

THE MILCOM MEMORIAL READING ROOM

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AND ATTENTION LIBRARY

About The B.B. Chamberlin Fellowship

The ESTAR(SER) Committee on Grants and Awards saw fit, in 2017, to inaugurate this Prize Fellowship in honor of a significant figure in the traditions of learned attention and attentive learning. Benjamin B. Chamberlin (1831-1888) was an attentive American naturalist, artist, and amateur, who served for many years as a Fellow and Curator of the New York Academy of Sciences and gave himself for nearly half a century to the close study of the myriad works of human and natural devise. Mineral productions were a special preoccupation, and Chamberlin was a Founder (and Treasurer) of the New York Mineralogical Club. The two large gemstone-quality aquamarine beryls that he discovered in Manhattan at the western end of 125th Street were eventually decided to that association, and in their faceted form drew visitors from some distance. Chamberlin was closely associated with the “Aesthetic Society of Jersey City,” a salon-volée gathered around the redoubtable Erminnie A. Smith, whose association with the Order appears to have passed through Susan E. Blow (See “Further Evidences of the Jersey City Volée, ca 1880,” in the *Communiqués*); Chamberlin himself penned the frontispiece of the commemorative volume that best archives the workings of this community, *Echoes of the Aesthetic Society of Jersey City* (New York: Thompson and Moreau, 1882). A painter, engraver, and sensitive aesthete—and a man with a great interest in both birds and Birds—Chamberlin was a regular visitor at “Minniesland,” the Audubon estate in upper Manhattan, where he is said to have engaged in practices of sustained attention with Lucy Bakewell, the great ornithologist’s widow.

HOLDERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Molly Orbon

September - November 2018

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Anna Riley

November 2018 - June 2019

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Stevie Knauss

July 2019 - Present