

Castle Chronicle



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Castle Readies for Seasonal Celebration

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Special Guest: Father Christmas will visit with children of all ages at the Christmas at the Castle celebration.

Christmas at the Castle Set for Public

The Christmas at the Castle Open House is returning this year. The Docents are all very busy decorating with fresh greens and gingerbread men.

There will be a bake sale, so when you are called, *please* say "yes" and bake your favorite pie, cake, bread, or cookies.

I understand that Father Christmas is planning to stop by! See you on December 4 and 5 from noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free. Invite your friends and neighbors!

—Bette Lou Pease, Event Chair

Members & Guests Party December 10

Don't miss the enclosed special invitation to the Castle Christmas party for members and guests. It's December 10 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Come share some Christmas cheer!

Fill Those Stockings in the Gift Shop

Open Dec. 4 & 5, Noon to 4 p.m.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas all around the Castle! Our "Docent Tree" is full of colorful and delightful ornaments that have been donated by our Docents. The shop is full of wonderful stocking stuffers, gifts for everyone, and some special treats. The Castle cookbooks were a huge success at Plantation Days and are still available. Come and see for yourself!

—Candace Bengston



Blackstone "Rides in" from Providence for Annual Meeting 2000

Come out to meet new and old friends, vote for new officers, and be well entertained at the Cocumscussoc Association Annual Meeting scheduled for 2:30 p.m., Sunday, February 6, 2000. The location will be announced soon. Get out your new calendar and mark this important date. Dessert and beverages will be served.

The speaker will be John McNiff, Roger Williams National Memorial Park Ranger, doing a first person in-character impersonation of William Blackstone. McNiff's tours at the Roger

Williams National Memorial get rave reviews.

McNiff as Blackstone will share a glimpse into the life of this multi-talented early settler, born in England in 1595, and ordained in the Church of England, and later venturing to the New World in 1623. He is said to have developed the first American variety of apples and may have had the largest library in the British colonies in his day. Hear his description of early Providence, "his take" on Roger Williams, and his preference for riding about on a mouse-colored bull.

Castle NEEDS the Power of Your 1999 Volunteer Hours

Volunteers are the heart of Smith's Castle and the time given is the lifeblood of the organization. Good volunteer hour stats are a critical component of grant proposals, and we are often asked by news media and other organizations for this information. If you don't have a Volunteer Hour Sheet for 1999, they

are available in the office. Just call or stop by. PLEASE prepare yours to send or bring to the Annex office in January, 2000. If you can't remember the exact number of hours, make a ballpark estimate. Hours great and small all count! Thank you for taking the time to complete YOUR Volunteer Hours Sheet!

Note from the Vice President

The Board of Trustees has accepted, with deep regret, the resignation of Bette Lou Pease as the Association President. Through the years, Bette Lou has devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy in serving Smith's Castle. She has participated in many committee assignments, served in varying capacities as a member of the trustees, and more recently assumed the responsibilities of Vice President and President. Her leadership will be missed. In addition to heading up the Christmas at the Castle event, Bette Lou will remain actively involved with the Docents and Furnishings Committee.

—Richard Bowen, Vice President

The View from the Annex Window

Sincere gratitude goes to Bette Lou and Bob Pease for faithful support. As President, Bette Lou's steadfast belief in the merit of the Castle has been yet another building block placing it on a strong foundation for the next century. We look forward to their wisdom and participation in the activities they both love best.

Somebody told me about a year ago that as soon as the Castle closed for the season, things would slow down a little. But these fall days are busier than those at the height of the summer. The bright ideas and hard work of Smith's Castle members, new and old, are inspiring. Challenging work has begun in long range planning. Much exciting activity is imminent with school tours knocking on the doors, preparations for Christmas at the Castle, the members' Christmas Party, potential local museum and museum-school partnerships and MORE.

You're a great group, Smith's Castle members!

—Barbara Carey, Resident Manager

The *Castle Chronicle* is published quarterly by the Cocumscussoc Association.

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New Membership Year Established

As reported in the last issue, the membership year has been redefined to coincide with the calendar year. Members who joined prior to September 30, 1999, will receive renewal notices at the first of 2000. As a transition to the new system, any memberships coming in after September 30, 1999, receive benefits through 2000. This membership year brings us into line with other non-profit organizations.

Lew Towler, Membership Chair, is wintering near family in his college town of Ann Arbor, Michigan. We look forward to his return in the spring. His creative spirit will be missed.

Welcome to New Members

New members as of November 5, 1999:

- Ellen Wilson
- Sandra and Ron Bernier
- Virginia Butler
- Nancy and George Sprague
- Ann Brown Eckert
- Mary Pierce and Family
- Rebecca and Charles Allen
- Clayton and Susan Seabury
- Kim and Stephen Clark
- Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Royle
- T. F. Moran, III
- Lee Zuker
- Charles and Linda Butson
- John Chase
- Craig Reekie
- James O'Donnell (Junior Docent) and Katherine Gee
- Mary and Paul Revello

Membership Statistics

Non-business membership units: (individual, family, patron, sustaining and life members)	260
Business membership units:	6
Membership receipts to date:	\$10,606

We're inching toward the \$15,000 goal!

Ryan's Market Joins the Business Member Ranks

Welcome to Ryan's Market, good neighbor and the newest member of the Smith's Castle Business Member Program. We hope to expand this group into 2000. If you are acquainted with a business that might be interested, call the office, 294-3521, for details.

Cooking Class is Finger-Licking Good

The Thursday, September 23 Open Hearth Cooking Class was filled to capacity. Docents Jean Chapman, Cay Mulcare, Marge Swift, Shirley Burnham, and Jan Breault led the class in preparing pumpkin soup, corn oysters, gingerbread, and a variety of griddle-fried fruit and vegetables.

The students learned about some of the most important cooking utensils. Each one received a Smith's Castle cookbook containing the recipes prepared and a handout entitled, "Fireplace and Oven Utensils for Cooking in the early American Kitchen."

People continue to inquire about cooking classes. If you are interested in a class next year, please call 294-3521.

Felicity Has Fine Finale

The Felicity fund-raiser was a smashing success with over \$1,000 raised for education and historic preservation! The lucky winner was Mrs. G. Dickson Kenney of Saunderstown. Thank you, Castle membership and visitors. It was a simple, nearly no-cost project. Please share any of your good ideas for more fund-raisers for Smith's Castle.

Newsletter Goes to Current Members

For continued receipt of the *Castle Chronicle*, be sure your membership is up-to-date!

Plantation Days Draws Crowds to Step Back in Time

Once again the white tents, crackling fires, glimmering candles, early music and characters of days gone by lent an air of colonial community to the Smith's Castle grounds. Pat Labrie coordinated the very successful October 2 and 3 event held under the skies of two perfect autumn days. Forty reenactment groups, 43 Boy and Girl Scouts and leaders, more than 80 other volunteers, and numerous community supporters made it all possible. The net profit was \$2,493.17.

More than 1300 visitors partook of the multitude of offerings, including candle dipping, the Junior Docent colonial wash day, ye old school house, period artisans, as well as the opportunity to chat with Revolutionary War militia from both sides of the cause. Louise Duckworth and her indentured servants cooked all day Saturday to serve about 150 volunteers that evening. Bob Holland and his super crew fed the hungry public.

A first this year was entertainment played off the west porch of the annex, with music and an original first person



impersonation of Mary Williams (Mrs. Roger) by new member Virginia Butler. Butler did extensive research to prepare this original piece.

Another new event was the selling of indentured servants brought into the cove on the *Brandaris*, the restored Dutch sailing vessel crewed by Doug Somers and his family.

Special thanks to Dan Gannon of Bay Signs, North Kingstown, for his donation of the reusable publicity banner displayed near the Wilson Park entrance.

Gratitude goes also to Tom Sandham, cider press; Mary Beth and Dave Burnham, straw and eggs; Narrow Lane Farm, apples; Russ Boothroyd, dining fly; Walmart and CK Pizza, food for Scouts; Boulder Hills Golf and Country Club, ice; North Kingstown Garage and Grounds Departments, planking; and the following for donations for the open-fire meal: Dave's Market, Ryan's Market, Shaw's Market, Stop & Shop, Healey's Vegetable Stand, Kenyon's Jonny Cake Meal, and Ro-Jack's.

Home and Garden TV Films Restoration Work for *Restore America* Series

Producer Nancy Rubin Stuart and a Home and Garden TV film crew spent Nov. 10 and 11 filming at the Castle for a segment in the *Restore America* series. The series premiered on July 4, 1999, and takes a historical preservationist look at the most beautifully restored historic buildings, gardens, and neighborhoods in each of the 50 states and Washington, D.C.

The Smith's Castle segment to be aired February 13 at 10 p.m. on HGTV

eyed the comprehensive restoration begun in 1994 and completed for reopening in 1997.

Interviewed were Project Architect Clifford (Jack) Renshaw, a Castle member, and Mary Turkel, Vice President and Managing Partner of The Preservation Cooperative, contractors for the restoration. Turkel is a current Trustee and former President of the Cocomuscussoc Association. Also providing background were Martha Dwyer, former Association

President, and Dick Zimmermann, current Trustee and a leader in the restoration. Bette Lou Pease and Trish Lopez were filmed in costume at the hearth.

The restoration, funded primarily by the Champlin Foundation, netted the Castle two prestigious awards: the 1997 State Historic Preservation Award from the Rhode Island State Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission and the 1998 National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Boy Scout Troop 152 Eagle Candidate Fixes Castle Fence

The Castle has benefited yet again from the work of Boy Scout Troop 152. Thank you, Warren Leach and crew! Leach, the Eagle Scout Candidate who managed the project, gave us this report.

"We replaced eleven fence posts and eight rails. We also cleaned up around the area, and replaced a post and a few rails on the other fence. And the sticks were

cleaned up in the yard.

I would like to thank everyone from Smith's Castle, Jim Peters especially for working with me. And Mr. and Mrs. Bibeault. I would also like to thank John Lower from Cedar Craft for working with me and for donating most of the wood. And most of all I would like to thank the seven scouts who helped. Special thanks

to Marlene and Paul Galitskie, my parents, and my Aunt Gail Ficazzola who all came and helped out and also for planning everything out with me. Thanks to Mr. Simeone and Mr. Renehan, Pete Bibeault, Andrew Diasilva, Chris Nannig, Stephen Leach, Bill Renehan, Mike Simeone, and Chris Simeone."

—Warren Leach



© Don Bousquet

Cartoonist Don Bousquet Lends Artistry

Don Bousquet, renowned professional cartoonist and author of many books of his collected works has agreed to our use of his cartoons in the *Chronicle*, our quarterly newsletter. We are thrilled to be able to add his humor to our publication. Watch for Bousquet's upcoming guest column relating his fascinating link to Smith's Castle past.

Education Committee Plans for Y2K

Education Committee members, Ann Prokopowicz, Bob Shillaber, Jane Crum, Louise Duckworth, Pat Labrie, Martha Dwyer, Cathy Shippee, Diane Long, Barbara Carey, and Jan Breault, Chair, met in September and October to plan events for the 2000 season.

Ideas covered both members-only as well as public events, including changing exhibits, family programs, and special emphasis days such as "Woolen Works" or "Quilts-Old and New." Some spring dates are set and programs are in the works for July and August.

School tour information packets were mailed in late September to over 220 schools statewide. The response for fall 1999 has been strong. Two tours are already booked for 2000.

Furnishings Committee Begins Inventory

The Castle Furnishings Committee, chaired by Linda Eppich, has begun a major initiative to inventory and number all furnishings and artifacts at the Castle. This is the first inventory done by the Association since 1991.

Committee members met on October 23 to take a preliminary, room-by-room inventory of all artifacts at the Castle. Meeting again on November 6, they started to number artifacts using a system consistent with current museum practice.

The first artifact to receive the new numbering system was the Hepplewhite sideboard in the Updike dining room. Dating from between 1790 and 1810, the sideboard was donated to the Castle in 1956 by Mrs. John Gardiner. Other

dining-room artifacts newly numbered were two English knife boxes, dating from 1775 to 1790, and the unsigned portrait of a little girl. The knife boxes and the portrait were donated by Norman Smith in 1959 and 1960, respectively.

The Association continues to seek furnishings that have a direct connection with the Castle's residents—especially the Smiths or Updikes—and pieces must date from within the Castle's interpretive time period (1630-1830).

If you have items that fit this description, please consider donating them to the Castle today or making a bequest as part of your estate planning. For more information about donations, please contact the Castle at 294-3521.

—Neil Dunay

Castle Plays Role in District-Wide Educators' Day

Jan Breault and Barbara Carey represented Smith's Castle at Educator's Day, November 2, a professional development program for North Kingstown teachers, principals and staff. Our session, "Let's Live a Little History," was a roundtable format designed for museum representatives and local educators to discuss how to cooperate to best help children make meaningful connections with history.

Among the good ideas discussed were the need to cross-reference the curriculum with the museum capabilities, so that when a particular topic is studied,

the teacher has a reference to follow to the local museum program. Teachers also expressed the desire for more direct contact with the museums to better understand what's available.

Other museums in the roundtable were the *Brandaris*, Casey Farm, Gilbert Stuart Museum, South County Museum and Watson Farm. This worthwhile opportunity was made possible through the invitation of Kathy Mort, the North Kingstown District Professional Development Coordinator.

Bryant Students Pitch In

Fifteen freshmen from Bryant College and their advisors came to the Castle on Sunday, August 29 as part of the Bryant College Experience-New Student Welcome Weekend. Through a competitive application process, we were chosen to be one of thirty-two worksites in Rhode Island.

This Volunteer Center of RI and Bryant College collaboration exposes students to the positive experiences of community service by doing meaningful hands-on work. For some this may be a first experience in volunteerism.

Nancy Birch, Jim Peters, Jan Breault, and Dick Bowen all helped make it happen. The feedback and evaluation we received from the Volunteer Center was top notch for Smith's Castle. Thanks to all!

Mark Your Calendars!

December 2, Docent meeting, Christmas decorating

December 4 and 5, Castle open to the public for an old fashioned "Christmas at the Castle"

December 10, Castle Christmas Party for members and guests

January 2000, Volunteer Hours Sheets due

January 20, Docent-sponsored trip to Pequot Museum, Ledyard CT

January 29, Docent training

February 6, Cocumscussoc Association Annual Meeting

February 12, Docent training

February 13, Castle to be featured on HGTV's *Restore America* TV Series

March 4, Docent training

Thank you, Docents

Plantation Days was a mammoth success and a huge thank you goes to all the docents for commitment and hard work in helping to make it happen.

Plans for the rest of the year include several school tours and Christmas at the Castle, Dec. 4 and 5. Start you ovens now because this event will include the All-Member Bake Sale, which we hope will be a major fund-raiser! Everyone is welcome to help decorate the Castle on December 2 starting at 9 a.m.

We've added about fifteen new members, and there is always room for more. Anyone interested please come

to the December 2 meeting. Training sessions are scheduled for January 29, February 12, and March 4.

On January 20 (weather permitting) the Docents are planning a trip to the Pequot Indian Museum in Ledyard. Transportation will be provided. If you're interested, please contact Joyce Fuller, 294-9650.

This has been a good year because of the many volunteer hours given by our dedicated docents. Give yourselves a big pat on the back for all the jobs well done and look ahead to another busy year in the new millennium.

—Joyce Fuller

Junior Docents Do Bees, Butter, and More

At Plantation Days we had our hands full, with hordes of kids coming through and participating in a wash day or colonial games. For the games we had hoops, stilts, graces, and nine man's morris. For wash day we made soap ahead of time which the kids used to wash clothes in wash tubs. We enjoyed having an activity for the kids to participate in and look forward to the next Plantation Days.

Another colonial chore we tried was churning butter. It was hard work but delicious on homemade bread with honey. While we ate, Jan Breault explained the mysteries of beekeeping from her own experience.

When we were making candles we all had to find a stick to which we would tie the wick. Then we all got into a great big line dipping in the wick as

we would walk by. Then we would all go into a big circle inside the Castle passing in front of the fan as we would go for another dip. Some candles got as big as a half an inch, but most were only one eighth of an inch because we ran out of time.

On a rainy fall day we set up winter quarters in a cozy upstairs room at the annex. There we will be working on the colonial crafts we have learned and trying new ones.

We will also be planning our last public appearance of the year, Christmas at the Castle, when we will don costumes to demonstrate indoor games and activities in the Richard Smith room and help the docents serve refreshments.

—Rebecca Long, Ryan Cranston, and Diane Long



Castle Visits the Library

"A Cocumscussoc Primer," a North Kingstown Library and Smith's Castle collaboration involved elementary school students and their parents on Nov. 6. Docents Jan Breault and Elinor Dykstra took a program on "Corn" to the library, with discussion of various types of corn, processing information, and hands-on Jonny Cake making and tasting, of course! The group then toured the Castle. Paul Lefebure, children's librarian, was key in making this program possible. All involved considered this "first" a success and look forward to future mutual programming.

Grass Mowed, Brush Cut, Tree Down—Can Winter be Far Behind?

The 1999 season has begun to wind down for the Grounds Committee at Smith's Castle. The year has seen several projects completed—the clearing of overgrown areas, removal of brush, and the never-ending task of mowing the lawns—all amounting to over 150 hours of work.

Recently, the old willow tree behind the annex had to be removed. It became too large and old to support itself and was se-

verely damaged in the storms of last month.

Also the fence along the parking area was repaired by Warren Leach as part of his Eagle Scout project. Many thanks to Warren and his crew of Scouts for their efforts. (See Warren's report on page 3)

Many thanks to Barbara and Bill Carey, Bob Pease, and Dick Bowen for their help this summer and the projects they completed.

18th Century Garden

The garden has been put to bed for the winter. Thank you, Master Gardeners, for helping to keep our garden beautiful from the beginning to the end of the 1999 season.

A new Garden Guide is being designed for the opening of the 2000 season. Hopefully, it will answer some of the many questions our visitors ask.

—Audrey Moncrieff



Hearty Pats on the Back to...

Pat Labrie, her right hand woman Louise Duckworth, and all the Castle volunteers for the success of Plantation Days.

Les Flood for unflagging season-long support in grounds and tool maintenance.

George Long for the beautiful signs made for the Jr. Docent Dye Garden and the gates of the 18th Century Garden.

Jean Chapman, Shirley Burnham, Cay Mulcare, and Marge Swift for leading the September 23 Open Hearth Cooking Class.

Mary Turkel, Jack Renshaw, Martha Dwyer, Mary Shillaber, Dick Zimmerman, Bette Lou Pease, Trish Lopez, and Dick Bowen for making the Castle "smile" for the Home and Garden TV camera.

All the Bryant College students, advisors, and the Volunteer Center of RI for the volunteer project on August 29.

Freida King for help all summer long in preparing mailings.

Louise Heard, Bette Lou Pease, and the Breaults for perennials for the Annex gardens.

Help us with future thanks yous. We try not to leave anyone out, but please forgive us if we have.

Thank You Community Volunteers

Huge thanks Dennis Gauvin of Emerald Enterprises for removing the equally huge pile of tree trunk and brush on the front side lawn. What an improvement!

Classified

Volunteers Wanted— Great Fringe Benefits!

- Seamstresses to repair textiles and do other sewing projects
 - Docents—Training provided
 - Special Events Coordinators for 2000
 - Committee members for Membership, Fund Raising, Special Events, Publicity/Marketing, and Historical Research
 - Data entry for new membership data base
 - Help to repair and maintain Castle boat
 - Painters
 - Members interested in performing early vocal and/or instrumental music
- Call 294-3521 to inquire.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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