

## Charitably



## Speaking

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Quincy, MA 02169

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**A PUBLICATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHARITABLE MECHANIC ASSOCIATION**

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### President's Message

It is an honor to be your 70th president. For over 200 years our association has been doing what we are doing now, adding value to our country. We are building, fixing, manufacturing, inventing, and everything that mechanics do, and all this with our hands, minds, and leadership. This is indeed an elite group of individuals.

The value of our organization is in our members, and our members can add value very easily. If you hear a person give a great talk, let's try to have them speak at our quarterlies. If you know someone who would make a good member, try to guide them to membership. Maybe as a member you would like to become more active and serve on a committee, or you have an idea on how to improve our club. Let us know. Finally, try to make it to our quarterly meetings, for you are Mass. Charitable and your presence adds value. There are many ways to add value to our association with very little lifting required and much satisfaction to be gained.

Thank you for this honor. – **Arthur Anthony**

### Recent Happenings

Our Annual Meeting took place on January 20, and was held once again at the Neighborhood Club in Quincy. Reports from the Treasurer, Secretary, Board of Government, Finance and Relief Committees were delivered and acted upon, while each of our other committees reported on their 2015 activities. It was voted to extend honorary membership to Paul Revere III, and President Adams, noting that this was his final meeting as president, took the occasion to thank everyone for their help and support over the past three years. Lastly, the membership approved the recommendations of the Committee on Nominations, voting to elect for three years as president Arthur Anthony, as vice president Peter Lemonias, as trustees Paul Lohnes, Joseph Valante, John Moriarty, Russell Johnson, and Frederick Arrowsmith; and to the Committee of Relief, Charles Sulkala, Russell Johnson, and Richard Reale; and for one year as treasurer, Kurt Hanson, and as secretary, Martin Joyce.

On Saturday, January 30, we held our 73rd Triennial Celebration at the Millennium Bostonian Hotel, across from Quincy Market and Faneuil Hall. It was preceded by afternoon excursions to North Bennet Street School and the Paul Revere House, where our members and guests received guided tours of both facilities. The evening event itself featured dining and dancing and, of course, the ceremonial passing of the "Revere snuffbox" from past presidents to our incoming president. And we were pleased to again include in that ceremony Paul Revere III, a direct descendent of our first president. This Triennial was enjoyed by all who attended, and we sincerely thank Peter Lemonias and those who served on his Triennial Committee for the planning and effort they put into making it such a success.



**Helping Others**

We were pleased last year to renew our relationship with **The Arc of the South Shore** in Weymouth, formerly known as South Shore Arc. Founded in 1951, this family-oriented, community-based agency provides high quality services and advocacy for children and adults with cognitive, physical, and other intellectual and developmental disabilities. In practice, they strive to provide services that fully integrate individuals into the community, are responsive to a full range of individual, family, and community needs, and incorporate effective systems of family support. The services offered are extensive, including among others residential support, early intervention, day services, personal care services, and adult foster care. Their efforts in the area of employment training, however, are what draw our attention.

The Arc of the South Shore’s Day and Employment Supports Program is engaged in person-centered career planning and development that helps people with disabilities identify and achieve their goals. It uses job seekers’ interests, skills, preferences, and strengths to guide the career planning process, and gives them the tools to learn, hone their skills, and find and keep jobs in the community. It then provides job coaches to support participants in a variety of settings.

More than 20 of the individuals served expressed interest in culinary jobs, and MCMA’s grant was used to purchase tools and equipment to expand the training curriculum in that area. The goal for participants will be to successfully learn and develop the job skills necessary to become ready for full or part-time jobs in this vocational area, which could include working with local restaurants, catering companies, function facilities, or other related businesses. This organization serves more than 1700 individuals annually, and its success is the result of active parent participation and strong public and private partnerships. We at MCMA are pleased to be able to support their fine work.





## MCMA History

Of the many artifacts in MCMA's possession over the years, the marble sculpture of *The Wounded Indian* is perhaps the most beautiful, but it carries a tortured history. Peter Lemonias, chairman of our History Committee (and now our vice president), put together an account of that history, using as sources a book by H. Nichols Clark, *A Marble Quarry: The James Ricau Collection of Sculpture at the Chrysler Museum of Art*, and MCMA's own *Annals*. This account is drawn from Peter's work.

*The Wounded Indian* was the first fine art, marble sculpture made in America. It was sculpted out of a single block of Rutland, Vermont marble by Peter Stephenson. It was completed in Boston in 1850.

Peter Stephenson was born in Yorkshire, England in 1823 and moved with his parents to America in 1827. The family lived initially in New York, then in Michigan where Peter spent considerable time with Indians. Following the death of his father, he moved to Buffalo in 1836 to live with an older brother who taught him the trade of watchmaker. He began cutting cameos in 1839, and four years later the 20-year-old Stephenson moved to Boston with hopes of becoming a sculptor. Cutting cameos of Boston residents, he earned enough money to spend 1845 and 1846 in Rome studying ancient sculpture. He began work on *The Wounded Indian* soon after his return to Boston in 1847. He died of "mental illness" in 1861 at the age of 38.

[*The Wounded Indian* is clearly inspired by an ancient sculpture called *The Dying Gaul*. That sculpture shows a soldier on the ground with a serious leg wound. It's a Roman copy of a lost Greek original, made around 220 B.C., and is now in the Capitoline Museums in Rome.]

When *The Wounded Indian* was completed, all who saw it realized its beauty. But Stephenson was frustrated at the lack of patronage or interest in purchasing his creation. People with money to purchase fine art in 1850 would only purchase from Europe. American-made art was not considered a worthy investment, and Stephenson and other American sculptors in the pre-Civil War period struggled to earn a living. (He wrote in 1853: "I do not complain; the way to make up for hard luck is to work the more industriously. I have never received a lesson from any one, nor a cent of money that the sweat of my brow did not earn.")

*The Wounded Indian* was displayed in a Boston gallery. According to the *Boston Transcript*, the sculpture was a true work of art that showed character, force, expression, truth to nature, and anatomical correctness. In 1851 *The Wounded Indian* was shown at the London Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, also known as the Crystal Palace Exhibition. Critics were surprised that such a fine work could have been made by an American artist. The sculpture was shown in New York City in 1852 and then returned to Boston, where it was displayed in the statuary room of the Boston Athenaeum for the next four years.



Above is *The Wounded Indian* by Peter Stephenson, as pictured in MCMA's *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting ... Issues 121-127* (1921 Annual Report).



In 1851, Peter Stephenson's sculpture, *The Wounded Indian* was exhibited in the United States Gallery (at left) at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London, England.

According to Clark's book, the sculpture "was then acquired by the Boston Mercantile Library Association in 1856." The book goes on to say: "Little is known about its subsequent history. It remained in the association's collection after the library was transferred to the Boston Public Library in 1881. At this juncture, the institution became a social club with headquarters at the corner of Tremont and Newton streets. It disbanded in 1952. There is no known record of the disposal of the piece; Ricau acquired it in Boston before 1967."

This is where the story differs from our records. MCMA *Annals* for 1893 includes a November 2, 1893, letter from our Board of Government to Dr. James W. Bartlett of Boston. The letter reads in part: “At a meeting of the Government of this Association ..., a report was made by Mr. Lothrop, a member, announcing a willingness on your part, to present to this Association, as a free gift, a piece of marble statuary, of which you are the owner; the work of P. Stephenson, an American artist; representing a Wounded Indian, and has been stored in this building for several years ....” We agree in the letter to not charge for storage, to properly restore the sculpture, and to put it on permanent display at the expense of the association, and the letter concludes that The Board of Government, “... in the name of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association voted, unanimously, to accept the gift on the conditions named.”



*The Wounded Indian* sculpture was displayed in the niche in the corner of Talbot Hall at MCMA's Mechanics Hall building. The photo is from MCMA's *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting ... Issues 121-127 (1920 Annual Report)*.

In our 1894 *Annals*, Mr. Lothrop, upon stepping down from his term on the Board of Government, states: “At our meeting in November (1893) I reported to you the progress then made in regard to the statue on store in our building, and which I had hopes we should obtain by gift. My hopes were fulfilled and the statue of the “Wounded Indian” in pure white marble, cleaned, restored and suitably mounted, is now our own.”

Further, our *Annual Reports* book for the period of 1914-1925 includes at the end a full-page photo of *The Wounded Indian* and the following statement: “*The Wounded Indian*, sculptured by Mr. Stevenson, stood for many years in the reading room of the Boston Mercantile Library Association which was situated on Summer Street directly opposite the C. F. Hovey Company store. When the Mercantile Library rooms were vacated [1881], the statue was stored by the owner in Mechanics Building and was subsequently presented to the Association by him. It now occupies the niche in Talbot Hall, where its technical perfection and artistic beauty may be enjoyed by the patrons of the building.” In a separate photograph of Talbot Hall the statue, in its niche, is clearly visible.

The big question for us is, what happened? When Mechanics Hall was sold, prior to it's demolition in 1959, MCMA artifacts were put into storage, though a subsequent (1973) fire at the storage facility destroyed many of those artifacts. But, according to our former executive director Ray Purdy, we were told the statue was “damaged beyond repair” while being moved, so it was no longer counted among our artifacts. Decades later



*The Wounded Indian*, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

a researcher who had asked to look through some records in our office came upon the photograph of *The Wounded Indian* and commented to Ray that he had seen that statue at the Chrysler Museum in Virginia. Ray communicated with the museum, but they refused to accept any suggestion that MCMA had ever owned or had any claim to “their” statue.

The Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia is proud to have the James Ricau Sculpture Collection. Yet, in their book about the collection, they note that Ricau, who donated/sold *The Wounded Indian* to them “was a collector of the old school who was motivated by a pure love of the object and excitement of the chase. He had little concern for documentation ....” Was his acquisition of *The Wounded Indian* completely aboveboard? We're still trying to learn that answer, though we surely have our doubts.