Poe Museum Receives Rare Acquisitions

In 1845, the American public was astonished by the medical advances which allowed doctors to suspend the process of death through mesmerism. According to an article in the American Review, a man named M. Valdemar was kept in a mesmeric trance for months after his death and successfully communicated from beyond the grave. Needless to say, the author of this “article,” Edgar A. Poe, soon revealed it had been a hoax, but people continued to believe the account in spite of his confession. Within months, it appeared in medical journals and magazines on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1846, a small pamphlet appeared in London entitled Mesmerism in Articulo Mortis. The preface to this unauthorized reprint of Poe’s story “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” states that what is contained within is merely “a plain recital of facts.”

Last December, Poe collector and Poe Foundation Trustee Susan Jaffe Tane donated a copy of this rare pamphlet to the Poe Museum. It is now on display in the Elizabeth Arnold Poe Memorial Building in a case focusing on Poe’s European influence.

The Museum’s collection has also grown in recent months with the gift of several foreign language editions of Poe works and criticism by René van Slooten and with a donation by Karen M. Reciniello of the 1858 book The Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe featuring illustrations by John Tenniel and Felix O.C. Darley. In his book Images of Poe’s Works, Dr. Burton Pollin called this book “possibly the most important English-language illustrated Poe-volume of the 19th century in its sumptuous format, important illustrators, and numerous reprints.”

Donations like this have made the Poe Museum’s collection the world renowned resource it is today. If you have any items you think will help the Museum tell the story of Poe’s life and work, please contact our Curator Chris Semtner at chris@poemuseum.org or 804-648-5523.
A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Summer has come to the Poe Museum! We have an exciting program series you won't want to miss. In early June, we will team up with the Virginia Historical Society to host Poe scholars Barbara and Charles Cantalupo to explore "The Poe You May Not Know" and to hear new Poe-inspired poetry.

Ever seen a palmetto tree in Virginia? Come see ours! The Garden Club of Virginia planted a Low Country Garden in honor of Poe's cryptographic treasure-hunt story "The Gold Bug"-the newest garden on the Richmond Garden Trail! And don't forget to check out our new exhibits at our Unhappy Hours, every fourth Thursday of the month.

New this summer, we are working with the Richmond Public Libraries to bring our Poe To Go Programs to families. Join us as we build raven puppets, write poetry, tell stories, and create Poe artwork.

Our educational programming is made possible by the generous Poe Museum donors and sponsors. Please help us engage new readers, inspire writers, and share Poe's influence for years to come. We can't do it without your support! Simply return the enclosed postage-paid envelope or go to www.poemuseum.org to make your tax-deductible contribution today!

Jaime Fawcett, Executive Director

SEVENTH UNHAPPY HOUR SEASON KICKS OFF

Created in 2008, the Unhappy Hour is the product of the Poe Museum's desire to support the local community and cultivate local pride and interest in the Museum. After realizing that the majority of the Museum's visitors were out-of-towners, Unhappy Hours were developed as a way of getting locals to check out the Museum in the evenings, after work, in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. After acquiring a grant from CultureWorks to fund the initial events, Poe Museum staff began planning the first Unhappy Hour and--boom!--a Richmond institution was born! After debuting on April 28, 2008, and taking Poe and Comics as its theme at its launch, the Unhappy Hour season has run from April through October every year since its initiation. Despite its local beginnings, however, the Poe Museum's Unhappy Hour gained national recognition within a year of its implementation after serving as the answer to a question on a 2009 episode of Jeopardy.

Unhappy Hours are held in the Museum's Enchanted Garden on the fourth Thursday of every month from April through October, from 6 to 9 p.m., and feature exhibit openings, live music, a cash bar, guided tours of the museum, and Poe-themed performances and activities. Each Unhappy Hour focuses on a particular Poe short story or poem and is a great way to learn about both Poe's well- and lesser-known works. Proceeds from these events support the Museum's educational programming. To learn more about Unhappy Hours, call us at 804-648-5523 or check out our website at poemuseum.org.
**POE CURIOSITIES SHOWCASED IN SUMMER & FALL EXHIBITS**

The Poe Museum's collection is made up of thousands of objects ranging from manuscripts to furniture. Among the treasures to be found here are such rarities as Edgar Allan Poe's vest, his boyhood bed, and a lock of his hair. These pieces are regularly displayed in the Museum's permanent exhibition galleries, but some lesser-known items are only displayed during special temporary exhibits like *Poe Goes to the Movies or Poe in Paris.* Not only does this offer the public the opportunity to see rarely exhibited items, but it also allows the Museum to explore specific Poe works or aspects of his life or influence. Among the exciting exhibits planned for this summer are *Buried Alive: Poe's Tales of Premature Burial* (August 27-October 18, 2015), *Madness: Insanity in the Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (July 23-September 20, 2015), and *Decoded: Poe's Cryptograms* (September 24-November 29, 2015). Some objects are too weird to fit into one of these themed exhibitions, so many have never been publicly displayed. Some of these will appear in *Poe's Cabinet of Curiosities: Strange Artifacts from the Poe Museum* (June 25-August 23, 2015). Check out our museum blog at poemuseum.org/blog for regular updates regarding these and other exhibits.

**ENCHANTED GARDEN TAKES CENTER STAGE AT POE MUSEUM**

One of Richmond's most beautiful gardens, the Poe Museum's Enchanted Garden has attracted visitors to the Museum since its opening in 1922 and is now part of the Richmond Garden Trail. Mrs. Annie Jones, who was jointly responsible for the creation and opening of the Museum, alongside her husband, Mr. Archer Jones, and sculptor Edward Valentine, was the driving force behind the garden's creation and design. She found inspiration for the garden in Poe's poem, "To One in Paradise," which describes, "A fountain and a shrine, / All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers, / And all the flowers were mine," resulting in the beautiful fountain and brick shine found in the back of the garden.

Mrs. Jones's beloved garden is currently being restored to its appearance from nearly a century ago by the Garden Club of Virginia, with a Low Country Garden planted just a couple of weeks ago. Located between the Memorial and Exhibits buildings, this new addition to the Enchanted Garden is inspired by Poe's depiction of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina in "The Gold-Bug" and features Dwarf Palmettos, Windmill Palms, Bear's Breeches, and Banana Shrubs, as well as many other lovely and exotic flora found near the Charleston harbor region.

Another great way to experience the beauty of the Enchanted Garden is through the Painting the Garden II exhibit. From March 15 through April 19, the Poe Museum hosted artists interested in interpreting the Enchanted Garden through a painting, sketch, or photography for this exhibit. Their beautiful work is on display in the first-floor gallery of the Exhibits building through June 21.
In just the first quarter of 2015 (and despite winter’s heavy snowfalls), we’ve had nearly 500 students visit the museum for guided tours! Whether they’re in middle school or college, students on our 45-minute tours come away with an enhanced understanding of Edgar Allan Poe and his work. Teachers also have the option of adding an activity to complement their students’ visit.

By far, the most popular add-on activity is our “Tell-Tale Heart” Mock Trial. Featuring an impassioned self-defense by the notorious narrator in Poe’s story, this activity captivates students and adults alike. Participants get into the act by serving as prosecution, defense, judge, and jury. You may have heard of the “Twinkie defense,” but what about the “vulture eye” defense? As Poe’s narrator plainly states of his victim: “He had the eye of a vulture—a pale blue eye with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.” Is the narrator guilty of murder or is he innocent by reason of insanity? You—the members of the jury—decide!

Other add-on activities include Poe: Man of Mystery, Poe: Fact or Fiction, and the Death of Poe Tour. All of these supplemental activities foster student creativity and analysis by asking students to critically engage with material learned at the museum. And for the little ones, we have, of course, Poe’s Pipsqueak Poets Tour, which includes a guided tour tailored for students ages 6 through 11, a poetry activity involving “The Raven,” and an opportunity to make a keepsake raven puppet.

We have many educational programs in development this year, but we’re especially excited about working with former U.S. Children’s Poet Laureate J. Patrick Lewis to develop one based on his children’s book Edgar Allan Poe’s Pie. Innovative and accessible, Edgar Allan Poe’s Pie uses poetry to help students improve their math skills. Stay tuned for more information!

**JUNE TO BRING WRITERS & SCHOLARS TO MUSEUM**

*June is stacking up to be an important month for the Poe Museum for scholarship and education.* Always seeking to educate the public about Poe’s life, works, and legacy, the Poe Museum is thrilled to support and collaborate with writers and Poe scholars whenever possible. Two such distinguished writers and Poe scholars, Barbara and Charles Cantalupo, will visit Richmond on June 4 to discuss their work.

Barbara Anne Cantalupo, associate professor of English at Penn State Lehigh University, will deliver a Banner Lecture at the Virginia Historical Society entitled “The Poe You May Not Know” on Thursday, June 4, from 12-1 p.m. Dr. Cantalupo is editor of The Edgar Allan Poe Review and author of Poe and the Visual Arts. Her lecture will highlight Poe’s love of beauty and interest in the visual arts. At 6 p.m., her husband, Charles Cantalupo—a poet, scholar, and English professor at Penn State University—will give a special reading of a series of poems inspired by each of the cities in which Edgar Allan Poe lived. This reading will be Charles Cantalupo’s first performance of the entire poetry series and will be held at the Poe Museum.

On June 23, the Museum will host Poe Museum Trustee Dr. Richard Kopley of Penn State University for a lecture about Poe’s famous South Carolina adventure story, “The Gold Bug”. This lecture will celebrate our new Low Country Garden.

Wrapping up the month, the Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers’ Conference will be held June 21-27. During this week-long conference, created by Edgar Award-winning author Dr. Harry Lee Poe, high schools engage in writing-intensive workshops led by experienced writers, meet with professional authors, visit Poe-related sites, and discuss Poe’s work.

*This program is made possible through the generous support of the Museum’s donors and community sponsors. If you would like to support this program, please contact Jaime Fawcett at jaime@poemuseum.org.*
Thank you to our 2015 community sponsors!

Interested in supporting the Poe Museum?
Contact Jaime Fawcett at jaime@poemuseum.org for more information.

BECOME A MEMBER!

It's springtime here at the Poe Museum, and we would like to invite you to become a member of our museum. There are many amazing reasons to become a member of the Poe Museum! As a member, you not only help to support the museum's educational programs, but you also help to preserve the legacy of "America's Shakespeare." Through member support, the Museum is able to educate the world about the life, works, and accomplishments of Edgar Allan Poe, as well as his continuing influence on literary and popular culture today.

- Members receive the following benefits:
- Free Admission to the museum
- 10% off shop sales in-store and online
- Copy of our Incredible Mr. Poe book
- Biannual print newsletters, as well as weekly email newsletter updates
- Invitations to member-only events
- Participation Special Member-Curated Exhibits

We hope that you become a part of our Poe Museum family and continue to support our mission! For more information about membership opportunities, contact us at info@poemuseum.org or visit our website at poemuseum.org.
### 2015 Calendar of Events

- **May 28-Jul 19**: Oblong Box exhibit
- **Jun 4**: "The Poe You Don't Know" lecture by Barbara Cantalupo (at VHS); Charles Cantalupo Poetry Reading
- **Jun 21-27**: Edgar Allan Poe Young Writer's Conference
- **Jun 23**: "Decoding 'The Gold-Bug'" lecture by Richard Kopley
- **Jun 25**: Unhappy Hour—"Hop-Frog"
- **Jun 25-Aug 23**: Poe's Cabinet of Curiosities
- **Jul 23**: Unhappy Hour—"The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether"
- **Aug 27**: Unhappy Hour—"Premature Burial"
- **Sep 24**: Unhappy Hour—"The Gold-Bug"
- **Oct 22**: Final Unhappy Hour of the season—"The Cask of Amontillado"
- **Oct 25**: Poe's Pumpkin Patch
- **Oct 30-31**: BaBoween Murder Mysteries

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### Visiting the Poe Museum

Museum Hours:
- Monday—Closed
- Tuesday—Saturday 10-5
- Sunday 11—5

1914-16 East Main St.
Richmond, VA 23223

To learn more about visiting the museum, please contact us at (804) 648-5523 or info@poemuseum.org
or go to poemuseum.org.