

# 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 26 NUMBER 1

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

APRIL 2018

## *As We Welcome A New Year At The Tate House Let's Take A Look Back*

### **2017 Goings On at the Tate House Museum**

It was a very busy year for all of our staff members, board members, volunteers and docents.

We look forward to more of the same this year and are putting our plans together as I write this article.

Last year we started our events with our Annual Girl Scout Badge Day thanks to Michelle Josephson and we plan to hold this event again this year on May 5<sup>th</sup>. We love interacting with our younger community members and teaching them what it was like to live in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Our Annual Plant Sale will be held again, this year on May 19<sup>th</sup> and there will be plenty of plants to add to your garden and at the same time help out our museum. If you have plants that need to be thinned out in your garden feel free to contact us to add your plants to our offerings.

In 2017 our tea in the garden was literally quite a hot event. This year we will again be having our Tate House Tea on June 10<sup>th</sup> and the theme this year will be strawberries and cream. Nellie's Teas will be served and we hope to see you all join us.

2017 saw many successful lectures on Tuesday nights and we are in the process of setting up that schedule. We are looking for speakers who focus on historical aspects of life in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century in and around Maine and Portland in particular.

We had a very successful Frolic in 2017 out at the Sprague Farm in Cape Elizabeth. We are very thankful to Mary Lou and Phineas Sprague for sharing their amazing property for this event and also the 5K Race that was held the same day. This year we are hoping to hold the Frolic on the grounds of the Tate House in September. No final date has been set.

Thanks to Mast Landing Brewery and our "beer committee" of Peg Puza, Bill Gousse and Stephen Perrizone we had a wildly popular beer lecture and tasting and talk revolving around the history of beer in colonial times. We are planning to repeat this program this year in the Fall so stay tuned.

As always our tours of the Stroudwater Burying Grounds were a popular event last year. We are planning tours again this October but with some interesting changes.

In late October the Tate House held their Gala at the Westin Hotel in Portland. Guests enjoyed music, cocktails and a wonderful dinner while helping the museum raise funds. We hope to hold this event again this year but have not set a date yet.

In December 2017 we held our second annual Christmas Tate House Museum Tour. Attendees were provided wonderful music by Sam Schuth who played period pieces on his violin. That of course was followed by refreshments in the Means House. Julie Neuls headed up the committee for the event and we certainly want to thank her, Mary Ann and John Farmer and all of our docents and volunteers for their contributions. We plan on having this event again in 2018.

Follow us at [www.tatehouse.org](http://www.tatehouse.org) under the events tab for this years offerings.

### In keeping with the spirit of the season!

On December 9th and 10th the Tate House doors were opened to visitors for the second annual Colonial Christmas celebration. Approximately 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. In the parlor a violinist played period music. Upstairs a wedding dress was displayed in the Tate's parlor chamber along with examples of other period dress. Games were demonstrated and played in both the Tate boy's room and the sitting room chamber. Christmas Boxes were displayed, furnished by our neighborhood potter.



When our guests finished touring the house, they adjourned across the street to the Means House parlor to enjoy a sumptuous feast of sweet and savory treats. The Wassail punch once again was a hit as were the other treats.

Planning for Christmas 2018 is already well under way with some new features being added. Join us again this December for the celebration. Better yet, come 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. We couldn't have done it without them.

Julie Neuls - Celebration Chairman





### Another Beautiful Evening



The 4th Annual "Poetry in the Garden" was held June 20, 2017 amidst the blooming roses, peonies and setting sun. The Stroudwater River flowed silently by as Betsy Sholl read from her collection of poems. The Maine Poet Laureate from 2006-2011 initially introduced us to some basics of poetry and then captivated the audience with her readings. Light snacks were available after during the discussion time. If you weren't there you missed another perfect evening!

Barbara Luke - Docent



### Spirits of the Stroudwater Cemetery Tour 2017



Once again on a Saturday 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. This year due to scheduling the tour was only offered on one Saturday instead of the usual two consecutive ones. 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.

The weather cooperated again this year with a typical fall day.

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 2018 Spirits of Stroudwater even better. In response to some suggestions we have decided to make a few changes to the event.

In keeping with the time of year we will be moving tours hours, which originally ran from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., to a later time frame, 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. with tours beginning every half hour. We agreed this would add a more spirit like ambiance to the experience.

John Farmer - Docent

### Did You Know

If you look closely upon entering the Tate House kitchen hanging from a shelf on the plate rack, you'll see a lamp very similar to the one shown in the picture to the right. This is known as a Betty Lamp. There were many forms of the Betty Lamps designed during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The most popular lamps were made of brass or as with the one shown and the museum's lamp, iron. They had a shallow reservoir for oil with a spout on one end and a hinged lid. The spout provided a place for the wick to just slightly protrude and be lit. In addition what was called a "pickwick" usually was attached to the lamp for picking the wick out of the lamp should it slide in to the reservoir. As with the Tate House lamp and the one pictured a hook was attached. It resembled a hearth tool and provided a means to hang the lamp by sticking the point into a rafter, or to use the hook on a peg or hang over the rung of a ladder. Any type of oil could be burned in these lamps. The most common being either animal fat or fish oil. Animal fat was preferred as it smoked less and had less of a odor than fish oil.

The Betty Lamp is said to have gotten its name from the German word "besser" which means To Make Better. In fact they did give off a better light than a candle.



John Farmer - Docent

### **Tate House Exterior Restoration, 2016-2018**

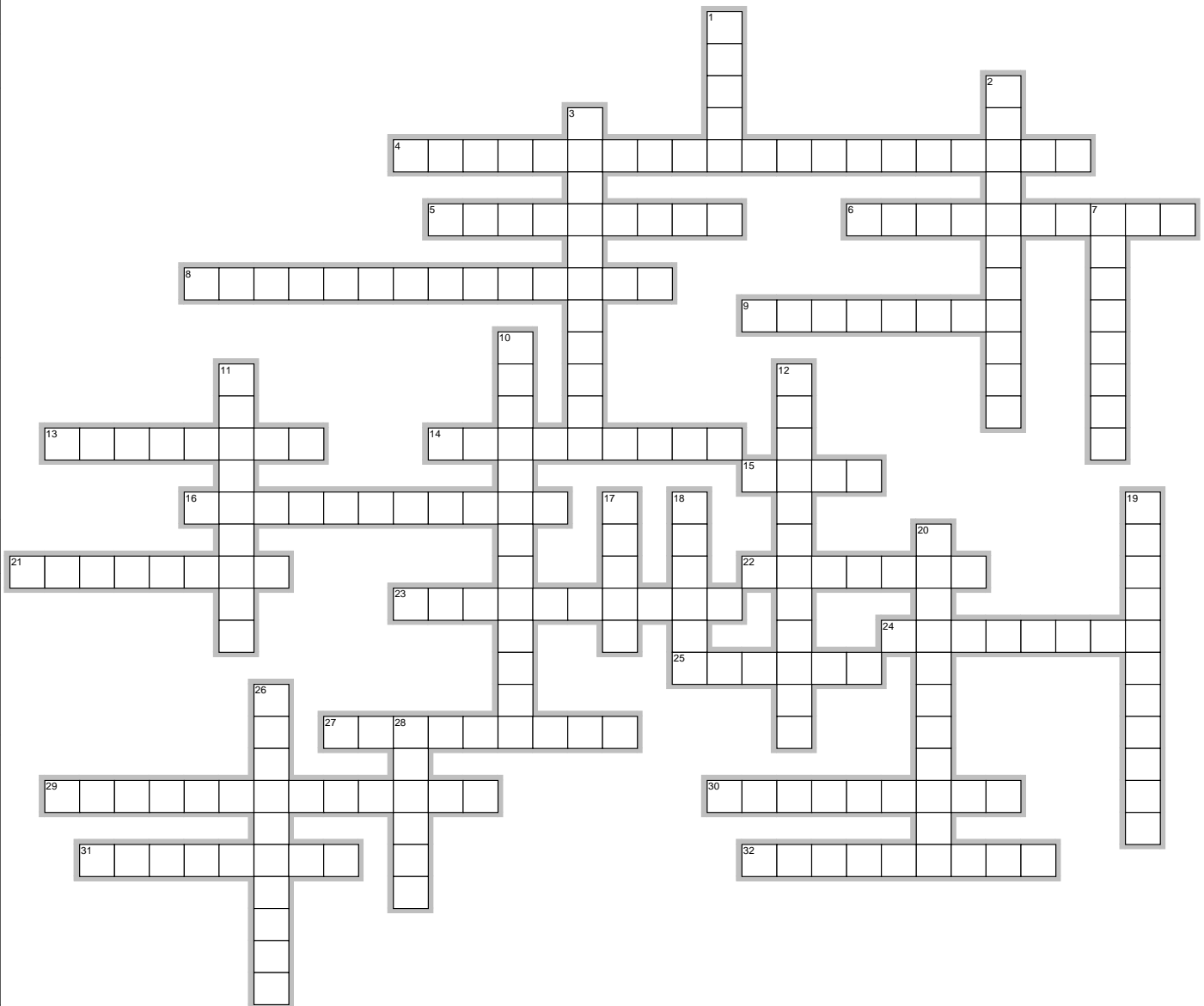
Thanks to a generous grant of \$16,865, awarded in 2016 by the Davis Family Foundation, and the support of the David W. Bradley Preservation Fund, the Museum addressed painting and re-glazing of window sashes and frames in the main house and ell. This work was part of the \$125,000 capital improvement project to address drainage, climate, and site improvements.

We were fortunate to have two great artisans – who know our landmark building well – undertake this important work. Greg Kirk of Kirk Painting in Portland repaired and painted twenty-one windows in the main house and ell. When he found some cost-savings, it was directed to the front door and pediment, exterior elements that had not been part of the window project. The arched fanlight, an early and important architectural component, has also been beautifully re-glazed and conserved. Caleb Hemphill, of Hemphill Preservation and Carpentry in Falmouth, has completed the restoration of the decorative window cornices. In 2014 he had conserved the four cornices on the front façade. The remaining ten cornices on the east and west facades will be installed this summer. These key architectural ornaments add distinction to the exterior. The Museum is most grateful to the Davis Family Foundation and David W. Bradley Preservation Fund of Tate House Museum for making this essential restoration possible. Thank you!

Laura F. Sprague - Consulting Curator



# Test Your Tate House Knowledge



EclipseCrossword.com

## Across

4. The year construction was completed
5. What is that picture on the wall?
6. What was used to cut down the pines?
8. Time to hit the road Jack!
9. It was the style in 1755.
13. It's believed to have belonged to the Tates.
14. Row, row, row your boat on it but watch out for the floating logs.
15. How does her garden grow?
16. How do I set the temperature? Where's the timer?
21. The Admiral
22. By his father's side.
23. There are eight in the Tate House.
24. It's a scale of sorts.
25. It was there, then it wasn't, then it was.
27. What Captain Tate was tasked with overseeing.
29. Preservers of our history.
30. Look Ma, no hands and it goes round and round.
31. Captain Tate's moonlighting occupation.
32. His name sounds kingly.

## Down

1. Grown in the Tate's garden.
2. They wanted the trees.
3. One of two rivers running by Tate House.
7. The Tate's religion.
10. That bed doesn't have a full canopy.
11. Our most valuable trees in 1775.
12. You really need one of these to help sweeten your tea.
17. Another name for a Buffet
18. The youngest son.
19. Sixteen sided.
20. The man of the house.
26. The King's Mark.
28. The oldest boy.

Answers available upon request by emailing: [johnfar2@earthlink.net](mailto:johnfar2@earthlink.net)



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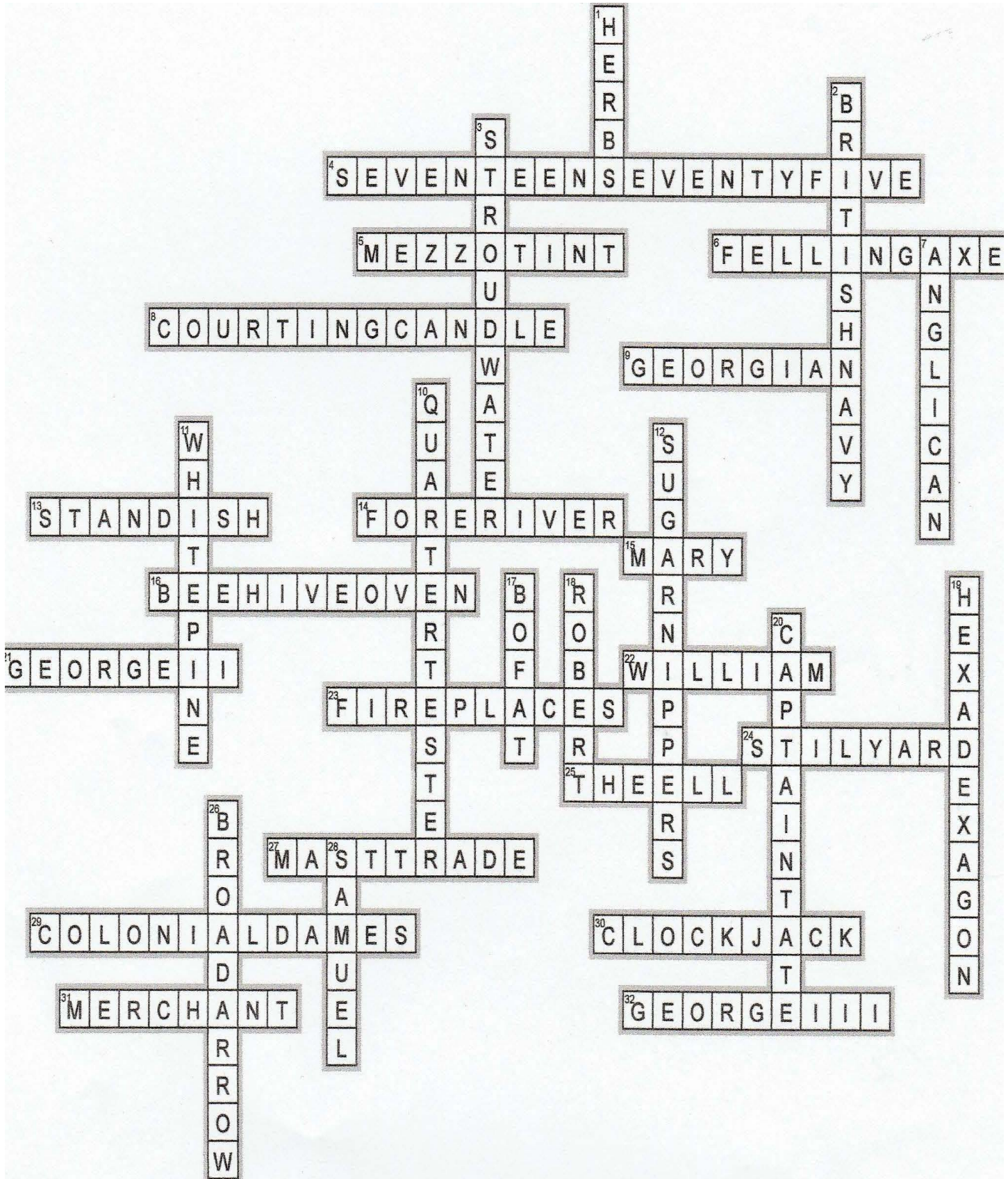
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# No Peeking





## 2018 TATE HOUSE EDUCATION PLANNING IN A NUTSHELL



May 5 Girl Scout Day

May 19 Annual Herb and Plant Sale

May 30th Tate House Opens for Tours

June 2nd Grand Opening, Celebrating the Dames

June 10th Colonial Tea

June 20th Evening in the Garden, rain date June 27th

July 12th Herb Adams lecture

August 9th Michael Dekker Lecture

August 23 Jim Nelson Lecture

September 22nd Beer Event

September 27th James S. Leamon Lecture

October 13th & 14 Stroudwater Cemetery Tours

November 6th Beth Maitland Lecture English Paper Piecing  
Quilting

November 13th Volunteer & Member Appreciation Buffett

December 8th & 9th Colonial Christmas

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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.

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☐ I wish to remain anonymous \*