

Charitably



Speaking

353 Southern Artery

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A PUBLICATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHARITABLE MECHANIC ASSOCIATION

President's Message

I would like to thank the MCMA membership who participated and worked towards our fantastic Triennial at the Royal Sonesta Hotel. Our first silent auction held at that event was a great success, with over \$4700 being raised for MCMA's many missions. I want to thank all who contributed the great items for auction, and also thank all who showed their generosity by purchasing those items. Peter Lemonias and his very conscientious Triennial Committee deserve our particular thanks and appreciation, and we are greatly saddened that one of those men, Carl Wold, was lost to us only weeks after the event.

I also want to thank our members for the opportunity to serve as your president, and would like you to know I appreciated all of your congratulations. I look forward to our July Quarterly at the Adams Inn in Neponset and hope to see all of you there. – **Rich Adams**

Recent Happenings

The 72nd Triennial celebration of MCMA was held March 2 at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge. Prior to the evening festivities, members and guests enjoyed an escorted tour of the new Art of the Americas Wing of the Museum of Fine Arts, which features a fine collection of Paul Revere's handiwork. That was followed by a cocktail hour in a room overlooking the Charles River, then dinner and dancing for the remainder of the evening. We did, of course, take time out for the ceremonial passing of the "Revere snuffbox," the tradition begun in 1852 wherein the snuffbox has been passed from past presidents to the incoming president. We were pleased to include in that ceremony Mr. Paul Revere III, a descendent of our first president, who is active in several of the charitable causes founded by his ancestor, and serves on the board of directors of the Paul Revere House in Boston. Outgoing President Anderson expressed his appreciation for having had the opportunity and the honor to serve as MCMA's 68th president, and incoming President Adams conveyed his commitment to strengthening the association and increasing member involvement in the years ahead. The weekend concluded Sunday morning with a private breakfast for our members and guests. We are deeply grateful to Chairman Peter Lemonias and his Triennial Committee members for the planning and the effort they put into making this event so very successful.

Our April Quarterly was held at Spinelli's Function Facility in Lynnfield, where we enjoyed a nice luncheon before attending to the business portion of our meeting. President Adams called for a moment of silence for deceased members Robert H. Wills, Jr.; J. Douglas Brown; and Reed



Above, l. to r., are Paul Revere III, past presidents MacLaughlin, Joyce, Anderson, and President Adams.

Dickinson. Minutes of the previous meeting were read by Secretary Joyce, and were accepted as read. The president again thanked the members of the Triennial Committee for their efforts in coordinating that very enjoyable event, and thanked all the donors and buyers who made our silent auction such a success. He also presented to Past President Bill Jutila a plaque in recognition of his service to MCMA in the aftermath of Rick Purdy's sudden passing, and informed everyone that Vice President Anthony is forming a committee to explore ways to make our website more useful. Our scheduled speaker was unavailable due to a late commitment, but member Peter Lemonias filled in admirably with a discussion of his company's metal plating operations, using snare drum components to illustrate the process, and member Joe Bellomo contributed by briefly explaining the snare drum and actually playing a number for us. We thank Peter and Joe for stepping up to the plate on short notice, and Tony Scalse for making all the arrangements for this Quarterly.

Helping Others

It's been only two years since we profiled **Old Sturbridge Village** (OSV) in this space, but in essence this is a follow-on to that article. The earlier story dealt with the support we gave OSV for the 2010 repair of a deteriorating, circa 1870 covered bridge on their property. *[It had been moved there from its original location in Dummerston, Vt.]* A sideline to that story was that carpentry students from nearby Tantasqua Regional High School were invited to closely observe the work as it progressed, and this led to the replacement of a cedar shingle roof on another of OSV's structures by the students themselves. Happily, that experience grew into what OSV calls their Vocational Schools Outreach Project, whereby dozens of high school students have since been welcomed to the OSV campus for a hands-on learning experience in the building trades, particularly in the areas of roofing, masonry, and engineering.



Last year we continued our support for OSV with a grant for the purchase of materials required for reconstruction of their gristmill waterwheel. Over several decades, the waterwheel had deteriorated beyond repair, and had been idle since early 2011. Originally it had been intended that Tantasqua students would take part directly in that reconstruction, but scheduling and safety considerations ultimately required modification of those plans. In a compromise, the students were assigned to work on a smaller, safer project (replacing the roof on the historic law office), but were brought regularly to the gristmill to closely observe the work being done by OSV's professionals.



As we've noted before, Old Sturbridge Village is the largest outdoor museum in the Northeast, depicting life in a rural New England town in the early 1800s. More than 40 original buildings have been restored and brought to the museum from all over New England. (The gristmill was the first exhibit constructed by OSV, built of new lumber and old timbers in 1938 on the site of a 19th century mill. The 3000 lb. millstone, bedstone, and related machinery came from a gristmill in Hebron, Conn.) OSV develops

and offers programs for schoolchildren, partners with schools throughout New England, and works with them to provide intelligent, age-appropriate learning experiences so students can explore and experience early American life. Additionally, it offers adult workshops for many of the crafts that are on display, such as blacksmithing, textiles, woodworking, etc. And its Vocational Schools Outreach Project is giving vocational students real-project experience, with skilled professionals, that will hopefully serve them well as they pursue their careers.



MCMA History

It's sometimes difficult to convey how the accomplishments of past members of MCMA have advanced their particular industries or fields, or had a lasting effect far beyond their own era. We rarely, however, have that problem with the architects in MCMA's past, and the subject of this article is no exception. **Ammi Burnham Young**, who joined our association in 1838, was born in Lebanon, N.H. in 1798. His father, Samuel Young, was a carpenter and designer of churches, courthouses and academy buildings in the Lebanon area. At age 14 Ammi began work in his father's trade, learning the classical orders from the pattern books of **Asher Benjamin**. *[As always, the names of MCMA members will be **bolded**.]*

Young's early commissions included churches in the Lebanon area and dormitories at nearby Dartmouth College. His education was furthered by moving to Boston and working in the office of **Alexander Parris**, whose characteristic work in granite influenced Young's later government commissions. It was Young's 1833 design of the 2nd Vermont State House in Montpelier, however, that brought him real fame and success, leading initially to him winning a competition to design the U.S. Custom House in Boston in 1837, and eventually to him becoming the first Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department in 1852. *[Young's custom house in Boston consisted of the base section only (most of the drawings for which were done by **Hammatt Billings**); the tower, built by **O.W. Norcross**, was added many decades later.]*

As Federal architect Young was responsible for creating across the country numerous courthouses, hospitals, customhouses and post offices, many of them listed today on the National Register of Historic Places. His traditional designs lent a sense of grandeur and permanence to government institutions. Fireproof construction was a mandate, and specific examples of his attention to that mandate can be found in Galveston, Texas, and Richmond, Va. The Galveston Customhouse and Courthouse survived both the Galveston Fire that leveled much of the city in 1885 and the Great Galveston Hurricane of 1900. And Young's Customhouse and Courthouse in Richmond, which was used during the war as the Confederate Treasury, was one of the few structures to survive the conflagration set by Union troops following the city's evacuation by the Confederates in 1865. *[Jefferson Davis would be indicted for treason in its courtroom the following year.]* Young's designs typically featured masonry foundations, walls, and vaulting, with interior cast iron structural and architectural elements, and liberal use of marble for flooring and stair treads. *[Young was in fact a pioneer in the use of cast iron*



2nd State House, Montpelier, Vt. (1838-1857)



Custom House, Boston, Mass. (c. 1907 view)



Custom House, Galveston, Texas

in building construction, employing it not only for columns and floor supports, but for stairways, railings, door frames, and even window frames.]

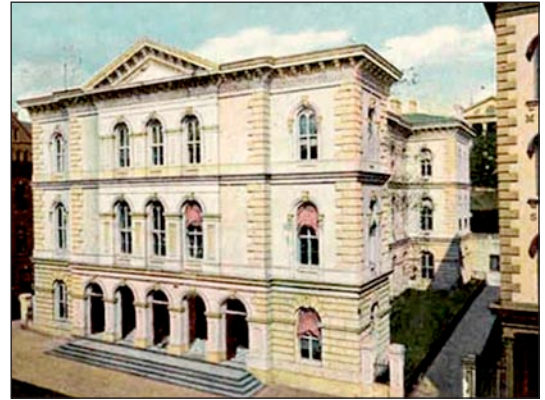
During Young's tenure, the Treasury Department initiated a systematic re-design of the nation's customhouses, and in the process revolutionized the design and construction of post offices as well. As most of the customhouses designed by Young were intended to serve also as post offices, and their postal function was prominently displayed (generally on the first floor), within a few years the postal system had its first set of spaces specifically designed for the collection and distribution of mail. Importantly, the new post offices were designed to resemble one another as these 1850s projects employed standard building types – in some cases, identical blueprints were produced for different locations. The Young post offices appeared in cities large and small across the country, from Chicago to Mobile, from Gloucester to Galena to Galveston, and most were remarkably similar in appearance. Though design changes were to take place after the war (and after Young's departure), for the postal service, the legacy of the Young period was profound and enduring.

Another major accomplishment for Young while at the Treasury was the expansion of the Treasury Building itself. From 1855 to 1861 he oversaw construction of the building's South Wing, and he began construction of the West Wing, though completion of that wing would come under **Isaiah Rogers**, who took over from Young in 1862. In these parts, some interesting examples of Young's work remain, including UVM's Wheeler House and the Timothy Follett House in Burlington, Vt.; the Great Stone Dwelling House of the Shakers in Enfield, N.H.; Loring Hall (now the Loring Hall Cinema) in Hingham, Mass.; the Worcester (Mass.) County Courthouse; Customhouse/Post Office buildings in Bath and Waldoboro, Maine, Portsmouth, N.H., Providence, R.I., and Barnstable, Mass.; and the Middlesex County Courthouse in Cambridge, Mass. *(In 1848 Young enlarged and redesigned the exterior of Charles Bulfinch's original stucco structure.)*



Middlesex County Courthouse, Cambridge, Mass.

In 1823 Young married Mary Hough, who died in 1825, leaving a daughter. His second wife, Hannah Green Ticknor, died in 1859, and he is said to have married a third time following his retirement to Washington, D.C., although she, too, predeceased him. Ammi B. Young died in 1874 ... yet another member of MCMA whose influence we see around us almost daily without even realizing it.



Custom House, Richmond, Va.



Custom House, Galena, Ill.



Loring Hall, Hingham, Mass.