



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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January 2013

**GIFT SHOP AND OFFICE ARE OPEN WEDNESDAY,
THURSDAY, AND FRIDAY 9-3 DURING WINTER**

In Memoriam Cynthia R. Griswold

Tate House Museum lost one of its most dedicated friends with the death of Cynthia Rhodes Griswold on November 24, 2012. With quiet resolve she fought cancer for several months but all the time continued to share concerns and ideas about the Tate House collection and its needs.



A Connecticut Yankee born in 1937, Cynthia was devoted to early American history and genealogy. She and her husband, David, resided in Bangor and Cape Elizabeth in the 1960s before moving to Guilford, Connecticut. They loved living in Maine and moved to Durham in 2000 to be near their children. On her return, Cynthia brought her extensive knowledge and experience in the operation of historic house museums.

In Connecticut, she served as director of the Jonathan Trumbull House in Lebanon, a National Historic Landmark built 1735-1740. Later, she directed educational interpretation at the Hyland House, an early eighteenth-century dwelling in Guilford. At Hyland's large colonial cooking hearth, Cynthia thrived in the joyful pursuit of open-hearth cooking. She appeared in a film, *Colonial Open-Hearth Cooking*, baking cookies, simmering clam chowder, and preparing mincemeat. She co-authored *Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Lebanon, Connecticut, and His Descendants* with Frances Gilman in 2001. Upon arriving in Maine, Cynthia participated in the Portland History Docents program, embracing the colonial history of Tate House.

She was especially devoted to our collections and food-ways interpretation, offering many ideas for refining our presentations. She served as chairman of the Museum Properties Committee for the NSCDA-ME and, later, assumed leadership of the Tate House Museum's collections committee. Smart, perceptive, and fun to work with, Cynthia loved sharing information and new research. Cynthia was regularly at Tate House, working on activities ranging from improvements to hearthside interpretations to arranging loans for special exhibitions.

A significant recent accomplishment was Cynthia's research that ensured the proper installation of the circa 1750 spit engine or clock jack, an instrument that eased the time-consuming labor of roasting meat on a cooking hearth. She visited other New England house museums to investigate installation techniques and searched tirelessly for the necessary materials. Her work paid off as many visitors, young and old alike, enjoy learning about this domestic technology of the colonial era.

Former Tate House Museum chairman, Peter Cook observed that Cynthia was "the epitome of museum volunteerism – addressing needs, celebrating the collections, enjoying member fellowship, always with genuine follow-through in getting things done. She had a love affair with Tate House and her devotion to the collections was contagious."

We will miss her. Gifts to Tate House Museum made in her memory will support the Griswold Collection Fund for the acquisition of foodways-related objects to improve interpretation at Tate House. Tate House Museum extends its most heartfelt condolences to Cynthia's family.

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Curator**Laura Fecych
Sprague**EDUCATION TASK FORCES**

New sub-committees were set up this fall to assess the quality of what we are doing in the name of education and recommend changes. Here are the tasks and the leaders of these committees:

**Bridget McCormick – School
Programs.**

Bridget is a new member of our Education Committee who is also in charge of education at Maine Historical. She will look at current programs, pre-visit materials, engaging new schools, establishing a feedback system, and aligning with Maine State Learning Results.

Joan Hatch – Publicity.

Working with the board overseeing new rack cards, membership in MPBN member card promotion, and Maine Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Liz Bradley – Safety and Security.

Will deal with questions of photography in the museum and docent security training. Liz is also in charge of Opening Day 2013 and developing new tours.

Barbara Luke – Tours.

Will deal with misinformation, as well as paired peer reviews on tours, for the purpose of soliciting constructive comments.

Dolores Vail – Accessibility.

Will oversee the development of written text to the current video, and investigating virtual tours.

Delene Perley – Training Manual.

Is overseeing the implementation of corrections, new definitions and consistency throughout for the next printing of the manual and brochure.

Adeline Allen – Signage.

Is working with board members on the wording, placement, type of lettering, and pictures/colors on new signs.

Jackie Day – Refreshments.

Will solicit and coordinate volunteers to provide refreshments for the PHD program at both Maine Historical and our site, including site training.

THE CITY IS A CLASSROOM

Nearly two years ago, Jennifer Pollick, Manager of Education Programs for Greater Portland Landmarks, put together a committee of representatives from every public historic site. Susan Bowditch participated as the education representative from Tate House. Over the course of the project we assessed the former "The City is a Classroom" workbook, which had been available to teachers in greater Portland. Then we made recommendations for changes, submitted new paragraphs about our sites, new photographs, and inserted new information into the Portland timeline. New lesson plans were also developed. At this time the booklet is about ready to go to the printer. But first, Jennifer has organized a workshop for teachers who will use the new workbook. The purpose will be to have the teachers review it and provide any feedback before it goes to print. This workshop is scheduled for February 28 at Greater Portland Landmarks offices.

TATE HOUSE EDUCATION ON THE RISE!



The Portland History Docent Program

Tate House is about to embark on another journey with the PHD program. Held yearly, and sponsored by most historic sites in Portland, this wonderful program gives a distinctive and broad overview of the history of this city. It is also our best venue for gathering new docents for the Tate House Museum. Held primarily at the Maine Historical Society, participants also have the opportunity of visiting eight sites that are open to the public. Featured lectures will be provided this year by Dana Baldwin of the Portland Museum of Art, Peter Gittleman of Historic New England, and Tom Desjardin, Historian of Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, among others. The program also provides three mornings for each site to deliver site specific training. Susan Bowditch, Tate House Board member in charge of education, will oversee our side of the program but she will have lots of help from Delene Perley, who will introduce Tate House to the participants, as well as Anita Jones and Peter Cook who will be available on alternate days to talk about our site and encourage new docents to select it. We are very grateful for Jackie Day's coordination of refreshments for one day at MHS and the visiting day at Tate House. Current docents and members of the board are welcome to attend the program. Betty Janus, Site Coordinator at Tate House, has the schedule.

CHANGE IN FISCAL YEAR

The Board of Directors voted Thursday January 17th to change the fiscal year from May 1st - April 30th to January 1st - December 31st. The Tate House will now be in sync with the calendar year. Memberships however will be following the anniversary dates of individual members. Letters will be sent out as reminders.

A REMINDER

The gift shop at the Tate House Museum is open during the winter. Wednesday, Thursday, and Fridays from 9AM to 3PM. Come and visit!

News from Stroudwater Village Association



The Stroudwater Village Association is planning a Winter Celebration Breakfast on Saturday, February 9 at 8:30AM in the Stroudwater Baptist Church. There will be pancakes, sausage, cereals, fruit, etc. in great abundance and it's all free. So do come and enjoy.

Once the breakfast is over at around 9:30, the adults will gather to participate in a discussion of Phase 2 of the traffic changes. These changes involve amenities for pedestrians such as crosswalks, bus stops, safety islands, etc. If you'd like to see the plans and offer your two cents worth, here's your chance!

Depending on snow conditions, the children may adjourn to the hills for sledding and outdoor fun during the traffic discussion. Alternatively, there may be a snow festival for kids at some other time, announced as conditions permit.

The SVA continues its work with the airport to reduce the impact of airport noise on neighborhood homes, and to work with the City of Portland to pursue repairs to the dam. There will be a project to evaluate the ground along the edges of the Stroudwater River in the spring, Involving residents as monitors. The SVA Annual Meeting is planned for April 27.

A BIG THANK YOU

A big thanks to all of you who attended our November 3rd fundraiser held at the Osher Map Library at the University of Southern Maine, Portland. An interesting lecture given by Matthew Edney was preceded by a wonderful dinner with colleagues and friends as well as a tour of the facilities. The fundraiser was extremely successful and the Tate House is grateful to all who attended, helping to support the museum.

NEXT FUNDRAISER

Our next fundraiser, a Ramble, is in the planning stage and the particulars will be released soon.

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

BECOME A MEMBER



___ **\$250 Mast Agent** –Unlimited free museum visits, 10% off at gift shop & special events, Library privileges, Tate House Gazette, Special recognition event

___ **\$100 Patron**– Unlimited free museum visits, 10% off at gift shop & special events, Library privileges, Tate House Gazette

___ **\$50 Family**-Two free museum visits, 10% off at gift shop & special events, Library privileges, Tate House Gazette

___ **\$35 Individual**-One free museum visit, 10% off at gift shop, Library privileges, Tate House Gazette

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