

THE STORY BEHIND THE WALKER HANCOCK  
SCULPTURES AT TRINITY CHURCH, TOPSFIELD.  
PRESENTED BY MEG BLACK, PHD

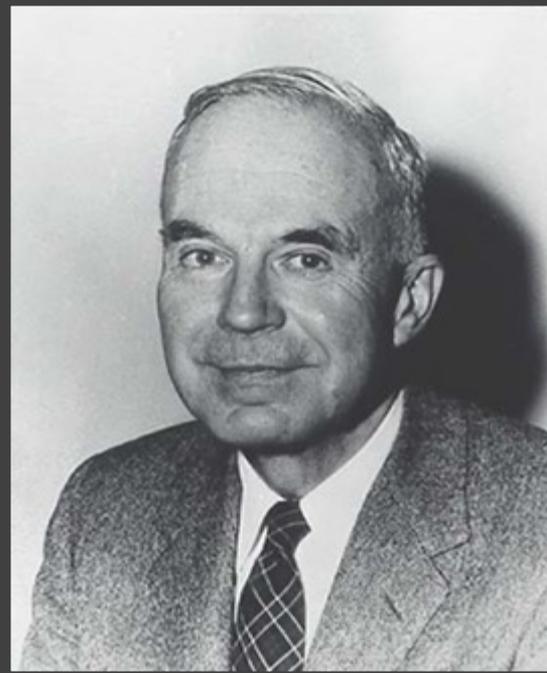
Like many of Topsfield's residents, I was aware of the Walker Hancock sculptures, *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, located at the entrance to Trinity Church on River Road. While I had long admired the sculptures, I did not know the story behind them. What I uncovered is a remarkable story of their creation and the three men whose dedication to art, religious tolerance, and civil rights made them happen.

Here is the story of the patron, William Appleton Coolidge; the sculptor, Walker Hancock, and the Episcopal Seminarian and martyr of the Civil Rights Movement, Jonathan Daniels, to whom they are dedicated.

# CAST OF CHARACTERS:



William Coolidge



Walker Hancock



Jonathan Daniels

## WILLIAM APPLETON COOLIDGE, (1901-1992): THE DONOR AND PATRON



-Descendent of Thomas Jefferson-home on River Road resembles a Virginian Plantation.

-Brother Thomas Jefferson Coolidge was undersecretary of the Treasury to Franklin Roosevelt and President of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

-Stockbroker and Lawyer (Ropes and Gray), Harvard College and Oxford

-Helped found Minute Maid Frozen Orange Juice

-Formed Venture Capital Firm New Enterprises, which financed Kaman Aircraft, produced WWII helicopters for the US Navy.

-Trustee, Museum of Fine Arts. Retired in 1976.

# WORKS OF ART IN THE COOLIDGE COLLECTION

...HE BELIEVED IN COLLECTING FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD-THEY HAD AN EXTRAORDINARY SENSE OF LARGESS AND PUBLIC SPIRIT WHICH I'M NOT SURE EXISTS TODAY. PETER SUTTON, FORMER DIRECTOR, MFA, BOSTON, 1992.



Richard Wilson. *View of the Thames at Twickenham*, (1968).  
Oil on Canvas. Coolidge Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Gustave Courbet *Portrait of Jules Bordet*, (1870).  
Oil on Canvas, National Museum, Sweden.  
Note: Bordet was an art collector, much like Coolidge.



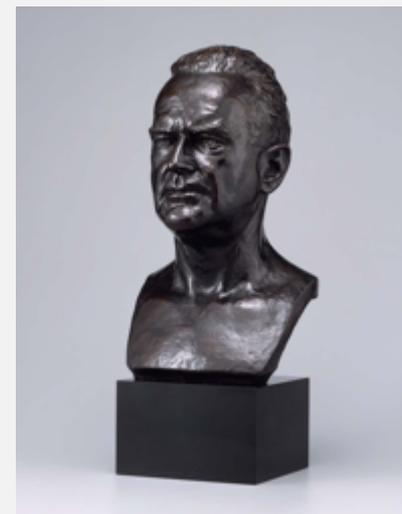
Van Gogh, *Enclosed Field with Ploughman*, (1889).  
Oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



William Draper, *William Appleton Coolidge* (1947).  
Oil on canvas. Collection: Balliol College: London.



Joseph Mallord William Turner *Whitehaven, Cumberland*, (1837).  
*Watercolor and Ink*. Tate Gallery, London.



Walker Hancock, *William Appleton Coolidge*, (1966).  
Bronze, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Orazio Gentileschi, *Madonna and Child*, (1613-1619). Oil on Canvas, Fogg Museum, Cambridge.



Peter Paul Rubens, *The Sacrifice of the Old Covenant* (1626). Oil on panel, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Andrea del Sarto, *Virgin and Child*, (1509-10). about 1509-10. Oil on panel, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

## RELIGIOUS PAINTINGS IN THE COOLIDGE COLLECTION

## MR. COOLIDGE'S DEDICATION TO ART AND CHRISTIANITY MERGE WITH HIS DONATION OF LAND TO BUILD TRINITY CHURCH

- ❖ In 1959, William Coolidge donates 9 acres of land on River Road for the new Trinity Church. The church starts holding services in 1960. Pierce Associated Architects designs the building.
- ❖ In 1964, Coolidge commissions Walker Hancock to create an almost life-size bronze sculptural composition of Christ and the three apostles (Peter, James and John) in the Garden of Gethsemane to be placed at the entrance of Trinity Church, Topsfield. Later that year, he decides to donate a second set to the Gethsemane Monetary in Kentucky.
- ❖ Gethsemane is Greek for “olive press.” Located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, Gethsemane was a place often mentioned in the New Testament bible. Because Jesus goes there to pray before his crucifixion, it is associated with a place to retreat to before facing a difficult task.
- ❖ Not necessarily a garden, but a quiet place for rest and contemplation.



*Trinity Church, River Road, Topsfield.*



Ancient olive press  
found in Gethsemane, Jerusalem.

*Gethsemane Garden, Jerusalem.*

# WALKER HANCOCK (1901-1998): THE SCULPTOR



Walker Hancock, Lamont Moore, George Stout and two unidentified soldiers in Marburg, Germany, 1945 June.



Monuments Man Walker Hancock assists residents with the relocation of the Madonna of La Gleize. 1 February 1945.

- Born in St. Luis in 1901. Died, Gloucester, MA., 1998.
- Attended one year of Art School at Washington University.
- Studied with Victor Holm, student of Augustus St. Gauden.
- Studied with Charles Grafly at Pennsylvania Academy of Art.
- Chair, Sculpture, Pennsylvania Academy of Art, 1930-1967.
- Influenced by Classical Sculpture: Emotion, light, texture.
- One of the original six Monuments Men in WWII.
- Congregant, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Gloucester, MA.
- Played in the movie, *The Monuments Men*, by John Goodman.



John Goodman (left) as Walter Garfield. Captain Walker Hancock, U.S. First Army. Age: 43. Born: St. Louis, Missouri

WALKER WAS  
INFLUENCED BY  
AUGUSTUS  
SAINT GAUDENS

*The Robert Gould Shaw  
Memorial, Boston  
Common (1884–1897). Bronze.*



# A FEW OF THE ARTWORKS FOUND BY THE MONUMENT'S MEN



Jan Van Eyck (c. 1420) *Ghent Altarpiece*



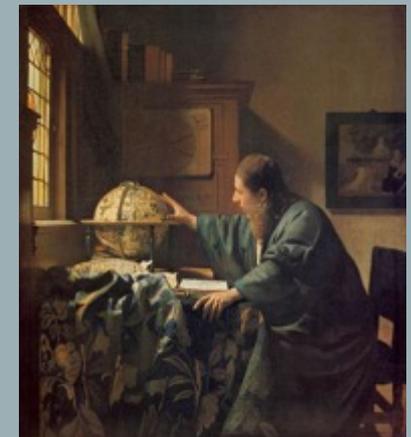
Vermeer's *The Astronomer* found in Alt Aussee (Photo: US Army)



Michelangelo (1501). *Madonna of Bruges*



*Bust of Nefertiti* (c. 1350 BCE).



Johannes Vermeer (1668). *The Astronomer*

## FAMOUS WORKS BY WALKER HANCOCK

*Angel of Resurrection* (1950). Hancock's most famous work is the Pennsylvania Railroad World War II Memorial at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The 39-foot (11.9 m) monument is dedicated to the 1,307 PRR employees who died in the war, and whose names are inscribed on its tall, black-granite base. Hancock's heroic bronze depicts Michael the Archangel raising up a fallen soldier from the Flames of War.



Michelangelo, Pietà, Self-portrait as Nicodemus.  
(c. 1545). Marble



# HIGH ALTAR, NATIONAL CATHEDRAL, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Christ in Majesty, 1972



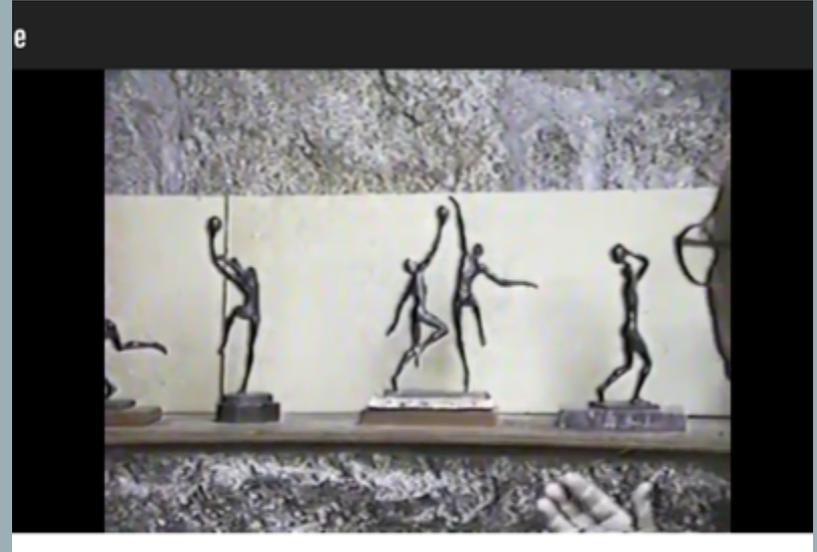
Funeral of Ronald Reagan, 2004.

“The architect Mr. Froman, ostensibly the authority in this case . . . made one very good suggestion, which was the figure should have its feet on the clouds instead of the conventional world city that is shown in such sculptures as that at Chartres where you get architectural base for the feet. I did like that suggestion and we did use it. And in the end Mr. Froman I am glad to say was very much pleased with it, he did live long enough to see it up, and approve it. “

*Walker Hancock, 1977.*



Chartres Cathedral, c. 1163-1200. Christ in Majesty. Sits on the city of Chartres . . . Surrounded by symbols of the gospel writers.



**BOYS PLAYING BASKETBALL IN  
LANESVILLE, CAPE ANN, 1970'S.  
BRONZE.**

# JONATHAN DANIELS (1939-1965): THE SEMINARIAN



Born in Keene New Hampshire. Jonathan's father was a doctor who often worked for a reduced fee.

Entered the Virginia Military Academy upon high school graduation. Enrolled in Harvard for an MA in English (1963).

Entered the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, MA (1964).

Went to Selma, Alabama upon Dr. Martin Luther King's call to join the Civil Rights Movement.

On Saturday, August 14, 1965, he joined a small protest in Lowndes County, Alabama. Taken to the local jail-spent 6days in a crowded, hot, jail cell with 30 other people. No bathroom, shower, toilet or hot meals. Among his cell mates were Stokely Carmichael and Ruby Sales.



Jonathan Daniels funeral, Keene, New Hampshire.



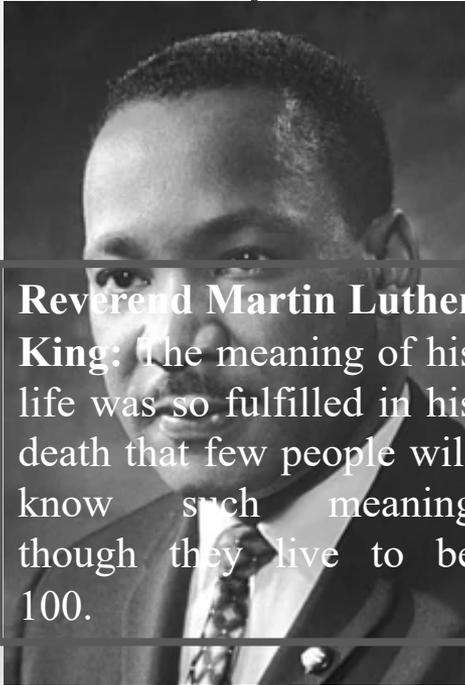
A group gathers near Jonathan Daniels' grave at Monadnock View Cemetery in Keene, New Hampshire. Stokely Carmichael is second from left, facing the camera. Photo: The Archives of The Episcopal Church

On August 20, his mother's birthday, Jonathan and his cell mates were let out of jail without explanation and ordered off the property. They went to a local store for a soda and were met by the local sheriff, Tom Coleman, who stood on the porch holding a 12-gauge shotgun.

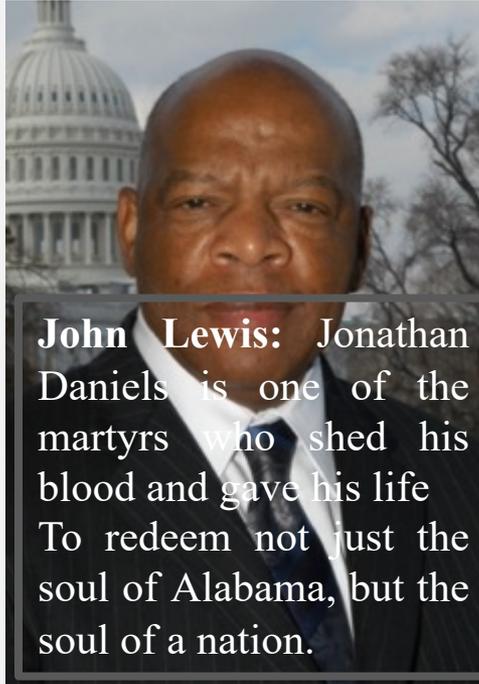
Ruby was in front of Jonathan. Coleman, according to Sales who recounted the incident years later, yelled out to her "bitch, I'll blow your brains out." She adds that "Jonathan pulled me out of the way and took the blast in the chest." He was killed instantly. Coleman was found "not guilty" at trial due to acting in "self-defense."

Coleman's acquittal led to Operation Southern Justice, a campaign and lawsuit aimed at integrating southern juries.

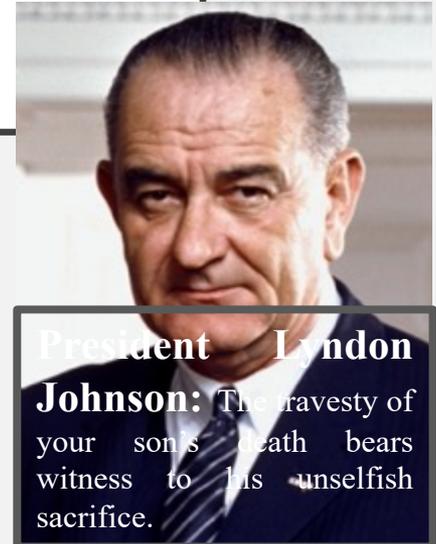
# REACTIONS TO THE DEATH OF JONATHAN DANIELS



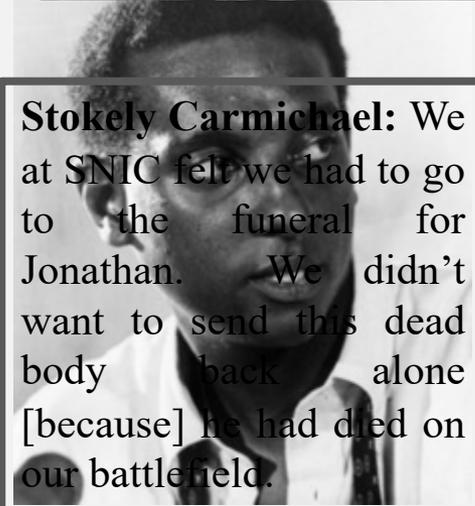
**Reverend Martin Luther King:** The meaning of his life was so fulfilled in his death that few people will know such meaning though they live to be 100.



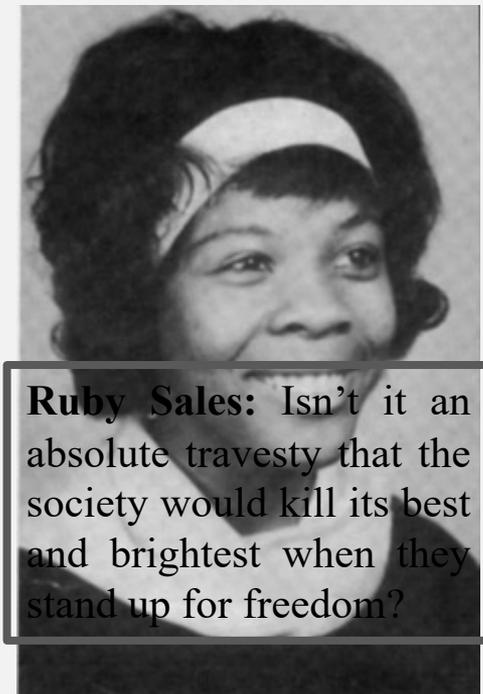
**John Lewis:** Jonathan Daniels is one of the martyrs who shed his blood and gave his life To redeem not just the soul of Alabama, but the soul of a nation.



**President Lyndon Johnson:** The travesty of your son's death bears witness to his unselfish sacrifice.



**Stokely Carmichael:** We at SNIC felt we had to go to the funeral for Jonathan. We didn't want to send this dead body back alone [because] he had died on our battlefield.



**Ruby Sales:** Isn't it an absolute travesty that the society would kill its best and brightest when they stand up for freedom?

# THE DEDICATION CEREMONY: TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 1966.

Finally, I have included a photograph from the dedication which shows Dom James, the abbot of Gethsemani, shaking the hand of Mrs. Daniels, Jonathan's mother.

- In the picture, left to right, are:
- Rt Rev Anson P. Stokes, Jr. bishop of the Massachusetts Episcopal diocese;
- Mrs. Philip Daniels;
- Herman T. Silius, 3rd, Rector of Trinity Church;
- Dom James Fox;
- Rev Arthur White, pastor of the First Congregational Church;
- Richard Cardinal Cushing;
- William A. Coolidge.

Many blessings on your work.

Br. Lawrence Morey

Archivist, Abbey of Gethsemani





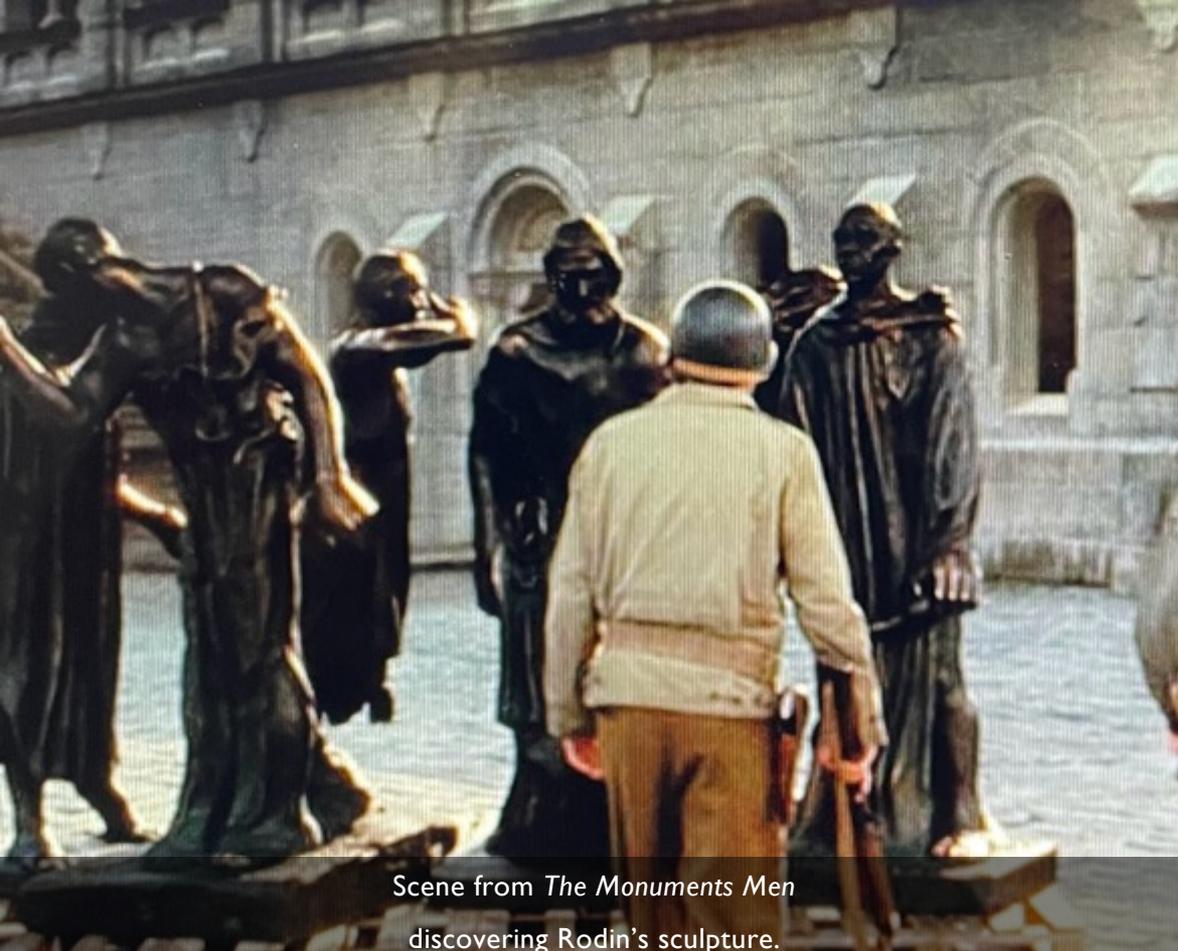
Walker Hancock, (1965). *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*. Trinity Church, Topsfield. Bronze.



Auguste Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*,  
bronze, 1884-95 (Musée Rodin, Paris).



## THE SCULPTURES



Scene from *The Monuments Men*  
discovering Rodin's sculpture.



Auguste Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*,  
bronze, 1884-95 (Musée Rodin, Paris).

THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS WERE  
TAKEN TO A CASTLE IN BAVARIA.

# WALKER WAS INFLUENCED BY AUGUSTE RODIN

ART LIFTS HUMANITY OUT OF DESPAIR  
...WALTER MANNINEN



Auguste Rodin (1880). *The Thinker*. Bronze.

Auguste Rodin (1884-95). *The Burgers of Calais*, bronze. (Musée Rodin, Paris)

## OTHER DEDICATIONS TO JONATHAN DANIELS

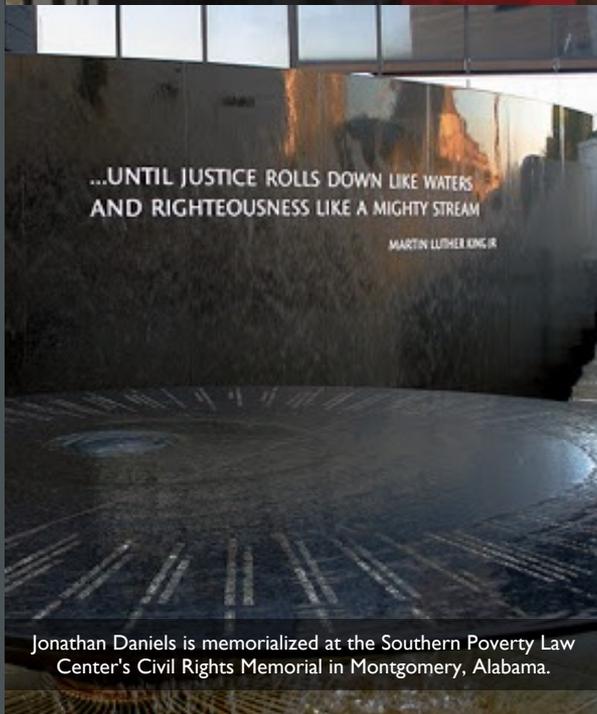
- The Virginia Military Institute created the Jonathan Daniels Humanitarian Award in 1998; awardees include former President Jimmy Carter.



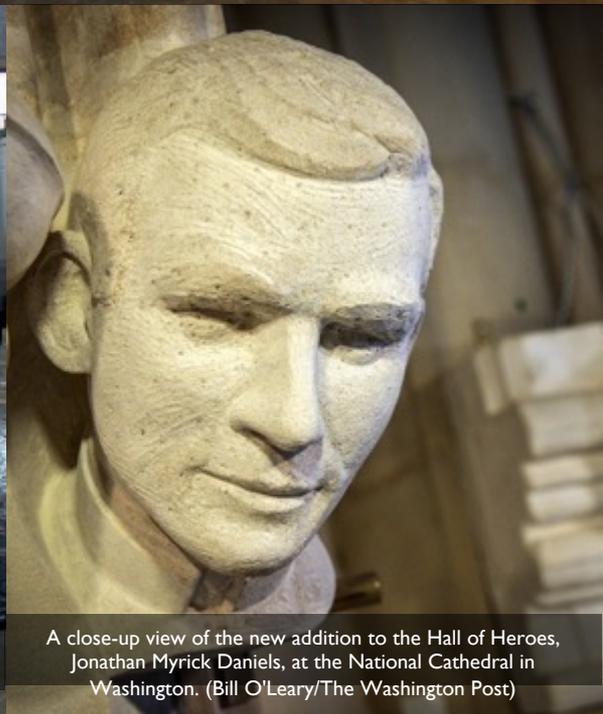
President Jimmy Carter receives first Jonathan M. Daniels '61 Humanitarian Award, 2001



Canterbury Cathedral. Chapel of Saints and Martyrs



Jonathan Daniels is memorialized at the Southern Poverty Law Center's Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.



A close-up view of the new addition to the Hall of Heroes, Jonathan Myrick Daniels, at the National Cathedral in Washington. (Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post)

# BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Ambler, L. T. (1989). The sculpture of Walker Hancock. *Cape Ann Historical Association*.
- Benaquist B. (2010) *Here Am I, Send Me: The Story of Jonathan Daniels*. <https://vimeo.com/14117023>
- Brown, R. (1977). Oral History Interview with Walker Hancock. *Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution*.
- Eagles, C. (2000). Outside Agitator, Jon Daniels and the civil rights movement in Alabama. *University Alabama Press*.
- Fairbanks, J. (1998). In memoriam: Walker Hancock. *Sculpture review*: Spring, 99, vol. 48; Issue 1, p. 34.
- Hancock, W. (1997). A Sculptor's Fortunes. *Cape Ann Historical Association*.
- Hancock, W. (1946). Experiences of a Monument's Man in Germany. *College Art Journal*, Vol. V, No. 4
- Jackson, A. (2004). The Life of Jonathan Daniels. *St. Augustine Press*. <http://staugustine.com/stories/100204/com>
- Schjonberg, M., F. (2015) Remembering Jonathan Daniels 50 years after his martyrdom, *Episcopal News Service*, <https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2015/08/13/remembering-jonathan-daniels-50-years-after-his-martyrdom>
- Temin, C. (1999). A master of unmawkish realism. *Boston Globe*, January, D1.
- Schneider, W. (1992). American Martyr: the Jon Daniels Story. *Bloomsbury Publishing*.
- Sutton, P. (1995). The William Appleton Coolidge Collection. *Museum of Fine Arts Press*.
- Wallace, R., & Wallace, S. Blood brother : Jonathan Daniels and his sacrifice for civil rights (2016). *Calkins*.

# LET'S SEE IF WE CAN "FIND THE ART IN THE ART" . . .

“The sculpture should create a multitude of color values from proper light and shadow reflection.”

“The form should be readable from a distance. Closer inspection should allow the viewer to engage with the art on an intimate level”

“The placement of the figures should help to communicate the subject.”

“The medium should enable the subject to be read properly.”

*Walker Hancock, 1977*

# NOTES:

- It is interesting that the sculptures at Trinity Church are dedicated to Cardinal Cushing, a catholic, while the sculptures at Gethsemane Monastery are dedicated to Johnathon Daniels, an Episcopalian.
- Thomas Merton, author of *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) came to live at Gethsemane Monastery the same day Daniels was killed.
- Jonathan was killed on his mother's birthday.
- Ruby Sales is an African-American social justice activist. She attended local segregated schools and was also educated in the community during the 1960s era of the Civil Rights Movement. She has been described as a "legendary civil rights activist" by the PBS program "Religion and Ethics Weekly"
- Stokely Carmichael was a prominent organizer in the civil rights movement in the United States and the global Pan-African movement. Born in Trinidad, he grew up in the United States from the age of 11 and became an activist while attending the Bronx High School of Science.

# SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- Matt Madden for your stories about working for Mr. Coolidge in high school.
- Brother Lawrence Morey, Gethsemane Monetary for finding so many dusty manuscripts in the Monetary attic (I'll try not to call so close to Vespers next time).
- Eric Schultz for reading my manuscript.
- Jack Armitage for the props.
- Rev. Barbara Stowe for the newspaper clippings.
- Rev. Dan Weir for letting me borrow your books about Jonathan Daniels.
- Department of Marketing and Outreach, Episcopal Diocese of Boston
- Rev. Jo Barrett
- Members of Trinity Topsfield for your encouragement and support of this research.
- Rebecca Boudreau, Library Associate, Topsfield Town Library
- Vestry, Trinity Church, Topsfield

# JOIN US NEXT WEEK!

## *Highlights from the Topsfield Library Art Collection*

Thursday, February 11, 7:00-8:00PM



Dennis Sheehan, *Landscape in Oil*.



Harold Field Kellogg, *Town of Topsfield, 1600-1800*



Patricia Wright *Blue and White*. Oil on canvas.



Harold Field Kellogg, *The Three Muses*

The Topsfield Town Library is home to an impressive collection of art from traditional oil paintings to contemporary sculpture. In this one hour lecture, we will explore just a few of the highlights from this distinguished collection.

***Wait until you find out what famous painting is copied into the murals in the main lobby!***