



# 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 25 NUMBER 1

[www.tatehouse.org](http://www.tatehouse.org)

MARCH 2017

## *Welcome To A New Year At The Tate House 2016 In a Nutshell*

### **Everything Old is New Again**

Every now and then we need to be reminded of what went on at the Tate House this past year and what we have to look forward to in 2017. We had a couple of new events this past year with Frolic on the Farm, Masquerade Ball and A Tate House Colonial Christmas. For those of you who came to these events you know what wonderful successes they were for us. We are planning another Frolic on September 9th at the Sprague Farm in Cape Elizabeth and details will follow.

This year will see the Tate House opening on May 31st for public tours. June 3rd will be our formal opening day at the Museum with a few special lectures and demonstrations. Last year started the day with firing of Fred Maitland's muskets. Fred has trained a few of our docents in this fine art and who knows what may happen this year.

If you missed last year's Tea in the Garden you will have another chance to join us for a beautiful afternoon on the back lawn of the Tate House on Sunday, June 11th. This annual event features teas served by Nellie's Teas of South Portland with sweets and savories made by our own volunteers. This is a wonderful event to share with your friends and family.

On Tuesday evening, June 27, we will again be hosting Poetry in the Garden. Last year's event with Martin Steingesser and Judith Tierney was a wonderfully theatrical event. This has become an annual event for the Tate House and 2017 will bring former Portland Poet Laureate Betsy Scholl to our doorsteps as part of our Tuesday evening Summer Lectures.

Tuesday, July 11, will be lecture by Diane Hoppe on Colonial Plant Lore. This lecture will focus on the plantings in our own Tate House Garden. This will be informative both for our volunteers and the public.

Our August 1st lecture will feature Ron Romano from Spirits Alive and Eastern Cemetery who will talk about the setting of stones in the Stroudwater Burying Ground. This lecture is in preparation for a clinic in stone setting at the cemetery on August 5th. Ron is the author of *Early Gravestones in Southern Maine: the Genius of Bartlett Adams*. Many of you may have attended Ron's presentation this past year or purchased his book in our gift shop. We welcome this opportunity to help with the restoration of the burying ground where our own George and Mary Tate have their final resting place.

If you didn't come to the Tate House this past summer to see Fletcher's Scouting Company display and talk about colonial times in Maine, you will have another chance on August 19th. This is a free event which this year will focus on what it was like in the Portland area during the French and Indian War. They come dressed in the clothing of scouts and set up camp in front of the Means House. These gentlemen and ladies are re-enactors for the time in history which coincides with the Tate's arriving in the Province of Maine.

Every Fall we like to have a lecture that centers in some fashion around colonial cooking. Last year we had Sandy Oliver talk about a woman's place in the colonial kitchen. This year on October 10th we will be welcoming Susan McLellan Plaisted from Heart to Heart Cookery. The topic of Susan's lecture will be 18th Century Fare and will focus on bread baking, cheese making and beer making in colonial times and the dining experience related to these staples of the Tate's table. This lecture will be open to the public and will also be an opportunity for our docents to augment their knowledge of our own iconic hearth and home.

On November 14th Beth Maitland, one of our docents and the guiding force behind the Tate House Sew Historical Society will be doing a lecture and demonstration of English Paper Piecing Quilting. This is a repeat performance for Beth and always brings in an audience who likes to learn something old and make it new again.

The Education and Events Committees have come up with a lot of possibilities to add to our programs this year. A Beer Tasting? Another Colonial Christmas? Book signings? Our volunteers are working on making this the best year ever for the Tate House Museum. Please mark your calendars and join us for a fun filled year.

Joan Hatch - Board of Directors

## Tate House Masquerade Gala 2016

Sixteen SMCC students mixed pleasure with learning while taking part in a masquerade gala where they greeted guests while dressed to the nines, made connections and learned about history.

The festive event was held October 29<sup>th</sup> 2016 at the Portland Marriott Sable Oaks and put on by the Tate House Museum board of directors and the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Maine. SMCC Adjunct Professor Ralph Carmona, president of the Museum's board of directors, said he invited the students so they could expand their horizons and skills.

The students greeted other guests, showed them to their tables and were placed at different tables for dinner so they could talk with other guests, and tell them about their aspirations. They also learned about the Tate House from the people who are involved with the museum.

The event provided students an opportunity to dress up and interact with people who are successful and knowledgeable in their fields. Carmona said Students were given complimentary tickets to the \$100-a-plate fundraiser.

"I'm willing to bet none of them have been to an event like this," Carmona said.

Half of the sixteen students came from Carmona's political science and sociology courses, with the other half coming from SMCC's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.

One of the students, Clautel Buba, said it was "amazing to be part of such a memorable evening."

"Not only did I enjoy the food, I also enjoyed meeting new people, learning about their lives, learning a little history about Maine, and dancing to the oldies," he said.



## TATE HOUSE MUSEUM PROGRAMS 2017



*“Connecting People to Maine’s Colonial Roots”*

**Open Wed - Sun, June - October**

**Hourly Tours from 10AM-4PM**

**Sun 1PM-4PM**

**Last Tour at 3PM**

*School Tours*

*Architecture Tours*

*Garden Tours*

*Available- Call 207-774-6177*

**May 6**  
**Girl Scout Day**

**May 20**  
**Annual Plant Sale**

**June 3**  
**Opening Day Celebration**

**June 11**  
**Annual Tea in the Tate House Garden**

**June 20**  
**Poetry in the Garden**

**July 12**  
**Colonial Plant Lore Lecture**

**August 1**  
**Ron Romano Lecture Author of**  
**Early Gravestones in Southern ME**  
**The Genius of Bartlett Adams**

**August 5**  
**Cemetery Stone Setting Clinic at Stroudwater**  
**Burial Ground**

**August 19**  
**Fletcher Scouting company**  
**Demonstration**

**September 9**  
**Frolic on the Spectacular Spurwink Farm**  
**Cape Elizabeth**

**September 16**  
**Beer Tasting and social tour of Tate House**  
**Gathering Rooms**

**September 30**  
**Lecture and Silent Auction**  
**Portland Country Club hosted by the NSCDA**  
**in Maine**

**October 10th**  
**Susan Plaisted Lecture Author of**  
**~Heart to Hearth Cookery~**

**October 14 and 21**  
**Stroudwater Cemetery Tours and Bake Sale**

**October 28**  
**Tate House Masquerade Gala**

**December 9 and 10**  
**A Tate House Colonial Christmas**

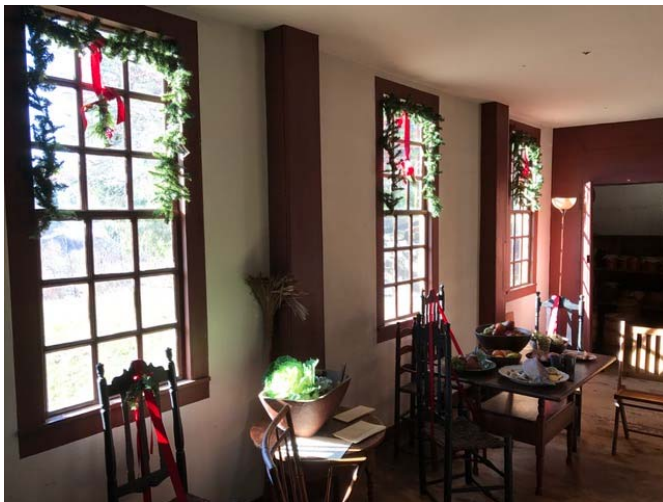


### And A Good Time Was Had By All !

On December 10th and 11th the Tate House doors were opened to visitors for a Colonial Christmas celebration. Close to two hundred people were greeted by docents clad in period clothing who related how the Tate family would have welcomed guests to their home in honor of the Christmas holiday. Each room was decorated according to custom (with some liberties taken here and there) and contained something special that visitors might not see during the regular season. The Sitting Room offered a menu for a Christmas Feast and the kitchen provided the recipes. A wedding dress was displayed in the parlor while upstairs quilts were made, games were played and Christmas Boxes displayed, thanks to our neighborhood potter.

When they finished touring the house, visitors adjourned to the Means House parlor to enjoy a sumptuous feast of sweet and savory treats. The colonial wedding cake was the star of the show, with the Wassail punch running a close second.

Now it's on to next Christmas, already well in the planning stages with some new features being added. Join us on either December 9th or 10th for the celebration. Better yet, come on both days and be a part of it! Thanks to everyone who participated this time: the decorators, the docents, and the fabulous bakers who made sure our guests were well fed.



Julie Neuls - Celebration Chairman

## Spirits of the Stroudwater Cemetery Tour 2016



Once again for two consecutive Saturdays in October volunteers and staff from the Tate House Museum hosted the Spirits of Stroudwater Cemetery Tour. As was done last year the Tate House was open for tours and a combination ticket was offered to participants. The attendance this year was excellent and many of our guests took advantage of the combination ticket offering. Guests were escorted through the historic Stroudwater Cemetery where they encountered the spirits of prominent village residents during the 18th century. The tour guides provided the guests with a brief history of the area and the spirits with a synopsis of their lives. Concurrently docents provided tours of the Tate House and told of its fascinating history. An addition to the tour this year was a live firing demonstration of a Brown Bess Flintlock rifle by Fred Maitland. This was done at the entrance to the cemetery with the purpose to, "Wake the dead".

The weather on both days cooperated somewhat. The first Saturday was bright and sunny. The kind of day we all look forward to in the Fall. The second Saturday was rather cool, cloudy with a lite drizzle. This lent to the typical feel of a Maine fall day in transition to those short cold days of winter.

The tours began in the front yard of the Means' house where guests could browse through the gift shop and the tables on the front lawn, which offered a selection of delicious treats available for purchase with the proceeds from all sales benefiting the museum.

Thanks to the efforts of the Tate House Museum staff and our hard working volunteers the event was a huge success. Preparations are already underway to make the 2017 Spirits of Stroudwater even better.



John Farmer - Docent

## Did You Know

**A Hornbook**, was the primer or first reading book used in colonial schools. Long used in England, colonists brought it with them to America. The hornbook was not really a book at all but simply a sheet of paper mounted on a board and covered with transparent horn. The board ended in a handle that a child held while reading. The handle usually had a hole drilled in it so a string or leather lace might be attached thus to prevent loss by securing it to the child's wrist or belt. Hornbooks contained the alphabet in capital and small letters, followed by combinations of vowels with consonants to form syllables, the Lord's Prayer, and Roman numerals.

The horn tacked on over the lessons was used to keep the lessons from being soiled by the child. The horn of oxen and sheep were used to make the laminating structure. The horn was left in cold water for several weeks, which separated the usable part from the bone. It was then heated, first in boiling water then by fire, and pressed by plates and machines to make it smooth and transparent.



John Farmer - Docent



The **Shoe Last** was a wooden form carved in the basic shape of a foot, over which pieces of leather would be shaped and attached together to create a shoe or boot. During the colonial period there was no distinction between left and right shoes, so a single last would be used for both. The shoemaker would maintain a number of lasts to cover various sizes. Notice the holes in the bottom of the last, which resulted from the shoemaker tacking the leather onto it.



Larry D. Smith - Museum 665



### Drainage Preservation at George Tate's House, 2014-2017

We are pleased to report that the capital improvements at Tate House are nearly completion. Research, including archaeology, and soil and drainage studies, began over a decade ago. Work ranged from drainage improvements, a new gas furnace, and burying the electric lines under Westbrook Street. Historic landscape improvements included a replacement fence and a wooden boardwalk and steps with hand railings that provide improved safety and access. Window conservation will conclude this summer along with treatment of the original decorative window cornices.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous foundations and individuals, contributing over \$135,000, that made this vital work possible: The Davis Family Foundation, National Park Service and Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Belvedere Fund Historic Preservation Grants Program of the Maine Community Foundation in cooperation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Maine Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust, David W. Bradley Preservation Fund of Tate House Museum, Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust, The P. W. Sprague Memorial Foundation, and an Anonymous Donor.



Before



During



Almost After



August 2016: Capital improvements nearly complete with window and cornice restoration to be completed by June 2017.

Laura F. Sprague - Consulting Curator

## Tate House Museum Word Search

F E I W S H R E F U C C Y L N E B T D Z  
 U O V B H O S O G A M V D E O L R A A E  
 Z Q R I B I R I P R A S L C G D O F H Q  
 S E U E F E T T D N O Y H L A N A O A E  
 H T R A R Y A E H N T E V O C A D B L V  
 A T I I R I T S P S A E G C E C A L D K  
 R R V L N T I F N I P T N K D G X T S K  
 E E R T Y T E A I M N Z S J A N E P U A  
 R C A O I A I R N F W E X A X I N M G G  
 O T R R W G R A T E N Y S C E T L B A Z  
 E J B B R O A D N E V E W K H R M R R N  
 G H R O J L E U M A S O E D Y U A C N A  
 F M E R C H A N T J A T E T V O R I I C  
 P G T N I T O Z Z E M D E V N C Y L P I  
 R E T A W D U O R T S X V R I E U P P L  
 A Q T M K V K G L A J C O R S H V L E G  
 M A S T T R A D E U N W C P X H E E R N  
 C O L O N I A L D A M E S C A S B E S A  
 N W F W Q J K E G C P S M X B G N F B B  
 J U V H V J N D X R F N G E J D P V K J

ANGLICAN

BOFAT

BROAD AXE

COLONIAL DAMES

FORE RIVER

HERBS

MAST TRADE

QUARTER TESTER

SEVENTEEN FIFTY FIVE

STROUDWATER

ARROW

BRITISH NAVY

CAPTAIN TATE

COURTING CANDLE

GEORGE

HEXADECAGON

MERCHANT

ROBERT

STANDISH

SUGAR NIPPERS

BEEHIVE OVEN

BROAD

CLOCK JACK

ELL

GEORGIAN STYLE

MARY

MEZZOTINT

SAMUEL

STILYARD

WHITE PINE



July 30, 2016

Colonial Frolic  
Tate House Museum  
Spurwink Farm





## Tate House Colonial Tea 2016



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2017

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### 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! !*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Information:**

☐ We are enclosing a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ Please make checks payable to: Tate House Museum

☐ Please charge my Visa or Mastercard one time for \$\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please charge my Visa or Mastercard quarterly (January, April, July, and October) for \$\_\_\_\_\_

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Tate House Museum is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

☐ I wish to remain anonymous \*