



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.

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**TATE HOUSE MUSEUM WILL OPEN FOR THE SEASON
ON JUNE 2ND . WEDNESDAY THRU SATURDAY
10AM TO 4PM. SUNDAY NOON TO 4PM. TOURS ON
THE HOUR WITH THE LAST ONE AT 3PM**

Drip Irrigation Comes to the Tate House

A new Underground drip irrigation system was installed at the Tate House Historical Gardens this spring. Plans for this irrigation system were in the works for about 3 month. The project was headed by the museum's building committee. The



generous volunteerism by Environmental Solutions of Yarmouth and local plumber Matt Solak gives testament to how community involvement can get things done.

The irrigation system at the Tate House is a simple drip circuit or zone that is low-volume, high-efficiency and specific to watering the root system of plants where it is truly needed. Drip or trickle irrigation is the slow application of water delivered to the root zone of a plant that originates from the arid Middle East and Western United States. Drip irrigation is small diameter, pressure rated tubing or piping with emitters spaced every 12 inches and buried just below the surface for aesthetic value. Drip is the most efficient irrigation application because it eliminates surface run-off, evaporation to the air (there are no droplets thrown into the air) and reduced weed production all of which adds up to optimal plant health.

May 19th Herb and Plant Sale at THM

Saturday May 19th will be the annual herb and plant sale of the Tate House Museum. The sale will be at the Means House from 9 am to 2 pm .

This year Landscapers Depot and Garden Center on Stroudwater Street in Westbrook , will support the sale. They are a Stroudwater neighbor and are interested in a closer connection with the Tate House. They will be supplying many herbs for the sale at a price to us to support our fundraising effort. Please come and support the museum and our new partner.

If gardeners would like to supply plants, we would be delighted to have you bring in plants you have potted and established in their pots. So get busy now with thinning your beds. Label your plants with the name, color, and height as well as the type of soil they prefer and whether sun or shade location. Pass the word to friends and neighbors to come. This is a fundraiser for the Museum Garden and we need support. We are also going to be thinning some of the Tate House Garden plants. These will be offered for sale as well. Though they didn't come directly from Mary Tate they have a theoretical connection!

Fun Day Thank You

Between the hours of 8am to 2pm on April 21st an enthusiastic crew of volunteers completed a myriad of odd jobs on the Tate House campus. From the kitchen in the Means house to patching a squirrel hole in the 2nd floor fascia of the Tate House.



Barbara Luke & THM friend & Master Gardener Charlotte Witt work hard to straighten a wayward fruit tree.

A big thank you to; Joan Hatch, Mark Sengelmann, Dick Kempton, Jim Stenberg, Barbara Luke, Dick Gilbane, Pat Jackson, Margaret Curran, Gini and Steve Link, Charlotte Witt and Bill Hubbell. Without you, this couldn't have been accomplished.

Education Committee News

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The Tate House Museum's Education Committee has been hard at work recruiting and training new docents for the coming season. Susan Bowditch, Co-Chair has attended most of the PHD sessions at various museum sites and has hosted lunches with veteran THM docents. An orientation meeting with tours was held for prospective docents at Tate House in March. In April three training sessions were held for the PHD graduates who chose to volunteer at Tate House. On May 31 Laura Sprague, Consulting Curator, will speak about new acquisitions and Peter Cook, Chairman of the THM Board will lead a special tour to enhance understanding of Tate House.

In preparation for the coming season, Liz Bradley and Delene Perley are designing a new tour of the Stroudwater neighborhood. This tour will concentrate on stories of Stroudwater people from the past and the houses in which they lived. New letters are going out to area schools inviting teachers to bring their students to Tate House to enhance their study of the colonial era in America. Shirley Hibbard continues to plan Soup and Connoisseurship programs for docents and all friends of THM.

SAVE THE DATE!

JUNE 12, 2012 RAMBLE!

Join Tate House Museum friends for a Ramble to Dresden and Alna, Maine on Tuesday, June 12 at 9 AM. The VIP coach will return by 5PM. Departure and return will be in front of Means House. In the morning we will tour the Pownalborough Courthouse built in 1760-61, the oldest surviving judicial building in Maine.

The Courthouse witnessed the first permanent settlers on the Kennebec River, housed the first courts in the wilderness north of Portland and oversaw endless arguments over the ownership of original land grants. The building housed the court on the second floor and also served as a tavern and a general store. John Adams tried a case on behalf of the Kennebec Proprietors in 1765 at Pownalborough and described it as "almost the remotest verge of civilization."

After lunch at picnic tables on the Courthouse grounds, the Ramble will continue to Alna. There we will tour the Alna Meeting House built in 1789 and the Head Tide Church built in 1838. The Meeting House is often described as the best example of that style in Maine. The box pews, high pulpit and the sounding board are especially handsome. Head Tide Church is a fine example of the Greek Revival style set in a lovely country landscape.

The cost of the Ramble is \$50 per person. Part of that cost provides for donations to the historic sites that we will visit on the Ramble. Please bring your own picnic lunch. Reservations and payment must be received by THM Site Manager, Betty Janus by Friday, June 1, 2012. There will be no cancellation refunds after that deadline date.

Further inquires can be made to Ann Worster at 772-2839 or the Site Coordinator at info@tatehouse.org.

Summer Office Hours

The museum office will be open from 10 AM to 4PM Wednesday thru Friday. Please call 774-6177 or e-mail us at info@tatehouse.org

Exciting Collections Work Underway!

In December 2011 Tate House Museum was delighted to receive a \$4,000 grant from the Phineas W. Sprague Memorial Foundation in support of important collections work. The funds will be used to improve professional standards by updating the collections database on PastPerfect, one the museum field's most versatile programs. The Museum has used PastPerfect for several years for membership, but now will be able to add all the collections records into a central database. With the grant funds, the Museum hired Grace Batsford, a University of Southern Maine student who many will remember from her work as the Museums's Weekend Manager last Summer

Previously, Grace had been an intern at the Maine Historical Society, where she worked with its Registrar, Holly Hurd-Forsyth, a member of Tate House Museum's collections committee. Already experienced with the program and data entry, Grace was the perfect person for the job.



Since January she has been working to ensure each object record is accurately entered into the database. Once this stage is complete, we will add digital images. Last year, through a \$236 grant from the Historical Records Collections Program at the Maine State Archives, Tate House Museum acquired PastPerfect's digital software. Historic and other images can be scanned so that vital information related to the collections and building preservation will be accessible.

Having good digital images available will also support various educational activities. For example, we now have the capability to organize a collaborative on-line exhibition for the Maine Memory Network. While this project has been a winter focus, the committee is also taking a room-by-room inventory of the collection. Once this work is completed, the next step will be to work, in conjunction with the Education committee, on new room books for the docents.

Gifts to the Collection

The Tate House Museum collection has grown significantly thanks to generous contributions, both material and financial. Last fall the Women's Literary Union closed its headquarters and dispersed its historic furniture to several museums. We are honored to be the repository of three fine Maine tables. The earliest is a colonial drop-leaf dining table, dating from 1740 to 1770, that may have been made in Portland. The Union also gave a round tip-top pedestal tea table, a popular colonial form but one not represented in the collection, and also a fine Portland candlestand, ca. 1790. We are most appreciative of this important gift.

The Museum acknowledges with deep thanks another generous \$1,000 gift by Amy Shinn from the George L. and Clara S. Shinn Foundation in support of the Museum's purchase of Samuel Sewall's dining table. This table is one of our finest recent acquisitions; its purchase would have not been completed without Amy's support.

Hollis Brodrick of The Antiquarium of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, recently donated an English brass posnet pot marked by William Wasbrough of Bristol and dating from 1750 to 1775. A wonderful addition to the kitchen, we are most grateful to Mr. Brodrick for this rare cooking vessel.

Tate House Gift Shop - Joan Hatch

As you may or may not know, I have taken over the running of the Gift Shop from Theresa Libby. As Theresa added her touches to the shop, I have several new items which I plan to add this year when the shop reopens to the public. I'd like to thank members who have already given me ideas or input for items which I plan to introduce. I am always open to new ideas so you can e-mail me either through the Tate House e-mail which is info@tatehouse.org or chefjoan@earthlink.net.

This year I plan on having the gift shop open when we do our Plant Sale at the end of May. Remember members are given a 10% discount.

H a p p y S h o p p i n g ! !
Joan

Tate House Museum
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Portland, ME 04102
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www.tatehouse.org

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