



Tate House Gazette

News from the Tate House Museum

Connecting people to Maine's colonial roots and helping them to discover, imagine, and value the relevance of this history to our lives.

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 1

www.tatehouse.org

JANUARY 2014



Happy New Year



John Adams Came to Town last November!



With his period costume, hearty handshake, and strong, pleasant singing voice, George Baker came to Portland from Connecticut as John Adams and entertained us at a delightful fundraiser for the Tate House Museum. The event was held at the Maine Historical Society on Congress Street on the first Saturday evening in November and was attended by just short of sixty people. His presentation was titled "My Wife Abigail Adams, America's First Modern Woman" and revealed many interesting tidbits about Abigail's character, her interests, and the letters that the two exchanged during his many and prolonged absences.

Mr. Baker injected his presentation with songs from the period accompanying himself on a keyboard. Attendees were entertained with anecdotes built upon the letters exchanged between John and Abigail



Adams. We came away with an appreciation of the amazing woman Abigail was and her contributions to the prosperity that this colonial couple achieved.

Highlighting the evening was the table of colonial desserts and drinks provided by our volunteers. Attendees piled their plates and bowls with Abigail Adam's pumpkin pie and tarts, ginger cookies, apple pan dowdy, Indian pudding and rum balls, and came back for seconds. Also offered were ice cream and hard sauce for topping the pies, pan dowdy and pudding. Rum punch, tea and coffee were served in punch cups and tea cups from the homes of committee members. In fact, all the serving plates and bowls as well as the small and large plates and bowls, cups and saucers came from the shelves and sideboards of volunteers to grace the table with beautiful designs and patterns.



Many thanks to the Event Committee: Liz Bradley, Joan Hatch, Annie Upton, Betty Janus, Gail Rae Carter and Diane Hoppe who worked hard for the month preceding the event to publicize, plan for, and carry off this very successful and fun event. A big thank you to docents Jim Nappi, Kitty Penner and Cynthia Setchell for volunteering their time and energy.



Anita B. Jones and Joan Hatch

Successful Stroudwater Cemetery Tours

The Halloween tours of the Stroudwater Cemetery were a lot of fun for me and my family.



It was attended by guests - old friends and newcomers to the Tate House.

Peter Gaulke was in charge and taught us

"newbies" all about the cemetery and many of the people buried there. Peter and I gave the tours.



In 1720, Colonel Thomas Westbrook (who was the English King's Mast Agent then) set aside a beautiful small part of his own property on the Stroudwater River as a burial spot for people of the



area and young men and women who worked for him, had come from Britain, but had no property yet. Westbrook isn't buried there though. He's buried at Smiling Hill Farm. (Come to the Tate House, and we'll tell you all about it).

Probably the most famous person buried there in Lilian Stevens. She lived right next to the Tate House and was president of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union. Some people screamed when the "wolf man" appeared



over the bank. He was an early Portlander, disfigured by a fire, who is buried over the bank. Jacky Day stole the show. She wailed most of the time and brought

a life sized baby doll with her. My son and daughter thought she was a profession actress. The accompanying bake sale, which consisted of donated pastries, was a great success, and I bought a "perfect" pumpkin pie.

Peter Jensch

Stroudwater Village Association News



SVA enjoys a quiet time during the winter months. We have discussed holding a winter carnival of some sort, but that hasn't come to pass in recent years, this one being no different. The Village sees the Tate House all wrapped up for winter with the only activity across the street from it at the Means House. The dam is frozen, and the

cemetery that was so busy in the fall is snow covered and quiet.

SVA Board members have been busy, though. We did a house to house canvass to tell our neighbors about our organization and ask for contributions to our work. It was quite fruitful and provided a chance to meet folks face to face and gather email addresses.

We are preparing for a meeting with City of Portland officials about the work on Congress Street. There is more money for improvements in the city budget, and the officials are seeking input from the neighborhood. We plan to suggest three "islands" in the street before and after the Westbrook Street crossing which would calm the traffic further and hopefully ensure that cars do not enter the turning lanes to pass slower traffic proceeding along correctly in the travel lanes. We also will mention the danger posed by trying to turn right onto Congress from Westbrook at the light when the incoming traffic has a green light not visible to those of us leaving Tate House and turning right to go east on Congress.

Tate House docents said perhaps as many as thirty neighborhood residents made visits to Tate House during the September's Stroudwater Village Day. It's wonderful to think of the neighbors enjoying our beautiful colonial house museum which is at the center of their village, actually entering it and looking around rather than passing by and being cross at the cars parked along the road in their way.

Anita B. Jones , SVA Board Member

BECOME A DOCENT

Portland History Docents Class Starts February 13, 2014



The 2014 class runs every **Thursday morning, 9:00 am to noon, February 13th through May 1st.** Classes will take place at the Maine Historical Society and at each of the 7 historic sites. Tuition is \$30 per person, \$20 for students with valid student I.D. All those interested should contact The PHD program at 207-774-5561 ext. 120 and leave a voice-mail or email Marjorie Getz Volunteer Program Coordinator at: volunteer@portlandlandmarks.org You will receive a response regarding course details and payment of tuition.

Museum Properties Workshop



In November I attended the NSCDA Museum Properties workshop. Presentations included fund raising, grant writing, contingency planning and communications. One of the more interesting ideas was the use of Wikipedia to spread our story.

We could upgrade our Wikipedia profile and add broad links to other topics and tag everything – especially objects. For THM this would mean links like colonial herbs, Georgian colonial houses, white pines, mast trade, Russian navy etc. Objects could be the clock jack, other kitchen items, the standish, etc. These links would tie us to any searches for any of these items and increase awareness of THM. Dick Gilbane, a member of the THM Board of Directors, has volunteered to work on this project.

The keynote address on the importance of stressing history and preservation, by Dr. Charles Bryan, highlighted the declining attendance and contributions for small house museums, most of which have little or no endowment. There is more competition for leisure time options; young families' free time is filled with soccer games, school events, etc. and interest in historical sites doesn't pick up again until people are in their 50's. Our job is to find ways to make sites relevant – why are we here, where do we come from? We need to see our self as an educational institution. The public is less interested in objects – we need to tell a good story. We all need to make American history relevant to a diverse population.

As a member of the Tate House family, ask yourself why you care about the museum, and what is most important to you about the house and the Tate family story. What themes would you like to see us develop that would engage the community? As an example, we could spend more time on the white pine and its role in history or we could talk more about the clash between the European countries and their colonies around the world, with which many groups can identify.

Liz Bradley

Conservation Assessment Update



Sutherland Conservation and Consulting submitted its first draft of its Conservation Assessment Program report in December and the building committee has been in the review process.

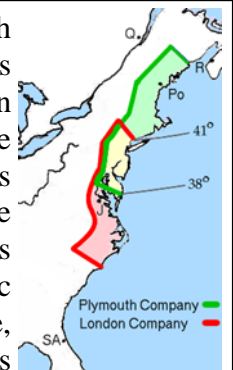
Additional information has been submitted for Sutherland's review and we expect a new draft soon.

The report looks ten years out with priorities for building care and conservation for both Tate House and Means House. With these critical recommendations, Tate House will begin raising major capital funds for preservation projects to ensure the future of these landmark buildings. The conservation assessment for the collections is being drafted by Ronald Harvey of Tuckerbrook Conservation. This first draft will be reviewed by the collections committee in the coming weeks. Once final reports have been submitted, copies will be available in the office for those interested in reading them.

Laura Fecht Sprague Consulting Curator

Did You Know

The first ship built by English colonists in Americas was launched on the Kennebec River in 1607. The first ship built by the English in the New World was completed during the year of the Popham Colony 1607 and was sailed back across the Atlantic Ocean to England. The pinnacle, named *Virginia of Sagadahoc*, was apparently quite seaworthy, and crossed the Atlantic again successfully in 1609 as part of Sir Christopher Newport's nine vessel Third Supply mission to Jamestown. The tiny *Virginia* survived a massive three day storm en route which was thought to have been a hurricane and which wrecked the mission's large new flagship *Sea Venture* on Bermuda.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Popham_Colony

Tate House Museum Members 2013

Captain Tate

William Hubbell

Colonel Westbrook

Richard T. Gilbane
Anita B. Jones
Mary Lou Sprague

Mast Agent

Elizabeth and David Bradley
Col. William Hall Jr.
Barbara Luke
Andrew Stickney
Annie Upton
Katherine Watson

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Suzi Barbee
Mary P. Bolton
Susan Bowditch
Maria Chambers
Sharon Colgan
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Johannah Hart
Joan Hatch
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Perry Hopf
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Linda Markee
Jane McCarthy
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John Robinson
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Charlton & Mary Smith
Laura & Seth Sprague
Jim Stenberg

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Elizabeth Bradley	Sue Edwards	Nancy Hiatt
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Gail Rae Carter	Elinor Goodwin	Mary Kendall
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Kathlyn Clark	Meredith Harding	Virginia Kurtz
Marie Clarke	Talie Harris	Nancy Ladd
Jane Cutter	Hilary Harwood	Frances Lee
Zella Dewey	Harriet Hathaway	Rosalind Lewis
June Dolcater	Mary Hendrian	Virginia Link
Josephine Detmer		Sally Lombard

Family

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Zareen Taj Mirza
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Elizabeth Preti
Mary Rea
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Sonia Robertson
Barbara Robinson

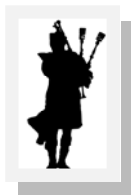
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Merilee Robinson-Grubb
Dorothy Ryan
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Babette Schmidt
Nancy Seabury
Cassandra G. Simonds
Meredith Smith
Mary Lou Sprague
Henrietta Stewart
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Anita Stickney
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Julia Gaulke Peter Gaulke Richard Gilbane Mary Carol Haggerty
Joan Hatch Shirley Hibbard William Hubbell Christina Jackson
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EDUCATION COMMITTEE NEWS

Education at the Tate House Museum

It was exciting and a bit overwhelming to take on the responsibilities of Education Chair at the Tate House Museum this year. I quickly realized that the museum volunteers and docents were extremely knowledgeable and eager to expand educational programming at the museum. The museum education committee is offering a couple of winter Soup & Connoisseur activities for docents and volunteers in 2014. Winter S&C's will be devoted to the museum's collections. We continue to collaborate with other Portland area museums in participating in the PHD docent program throughout the spring.

In response to suggestions from our members and visitors, we are developing some exciting new activities for the 2014 summer season. Our goal is to engage existing members and reach out to new audiences. The opening date of May 31st is closer than any of us realize as we look out on the snow-covered fields and rivers.

The museum will begin its Summer Lecture Series with *Stroudwater Poetry, Readings by Mihku Paul* on July 1st. A presentation by the *National Society of Colonial Dames* will give an overview of their properties and museums throughout the US on July 15th. A lecture on *Examining Antique Silver* will be offered on July 29th. *Colonial Herbs and Their Uses* by Holly Ihloff on August 12th will take place in the Tate House gardens. And to end the season, we invite you to a lively discussion on *Sustaining Antique Structures* on August 26th. We hope to see you at any or all of our presentations. Most of these presentations will be offered for a self-sustaining fee of \$10.00 each (member discounts apply).

Even though our museum is small, after spending a bit of time there, we begin to realize that the museum's history and interpretation depict its unique and pertinent contributions to Maine's culture, from pre-Colonial times to right now! To share this with audiences of all ages, the education committee is coordinating hands-on family activities for Saturday mornings during the summer.

Beginning on Saturday, July 12th, there will be an Introduction to Colonial Dress. Other activities will include Family Puppet Show (Date TBA), Creating in the Herb Garden on July 26th, Colonial Games on August 9th, Sheep & Wool on August 16th, and a Junior Curator Exhibit on August 23rd. **The education committee is very excited about all of these activities and we hope many of you will be too. If you are interested in helping out or participating in any of them we welcome you whole-heartedly!**

Submitted by Diane Hoppe, Education Chair

Tea at the Tate House

Attention Tea Lovers

On Sunday, June 8th, 2014, the Education Committee has arranged for Nellie's Teas of South Portland to host a special tea as part of our opening weekend. Nellie's Teas provides the Tate House Gift Shop with a variety of delightful teas which many of you may have purchased. Marianne Russo, the owner of Nellie's Teas and will be pouring tea and serving scones with clotted cream, lemon curd and jam in our garden (weather permitting).

Marianne will also entertain us with tea lore to add to the occasion. The event will run from 1-4PM. Admission for docents and members will be \$12 and general admission will be \$16. The admission will also include a tour of the Tate House.

Come and join our old fashion tea party!

Reservations are required and should be made by one week prior to the event by calling 207-774-6177 or e-mailing info@tatehouse.org.



or

Submitted by Joan Hatch Gift Shop Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Education Committee Plans
for 2014**

Soup & Connoisseurship:

February 4th 5:30PM

Tate House Collections I
Collection Review

March 4th 5:30PM

Tate House Collections IIApril **PHD Training**

10th, 17th and 24th

May 8th **All Docent Training**“Giving a Tour at the
Tate House Museum”May 31st **Opening Day**June 8th **Tea Time**An historic presentation by
Nellie’s Tea Co. Fee Based

July & August

Tate House Tuesdays:An Evening Lecture Series
Fee Based**Family Saturdays:**Colonial Games-board games,
card games and outdoor fun,
Sheep & Wool-spinning,
weaving, sewing & felting for
families,Colonial Dress-up-Trunk
presentations and dress-up
stations,

Puppet Show,

Creating in the Herb Garden -
Herb drying, dyeing , salves and
Sachets

A Junior Curator Exhibit

October Cemetery Tours

November-Docent Appreciation

December-Holiday Reception
& Shopping incentive at the
Means’ House**Member and Docent discounts apply on
all fee based events.****Museum Internship Available**

The objective of the internship is to provide the intern with a learning experience in the operation of a small historic house museum. Interns will gain experience through projects as well as participation in all facets of the museum operations. The museum season runs from June until mid-October, Tuesday through Sunday.

Collections Management

Become familiar with the objects on exhibit
Inventory, research, and document collection
Assist with creating labels for the current exhibits
Utilize knowledge of collection in developing
educational materials

Assist in the museum’s gardens as directed by the
garden committee

Other curatorial duties as assigned by the Museum
Curator

Education

Develop an individualized ‘special project’ plan of
work

Work independently and with Education Committee
to fulfill project requirements

Develop a research project and present to audience at
the end of the internship

Develop and facilitate educational projects
Educational activities for youth and families

Coordinate and host bi-weekly lectures

Update the museum’s website weekly

Visitor Services and Outreach

Prepare museum for opening and/or closing

Place/remove signs in front of the building

Welcome visitors into the museum shop, run the cash
register for tour fees and general sales

Answer visitor’s questions or direct visitors to the
appropriate resource

Give tours of the museum’s collections

Deliver museum based programs to community
organizations and schools

Museum Office

Hours for the Tate House office are :

Tuesday - Friday 10AM to 4PM

Office Phone: 207-774-6177

E-Mail Address—info@tatehouse.org

Tate House Museum
1267 Westbrook Street
Portland, ME 04102
207-774-6177
www.tatehouse.org



Our mission is to connect people to Maine's colonial roots, and to help them discover, imagine, and value the relevance of this history to our lives.

Make a Donation

Tate House Museum, its history, and neighborhood will serve as a catalyst for educational programs and research for students and the general public who visit the house, as well as a community resource.

You can help!!

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E-mail Address _____

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I wish to remain anonymous *