

Castle Chronicle

Volume 12 Number 1 ■ Spring 2003

Published by the Cocumscussoc Association at Smith's Castle ■ 55 Richard Smith Drive ■ Wickford, Rhode Island 02852

Opening Day Initiates Year-Long 325th Anniversary Celebration

Events will pay tribute to 1678 structure throughout the year.



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This recent illustration of the 1678 house is based on information gleaned from the 1990s restoration of the Castle and Richard Smith Jr.'s 1692 Inventory. Drawing by J. Susan Cole Stone.

When Richard Smith, Jr. built his stylish home about 1678, he was certainly proud. But could he have ever imagined that it would still be here 325 years later? Or that it would be so lovingly honored by the community around it?

Honoring the ancient structure is what the 325th Anniversary Committee is planning this year. Committee Chair Mary Shillaber and members Carol Bozarth, Janice Brown, Neil Dunay, and Lara Seaburg have been meeting monthly to plan events for the celebration and to make sure the theme is highlighted at all the Castle's annual offerings.

The year already started off great with Dr. Robert Fitts' February 1 lecture on slavery in South County (see

article p. 10). Co-sponsored with the North Kingstown Free Library, the lecture attracted a standing-room-only crowd and reaffirmed the importance of developing this subject further in our interpretation of the Castle.

One of the biggest tributes to the Castle this year will be the installation of the visitor orientation exhibition panels that explore our site's history over the past four centuries (see article p. 8). Castle members, project donors, and local government officials will get a sneak preview of the exhibition at a gala reception on Friday, May 2, the night before the Castle's seasonal opening on May 3. Watch the mail for your invitation. Opening Day will be a birthday bash for the Castle,

with many family events planned (see article p. 12).

The 325th Anniversary Committee has planned a new event for May 17. Carol Bozarth, with help from the Castle's other hearth-cooking enthusiasts, is staging a members-only Tavern Night. This evening will be filled with great food, cooked in the 18th century manner over an open fire, and great fun, as we learn about colonial foods, eating habits, and tavern customs. Net proceeds will support a permanent outdoor cooking facility.

Please review the calendar (page 15) for other events scheduled this spring. In addition to your attendance, we are also seeking volunteers to help plan and staff these events, so please call the Castle office to sign up. ■

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Castle Chronicle is published quarterly by the Cocumscussoc Association of Smith's Castle 55 Richard Smith Dr. Wickford, RI 02852
E-mail: smithscastle@earthlink.net
Web site: www.smithscastle.org

Subscriptions are by Smith's Castle membership only, beginning at \$20.

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

Note from the President

I hope everyone is excited about the celebration of the Castle's 325th anniversary. Only a handful of buildings in Rhode Island can boast this longevity, and none of those can claim the extraordinary history associated with our site: a summer gathering place of the Narragansett; the first English settlement in what is now Washington County; the occasional home of Roger Williams; the garrison—and final resting place—for soldiers involved in the Great Swamp attack; and one of the largest of the 18th century Narragansett plantations.

This rich history is detailed in the upcoming visitor orientation exhibition and companion catalog, spanning the site's development from Richard Smith's trading post in 1637 to the Fox's large dairy complex in the 20th century. This exhibition will provide important information to our visitors and will help docents bring to life our history through its carefully selected graphic images. Many kudos to all those who worked on this project over the past three years!

As we reflect on the 325 years since Richard Smith built the house, let's not leave out one im-

portant era: the 54 years that the site has been protected, restored, and interpreted by the Cocumscussoc Association. If you're doing the math, our group has been steward of this building for one-sixth of its life. And we're doing a great job!

We often credit a faceless "Association" for action, but remember it's really individuals—our members and volunteers—whose efforts have made everything possible. Last year, Smith's Castle volunteers reported 8,160 hours of work (in addition to the immeasurable hours that went unreported). That's the equivalent of more than 40 full-time staff members! I can't tell you how many "outsiders" have expressed astonishment at the Castle's loyal and enthusiastic army of volunteers. There can be no better barometer of our health and of our relevance to our community.

So, when you come to the Castle this year, reflect not only upon its long history but also upon the fact that *you personally* have been an integral part of its legacy. ■

—Neil Dunay, President

Welcome New Members

Scott and Kathryn Donahue	Lynn Stanton
Marjorie Duerr	Mark, Hope, and Elim Utterback
C. Melissa Powers	David R. Whitman
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rocchio	

—as of 2/28/03



The *Chronicle* staff has been informed of the deaths of Castle member s **Cay Mulcare** and **Ruth Rathbun Pitman**. On behalf of the membership, we extend sincere sympathy to their families.

Trustees Approve Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan

At its quarterly meeting on February 24, 2003, the Board of Trustees approved a fire-safety and emergency preparedness plan. Former Association President, Richard Bowen and Resident Director, Barbara Carey have been drafting the plan in coordination with North Kingstown fire officials for about a year. The plan is in conformity with National Fire Protection Association 909, "Standard for the Protection of Cultural Resources Including Museums, Libraries, Places of Worship, and Historic Properties."

The plan will become effective pending review by legal counsel and the appointment of a safety manager. Docents and other volunteers will be instructed on fire preparedness, including location and operation of extinguishers, and other emergency procedures at their June meeting. Trustees will be instructed at their April meeting. We encourage all volunteers to review the plan and educate themselves on appropriate responses to emergencies. Copies of the plan are available at the Annex. ■

Annual Meeting Committee Reports

Workshop Attendees Discuss Castle Future

On January 15, 2003, Castle members gathered for the Cocumscussoc Association annual meeting at the North Kingstown Free Library. Following the elections, reports, and award presentations, trustee Peter Dunston led a workshop discussion activity designed to enable members to help shape the long-range plans of the Association. The exchange of ideas was lively and thoughtful as the group explored two strategic questions.

The first question addressed growth. Should the Association focus its resources on striving for excellence in its current preservation and education programs, or should the Association embark on a growth strategy that would include massive fundraising to build a new facility or acquire adjacent property to accommodate growth?

The response seemed to be a "let's have it all" strategy. Members expressed the desire to begin planning for growth while preserving the site and maintaining our cur-

rent size and vibrant programming. A development committee could provide leadership in establishing an annual fund drive and an endowment for future expansion plans. A better financial position would also allow the hiring of additional skilled staff persons as needed. In the pursuit of growth, the organization should build out from unmet needs (e.g. establishing an alternative cooking area now that fires are no longer allowed in the Castle fireboxes).

The second question addressed human resources. What can be done to expand membership, attract more volunteers, and secure additional motivated and capable people to manage committee activities?

Members felt that if the museum is known as a "fun," interactive, and meaningful destination, visitor numbers should increase, membership will grow, and volunteers will gladly donate their time. Public relations is of increasing importance to get our message out through

such methods as the Web and effective relationships with other museums, civic organizations, chambers of commerce and schools.

Castle leaders involved in other organizations must be advocates for the Castle and stimulate awareness of membership and volunteer opportunities. Involving volunteers in Castle activities will be easier if we better understand our members' interests and talents. Special consideration given to planning activities for young families also provides the potential for developing a broader demographic within the membership.

Concluding thoughts included the observations that responsible growth requires vision, people, and money. Dollars come forth only when donors see value in a cause. So while we preserve what we have and plan for the future, the Association should move forth with developing the financial and membership resources necessary to build upon our fine successes and prepare to grow conscientiously into the future. ■

Castle Committee Chairs Lead 2003 Efforts

The Association is pleased to have great committee leadership in place for 2003. Members are welcomed to contact these committee leaders with any questions about projects and activities and to become involved in an area of interest. Call 294-3521 to get in touch.

Buildings: John Weaver
Christmas at the Castle: Joyce Fuller and Betty Fenik
Chronicle: Bud Nannig
Collections (House furnishings): Ellie Perkins
Docents: Mary Nunes, Bob Hocking, Betty Fenik
Education, Adult: Carol Bozarth

Education, Youth: Chris Kalina
Gardens: Jules Cohen
Grounds: John Aubin
Mailing Coordination: Kathy Hartley
Marketing/Public Relations: Carol Allen
Membership: Jan Breault and Betsy Steinman
Plantation Days: John Aubin
Site and Building Development: Mary Turkel
Strategic Planning: Peter Dunston
Strawberry Festival: Meghan McKay and Becky Allen
325th Committee: Mary Shillaber
325th Exhibition Reception: Jackie Gildersleeve
Website: Darrell McIntire

Annual Meeting Committee Reports

The following are summaries. Full reports are on file in the annex office.

Chronicle. The *Chronicle* began as a one page flyer and has grown to a 12 page newsletter with a circulation of more than 300 quarterly. It continues to be an important tool of communication for the Association, carrying committee and events announcements and volunteer thank-yous. It also features research articles and scholarly discussions. New in 2002, a kids' page provides interesting reading and activities for younger members.

—Urban (Bud) Nannig

Collections. The Castle will loan the cheese basket and cheese box for inclusion in "Rhode Island Treasures," a May 10-June 15 exhibition at the Convention Center sponsored by the RI Department of Tourism and Economic Development. A database is being designed to hold collections records. Collections and Marketing/Public Relations committee jointly purchased a digital camera. Digital processing will make it possible to store collections photos with the database. The registration process continues. 2002 gifts and acquisitions appear on page 7.

—Eleanor (Ellie) Perkins

Collections: Exhibit Subcommittee. In 2002 this committee continued preparation of the visitor orientation exhibition. This work included research, writing, editing of the script; researching, locating, obtaining and reproducing graphic images; designing and laying out the graphic panels; designing and fabricating the panel frameworks; and securing project funding. To date, a total of \$11,962 has been donated by a range of businesses, private individuals, and charitable organizations. The exhibit opens to the public on May 3, 2003.

—Darrell McIntire

Docents/Friends: 2002 was the first year with an elected Docent Trustee to assure two-way communication between the board and the docent/friend group. Our trustee designed and conducted a survey to better understand feelings, opinions and ideas. The resulting four top areas targets needs for the coming year were: clear communication within the organization, recruitment of new docents, the need for a "guest video," and continued training and education. During the year the docent/friend committee members worked at all major events, benefited from several continuing education programs, and conducted an increasingly refined training program.

—Janice E.A. Brown, committee chairperson, and Cathe Rezendes, Docent Trustee

Education, Adult: The goals of the committee were: provide meaningful member benefit, create a reason to return to the Castle, generate new memberships and introduce the Castle to those who may not be interested in usual house tours. Fourteen successful programs were conducted. 271 members and visitors participated, representing a five-fold attendance increase over 2001.

—Carol Bozarth

Education, Youth: With expanded programming linked to state and local standards, programming was provided for 182 students and chaperones. The budget goal was exceeded by 34 percent. A Youth Program Docent Manual was produced to support effective and consistent programming. The ongoing interactive collaboration with Forest Park is rewarding, and the effective interpretive methodology applied in the program was presented at the 2002 statewide Docent Symposium. Increasing exposure to our programs brought Tufts University Museum Studies students to the

Castle for study of our general approach and techniques as well as specifics on our handling the sensitive topic of slavery. The Youth Historian program conducted independent research, produced 25 articles of historic clothing and participated in special events. The committee also inaugurated a Kid's Page for the *Chronicle*.

—Chris Kalina

18th Century Garden: In 2002 the URI Master Gardeners developed a renewed relationship with the Castle, the long-range plans being to partner in providing educational services pertaining to both colonial and contemporary gardening issues, to bring the garden up to proper quality, and to recruit and train Castle volunteers to handle on-going maintenance. While the Master Gardeners will always be available for consultation, the intent is that full care will be handled by the Castle volunteers by the end of 2003. The garden team welcomes the involvement of anyone interested in learning about colonial plants and sustainable gardening practices.

—Jules Cohen

House: The Castle was quiet in 2002—must have been that great restoration job! New hemp cord was installed in the back stairhall. The septic system passed inspection and will support present use.

—Mary Turkel

Long Range Site and Building Committee: The committee is pleased to report the awarding of a \$200,000 grant from the RI Department of Transportation to be available in 2005. (See the Fall, 2002 *Chronicle* for further details.) Key committee concerns are the preservation and protection of all known and yet to be discovered resources of the property, and the committee plans to order a cultural landscape

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report to identify these resources to provide guidance for any future development or expansion. A conceptual site plan showing location of a proposed new visitor center was developed for future discussion.

—Mary Turkel

Membership: Membership units for 2002: personal, 320; business, 9; lifetime, 30. Revenue for membership: \$11,085. The very successful member-guest holiday party brought in \$4845. Proceeds helped fund the new visitor orientation exhibition.

—Ellie Ferguson and Cathy Shippee

Marketing: Activities included implementing a new visitor satisfaction survey; overseeing the conception, design and installation of a new entrance sign hand painted by Rob Blais; providing ongoing marketing support for Castle events; purchasing a digital camera in col-

laboration with the collections committee; and contacting websites not linked to the Castle website.

—Carol Allen

Strategic Planning: Meeting regularly over a several months, the committee has drafted the following: a revised mission statement with explanatory notes defining the scope of activities; long term plans for education, collections, marketing, development and building and site committees; resource plans detailing long term human and building and equipment needs; and long term capital and expense budgets. The committee will utilize input from the annual meeting workshop to determine the next steps in planning.

—Peter Dunston

325th Anniversary Committee: It is the committee's intent that all 2003 activities at the Castle, from

Opening Day through the end of the year, be anchored in this wonderful celebration. Among the activities planned is a collaboration with the Hera Gallery of Wakefield, spotlighting artistic interpretation of the Smith's Castle site. The *Chronicle* will carry event announcements and details.

—Mary A. Shillaber

Treasurer: All records were computerized, a payroll service was employed and all records moved to the Annex office. CPA James Powell donated Financial Manager software, set up accounts and provided system training. Greater ease with budget tracking and filing of government tax reports is a prime benefit. A CPA compilation for 2001 was completed to meet grant requirements. 2002 expenditures were \$61,311 with net receipts over expenditures of \$13,868.

—Russell Shippee

New Officers and Trustees

Carol Allen, Trustee

Carol Allen is a Business High School teacher at Toll Gate in Warwick. She was previously employed by IBM as a Logistic Specialist in Burlington, Vermont for 11 years before coming to Rhode Island in 1993 as a Marketing Rep selling IBM's midrange computer systems to the manufacturing sector in the north east. In 1996 she was transferred to Atlanta, Georgia, and it was at this time that Carol decided to make a career change and complete a Masters in Business Education. Prior to this endeavor, Carol held a BS degree in Business, Marketing, and Psychology from Trinity College of Vermont.

In her five years teaching experience, Carol has established a college level accredited articulation business program with local colleges at both Pilgrim and Toll Gate High School. She also resurrected FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) at Toll Gate High School three years ago. This exclusive business club enables students to compete with projects at the state level with the potential to continue onto the national level only if awarded first or second place. Toll Gate has consistently won first or second place and quali-

fied for Nationals in Orlando, Florida and Nashville, Tennessee, respectively, over the last two consecutive years.

Carol is also an active thespian, mostly involved with school and local community theatre. She has choreographed numerous high school musicals throughout Rhode Island and has directed high school students in the Rhode Island Theatre State Competition Event.

Carol's love for colonial history dates back to her high school years when she was an active member in the school's history club and participated in colonial reenactments in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. She and her husband, Ron, toured Smith's Castle the year they moved to Rhode Island and have been back every year with out of town visitors for special events or just to have a picnic on the grounds. In 2001, Carol and her husband became members and now she serves as the Marketing Chair, gives colonial garden tours, and performs the minuet with her husband at special events.

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Carol Allen, Trustee

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Cocumscussoc Association Officers for 2003. (L to R) Neil Dunay, president; Diane Traynor, secretary; Chris Kalina, vice president; and Larry Ehrhardt, treasurer.

Laurence (Larry) Ehrhardt, Treasurer

Larry Ehrhardt, a retired corporate financial executive, is a graduate of both Yale (economics) and Harvard (business administration) Universities. After living and working in Connecticut for many years, he and his wife decided to retire to Wickford where they became the proud owners of the William Hammond house which was constructed in 1792. They have been enthusiastic sailors on Narragansett Bay ever since he first reported for duty at the Newport Naval Base many years ago and were frequent visitors to South County in the ensuing years.

Because of his background and knowledge of the shipping industry, Larry was drawn into the debate over the Quonset container port. His extensive research revealed the lack of economic justification for the idea and helped support the final decision to abandon the project. The experience of working with members of the General Assembly and Town officials awakened an interest in public service, and Larry was asked to run for election as State Representative from the district that includes Cocumscussoc. Although he lost by only 35 votes, he maintains an interest in public affairs and is currently serving on Governor Carcieri's Quonset Advisory Task Force.

In addition to public affairs, Quonset, and antique home maintenance, Larry has long been interested in the history and genealogy of coastal southern New England with a particular focus on water-borne trade and migration patterns between the Massachusetts and Connecticut Colonies and eastern Long Island.

Eleanor (Ellie) Perkins, Trustee

Ellie was born and raised in Massachusetts and is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts. She lived in Oregon, California, and Pennsylvania before coming to Rhode Island two and a half years ago. Prior to the birth of her first child she worked in college administration. While raising her children, Ellie held various paid and unpaid positions promoting literacy in schoolchildren as well as holding offices in parent-teacher organizations.

Ellie first came to the Castle to attend a "Christmas at the Castle" open house and says she found the site and building magical on a dark December day. She trained the following spring as a docent but became more interested in documenting and cataloging the collections. She now serves as chair of the Collections Committee. Ellie notes, "I know my late parents, both "antiquers" and packrat Yankees, would share my interest in this aspect of the work at the Castle.

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Ellie Perkins, Trustee

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Diane Traynor, Secretary

A native of Maine, Diane has lived in North Kingstown for 35 years and has retired from a 30-year career with Sears. She has always loved the Smith's Castle grounds, and often brings her grandchildren to watch the birds on cold winter days when the cove is frozen over.

Grateful for the good fortune of living in the Wickford area where there is so much important local history, Diane enjoys learning about this history and sharing her learning with others. When she was looking for volunteer activities last year, the notice recruiting docent trainees compelled her to get involved at the Castle. She completed docent training and has been involved in docenting for school programs. Diane loves being with people and finds that the volunteers at the Castle are impassioned with their love of history. She believes preservation and education are everyone's mission. For her Smith's Castle is the place to do this important work.

John Weaver, Trustee

John Weaver moved to North Kingstown from Denver just over five years ago. Although his job was in Northeastern Connecticut, he chose the North Kingstown area for its proximity to Narragansett Bay and the cultural amenities of Providence. Having grown up in older homes and owning an older home

(by Denver standards), the main criteria for a search was an old home.

As it happens, he came across the ca.1715 Joshua Davis house. This building was once home to William Davis Miller, an early active member of the Cocumscussoc Association who had his house restored in 1948 by John H. Cady, the same architect who restored the Castle in 1949. The Weaver family agreed to take on the task of living in this home and giving it much-needed TLC.

John has done undergraduate work at Tulane University in New Orleans and completed a BA at the University of Denver along with some post-graduate studies. He is currently the purchasing manager for a large frozen food manufacturer in Massachusetts that is going through a major restructuring. Most of his spare time is spent maintaining and improving his home.

While becoming acquainted with the area, John discovered Smith's Castle. Perhaps it was the wonderful restoration work that gave him hope for his own home or the building's location and quiet nobility set back from the commercial sprawl along Post Road that made an immediate impression. John chairs the Buildings Committee and looks forward to assisting the members of the Cocumscussoc Association in protecting the future of Smith's Castle.

Watch for biographies of new trustees Kathleen Hartley and Betsy Steinman in the next *Castle Chronicle*. ■



John Weaver, Trustee

2002 Gifts and Acquisitions Increase Castle Collections

The Castle collections have increased in the past year thanks to the generosity of many donors and the purchases made through the collections committee. Important volumes received early in the year from Dr. Robert Fitts were reported in the Summer 2002 issue.

1771 Document signed by Beriah Brown. Donor: Carl R. Johnson.

7 ounce beverage bottle: "Five-O Cocumscussoc Farm Wickford." Donor: Richard and Cindy DeMaio.

Account book of Harry Hoxsie. Donor: Andree Phillips (Doherty) Conklin.

Atwood, William Franklin. *The Pilgrim Story: Being Largely a Compila-*

tion from the Documents of Governor Bradford and Governor Winslow, severally and in Collaboration; Together with a List of Mayflower Passengers. Fourteenth Edition. Linotyped, Printed and Bound by MPG Communications, Plymouth, MA. Distributed by Plimoth Plantation, July 1987. Donor: Janice Brown.

Binder, Frederick M. and David M. Reimers. *The Way We Lived: Essays and Documents in American Social History. Vol. 1: 1607-1877.* Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1992. Donor: Janice Brown.

Blue and white woven coverlet; summer winter pattern. Donor: Elizabeth Maine.

Butterworth, Hezekiah. *In Old New England: The Romance of a Colonial Fireside.* New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1895. Donor: Al Frechette.

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1983. Donor: Janice Brown

Damon, Sophie. *Old New-England Days: A Story of a True Life.* Boston: DeWolfe, Fiske & Co., 1898. Donor: Al Frechette.

Davison, Marguerite P. *A Handweaver's Pattern Book.* Chester, PA: Johns Spencer Inc., 1944. Donor: Mary Nunes.

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Smith's Castle: Four Centuries of Rhode Island History

Visitor Orientation Exhibit to be Unveiled

In celebration of the 325th anniversary of the construction of Smith's Castle in 1678, the Cocumscussoc Association has mounted a permanent exhibition entitled *Smith's Castle: Four Centuries of Rhode Island History*.

May 3, opening day of the 2003 season, will mark the public debut of the exhibition. It will be installed in the meeting room and will greet Castle visitors as they arrive for tours of the house.

A special launch event is being planned for the evening of May 2 to preview the exhibit for members, local and state officials, the press, and contributors. Watch for your invitation in the mail.

The exhibition surveys the history of Smith's Castle from its beginning as a trading post in the 1630s to its final days as a modern dairy farm in the early 20th century. The content was developed by carefully analyzing and integrating information from an extensive list of historical sources as well as current scholarship.

Many topics, only briefly touched upon in the exhibit, are more completely developed in a 44-page companion catalog. The catalog represents the most comprehensive research effort focused exclusively on Smith's Castle since Carl Woodward's *Plantation in Yankeland* in 1971. It will be available at the launch event and on opening day.

The exhibition includes several rarely seen images, some reproduced in color for the first time. Among these are the 1722 portrait of Anstis Jenkins Updike, the 1802 plat of Lodowick Updike's South Farm, and newly discovered 1880s photographs of the Babbitt farm.

Exhibition Committee members, Neil Dunay, Peter Dunston, Norma LaSalle, and Darrell McIntire, spent three years researching, writing, and producing the exhibition. Inestimable contributions were provided every step along the way by Resident Director, Barbara Carey. Nancy Birch, Carol Bozarth, Tim Cranston, Betty Follansbee, Chris Kalina, Lara Seaburg, and Mary Turkel provided critical comments on the manuscript.

Figure 1. A survey of Richard Smith's years in Taunton, Portsmouth, Long Island, and New Amsterdam, prior to his settling at Cocumscussoc, introduces the exhibit.

Figures 2 & 3. The panels that examine the trade relationship between the Narragansett and Richard Smith include a section on the possible appearance of the trading post itself.



1.



2.

Following are the combined contents of the exhibit and the companion catalog:

- *Richard Smith, First English Settler of the Narragansett Country*
The Smith/Updike Family: Six Generations at Smith's Castle Nieu Nederlandt
- *The First English House*
Jireh Bull's Garrison House
- *Nanhigganeuck, Peoples of the Little Points and Bays*
The Narragansett Fur Trade
Wampum
- *Land and Allegiance*
- *The Great Swamp Attack*
King Philip
- *The House in the 17th Century*
- *The House in the 18th Century*
- *The Narragansett Planters*
Land Divisions of the Plantation
Plantation Life
Rhode Island Cheese
Narragansett Pacer
Slavery at Cocumscussoc
Daniel Updike
Decline of the Plantations
Wickford Village
- *The Cocumscussoc Dairy*
The Babbitt Farm
Austen G. Fox

Thank You to the following individuals and organizations whose generous contributions made the exhibit and catalog a reality:

Michael and Sarah Beatrice
Peter Dunston
Norma LaSalle
Darrell McIntire
Bob and Mary Shillaber
Mary Turkel
Sponsors and attendees
of the 2002 holiday party
Home Depot, North Kingstown
National Trust for Historic Preservation,
Northeast Office
Ocean State Charities
Wal Mart Foundation

Anaquashento

Let Us Trade. Trade was a firmly established activity among Native Americans well before the arrival of Europeans on their shores. Of the Narragansett Roger Williams wrote, "among themselves they trade their Corn, skins, Canoes, Arrows, Fish, etc." The Narragansett were part of a vast trade network that stretched thousands of miles and linked them with peoples in what is now Ohio, as well as with other coastal peoples ranging from present-day Florida to Nova Scotia. Ultimately the network extended even to the Caribbean and South America.

Native Americans were well versed with trade and brought with them skills to negotiate. Roger Williams noted that "who ever desire to trade with them had need of wisdom, patience, and forbearance including, for they frequently use expostulations, you lie, cattawachewene, you deceive me... they are marvelous subtle in their language to serve a purpose... they will beat off merchants and try all places, and come twenty, thirty, one, forty miles, and lodge in the Woods, to serve a purpose."

Even before Roger Williams arrived among them in 1639, the Narragansett were exchanging goods with the English from Plymouth and the Dutch from New Amsterdam - areas distant from their villages. The Narragansett were eager to have access to markets closer to home.

Yu Aisicaw Wunnigis

The Indians' houses were so large that the Europeans had to build them in the woods near to the water. At Cocumscussoc, where Williams lived, the houses were built on the banks of the Narragansett River, and were so large that the Europeans had to build them in the woods near to the water.



Cawcawmquick Anaquashanchick

Cocumscussoc. Williams, about 1637, Narragansett chief sachem, Cocumscussoc and Williams, pointed Richard Smith a large tract of land adjacent to their village on which to build a trading post. The post was erected near the water where a small brook flows into a larger one of the Narragansett River. The Narragansett name for the brook and the area around it is Cocumscussoc, from two, meaning smooth and quiet, weapons, "strong water," cloth, and hence for personal adornment such as glass beads were among the merchandise of the European goods.

But changed hands at Cocumscussoc. In exchange, the Narragansett brought furs, mostly beaver, corn, and wampum. With trading posts nearby, Narragansett acquisition of European trade items accelerated. By the 1650s, as beaver disappeared from the region, the fur trade diminished, and the value of wampum declined, the Narragansett were unable to afford the goods to which they had grown accustomed.

During the 1670s, grievances and resentments mounted between the Narragansett and

the English. When hostilities erupted in King Philip's War in Plymouth Colony, the Narragansett maintained an uneasy neutrality. This did not prevent the United Colonies of Connecticut, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay from launching a brutal assault against the Narragansett winter encampment at the Great Swamp in South Kingstown. Richard Smith's trading post was the landing point for the assault. This attack and the confrontations, exclusions, and executions that followed, dealt a mortal blow to the Narragansett.

The First English House

"Richard Smith... put up in the thicket of the barbarians, the first English house amongst them..."

—Roger Williams, 1639

About 1631, Richard Smith moved his family to Cocumscussoc. They settled into a house located where Cocumscussoc Brook flows into Wickford Harbor—virtually in the front yard of the current house. The site was quite near the water's edge, and it could be reached on foot over the brook. According to

Updike family tradition... "Father [Daniel Updike, 1731-1804] used to say, 'When Major Smith came to this country, he built the first house ever built in the country, which is now standing. The timber was all brought from Fall River [Hartford]. There were no mills in the country. There was a little boat

and running one north and east, one hundred feet square, one story high. The wood quay in the middle contained the traps that quartered there in the Indian wars. This was called Smith's Castle, which was a house, afterwards, the residence of the Updike family."

—Richard Smith, 1639



Recent Events

Fitts Addresses Standing Room Only Audience

Those who were lucky enough to get a seat at the standing-room-only Robert Fitts lecture on Saturday, February 1 were indeed blessed individuals. The lecture and slide presentation, orchestrated by Smith's Castle in cooperation with the North Kingstown Free Library, was a worthwhile way to spend a gray afternoon.

Fitts, a NYC consulting archaeologist and Brown University graduate, spoke eloquently of the life, labor, and lot of the 18th century Narragansett country plantation-era slave, with special emphasis on the poor souls who toiled on and around Cocumscussoc. His focus was to explode the distorted and

over-romanticized myth of the "happy slave" and the "slave paradise" which was said to have existed here in South County. Through Mr. Fitts' lecture and slide presentation we learned that this myth was perpetrated by the descendants of local slave owners such as the Hazards, Updikes, and Robinsons. The writings of these "apologists" eventually became a part of the historic record and formed the basis for much of what was written from that point on. Fitts showed, through his doctoral dissertation, "Inventing New England's Slave Paradise: Master/Slave Relations in 18th Century Narragansett, Rhode Island" using research gleaned from the historic record, that this was

indeed not the case; the life of a New England slave was just as difficult as that of a southern plantation slave.

Through Fitts' well organized presentation, supplemented by the questions and comments of many well-known local experts on the subject who were in attendance, those who attended the lecture were able to learn a little more about the life of a South County slave, from the very beginnings of the colony right up to the death of Rhode Island's last slave in 1859. Mr. Fitts' book is available for loan at the North Kingstown Free Library for those interested in learning more about this topic. ■

—Tim Cranston

continued from page 7

Earle, Alice Morse. *Home Life in Colonial Days*. Reprint: New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1906. Donor: Al Frechette.

Half pint bottle: "Cocumscussoc Farm, Wickford, RI." Donor: Neil G. Dunay.

Laundry fork, laundry paddle, wheat flail. Donor: Consuelo A. Peterson.

Le Gallienne, Richard, Ed. *Passages from the Diary of Samuel Pepys*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1921. Donor: Al Frechette.

"North Kingstown Born 250 Years Ago This Week." Newspaper article printed in *The Providence Sunday Journal*, October 26, 1924. Donors: Tony and Betty Faella.

Rhode Island History, Vol. 25, No. 4, October, 1966. Donor: Dr. Norma LaSalle.

Schofield, William G. *Ashes in the Wilderness*. Philadelphia: Macrae-Smith Company, 1942. Donor: Bette Sue Reed.

Sewall, Marcia. *Thunder from the Clear Sky*. New York: Simon & Schuster Alladin Paperbacks. 1998. Donor: Christine Kalina.

Watson, W. L. *Rhode Island Indian Corn Meal: "Ambrosia of the Gods."* Published for Society for the Propagation of the Jonnycake Tradition in Rhode Island. Printed by Pronto Print Inc., Bristol, RI. Donor: Sally Marinelli.

Whitman, A.M., Edmund A. *Flax Culture: An Outline of the History and Present Condition of the Flax Industry in the United States, and a Consideration of the Influences Exerted on It by Legislation*. Boston: Rand Avery Company, 1888. Donor: Barbara Green.

Woodward, Carl R. *Plantation in Yankeeland*. A Publication of the Cocumscussoc Association. Published by the Pequot Press, 1971. Donor: Bette Sue Reed.

Wool carriage robe. Donor: Elizabeth Maine

The following items were purchased by the Association in 2002.

Photograph of Wilkins Updike among other photos of the Updike family.

Updike, Daniel Berkeley. *Richard Smith, first English settler of the Narragansett country, Rhode Island, with a series of letters written by his son, Richard Smith, jr., to members of the Winthrop family and notes on Cocumscussoc, Smith's estate in Narragansett*. Boston: Merrymount Press, 1937. ■

Volunteer Opportunity: Be a Castle Tour Guide

Hear ye! Hear ye! Are you interested in the history of Smith's Castle? Do you enjoy working with people? Would you like to educate visitors in a wonderful interpretive atmosphere? If the answer is yes, then please join us for the annual docent training program.

This year's series, "Training Tuesdays," will be held on seven consecutive Tuesday evenings, 6:30 to 9 pm, from April 29 to June 10 at the Castle. During this 2003 celebration of the 325th anniversary of the 1678 house, Smith's Castle is planning many exciting events and hoping for a banner year of visitors interested in learning about the history of this site. Docents play an essential role in serving these Castle guests.

Trainees will prepare to give a guided house tour,

presenting the history of the Castle with information about the interesting families who lived on the site during the 17th and 18th centuries. Instruction and guidance will also be given for appropriate docent outfitting for both men and women.

To register or ask questions about the program, call Barbara Carey at 294-3521, Carol Bozarth at 788-8016 or Lara Seaberg at 294-2917.

Please consider joining us for "Training Tuesdays" during this exciting 2003 season. If being a tour guide is not for you, please pass this information along to someone who might enjoy being a part of the terrific Castle volunteer docent team. ■

—Lara Seaberg

Volunteers Give Generously of Their Time

Last year was a record year for volunteer hours reported. 118 volunteers submitted a total of 8,160 hours of service to the Castle. This translates to kind donations of more than \$100,000.

If you volunteered in 2002 and your name isn't on

the list, we thank you as well and hope you will report your service hours for 2003. The work of the Castle couldn't be done without every one of you. Stop by the office and pick up a new, easy-to-use volunteer hours form for 2003.

Margie Adams	Bill Carey	Betty Fenik	Hilary Hurdis	Clare Northrup	Mary Shillaber
Carol Allen	Jean Chapman	Al Fenik	Ellen Jacke	Mary Nunes	Robert Shillaber
Ron Allen	John Chase	Ellie Ferguson	Janet Jacques	June O'Neil	Cathy Shippee
John Aubin	Marilyn Cohen	Les Flood	Richard Jacques	Diana Osychny	Russell Shippee
Marge Bartlett	Mary Cooney	Betty Follansbee	Chris Kalina	Anne Palmer	Heather Skenyon
Candace Bengtson	Shef Corey	Freida King	Freida King	Nisha Pathak	Maggie Skenyon
Nancy Birch	Ryan Cranston	David Follansbee	Lisa Kingsley	Ellie Perkins	Diane Smith
Dick Bowen	Tim Cranston	Joyce Fuller	Skip Kingsley	Jan Post	Betsy Steinman
Carol Bozarth	Maureen Danforth	Jackie Gildersleeve	Bill Kokonis	Jim Powell	Don Steinman
Morgan Bozarth	Louise Duckworth	Barbara Green	Norma LaSalle	Eunice Pratt	Jim Sullivan
Roger Bozarth	Donna Dufault	Liisa Hallberg	Harvey Liberman	Betty Sue Reed	Marge Swift
Jan Breault	Neil Dunay	Roberta Hale	Diane Long	Bob Reed	Ed Swirka
Dick Breault	Peter Dunston	Janet Hatch	Rebecca Long	Cathe Rezendes	Allison Taggart
Gingee Brewer	Elinor Dykstra	Louise Heard	Sally Marinelli	Louise Richter	Richard Tomlinson
Deb Britton	Amanda Eagan	Catherine Hiller	Dianne McGowan	Virginia Royle	Diane Traynor
Janice Brown	Barbara Eastwood	Bob Hocking	Darrell McIntire	Wilfred Royle	Mary Turkel
Gail Burda	Harry Eastwood	Diane Hoffman	Meghan McKay	Clyde Scanley	Bob Viera
Dick Burda	Dave Eaton	Ali Holland	Bill Moncrieff	Lara Seaberg	Jane Viera
Shirley Burnham	Linda Eppich	Bob Holland	Becky Morgan	Larry Seaberg	
		Pinky Holland	Bud Nannig	Bethany Seavey	
				Donna Shammass	

Upcoming Events

Celebrate the 325th Anniversary at the Tavern on the Grounds

Taverns have long been places for meetings, merriment, food, drink, and lodging. In colonial times they were also places to purchase goods, post mail, and hear the current news (which could be several months old).

On Saturday, May 17, from 5–8 pm, in celebration of the 325th anniversary of the 1678 house, the Cocumscussoc Association is hosting a member-guest tavern evening on the Castle grounds. Profits from this event will help fund a permanent outdoor cooking area, since the inside hearth is no longer available.

Step onto the Castle grounds and be transported to 1778. Newport is occupied by the British. Colonel Chew's First Angel Regiment of the 2nd Continental Army is posted on the grounds to protect the Updike plantation and Wickford village from marauding British sympathizers and trouble makers.

Relax. Our tavern keeper and tavern wenches will serve you keg ale, wine, and cider beginning at 5:00 pm (Sorry, there are no carbonated beverages. They were not available in the 18th century). The mug is yours to keep.

Listen to music performed by The Landing Party. These privateers will sing sea shanties all through the evening.

The meal will be prepared by the experienced open fire cooking team at Smith's Castle. Your bottomless bowl of stew will be cooked using an 18th century recipe. Only ingredients available in early spring at that time period will be used. The meal includes "sallet" greens dressed with oil of olive and vinegar, bake-oven bread, freshly churned butter, and pudding with lemon sauce. Guests will take home their bowl and eating utensil.

Raffles, common fundraisers in this time period, were used to raise money for municipal buildings, churches, and schools. The Association will raffle a unique handcrafted quilt made by Castle volunteers. Don't expect to see 21st century raffle tickets!

This will be a memorable evening. Everything you see and eat has historical significance. It is an opportunity to experience 18th century life style. If you own historic clothing, wear it. You won't feel or be out of place.

Seating for this event is limited. When your invitation arrives in the mail, reserve your seat promptly. Tickets are \$27.00 per person. This event will take place rain or shine. For further information, or if you want to volunteer for this event, call the office at 294-3521.■

—Carol Bozarth

May 3 Marks Opening of 325th Year

The excitement of the Saturday, May 3 Opening Day festivities spotlights the beginning of the 2003 celebratory season honoring Richard Smith, Jr.'s venerable 1678 house. At 1:00 pm a flag ceremony will officially mark the opening. Admission is free with a donation of a non-perishable food item for the North Kingstown Food Pantry.

Doors open at noon for walk through tours of the house. The new visitor orientation exhibition will be unveiled for the public. Many activities to be ongoing throughout the day including a colonial cooking demonstration luring visitors with the enchanting aromas of food prepared over open fire. Children of all ages will have fun playing a variety of colonial era games. The Musicians of Updike's Rose will grace the front lawn with their lovely music and traditional dance around the colorful May Pole. ■

Rhode Island's History Comes Alive at the Convention Center

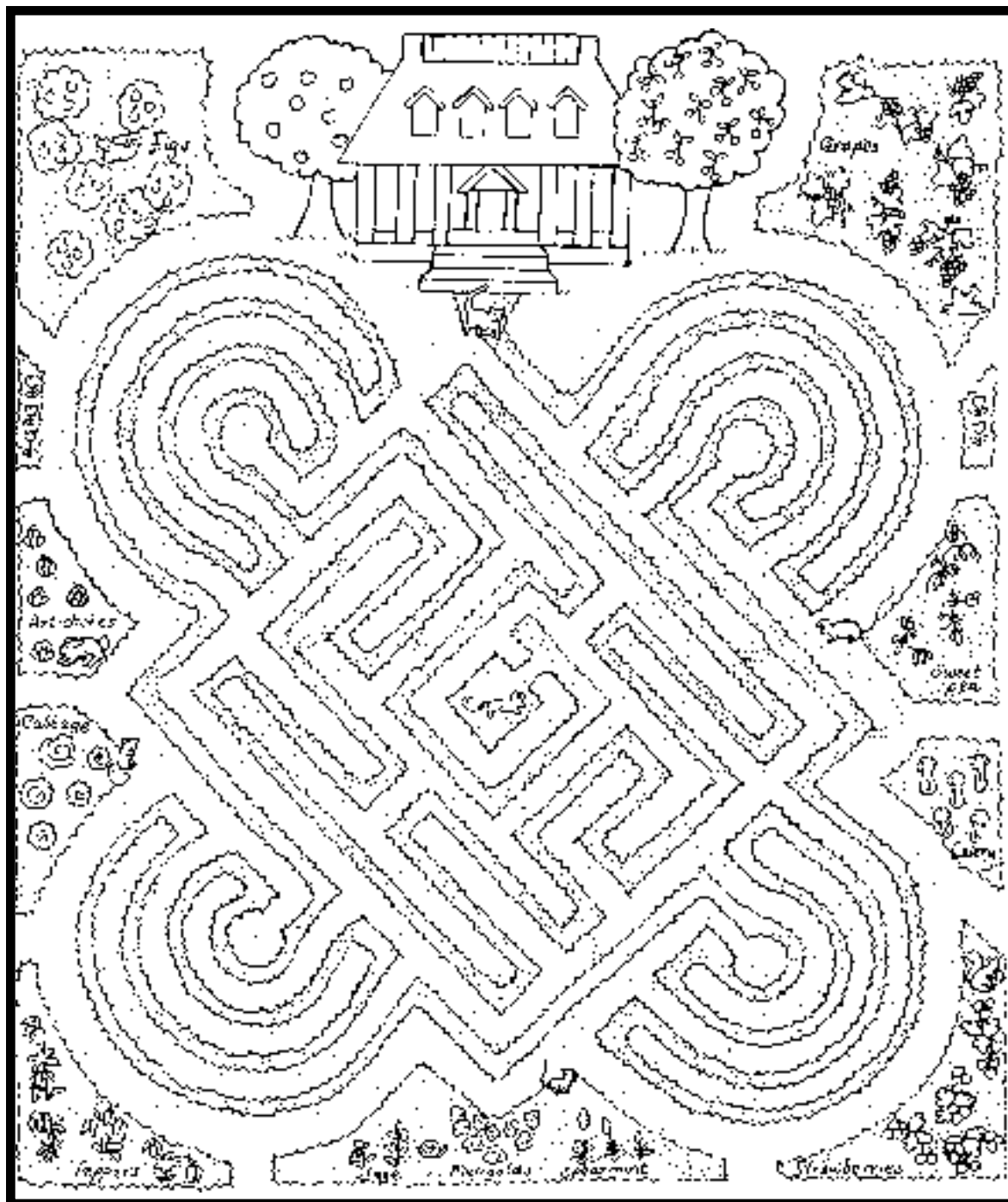
We are pleased to announce that Smith's Castle will be represented among the over 100 items "uniquely Rhode Island" to be displayed at the Rhode Island Treasures exhibition May 10 through June 15, 2003 at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence. The special collection of documents and artifacts is mounted in celebration of Rhode Island's history.

Smith's Castle's ca. 1800 wood splint cheese basket and wooden cheese ladder will be in good company. Other "uniquely Rhode Island" items are the compass that led Roger Williams to Providence in 1636, the original GI Joe action figure, and many items from the RI Secretary of State Archives, such as an original copy of the Declaration of Independence, printed in Newport in 1776. Also included are these documents: Rhode Island's original copy of the Bill of Rights, handwritten March 4, 1789; Manumission Act of 1784; Thomas Dorr's prison log; and the Rhode Island Constitution.

Admission is \$4 for students, \$6 for seniors and \$7 for adults. Group rates are available for 10 or more with advance notice. Order tickets by phone or email: (401) 861-0100; magnotj@ids.net.

The Association sincerely thanks Ellie Perkins, Neil Dunay, Linda Eppich, and Darrell McIntire for helping with the exhibit application process. ■

Mouse in the middle's friends are calling to him to help him escape from the cat. Help him to find the way to his nearest friend.



Kids' Corner



Historic Communities Series Details 18th Century Life for Children

Bobbie Kalman is the author and publisher of more than 200 children's books. The acclaimed Historic Communities Series provides a close-up view of how people in North America lived more than 200 years ago. Colorful photographs taken at restored historic villages and national landmarks across the country provide rich detail

to these informative books. Children will have fun learning about early homes and communities; what people wore; the crafts they made; and the values, customs, and traditions of the early settlers of New England. Several of her titles are available in the Castle gift shop. Reading level grade 3–5. Chris Kalina

Feeding the Sweet Tooth



In early America there were no candy bars, packaged cupcakes, or boxed cookies sitting on a store shelf for people to buy. In the 1600s, desserts as we know them were far too expensive. The only sweetener the first settlers had ever used in their food was honey. But when the Native Americans introduced maple syrup to the colonists, a whole new set of sweet dishes was added to the colonial diet. The colonists learned from the Native Ameri-

cans to bore a hole in the maple tree to drain the sap. This chore was done under what the Native Americans called the "maple moon," what we now call spring. The New England colonists loved maple sugar and learned to store it in wooden tubs for use the whole year. They put it in pies, puddings, jam and preserves, pickles, cornmeal mush, cured meats, and used it for sweetening their coffee and tea. Maple sugar became a valuable staple.



Wax Sugar

Ingredients

1 pint real maple syrup
crushed ice

Utensils

saucepan
candy thermometer
cookie sheet
ladle
wooden spoon
pot holder

1. Put syrup in a saucepan and bring to a slow boil over medium heat.
2. Keep cooking the syrup until the candy thermometer reaches 235 degrees. This is the soft-ball stage.
3. Put the crushed ice in an even layer on the cookie sheet. Use the ladle to drizzle syrup over the ice.
4. Let the syrup cool and then peel the candy off the crushed ice and eat like taffy.
5. Heat a little less than 1/2-inch of oil in the frying pan. Dip the apple rings/slices into the batter and fry them, turning once so that they are golden brown on both sides. Add oil as necessary.
6. Take the fritters out of the oil and place them on paper towels to drain and cool. Sprinkle them with powdered sugar (though not a colonial step).

Recipe from *Hasty Pudding* by Loretta Frances Ichord, 1998.

How Did Native Americans Make Wax Sugar?

Snow on the ground was used, not ice cubes. Native Americans had no candy thermometer to judge the readiness of the maple syrup. They learned to watch

the color and thickness of the cooking syrup to know when it was ready. They drizzled the hot syrup on the snow and waited for it to cool. Then they peeled the taffy and packed it away for journeys.



This Spring at Smith's Castle

Note: Call the Castle office, 294-3521, to register for docent training and educational programs.

April

Day	Time	Event
Saturday & Sunday, 12 & 13	9:00 am–3:00 pm	Clean-up days
Monday, 14	5:00 pm	Executive committee
Monday, 28	7:00 pm	Trustee meeting
Tuesday, 29	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #1

May

Day	Time	Event
Thursday, 1	9:00 am	Docent meeting
Friday, 2	6:00–8:00 pm	Opening reception: Visitor orientation exhibition
Saturday, 3	Noon–4:00pm	Opening day
Tuesday, 6	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #2
Saturday, 10		Opening of R.I. Treasures Exhibition, Convention Center
Saturday & Sunday, 10, 11		Living History Days, Roger Williams National Memorial
Tuesday, 13	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #3
Saturday, 17	5:00 pm	Colonial Tavern night
Tuesday, 20	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #4
Thursday, 22	7:00 pm	Colonial Expressions program: NK Adult Ed.
Tuesday, 27	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #5
Thursday, 29	7:00 pm	Etiquette and Deportment of 18th Century Women
Saturday, 31	10:00 am–noon	For Meate or Medicine: SK Parks and Recreation

June

Day	Time	Event
Tuesday, 3	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #6
Thursday, 5	9:00 am	Docent meeting
Saturday, 7	Noon–4:00 pm	Strawberry Festival
Sunday, 8	Noon–4:00 pm	Strawberry Festival, rain date
Tuesday, 10	6:30–9:00 pm	Docent training #7
Saturday, 14	10:00 am	Master Gardener program: Drip Irrigation
Sunday, 15		R.I. Treasures closes
Saturday, 21	10:00 am	Colonial Cooking demonstration: NK Adult Ed.

Find Answers to Your Local History Questions

Beginning with the next issue, your newsletter will include a column called "Ask The *Chronicle*." This will be your opportunity to get answers to those perplexing local history questions that have been nagging at you. Open to all members and their families, young and old alike, we invite you to send your questions in to "Ask The *Chronicle*."

Local historian, Swamp Yankee, and *Chronicle* staffer Tim Cranston will host the column. He will draw upon the resources of Smith's Castle, as well as his Swamptown Enterprises network of local historians and genealogists to root out the answers to your questions and queries. So sit down, scratch your head, put pen to paper, and send in your questions.

Hearty Pats on the Back to...

Jim Powell, member and CPA, for professional expertise and untiring, patient and good-natured consultation during the transition to computerized financial management. Jim generously continues to oversee our books and answer our questions.

Jan Breault, Shirley Burnham, Joyce Fuller, Dianne Hoffman, Clare Northrup, Mary Nunes, Lara Seaberg, Marge Swift and their many volunteers for making Christmas at the Castle successful once again.

Cathy Shippee, Ellie Ferguson, Betsy Steinman, and Jackie Gildersleeve for providing another fabulous member guest holiday party and to **Amanda Eagan, Ryan Cranstons, Aaron Greene, Hilary Hurdis, and Rebecca Long** for giving top notch service to the guests.

The generous sponsors of the 2002 holiday party: **Anne and Dick Bowen, Jan and Dick Breault, Neil Dunay and Darrell McIntire, Betty and Peter Dunston, Betty and Al Fenik, Ellie and Bruce Ferguson, Judith and Peter Kohlsaat, Betty Sue and Roberts Reed, Cathy and Russell Shippee, Mary and Robert Shillaber, Betsy and Don Steinman.**

Gail Burda for gift of the grant writing course and to **Meghan McKay** for taking the course and making a full report and materials available to the Association.

The 2002 docents and friends, who, according to the customer satisfaction survey, gave outstanding house tour service to the public.

Neil Dunay for accepting the Wilkins Updike award for the RI Heritage Hall of Fame.

The 2002 youth education committee, **Chris Kalina, Deb Britton, Maureen Danforth, Martha Dwyer and Diane Long** and school program docents, **Marge Bartlett, Carol Bozarth, Jan Breault, John Chase, Louise Duckworth, Betty Follansbee, Bob Hocking, Chris Kalina, Skip Kingsley, Sally Marinelli, Mary Nunes, Lara Seaberg, Mary Shillaber, and Diane Traynor** for an outstanding year of programming for children.

Retiring Gift Shop Manager, **John Chase** for a superb job.

Nisha Pathak, Heather Skenyon, Liisa Hallberg, and Diane Smith for their sign-making dedication.

Bill Spicer for another round of maintenance on the Castle tractor-mower.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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