

HEBRON ACADEMY Semester



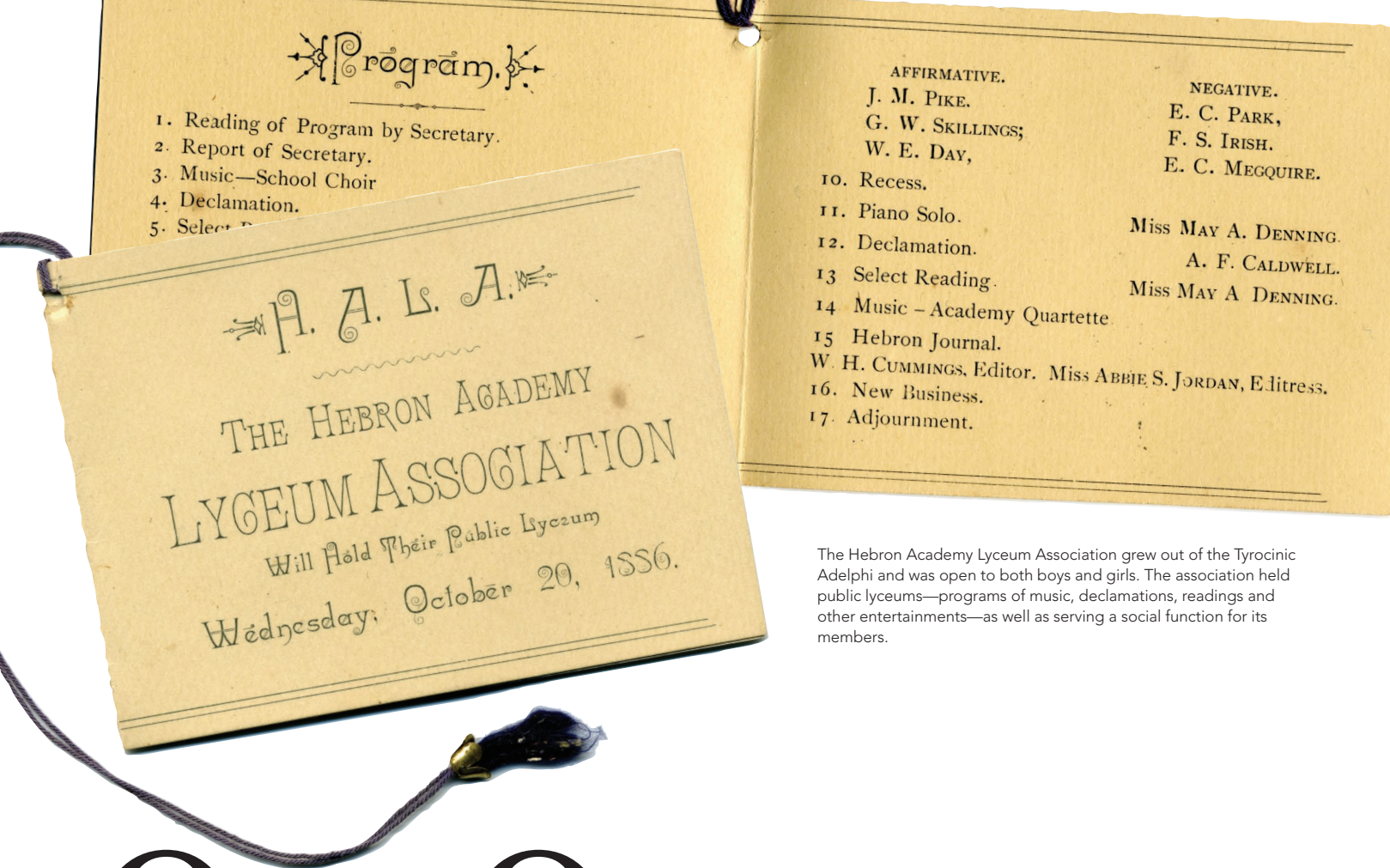
SPRING
2009

SCHEDULE OF EXERCISES
FOR THE
EXHIBITION
AT
HEBRON ACADEMY—OCTOBER 27, 1824.

1. SALUTATORY ADDRESS, (original,) T. I. Pollard.
2. DIALOGUE, - - Thomas Bradley, William C. Whitney.
3. DIALOGUE, - - - - - J. Carr, G. F. Tewksbury.
4. ORATION, - - - - - J. Small.
5. DIALOGUE—“*The Conjuror.*”
E. HAYDEN, L. C. ANDREWS,
B. F. VERRILL, J. SMALL,
S. FOSTER, B. DUNHAM,
D. H. FIRBUSH, MISS M. GREENWOOD,
J. A. BEARCE, MISS E. JORDAN.
H. SMITH,
6. ORATION, - - - - - B. F. Verrill.
7. POEM, - - - - - J. B. Brown.
8. DIALOGUE—“*The Triumph of Temper.*”
J. SMALL, S. FOSTER,
B. F. VERRILL, E. HAYDEN,
G. C. WHITNEY, MISS E. JORDAN,
J. B. BROWN, MISS P. STAPLES,
S. L. JORDAN, MISS H. BOLSTER.
9. ORATION, - - - - - S. L. Jordan.
10. ORATION, - - - - - G. C. Whitney.
11. DIALOGUE—“*William Tell.*”
Z. THOMPSON, J. B. BROWN,
S. L. JORDAN, J. CARR,
D. H. FIRBUSH, MISS R. CURRIER.
WILLIAM TURNER,
12. ORATION, - - - - - D. H. Furbush.
13. ORATION, - - - - - Z. Thompson.
14. DIALOGUE—“*Rudolph.*”
Z. THOMPSON, M. CALDWELL,
T. I. POLLARD, J. B. BROWN,
G. C. WHITNEY, MISS P. STAPLES.
15. VALEDICTORY ADDRESS, (original,) J. A. Bearce.

PRINTED AT THE OBSERVER OFFICE.

This is one of the oldest documents in Hebron Academy's Bell-Lipman Archives. The exhibition was probably sponsored by the Tyrocinic Adelphi Society, formed in 1802 by the town's (male) schoolteachers. The Tyrocinic Adelphi became part of the Academy a few years later and eventually admitted women, for library privileges only.



The Hebron Academy Lyceum Association grew out of the Tyrocinic Adelphi and was open to both boys and girls. The association held public lyceums—programs of music, declamations, readings and other entertainments—as well as serving a social function for its members.

Our Own Entertainments

by Jennifer F. Adams

Human beings are storytellers. We tell stories to explain mysteries beyond our comprehension or to point out great truths or to make each other laugh. In ancient times, storytellers were travelers, bringing tales of faraway lands, of gods and goddesses and of human nature to those who could not journey. Theater grew out of simple storytelling, and groups of actors took to the stage, engaging and entertaining their audiences.

In Hebron Academy's earliest days, students and teachers alike took part in the honored tradition of storytelling and performance, "making their own entertainments" as isolated populations have always done. The Bell-Lipman Archives at Hebron are filled with ephemera relating to these entertainments, from "exhibitions" and prize speaking competitions to the literary societies that flourished in the late nineteenth century and the full theatrical productions of the twentieth and twenty-first.

IN 1802, BEFORE the school's founding, the young male teachers in the town formed the Tyrocinic Adelphi Society, for the purpose of "introducing a uniformity of books and manners into their schools—and improving each other in pronunciation; English grammar and correct reading and speaking" (excerpt from a letter of William Barrows, Jr., North Yarmouth, dated March 1, 1815). The Tyrocinic began admitting Academy students in 1806 and was soon part of the school. They started a library and began admitting women, but for library privileges only. The Society organized annual "exhibitions" in addition to weekly debates and was the principal source of entertainment for many years.

The 1824 schedule of exercises shown on page 16 was probably arranged by the Tyrocinic Adelphi. Although we know the story of William Tell, we can only speculate about the subjects of the other named "dialogues" or the topics of the addresses. It is interesting to note that both boys and girls took part in the group numbers but it appears that only the boys orated.

In the 1860s the male-only Tyrocinic was dropped in favor of the Hebron Academy Lyceum Association, open to both boys and girls. The program from the public lyceum of 1886, shown on page 17, includes musical numbers, readings and a debate, framed as "Discussion of Question: *Resolved: That a College is better than a Business Education for an American Citizen.*"

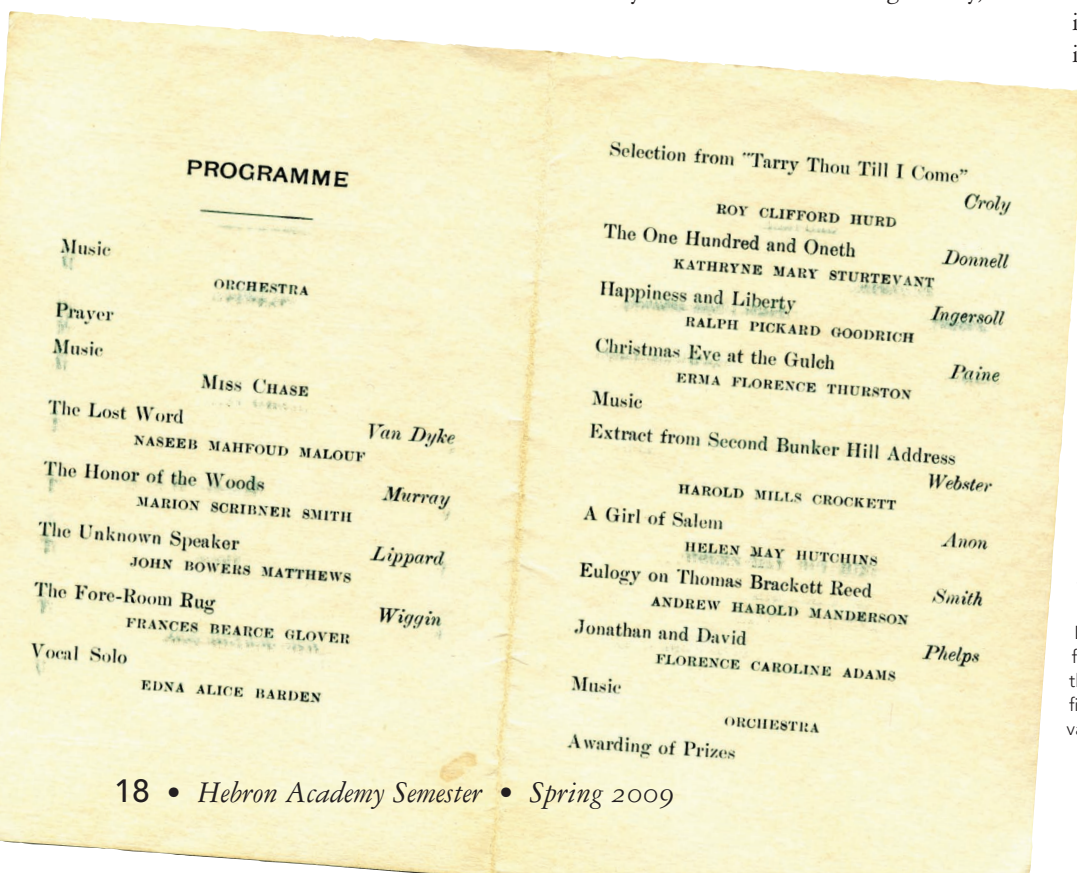
By the mid-1890s, the Lyceum had turned back into the Tyrocinic Adelphi, and was now the parent literary and forensic body of the Bellevue Debating Society,

formed by the boys living in the Bellevue boarding house, and the Percival Bonney Literary Society, named for a trustee. The two groups met weekly to prepare for public debates sponsored by the Tyrocinic.

Meanwhile the girls formed their own club, the Alpha Literary Society, which met bi-weekly in the girls' parlor in Cook Gymnasium. The two programs shown above are charming examples from the Alpha Receptions of 1908 and 1909, both held in Sturtevant Home. The 1908 program included an orchestra, "statue posing" and a reading, followed by a banquet. The 1909 program also featured music, toasts and a banquet of sandwiches, salted nuts, olives, fancy crackers, candy, punch and ice cream.

The two Alpha Literary Society programs shown above, from 1908 and 1909, are among the most charming objects in the Archives. The printed pieces are hand-embellished with flowers and tied with ribbon.

The piece at left is from the prize speaking exhibition, held in 1912. The judges were Perley H. Ford, principal of Mechanic Falls High School; Ella J. Dwinall of Mechanic Falls; and Dr. W. M. Garrison, from the Maine Sanatorium in Hebron. John Matthews won first prize for the boys and Ralph Goodrich finished second. Girls' honors went to Kathyne Sturtevant and Florence Adams.



THE EARLY YEARS of the twentieth century show how much Hebron Academy had grown during its first century. Principal William Sargent, who came to Hebron in 1885, transformed the Academy from a rural town school into a more formal educational institution. He oversaw the first real building boom, erecting Sturtevant Hall in 1891 and Sturtevant Home in 1900; Atwood Hall followed in 1909.

Prof. Sargent also worked diligently to upgrade the curriculum and provide wholesome social functions for the students. In 1905 he hired Harold C. Newton to teach English. Mr. Newton had a passion for debate. Building on the foundations of the literary societies, he strengthened the students' debate skills, leading eventually to interscholastic competitions under the guidance of Ernest C. Marriner who took over in 1912.

The program on page 18 shows the prize speaking exhibition of March 16, 1912, held in the Baptist Church. The speakers are divided almost evenly between boys and girls; several of the boys went on to regional contests. As in 1824, most of the selections are now obscure, with the possible exception of Daniel Webster's second Bunker Hill Address.

With the untimely death of Prof. Sargent in 1921, the school underwent another fundamental change, becoming boys-only. Athletics grew in importance and the same competitive spirit took hold in performance opportunities. By the 1930s, the debate team competed against other high schools

and a thriving drama club entered one act competitions. The new Sargent Memorial Gymnasium included a stage, providing a real theater for the drama club's shows. In 1933, the club's production of "Submerged" won the one act competition preliminaries and finished second in the state finals. They went on to the New England contest, finishing third.

Although theater was thriving in the 1940s—the seniors mounted another production of "Submerged" in 1941—the Great Depression was putting pressure on the school's finances. More and more masters and students were enlisting to fight in the war, and the trustees reluctantly concluded that the school should close for the duration.

WHEN CLAUDE ALLEN reopened the school in the fall of 1946, he chose to focus at first on academics and athletics. The arts were completely extra-curricular, with many musical groups complemented by art and book fairs.

According to the Winter 1962 *Semester*, "the art of the legitimate stage was effectively revived" when the Dramatics Club, under the direction of Dick Stratton, presented "Twelve Angry Men" in December 1961. The play was well-received and the group presented an equally fine production of "Stalag 17" in the spring. Drama was back.



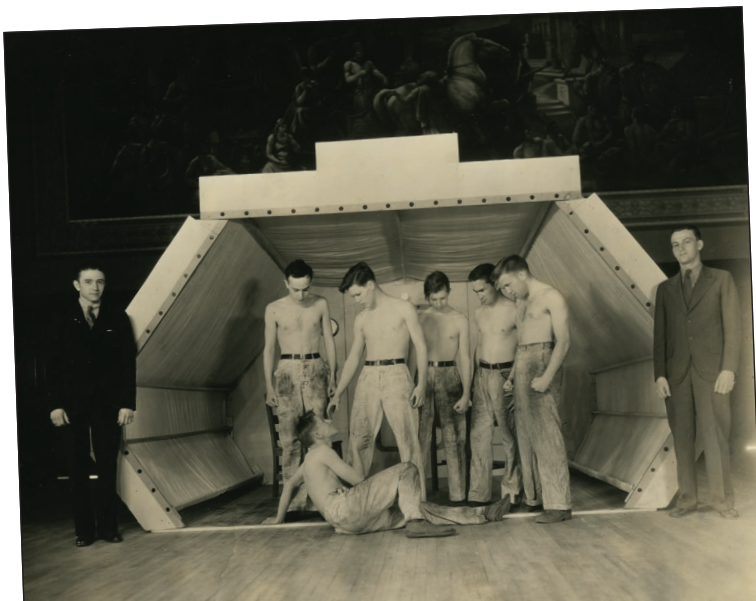
A student-directed production of Bill Johnson's melodrama *Dirty Work at the Crossroads; or Tempted, Tried and True* featuring Kim Kenway '70 as Ida Rheingold, Peter Kimball '70 as Nellie Lovelace, Doug Endreson '72 as Widow Lovelace and Donald Baumer '70 as Mookie Maguggins.

Over the next few years Mr. Stratton and others directed a variety of serious plays, such as Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*, Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, *St. Joan*, by George Bernard Shaw and *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, leavened by an occasional lighter offering such as *Arsenic and Old Lace* by Joseph Kesselring.

In 1970, students staged a classic of a completely different kind: Bill Johnson's melodrama *Dirty Work at the Crossroads; or Tried, Tempted and True*. A 1942 recreation of a classic melodrama, *Dirty Work* featured a mustachioed villain and pure-hearted (although thickheaded) hero among other standard characters.

NINETEEN SEVENTY-TWO brought another paradigm shift. Claude Allen retired and once again Hebron began to admit girls. Although athletics and arts stayed strong, theater went on hiatus for a few years, coming back to the fore when English teacher Nick Durso directed a production of Neil Simon's *The Good Doctor* in 1978. The success of that production inspired Mr. Durso to expand Hebron's theater offerings and *The Good Doctor* was followed by extremely successful presentations of *Godspell* and *Pippin* and a staging of the difficult *Equus*.

From the seventies on, many shows were performed on the smaller stage of the 80-seat Lepage Lecture Hall in the Treat Science Building. Although "backstage"



The 1933 production of "Submerged" in which a submarine officer and five men are trapped on the ocean floor. Drawing lots to see who will be shot through the torpedo tube to attract the attention of rescuers, the hysterical cowardice of one of the men leads to the noble self-sacrifice of another.

space had to be carved out of the lobby for each performance, smaller crews found the intimate lecture hall space to be more appropriate for smaller shows.

After piloting a run of intense productions, the charismatic but controversial Durso moved on from Hebron. Several faculty members stepped in to direct one or two shows a year, ranging from simple one acts to musicals like *Little Shop of Horrors* and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; from small casts to large; from drama to comedy. In 1983, Shakespeare returned to the Hebron boards when Helen Davidson directed *The Taming of the Shrew*. Seventeen years later, in 2000, senior Elizabeth Rozeboom did what she had always wanted to do, and directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, played to standing-room-only crowds in the lecture hall.



THE NEWEST CHAPTER in Hebron drama began in 2001, when renovations to the stage house and upper gym, made possible by trustee emeritus Albert Lepage '65, created the Androscoggin Theater. New curtains and lighting brought the unused theater space back to life, and with the arrival of Admission staffer Julie Middleton, a bright and vibrant life indeed.

Ms. Middleton had directed large musicals at her former school and decided that the Hebron community could rise to that challenge as well. From her first production, *Working*, chosen in large part because its vignette structure made scheduling easier, to this year's beautiful yet heart-breakingly sad *Once On This Island*, Ms. Midd's shows have increased in scope with each presentation.

PERFORMANCE, BY ITS very nature, is ephemeral. These printed programs and photographs cannot capture the excitement of live debate or theater. While we can only imagine what the performances of the nineteenth century were like, we do

know this: some of the participants loved it, some were taking a chance on trying something new, and all of them learned from the experience. Ultimately, our own entertainments are the ones we remember in the stories we tell.



Left: John Philbrick '80 and John Benbow '78 in *Godspell*, one of a series of plays produced in the late 1970s that revitalized Hebron drama.

Top: Steve Baker '88 (Seymour), Nicole Chase '91 (Audrey) and Rob Burns '89 (Mr. Mushnik) in the 1988 production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Right: storytellers Andrew Burgess '11, Lydia Drown '09, Sarah Fensore '09 (hidden), Leah Schultz '09, Kim Vigneau '11, Jiyeon Ko '11, Abbie Small '12, Sophia Chen '09 and Candace Woods '10 surround Mary Randall '09 (kneeling) and Bobby Morrill '10 in a scene from *Once On This Island*.

