

Charitably



Speaking

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A PUBLICATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHARITABLE MECHANIC ASSOCIATION

President's Message

First let me say that I am truly honored to have been elected the 69th president of MCMA. The work that the Board of Government, various committees, Past President Bill Anderson, Secretary Marty Joyce, and Treasurer Kurt Hanson have done since the passing of Ric Purdy has been nothing short of extraordinary. Their work has made my transition as incoming president a lot smoother, and for that I'm grateful.

I look forward to our Triennial Celebration at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge on March 2, and I'm confident that with Peter Lemonias and his committee working on the planning, it will be a truly wonderful evening. I would also like to extend an offer to all members to please offer any suggestions or comments which you feel could possibly further our mission or improve our association. In closing, I look forward to working with the board and all of our committees in moving to forward MCMA's vision for support of the trades in the coming years. Thank you again. – **Rich Adams**

Recent Happenings

MCMA'S Annual Meeting was held January 30 at the Neighborhood Club in Quincy. Following an invocation by Past President Hanson, the members enjoyed their luncheon, after which the business of the meeting got under way. Minutes of the previous quarterly meeting were read by Secretary Joyce, and Treasurer Kurt Hanson distributed a preliminary balance sheet and statement of activities for 2012. Reports were presented by members Lordan, Scalse, Sulkala, Flight, Lioce, Johnson, and Lemonias, representing each of our committees. Expenditures for 2013 were authorized in the amount of \$310,000. Mr. Lemonias, who also chairs our Triennial Committee, updated everyone on the progress toward that upcoming event, noting that invitations were being mailed that week.

As this was the final meeting presided over by President Anderson, the president took the occasion to thank all those who had helped and supported him and MCMA over the past three years. He especially noted the extensive support he received in the aftermath of Executive Director Purdy's sudden death, and gave credit to all those who helped get us back to near-normal. Additionally, he recounted some of the memorable events of

his presidency, and expressed his appreciation for having been given the honor to serve MCMA as its president. He was warmly applauded by the membership.

Lastly, the membership approved the recommendations of the Committee on Nominations, as presented by Chairman William Jutila. Elected for three years were President Richard Adams, Vice President Arthur Anthony; Trustees John Moriarty, Richard Trethewey, Frederick Arrowsmith, Charles Sulkala, and Joseph Valante; and Committee of Relief Charles Sulkala, Russell Johnson, and Richard Reale; and for one year, Secretary Martin Joyce and Treasurer Kurt Hanson.



Helping Others

We of course admire all of the organizations we support, and value the work they do, but there can be no denying that North Bennet Street School (NBSS) ranks among our favorites. Partly this is due to the fact that their interests so closely resemble our own, but partly it's because they do their job so well. Their job, of course, is to help students to achieve meaningful livelihoods by offering intense, hands-on training in traditional trades and fine craftsmanship. This school's reputation for excellence and value attracts students from around the world.



While NBSS does offer continuing education workshops and “short” courses, our interest has always favored their full-time programs. These programs include specialty professions such as preservation carpentry, cabinet and furniture making, piano technology, violin making and repair, locksmithing, bookbinding, and jewelry making. All are taught in a structured framework with a focus on practical projects, each project building on previous learning and requiring students to solve increasingly complex problems. The teaching methods encourage the systematic development of hand skills along with an understanding of tools, materials, and processes, plus a commitment to excellence.

Our support for NBSS in 2012 was concentrated on their bookbinding program. We provided a collection of specially crafted “handle letters,” brass type, and other hand tools used for hand-tooling and gold-stamping titles. These items are used in repairing bindings, and making facsimile and period style bindings, as well as for new work.



Last year was an important one for the school, as they finalized the purchase of surplus City of Boston property in order to build a new consolidated facility. Work is already under way to renovate the new property on North Street, and, when completed, NBSS will be able to house all of their programs under one roof. (Programs are currently located in the North End, Arlington, and South Boston.) Regardless of their location, we look forward to continuing our very rewarding association with the North Bennet Street School.

MCMA Past ...

Few of us these days are familiar with Boston-born **Albert Augustus Pope**, but in the 1890s his name was known throughout the country, both as the father of the American bicycle industry, and as a pioneer in the early automobile industry. Albert's father had pursued a career in real estate speculation. Initially prosperous, his business collapsed in 1852, which sent 9-year-old Albert to work plowing fields. By age 13 he was selling produce, and by age 15 he had quit school and taken a job at Quincy Market. In 1862, at age 19, he joined the 35th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment, receiving a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. He served until the end of the Civil War, participating in many major actions, including Antietam, Fredericksburg, and

Gettysburg, and received two battlefield promotions for gallantry under fire, the second to lieutenant colonel. (From then on, much to his pleasure, he was known as Colonel Pope. In 1898 he had a monument erected at Antietam Creek to honor the men of the 35th Massachusetts who died there.)

After mustering out of the Army with \$900 in his pocket, Pope started a business providing decorations, supplies and tools to the shoe industry, then one of the largest employers in the state. The business was a great success, but Pope's interest was diverted in 1876 when he attended the Philadelphia Exhibition and became fascinated with bicycles. He imported several European models and went about obtaining U.S. patents, including buying up existing patents. Eventually he contracted with the Weed Sewing Machine Co. in Hartford, Conn., to use an empty wing of their plant to build 50 "test velocipedes." Pope's two-wheel models were an immediate success, and Weed was soon producing more bicycles than sewing machines. By the late 1880s, production of Pope's

"Columbia" bicycles was 5,000 per year, and Pope had bought the plant outright.

Pope's knack for advertising contributed to his success, and controlling his supply chain (he bought a steel and a nickel-plating company, and the Hartford Rubber Works) helped lower costs and maintain quality. But he pushed innovation as well, like reduced wheel friction and the use of hollow steel tubing, making his bicycles lighter and easier to pedal, allowing him to market them to women and children. The bicycle craze peaked in the mid-1890s, and Pope's company was the largest employer in New England, but by then his attention was turning to automobiles.

In 1896 he founded the Columbia Electric Vehicle Company, and his production of 2,092 vehicles in 1899 accounted for nearly half the automobiles made in the U.S. that year. *[He also exhibited his vehicles at the Mechanics Building in Boston, in some of the first "auto shows" in the country.]* Although he did manufacture some gasoline-powered vehicles, his attachment to electric vehicles would be his

downfall, as batteries at the time were heavy and were incapable of holding charges for long periods. His company was forced into receivership in 1907, and he died two years later at Lyndemere, the family's summer home in Cohasset. Pope is buried at Forest Hills Cemetery. *[His vehicles are valued somewhat more highly these days. The 1899 Columbia Electric Landaulet in the photo sold for \$550,000 recently.]* So, once again, we find an MCMA man was instrumental in the advancement of an American industry. (Colonel Albert Pope made Hartford the bicycle, and for a time the automobile, center of the nation.) Is anyone surprised?



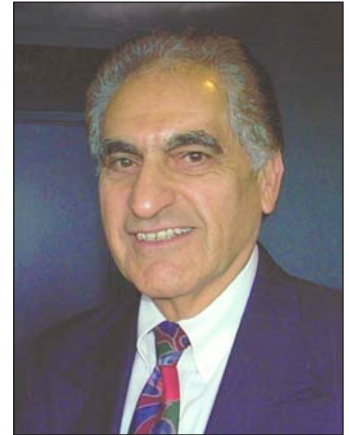
Albert Augustus Pope



... and MCMA Present

We have recounted in previous issues several MCMA men with maritime connections, in particular naval architects and the builders of clipper ships. And we are familiar with the facts that many of our members excelled in specialties like the making of sails, ropes, pumps, blocks and tackle, etc., and that our earliest members helped build “Old Ironsides.” But we have not singled out a member who has actually commanded a ship ... until now.

Anthony C. (Tony) Scalese was born in Cambridge, the son of Italian immigrant parents. From Rindge Tech high school, Tony went on to receive his navy commission, and a B.S. in marine engineering, from the U.S. Naval Academy. He would later earn an M.S. in personnel management from George Washington University, and still later a B.A. in business management.



His navy career began with service in the Korean War, aboard the amphibious attack transport USS *Botetourt*, and later as the chief engineer aboard the destroyer USS *Samuel B. Roberts*. *[The photo shows Tony being hauled back aboard that ship after freeing a cable-snagged propeller.]* In the years to follow he would serve on several other vessels, as well as in various NATO and fleet staff positions. He served off Cuba during the Missile Crisis of the 1960s. His commands included the converted LSM USS *Launcher*, the aviation gasoline tanker USS *Pecatonica*, which Tony also delivered to the Republic of China when it was leased to that country, and the mine sweeper USS *Fidelity* (MSO-443). *[And if anyone actually thinks mine removal involves shooting at them with a rifle, go to the back of the class. The process is infinitely complex, employing an array of mechanical, magnetic and acoustic equipment.]*



Since retiring from the Navy with the rank of commander, Tony, a registered P. E., has, to put it mildly, kept busy. He formed a consulting engineering practice, managed hotel construction across the country, consulted on shipyard design in Iran, and has been involved in engineering projects in the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. Additionally, he served as director of engineering and construction for the Mass. Department of Correction.



Tony and his wife, Karin, who now live in West Newton, have five children, eleven grandchildren, and a three-weeks-old great-grandson. They still travel extensively, and Tony keeps active in veterans' organizations as well as other charitable and civic organizations. Though he joined MCMA late in his career, Tony has, among other contributions, served on several triennial committees, helped develop the MCMA web site, and in January completed his third term as a trustee. The Energizer Bunny would get worn out following this man around, and it is our honor to count him as a member of MCMA.