

# THE PORTFOLIO

THE NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM AT THE OLD CORNER HOUSE, STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

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## Membership Program to be Stressed During Summer

If you visit the Norman Rockwell Museum at the Old Corner House this summer or fall, be prepared for a surprise when you see the sparkling new awning-tent which has been erected over the terrace directly in front of the entrance to the Museum shop and admitting area.

The bright green and white striped canvas covering will shelter museum visitors as they wait for entrance, both from the sun and from inclement weather. It will also house a membership desk, to be maintained this summer and fall by the museum for the first time. Staffed by volunteers from the community, this desk will provide information to arriving guests on the new Friends of the Museum group and will stress the advantages of becoming a member, most important of which will be free admission for family groups to the house and a discount on purchases made in the museum shop.



Curator Laurie Norton Moffatt addresses Town Meeting in support of the Linwood move



Veteran Town Clerk Lillian Rathbun checks voter's list as Molly Rockwell waits to enter Town Meeting

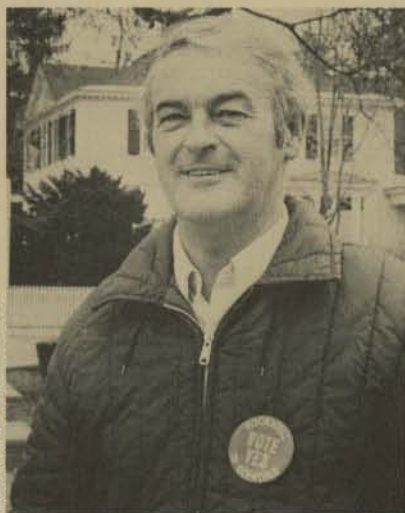
## Town Meeting Votes Zoning Change by Large Majority

Climaxing many weeks of contention, the Stockbridge Town Meeting on Monday, May 21, overwhelmingly approved a zoning bylaw amendment which will allow the Norman Rockwell Museum to move to the Butler Estate property, Linwood, purchased by the Old Corner House in the Glendale area of Stockbridge. Although a two-thirds majority vote was necessary, the 676 affirmative votes represented a fraction under 75% of the 904 voters who cast ballots. Negative votes numbered 228.

Voting on Article Seven of the Town Warrant came after approximately an hour of debate, during which proponents for both sides presented arguments on the issue. Opponents of the zoning bylaw change argued that traffic increases on Route 183 would harm the quality of life in the town. They also felt that moving the museum into a residentially-zoned area constituted a precedent which could have unfortunate consequences. Some saw the Museum as a "power structure" intent on having its own way when the permitting process had foiled their previous attempts to use the Butler property as a museum site.

Proponents, speaking for the Museum, pointed out that several years have passed, many sites have been examined and much money spent without any progress in the Museum's attempt to house the Rockwell paintings collections in safe and secure surroundings. The Board of the Old Corner House had indicated that, if the proposal were not approved, they would examine other sites outside of Stockbridge, thus almost surely losing the paintings and the studio to the town of Stockbridge forever.

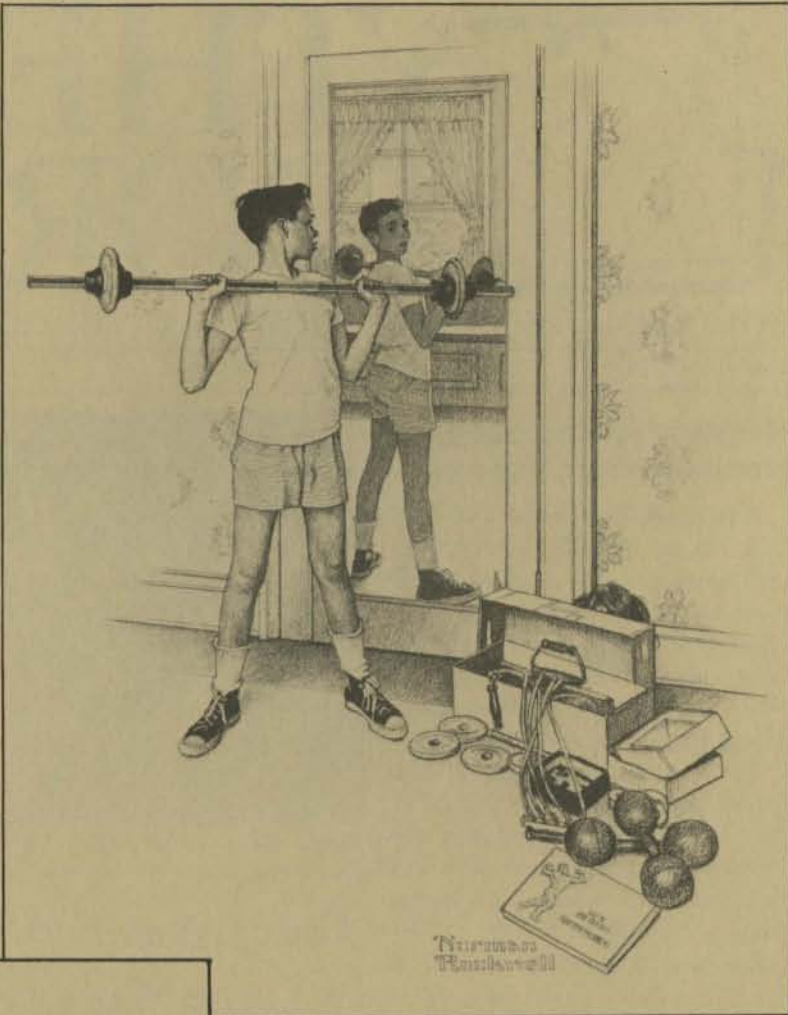
Before the Town Meeting, speculation had been rife as to whether, in fact, it was possible to achieve the needed two-thirds majority. Feelings in the town have been strong and much campaigning was done by both sides following the Selectmen's rejection of the special permit in late February. Opponents of the zoning change had flooded the local newspapers with letters and, apparently, carried on a telephone



Concerned Citizen William Price sporting his bright green VOTE YES button

Continued on page 4





*Little Shaver (pencil on paper, 9" x 5 3/8") Massachusetts Mutual Collection at OCH*

*Boy with Barbell (pencil and charcoal on paper, 17 7/8" x 14 1/2") Massachusetts Mutual Collection at OCH*

*Norman Rockwell at the Voting Booth (pencil on paper, 12 1/4" x 9 3/8") Massachusetts Mutual Collection at OCH*



# Museum Receives Rockwell Drawings Gift

Early in March the Norman Rockwell Museum at the Old Corner House received as a gift forty drawings done by Rockwell for the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company of Springfield. The largest gift of its kind yet received by the Museum, the collection of drawings comprises half of the total done by the artist for the Springfield-based insurance firm. The remaining half of the collection of drawings has been given to the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum in Springfield.

Commenting on the group of drawings, Curator Laurie Norton Moffatt remarked that this collection is the largest body of the illustrator's work to remain together. Though Rockwell did many commissions for a wide variety of advertisers, most of the original drawings or paintings were scattered; some were sold or given away and many undoubtedly were destroyed. Curator Moffatt noted that the drawings are very much "in the Rockwell style," their subjects being the American family. Scenes of children's activities abound, along with such family projects as the building of a dog house, paying family bills, reading, fishing and playing together. The artist himself even appears in one drawing, which shows him in a voting booth in a state of perplexity.

The drawings, done by Rockwell for Massachusetts Mutual, were executed during the 1950s and early 1960s. They appeared

in popular American magazines of the time such as the POST, TIME and LOOK. The insurance company was clearly interested in appealing to the American average family and did so by using the Norman Rockwell image of the ordinary, recognizable household situation. Some of the drawings were done before the artist moved to Stockbridge; the remainder were done here and show local models, many of whom appear in other works by Rockwell.

The collection, appraised at approximately half a million dollars, is being reframed for the opening exhibition. On July 24th there will be a special preview of an exhibit of part of this collection, which will then open to the public on July 25th.

On June 10th Director David H. Wood journeyed to Springfield where he lectured to a gathering hosted by the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, which is presently showing a selection from their part of the Massachusetts Mutual collection. His subject, "Rockwell: The Artist and the Man" was accompanied by slides, many of which were of little-known Rockwell works from the Old Corner House archives.

A catalogue of the exhibit at the Old Corner House has been prepared and is available at the Museum shop, or it can be ordered by mail for \$3 plus \$1 to cover shipping. The exhibit of these drawings will continue through January, 1985.

## CURATOR'S CORNER by Laurie Norton Moffatt

After observing several years of enthusiastic reception by our visitors, Norman Rockwell formally entrusted his personal collection of art to the Old Corner House in 1973, creating what would henceforth be known as the 'Norman Rockwell Art Collection Trust'. Two years later, the Old Corner House took an important step forward to ensuring the vitality and growth of this as yet young museum dedicated to Norman Rockwell. The Board of Directors, at the urging of museum director David H. Wood, purchased its very first Norman Rockwell painting, 'School Girl with U.S. Marshals,' and thereby laid the cornerstone of the museum's own art collection. Since then, the museum has added approximately fifty works

of Rockwell's art to its collection, which was further strengthened this year by the generous gift of the Massachusetts Mutual drawings featured elsewhere in this issue of *The Portfolio*.

Not only was our first acquisition a work of major political and historic importance, but on a more humorous

note, it was good news to all that it had come back home to join NR's museum. As can be seen by NR's personal inscription here reproduced with the picture, NR had once remarked, "Stupidly, I sold it," to which we reply, "Happily, we bought it."



'School Girl with U.S. Marshals,' 1964, (Look: 4 January 1964, "The Problem We All Live With," pp. 22-23) Copyright © 1964 Estate of Norman Rockwell

Stupidly I sold it



## Museum Marks Retirement of Mrs. Kinne



Stella Kinne (left) with Assistant Director Margaret Batty pictured at Mrs. Kinne's retirement party

The Old Corner House, late in May, marked the retirement from active service of Mrs. Roy Kinne as housekeeper for the Museum.

The oldest employee in terms of service, Stella Kinne has been on the Museum staff since its opening in the late 1960s. An informal staff picnic was held on Tuesday, May 22, a surprise to Mrs. Kinne. A buffet-style pot-luck meal was climaxed by a long, humorous and reminiscent speech by Mrs. Margaret Batty, Assistant Director, who recalled many of the incidents which have occurred during Mrs. Kinne's tenure. At the close of the festivities she was presented with a purse. She and her husband Roy have sold their home in Housatonic and will shortly be moving to an apartment in Suffield, Connecticut.

"I've never looked on this as a job," Mrs. Kinne remarked. "It's always been just a pleasant place to be." Those who have

worked with her, however, know that it will be difficult to replace the extraordinary sense of devotion Stella has shown to this museum and the constant hard work that has gone into keeping the house in clean and shining condition.

The staff expects frequent returns of Stella Kinne to check on the condition of "her house," to examine the brass fittings (which she kept Navy-bright), and to pass her eye over the "winders" for the inevitable finger-marks which were so repugnant to her.

We wish her well in her retirement.

**Town Meeting Votes Zoning Change** *continued from page 1*  
campaign. Supporters of the Museum issued bright green buttons carrying the message: ROCKWELL IN GLENDALE: VOTE YES.

The Concerned Citizens group, comprising about 50 Stockbridge voters, was active in campaigning for the passage of the amendment. They met informally and organized in early March. Raising funds to pay for newspaper advertisements, the green buttons and radio "spots," this group was also active in talking directly to voters, identifying supporters, and distributing fact sheets.

Director David H. Wood pointed out that, although the measure has been approved by the voters, the move will still entail a long period of time. The Attorney-General of Massachusetts must pass on the legality of the measure and time must also be allowed for any legal challenges. A fund-raising campaign will be initiated and architect Warren Platner will be consulted for more detailed plans for the museum gallery, parking area, relocation of the studio and refurbishing of the Linwood House. The Director indicated that he thought a three year period would probably elapse before the new facility was completed and in use.



## The Norman Rockwell Museum at the Old Corner House

Stockbridge, Massachusetts 01262

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### Old Corner House Staff

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Mrs. John T. Batty	Assistant Director
Laurie Norton Moffatt	Curator
Julia A. Forster	Development