



IN THE NEWS

## Annual Meeting on May 16, 2024

The historical society will be holding its Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:45 PM at Madison Community House, 25 Cook Avenue. This will be our first in-person meeting since 2020 and all members are invited. The meeting will be a way to update members on the activities of the society as well as vote on a slate of officers and trustees for 2024-25. (See pg. 3) Refreshments will be served and there will be a guest speaker, Janet Foster, whose topic will be:

### “Black, White, and Yellow Taxis: Madison and the Green Book”

Janet W Foster is an architectural historian, preservationist, and author who lives in Madison. She served as the Assistant Director for the Urban Planning & Historic Preservation programs at Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning Preservation from 2002-2012 and also served as Chair of the New Jersey Historic Trust. Janet also is on the Hartley Dodge Foundation Committee and Madison’s Historic Preservation Committee.



## Please RSVP

**This meeting is open to all members of the Madison Historical Society. If you are planning on attending, please email the Madison Historical Society at: [historyspeakerseries@gmail.com](mailto:historyspeakerseries@gmail.com) for registration.**

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## Historical Society Officers

### President

Virginia Laughlin

### Museum Chair

Susan Simon

### Vice President

Herm Huber

### Newsletter Editor

Doug Simon

### Corresponding Secretary

Noreen McManus

### Trustees

Nancy Adamczyk

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Judy Seery

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### Recording Secretary

Laurie Hagerich

### Treasurer

Dave Luber

### Custodian

Kate Malcolm

### Historian

Nikolina Uzicanin

### Membership Chair

Judy Seery



## Message From President Virginia Laughlin

Just as Spring means renewal after the dreary months of winter, so does it mean restoration to the Historical Society! For the first time since 2020, the Society will resume in-person meetings. The first of which will be the Society's Annual Meeting to be held on May 16th. The nominated slate of officers and trustees for 2024-25 can be found in this newsletter. This meeting is open to members only. We will have a guest speaker and refreshments will be served. Then in the Fall, we will return to in-person lecture presentations. After being away for so long, we are excited to gather together again.

Work continues in the planning of the History Museum. We are in review of the architectural plans for our space in the Hartley Dodge Memorial. Once the plans are finalized, the Borough will begin the bidding process for the construction and renovation work. While all of this is happening, the Museum Committee continues their work on developing themes and designing exhibits. One project that we will begin is to digitalize all our archival audio and video materials into a format that can be used by both the museum and outside researchers. A giant thank you goes to the Elks Club for providing funding for this project.

Do you know that the Junior School building is 100 years old? The Junior School is planning a centennial celebration on June 15<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the Corner Stone ceremony that took place on June 14, 1924. The Society has been invited to attend and will take part in the festivities. There will be more information to come on this important event.

We look forward to seeing you in-person again and wish you a Happy Spring!



MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Website: [madisonnjhistoricalsociety.org](http://madisonnjhistoricalsociety.org)



Speaker Series

Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 7:00 PM – Zoom Event

## “Madison’s Lincoln Portrait” with Mallory Mortillaro



Although Abraham Lincoln was not 9 feet tall, his portrait in Madison's council chamber was. When President George H. W. Bush visited Madison in 1992, he was shown the Lincoln portrait, and quipped, "I have one of those where I live too." Join us when Mallory Mortillaro, art historian and curator of collections for the Hartley Dodge Foundation, tells us about this famed and unique portrait, its history, how it got to Madison and where it is now.

Mallory Mortillaro is nationally known for her rediscovery of the Rodin bust of Napoleon, hiding in plain sight in the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building. She has worked on various research projects for museums and organizations in the NY metropolitan area. With undergraduate and graduate degrees from Drew University, she is also a 6th grade language teacher in Summit.

**This program is free and open to the public. Email the Madison Historical Society at: [historyspeakerseries@gmail.com](mailto:historyspeakerseries@gmail.com) for registration. Send the email no later than by 2 pm on Tuesday, April 16 for the Mortillaro talk to receive the link to join the Zoom presentation or register through the society website..**

## Slate of New Officers and Trustees

A slate of officers and trustees for the Madison Historical Society 2024-25 is found below. It will be voted upon by the membership on the Annual Meeting, May 16, 2024 at 6:45 PM at Madison Community House, 25 Cook Avenue.

### OFFICERS/TERM OF OFFICE

**Vice President/Two-Year Term: Nancy Adamczyk**

**Treasurer/Two-Year Term: Dave Luber**

**Museum Chair/Two-Year Term: Susan Simon**

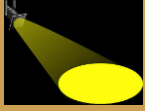
### TRUSTEES/TERM OF OFFICE

**Trustee/One-Year Term: Herm Huber**

**Trustee/Two-Year Term: Jim Malcolm**

**Trustee Three-Year Term: Judy Seery**

**Trustee/Three-Year Term: Christine Preston**



Spotlight on History

# The Writers of Madison

by Doug Simon

The Borough of Madison has had a rich history of writers. Some were born and/or raised here. Some moved here later in their lives and used Madison as a base for their writing. Some are novelists and others focus on non-fiction and some are poets. All are artists using their skill with words to both inform and influence. We do not make the claim that this list is complete. Perhaps in the not-too-distant future we can expand the list in the pages of the newsletter.



## William O. Stoddard



We begin with William O. Stoddard, perhaps best known as President Abraham Lincoln's Third Secretary in the White House. As young man, Stoddard began his career as a journalist and editor of the *Central Illinois Gazette*. After making Lincoln's acquaintance, he endorsed the future President and after the election found himself in Washington as a clerk in the Department of the Interior. Eventually he was called to the White House as Third Secretary to the President. While still assigned to the White House, he briefly joined the military after the fall of Fort Sumter in 1861. While in the military he was still attached to the White House and continued with his journalism, submitting accounts of life in Washington under the pen name "Illinois." In 1865 he moved to New York City working on Wall Street and later for the government of the city. He eventually moved to Madison and became a prolific writer producing

some 76 children's books and historical volumes on among others George Washington, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler and James Knox Polk, Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, James Madison, James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, Ulysses S. Grant, and Theodore Roosevelt. But perhaps his greatest achievement was his six volumes on Lincoln: *Lincoln at Work: Sketches From Life, Inside Lincoln's White House in War Times, Dispatches from Lincoln's White House, The Boy Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life, and Table Talk of Abraham Lincoln*.

## Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson



Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson was born on July 23, 1868, in Madison, New Jersey. He was the son of Paul Stevenson, a Presbyterian minister. His mother, Cornelia Prime, was from a family of distinguished literary and academic figures. Early on he studied law but ultimately decided to become a writer and a journalist. During his writing career, he used several variations of his name such as E.I Stevenson, Edward Stevenson, Edward Prime-Stevenson and he wrote all types of literature – magazine fiction, poetry, literary and music criticism, and travel essays. Stevenson was the first American to deal openly with homosexuality, a difficult subject to tackle in the Victorian early 20<sup>th</sup> century when he came out with two major gay works. In 1906 he

wrote *Imre: A Memorandum*, a homosexually themed novel and in 1908, *The Intersexes, a defense of homosexuality from a scientific, legal, historical, and personal perspective*. One of the early reviews for *Imre: A Memorandum* appearing in the journal *Library Thing* stated, "Fascinating book ... almost unbelievable that it was written in 1906 ...but what is most astonishing is how well read the author was ...That may not be entirely



evident from this book, but his *The Intersexes* published two years later, in 1908 ...clearly demonstrates the truth of the matter.”

## Ward Moore



Ward Moore was born in Madison in 1903 and passed away in 1978. He was a talented novelist and short story writer in the science fiction genre. The great science fiction writer Ray Bradbury once said, "Ward Moore is one of the best American writers." Among his noted novels are *Greener than You Think*, *Joyleg*, and *Caducous Wild*. But by far his best received novel was *Bring the Jubilee* written in 1953. The central premise of the story is that the South won the Civil War and the north was destroyed. It is considered by many critics as a classic and one of the best in the field of alternative history. In his review of *Bring the Jubilee*, in the magazine *Bewildering Stories*, Don Webb writes, "*Bring the Jubilee* would be merely a curiosity were it not for two successes. First, Ward Moore brings his characters to life with many adroit, small strokes, and he communicates their emotions with delicate craftsmanship. Second, Moore depicts not only an alternate history but something more important: what such a history would have meant."



## Daphne Kalotay



Daphne Kalotay was born in Long Branch, New Jersey and her family moved to Madison when she was 3, where she was raised. She attended Vassar College, and currently lives in Somerville, Massachusetts. At Vassar she was a psychology major and did not take a class in creative writing until her final semester. She is best known for her novels, *Russian Winter* published in 2010 and *Sight Reading* in 2013, as well as her collection of short stories in *Calamity and Other Stories* released in 2005. For several years now, she has taught creative writing part-time at Boston University and Grub Street, and serves as co-president of the Boston chapter of the Women's National Book Association. Her work has received numerous awards. The Writer's League of Texas awarded her the Fiction Prize for *Russian Winter*, her first novel. It tells the story of a Russian Bolshoi ballerina, now retired, who confronts her past in Boston where she now resides. In her review in the *New York Journal of Books*, Lisa Verge Higgins writes, "Reading *Russian Winter* is like savoring a ripe August plum. The first bite is a lovely surprise—sweet on the tongue. The deeper you get into it, the more you realize how exceptionally good it is, and you become more excited."



## Greg Olear



Born in 1972, Greg Olear was raised in Madison. He is a novelist, journalist and author of books that are icons of pop culture. Olear at one time was senior editor of the online literary magazine, *The Nervous Breakdown* and he has written for the *Huffington Post*, *Babble.com*, *the Rumpus*, *The Millions*, and *Psychology Today* online. He also hosts a weekly podcast, PREVAIL and co-hosts a weekly review chat, The Five 8. But it is his extraordinary books where he really has made a startling impact. His *Fathermucker: A*



*Novel Paperback* written in 2011, is a marvelous commentary on 21<sup>st</sup> century parenthood. The author of *Up from the Blue*, Susan Henderson, comments, “With candor and wit, Greg Olear takes the reader to the most uncomfortable truths of marriage and parenthood--and yet, *Fathermucker* oozes with vulnerability and love. I burst into tears several times while reading this novel.” In his *Empress: The Secret History of Anna K.*, Olear finds a setting in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century Constantinople. A manuscript has been uncovered by construction workers what is now Istanbul that, as it turns out, is the first English translation of the *Anekdota*, or Secret History of the Byzantine princess and historian Anna Komnene (1085-1153). It is an archeological find that turns history upside down. Aja Raden, author of *Stoned* and *The Truth About Liew*, writes, “With the imagination of a novelist and the exacting attention of a journalist, Greg Olear has written a trans portative tale of sex, violence and politics. These timeless themes, and the characters they swirl around, make the richly embroidered tapestry of medieval details and Byzantine machinations he’s woven feel as urgent and compelling as current news.” And finally, Olear’s *Dirty Rubles: An Introduction to Trump/Russia* published in 2018, departs from the novel and presents a detailed narrative on Trump’s relationship to Russia.



## George Witte



Born in Madison, George Witte is an American poet who now serves as editor-in-chief of St. Martin’s Press. He is the author of four books of poetry: *An Abundance of Caution*, *Does She Have a Name?*, *Deniability*, and *the Apparitioners*. He also has put together seven poetry anthologies and published his poems in a variety of magazines and journals. He is a graduate of Duke University and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and now lives in Ridgewood, New Jersey. Witte is the recipient of the Frederick Bock Prize for a group of poems, a poetry fellowship from the New Jersey Council of the Arts and New Jersey Department of State. Further, his poem “At Dusk, the Catbird” was honored for The Best American Poetry 2007 anthology. In reviewing Witte’s book *Abundance of Caution*, the Unbound Edition Press notes, “Distinguished by expert attention to image and phrase, time and sentence, rhythm and tone, George Witte’s *An Abundance of Caution* proves much more than a showcase of virtuoso technique. Witt’s formal skill lends a voice and body to the crucial work of finding grace in a time marked by environmental crisis, global pandemic, and personal loss. His poems gain their depth and dimension from attentiveness to the lives of others, the details of the natural world, and the often bewildering ways we live now”.

### Sources consulted:

1. Boston Athenaeum, <http://Bostonathenaeum.org/blog/daphne-kalotay>
2. Boston Public Radio, WGBH, <http://www.wgbh.or/people/daphne-kalotay>
3. isfdb, Science Fiction, “Summary Bibliography: Ward Moore. <https://www.isfdb.org/cgi-?/1284> 2024.
5. Lauritsen, John, “Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson (Xavier Mayne)(1868-1942, *Before Stonewall*, Routledge Press, 2002
6. Library Thing, review of *Imre: A Memorandum*, March 19, 2022
7. Open Road Media, <https://openroadmedia.com/contributor/ward-moore> , 2024
8. Wikipedia, articles on William O. Stoddard, Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson, Ward Moore, Daphne Kalotay, Greg Olear, George Witte
9. Williams, Anthony, “Bring the Jubilee by Ward Moore”, *Chronicles:Scientific Fiction & Fantasy Community* 2012.



10. Witte, George. <http://georgewittepoet.com>



In the News, cont.

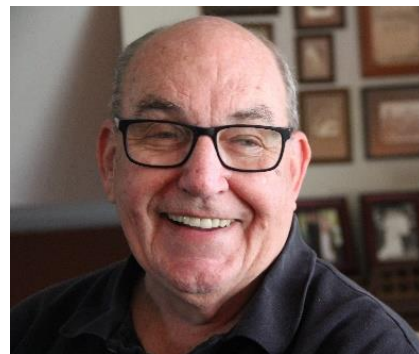


## Society Welcomes New Intern

The Madison Historical Society recently welcomed a new student intern, Stella Contente. Stella is a first-year student at Drew University. Her home is in Tallahassee, Florida. Having a life-long interest in art, she plans on studying Art History and Business Administration at Drew and perhaps someday running a museum or owning an art gallery. In addition to her academic work at Drew and interning at the historical society, she also holds an internship at the Drake House Museum in Plainfield, N.J.

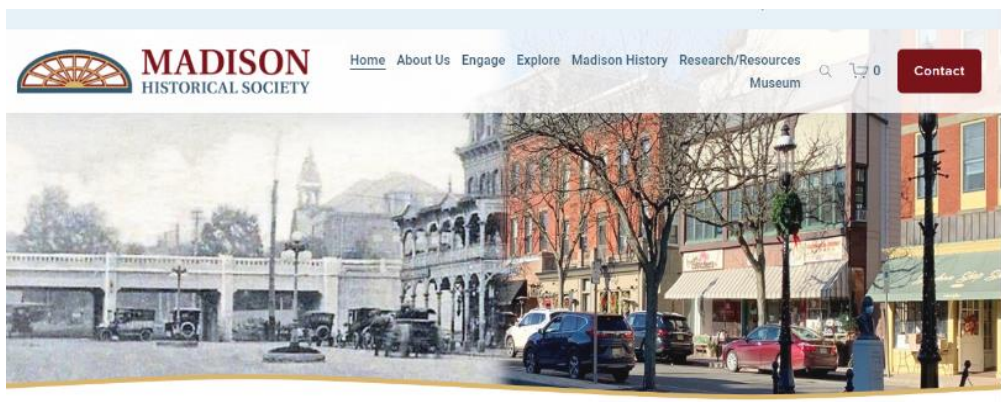
## Society Presentation to Thursday Morning Club

On March 7th, Society Trustee Doug Simon gave a talk to the Thursday Morning Club of Madison titled *A Quilt of Personalities: Madison New Jersey*. The talk highlighted some of most accomplished and notable citizens of Madison going back to its earliest days as Bottle Hill up to the present. These include people representing the fields of medicine, architecture and building, the military, writing, acting, social media, business and philanthropy.



## Check Out the Society's New Website

If you have not checked out our new website, give it a look. It has been completely redesigned with our new logo and has many new features. Among other things we have a blog on the site as well as a way to buy maps on line and pay dues either as new members or for membership renewal. The address is: the same as our old website:



<https://www.madisonjhistoricalsociety.org/>

Also, check out the society's Facebook and Instagram pages.



**MADISON**  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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