



DEANE HOUSE

WEBB HOUSE

STEVENS HOUSE

NSCDA-CT NEWSLETTER

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WINTER 2008

Message from the President

Anne Kuckro

We are very grateful to all who contribute to the NSCDA-CT and to our Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum. Cash and in-kind donations help to defray the Museum's operating expenses, while donations of objects help to expand its collections. Thank you.

At its February meeting the Board of Managers created an Ad-hoc Building Committee to monitor the structural stabilization, restoration and new interpretations that we are making at the Webb House thanks to the generous support of the National Park Service through its "Save America's Treasures" grant program. The Ad-hoc Committee will also work with the Director and the Boston architectural firm of Mellowes and Paladino to develop and implement plans for the proposed addition to the Museum.

I am pleased to serve as the Committee's Co-chair; Properties chair, Sally Given and Development chair, Judy Rowley, have also agreed to serve on this committee. Over the past 15 years Mellowes and Paladino have specialized in the design of additions to traditional residences in towns like Concord and Salem, MA. Board members who attended their PowerPoint presentation were impressed with the way they use massing and scale to insure that the additions did not overwhelm or upstage the original houses. We are confident that this architectural team can design an addition that will respect and complement our historic houses and provide an appropriate backdrop for our Colonial Revival garden. We hope that they will have conceptual drawings ready in time to show those of you who attend the Annual Meeting in May.

Message from the Director

Charles T. Lyle

I am pleased to report that our Christmas tours in December were a success. A total of 622 people visited the houses and the newly expanded museum shop. The Webb House was decorated with fresh greens and flowers with a large Christmas tree and toy display in the second floor hallway. The rooms were filled with holiday decorations and good cheer. The Stevens House was also opened with appropriate decorations representing Christmas in the early 19th century.

This is the first year we have collaborated with the Wethersfield Historical Society on Christmas tours.

(Continued on page 2)



Photograph, Charles T. Lyle

*Webb House Parlor set up as a dining room
For Christmas tours*

Message from the Director

(continued from page 1)

They invited various decorators to come in to decorate the rooms in the Hurlbut-Dunham House, taking a less traditional approach that provides a nice contrast to our historic houses.

Our former shop consultant, Renate Smoller from Boscobel, did an excellent job getting things organized this fall, when we doubled the physical size of the shop to include the dining room. Our new shop consultant, Leslie Watson, who is also in charge of the Institute of Living Auxiliary Shop at the Hartford Hospital, started with us in early December. Aided by museum shop assistant Amy Dalton-Kay, she added many fun holiday touches and some attractive, new merchandise to bring the shop alive. We are closed to the public over the winter and will reopen on weekends in April. Leslie has been to the New York Gift Show and is ordering some exciting items for the spring reopening.

Over the winter break, a number of important projects are in progress. The structural stabilization of the Webb House, funded by the prestigious "Save American Treasures" grant of \$150,000, is currently under contract and the work will be completed by the end of March. In January, it was necessary to remove asbestos on the basement ductwork. Asbestos was also found in the old plaster, which had to be removed in the closets where steel rods will be installed and in the hallway where it was buckled and cracked. We are also refinishing the floors in the Webb House over the winter break.

With the balance of remaining federal grant funds, estimated at about \$100,000, we hope to get the approval of the National Park Service to complete the restoration of the hallway and the Washington Bed Chamber in the Webb House, including the graining on the woodwork. Research and planning is currently in progress for these projects.

The offices are open over the winter, and we encourage you to call if we can be of assistance.



Photograph, Charles T. Lyle

The Christmas tree in the second-floor hallway of Webb House features a display of antique toys from the collections of Muffy Barhydt and Charles Lyle. The dolls' house was donated to the Museum in 2007 by Elizabeth Whitley.

Presidential Visit

Mark your calendars for May 21st. The President of the National Society, Mrs. James Cobb, will visit the Connecticut Society and be the featured guest at the Annual Meeting in May. A good turn-out would be a wonderful welcome for her, so plan to come to the Webb Barn at 10:30 a.m. on May 21st, 2008.

She plans to arrive on Tuesday afternoon in time for her to tour our three houses and to see the plans for the proposed addition. She will have the opportunity to meet the Board during dinner and will spend the night at the Kuckro's. There will be a reception following the business portion of the Annual Meeting. Lunch will be served promptly at 12:30 p.m. so that Stuart can leave by 2:00 p.m. Her next stop will be the Rhode Island Society.

National Essay Contest

The 2008 Congressional Seminar National Essay Contest has now entered the judging phase. The topic this year is:

“If you were a Presidential candidate, what domestic issue would you consider most important, and what would you do about it?”

Entries received covered diverse subjects ranging from Immigration to Health Care. All were well written and intelligently argued, and we await news of the winning essay.

Although children and grandchildren of Dames are not eligible for the scholarship, they are invited, and, in fact, encouraged, to attend the Seminar at their own expense. The Seminar will be held June 21-27, 2008 in Washington, D.C. and is a most worthwhile experience.

Sally Kernan, Patriotic Service

Judy says “Thank You!”

The Annual Appeal kicked off in December and many thanks to all of you who have supported it. For others, there is still time to support this endeavor and take us beyond our goal. I hope we will have 100% of the Dames contributing by this April.

By the time the Newsletter arrives, you will have received the brochure on the Elizabeth Colt Society. What a marvelous piece on Elizabeth Colt, our first President, and the Connecticut Society of the Colonial Dames!

We can be proud of all we have accomplished and contributed in terms of education and preservation. Leaving a legacy is a perfect way for our members to honor and support the Connecticut Society and our Museum.

Once again, Thank You to all the Connecticut Dames for their continuing efforts and support!

Judy Rowley, Development Committee Chair

Sulgrave Manor ~ Your Own Manor House

Many Colonial Dames do not realize what a treasure they own. Yes, *you* have a presence in the beautiful 16th-century home of George Washington’s ancestors. In fact, we are all invited to take the trips sponsored by the Friends of Sulgrave Manor. Are you interested in visiting Ireland at the end of May, or Normandy and Brittany June 1-13, with a cruise on the Seine? Between the two trips you can enjoy Dames Day, May 31st at Sulgrave Manor that will give you a chance to see the lovely manor and gardens. You may make your reservations with Martha Baty, Travel Agent. You may also visit the Manor any time that you are in England. It is in Northamptonshire, not too far from Oxford.



Your donations in the past helped to replace the slate roof that had been on the house since 1539. Can you even imagine a roof of today lasting 450 years? Of course, money is always needed, so donations will be gratefully received and used to restore the gardens after the 2007 deluge or to continue the fabulous educational programs.

In September, 2008 Martin Sirot-Smith will again come to the United States with his portrayal of Lawrence Washington, one of George’s many great-grandfathers. Connecticut is going to have the honor of hosting him on September 26. He will perform for us and for other organizations that might want to meet George Washington’s ancestor. He also performs in full regalia for school children. Should we have a luncheon or an English tea in his honor? He will need housing for the two nights he spends with us. If you are able to be his hostess, please let us know.

We Dames are privileged to retain this ancient connection to British soil and heritage. Please do help support this property. You may send donations of any amount to: Friends of Sulgrave Manor, addressed to: Mrs. John B. Hubbard, 759 Port Way Drive, Harbor Spring, MI, 49740-9105

Tags & Treasures

Planning is well underway for the popular bi-annual Tags & Treasures Sale, to be held the weekend of April 25-27. We have already received many lovely items and could use many more. If you are downsizing or simply cleaning out – or helping others to do so, please think of the Dames!! Any clean, saleable items in good condition are welcome.

We are particularly looking for antique and vintage items, jewelry, linens, furniture, books, china, silver, pictures, etc. If you have items that you would like to donate, please contact your Area Chair (see pg. 19 in your Directory) to arrange for pickup or drop off – or contact Tags & Treasures chair, Sally Kernan at 203/758-8086. We would be happy to provide itemized donation receipts for tax purposes.

This year, we are planning a Gala Preview Party for Dames and their guests from 5-7 p.m. on Friday the 25th. For the admission fee of \$20 per person, guests will enjoy wine and cheese, delicious hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction of a few of our finer treasures as well as a “Teacup Raffle” of unique and charming items (gift baskets, gift certificates, homemade goodies and goods & services). If you have a lovely antique or piece of silver that deserves special attention, please consider letting us feature it at the preview party.

Regular Hours will be as follows: Early Buying: Saturday 9-10 a.m., \$20 per person; Saturday 26th, 10-4 p.m., \$5 per person; Sunday 27th: 10-2:00 p.m., \$2.50 per person--Bag Sale starts at noon on Sunday (\$2 per bag).

Patriotic Service

“Massing of the Colors”

On October 21, 2007, the annual “Massing of the Colors” ceremony was held at the beautiful First Church of Christ in West Hartford. The Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford hosted this year’s event, and Dames Margaret Thomas and Sally Kernan attended. Each year some thirty genealogical and heritage societies as diverse as The Order of the Cincinnati and The Sons and Daughters of Pirates convene to carry their societies’ flags and to participate in a lovely church service. Many of the flag bearers are in costume, and it is a most colorful and uplifting event, open to all members of the invited societies.

Support for our wounded Veterans

In December, Dame Patricia Carroll organized a collection of historical and patriotic books and tapes and sent them to wounded and recovering veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. *Sally Kernan, Patriotic Service*

Utley Lecture

We are please to announce that our speaker for the Utley lecture is Hugh Howard. The lecture is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 4th in the Webb Barn. A wine and cheese reception will follow the talk.

Mr. Howard has a passion for historic architecture and is the author of nine books, including most recently *Houses of the Founding Fathers*, which features the Silas Deane and Joseph Webb Houses among the many sites selected to highlight the men who made America and the way they lived. Other recent titles include *Dr. Kimball and Mr. Jefferson: Rediscovering the Founding Fathers of American Architecture*. He has also worked as a writer and researcher for the A&E series *In Search of Palladio* hosted by Bob Villa, and his writings have appeared regularly in the New York Times and other major publications.

Spring Outing

Invitations have gone out for the spring outing planned for Thursday, April 3rd. The Connecticut Dames are planning a trip to the Yale University Art Gallery. We will be having a guided tour of the newly renovated Art Gallery, which starts promptly at 10:30 and then we will be lunching at Morey’s in New Haven. Guests are welcome! Please let us know by March 1st to insure a place.

Busy Winter and Spring Schedule

Even though the Museum is closed for the winter months, a number of educational programs and activities are scheduled. In honor of Black History Month, special tours focusing on the enslaved and free African Americans who lived in Wethersfield in the 18th century were held on February 9 and 23rd. Also on the 23rd Tammy Denease Richardson, a storyteller, artist and performer who also works as a museum educator at the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, provided a dramatic debut of her new character Clo Pratt, a Wethersfield slave who was given her freedom upon the death of her master. Her performance in the Deane House kitchen was a full house, with 30 attendees.



Photograph, Charles T. Lyle

Tammy Richardson visits with Sal Carmosino prior to her performance. Sal greeted visitors at the front door in the role of a male servant in the household.

In March, the programs emphasize the lives of women in honor of Women's History Month. Staff will conduct special tours on March 8th highlighting the women who lived in the Museum's houses during the 18th century. Pieces from the textile collection will also be showcased. On March 22, the emphasis shifts to the women who lived in the houses in the late 19th and 20th centuries, including the role of the Colonial Dames in preserving the complex as a Museum.

Historian and museum staff member Linda Pagliuco will conduct a two-day knitting workshop on March 8 and 22 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Participants will make an 1830's shawl based on a pattern from the 19th-century sewing manual *The Workwoman's Guide*. Each participant should have basic knowledge of the knit/purl stitch.

The cost, \$25, includes instructions, light refreshments and a tour of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum that focuses on the museum's textile collection. Reservations are required as space is limited to 20 people. A list of supplies needed will be provided upon registration.

“Victorian Lady” Performance



The museum's Women's History Month celebration ends on March 22nd with a performance by Kandie Carle, better known as “The Victorian Lady,” at 2 p.m.

Kandie Carle has worked since 1980 as an actress, dancer and singer in theaters throughout the United States and abroad. She began touring with her one-woman show “The Victorian Lady” in 1996. During the show, Carle takes her audience on a journey to the 19th and 20th centuries using a vast collection of authentic Victorian and Edwardian clothing and accessories. Throughout the interactive presentation, she blends humor with history as she shares intriguing anecdotes and insight into the clothing, lifestyles, manners, etiquette and customs of men, women and children.

Cost: \$20 per person. Price includes a tour of the museum and light refreshments. Reservations are required. Space is limited. Please call the Museum or email lsillitto@webb-deane-stevens.org.

Gifts to the Museum in 2007

The Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum was fortunate to receive some generous gifts of antiques and other furnishings in the 2007 calendar year. We wish to acknowledge and thank the following donors:

- Virginia M. Hall, Caroline Y. Hicks and Susan M. McCabe for their gift of a large set (95 pieces) of Staffordshire china with a yellow and black tulip design. The china is the same one shown in the period photographs, ca. 1920, of the Webb House Tea Room. The original owner was the great aunt of the donors, Florence Booth Andrews, who purchased it in the 1920s for their family summer home at the shore.
- Jeanne Livingston for her gift of a coral three-strand necklace and two armlets with gold clasps with the likeness of a child on them. The jewelry, ca. 1840, was given for the Stevens House Children's exhibits. In a hopeful attempt to ward off illness during the 19th century, children were given jewelry made of coral, a material that was believed to have properties that repelled disease and evil spirits.
- Dorothy Venter for a Britannia ware teapot, ca. 1845, made in Meriden, Connecticut, by Isaac C. Lewis; an ivory button-hook; linens, and other accessories.
- Elizabeth Whitley for the gift of her family dollhouse. The three-story town house with a Mansard roof, probably dating from the 1880s, was exhibited under the tree in the Webb House second floor hallway at Christmas and is now on view on the second floor of the Stevens House.
- TD Banknorth, N.A. and Christine Traczyk, Vice President, for the gift of colonial-style office furnishings used in their former branch on the Silas Deane Highway. The generous gift includes four desks, wooden file cabinets and credenzas, lamps, fifteen framed and matted prints, a large mahogany conference table and 18 chairs, a large Japanese-style lacquered screen, a sofa and other chairs, and a variety of tables. We plan to use the furniture in the new addition to the Webb House.

Donors to the Annual Fund

As of March 7, 2008, the following generous donors had contributed to the Annual Fund, the single most significant source of income for the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum. We are very appreciative of this support and gratefully accept any further donations, which will be acknowledged in subsequent Newsletters.

Gift of \$5,000 and above
Philip & Betsey C. Caldwell
Foundation

\$2,500 and above
Order of Colonial Lords of Manors
In America

\$1,000 and above
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Wethersfield Travel, Inc.

Annual Dues

Annual Dues payments were nearly 100% and we appreciate the dedication this represents. Below, we gratefully acknowledge the Dames who gave an extra donation to the NSCDA-CT above and beyond their dues.

Mrs. James Alexander

Mrs. Sally J. Bill

Mrs. Stanford H. Brainerd

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Mrs. Edward H. Budd

Mrs. Stanton L. Catlin

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Mrs. Calvert Thomas

Mrs. M. Pierpont Warner

Mrs. Edward Waters

Miss Eleanor Pratt West

Ms. Harriotte Wilson

Mrs. Frederick D. Zonino

New Members

From the Newsletter of February, 1984:

“All members are encouraged to think about finding and proposing new members. We need to swell the ranks with congenial, contributing women.”

Then, there were about 425 members, while now we have fewer than 300. These current members have the huge task and duty to keep the Connecticut Society alive and our historic houses, barn and planned addition all maintained. In attending to the present as well as looking to the future, we must increase our membership. If every two members brought in one new member we would have more than 100 new Dames!

Coming Events

March 8	“Ladies of the Houses” tours, exploring the lives of 18 th century women living in the Webb, Deane and Stevens houses. 10-4 p.m.
March 8 & 22	Knitting workshops with Linda Pagliuco; 9:30-11:30 a.m. Reservations required
March 22	“Ladies of the Houses” tours, exploring the lives of 19 th & 20 th century women living in the Webb, Deane and Stevens houses and the origins of the Museum. 10-4 p.m. Performance of “The Victorian Lady” by Kandie Carl (2:00 p.m.). Reservations required
April 3	10:30 - Visit to Yale University Art Gallery and lunch at Morey’s in New Haven
April 25, 26, 27	Tags & Treasures, Webb Barn. Preview party reception on April 25 th . 5-7 p.m. See article for hours on other days.
May 4, 3:00 p.m.	Utley Lecture by Hugh Howard, author of <i>Houses of the Founding Fathers</i> ; Webb Barn, wine & cheese reception follows.
May 21, 11:00 a.m.	Annual Meeting, Webb Barn

Visit www.webb-deane-stevens.org for program info. Make reservations at 529-0612, ext 12 or lsillitto@webb-deane-stevens.org.



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