Erickson was unfazed throughout. He apparently had no qualms about the ultimate success of the move.

The Concord coach is one of the most beloved objects in the Society's collection and with good reason. The Abbot-Downing Company was a leading innovator in transportation in the 19th century. The reach of the company's products was world-wide, as its coaches were used throughout the United States, South Africa, South America, and Australia. The evolution of the company was entwined with the history of Concord and New Hampshire for over a century, beginning in the early 1800s.

The Abbot-Downing story is one that should be remembered and retold, and the Society values its role in keeping this history alive.



The Society's Abbot-Downing stagecoach makes its way down Main Street in Concord on August 18, 2024. The coach was moved by Brian Erickson of Hopkinton and his crew of helpers, along with Society staff Adam Brooks, Tom Chase, and Jonathan Olly.

## Board of Trustees

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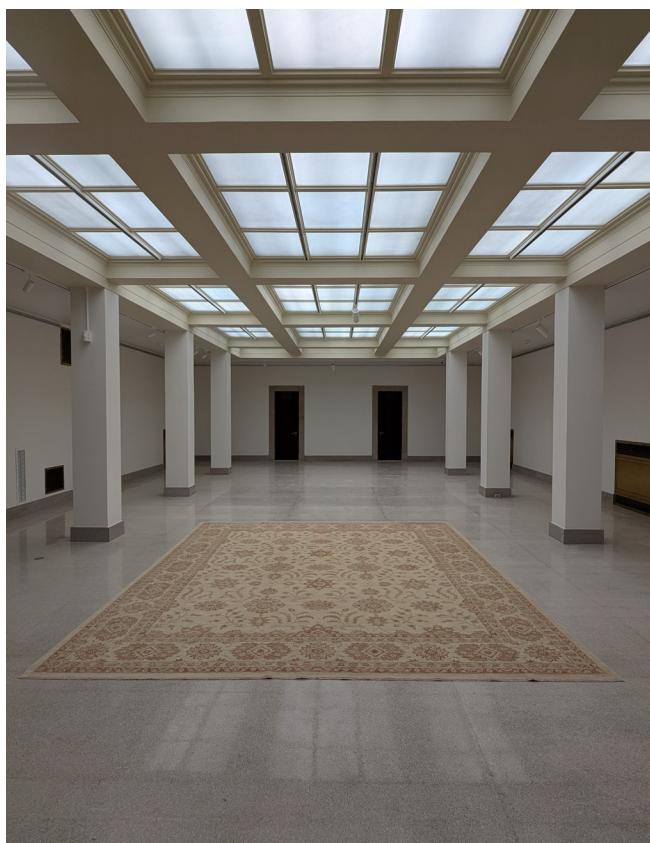
Benjamin H. Wilson  
*Hopkinton*

## A LEGACY OF LANDSCAPES

(continued from page 1)

peaks, while others are more intimate and pastoral scenes. Together, they tell the story of New Hampshire. White Mountain landscape art has become emblematic of the Granite State, capturing its stunning natural beauty and the indomitable spirit of its people. The work created by White Mountain artists helped define American landscape painting.

The McLanes' generosity also facilitated the conversion of the Society's former library stacks into new gallery space on the second floor of the Park Street building, where *A Legacy of Landscapes* is on display. The new gallery nearly doubles the Society's exhibition space. Together, the McLane collection of White Mountain landscape art and the new exhibition space open up new possibilities for research and scholarship for Society staff and visiting experts, and new opportunities to share more of New Hampshire's history with the public. The Society is grateful to Andy and Linda McLane for their generosity and the legacy of White Mountain landscape art they have established at the New Hampshire Historical Society.



*Above:* Detail from *Willey Brook, North Conway Lake*, painted by Samuel W. Griggs (1827–98), 1861. An architect and artist, Griggs was one of more than 450 artists who came to New Hampshire during the 19th century, drawn by the state's pastoral beauty and sweeping landscapes. Linda and P. Andrews McLane Collection.

The new gallery space before, *left*, and after, *right*, the installation of *A Legacy of Landscapes*. The Society looks forward to many future exhibitions derived from the McLane collection.

*A Legacy of Landscapes: Selections from the Linda and P. Andrews McLane Collection* is made possible through the generosity of the Turner Group, McLane Middleton, and Catering By Design.

The exhibition will be on view through December 31, 2025. The Society is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.



*Presidential Range from the Mt. Pleasant House* by Frank Henry Shapleigh (1842–1906), 1888. This is one of eight paintings by Shapleigh on view in *A Legacy of Landscapes*. Shapleigh was artist-in-residence at the Crawford House from 1877 to 1893 and owned a summer home and studio in Jackson. Linda and P. Andrews McLane Collection.



## TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

The Society is grateful to its trustees for their commitment of time and talent. In this issue, we're spotlighting two recent additions to the board.

Robert J. Dietel became a trustee in 2024. He chairs the governance committee and is a member of the education committee. Robert is president of the law firm Gallagher, Callahan, and Gartrell in Concord.

The firm is located in the building that was the Society's home starting in 1841 and, from 1924 to 1952, its museum. Since 1983, Gallagher, Callahan, and Gartrell has been a wonderful steward of that historic building, which once housed Franklin Pierce's law office. Robert is a past trustee of the Mount Kearsarge Indian Museum in Warner. Additionally, he currently serves as an appointed member of the New Hampshire Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission and on the Campaign for Legal Services Leadership Council. Robert, his wife Clara, and their two children live in Concord.



Anne L. Hamilton joined the board in 2024 and sits on the finance and development committees. She is no stranger to the Society, having served as the director of development from 2007 to 2015. In her 35-year career in nonprofits, Anne also worked at the United

Way of Merrimack County, including seven years as its executive director, and the Capitol Center for the Arts. She has been active in her community, serving two terms on the Concord City Council and on the boards of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce and the Capital Regional Development Council. She is currently a trustee of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, the partner organization of the Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park in Cornish. After living in Concord for many years, Anne and her husband, Bill, recently moved to Westborough, Massachusetts, to be closer to their children and six grandchildren.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Since 1993, the Society has honored those who donate their time and expertise to the organization with the Volunteer of the Year Award. This year's award goes to Bill Morrison, formerly of Bow and now living full time in Florida. Bill has had a long affiliation with the Society, having joined the investment committee in 1990. Advances in technology, especially Zoom, have allowed Bill to continue as an active member of this vital committee even after his relocation to Florida, much to the Society's benefit.



Bill had a long and successful career in the trust and wealth management business, concluding as president of Cambridge Trust of New Hampshire. Early in his career, he worked at the First NH Bank in Concord, which at the time was custodian of the Society's endowment assets. Stanley Hamel, who had a keen eye for talent, was the board treasurer during those years. Stanley spotted Bill, and when the time was right, recruited Bill for the investment committee.

Bill has been a steady, calm voice on the committee since then, helping to wisely invest our endowment year-in and year-out. During his time on the committee the endowment has quadrupled. Today the endowment helps meet the Society's mission by providing one-half of the annual budget.

In appreciation of his longstanding service to the New Hampshire Historical Society, we recognize Bill Morrison as the 2025 Volunteer of the Year.

## NEW RESEARCH RESOURCE

The Society's library now offers on-site researchers access to Fold3 by Ancestry, a digital database with over 500 million indexed and digitized military records from the American Revolution to the present. Fold3 includes service records, photos, and draft cards. The name of the database is derived from a traditional flag-folding ceremony, where the third fold honors veterans. The library is open Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Appointments are encouraged. Admission is free for members; \$10 for nonmembers.



## SOCIETY AWARDED BUILDING PRESERVATION GRANT

The New Hampshire Historical Society was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant from the 1772 Foundation in cooperation with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance to assist with a major facilities project that will make necessary repairs to the Park Street building.

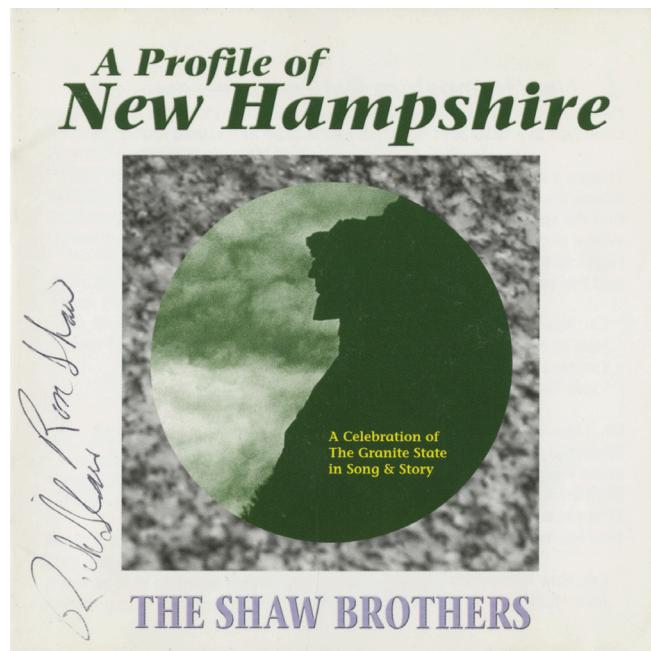
The project will repoint the granite parapet of the building to stop water infiltration and damage. The work is being done by the masonry restoration and construction firm Pro-Point Restoration LLC of New Durham. Pro-Point has repaired and restored monuments and historic sites across the country, from California's Point Reyes Lighthouse to the Texas Capitol, and has previously worked on the Park Street building with excellent results.

Dedicated in 1911, the Park Street building is regarded as one of the nation's finest examples of Beaux Arts architecture. Additional funding for the repointing project is needed. To learn more or to make a contribution, contact President Bill Dunlap at [bdunlap@nhhistory.org](mailto:bdunlap@nhhistory.org) or 603-856-0601.

## COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHT

A copy of the 2003 Shaw Brothers album, *A Profile of New Hampshire: A Celebration of the Granite State in Song and Story*, was recently gifted to the Society's archives by an anonymous donor. Identical twins Ron (1941–2018) and Rick (1941–2021) Shaw were New Hampshire natives who grew up in the White Mountains. They began singing and playing music as young children, but their musical career really took off while they were students at the University of New Hampshire. They formed a folk group and toured all over the country. Later, the brothers joined the Hillside Singers and recorded the international hit, "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Ron and Rick Shaw went on to record many albums together as the Shaw Brothers and are beloved for their songs about the Granite State. Their annual summer concert series at Prescott Park in Portsmouth drew huge crowds. When their song, *New Hampshire Naturally*, was named an official state song in 1983, Governor Hugh Gallen described them as "New Hampshire's musical ambassadors to the world."



*The Ballad of the Concord Coach* is a classic Shaw Brothers tune included on this album. They wrote and recorded it in 1984 in collaboration with the Concord Coach Society, now known as the Abbot-Downing Historical Society. The Concord coach also inspired *Lucy Come Ride in My Wagon*, about the courtship between Abbot-Downing founder Lewis Downing and his wife, Lucy Wheelock.

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The Society serves nearly 7,000 schoolchildren each year through its on-site, outreach, and homeschool programs. Students and staff from Ashland Elementary School were the first group to welcome the Concord coach back after it was placed on display in the rotunda of the Park Street building. Learn more in the President's Message on page 2.