

Historic Childs: The Upper Gallery at the Brick House showcases modern art

Posted 21 March 2021 at 10:40 am

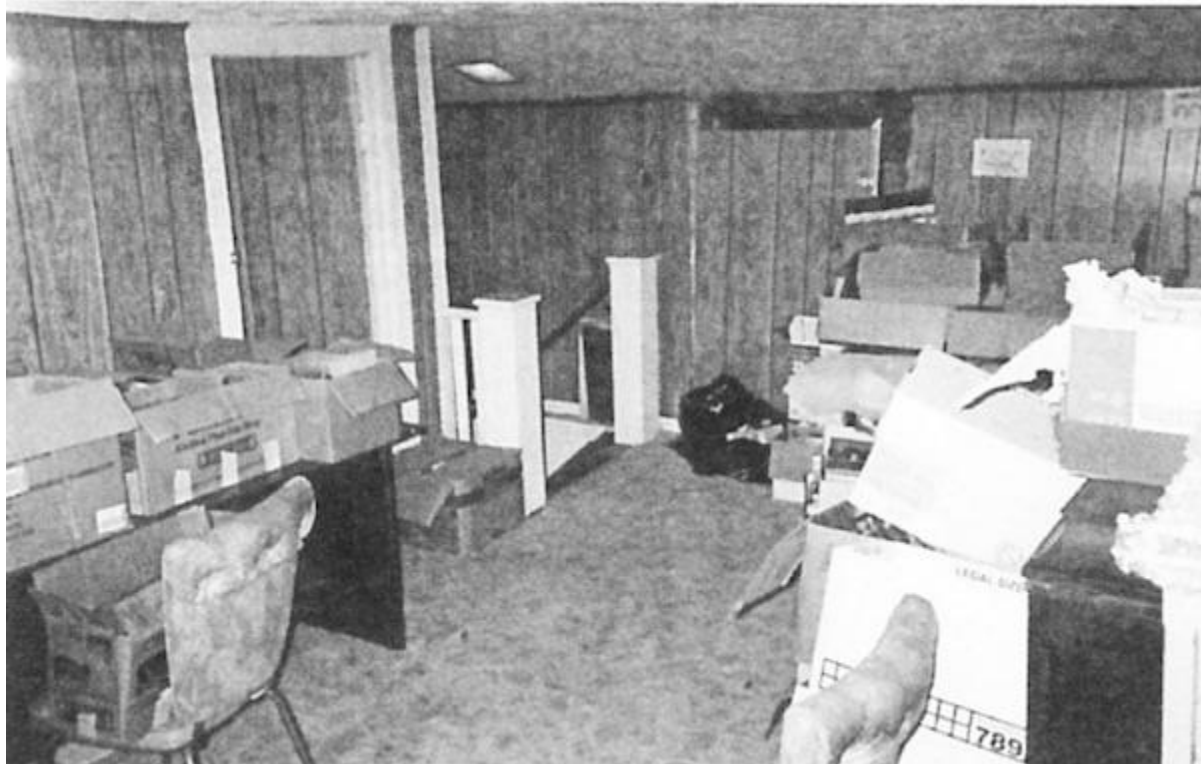


The Cobblestone Museum and Town of Gaines celebrated the opening of the Upper Gallery at the Brick House, a building from 1836 next to the Cobblestone Universalist Church on Route 104. There was an official ribbon cutting ceremony on June 15, 2007. Town of Gaines Supervisor Richard DeCarlo and Cobblestone Society Board President Paul Letiecq

are seen here cutting the ribbon. Looking on are: Bill Lattin, Museum Director; and Board Members Peg Letiecq, Dee Robinson, Gloria Neilans, David Heminway, Elsie Davy and Georgia Thomas.

By Doug Farley, Cobblestone Museum Director

GAINES – The year 2007 saw several improvements at the Cobblestone Museum campus, most notable was the addition of the “Upper Gallery” in the Brick House (1836), which created a modern art exhibition space in the Hamlet of Childs.



Beginning in January of that year, the second story of the Brick House was completely gutted and then reconstructed to house an ideal 15'x26' exhibition space for art exhibits, along with several new storage closets that lined the sides of the room.

The curator, Bill Lattin, reported that with help of volunteer Lee Minier, the duo removed the “what-not” that had accumulated in the second floor space since the building was acquired in 1998. Bill then turned his attention to gutting the plaster walls and removing all of the debris to an awaiting dumpster. He reported at that time that he worked on the project almost every weekday for two months.



For the reconstruction, Joe Baker and David Heminway were consulted to provide help with the structural modifications. They decided that extra bracing in the roof rafters was needed, along with reinforcing scissor trusses that gave the room extra height. The team installed the framing so it was ready for wallboard.

Dave Heminway also donated plywood sheets. Dale Adomo provided a refurbished track lighting system with 20 lamps. This was a truly significant gift that helped to lower the cost of remodeling the room. Richard Cook donated the electrical work. Joe Baker came to install the wallboard and Bill Lattin finished up the trim work, installed period stairway spindles and sanded/finished the wood floor.



The Upper Gallery held an official ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, June 15, 2007. The Cobblestone Society board had previously decided that the room would be dedicated to the memory of past president and board member, George W. Zeis (1918-2002), seen here in 2000. Mr. Zeis in addition to his years of service, had provided a legacy gift of \$75,000 to the Society through his estate.



A bronze plaque was ordered and installed to commemorate the dedication.



The opening exhibit was entitled, "Victorian Angels," which consisted of a vast array of 19th century lithograph prints, some from famous religious paintings that contained angels. This exhibit was followed up in 2008 by "Saints from Whom Their Labors Rest," and "The Life of Jesus" in 2009.



In 2010, a multimedia exhibit entitled, "Contrasting Champions" was installed integrating modern ceramic sculpture with antique prints. Local sculptor, Heather Boyd, provided 12 modern sculptures which were matched by an equal number of Victorian religious prints.



In more recent years, former Director, Matt Ballard, created an exhibit of WWI photos and poster art. Most of the posters were received, on loan, from the Hoag Library in Albion. Mr. Ballard framed the prints using a grant from Genesee-Orleans Art Council.



"Church Benches" by Tom Zangerle

A future exhibit in the planning stages for the Upper Gallery for autumn 2021 is a one-man show of paintings by Medina artist Tom Zangerle.



The current exhibit in the Upper Gallery was created this winter and opened in March. Bill Lattin provided a loan of his Currier & Ives art prints to create a curated display of 19th century lithographs. About 75 pieces of hand colored and black & white art prints are displayed within various themes and genre. Also, a 19th century lithography stone is on display to show how studios, such as Currier & Ives, produced over 7,000 different art prints in their time period.



Little Daisy, Currier & Ives most popular print, creation date circa 1872

The Currier and Ives exhibition is currently open to the public by appointment. The exhibit is free of charge, but donations to the Museum are gladly accepted. Call the museum at (585) 589-9013 to set up an appointment to visit The Upper Gallery.