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Lectures on the Setons: Authors, Builders, Artists and Individuals

Cos Cob, CT, December 5, 2016--The Greenwich Historical Society will host two lectures by Lucinda MacKethan on the subject of the Seton family--father Ernest Thompson Seton (author, wildlife artist and founder of the Woodcraft Indians and Campfire Girls--precursors to the Boy and Girl Scouts of America); mother Grace Gallatin Seton (author, suffragist and WWI motor unit organizer); and daughter, celebrated historical novelist Anya. MacKethan has been researching and publishing articles about the Setons for years, making extensive use of the Greenwich Historical Society archives, which houses a large collection of materials connected with the family. She is currently working on a full-length biography of Anya Seton, which also draws on information gathered from interviews with the author's daughters and granddaughter.

The first lecture, "The Seton Houses: Organizing a Family Biography" will explore the social as well as personal and artistic motivations of the famous Seton family. MacKethan will give a virtual tour of the five houses that they built between 1900 and 1951, four of which claimed Greenwich addresses. Ernest Thompson Seton built his last residence, Seton Castle, on the outskirts of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Anya Seton resided at her home Sea Rune on Binney Lane in Old Greenwich until her death in 1990. (The home has since been demolished.) Through these personal spaces, we can track the course of the Setons' lives as successful writers, prominent American personalities and as a complex and ultimately failed family.

The second lecture, "Fathers, Mothers, Daughters: A View of Anya Seton's Family Through Her Novels," examines autobiographical elements in Anya's fiction, especially as she cast interactions with her famous parents into the fictional lives of some of her important characters. Discussion will include five novels written between 1941 and 1972 that offer perhaps the most intriguing representations of her own evolving sense of self as a daughter, lover, wife and mother.

A professor of English at NC State University for close to 40 years, Lucinda

MacKethan, now retired, has authored three books on southern literature and many articles on American women writers. She is senior consultant of scribblingwomen.org, a series of radio plays based on American women's short stories, and was a fellow at the National Humanities Center, where she now produces online materials for teachers.

The Seton Houses: Organizing a Family Biography

Thursday, January 26, 7:00 to 8:00 pm

Fathers, Mothers, Daughters:

A View of Anya Seton's Family Through Her Novels

Friday, January 27, 2:00 to 3:00 pm

Greenwich Historical Society, Vanderbilt Education Center,
39 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807

Each lecture: Members: \$10; nonmembers \$15

Reservations required. Visit www.greenwichhistory.org
or call 203-869-6899, Ext. 10.



Seton Family circa 1908. Photo by Jessie Tarbox Beals.

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