

# Saint-Gaudens Medal Presentation

July 13, 2014



*Saint-Gaudens Medal*  
c. 1992, Robert W. White (1921-2002), silver

## The Saint-Gaudens Medal

**T**HE SAINT-GAUDENS MEDAL was established in 1988 and intended for, “such persons who, by their talents and beneficence, have made a distinguished contribution to the arts in America in the high tradition of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.” And it has been our practice to award the medal to those whose efforts have added to our knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony.

The medal has been given eight times in the past 26 years. It was last given in 2006 to Earl A. Powell, III, Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., which helped to conserve and now displays the plaster Shaw Memorial that was once here at the park. Other recipients of the medal include artists, such as Walker Hancock; author Burke Wilkinson; and benefactors of the site, including Eric Lagercrantz, who made possible the preservation of Blow-Me-Down Farm, now part of the park, and New Hampshire philanthropist Rosamond Putnam.

The medal awarded today to Mr. Atkinson, and pictured on the program, was designed in 1992 by the late Robert W. White. Bobby White was an artist, a longtime Trustee of the Memorial, and grandson of the architect Stanford White who was a frequent collaborator on projects with Saint-Gaudens.



*Onatoga in the Forest*  
George DeForest Brush  
1888, oil on canvas  
Gift of James B. Atkinson and  
Gretchen Holm



*Diana*  
Frances Houston  
1905, pastel on paper  
Gift of James B. Atkinson and  
Gretchen Holm

## James B. Atkinson

**J**AMES ATKINSON is a historian and scholar, collector and donor, Friend of the Memorial and the park, and a sometime portrayer of the great Saint-Gaudens himself, along with his wife Gretchen Holm, as Gussie. His talents and generosity have been enormously beneficial to the park – its special projects and its collections – and to public knowledge about Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony. Mr. Atkinson is author (with the late Virginia Colby) of the book *Footprints of the Past*, a definitive encyclopedia of Cornish Colony artists. He has been a colleague and collaborator with park staff in his capacity as president of the Cornish Historical Society. He has been a prodigious collector of Cornish Colony art, with a collection of about 100 works, and historical material. Mr. Atkinson has made the park beneficiary of a significant portion of these works, significantly expanding the park’s Cornish Colony collection. Highlights include, “Onatoga in the Forest” by George DeForest Brush, “Washington’s Farewell to His Officers” by Paul Manship, study for “The Artist’s Daughter” by William Zorach, and prints, as well as a copper etching plate by Stephen Parrish. Other works include pottery, drawings and prints, painted portraits by Carlotta Saint-Gaudens and sculpture by two of Saint-Gaudens’s assistants: “Theodore Roosevelt” by James Earle Fraser and “Memorial Plaque for the Battleship Maine” by Charles Keck.

Mr. Atkinson and Ms. Holm will also be remembered by many for their portrayals of Mr. and Mrs. Saint-Gaudens in the 2005 production of “A Masque of ‘Ours’ or The Gods and the Golden Bowl,” segments of which appear in the interpretive film about Saint-Gaudens shown at the park, and as a special feature of the PBS DVD *Augustus Saint-Gaudens: Master of American Sculpture*.



Welcome and opening remarks

*Byron Bell, President of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial*

Comments about James Atkinson

*Rick Kendall, Superintendent of the Saint-Gaudens NHS*

Presentation of the Medal to James B. Atkinson

Followed immediately by the concert –

*Occasional Music for Early Winds and Plucked Strings*

# The Saint-Gaudens Memorial and The Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit organization chartered in New Hampshire in 1919 by family and friends of the great sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens for the purpose of creating a permanent memorial to honor his legacy. On the site of his homestead estate, the Trustees of the Memorial owned, managed, and maintained the Cornish property and collections for 46 years, then donated these to the federal government in 1965 for creation of the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. The Memorial's mission and charter were modified, allowing it to collaborate with the park as a supporting organization. The Memorial continues to sponsor events such as exhibitions and concerts; works with the park on providing interactive and educational programming; and offers assistance on preservation and development of the park, its historic buildings, and its collections.

Since 1965, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site has been managed on behalf of the American people by the National Park Service as the only national park in New Hampshire. The park preserves the home, studios, gardens, and grounds that were part of the Saint-Gaudens estate. It also manages the largest museum collection of Saint-Gaudens artwork in the world. The park is also taking a leadership role in the interpretation of the Cornish Colony of artists that formed around Saint-Gaudens and included dozens of artistic luminaries from the turn of the 20th century. The park will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2015.

*On the Thames*, Stephen Parrish, 1884, etching  
Gift of James B. Atkinson and Gretchen Holm



*Memorial Plaque for the Battleship Maine*  
Charles Keck, 1913  
metal salvaged from the Battleship  
Gift of James B. Atkinson and Gretchen Holm

