

# Fall lecture series to feature national experts in Arctic history; Exhibit “100 Years of Mountain Photography” debuts opening night



*Old Dartmouth Lyceum explores the Arctic,  
Sept. 19 – Nov. 14 (Whaling Museum)*

The mystery and majesty of the inaccessible Arctic regions, which mesmerized the nineteenth century world is revealed when the New Bedford Whaling Museum launches its fall lecture series, The Old Dartmouth Lyceum, on Thursday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m. with the first of four presentations by national and international experts on the history of Arctic exploration and its influence on art and popular culture. The illustrated lecture series focuses on the museum's exhibition "Arctic Visions: 'Away then Floats the Ice-Island'", and provide a forum for discussion. The evening begins at 6:00 p.m. with the opening of a new exhibit titled "100 Years of Mountain Photography – From Vittorio Sella and Bradford Washburn."

Old Dartmouth Lyceum programs are slated for Thursday evenings: September 19, October 3, October 24 and November 14,

with a pre-lecture reception at 6:00 p.m., followed by the lecture at 7:00 p.m. Admission: \$15 per lecture (non-members, \$20); for the Series, \$50 (non-members, \$75). For reservations, call: (508) 997-0046, ext. 100.

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**September 19**, Russell Potter will present “Frozen Zones: Bradford, Arctic Photography and Nineteenth Century Visual Culture.” William Bradford’s voyage to the Arctic “purely for the purposes of art” revolutionized the scope and immediacy of photography, bringing back a rich array of images, the first ever taken of the Arctic by professional photographers. Bradford’s work testifies to the Arctic’s importance in the visual culture of the 19th century.

Russell A. Potter, PhD is an author and professor of English and Media Studies at Rhode Island College. His work spans the history of exploration of the Arctic to popular music and hip hop culture.

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**October 3**, Kevin Avery will present “Sea of Ice: The Art of Arctic Exploration” – a history of Arctic exploration in painting and illustration, with special reference to nineteenth century artists and illustrators leading up to Frederic Church and New Bedford’s William Bradford. Among the artists illuminated are the Dutch Golden Age painter Abraham Hondius; Britons William Hodges, Samuel Cresswell, Edwin Landseer, and others. Sources in western imagery are compared with these visualizations of the Arctic landscape, considered otherworldly even today.

Kevin J. Avery, PhD is a senior research scholar and a former associate curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and adjunct professor, Hunter College, City University of New York.

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**October 24,** Douglas Wamsley will present “William Bradford’s 1869 Expedition, in Context with Arctic Travels of the Nineteenth Century.” In 1869, a sailing excursion along the northwest coast of Greenland was a dangerous venture. However, William Bradford’s voyage ably succeeded in navigating those ice-laden waters to capture vivid images of the “Frozen Zone” with both the artist’s brush and the photographer’s camera. This lecture recounts the history of that memorable expedition and its proper place in the broader context of 19th century arctic travels.

Mr. Wamsley, an independent scholar and attorney, has written extensively on the history of 19th century Arctic exploration. His recent work, “Polar Hayes,” is a biography of Dr. Isaac Israel Hayes, a participant in Bradford’s 1869 voyage.

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**November 14th,** Kenn Harper will present “Inuit and Whaling in the Bradford Era.”

The whaling industry had a profound effect on the culture of Inuit in both Canada and Greenland. Kenn Harper will examine this impact, its effect on Inuit life, and Inuit adaptation to the stresses and demands of change. He will recount episodes from the lives of particular Inuit who used the whaling industry to their own advantage.

Mr. Harper, a historian, linguist and writer, has lived in the Arctic (both Greenland and Canada) for the past 47 years. He writes a weekly column under the name Taissumani for Nunatsiaq News, the newspaper of record for Nunavut, Canada, and is the author of “Give Me My Father’s Body: The Life of Minik, the New York Eskimo.”

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Opening concurrently with the first lecture on September 19, an exhibition of photography titled "100 Years of Mountain Photography" is the second in a series of exhibits following "Arctic Visions: Away then Floats the Ice-Island" in the Wattles Family Gallery. A collaboration of the Decaneas Archive, the new exhibit focuses on two photographers, who like artist William Bradford found inspiration in hard to reach, primeval landscapes.

Vittorio Sella (1859-1943) grew up in the shadow of the Italian Alps. He traveled widely, climbing summits to capture stunning mountain panoramas. He achieved this work at the end of hemp ropes, using large glass plates and a 40 lb. camera.

Bradford Washburn (1910-2007) worked in subzero temperatures at 20,000 feet by removing his airplane's side door and balancing at the opening. His innovative techniques produced spectacular images in a career that spanned six decades. In 1988, he was awarded the Centennial Medal of the National Geographic Society.

Sponsored by Nye Lubricants and Bruce and Karen Wilburn, the Old Dartmouth Lyceum is the region's oldest public forum for "the advancement of popular education." Tweet hashtag: #ODLyceum2013

The New Bedford Whaling Museum is the world's most comprehensive museum devoted to the global story of whales, whaling, and the cultural history of the region. The cornerstone of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, the Museum is located at 18 Johnny Cake Hill in the heart of the city's historic downtown and is open daily. Wheelchair accessible. For more information, visit the Whaling Museum online at [www.whalingmuseum.org](http://www.whalingmuseum.org).

