

VOICES

Fall 2010



The Story of Work and Community
in Lewiston-Auburn

Exhibit opens!

Multi-generational crowd
of 400+ attend receptions

Portraits & Voices: Shoemaking Skills of Generations, the third in the *Portraits & Voices* series, opened on Saturday, September 25th. A private opening for the 52 oral history participants and their families kicked off the day followed by an opening for the general public.

Approximately 425 people learned about the shoe industry through photographs and videos from factories then and now, a timeline researched by Janet Nelson depicting the impact and



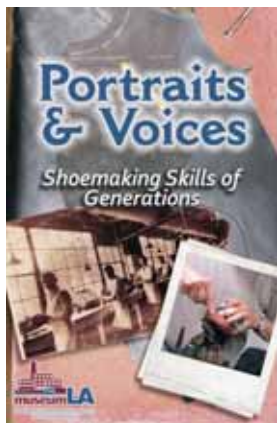
Museum Archivist Susan Beane takes a photograph of Fernand Sarasin for the "Many Faces of Shoemaking" collage. Photos continue to be taken throughout the course of the exhibit. Contact Susan at 207-333-3881 to make arrangements for a photo shoot.

growth of the industry throughout the Twin Cities, Museum L-A's Historical Forensic Database Project created by Rosemary Mosher, as well as personal accounts of those who worked in the industry. The exhibit will be up through the middle of 2011.

In addition to the portraits, the exhibit delves into the people and the processes that made the shoe industry in Lewiston-Auburn a success.

Highlights

"The Many Faces of Shoemaking," a photo collage outside the main gallery, depicts faces of shoeworkers, past to present, young and old, who



helped shape the shoe industry in Lewiston-Auburn.

The construction of a shoe, both hand sewn and machine made, are depicted in photographs, videos, and text. Read about the 110 steps it takes to make a hand sewn shoe while watching how loafers are still being handmade at Rancourt & Company in Lewiston. Learn what goes into making a Dunham boot with a video tour of the factory with Ted Johanson. View photographs of people making machine-made shoes at Falcon Shoe in Lewiston. Watch the skill and speed of hand sewer, Vernon Daigle, in a short video.

If hands-on is more your thing, measure your foot in a recreation of the Lamey-Wellehan shoe store. Learn about the different parts of a shoe and see the shoe sizes of famous L-A people such as former mayor of both cities, John Jenkins, and actor Patrick Dempsey.

Thanks to a generous ABCCommunity grant from Androscoggin Bank, the museum purchased two interactive computer kiosks that were officially unveiled at the opening. Visitors can read or listen to the shoe worker oral histories and share their own story of shoe making. The interactive oral history site can be accessed from any computer by visiting: <http://shoexhibit.museumla.org>.

RACING AGAINST TIME

Every exhibit brings great joy and educational connection opportunities to not only the people of Lewiston and Auburn but to visitors from 39 states and nine countries. Every exhibit also brings with it great losses for the Museum family since we seem to be working against time to get many of these stories.

Barney Charest was a very knowledgeable man in the shoe industry. We interviewed him a first time, but had to stop because he had been ill. We decided we would come back to finish his oral history. Several months later, we received a call asking us to go see him at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. When we arrived, he insisted: "You don't understand, I have to finish this now!" After 45 minutes, the Oral Historian thanked him and left. The next morning, I received an email from his sister, Nicci Leaman, telling us that he had passed away that evening. It was that important for him to finish telling his story.

Jerome Feinstein gave us his oral history but every time we called for his portrait, he didn't seem well. Finally, I called a friend of his to see if he could get a time for that next Monday to get the official portrait done. That was Friday morning. Saturday morning as I am reading the obituaries in the newspaper, I see Mr. Feinstein's. Another huge loss for our Museum family.

These instances keep telling us that we cannot take any of these histories for granted. The stories we are gathering absolutely need to be heard. I have now been attending more wakes for our previously interviewed workers and each loss is felt as a part of our great community slipping away. We are racing against time...

- Rachel Desgrosseilliers, Executive Director



Richard Courtemanche, left, places a painting of his father, Ferdinand Courtemanche in the *Portraits & Voices* gallery. Assisting him is Exhibit Committee chair Kevin Callahan. "The Hand Sewer" was painted by local artist Ray A. Michaud and is the third in his specially-commissioned series for the *Portraits & Voices* exhibits.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I was at a meeting where someone started talking about the Museum. In conversation, he commented that people want to be part of and support something new but wait to see if it is going to be around in the future. I told him that Museum L-A was here to stay.



At a meeting with a community leader, he commented he had been watching us and was very pleased to see that we were doing all the right things such as – taking one step at a time, great planning, good leadership and that we had built an excellent board.

This has been part of our plans from the beginning – building a solid foundation that will sustain us in the future. To make things happen, we had to exert some control over our destiny. We remain open to fortuitous situations and try to pounce on them when they arise. We try to expect good results because if we don't put ourselves in positions to have something positive happen, usually it won't. We try to show positive energy and people usually respond to us positively. We feel that being open to unforeseen opportunities (some may say challenges) can lead to unexpected - and better - results. Listening to our gut about the heroic lives of our workers allows us to keep focusing on the positive and keep the future right in front of us as the inspiration we need to keep moving through some pretty tough and demanding times.

This Museum is meant to be, because many times, it seems like we are faced with almost impossible roadblocks. However, the community itself, great donors and volunteers or an opportunity comes to the rescue. To us, roadblocks are not the end. They are merely part of our journey as we make our way toward the ultimate goal of creating a Museum of Work and Community.

We have found that inspiration can come from pretty much anywhere. At Museum L-A, we find it in our millworkers, brickworkers, shoeworkers and their families. It is amazing to see where and how often we find inspiration for our future. Often it isn't exactly according to our plan, but, somehow it ends up enhancing it and we adapt as we look to the fact that there are a lot of different paths for getting to where we want to go. We prepare ourselves to look for the good in any given situation.

We are certainly not leaving the making of this Museum to chance as you will see in the

following Timeline review and updates of activities for Museum L-A and its future at Camden Yarns Mill:

Received purchase option for \$1 for Camden Yarns Mill, Beech Street, Lewiston – 2008

Purchased Camden Yarns Mill for \$200,000 – June 30, 2009

Received Riverfront Development Bond of \$100,000 from State of Maine – 2009

Remaining \$100,000 being raised by board challenge and community. **To date, \$61,000 raised with \$39,000 to be raised by end of December 2010 to get a 49 percent match for operations for every dollar received.**

Received targeted Brownfield grant – \$200,000. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to finish cleanup of lead paint and asbestos - 90 percent complete.

Saved artifacts and documents from Mill #5 and Camden Yarns Mill with help of community businesses and volunteers – March 2010

Board retreat held June 2010 to begin process of revising 2007 Strategic Master Plan. Review included reorganization of the Board of Directors, Organizational Chart and all Board, Internal Operations Committees, and Goals and Objectives

Development office preparedness study completed for fundraising by Demont Associates – Sept. 2010

Project Grant Funds received through City of Lewiston's EPA Assistance Grant for cleanup of small oil spill at exterior of building. Work to start in Nov. 2010.

Staff input for revision of Strategic Master Plan – Oct. 2010

Pre-design preliminary concept for site & building design by DesignLAB Architects – Nov. 2010

Economic Impact Study by Economic Stewardship, Inc. Feasibility/Sustainability analysis addressing audience, market, operations, exhibitions/programming, and financial dimensions. Strategic thinking about how Museum L-A can contribute to community economic development. Quantifying Museum L-A's economic impact on the region. – Dec. 2010

Structural Evaluation, demolition & stabilization review and work – Smith Reuter Lull Architects – Nov. 2010

Camden Yarns projected to become an environmentally green site – Feb. 2011

Five Year Revised Strategic Master Plan to 2015 – Feb. 2011

We have been very busy this year to make the organization ever ready to face future challenges and continue to be open to amazing opportunities. We invite all to join us in our efforts in whatever way you can — be it as a volunteer, donor (small and large needed) or as a cheerleader. We are proud to

- Rachel Desgrosseilliers
Executive Director



Board of Directors

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Jennifer Dube-Works
Development Director

Karla Leandri Rider
Coordinator of Collections
and Visitor Services

Diane Williams
Educator

Gail Baillargeon
Office

COLLECTIONS



Museum staff and volunteers are constantly working on several projects to preserve artifacts and archives in Bates Mill #1 and #5 as well as at the site of the new Museum (Camden Yarns). Pictured are: 1: Board member Gene Clough looks over a piece of machinery in the former Bates Mill Machine Shop. 2: Volunteers Paul Jalbert and Norm Berube move a box of machine parts from the Shop. 3: Collections Coordinator Karla Leandri Rider marks a sign to be saved from the Camden Yarns Mill site. 4: Volunteer Elaine Toutain lists archival materials she boxed up in Bates Mill #5.

Volunteers busy with projects, new training session in Oct.

Museum L-A volunteers have been busy working on many different kinds of projects. Kiosk duties, mailings, research, conducting tours, varied tasks in Bates Mill #5, special events such as the opening of the shoe exhibit, Teacher Appreciation Day, and preparing bedspread designs for framing are just a few of the jobs they have undertaken. Museum L-A recognizes and appreciates their dedication and support.

In October, a training session was held for all new and veteran volunteers. Executive Director Rachel Desgrosseilliers addressed the volunteers with background information on how the museum began and where it is headed.

The volunteers then watched two films to further their understanding of the shoemaking industries. Brief training sessions were provided by Karla Leandri Rider, Coordinator of Collections and Visitor Services, for clerical and kiosk training, and by Museum Educator Diane Williams for those interested in leading tours.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



BOARD PLANNING RETREAT - Board members gathered at Bates College in June to review the Museum's current Strategic Master Plan and share ideas for its revision. Additional meetings with board, staff, and community will result in a document that will serve as a guide to Museum activities through 2015.

Brickyard Roads exhibit winds down with workshops, tours of Morin Brick Co.



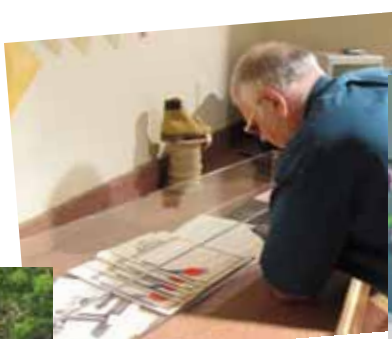
In conjunction with *Portraits & Voices: Brickyard Roads*, the museum held four brick workshops in collaboration with artist Christina Bechstein. Members of the community were invited to carve a word or a symbol into an unfired (green) brick. The finished bricks were fired at Morin Brickyard in Danville and will be incorporated into the new museum at the Camden Yarns site. Morin Brick also opened its door to special tours for Museum Friends on Aug. 31 to mark the exhibit's final day.



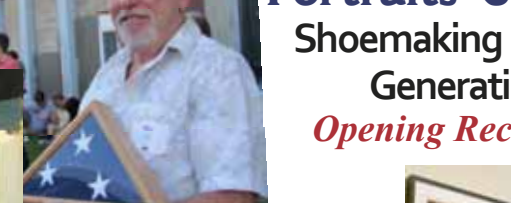
Capstone Photography



Capstone Photography



Pauline Mathieu finds her photo in the Timeline - taken at Panther Shoe in the 1950s.



Portraits & Voices Shoemaking Skills of Generations *Opening Receptions*



OUR VISITORS



THAT'S MY MOTHER - David Sleeper who lives in New Jersey now, spotted a photo of his mother, Lydia, in an open scrapbook on display in the textile-history gallery. He told Archivist Susan Beane about how she had worked at the Bates Mill as an inspector for 30 years. "This was the highlight of our vacation," noted Lorraine Sleeper.



THE MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION met for a board meeting in Lewiston and toured the Museum. From left: Rachel Desgrosseilliers of Museum L-A, and James E. O'Gorman, Christi Mitchell, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., and Kirk F. Mohney of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.



BATES ALUMNI - Groups of Bates College alumni arrived via trolley.

SERVICE LEARNING



BATES FRESHMEN - In early September, Bates College freshmen volunteered their time to help prepare galleries for the upcoming *Portraits and Voices* exhibit - and learned about L-A history as they worked.

PROGRAMS



TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY —On Oct. 21 Educators Joan Beal and Diane Williams introduced area teachers to the Museum's current exhibits, collections and programs offered for youth. Refreshments were served and door prizes were awarded. The grand prize was free admission for a class to the museum with free transportation provided by Northeast Charter Tours. The winner of the free trip was Jacqueline Hamann, - grade 3 Martel School.

VOICES LECTURES



THREE lectures, sponsored by Androscoggin Bank, were held in conjunction with the *Rivers of Immigration: Peoples of the Androscoggin* exhibit. *The Culture of Money* was presented by Androscoggin Bank and Bates College faculty and students in May. A multi-cultural panel discussion *Journey of America: Weaving a Cultural Tapestry* took place in June. In August local author Dave Sargent touched upon the history of immigration in L-A in his presentation and signed copies of his new book *Remembering Lewiston-Auburn on the Mighty Androscoggin*.

DEVELOPMENT

museum LA
ANNUAL FUND

As we approach 2011, we invite you to consider a gift of support to Museum L-A's ANNUAL APPEAL. Please help keep the community momentum going.

Generous support for exhibit

Museum L-A exhibits are made possible with contributions from volunteers and individual donors. The third and largest in the *Portraits & Voices* series: *Portraits & Voices: Shoemaking Skills of Generations* was generously supported with what was the largest amount of individual support in Museum L-A's exhibit donor history. We thank you for your part in helping to create history. Through support, Museum L-A is able to record, preserve and make accessible the story of our shoe workers in both the museum gallery and on the world wide web at www.museumla.org. The museum's exhibit committee was delighted to be able to implement all envisioned components of this exhibit through realizing the successful fundraising of \$52,000 to exhibit the story of our history in shoe making- among the largest industries in Maine and a history that shaped our Twin Cities. Thank you to the 184 individuals who collectively invested \$18,313 dollars and in kind support from talented professionals who gave of their time and talents with additional in-kind support.

Museum L-A thanks its corporate partners and major donors for ensuring that this story of work and community provides community programs and services throughout the year: Thank you to exhibit major donors Ted Johanson and Pat Lundholm, New Balance,



Ray A. Michaud, representing Androscoggin Bank, and Jennifer Dube-Works of Museum L-A cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the two interactive computer kiosks made possible by an ABCCommunity Grant.

Androscoggin Bank and the ABCCommunity Grant, Lamey Wellehan, Falcon Shoe, Pamco Shoe Machinery, Corp., Rancourt & Company Shoecrafters and to our state agencies who have supported this exhibit and Museum L-A's service to community over years: The Maine Arts Commission, Maine Humanities Council, Maine Community Foundation and the USDA.



Anyone wishing to support *Portraits & Voices: Shoemaking Skills of Generations* can reserve a commemorative shoe last at Museum L-A for \$50.

All contributions support exhibit education programs and services throughout the exhibit.



Kurt Perham of Brunswick was the first to receive an inaugural LADU medal as he crossed the finish line in overall first place.

LADU DEUX set for Sunday, June 26, 2011

Register early and save the date! Sunday June 26, 2011, Museum L-A will again actively encourage its visitors to engage with history like never before in a 3 mile run, a 15 mile cycle and a 3 mile run-a duathlon- in the historic Museum L-A race for preservation. The LADU course winds through the *All America Twin Cities* of Lewiston and Auburn, Maine and year DEUX promises to be an amazing-fun filled day for all ages with a Textile Trot for the young ones, with racers competing as relay teams or individuals and with over 100 volunteers on course.



Race registration fee will be \$50 and will include a historic guide, historic course maps, race day expo, finishers medals, high quality technical T-shirts and amazing age group and finisher prizes. Register early at www.museumla.org as we expect LADU to reach its cap early. Stay tuned for more exciting details about this year's race for preservation. Get your training groove on, your teams together and get ready to celebrate the rich history of L-A in what is fast becoming the most unique museum tours anywhere!

Museum L-A thanks its committee members, participants and the volunteers for their energy and commitment in kicking off the inaugural LADU and looks forward to a great year DEUX! The inaugural LADU was made possible with the support of more than 100 volunteers and through the generous investment of major sponsors: Androscoggin Cardiology, Walmart, Poland Spring, New Balance, Morin Brick, Rinck Advertising, Tri-ME and NeoKraft Sign and with support from partners, Ramada Inn, Hilton Garden Inn, Ware Street Inn, Tim Hortons, Federal Distributors, Native Maine Produce, Geiger, Rainbow Bike and the Cities of both Lewiston and Auburn. Race registration fees from the Duathlon of Historic Proportion benefit preservation efforts under way at Museum L-A.

CAMDEN YARNS UPDATE



Fundraising activities

As part of Museum L-A's plans to secure its future, the Museum embarked on a spring fundraiser that would maximize matching funds to continue work on its future home at the Camden Yarns Mill along the riverfront on 1 Beech Street in Lewiston. The museum would like to thank its board and community leaders for investing in the preservation and sharing of the story of work and community in Lewiston and Auburn, through making significant contributions to the vision and future plans of Museum L-A.

The museum is pleased to report lead contributions have enabled the museum to take the next steps in its building plans to secure our future museum. Thank you to lead donors: Central Distributors, Raymond and Rhonda Martel, Federal Distributors, Geiger, Northeast Bank, Champoux Insurance and Maine Recycling Corp.

Cleanup is under way - both inside and out at the future Museum L-A.



EDUCATION

Traveling Trunk journeys to Turner and Poland schools

Sixth grade students in Ms. DeLaGarza's class in Turner had the opportunity to be the first stop on this year's journey of the Traveling Trunk, as they traveled back in time to experience and learn about the textile industry and the Industrial Revolution. On one bright October morning, several children were writing journal entries while dressed in replicas of clothing that young millworkers might wear. Other students were interacting with each other, as they learned historical facts through games such as *Go to the Mill* or *Who's Who*. Still others were back to the present as they used computers to research entries on a timeline.



Students in Ms. DeLaGarza's class at Turner Elementary School experiment with Traveling Trunk activities.

Ms. DeLaGarza felt that the activities in the traveling trunk were perfect for her grade level and that the students learned a lot. The trunk is next bound for Poland to Whittier Middle School.

The Traveling Trunk is a colorful, portable trunk filled with activities, games, audio CD's, costumes and projects relating to the textile industry, child labor, and the Industrial

Revolution. Teachers may rent the trunk for two weeks at a cost of \$25 with a \$25 returnable deposit. The activities are coordinated with Maine Learning Results for grades 3-5 and meet many of the grade 6-8 descriptors.

The Museum educators would love to see classes follow their Traveling Trunk rental with a visit to the Museum, but if teachers can't find funds for an actual visit, the Traveling Trunk offers great hands-on learning.

Camp Sunshine youngsters try their hands at carding, spinning & weaving

Summer has come and gone, but the memory of spinning, weaving, and carding will linger for the children in the Lewiston Parks and Recreation Summer Program, *Camp Sunshine*.

Forty children, aged 5-12, visited Museum L-A in July and took part in several activities. The youngest participants heard a story, participated in an activity with cotton balls and guessed mystery materials related to the industries which made the area famous — cotton, leather, and clay. The older children experimented with carding, spinning and weaving by

hand, with cotton and wool. "These drop spindles are hard!" was a comment shared by all, including the Museum educators and volunteers.

Each group toured the museum afterward, with the older children noting how the machinery of the Industrial Age certainly made spinning and weaving faster, noisier, and more productive.



Upcoming Education Programs:

After School Discovery Days 3:30-5 p.m., for ages 8-13
Monday, Nov. 8: Weave and Spin **Monday, Nov. 15: Building Shoes**

For more information call (207) 333-3881 or visit www.museumla.org
Registration is limited to 12 participants per session. Fee: \$6 per child.

Bedsread design contest draws 200+ entries from Lewiston third graders



WINNERS & EDUCATORS - From left, front row-Megan St. Cyr, Mickayla Friel, Hayden Bavis, and Sydney Hill; back row-Museum L-A Educators Diane Williams and Joan Beal. More than 200 third graders in Lewiston submitted their creations to the Museum L-A Bedsread Design contest. First place winner was Hill of Martel School, who chose Sts. Peter and Paul Basilica as her inspiration. A tie for second place went to Bavis of Montello School, who chose Thorncrag Sanctuary as his theme, and to Friel, of Montello School, who was inspired by the Bates Mill. Third place went to St. Cyr, of Martel School who chose St. Mary's Hospital as her inspiration.

Museum receives 'Leaders in Innovation' Award



Museum L-A has just received word that it will receive the "Leaders in Innovation Award" at the annual meeting of the New England Museum Association in Springfield, Massachusetts on Friday, November 5th for the *Rivers of Immigration: Peoples of the Androscoggin* exhibit which ran from October 2009 through August 2010.

Selection criteria for the initiatives were: Innovation for originality and creativity; practicality as could it be done by different types of museums; connection to mission as to it furthering the mission of the Museum; impact on Community (local, regional, national) as to providing benefits beyond the institution; and, impact on the museum field as to in what ways does the exhibit push the boundaries of the profession, cross disciplines and respond to new trends in a different way.

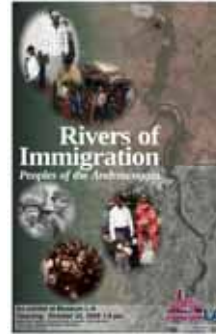
Rivers of Immigration, as one judge commented, is "a terrific project that

clearly used the museum and the exhibition as a catalyst to bring together many parts of the community through the common thread of immigration" and "the project serves as a timely model for

the field to think more broadly about the role of the Museum/community partnerships that are possible."

"It is an honor to not only have the opportunity to be judged by your peers, especially being such a young Museum in the making, but to win the top award brings honor to our whole community" says Rachel Desgrosseilliers,

Executive Director. "Congratulations goes out to all who took part in making this unplanned exhibit a reality, from the Board of Directors who took the risk of allowing a second exhibit to be created, especially in hard times, to all who worked so hard to make the different parts come together so that the community could learn more about itself, past and future."



The Story of Work and Community
in Lewiston-Auburn

(207) 333-3881

35 Canal Street, Box A7
Lewiston, ME 04240
www.museumla.org

Be Significant!

Museum L-A actively challenges visitors and supporters to engage in the stories it tells and the history it richly preserves. With your help and support, Museum L-A will continue to play an important part in the current economic and cultural revival of Lewiston-Auburn.



Rural Business Enterprise
Grant received from
USDA-Rural