

THE PORTFOLIO

THE NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM AT STOCKBRIDGE, STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

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Summer 1987

Rockwell's Private Collection on Exhibit

A significant portion of Norman Rockwell's private art collection, never before seen by the public, is on exhibit at the Museum. The family of Norman Rockwell has entrusted the collection of 72 pieces by Rockwell and a number of other notable illustrators to the Museum for conservation management and exhibition. The collection includes paintings, drawings and sketches which Rockwell collected for himself.

Seventeen pieces from this collection make up the new exhibit. Family portraits and pictures done on his travels form the core of the exhibit, which spans 41 years of Rockwell's career—from the finely drawn illustrations for "The Most Beloved American Writer," the story of Louisa May Alcott, in 1937, to the vibrantly colored oils of Wyoming and Norway in the early 1970s.

Because most of the pieces were done for pleasure, not an anxiously waiting magazine editor, the exhibit shows an intensely personal side of Rockwell's art. After having his sketchbook stolen in the Prado in 1927, Rockwell said that he had never lost anything that he felt so bad about because it was work he had done for his own pleasure with no deadlines.

This exhibit will give visitors the opportunity to see this other side of



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"View of Rome From My Hotel Window" drawn by Rockwell while visiting his son, Peter.

Rockwell's work—the charm and intimacy of family portraits and his impressionistic landscapes done in Europe.

The exhibition opened with a reception for members (see page 2) on June 14 and will run through the end of November. □ LSR

From the Director . . .

While pondering the events of the last six months and thinking about that which I'd most like to share with you, I am struck by the enormous amount of activity and new programs bubbling forth at the Museum.

In this issue, you will read about our exciting children's educational program in the local schools, you will see some new faces, learn about rewarding campaign developments, and enjoy the many important new additions to the Museum's collection, including the loan of the Norman Rockwell family collection. As we welcome new staff, we must say good-bye to "old timers." We will truly miss Dennis Carr, who returns to college in September after six special years with the Museum.

Look forward over the next months to an expanded membership program, a colorful new catalogue of an expanded range of merchandise from our Museum store, the research and installation of the Norman Rockwell studio exhibit, and word on the development of the new gallery building at Linwood.

Commencing with this, our eighth issue, *The Portfolio* will be coming to you three times a year so that we may keep you informed of all that is happening at The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge. You, our members, are the lifeline of the Museum, and I hope you will share with us your affection for Norman Rockwell for years to come. □ LNM



Rosie Schneyer and Dot Perkins greet members and friends of the Museum at the opening of the Family Art exhibit.



The Museum is blooming this spring, but then it's that way all year long thanks to Claire Williams. Claire is a professional guide three or four days a week and full-time volunteer horticulturist. Her artful arrangements are in every Museum room and hallway. The flowers come from the Williams' large garden and are arranged in the most imaginative containers. Her efforts do not wilt in the winter, when Claire uses all sorts of natural materials in her arrangements. She vows she will never let flowers become a job—they are a labor of love.

...

The new position of Head Guide was created in March and is being ably filled by Jane Salvatore. Jane has been a guide since 1981 and is helping Assistant Director Margaret Batty with scheduling and matters related to the guiding staff. Jane is keeping us admirably organized, and her kindly care extends to all the visitors.

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The editor of the newsletter is always asking for information from every department, and an interesting pattern has emerged. A lot of the staff is going "back to school." Linda Russell, Curatorial Assistant, has attended workshops on the conservation of paper, exhibitions, and others dealing with the care of the collection. Barbara Allen, Education Coordinator, and Head Guide Jane Salvatore headed for the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College for a conference entitled "The Adult Learner." They both said this would be a great aid in keeping the guided tours as informative and interesting as possible. Ginger Schwartz, Development Associate, traveled down the Mass. Turnpike to the Children's Discovery Museum for a day of meetings and discussion about membership and special events. Laurie Norton Moffatt, Director, is about to leave for a month at the Museum Management Institute in California. A report on her activities will be in the next newsletter. Not only bigger but better!

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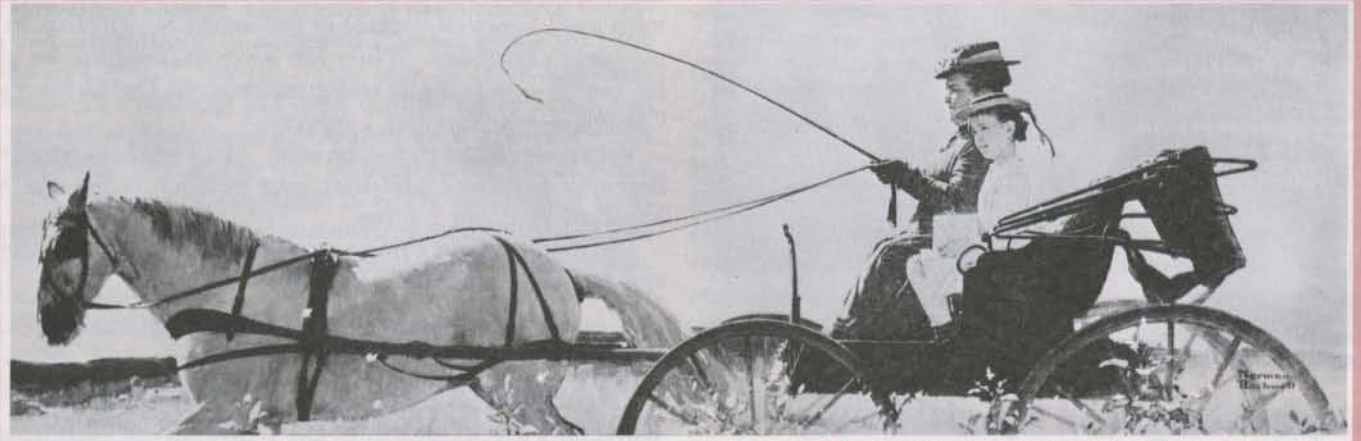
The Museum had the pleasure of a visit for a week from a film crew from WQED—a PBS television station in Pittsburgh. They are putting together an extensive documentary on the life and career of Norman Rockwell which will air on Thanksgiving Eve on many PBS stations around the country.

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Volunteers Piri and Edgar Taft can be seen again this summer helping Bill Boyer keep the lovely Linwood grounds in top-notch shape. The Drs. Taft have given of their horticultural services for three years now and are warmly appreciated.

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CURATOR'S CORNER: *Aunt Ella Takes a Trip*



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by Roger Reed, guest curator

One of the pinnacles of Norman Rockwell's career was his series of fiction illustrations from the '30s and '40s. One of these is "Aunt Ella Takes a Trip," for the story by Marcelene Cox in the *Post*, published in April 1942. It is among the last magazine fiction story illustrations he did shortly after he had "priced [himself] out of the market."

The striking composition can be read at a glance as it masterfully leads one's eyes to the figures and encourages reading of the story. It looks natural, not posed. The buggy and harness are authentically detailed without being fussy. The effects of light and setting perfectly evoke the feeling of this childhood reminiscence, accented by the yellow butterflies and highlights on leaves.

Like most Rockwell paintings, it is above all about character. The little girl is going along for the ride, with a curious but respectful innocence. The main character is Aunt Ella: "You knew, somehow, that she

had grown up on sunshine and lots of Irish loving. She had just the right plumpness, with dimples in her elbows and cheeks, a clear, pink complexion and auburn hair." But she was also principled and held strong convictions; "she kind of ran crosswise to things as they were then." NR found just the right model (Jenny McKee?) to capture the whole story. He gave her an upright posture and a determined gaze, but the double chin belies her soft-hearted generosity. Happily, he doesn't indulge in sentimentality or exaggeration—if anything, the painting is understated.

This particular story is probably not great literature, but that is beside the point. The best illustrators tried to give their pictures a life of their own that wouldn't be tied to an incidental moment of a particular story. This painting is one of these: it stands on its own. Although it refers to the text rather exactly, the text is not needed to explain the picture. In so crafting it, Rockwell realized the apex of the illustrator's art. □

Archival Additions

Following is a list of recent gifts to the Museum archive. Many thanks to our loyal and generous friends who have made contributions to enhance our growing collection of Rockwell material.

- NR limited edition, signed prints, "Ichabod Crane" and "Young Lincoln," gift of Mr. Aristotle Soter.
- NR's etching press, which will reside permanently in the artist's studio (where it has been for many years), gift of Mr. Jarvis Rockwell.
- Numerous transparencies, prints and slides of NR artwork, gift of Mr. Thomas Rockwell on behalf of the Rockwell family.
- NR film, "American Illustrator," gift of Mrs. Irene Bras.

- Robert Rapp's complete collection of *Saturday Evening Post* magazines with Rockwell covers, gift of Mrs. Robert Rapp.
- A large assortment of NR ephemera including: 788 Massachusetts Mutual prints, 13 issues of *Literary Digest*, 118 *Saturday Evening Post* covers, NR playing cards, sheet music, presidential inauguration posters, miscellaneous magazine covers, prints, tearsheets, calendars and ads, gift of Messrs. Steven and Jacob Lomazow, in memory of Mrs. Jacob Lomazow.
- May 1915 *St. Nicholas* and Summer 1949 *Vermont Life*, gift of Mr. Bernard Drew.
- Four intaglio prints of Parkay margarine ads by NR, gift of Kraft Foods.
- June, July and August 1917 issues of *The American Boy* with NR covers, gift of Mr. Henry H. Williams, Jr.

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Craig Simmons with "N.R." puppet

Children Delight in Special Tours

This spring, The Norman Rockwell Museum and its exhibit were inspected, analyzed and evaluated by 450 students from Berkshire County. Students from 19 classes in nine schools were introduced to Norman Rockwell and his work both in their classrooms and at the Museum. Led by Education Coordinator Barbara Allen, the children took part in a slide show and discussion group in the school in order to prepare them for the trip to the Museum.

These young students were given special tours where they could take part in activities and games which taught them about the paintings and helped them to think about illustration as communication.

In each class Rockwell's paintings were given an "awesome" rating. Comments ranged from "I picture Mr. Rockwell as a kind man" to "He expressed his feelings with paint" to "He was a cool dude." The children all thought that the Museum visit was too short.

An expanded program next year will introduce a new member of the staff, "N.R.," a puppet created by Craig Simmons, who is in the seventh grade at St. Mary's School in Lee. Craig created his plaster puppet after doing research on the life of Norman Rockwell. "N.R." will help introduce these young students to the world of Rockwell's illustration and the people that inhabited that world. □ BA

Portrait of a Friend



The Museum's members are its life's blood. We'd like to salute one of our staunchest supporters. Joe Busciglio, a long-time friend of the Museum, has undertaken a mini-capital campaign effort in his hometown of Tampa, Florida. He has raised over \$1,000 toward the campaign for the new museum.

Joe's hobby is collecting other artists' work. The Museum is fortunate to have on loan from Joe two original charcoal sketches by Norman Rockwell—"Willie Gillis in Church" and "Willie Gillis, What to Do in a Blackout." Joe had the opportunity to visit with Mr. Rockwell in Vermont when he was painting the "Four Freedoms."

Joe has been a commercial artist and cartoonist for over 46 years. He has been involved in commercial art, cartooning for TV ads, storyboards for educational filmstrips, some animation, greeting cards and magazine cartoons. Joe worked with Fred Lasswell, creator of the Snuffy Smith strip, as an assistant cartoonist. While Joe loves cartooning, he calls his family—wife Stella and three children, David, John and Cynthia—his "number 1 interest."

When we talked to Joe, he said, "I still feel I can improve. Norman Rockwell said that your best job is the one just ahead of you, and I agree."

Joe, thank you for being a wonderful friend to the Museum and for a job well done. □ LDS

New Faces

Christian G. Kersten, former Assistant Chancellor for University Development at the University of California at Santa Barbara, has been named Director of Development at the Museum. Kersten has also held senior development positions at Tufts University and Clark University.

"Chris brings to the Museum capital campaign experience coupled with solid annual giving and development skills. His former positions in California and Massachusetts institutions make him familiar with our home state as well as the national community," said Laurie Norton Moffatt, Director, when making the announcement of the position.

Board of Trustees President Lila W. Berle characterized Kersten's experience as "just what the national phase of the campaign needs to reach its goal of \$5 million."

A native of Yonkers, New York, Kersten graduated from Long Island University with an A.B. in political science and attended the graduate school of Public Administration at New York University. He and his wife, Mary Lou, live in Hillsdale, New York, where she is a sales associate with Hillsdale Country Realty, Inc.

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"J. Cristopher Irsfeld has been appointed Marketing Manager at The Norman Rockwell Museum," announced Laurie Norton Moffatt, director. "Irsfeld will coordinate and integrate the marketing and sales-related functions of the Museum. To that end, the management of the store, mail order, inventory control and sales personnel will be under his jurisdiction," she continued.

The Board of Trustees, under the leadership of Trustee Steve Lett of Country Curtains, has adopted a comprehensive plan for the Museum mail order department which Cris Irsfeld will be implementing over the next few months.

Irsfeld is a native of California, where he was a stockbroker for E. F. Hutton and Company in Beverly Hills. He has also been a stockbroker for Shearson/American Express, first in Beverly Hills and then in Pittsfield.

He and his wife, Caroline, have five children ranging in age from two to eleven years old. The family lives in Stockbridge.

Welcoming Cris to the staff, Ms. Moffatt said, "We are all very excited about the new directions for the shop and catalogue and hope that all our members and friends will be very pleased with the new offerings." □

Kraft, Inc., Donates \$250,000

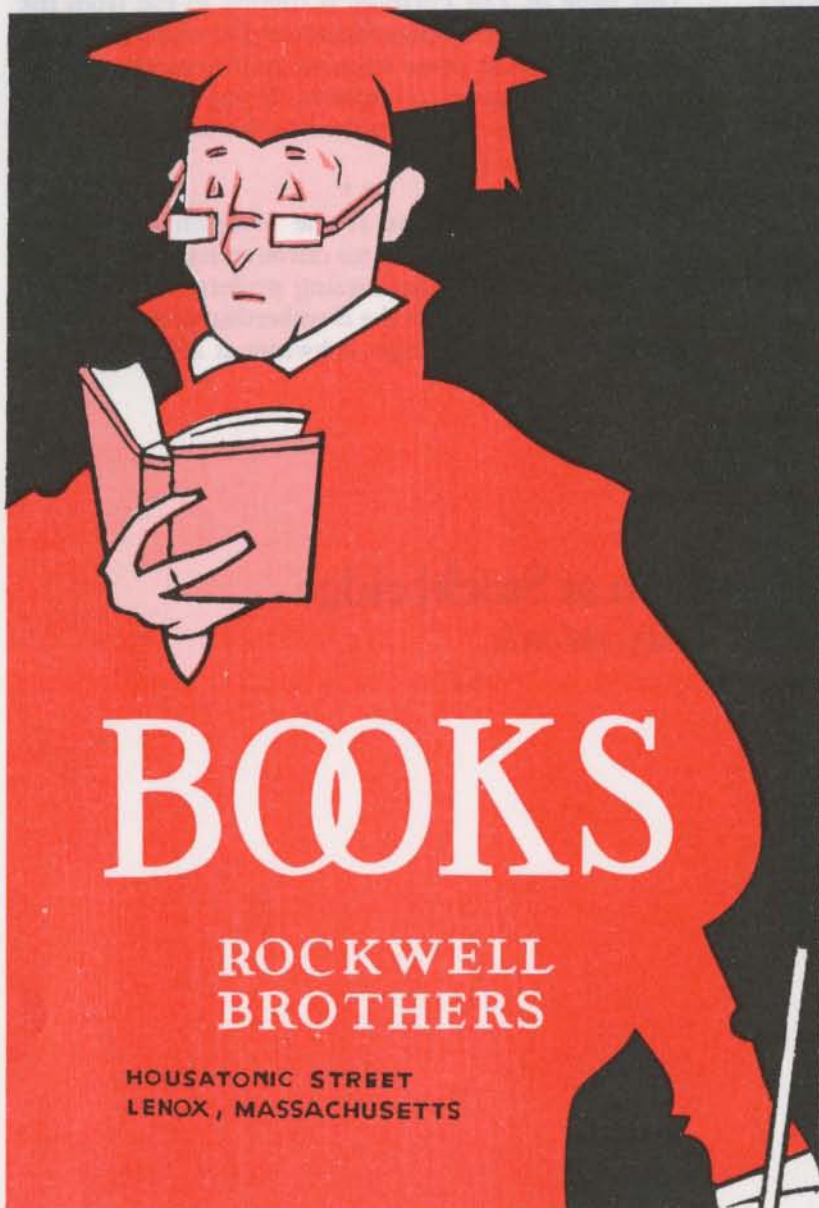
Kraft, Inc., has given \$250,000 to The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge. The company has funded the relocation and refurbishing of Rockwell's studio, which has been moved to Linwood, the site of the new Norman Rockwell Museum. The building has been completely restored, and its contents will be placed just as they were when the artist was painting. The studio will be open to the public when the new gallery is completed. A Kraft spokesman commented, "The artist's working environment is unique and exceptional to the understanding and appreciation of this famous American."

Kraft commissioned Norman Rockwell to illustrate the theme of "nourishing goodness" for an ad campaign for Parkay margarine. Rockwell did four illustrations in 1960 at a time when he was accepting only one in ten of the commissions offered to him. Kraft felt that Rockwell could embody the wholesome, fresh image that they wished to

convey. Kraft also gave prints of the four advertisements to the Museum.

The generous gift is the result of the deep commitment of Dr. Ralph Wilson, a member of the National Steering Committee, to the preservation of the work of Norman Rockwell. Dr. Wilson is the president of Ralph Wilson Plastics Company, Temple, Texas, which was a division of Dart & Kraft, Inc., until the companies separated recently. It is now part of Premark International, Inc. (formerly Dart). Ralph Wilson Plastics Company received the Freedoms Foundation National Award in 1978 for an extensive advertising series whose focus was the encouragement of civic responsibility on the part of other businesses. Wilson is Chairman of the Board of the King's Daughters Hospital in Temple and a trustee of The Texas Bureau for Economic Understanding.

With the announcement of this gift, The Campaign for Norman Rockwell has reached a total of \$2.6 million toward its goal.



Limited Edition Silk Screened Prints For Sale

Authentic, individually handmade silk screened prints from a sign created by Norman Rockwell for his sons, Thomas and Peter, for their first entrepreneurial endeavor, the Rockwell Brothers Book Shop, in Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1954 are now available from the Museum.

Limited to an edition of no more than 300, these original prints are fashioned after the wood sign that hung outside the shop. There are only a small number of these unique collector's items left in the world. According to Thomas Rockwell, this is the only design Norman Rockwell ever did for silk screen. An absolute must for the avid Rockwell collector!

Priced at \$1,000. Offered first to our members.

Please send my silkscreen to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

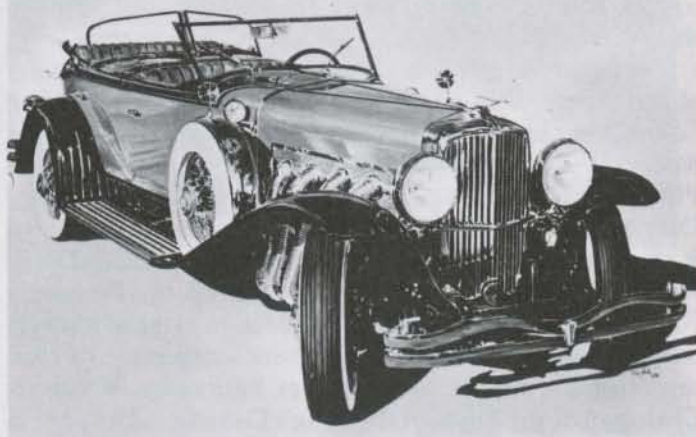
_____ quantity _____ price

Check enclosed

Visa MC AmEx

No. _____ Exp. Date _____

(Reproduced here in actual size. The print is predominantly black and red but could not be reproduced in true color in the newsletter.)



Scholarship-winning illustration by Tim Houle

Museum Gives Scholarships

The Museum is very happy to have been able to contribute toward the education of two young students of illustration by awarding scholarships through the Society of Illustrators in New York City. The Society of Illustrators held the juried Society's Student Scholarship Competition in April. Laurie Norton Moffatt, Director, was present in New York on May 1 for the awarding of the Museum scholarship to Tim Houle, School of the Associated Arts, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Donald Sturtz, San Jose State University. In thanking the Museum for the scholarships, director of the Society of Illustrators Terrence Brown said, "The students are from important schools, and the work was felt to be representative of Mr. Rockwell's sensitivities. The \$1,000 award to each student shows the deep commitment of the Museum to the future of illustration." □

Archival Additions

- August 1915 *Boys' Life*, two NR tearsheets, page of 1835 Atkinson's *Saturday Evening Post*, issues of *Saturday Evening Post* from 1881, 1900 and 1904 and tape recordings of interviews with NR on "Bookbeat" in 1970, on the *Virginia Graham Show* in 1970 and with Mike Wallace in 1966, gift of Mr. Louie Lamone.
- A collection of NR books and magazines including: *Norman Rockwell, Illustrator*; *Norman Rockwell's Four Seasons*; *Norman Rockwell's Counting Book*; *The Norman Rockwell Storybook*; *Norman Rockwell Americana ABC*; *Norman Rockwell's America*; *Norman Rockwell, A Sixty-Year Perspective*; *Norman Rockwell and the Saturday Evening Post*; *A Rockwell Portrait*; *Norman Rockwell Engagement Book and Calendar*, *The Saturday Evening Post* (Jan/Feb '78, Mar '79, Jan/Feb '79); and *American Artist* (July '76), gift of Miss Mary J. Harrar. □ LSR

Sketches

This issue of *The Portfolio* is coming to you from the desk of its new editor, Ginger Schwartz, Development Associate. Contributions come from all staff departments and from occasional guest columnists. If you have a special interest you'd like covered in the newsletter, Ginger would love to hear from you.

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Volunteer opportunities at the Museum continue to abound. This year Jeanne Adams can be seen in the curatorial offices working on a cataloguing project, and Florence Andrews has assisted with the membership program. Interested? Please contact Ginger Schwartz at 298-4239. □



The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge

STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 01262 413/298-3822

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