

## OLLI NEWSLETTER

April 2021

[www.usm.maine.edu/olli](http://www.usm.maine.edu/olli)

## Profile

David Little

As an artist, David Little has had his share of highs and lows, the inspirational and the fallow. What stopped his complacency on March 24, 2020, ranks right up there among life-changing moments.



In those early days of the pandemic, he came across a *New York Times* article about ways to find cheer at home; it contained a segment called “An Artistic Exercise in Patience.” The writer, from Montreal, Canada, mentioned renewing his interest in ink drawing, which he had found absorbing and calming in the past.

Aha! David, who started out in the seventies and eighties doing abstract paintings and Chinese calligraphy, had been pursuing other media, and then other projects entirely, for the better part of four decades. What if he too looked back? Two light bulbs went on: first the one in his head, and then the one on the third floor of his barn, where 18 years of lyrical, Surrealist-inspired works (600 or so) were stored in portfolios. He cleaned up the space and resumed working, as if reuniting with an old friend. “I was so excited to go back to what I did as a young man,” he says, “to revisit my past!” Over this last year, he has produced a large body of experimental mixed media work, numerous collages and ink paintings, the latter drawing upon his earlier study of Chinese calligraphy. Much of the new work done while listening to classical music!

David calls this his “reset,” in the most exuberant sense. “This has totally re-energized my life,” he says, “and I’m the happiest I’ve ever been.”

David came to OLLI through his volunteer work as a history docent. Through his affiliation with Friends of Evergreen Cemetery, he co-led a series of four artists’ walking tours, starting with the first one in 2012. Four years later these tours were incorporated into an autumn OLLI class featuring a variety of subjects from “Maine in the Civil War” to “Notable Women” to “The Sinking of the SS Portland.” He co-led these “Artists of Evergreen” tours for several years until they came to a screeching halt with the pan-

(Continued on page 2)

## IN THIS ISSUE

[Hint: Click on these to jump to their page.]

- [Advisory Board](#)
- [Giving to OLLI](#)
- [OLLI Teaching Tips Panel](#)
- [New Reflections Deadline](#)
- [SAGE for April](#)
- [OLLI Players, History SIGs](#)
- [Wine Club, Facebook, Walking Club,](#)

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## David Little *(Continued from page 1)*

demic. The first OLLI course David enrolled in, “Great Choral Pieces in Great Spaces,” to be taught by Carolyn Paulin, was abruptly Covid-canceled, like all classes in the spring of 2020.

David grew up in New York. He inherited artistic genes from relatives: his uncle the artist William Kienbusch was an Abstract Expressionist painter who summered on Great Cranberry Island, and his mother, “one of my greatest supporters,” painted still lifes, landscape, and figure subjects. David started painting at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and then transferred to Southampton College on Long Island, from which he received a BA in Art. He also studied classical piano. He subsequently earned an MA and MFA in Studio Art from the University of Iowa. For two summers in the 1980s he took time off from his job at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to study at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

In March 1986, while working as the Registrar at the Terry Dintenfass Gallery in Manhattan, a shipper from Fine Arts Express asked him, “David, what do you *really* want to do with your life?” His adventures in East Madison, Maine, painting from the landscape provided clues.

The following month David moved from Brooklyn to his parents’ home on the south shore of Long Island. By November he had married his sweetheart Mikki and two years later moved to Portland. Realizing his abstract work was a hard sell, David’s focus became plein air painting. In 1988, he began a 10-year tenure at Bayview Gallery, Portland. While living in Maine, David has curated or co-curated exhibits at Bates College, UNE, USM’s Glickman Library, Fryeburg Academy, and Round Top Center for the Arts.

Around 2011, he pivoted to “a second act in my career,” this one involving writing books. “I always wanted to do it but never thought I would,” he says. *Art of Katahdin*, which came out in 2013, combines images of Mt. Katahdin by distinguished Maine artists of the last 150 years with elucidating text. David’s brother Carl, who has written many books on Maine art and artists, edited the book.

The book was widely recognized and won the *Boston Globe*’s “Best of New England” award for non-fiction in New England. It was, in fact, the first book to focus specifically on the art of the Katahdin region. And it was written in the “Great Study” room on the 7th floor of the Glickman Library!

Katahdin itself is in David’s blood. He has climbed it and painted it numerous times. In 2006 he was one of 18 artists involved in raising money to help the Trust for Public Land, along with other organizations and private donors, purchase the Katahdin Lake parcel (4,500 acres including Katahdin Lake). These lands became part of Baxter State Park.

After *Art of Katahdin* came out, “Everything changed.” David became a public speaker, giving many book talks. He was reinvented, and his second act lasted until he saw that momentous article on patience, during the early days of the pandemic, in March 2020.

After *Art of Katahdin*, David and Carl collaborated on several other books, including *Art of Acadia: The Islands, The Mountains, The Main* (2016) and *Paintings of Portland* (2018). In 2016, at the behest of Lucas St. Clair, he worked with two great scholars of the history of Katahdin and Baxter State Park, John Neff and Howard Whitcomb to produce *Penobscot: East Branch Lands, A Journey Through Time*.

This book, which presented the prominent historical, cultural, and social features of these lands and the importance of the people who traveled to Katahdin from the East, was written to support the case

*(Continued on page 4)*

**ADVISORY BOARD**

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**OLLI members are invited to attend Advisory Board meetings. Check with the Chair for time and place.**

**WEB SITES**

Maine Senior College Network  
[www.maineseniorcollege.org](http://www.maineseniorcollege.org)  
 OLLI National Resource Center  
[www.osher.net](http://www.osher.net)  
 OLLI at USM

**OLLI STAFF**

Donna Anderson, Director  
 Rob Hyssong, Program Coordinator  
 Megan Saul, Administrative Assistant

**OLLI NEWSLETTER**

OLLI Office:  
 Wishcamper Center 210  
 P. O. Box 9300  
 Portland, ME 04104-9300  
 Phone: 207 780-4406 or 1-800-800-4876  
 TTY 1-207-780-5646  
 Fax: 207 780-4317  
 E-mail: [ollinews@maine.edu](mailto:ollinews@maine.edu)  
 Tim Baehr, Editor  
 Don King, Editor Emeritus  
 Tim Baehr, Layout for April  
 Amy Liston, Contributing Writer  
 Please send newsletter material to the OLLI Office, via our e-mail.

**Deadline for the May issue is April 15.**

**Advisory Board**

Last month in this column, we celebrated OLLI’s successful response to the pandemic and the many challenges it presented. Classes moved to distance learning. Many Special Interest Groups continued to meet and even thrive. We figured out new ways to get together and enjoy discussions, games, music. So now what?

The OLLI Advisory Board met for a mini-retreat in March to assess what we had learned in the last year and identify the opportunities and challenges going forward. We decided to stay away from finding instant solutions and rather focus on how we might combine what worked best for running OLLI before the pandemic with all the new learnings from the past year. We do not want to go back to doing exactly what we have always done and lose the new skills and opportunities we have gained.

At the retreat we focused on four main questions:

- What do we need to learn about hybrid teaching and learning to best build it into our new OLLI programs?
- How do we increase membership both in numbers and in the diversity of the membership?
- How do we attract and support faculty and expand enrollment capacity?
- How do we publicize opportunities and then recruit more members from all of OLLI into leadership rolls?

As you can imagine, we had robust discussions and identified lots of ideas and challenges to explore in the next few months. I will keep you posted on what we are working on in upcoming columns. We are also eager to get members’ ideas on these issues.

So, talk/Zoom chat with each other and with Advisory Board members. Their names are listed in this OLLI newsletter. You can also send your questions and suggestions to me at the address below. Another great opportunity is to participate in the free panel discussions about teaching to be held on Wednesday, April 14. We encourage all instructors, potential instructors, and interested members to attend. See the article in this newsletter.

Stay safe and think about the future.

—Sue Jennings, Board Chair  
[jensusa10@gmail.com](mailto:jensusa10@gmail.com)



Alex Castro / The Verge

## David Little *(Continued from page 2)*

for preservation of the proposed Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. Consisting of land donated by Burt's Bees co-founder Roxanne Quimby, the monument was officially dedicated on August 24, 2016. Copies of the small book with color illustrations circulated in the West Wing of the Obama White House, at the National Park Service, and the Department of the Interior.

David's work appears in the latest issue of *Reflections*, which received an OLLI-wide Zoom-launch in February. He is an outdoorsman who loves tennis, and whose walking mileage exploring the Portland Trails system hit new highs over the past year. He helped research, write, and edit some of the seven signs along the City's new Baxter Trail, which runs from the Back Cove parking lot to Evergreen Cemetery and honors the Baxter family for their contributions to the Olmsted-inspired park system and the State of Maine. A lifelong journal keeper, David is mulling over his next project: a combined art book/memoir addressing the struggle to build a career in art and find an authentic voice.

All is well. "I'm using the brush more freely than ever before," David says.

His painting—and his spirit—are unfettered.

—Amy Liston

## The Power of Giving to OLLI

It has been a year since OLLI turned on a dime to create a new remote learning program that helped us to engage with members during the pandemic. Technical and training talent was brought together to teach us all about Zoom and how to use it, and pioneering instructors stepped forward to offer those first spring classes. But there was another important component in the success of online learning: The OLLI Gift Fund.

In Spring 2020, many of you generously donated your course fees to the Gift Fund, adding to the funds kept secure and dedicated to supporting activities and projects for OLLI members. Over 75 of you made the commitment to donate those fees and some of you generously sent along additional gifts. We are grateful for each of those donations; they were used to support OLLI activities in many ways: to fund summer interns who became remote learning assistants, to purchase the masks that you are now picking up from OLLI volunteers, and to purchase new instructional tools such as "The Globe on Screen" performance broadcasts that will enrich our literature and culture courses. Just before the pandemic, the gift fund was used to improve hearing assistance technology in classrooms—this same technology will be a useful component of our hybrid classes based in the Wishcamper Center. The OLLI Gift Fund allows the OLLI Director to initiate special projects and programs that greatly enhance OLLI's offerings to its members.

In the next year we know that we will need to make investments in more hybrid-related technology, in more teaching tools, and in more mobile hearing technology for outdoor programs. When we return to face-to-face classes in 2022, the requests for scholarships will also increase, and we want to meet that need. All of your donations will be used to fund these important initiatives and goals, which we simply could not achieve without your support.

On April 16 we will be launching OLLI's first annual giving campaign through a USM portal called "CampusGive." We will share more information about the campaign in the near future; but for now we thank you for your generosity in the past and we hope that you will consider a gift to OLLI this spring.

—Donna Anderson, Director



## OLLI Teaching Tips: Tales from the Trenches

Register for a (free) panel discussion about teaching to be held Wednesday, April 14, from 3:15 to 4:45.

Three OLLI instructors will share what they have learned and put into practice as their classes have moved to a Zoom format this past year. There will be time for audience Q and A.

This event is given under the auspices of the OLLI Teaching and Learning Committee and is open to all OLLI members. We hope it will be of particular use to any current, former or prospective OLLI instructor.

Registration information will be e-mailed to you shortly, so watch your inbox for details.

*—Pamela Delphenich, Chair, OLLI Teaching and Learning Committee;  
and Steve Schiffman*



## Reflections Deadline Moved to April 30

Reflections submissions were arriving at a pretty good clip as the original April 1 deadline approached. But the more the merrier, so we're extending the deadline to April 30.

In case you missed seeing the submission rules in past newsletters or on the OLLI website, we'll reproduce them here. If you want to print them out and are unsure of how to do it, e-mail me (see my gmail address below) and I'll send you a copy.

### Submitting Your Work to *Reflections* 2021

Current OLLI members are invited to submit their creative works to the 2021 edition of *Reflections: A Journal of Art and Literature*.

Please follow the guidelines below. The submissions manager can usually fix anything that's missing, or get in touch with you with any questions. (But do your best to follow the rules.)

1. Create your written or visual work (or find it on your computer). You may submit up to **two** items in each of the four categories (see Step 4). Your work must be entirely yours, original, and not previously published.
2. If you haven't done so already, save your work on your computer as a document or image file.
3. Do not put your name anywhere on your work. If it's on your artwork, cover it up.
4. Start an e-mail. **Put Reflections in the subject line.**

Type in the following:

- Your name as you wish to see it in the credits
  - The name of the work as you wish to see it in the Table of Contents
  - The category of what you're submitting: **Art, Photo, Poetry, Prose**
    - **Prose has a 1000-word limit.**
  - Your phone and e-mail address
  - A short (35 words max.) bio starting with your name (e.g., "Mary Jones...")
  - For all artwork, photos, etc., add a brief (20 words maximum) statement of what inspired your creation. Include the medium — photo, oil, watercolor, pastels, ink, pencil, sculpture, etc.
  - For artwork, including sculpture, take a digital photo and send that in. The PhotScan app from Google Photos is very useful and is available for both Android and iPhone devices.
5. Attach the electronic version of your work to the e-mail.
  6. Send the e-mail to Tim Baehr, the Submissions Manager, at [tim.baehr@gmail.com](mailto:tim.baehr@gmail.com).

**NOTE: This is a new e-mail address and is not the same e-mail address as in prior years.**

Repeat this for each item you send. If you send three items, you'll send three separate e-mails.

Acknowledgment e-mails for submissions started in March. Submissions are put into the tracking system in batches, so you may not hear from us for a few days.

One detail that may have been omitted is that there is a 1,000-word upper limit for prose submissions (as in all the past years). As of March 25, this hasn't been a problem.

The selection process takes a few months, and notice of the results won't be sent out until September.

We're looking forward to seeing your prose, poetry, photos, and art!

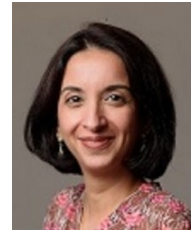
—Tim Baehr, Submissions Manager

## April at SAGE

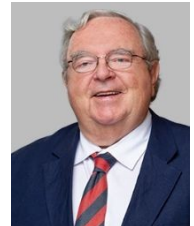
### Global Warming from Iceland & Greenland, and from Maine; Portland Conservatory of Art; COVID-19 Vaccines

The four April SAGE programs occur on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 on a Zoom webinar similar to OLLI classes. Amazing—no leaving home in bad weather, dealing with a parking challenge, or rushing to class, plus your own preferred coffee add-on. Each program provides the opportunity for audience members to not only hear stimulating presentations, but also to participate in Q&A dialogue with the speaker. Here are the four April programs.

**April 6.** Dr. Firooza Pavri is the Director of the Muskie School of Public Service and Professor of Geography at USM. Firooza’s research has taken her to the Arctic region where she has examined the impact of global warming on interactions between the changing environment and human social systems. With the support of NASA and the NSF, she uses satellite images to monitor changes in the shifting land coverage and vegetation. We look forward to hearing about what Firooza learned from her recent trip to Greenland and Iceland.



**April 13.** Tony Buxton has been a key player on energy and infrastructure issues for decades in Maine and New England, serving an important role in every major piece of energy legislation in Maine in the last 30 years as well as being involved in the formation of ISO-NE. He will discuss how a democracy such as Maine’s might most rapidly and effectively decrease carbon emissions to deal with global warming. Tony serves as chair of the Preti Flaherty’s Energy and Utilities Practice Group and is a member of the firm’s Management Committee.



**April 20.** Dr. Jean Murachanian, Executive Director of the Portland Conservatory of Music, business professional, art historian, and educator will share with the SAGE audience the story of PCM’s vital role in our community. Jean left the business world to earn her PhD in “Modern European Art History” with a focus on the interpretation of visual art and the symbolism and ritual use of Genocide memorials. One might wonder how studying art history has led Jean to Portland and PCM. As we shall hear, the answer lies in a commitment to sharing knowledge and ideas along with a successful strategy for community engagement.



**April 27.** Jackson Labs brought Stephen Pelsue to Maine after he earned his PhD at the University of North Carolina. Now he serves as Director of Science for BBI, a Welsh company with an office in Portland, which won the United Kingdom’s contract to develop testing protocols for COVID-19. In between Jackson and BBI, Stephen was a professor and researcher in USM’s Department of Applied Medical Sciences and Associate Dean of the College of Science, Technology, and Health. He investigated autoantibodies in autoimmune diseases focusing on Lupus. Stephen will examine the history of vaccines and the advances that have laid the foundation for those used to fight COVID-19.



SAGE lectures are offered online in a webinar format. When you register for an individual lecture, you will receive a link to access the webinar. The cost for each individual lecture is \$10, and you must register four days in advance to receive an access link. As with OLLI classes, you can register ONLINE at: <https://www.enrole.com/usmmaine/jsp/index.jsp?categoryId=10025>.

## OLLI Senior Players to Perform Online

In February's OLLI newsletter we OLLI Senior Players announced that we shall be putting on a Zoom show. The show will consist of skits with two to three people, performing monologues and singing old time commercials. It will be recorded and made available to all the Senior Colleges statewide, as they have been waiting to see how our show was put together before they attempted shows of their own. But even more exciting news is that we shall also be putting our show on YouTube, which, of course, means we will be seen worldwide. We'll become international film stars!

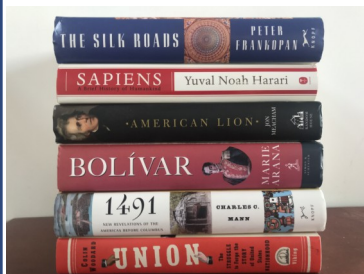


Most of us didn't even know what Zoom was when we went into the pandemic, but we soon found out when Anne Cardale, director of Maine Senior College Network, called me and asked if we'd be interested in attempting to do a show on Zoom. Ten of us agreed to try to do it, and we have done it. We have toiled for months and months, and the finished show should be ready to record at the end of April. People say "You can't teach old dogs new tricks." They're wrong. We were taught.

In case you missed last February's newsletter, we are a Reader's Theatre that performed two shows a year at Wishcamper, as well as at numerous assisted living facilities as a Special Interest Group for almost 20 years. We are always looking for new people to join us, as people move away, find new interests, and so on. All you need is an interest in theatre and acting; we would love to have you join us. And remember—no memorizing lines. Where else can you become an international film star?

If you have any questions or would like to find out more about our Senior Players, please contact either Cheryl Squiers, Director, here: [nenegirl8th@gmail.com](mailto:nenegirl8th@gmail.com); or Elizabeth Guest, Artistic Director, here: [elizabethme85@twc.com](mailto:elizabethme85@twc.com).

### A Love of History...



...that's what has drawn OLLI members together in the OLLI History Book Club for the past nine years. Our discussion group has read 65 books in that time period, covering every historical era from the dawn of our species (*Sapiens*) into the 21st century (*Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*). Popular histories, biographies, and scholarly accounts are all in the mix. Though American history has been a primary focus, we've visited history on four continents to date.

The group meets at 3:15 on the second Thursday of the month, except for December, July, and August. Discussions are usually at Wishcamper, but we've met on Zoom for the past year and will through June. While we have about 45 members on our distribution list, an average of 19 attend each month, and we take turns leading the discussion. Books are selected each spring through recommendations made by members and a voting process.

On April 8 we will be discussing *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland*, by Patrick R. Keefe. We are always welcoming new members and if you like reading and discussing history, please join us!

For more information, please contact coordinators Susan Gesing ([susangesing@gmail.com](mailto:susangesing@gmail.com)) or Dawn Leland ([lelanddm@gmail.com](mailto:lelanddm@gmail.com)).



## OLLI Wine Club News

Two years ago, Steve Schiffman (Vice-Chair OLLI Advisory Board) hiked in Alsace and grew fond of their distinctive white wines. Steve recently suggested to Joel Kallich that the OLLI wine club conduct a tasting of Alsatian white wines, engaging a wine-wise person's services. Joel has again secured the services (as a volunteer) of Grippy Tannins' owner to talk to us about these wines. Consequently, the April wine tasting of the OLLI Wine Club will focus on **Alsatian white wines**. It will be led by Lindsey Murray, owner of Grippy Tannins, a boutique wine store and tasting lounge in Portland's East End.



Vineyards in Alsace

The event, of course, will be on Zoom and will be held from **6:00 to 7:00 on Wednesday, April 21, 2021**. Lindsey is an authority and lover of wine and will share her knowledge and enthusiasm with us. Our meeting will focus on Alsatian white wines' generic features and the specific qualities of the two wines we will be tasting.

For information on how to sign up for the OLLI Zoom presentation and options on how to obtain and pay for the wine, please contact Joel Kallich at [joelkallich@gmail.com](mailto:joelkallich@gmail.com) as soon as possible so that Lindsey knows how much wine to have available. And, please renew your OLLI membership if it has lapsed.

—Jack Lynch and Joel Kallich

## Do You Know?

You will find on OLLI's Facebook page a video interview with Kelly Martin, retired Chief of Fire and Aviation of Yosemite National Park and the National Park Service, who was guest speaker at SAGE on March 15th. Take a look at upcoming SAGE speakers; you may wish to tune in!

— The Social Relations Committee

## Walking Club

Neither of the walks announced in the March newsletter took place where they were scheduled. The weather was so uncooperative both sites had to be changed because of dangerous terrain. It is important for all walkers to be sure of the destinations before they start out.

On **Wednesday, April 14**, we begin our 2021–22 season with a new walk at Broad Cove Reserve in Falmouth. It combines a variety of areas: a brief walk in the woods and a section along a residential area. The walk ends with a surprise bit on a beach in Casco Bay, which you wouldn't expect. I hope it will provide better terrain for a spring excursion.

On **Monday, April 26**, we will visit Horton Woods in Saco, an area that has undergone many trail improvements and presented us with an amazing array of mushrooms in the past. Of course that depends on the spring weather for the fungi to emerge.

More instructions and directions for each walk will follow closer to the times. Generally we will arrive at the trail areas at 10:15 to 10:30 and begin our walks by 10:30. If you have questions, contact me by phone (846-3304) or e-mail ([raegarcelon@gmail.com](mailto:raegarcelon@gmail.com)).

(Continued on page 9)

### Walking Club *(Continued from page 8)*

NOTE: Because of pandemic restrictions and their impact on parking and informal carpooling, the Walking Club cannot currently take new members. We look forward to the time when we can resume more normal operations of the Walking Club, but for now we must work within the realities that we face. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Walking Club in the future, please send your name and contact information to me, and I will keep a list for a time when we can welcome new participants.

Please remember that membership is required for all SIG participants.  
Best regards, and keep walking!

—Rae Garcelon



In March we decided to hit the beach at Pine Point. It was a hit for 29 of us- with the tide receding.



Winslow Park provides great views of the ocean.



With temperatures in the 40's some stayed for lunch.



Walkers got one snowshoe outing in at Winslow Park in Freeport in February.

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