

Castle Chronicle

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Smith's Castle, Forest Park Honored with AASLH Award

Barbara Carey, Resident Director
Christine Kalina, Chair, Education Committee

Smith's Castle and Forest Park Elementary School of North Kingstown have received the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Certificate of Commendation for the collaborative interpretive program, *Documents and Discovery: Kids Make History Live*. The AASLH was formed in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history.

The award was presented during the Association's 58th annual meeting in Providence. In conjunction, Castle volunteers and Forest Park staff conducted an on-site workshop for meeting delegates demonstrating how the program offers experiences in primary document research and living history.

Now in its third year, the program engages third grade students in a year-long, in-depth study of the Cocumscussoc site and its significance in Rhode Island colonial history and the development of North Kingstown.

The award is the culmination of an interesting collaborative journey. In November 1999, Smith's Castle representatives were joined by those of Casey and Watson farms, Gilbert Stuart Birthplace, and the *Brandaris* at a North Kingstown school department professional development workshop held to increase awareness of the resources for children to study their community's history.

Workshop attendees Robert Vincze, Forest Park principal, and Deborah Britton, Forest Park third grade teacher, saw great potential in North Kingstown school-museum collaboration. Vincze has a strong



Award Presentation. Representatives from Smith's Castle and Forest Park Elementary School accepted the AASLH award at a reception Friday, September 19 in Providence. Pictured (l to r) are Natalie Norris, director of marketing and special events, AASLH; Deb Britton, third grade teacher, Forest Park; Kim Roberts, third grade teacher, Forest Park; Robert Vincze, principal, Forest Park; Christine Kalina, vice president, Cocumscussoc Association; Barbara Carey, resident director, Cocumscussoc Association; and Mark Howell, chair, AASLH awards committee. Photo by Elizabeth Newman.

background in building such partnerships, developed while working with Dr. Bena Kallick, nationally recognized school reform leader, as a staff member at the Children's Museum in Fairfield, Connecticut, and while principal in Indian Lake, New York. Another collaboration with three public schools and the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, New York netted a three-year National Endowment for the Humanities grant. His experiences led to a determination to provide cross-curricular, arts-integrated studies for children at Forest Park. Vincze's enthusiasm inspired Forest Park third grade teachers and the Castle educational staff to develop *Documents and Discovery*.

The program offers students opportunities to interact with the site, the collections, and the museum staff making history come alive through

hands-on experiences that reach beyond the textbook. Students develop skills in creative inquiry, problem solving, and cooperative learning. Additional classroom activities integrate music, dance, visual arts, language arts, and math. Teachers and Castle staff collaborate in project development and instruction, with teachers serving as Castle docents and Castle staff serving as classroom teachers. Following is an overview of the project in its current form.

During phase one, prior to the first visit, students begin introductory activities in the classroom. These include vocabulary development, practice in artifact discovery, and making of hand bound journals in which students will record their experiences.

Students then visit Smith's Castle for a half-day program to explore the site in small, self-chosen study groups.

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The viewpoints expressed by contributors to *Castle Chronicle* are not necessarily those of the Cocumscussoc Association.

Note from the President

Education Excels at Smith's Castle

This issue of the Chronicle features the work of Smith's Castle's very hard working education committee and the volunteers who support its highly successful initiatives.

As the lead story indicates, our youth programs are attracting notice. The award-winning *Documents and Discovery* program is an outstanding example of a school-museum collaboration that enables imaginative educators to use local historic resources to maximum effect. I congratulate everyone involved in this project on a job well done!

Another successful and very popular special program was a summer day camp where attendees stepped back in time into the shoes of colonial children.

This past season 1,919 students (plus 325 teachers and chaperones) from towns across the state learned about the Castle's unique place in Rhode Island history and experienced colonial life and customs—thanks to the efforts of our education staff and docents.

Many thanks to Castle education chair Chris Kalina for her vision and her extraordinary commitment of time and energy. Thanks, as well, to resident director Barbara Carey for her extraordinary efforts on behalf of these programs. And a big thank-you to our docents, who generously volunteer their time to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with our youth.

Not to be outdone, our adult education staff is creating innovative programs that are also incredibly well-

received. In 2003, the committee sponsored 11 programs that attracted 250 attendees. Highlights of the year included an 18th century camp for women and Mary Nunes' fascinating exploration of colonial dyeing techniques (see page 10). The committee has already scheduled some great events for early next year (see page 4). Congratulations to Carol Bozarth and the adult-education volunteers for making the Castle a friendly and inspirational place for learning.

You can support Smith's Castle education programs. A major portion of the annual fund drive, which closes at the end of the year, will benefit one of the projects on the education committee's "wish list": publication of a children's book about Smith's Castle; an architectural model of the Castle; or an audio-visual presentation to facilitate community outreach. Thank you to everyone who has already pledged to the campaign. For those who haven't, please consider a tax-deductible donation to Smith's Castle as part of your end-of-year giving.

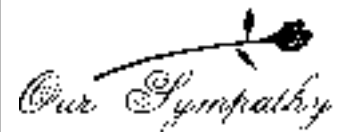
Education is a critical part of the Smith's Castle mission. At our annual meeting on January 31, members will vote on a revision of our mission statement that reinforces our commitment in this area. Please review the new mission statement and discussion on page 3. I look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting!

Neil
—Neil Dunay

Welcome New Members —as of 11/14/03

Benjamin & Isabel Burnett
Beth Andreo
Caroline Aumann
Donna M. Blanchard
Kathleen Bossy
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Bucksoules
Robert & Deedee Chatham
Nancy Drury
Gary & Lynne Eastman
Andrew & Mary Erikson
Kathy & Joe Gallichio
Yvonne Galinko
Mr. & Mrs. Russ Gardiner
Dan & Elizabeth Gay
Dennis & Laura Gay
Charles F. Gilbert

Richard & Rosemary Harrison
Robert & Dianne Izzo
Carol Jacques
Oskar G. Jenni
Mr. & Mrs. B. Kiermam
Jeff McFarland
Rosemarie E. Mello
Mr. & Mrs. Rob O'Connor
Linda Reynolds Olgrens
Brian & Nancy Pelligrino
Deborah Peterson
Nancy Peterson
Mr. Kenneth Salomon
Marjorie Stauffer
Chris & Kathy Tulsdorf
Mr. & Mrs. Paul White
Paul A. Whitman



Don Steinman 71, husband of Betsy Steinman, died October 11, 2003. He was a Cocumscussoc Association trustee and made generous contributions to the Cocumscussoc Association during his many years of involvement. He is survived by his wife Betsy, also a trustee, his three children, and nine grandchildren.

Strategic Plan Nets Board Approval

At its October board meeting, the Association adopted a long range plan produced over the past two years by the Strategic Planning committee. The plan grew out of a recommendation developed by the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) that urged the setting of long range objectives and priorities. At the Association's annual meeting last January a workshop session developed a number of recommendations which were incorporated into the plan.

Peter Dunston, chairman of the committee, in a presentation to the board, stressed that the plan was not a forecast. Predicting the future in an ever changing world is risky. The plan, however, does describe the long range program objectives and the physical, human and financial

resources needed to ultimately bring about that desired future. Key priorities include maintaining and expanding the Association's excellent education programs, expanding, preserving and exhibiting the collection of art, furniture and artifacts, maintaining and preserving buildings and landscapes, and building a part time staff. In the more distant future, as the economic environment permits, a campaign to build an endowment fund is planned. This will provide funds to maintain programs during recessionary periods and funds for emergency needs. Later, a building campaign is envisioned which will raise funds for the construction of a visitor's center with classroom, exhibition and collection storage areas.

The plan will be revised annually. For example, it currently lists the year 2006 as a period when part time staff will be employed. That date may have to be postponed if financial resources do not develop as planned. One can compare the plan to a road map of a driving trip from Providence to Seattle. The objective remains constant but detours and timetable changes may be required enroute as floods or forest fires are encountered.

The Association's objective of expanded programs, facilities and financial resources will remain constant, but specific plans will need to be altered as the environment in which we live changes.

Copies of the Strategic Plan are available in the Association office. ■

—Peter Dunston

Cocumscussoc Association Mission Statement

As stewards of Cocumscussoc, we shall preserve the area's architecture, archaeology, and landscape. We shall encourage a dynamic exchange of ideas through factual and lively interpretation of the stories of the people of Cocumscussoc and collect and conserve objects that shed light on their legacy. We shall educate our audiences about the relevance of Cocumscussoc to local and national history.

The Cocumscussoc Association is the steward of Cocumscussoc, whose center is Smith's Castle radiating outward to the North Kingstown community. Our stewardship extends to all periods of Cocumscussoc history, from the time of the Narragansett's occupation before European contact, up to the present.

We shall interpret the site to our audiences based on factual material about its history and the people associated with it. These people include the Narragansett, Roger Williams, the Smith and Updike families of the 17th and 18th centuries, the slaves, servants, and laborers who toiled here, the dairy farmers of the 19th and 20th centuries, and the founders, leaders, and benefactors of the Cocumscussoc Association.

To further accurate interpretation, we shall collect, conserve, exhibit, and share the furnishings,

personal objects, and documents associated with the people of Cocumscussoc or are appropriate to their times and lifestyles.

We shall foster archaeological, architectural, genealogical, and historical investigations to bring the stories of Cocumscussoc to light.

Our target audiences will include all parties interested in our history, both children and adults, including the local North Kingstown community which sprang from this site, tourists, descendants of the people associated with this property, and scholars whose research may benefit from studies of our site and collections.

In executing our mission, we shall provide or acquire all necessary materials, equipment, facilities, land, and personnel, and we shall seek adequate funding through all appropriate sources.

One of the recommendations that came out of the Castle's participation in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) in 2001 was that the Association update its mission statement to more accurately reflect its activities and stage of development. The current mission statement relies on the 1949 organization document supplemented by a vision statement that was adopted in 1999.

The strategic planning committee has drafted a new mission statement that incorporates the fundamentals of our mission since 1949, and reflects our current operations. The mission statement will be submitted to the membership for approval at the annual meeting on Saturday, January 31.

Upcoming Events

Site Committee Solicits Proposals

In December, the Long Range Site Committee will issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) soliciting candidates to prepare a cultural landscape report (CLR). This initiates the process of implementing the \$200,000 transportation enhancement grant awarded to Smith's Castle for FY2005 (see Winter 2002 issue of Castle Chronicle). The completed CLR will provide the Association with a comprehensive research and planning document that will guide the preparation of a landscape master plan and, ultimately, the detail design and construction of the specific landscape improvements for which the transportation grant was awarded.

Copies of the RFQ will be available in the Castle office and as a downloadable PDF document on the Castle web site.

Intriguing Topics to be Presented in Winter Adult Ed Series

Jane Lancaster, award-winning author and lecturer, will present *Reading Rhode Island Girls Lives in 1779: Diaries as Historical Records* at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 17, at the North Kingstown Free Library. This lively presentation will look at the lives of 18th century teenagers and draw comparisons between their lives and those of today's teens. It will show why diaries are such an important resource for understanding the lives of past generations.

Ms. Lancaster, educated in England and at Brown University, is an authority on women's history—particularly of Rhode Island. This program is sponsored by the North Kingstown Public Library, the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, and Smith's Castle. Watch for more information in *Among Friends*, the monthly newsletter published by the Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library. The program is free and open to

the public. Seating is limited for this program. Please call 294-3521 to register.

Cynthia Davis presents *Flax: An Historic Perspective* at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 20 at the North Kingstown Free Library. Flax was an invaluable resource for the early colonists. The presentation will discuss the critical role flax played in the economic survival of colonial families, including those of Smith's Castle. Learn how flax was grown and the many ways it was used. Find out about its uses today and how to cultivate it as an ornamental perennial in your own garden.

Ms. Davis is a URI Master Gardener and a volunteer at the Smith Applebee House in Smithfield, R.I. The program is sponsored by the North Kingstown Free Library, Smith's Castle, and the URI Master Gardeners. The program is free and open to the public. Seating is limited for this program. Please call 294-3521 to register. ■

Cocumscussoc Farm Milk Bottle Found in Michigan Cellar

The Cocumscussoc Association collections committee has just acquired a Cocumscussoc Farm quart milk bottle thanks to the eBay sleuthing of committee chair, Linda Eppich. It was purchased from a seller in Paw Paw, Michigan. The owners found it among other old

bottles while cleaning their basement, remarking that "it's a mystery how the bottle fell into our possession." It is an important addition to the collection, representing the Fox family era and the great Ayshire cattle that produced the Cocumscussoc Farm milk.

Accession number 2003.9.1



Photo by Barbara Carey

Upcoming Events

Don't Miss the Castle Holiday Merriment Reserve Now for the Members' Holiday Party

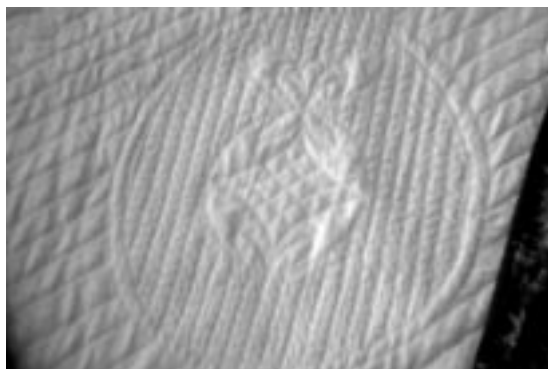
Call now! Some tickets are still available for the annual Holiday Gala to be held Friday, December 12 at the Castle. This gathering has the reputation of being one of the best holiday parties in town. With the ambiance of the Castle by candlelight, the delicious fare, fine music, and delightful company, how could it be other than wonderful!

For the first time this year, a silent auction will be held during the party. Simply select your favorite item, record your bid, and cross your fingers. The winners

will be announced at the end of the party. Each year we select a Castle project to benefit from the proceeds of this event. In 2000, Castle trees were cared for. In 2001, we funded our beautiful Post Road entrance sign. In 2002, the visitor orientation exhibit benefitted from this event. This year's proceeds will go toward updating the Castle's computer system.

For an additional gift of \$100, any member can become a sponsor of the party. This gift would be warmly appreciated by us all. Call 294-3521. ■

Silent Auction Items



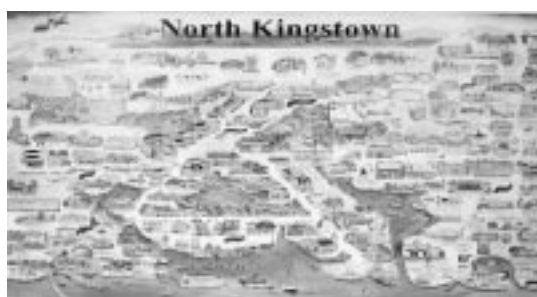
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1. *White on white quilt*. 72" x 50". Handcrafted by Christine Kalina.
2. *Serenity*. Toned 16" x 20" framed and matted photograph. Artist: Bo Kass, New York.
3. *Main Street Wickford USA*. Signed and numbered print, 96/200. Artist: Joe Szarek. 1979.
4. *North Kingstown*. Color poster, 24" x 35". Designed and illustrated by Marjorie J. Vogel, 2003. Marge will personally autograph the poster for the auction winner.

AASLH Award —continued from page 1

Students explore either the garden and stream, waterfront and punt, Richard Smith, Jr. room, or the 17th century bedchamber. They observe overall space, architecture, and natural resources and consider artifacts and their possible uses. They record observations in their journals.

Their journal entries are guided by a series of questions: How did the area you studied contribute to the function of the community? What important object did you see and what did it tell you? How does it compare to

or her own room at home. They examine reproduction artifacts and work in small groups to analyze the 1692 rooms and contents. Teachers assist students with difficult or unknown vocabulary. For example, no children recognize the word “Negro” in the inventory.

Students demonstrate comprehension by illustrating their assigned Castle room and reporting findings to classmates. Specific questions guide student reflections: What did you know about Richard Smith, Jr. before?

community. Each student chooses one experiential aspect of family life: children’s education, cooking, chores, or textiles. Each area is staffed by knowledgeable Castle docents.

Education: Children make ink and do lessons based on the early hornbook and the *New England Primer*, produce a simple sampler, and play colonial games at recess.

Cooking: Students learn basics of fire building, grinding corn, and making jonnycakes, soup, and butter. They draw water from the brook and

Forest Park School’s Third Grade at Smith’s Castle. Photos 1, 4, 7, 9, & 12 by Kim Roberts. Photos 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, & 11 by Stephanie Weber.



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something you have or use today? What else do you want to know about the people, site, or objects here? In this phase of the program when all is new, the question students most frequently ask is “Where is the castle?”

Phase two takes Smith’s Castle docents to the Forest Park classroom to engage students in the investigation of a primary document, the 1692 inventory of Richard Smith, Jr. In order that students grasp the concept of “inventory” before they begin to interpret Smith’s inventory, each is asked to list one or two objects found in his

What do you know about him now? What do you need to know next? Most note that while things listed on their inventory were primarily luxuries such as TV sets and computers, Smith’s inventory lists essentials. Most do not think he was a wealthy man because he had so few possessions. By learning about Smith’s possessions students make inferences about his life in that early community.

In phase three students return to the Castle for a half-day activity in which each assumes the role of a child in the 17th century Cocumscussoc

gather herbs from the garden for their meal preparation. The home-cooked meal is served to fellow students and teachers. It is surprising how few students have had experience in cooking or close examination of foods.

Chores: Children air bedding and curtains, draw water and do laundry, mend clothing, and gather essential household herbs. They assist the cooking group by fetching water and gathering herbs as needed.

Textiles: Children spin wool using both a drop spindle and the spinning wheel; dye their yarn with natural

plant material gathered in the garden; and weave their yarn on the loom.

There is a genuine feeling of discovery as even the simplest of chores is tackled with great enthusiasm. Students record their experiences and compare and contrast their roles in today's community with those of their counterparts in the 17th century. They describe their favorite activity and speculate on whether they would like to be a colonist or native American in this community in the 1670s.

The student's journal entries illus-

"Dear Journal, I'm at Smith's Castle once again. Today, I'm in a cooking class. We're cooking peas porridge and jonnycakes. I did a lot of stirring cornmeal. When you get too close to a fire it burns your eyes because of the smoke. That is one thing I learned. Today we played on stilts and played with graces. It was fun. I had fun cooking and playing as a colonial child today. It was a great experience."

The concluding demonstration of student learning, or performance, has been documented in a variety of

form of in-class student presentations based on further inquiry into topics that interested them as a result of the project. For example, some students did further study of cooking in a reflector oven and demonstrated the process with a student-constructed working model. Other presentations included herbs and their uses, writing with a quill pen, a working model of a sundial, the many uses of corn, and men's occupations in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Smith's Castle is grateful for the



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trate the power of their living history experience. Jacqueline Roberti wrote, *"This experience was different for me because things were much harder to do. They took longer too. For example using the yoke to haul water from a stream into a house takes a lot longer than turning on the faucet getting some water then turning it off. Going to Smith's Castle made me realize how hard things were then. It helped me to know how much homemade things were worth and how long it took to make them."*

Stephanie Burdick's journal entry expresses the reality of work and play.

ways, each year taking slightly different form. In 2001, students prepared a museum exhibit for their school that included "artifacts" from the project—a woven basket, articles of colonial costume, a handmade feather duster, and excerpts from their journals. They brought their exhibit to the Castle for Plantation Days, and talked with the public about their exhibit and their learning experiences. Thanks to this project, some children have become regular volunteers at Castle events and activities.

The 2002 performance took the

opportunity to collaborate in developing educational programming with a school such as Forest Park. The Rhode Island Department of Education has recognized the school as an exemplary school for continued high performance and improvement, and it has been named a model school for arts integration through the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Working closely with exceptional professionals, Deborah Britton, Kim Roberts, and Bob Vincze, has been a joy and an inspiration. What partners we have become! ■

Recent Events

Scenes from Plantation Days, 2003

Photos 1-6 & 8-10 by Bob Hocking
Photos 7, 12, 13, 15, & 16 by Marissa Bozarth
Photos 11, 14, & 17 by Bill Carey



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Recent Events

Is the Dye Ready Yet?

Twenty-three attended the August 16 *Colonial Colors to Dye For* program presented by Mary Nunes. Participants learned about the art and the science of dyeing cloth with readily available natural materials, such as walnut shells, sunflowers, and the berries of our common sumac. This program was one in the 2003 series of adult education programs sponsored by the Smith's Castle adult education committee. ■



Louise Duckworth (left) reads the dye pot for session participants to use for processing their swatches of wool. Program presenter, Mary Nunes (2nd from left), looks on. Photo by Barbara Carey.

Castle Participates in Veterans' Day Parade

This year for the first time, Smith's Castle fielded a contingent of marchers in the annual North Kingstown Veterans' Day Parade. About two dozen members, bundled up against the chill in the November air, joined area bands, military units, and civic groups of every description in paying tribute to America's veterans.

Out in front representing the Castle was past presi-

dent Les Flood. He led the Castle contingent astride the 1949 Ford tractor he recently donated to the Castle. The board of trustees gratefully accepted his gift at its October 25 meeting. Thanks, Les!

Thanks also to Dianne McGowan who organized the Castle's participation in the parade. And thanks to everyone who marched! ■



Dianne McGowan
Photo by Barbara Carey



Future docents Helen Richter, Rosie Bell, and Maureen O'Brien (l to r) carried the Smith's Castle banner on Veterans' Day. Photo by Larry Kalina.



Past president, Les Flood, led the Smith's Castle contingent. Photo by Neil Dunay.

Guy J. Natelli 135 Greenwood Road
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**It's That Time
of Year Again—
Time Sheets Due**

It's the time of year again to submit your annual volunteer hours report. There are handy forms in the office if you don't have one. If forms drive you crazy, just call in your hours to Barbara, 294-3521. Dates aren't necessary, just the amount of time you have worked. We are trying to categorize the hours, so let us know, for example, that you worked 3 hours for Plantation Days, 2 hours for Strawberry Festival, and 1 hour for clean-up days in April. Please submit your hours by January 9 so the report can be ready for Annual Meeting, January 31. Both your volunteer time and your report are important to the Castle. Thank you!

Telephone (401) 294-4587
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\$12.50 non-members \$11.25 members

The Cocumscussoc Association

This Winter at Smith's Castle

December

Day	Time	Event
Friday, 12	6:00–8:00 pm	Member-Guest Holiday Party

January

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 17	2:00 pm	<i>The Diaries of Young Girls</i> by Jane Lancaster North Kingstown Free Library, see p. 4
Saturday, 31	2:00 pm	Annual Meeting, North Kingstown Free Library

February

Day	Time	Event
Wednesday, 25	7:00 pm	<i>R.I. Slavery and Its Legacies</i> Dramatic Reading, Colony House Newport
Saturday, 28	10:00 am	Docent Volunteer Orientation, North Kingstown Free Library
	2:00 pm	<i>R.I. Slavery and Its Legacies</i> Dramatic Reading, Hope High School, Providence
Sunday, 29	2:00 pm	<i>R.I. Slavery and Its Legacies</i> Dramatic Reading, North Kingstown High School

March

Day	Time	Event
Tuesday, 9	7:00 pm	Docent Volunteer Orientation, North Kingstown Free Library
Saturday, 20	2:00 pm	<i>The History of Flax</i> by Cynthia Davis North Kingstown Free Library, see p. 4

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