

# Museum Textile Services

Issue 3 | 2014

203



*gedrehter Strich* 356

*gestrickt mit Strich* 356

204



*do* 356

205



*gestrickt mit gefärb. Saum und ungefärbtem Strich* 356

206



*do* 356

207



*gestrickt mit Strich* 356

208



*do* 356

209



*do* 356

210



*do* 356

211



*do* 356

212



*do* 356

# Table of Contents

Letter from the Director	3
Fifteen Years—Fifteen Objects	4
Exhibitions:	
<i>Dear Boston</i>	14
<i>The Shakers</i>	16
<i>Picturing Enlightenment</i>	18
<i>Henry Adams Bed</i>	18
Projects:	
Presidential Textiles	19
Squire White's Red Cloak	20
Leipzig Swatch Book	21
Yankee Doodle Drama	22
Raising the Dennis Flag	24
Highlights from 2014	26
MTS Staff	28

*Cover: Inner page of the 1855  
Leipzig swatch book.*

# Letter from the Director

This year we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of Museum Textile Services!

Time has flown by, and not a day passes without a sense of gratitude that this humble endeavor has taken on a life of its own. MTS now supports two full-time and one part-time employee, and an ever-changing group of interns and students who come here to learn about textile conservation. We love when a crew member tells us the day they spend with us is their favorite day of the week!

Cara Jordan and I have both had busy years in addition to our steady work load. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, Cara married Justin Davis in a magnificent ceremony at the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, followed by a reception at nearby Searle's Castle. I confess that I was overflowing with pride and love for this wonderful couple.



Director Camille Breeze &  
Conservator Cara Jordan

I also achieved a milestone with the purchase of my dream home. The Stephen Blaisdell House was built in 1690 near the confluence of the Powow and Merrimack rivers in northeastern Massachusetts. I had only three criteria for my new home: some age, plenty of magic, and garden enough to raise chickens. My wishes were fulfilled beyond my wildest imagination right down to the seller's four chickens, who I happily adopted. In the coming years I look forward to researching the history of the house, completing what little remains of the historic restoration, and receiving friends and family from around the world.

This year's e-Magazine has a special feature article called *Fifteen Years—Fifteen Objects*, in which I describe a favorite textile from each year we've been in business. But I'm asking you to choose the favorite textile from 2014! You can vote directly from the stories in this magazine, using our [website](#), or through [Facebook](#).



So let us know which textiles and stories you enjoy most! After all, conservation is about preserving history so that it can continue to inform and inspire our daily lives.

*Breeze*

# Fifteen Years—Fifteen Objects

Camille Myers Breeze

What makes the job of a textile conservator rewarding? Above all it is preserving cultural heritage in the form of the beautiful, intricate, meaningful, and often challenging objects we call textiles.

A trip through the Museum Textile Services archives reveals an astonishing array of objects that have passed across our tables. They range in date from 400 BCE to contemporary crafts. Many objects relate to our most intimate cultural practices, such as christenings and weddings, burials and memorials. These textiles were used in war, in prayer, and in schooling young women. We have treated textiles from every continent except for Antarctica (we're still hoping for a chance to work on any textiles recovered from Scott's missions) and from many of the remotest outposts of human civilization. We are constantly enthralled.

An insightful friend told me back in 1999 not to number our projects at Museum Textile Services by year, as many museums number their accessions (e.g. 1999.1) but instead to start with 10001 and keep a running tally. As of September, 2014, we are at MTS# 11251. Now it's not a perfect science—for example, sometimes a costume ensemble received one number and other times each component was numbered. However, I have learned a lot about the growth of our company by studying how quickly these numbers increase.

Below are fifteen textiles—one from every year since MTS was founded—alongside a story that it brings to mind. It has been a wonderful journey and one that we look forward to continuing for many years to come.



MTS# 10003, pre-Columbian textile, c 400 BCE

This textile was just the third one to receive an MTS number, late in 1999. Belonging to the proto-Nazca culture of Peru's culturally rich South coast, the textile came to us from one of the finest textile dealers in the United States. It was produced in a nonwoven technique similar to needle knitting, with braided and woven bands attached. The arrangement of these components and the fact that they do not lie flat reinforce what we know—that the textile was once part of a mummy bundle. I recall how I stepped away for a moment while this textile was soaking in a bath of distilled water only to find my cat eagerly drinking from the tray when I returned. I soon upgraded my washing setup.

My favorite textile from 2000 is MTS# 10018, a wonderful heirloom painted long cloth from the Toradja people of Sulawesi, in the Indonesian archipelago.

A nearly identical textile in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum is illustrated in a 2009 article about a lecture given by Rosemary Crill to the UK Textile Society. John Guy's catalogue entry for Textile 48 from the 2013 MET exhibit Interwoven Globe teaches us that few examples of such long cloths exist. He speculates that their heirloom status and exclusive use for clan ceremonies likely contributed to their preservation even in the hot and humid environment. We aren't paid to research these textiles but the temptation is irresistible!



MTS# 10018, Painted long cloth from Sulawesi



MTS# 10028, Embroidered Chinese textile



MTS# 10028 is my favorite textile of 2001. It hung in my friends' Maine home, which I visit at least once a year. Unspun silk floss was laid in color fields marked by drawn lines of white and black paint. A contrasting color of silk thread was used to couch this silk down to the red cotton ground fabric. Other areas are embroidered with metal-coated paper wound around fine cotton thread. The owner's sister researched the textile and concluded it depicts a theatrical performance of a ritual ceremony.

I didn't have a favorite textile from 2002, but rather a whole castle full of them! In June of that year, Gillette Castle in Hadlyme, CT, reopened after 2 years of restoration. The team of Melanie, Abby, Sophie, and I endured a year's worth of weather extremes and dressed like construction workers to conserve, restore and replicate over 4000 square feet of woven, knotted and braided grass wall coverings from William Gillette's 1919 eccentric river home. There was no turning back for MTS after this epic job!



MTS# 10035 was the number assigned to all of the 4000 square feet of textiles we conserved at Gillette Castle in 2001-2002.



The original colors were preserved beneath a wall sconce.



The same wall after we repaired and recolored the wall tiles.



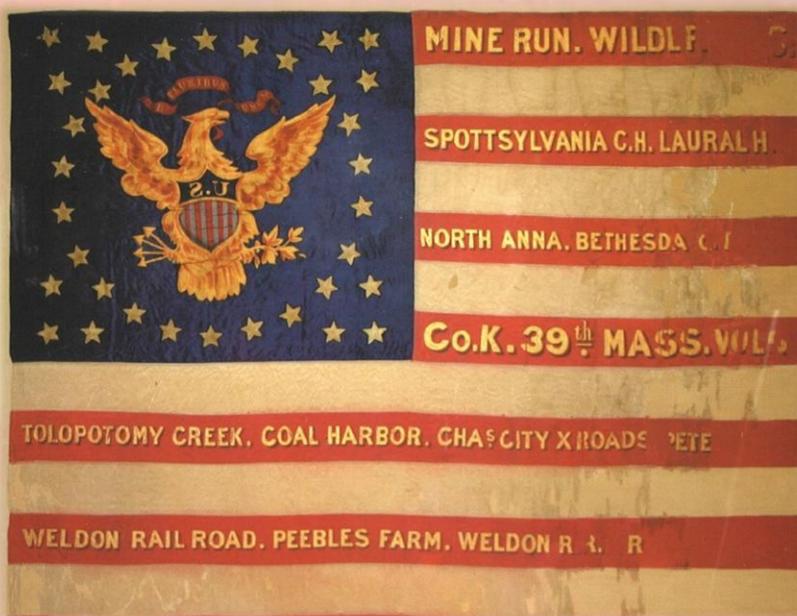
2003 brought the first of many Civil War flags to cross our tables. MTS# 10084 is the silk processional flag of the Woburn National Rangers, now on display at the Woburn Public Library. It came to us rolled on its own pole in a wretched state, with pieces from the many layers of shattered silk falling off in flakes.

Jan Williams and I saved the flag by humidifying, unrolling, and relocating all the fragments to their original place. Many fragments were lost, however, especially along the fly edge. The decision was made to restore the original appearance of the flag using paint on the cotton support fabric. We did not attempt to replace the missing gold lettering because the names of the battles fought are still decipherable.

On November 11, 2003, the flag was dedicated in the library in a public program entitled, "For Cause and Comrade, Woburn's Civil War Colors Restored," in which I gave a presentation to all those in attendance.



Working at home did have its perks!



The Woburn flag after it was rededicated at the Woburn, MA, library.

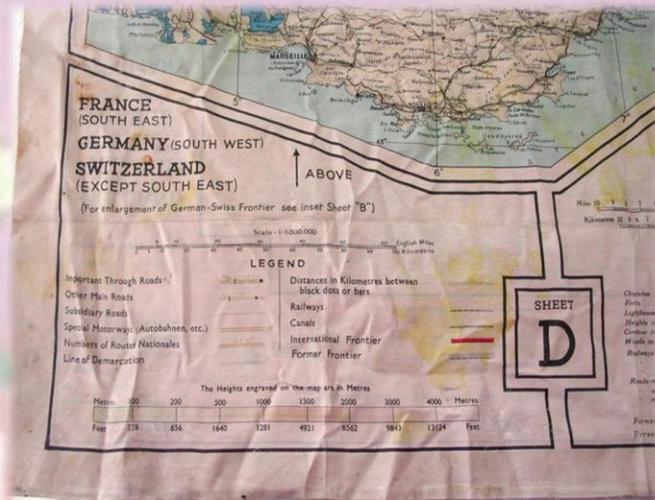
In January of 2004, I fulfilled a lifelong dream by conserving my first Peruvian mummy bundle. Mummy #7, also known as MTS# 10104, was salvaged in 1997 from the surface of the upper platform at the archaeological site of Huaca Malena, 100 kilometers to the south of Lima. It had been stored in the Municipal Museum, established that same year to house the salvaged artifacts, but could not be exhibited due to its poor state of preservation. I had no way then to know that I would spend parts of the next six years bringing students to Peru to work alongside Peruvian archaeologists conserving the astonishing textile and mummy collections at Huaca Malena. Many thanks go out to my project partner of ten years, Rommel Angeles Falcon, for always meeting my enthusiasm with his great skills and knowledge. The preliminary report of this, and every other Ancient Peruvian Textile Workshop, is available on the MTS website at [www.museumtextiles.com/resources](http://www.museumtextiles.com/resources).



Cleaning Mummy #7 with Gabriel Rimachi Sialer.



The burial textiles emerges as the dirt was removed.



Exhumed WWII silk map, Sheet D and Sheet C, depicting parts of Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Germany.

A very different kind of archaeological textile stands out among the many objects we treated in 2005. MTS# 10136 is a WWII silk map that was interred with the remains of the owner's husband's uncle in England following the downing of his airplane. Maps such as this were designed to fold up to the size of a pack of cigarettes and be easily hidden in the event of enemy capture. When the serviceman's remains were exhumed, the map was presented to the family for safekeeping.



One panel of the original skirt, which was disassembled over time.

This exquisite figured silk skirt came to Museum Textile Services in fragments, needing a great many hand-stitched repairs. When we were through, our colleague Astrida Schaeffer expertly reconstructed the skirt and created a replica bodice and stomacher.

Our favorite textile of 2006, MTS# 10217 was on display at the Moffatt-Ladd House in Portsmouth, NH.



The bodice, stomacher and manikin were made by our colleague Astrida Schaeffer.



MTS# 10245 is a fragment of an Inuit *amauti*.



Public domain image of an Inuit woman wearing an *amauti*.

My favorite textile of 2007 is a wool fragment excavated by a team of Bowdoin College archaeologists from the site of Iita, or Etah, in northern Greenland. Etah is an abandoned village that was once the most northerly populated settlement in the world. It was also used as a base camp for several Arctic expeditions in the 1930s. I didn't learn until conservation was complete that the textile is part of an *amauti*, or coat worn by Inuit women designed to hold an infant. This example, MTS# 10245, is made of wool and has two small pearlized buttons, indicating contact with European traders.

Another kind of archaeology happened during the conservation of my favorite textile from 2008. I first examined MTS# 10277 on site at the Museum of Firefighting in Hanover, MA. It appeared to be just an ornately matted and framed set of photographs with a plaque reading, "Dedicated to the memory of the members of the Drinkwater Fireman's Association who gallantly gave their service for their country in time of peril."



Inside we found a large service flag, possibly flown at the fire house, complete with a gold star in honor of captain Leon Webster Josselyn, who perished in WWI. We replicated the flag components inside the frame, conserved the actual flag, and packed it in an archival storage box.



The Service flag found inside the Fireman's Memorial.



Dress on display at Wistariahurst.

2009 was a banner year at MTS, and although it is hard to choose just one favorite project, MTS# 10536 stands out. This exquisite 1880s walking dress required a custom manikin to support the large bustle. Once I completed the manikin, it was equally challenging to fit it into the small corner display case allotted for it! You can still see this lovely ensemble on display at Wistariahurst in historic Holyoke, Massachusetts.



Custom manikin made by MTS.



Thangka of the Seventh Dalai Lama, MTS# 10627.

I had not one favorite, but 18 favorite textiles in 2010—the unparalleled collection of Tibetan thangkas from the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. We first surveyed the collection in April of 2009, and the final exhibit preparations were complete in August of 2012. I will never forget breaking my arm just a few months into the project and how I used stitching as therapy to regain my strength and fine motor skills.



Contract paintings conservator Kate Smith.



MTS# 10758 before conservation



MTS# 10758 after conservation

I couldn't choose between my two favorite textiles conserved in 2011, so we have a tie! MTS# 10753-10764 represent elements of the Negro League baseball uniform worn by William "Cannonball" Jackman. He came to play for the Boston Colored Giants in 1924, and played professionally into his sixties. According to Negro League superstar Bill Yancey, later a Yankees scout, Jackman was the best all-around ballplayer he ever saw. Cannonball's uniform was on display at the Museum of African American History, Boston & Nantucket. You can see our project slideshow in "Cannonball" Before & After.



The completed uniform of "Cannonball" Jackman.



MTS# 10759 before and after conservation.

Tied for my favorite textile of 2011 is the Olympic coat donated by hockey player Gordon Smith to his alma mater, the Middlesex School in Concord, MA. The coat was heavily damaged by webbing clothes moths but technician Courtney Jason employed raw wool roving and the technique of needle punch to restore lost pile, making these losses nearly invisible. More information about both of these amazing projects can be found in 2012 inaugural MTS e-Magazine.



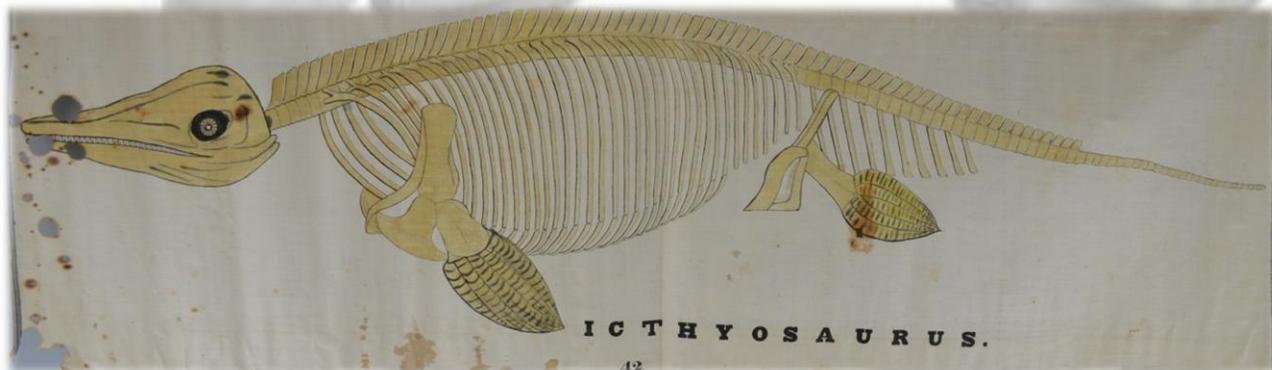
MTS# 10686, the 1932 Olympic coat of Gordon Smith.



Orra White Hitchcock, 1796-1863.

Rarely in history do we find a couple so astoundingly complementary as Amherst College president and geologist Edward Hitchcock and the artistically gifted Orra White Hitchcock. Edward was active as a professor of geology and botany, and Orra created for him several dozen "classroom charts," painted and drawn on cotton dress fabrics bound with wool tape. Museum Textile Services had the

privilege of conserving sixty-one of these rare and beautiful textiles for the Amherst College Archives, and they are my favorite textiles from 2012.



Ichthyosaurus is one of the sixty-one favorite textiles from 2013, MTS#10821-10882.



Cara Jordan keeping track of the Patton flags. MTS# 10900–10919.

I conclude this series on the favorite textiles from each of our 15 years in business with the favorite project from 2013, the conservation of 19 flags for the General George S. Patton Museum and Center of Leadership in Fort Knox, KY. I visited the museum in September, 2012, to conduct an initial survey. I learned that Patton was a notorious collector of anything that told the tale of his life and career, including flags.

Whenever possible, we mounted the flags with General Patton's hand-written inscriptions visible. In one case this meant cutting a window to allow both sides of the inscribed hoist binding to be viewed. General Patton ascended from a one-star general to a four-star general while serving in the field in WWII, so the fabrics to make some of those flags had to be purchased in the French and Belgian towns closest to his army encampments. This made mounting a challenge and resulted in many broken curved needles and bruised thumbs.



Camille Breeze cutting a window to view General Patton's writing.



Courtney Jason and Camille making progress on flag conservation.

It is too early to say what our favorite textile of 2014 will be. As I write this, we are up to MTS# 11251! The year has brought us flags large and small, exquisite costume, sentimental keepsakes, religious raiments, ethnographic textiles, and objects surrounded by intrigue and mystery.

Read on to learn more about some of the projects we worked on in 2014 and let us know which is your favorite!

## Exhibits: *Dear Boston*

When Museum Textile Services was invited in May of 2013 to participate in a voluntary effort to preserve artifacts left at the temporary memorial site in Copley Square following the Boston Marathon bombing, we said yes without hesitation.

The Archives and Records Management Division of the City of Boston Office of the City Clerk had overseen the dismantling and preservation effort for the memorial artifacts that month. Staff and volunteers from across the museum spectrum had documented and packed artifacts into donated boxes before they were loaded into trucks and transported to Polygon Corporation in Georgetown, MA, where they were professionally air dried. Next they were fumigated by Historic New England in their anoxic fumigation bubble to eliminate the possibility of insect, mold, and bacterial activity. After fumigation, the artifacts were transported to the Boston City Archives in West Roxbury where staff accessioned the material into the collection and stored in their climate-controlled facility.

In March, 2014, Museum Textile Services received a box from City Archives volunteers containing nineteen artifacts from the marathon bombing memorial. Inside the box were hats, shirts, baby onesies, and even a Starbucks apron inscribed with messages and memories of the often-anonymous donors. Over the next three weeks, Josephine Johnson and visiting conservation assistant Lisa Yeats photographed, surface cleaned, humidified, and gently straightened out these artifacts so that they could be safely preserved and exhibited without their condition detracting from the message they are sending.

Josephine Johnson and Lisa Yeats at the opening of *Dear Boston*.



On the morning of April 7, 2014, Museum Textile Services staff met on the steps of the Boston Public Library before joining the crowds of visitors and press in attendance for the opening of the exhibit, *"Dear Boston: Messages from the Marathon Memorial."* The press conference began with a speech by Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, who was followed by Massachusetts State Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey. All three spoke about what it was like in Boston immediately following the Marathon bombings, and the great job the first responders did in the ensuing days. New England Museum Association Executive Director Dan Yeager then came on stage and aptly concluded the press conference by thanking all of us who had contributed funds and services to the exhibit.

As we strolled through the exhibit, it was important to remember that this was not your average art opening. Eye witnesses and people who had been injured by the two terrorist bombs strained to see inside the display cases where notes and signs were displayed alongside many textile items, such as shirts, baseball caps, and teddy bears. At the center of the room was the exhibit's main feature, a square platform with hundreds of pairs of running shoes stacked in rows, signifying how the running community and the general public had come together following the bombing in support of a city, a community, and our historic Marathon.



A baby onesie and other Marathon memorial items on display.

In the spirit of the impromptu memorial at which these display items were originally displayed, visitors were invited to leave messages on paper tags and tie them to one of the three trees along one wall of the exhibit hall. This was a powerful way to evoke the outdoor feel of the marathon memorial and allow those of us who didn't make it to Boston in the weeks following the bombings to finally take a moment to say what we were feeling.

"Dear Boston" was joint effort of the Boston City Archives, Boston Art Commission, New England Museum Association, and Boston Public Library. Generous funding was provided by Iron Mountain.

To vote for the **Marathon Memorial baby onesie** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Exhibits: *The Shakers*

The stunning exhibit, *The Shakers: From Mount Lebanon to the World*, opened in June, 2014, at the Farnsworth Museum of Art in Rockland, Maine. In preparation for the opening, Museum Textile Services Director and Chief Conservator Camille Myers Breeze spent three days on site conserving and mounting clothing and textiles.

Many of us are familiar with Shaker craftsmanship and their contributions to design and architecture, including the clothes pin, the flat broom, and the circular saw. This same attention to detail is reflected in Shaker textiles and clothing.



The first thing Camille worked on upon arriving at the Farnsworth is the only remaining Shaker brethren's meeting uniform, worn and made by Elder Otis Sawyer (1815-1884.) It is one of the most prized items in the collection of the United Society of Shakers, Sabbathday Lake, in New Gloucester, ME. According to the exhibit catalog, ensembles such as this were "designed to make the Shakers worshipping at public meetings look in union with each other and in harmony with the interior of the meeting house."

This historic outfit consists of leather and wool boots, glazed cotton trousers, a long white cotton shirt (this one belonged to Elder Otis's contemporary, Brother Ransom Gillman,) a wool vest with glazed linen and cotton lining, and a wool coat with cotton and silk lining, and cotton velveteen on the cuffs.



Elder Otis's coat required the most stabilization. The sleeves are lined with a tan cotton that is deteriorating under the arm and has torn in several places. Patches of new cotton were inserted behind losses and hand stitching was used to hold the fragile areas together. Panels of nylon net were used throughout the interior to protect the torn cotton and silk linings.



Top: examples of Shaker craftsmanship. Right: meeting uniform of Elder Otis Sawyer. Above: repairing the cuff of Elder Otis's coat. Background: Elder Otis Sawyer.

A complete Sister's uniform worn by Eldress Catherine Allen is also in the exhibit. The dress and tailored yoke, or "bertha," are made of mozambique (a wool and cotton blend) with cotton bobbinet lace details. This is an example of the modern dress style introduced by Mount Lebanon, ME, Shakers at the end of the 19th century.



Above: detail of torn lace at the neck of the bertha. Right: Eldress Catherine Allen's uniform. Background: Sisters Elsie McCool and Della Haskell at Sabbathday lake Shaker Village in 1934.

A starched cotton collar is worn at the neck beneath the dress. Shaker women always wore a "lace cap" made of starched plain weave cotton as a symbol of their purity and commitment to the church.

The lovely purple color of the mozambique cloth resolves upon closer inspection into red and blue threads, one running in the warp direction and the other in the weft direction. Sister Catherine's dress is in perfect condition with the exception of the bobbinet lace, which is deteriorated at the back of the neck. The lace was conserved with an overlay of black nylon net.

What made this project so rewarding are the friendly colleagues, including Farnsworth Art Museum Chief Curator Michael Komanecky, Preparator Leith Mac Donald, Registrar Angela Waldron, and Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village Curator Michael Graham.

The historical information and period photographs in this article are taken from the extraordinary 272 full-color exhibit catalog, [The Shakers: From Mount Lebanon to the World](#), published by Rizzoli.

To vote for the **Sabbathday Lake Shaker garments** as your favorite textiles of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Exhibits: *Picturing Enlightenment*

The exhibit, "*Picturing Enlightenment: Tibetan Thangkas from the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College*" is on loan to the Middlebury College Museum of Art in Vermont through December 7, 2014. MTS Director Camille Myers Breeze contributed exhibit text panels about the conservation of these rare thangkas, and she will be visiting campus in October to speak to students and the public. Her essay, *Opening Doors: Conserving the Mead Art Museum's Tibetan Thangka Collection*, was published in the 2013 exhibit catalog, alongside writing by some of the country's finest Buddhist scholars. It is available on [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and other fine book suppliers.



Spacing lines of repair stitches on a thangka.

## *Henry Adams Bed*

After more than a year of anticipation, our replica of the Henry Adams silk bed hangings was completed and installed at the [Adams National Historical Park](http://Adams National Historical Park) in January 2014. The most challenging part of the project was recreating the colors and patterns of the brocaded, watered silk on a modern, stable cotton fabric. David Berman of [Trustworth Studios](http://Trustworth Studios) created our new fabric in Photoshop and digitally printed it onto cotton sateen. Judge for yourself whether we captured the essence of the original fragile hangings.



The Henry Adams bed in an archival photograph from the 1980s (left) and our digitally printed and hand-sewn replica (right).

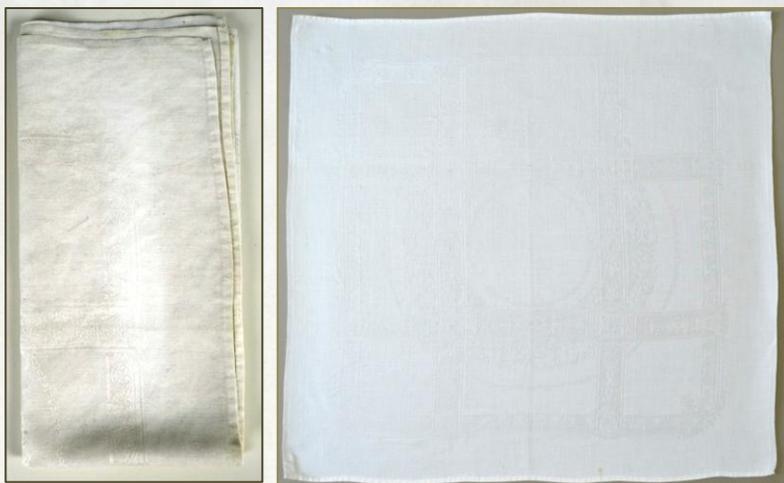
To vote for the **Henry Adams Bed** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Projects: Presidential Textiles

2014 brought a number of new textiles to Museum Textile Services with connections to United States Presidents. Here are just two of our favorites.

Rose Kennedy, the mother of President John F. Kennedy, was proud of her Brookline, MA, home. Upon her dinner table sat nothing but the best linens, silver, and china. Long after she passed, these heirlooms remained just as Rose had placed them. Her home is now the [John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historical Site](#), and park staff had MTS clean the table linens, which were so soiled that the silverware had left clean spots where they sat for decades!



Napkin before and after wetcleaning with Sodium Borohydride.



Rare Presidential coverlet woven in 1831.

A rare example of 19th-century weaving arrived at Museum Textile Services in 2014. Bearing the seal of the President of the United States and the date 1831, the wool and cotton coverlet was discolored and had areas of blue loss. Remarkably, we discovered a near twin in the 1995 exhibit catalog *Weaving a Legacy* from the Columbus Museum of Art. The author attributed the illustrated coverlet to New York, based primarily on the early date and the fact that it is a full 76 inches wide with no center seam. The coverlet at MTS belongs to an Upstate New Yorker and also has no center seam. After wetcleaning, damaged areas were restored at the request of the owner. Areas of missing yarns, such as the one below, were rewoven with custom-dyed wool yarns.



Before and after Intern Kate Herron dyed new wool yarns and reweave the area of loss.

To vote for the **Presidential Coverlet** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Projects: Squire White's Red Cloak

After decades of searching, the Buttonwoods Museum in Haverhill, Massachusetts, recently rediscovered the scarlet cloak of Squire Samuel White, one of the town's first eccentrics.

An old accession record for the cloak read, "Scarlet riding cape worn by Hon. Wm. [Squire Samuel – penciled in] White who lived at White's Corner, Main Street; this Mr. White, so folk lore says, was a six feet tall man, rode on a white horse, wore a wig and black cocked hat, and made a striking figure as he rode through the village."

In 1889, these "articles of dress" were owned by Samuel's great grandson, James Davis White. They were later donated to the Buttonwoods, but the cloak had not been seen by any living staff until it was discovered safe and sound last year.

The cloak is hand-stitched of red wool broadcloth. It closed at the neck with one button and tied with a brown braided-silk cord. Nine additional buttons, in three sets of three, run down the front. Only the top two buttonholes functioned, and they closed in the opposite direction of the very top button. All of the buttons, of which six remain wholly or partially intact, are made of wood and wrapped decoratively with wool thread. The cloak was in fair condition with minor insect damage and soiling from wear and display.

In Daniel Appleton White's 1862 book, "the Descendants of William White of Haverhill, Mass." We learn that Samuel White Esq. lived from 1765-1801. He is the great, great, grandson of William White, one of Haverhill's first settlers. Samuel was a "prominent and patriotic citizen" whose name is on a plaque on the bell that once hung in the First Baptist Meeting House, later moved the Baptist Meeting House in Plaistow, NH. He is immortalized in Annie Frances Richard's notes to the second edition of the book as follows: "It is said that 'Squire White possessed great personal attractions, and was a conspicuous figure as he rode about the town on his fine horse, in his "wig and red cloak.'" You can see pictures of Samuel White's red cloak in the October 27, 2014 Museum Textile Services Blog.

To vote for **Samuel White's Cloak** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Projects: The Leipzig Swatch Book

Museum Textile Services recently completed the cleaning and rehousing of a German textile ledger book inscribed, "Leipzig 1855." It contains within page after page of stunning fiber samples—from raw cotton and flax, to satin and trim, to braided straw, coral beads, and even rubber—and plenty of text in High German script (see cover).

What we know for certain is that this Muster-Karte, or "Pattern Card" was rebound in the 20th century. Together with the heavy patterns of use, this suggests the book was valuable to someone over a span of time. Despite sending photos of the writing to several German-speaking friends, no one has been able to decipher the handwriting enough to answer two basic questions: Who made the book and for what purpose?

The travels the Leipzig swatch book took in the early 20th century are easier to decode. The book came to us in a custom-made cardboard box labeled, "The Addis Co." The W.I. Addis Co. clothing store was founded in 1916 in Syracuse, NY, and merged with Dey Bros. department store before going bankrupt in 1992.

The book then traveled down to New York City—a label inside the box cover reads, "Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc, 980 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10021." The Parke-Bernet Galleries began in 1937 and quickly became New York's largest auction house. They were purchased in 1964 by Sotheby's & Co.

Just above the paper label is an intriguing inscription reading "Textile: Museum: 'Cooper Union' Downtown N.Y." We will never know whether the book belonged to the Cooper Union prior to arriving at Parke-Bernet, or was purchased on auction by the school.

The Leipzig swatch book was given to its current owner by his grandfather in the 1980s. Although the owner had only opened the box a dozen times since, and had stored it in a cool and dry place, the book and box were showing signs of ageing. We removed soot and particulate matter from the paper and textile samples using a HEPA vacuum and vulcanized rubber sponges. The book was then wrapped in rayon tissue and placed in a new custom box. Both the new and original boxes were returned to the owner.

Think you can tell us more about this book? Take a look at the [slide show](#) online in our blog and please let us know!

To vote for the **Leipzig Swatch Book** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Projects: Yankee Doodle Drama

Some projects are just made for research. Such was the case with the fourteen-and-a-half-foot-long Lawrence Opera House banner, which read “JAMES KYRLE MAC CURDY’S GREAT PLAY THE YANKEE DOODLE DETECTIVE” at the “OPERA HOUSE LAWRENCE 3 DAYS STARTING THURSDAY SEPT. 2 MATINEES FRI. AND SAT.”

“The Yankee Doodle Detective” was a comedy play considered to be “one of the best melodramas ever produced.” It was written by and starred California native James Kyrle Mac Curdy (1875–1923) in 1909. A quick check of the calendar shows that September 2 fell on a Thursday in 1909, so we can feel confident that the banner also dates to that year, making it 105 years old.



The 174-inch-long Lawrence Opera House Banner before conservation.



The history of the Lawrence Opera House is also interesting. It was built by the Boston & Lowell Railroad between 1878 and 1880, and opened for performances on May 26, 1881. Located at 326 Essex Street, near B&L’s Grand Depot, the opera house was long considered the most ornamental building in the city. In 1920 it was renamed The Rialto, and became known for vaudevillian acts and cinema. It became the Winter Garden Auditorium in 1923 and was demolished in the 1940s.

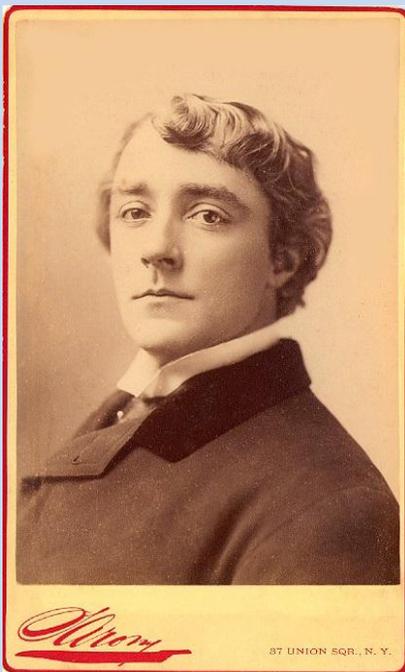
The question that begs asking is where the Yankee Doodle Detective banner was initially displayed. The length suggests that it could have been stretched across a street, in front of the building, or even inside the B&L railroad depot. It is tempting to assume that the water damage indicates the banner was displayed outside, however its condition issues are more likely due to one hundred-plus years of storage and hasty display.



The same area before and after conservation

The banner came to Museum Textile Services dirty and stained. It had been folded for an extended period of time, during which it was exposed to moisture and subsequently developed mold. There are numerous tears at the corners from being improperly hung over the years in Lawrence museums.

After surface cleaning, the banner was contact cleaned with deionized water. Dirt and fugitive red dye were captured using Polistini Tek-wipe, resulting in a dramatic improvement in the banner's appearance. It was then fully lined with Beva Tex, a polyester non-woven material impregnated with pH neutral Beva 371 adhesive. Pastels were used to tone the Beva Tex where it showed through gaps in the banner, making the losses in the corners less evident.



James Kyrle Mac Curdy

Lucky for us, history has not forgotten the life and work of James Kyrle Mac Curdy and his wife and fellow actor, Kate Woods Fiske. Mac Curdy died just 13 years after these Lawrence appearances, at the age of 47. Kate outlived her husband by twenty five years.

The Lawrence Opera House banner's display life was probably only a few days but it survives as a testament to the cosmopolitan energy of an early 20th-century Massachusetts city.



Kate Woods Fiske

To vote for the **Lawrence Opera banner** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# Projects: Raising the Dennis Flag

One of the most exciting projects of 2014 was concluded early in July with the reinstallation of the 13-star ensign flag belonging to the town of Dennis, Massachusetts. Completed in a mere 4 months, this conservation treatment was an exercise in collaboration—and often patience—resulting in a strikingly dramatic historic flag returning to its home town.



Jo Myers looks on as the Dennis Flag takes up most of our floor.

The flag was deinstalled on March 7th, 2014, by MTS colleague Barrett M Keating of North Falmouth, Massachusetts. Conservation of the flag took place during March and April, 2014, and was documented in an MTS Blog by Lisa Yeats. The previous lining and repairs were retained, additional repairs made where necessary, and the entire flag was overlaid with sheer nylon net. This invisible net protects the frayed areas and provides preventive conservation as the flag ages.

Reinstallation of the Dennis Flag was scheduled for the second week in July. This coincided with a heat wave in the northeast, making work in the un-air-conditioned and poorly lit auditorium challenging. In order to accomplish the tricky mounting, framing and installation in just three days, we brought together a team consisting of current and former MTS staff and interns. In addition to Director Camille Breeze and Conservator Cara Jordan, Intern Kate Herron, former Intern Jen Nason and former Technician Courtney Jason made the trip down to the Cape.

The tight three-day schedule hinged on the ability of the MTS team to get the flag stitched down to the padded panel within the day and a half allotted for this step. Using curved needles and cotton thread, lines of stitching were placed along every other stripe, around the perimeter, and at each star. This thorough support system, along with the preventive netting, assured us that the flag could withstand vertical display for another 30 years. It was tough work but we met our deadline.



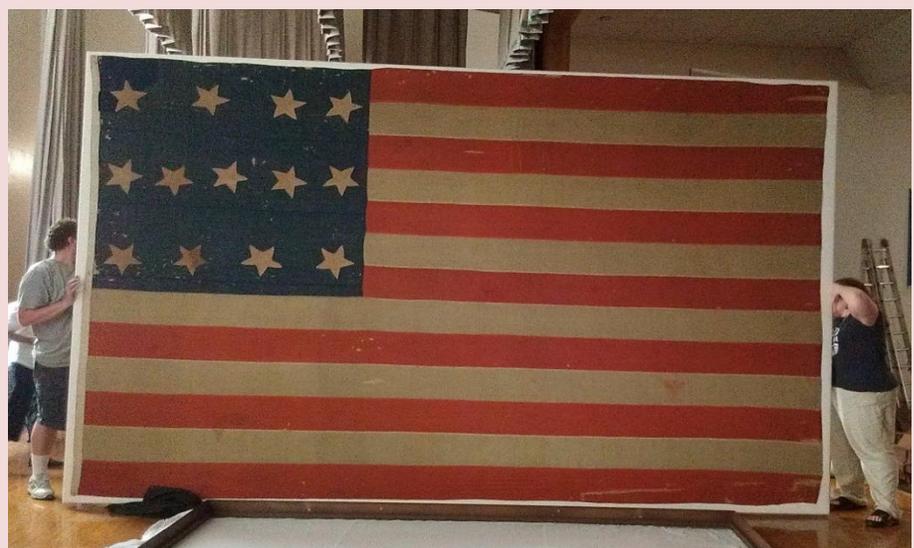
Kate Herron and Courtney Jason stitching down the center of the flag.



Cara Jordan and Courtney Jason giving the flag a final inspection before framing.

Once the flag was mounted, Barrett Keating returned to help us attach the 250-pound frame to the equally heavy mounted flag. Using a pair of super lifts, art installers then raised the 500-lb framed flag onto the wall in the Wixon Middle School auditorium.

The Museum Textile Services team would like to thank all the professionals who assisted with this historic conservation effort. We are especially grateful to Dianne Rochelle of the Dennis Historical Commission who acted as our go-between with the Town of Dennis and the various committees and agencies that had a say in this project.



Barrett Keating and Camille Breeze holding up the flag before it was framed.

To vote for the **Dennis Flag** as your favorite textile of 2014, visit our website and cast your ballot:

<http://www.museumtextiles.com/vote.html>

# In the Press

2014 brought Museum Textile Services plenty of attention from print and digital media:

Camille Breeze was interviewed in September, 2014, on the [Disney Wedding Podcast](#), on the topic of How to Preserve Your Wedding Gown. You can listen to the podcast and see Museum Textile Services' other wedding gown resources in the [MTS Blog](#).

The Summer, 2014, issue of the [Andovers Magazine](#) included a four-page feature article about MTS entitled, *A Tapestry Preserved*. Author Thomas Shamma and photographer Mary Schwam did an excellent job capturing how rewarding and fun it is to work here.

The Andover Townsman and its sister newspaper the Lawrence Eagle Tribune both ran extensive articles about Museum Textile Services on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, entitled **'Dear Boston:' Local Textile Studio Preserves Artifacts for Marathon Memorial Exhibit.**

## On the Road

The MTS team really gets around! This year we traveled to every New England state apart from Rhode Island, plus California, Alaska, Virginia, and New York. Here are the highlights:

Jan: Adams National Historical Park bed installation, Quincy, MA. Mead Art Museum thangka box build, Amherst, MA.

Feb: Camille traveled to Lima, Peru, to discuss a museum collaboration with the US Embassy. She was also a guest lecturer at Wheaton College, Norton, MA.

Mar: Human Library career day, Goffstown High School, NH. NYC museums trip.

Apr: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts tapestry survey, Richmond, VA. Boston Public Library's *Dear Boston* opening. New Hampshire Battle Flag survey, Concord, NH.

May: Contract textile conservation for Farnsworth Art Museum exhibit *The Shakers*, Rockland, ME. AIC conference in San Francisco, CA, returning via Mexico City.

Jun: Shelburne Museum hooked rug consultation, Shelburne, VT. Mead Art Museum, Amherst, MA. Mary Baker Eddy Library flag consultation, Boston.

Jul: Cara returned from her honeymoon in Alaska. Dennis flag installation, Dennis, MA.

Aug: Sampler Study Day at Haverhill Historical Society, MA. Camille taught a Campbell Center Workshop at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, Boston.

Oct: Camille gives public lecture for Picturing Enlightenment thangka exhibit, Middlebury College Art Museum, VT. Dennison Homestead consultation, Mystic, CT.

Nov: New England Museum Association conference, Cambridge, MA.

# Need a Hand?

Here are the newest additions to the library of MTS Handouts. The full list can be found on our [Website](#), and is conveniently sorted according to whether you are a [museum](#), a private [individual](#), or a fellow [conservator](#).

[Conservation Stitching Guide](#). This is an in-depth explanation of the four most common stitches used for textile stabilization, including ideal length, use, and variations.



[Hot Cutting and Using Polyester Sheer Overlays](#). These are detailed instructions for hot cutting and securing polyester sheer overlays. The technique also works on some other synthetics, such as nylon.



[Safe Fumigation of Textiles](#). This handout addresses how to identify a mold & mildew outbreak, to safely treat textiles to remove and kill an infestation, and to prevent the problem from spreading.

[How to Archive Your Wedding Gown](#). By following these easy tips, you can avoid costly gown preservation scams and archive your wedding dress yourself.

## MTS Research

There are two ongoing research projects here at Museum Textile Services:

Camille Breeze presented a poster at the AIC conference in May, 2014, entitled, "Evaluating and choosing Sheer Overlays." A concurrent survey on "The Use of Sheer Overlays in Textile Conservation" gathered 80 responses from around the globe. The results of these projects are being combined and should be published in 2015 or 16.

Kate Herron, a MLA candidate in Museum Studies at the Harvard Extension School, is in residence at MTS this fall while working on her Thesis Capstone Project, "Stitched Together: Advances in the Theory and Practice of Historic Costume Exhibitions."

# MTS Staff

Camille Myers Breeze, Founder & Director



Camille began her textile conservation career in 1989 at the Textile Conservation Workshop in South Salem, NY. After earning a BA in Art History from Oberlin College, she received an MA in Museum Studies: Costume and Textiles Conservation from the Fashion Institute of Technology. She spent five years in the Textile Conservation Laboratory at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NYC before moving to the Textile Conservation Center at the American Textile History Museum, in Lowell, MA. Camille is an avid motorcyclist, gardener new chicken owner.

Cara Jordan, Conservator



Cara joined Museum Textile Services in 2007 as a volunteer. She quickly joined the staff where she became responsible for intern training and project management. Cara's specialties include flags, quilts, samplers, and conservation framing. Cara earned an MLA in Museum Studies from the Harvard University Extension School in 2013. She is also a 2007 graduate of Tufts University in affiliation with School of the Museum of Fine Arts. Cara has worked on several art exhibitions and her art focuses mainly on painting, alternative process photography, and fiber arts.

Kate Herron, Student



Kate, who originally hails from Michigan, interned at MTS while working on the completion of her MLA in Museum Studies at the Harvard Extension School. She is happy to be able to unite her interests in textiles and the museum field which she has worked in for 10 years as a Curator, Collections Manager, and Educator with additional experience in photography, design, and gallery management. When she is not busy with work and school, she teaches hand embroidery in Boston in addition to designing and selling her own patterns.

Kim Oey-Rosenthal, Intern



Kim has a fashion design certificate and worked as an assistant designer for five years. She also has a small business importing and selling ikats and batiks from Indonesia. She and her family lived in Tokyo, Japan for two years. While there, she taught English and enjoyed the rich arts and crafts of Japan. Upon her return, she worked as a consultant in fashion design. Throughout her travels and museum visits Kim noticed that she was always drawn to textiles, how they are made and their histories. She is just beginning Lever Three intern certification at MTS.

Johanna Myers, Intern



Jo is a certified Dabbler and Jack-of-All-Trades. Thirty years of marriage and countless moves have allowed her to try many jobs and careers. A 2000 graduate of Baylor University in Museum Studies and Family and Consumer Science was a culmination of almost twenty years and twelve colleges. She is married to Pete who recently retired from the military and Jo has been following him, reinventing herself wherever they went. Jo and Pete just bought a home in Lowell, MA, and are looking forward to settling down for a change. Jo works at the New England Quilt Museum.

Erica Holthausen, Marketing Consultant



Erica is the Chief Instigator behind the Honest Marketing Revolution. She has been working with Museum Textile Services since 2009, during which time she has succeeded in making us LIKE marketing! Notice we didn't say LOVE marketing—that's why we still hire Erica to help us create even more opportunities to provide conservation and educational programming for our community.

Josephine Johnson



Josephine interned at MTS following her 2013 graduation from Wheaton College. She then completed her year with us as Technician, performing both administrative and studio support. At Wheaton College, she worked as a student conservator in the Permanent Collection where she had the opportunity to conserve many pieces in the collection. She also assisted MTS with the installation of a duchess's dress for the exhibit, 100 Years 100 Objects. Josephine is pursuing a career in art conservation.

Lisa Yeats



Lisa joined MTS for 3 months starting in January, 2014, while she was visiting the United States from Australia with the help of a Professional Development Grant from the Ian Potter Cultural Trust. Before coming to MTS, Lisa spent 3 months at the Philadelphia Museum of Art working with their textile collection. Lisa is a 2012 graduate of the University of Melbourne with a MA in Cultural Materials Conservation. She is currently working for Emily Fryer Conservation, in Christchurch, New Zealand.

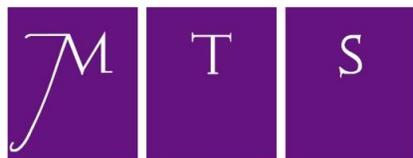
# MUSEUM TEXTILE SERVICES

Conserving Textiles



Protecting Collections

Since 1999



[www.museumtextiles.com](http://www.museumtextiles.com)