

Castle Chronicle



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The Rhode Island Black Battalion

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Rhode Island College*

The history of Black Rhode Islanders is very long, sometimes very hard, and is far from finished. First, recall that in the Boston Massacre on 5 March 1770 that among the very first to fall to British bullets was a Black runaway slave. This slave, Crispus Attucks, was leading a protest of workers who sacrificed their lives in the battle for American Freedom. A second incident in the American Revolution took place on 9 June 1772 in Narragansett Bay near Pawtuxet Village, Cranston. In this case the slave trader, John

Brown, was frustrated with British controls on his commerce, so he attacked and sunk the British patrol schooner the *Gaspee* and wounded its Captain Dudingston. His personal slave, Aaron Briggs, is believed to have rowed the boat from which this attack was mounted. These two events, both before the Boston tea party on 16 December 1773, clearly precipitated the unilateral Rhode Island Declaration of Independence on 4 May 1776 that was soon followed by the national Declaration on 4 July 1776.

A celebrated turning point for Blacks was with the military service of the Rhode Island Black Battalions during the American Revolutionary War. As the struggle for national independence from Britain intensified in the colonies, both sides began to need additional troops to replace those already fallen. Since slavery was still legal in most of the future United States, slave owners were reluctant to put their slaves at risk of death. For Rhode Island this meant that any willing slave owner

—continued on page 7

Inside

2	President's Note
3	Board of Trustees Summary
4	Association Officers Step Down
4	Holiday Book Ideas
6	Book Review
6	R.I. Black Regiment
8	Smith's Castle Doll Collection
10	Recent Events
12	Docent Field Trip
13	Kids' Corner
15	Upcoming Events
16	Winter Calendar



The Black Regiment of the American Revolution. © 2004 Cheryl Kirk Noll, image courtesy of Moon Mountain Publishing.

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

Note from the President

As stewards of Cocumscussoc, we shall preserve the Area's architecture, archeology, and landscape. We shall encourage the 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.

Year's end provides an opportunity for reflection. Have the objectives in the Mission Statement received the support of the Association? In 2005 the Cocumscussoc Association accomplished several significant goals and initiated others that will lead it into the future. They include but are certainly not limited to:

- The first phase of the Transportation Enhancement Grant received in 2002 is underway and the resulting cultural landscape report will provide much needed research to plan the next step in this project.

- The Castle hosted its first large scale public fund raising event in a gala summer party on the lawn.

- The Culture Coalition, a collaboration with other area historic institutions to promote and support one another and provide joint public history programs, was launched.

- Talented and dedicated Docents continue to provide excellent educational programming for

children and adults, as well as provide interpretation for special events.

- The long awaited directional signs have been placed on Post Road to guide visitors to the Museum.

Stewardship comes with challenges. With ambitious objectives often come growing pains. An all volunteer organization of this size is particularly vulnerable to leadership struggles. The loss of key individuals in any position impacts all areas of the organization. There are many energetic, enthusiastic, and committed volunteers whose passion drives the Association forward. Each and every hour donated is important and appreciated, from those who stuff envelopes for mailings to those who staff the house for public tours. Visitors often comment on the passion and excitement exhibited by Castle volunteers. It is that shared passion that sets this organization apart from others. However much of the volunteer work is accomplished by a small group of the membership. More volunteers are always needed. Please consider Smith's Castle and its countless volunteer opportunities, whether you have an hour a week or an hour a month. Your time will be well spent and most appreciated! Call 294-3521 for details and information.

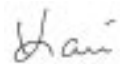
Happy Holidays and best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year!



View from the Annex

At the conclusion of my first year at Smith's Castle, I think this note should be one of reflection. I came to the Castle excited, nervous, and brimming with new ideas. My first day coincided with the Fall Ladies Camp, and what an eye opener that was! I learned how to dip candles, hook rugs, and paint with a feather—all things I have never done before. This year has been a learning experience for me from that day on. Most people do not realize how much

knowledge and experience flows through the veins of the Castle. Everyone here brings something to the table, and I couldn't be luckier to be learning from all of you. School never ends, and that is something that I am thankful for every day. So thank you to all of my teachers, the members and volunteers of Smith's Castle. Please continue to share, so that the Castle continues to grow.



Welcome New Members

Janet Hartman
Mr. and Mrs. Keith Ward

Mr and Mrs. Tom Burke
Mr. and Mrs. Dick Grafe

—as of 11/20/05

Volunteer Hours

Make sure to report your 2005 volunteer hours to the Castle office by **Friday, January 20!**

October 24, 2005

Highlights from Board of Trustees Meeting

It was announced that Trustee Dianne McGowan submitted a letter of resignation from the Board to the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer's report and financial statement were submitted to the Board. It shows that receipts are down sharply this year. Some events drew fewer attendees than expected and others were canceled due to weather.

The Executive Committee recommended that *ACT Database* software, a purchase previously approved by the Board, be returned due to budget concerns and the recent development of a membership database in *MS Access*. The Board asked the Membership Committee for a decision, as it would be the primary user.

The Board was provided with the Resident Director's recent job review.

The Board agreed that proceeds from this year's Annual Fund Drive would be divided as follows: Half would go towards needed repairs at the Castle and half would be applied to the costs of launching an endowment campaign.

Similarly, the Board agreed that proceeds from the Holiday Party would be split with half going towards filling the 2005 budget gap and, again, half applied to the cost of launching the endowment fund. The Board also approved an increase of ticket prices for the event, from \$30 to \$35.

The Board tabled a vote on an Association policy in the event of the catastrophic loss of the Castle, pending review by an attorney.

Committee chairs were asked to submit a calendar for 2006 events by November 15. Events scheduled include Opening Day (May 6), Strawberry Festival (June

10), Harvest Festival (October 14), and Holiday Open House (December 2 and 3). The committee in charge of the Antique Auto Show plans to hold the event again next year but has not yet set a date.

With money now designated for launching an endowment fund, a chair and committee will be needed to direct the project. Volunteers are being sought.

The President reported the appointment of a committee to review the Association's bylaws. Proposed changes and recommendations will be sent to every board member for review before a final draft is submitted to the entire membership for a vote. The revised bylaws will require approval by a two-thirds majority at the annual meeting in February. A draft copy and a ballot will be sent to the entire membership with an invitation to the annual meeting. Any member who cannot attend may submit a proxy.

Adequate recognition of the efforts of Smith's Castle docents was discussed. The role of docent is intensive and demands a substantial commitment of time and energy. Maggie Skenyon and Jan Breault suggested Trustees host a special open house for docents when the Castle is decorated for the Holidays. A suggested date is Sunday, December 11, 2005, pending discussion with the docent president.

Karen Pizzarusio inquired about the status of the credit card machine. It was used for the summer fund raiser, but has not been used in the gift shop (or elsewhere) since. It was suggested that the machine could be used for educational programs, membership, and special events. It could also be used in the Annual Fund Drive. Action was tabled pending further research and discussion. ■

Clean Slate in 2006

Current Officers Step Down

The Association's current officers have notified the nominating committee that they will not continue in office following the end of their current terms.

President Chris Kalina, who has logged innumerable hours on behalf of the Castle, will be stepping down from the presidency to concentrate on her position as education chair, including coordinating and staffing all children's program.

Vice President Jules Cohen, who has been an inspirational volunteer leader, would like to spend more time in the Castle grounds and gardens with his incredible army of Master Gardeners.

Treasurer Jim Powell, a Florida resident who accepted the position several years ago on the premise that it

would be a temporary position until a local candidate was found, has also decided to step down. Jim computerized and professionalized the Castle's accounting system and focused his incredible attention to detail on all aspects of the Castle's accounts and organization.

The Castle was not able to fill the secretary position this year and it also must be filled in 2006.

The Smith's Castle membership thanks the leadership team for their dedication, hearty efforts, and hard work.

If you think you would like to take on one of the officer's position in 2006 or if you know of a great candidate, please contact Betsy Steinman, nominating committee, (xpert@cox.net). ■

Holiday Gift Idea— Give a Book and Reward the Castle

Stuck for gift ideas? Here is a selection of newly published books that may help. All are titles that feature Rhode Island—its art, architecture, foodways, history, and folklore—and all are available through Amazon.com via the Smith's Castle website. Remember, when

you enter Amazon.com through the Smith's Castle website a percentage of your purchase is returned to the Castle. So buy a book to benefit the Castle this season. Just be sure you go to Amazon through the link below. (For children's book ideas see p. 14.) ■

www.smithscastle.org/museum_shop/holiday_books.htm



***Food in Colonial and Federal America*, Sandra L. Oliver, Greenwood Press, 2005.** The success of the new settlements in what is now the United States depended on food. This book tells about the bounty that was here and how Europeans forged a society and culture, beginning with help from the Indians and eventually incorporating influences from African slaves. Their daily life is illuminated through descriptions of typical meals, holidays, and special occasions, as well as their kitchens, cooking utensils, and cooking methods over an open hearth. Readers will learn how they kept healthy and how their food choices reflected their spiritual beliefs. This thorough overview endeavors to cover all the regions settled during the Colonial and Federal periods. It also discusses each immigrant group in turn, with attention given to Indian and slave contributions. It illuminates the settlement and adaptation of the European settlers, the European struggle for control of North America, relations between the settlers from different European countries, and changes in Native American society resulting from settlements.



***Saltwater Foodways: New Englanders and Their Food in the 19th Century*, Sandra L. Oliver, Mystic Seaport Museum, 1995.** *Saltwater Foodways* is the definitive history of New England's seacoast and seafaring food, and the evolution of Yankee foodways throughout the 19th century. Its 16 extensively illustrated chapters consider the food traditions of New England coastal people, of cooks aboard fishing and deepwater vessels, and the celebration of Christmas, Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, and the fruits of summer. Each chapter is followed by historic recipes, 185 in all, interpreted for the modern cook. Winner of the 1996 July Child Cookbook Award for distinguished culinary scholarship.

N.B. This title is not available through Amazon, but may be purchased at URI's Coastal Institute Bookstore (401-874-6211) or from Mystic Seaport Museum Shop (www.mysticseaport.org/shop).



***Private Newport: At Home and in the Garden*, Bettie Beardon Pardee, Bulfinch, 2004.** Newport—celebrated “City by the Sea” and home to America's elite—has a deeply rooted history, both architectural and otherwise, that makes it a perennial destination, with more than 3.5 million visitors each year. The famous properties of the Preservation Society of Newport County, the annual Flower Show, the Jazz Festival, the Tennis Hall of Fame, and corporate retreats all bring a steady stream of tourists to Newport each year. Featuring 275 full-color photographs, this is the first book to reveal the privately owned mansions and gardens of Newport that are closed to the public and not part of the tours given by the Preservation Society. Never-before-published photos of these homes, which have been designed by distinguished architects and landscape designers, are stunning examples of Newport's 375-year old-world architectural heritage.



***Roger Williams: Prophet of Liberty*, Edwin S. Gaustad, Oxford University Press, 2001.** The founder of Rhode Island and of the first Baptist Church in America, Roger Williams is the forgotten giant among the first English colonists. Readers follow Roger and Mary Williams on their 1631 journey to Boston, where he soon became embroiled in many controversies. Soon banished for these troubling (if farsighted) views, Williams wandered for fourteen weeks in bitter snow until he bought land from the Narragansett Indians and founded Providence, which soon became a sanctuary for religious freedom and a refuge for dissenters of all stripes. The book discusses Williams' journey back to London, where he sought legal recognition of his colony, spread his enlightened views on Native Americans, and (alongside John Milton) fought passionately for religious freedom. Gaustad also describes how the royal charter of Rhode Island, obtained by Williams in 1663, would become the blueprint of religious freedom for many other colonies and a foundation stone for the First Amendment.

***Art in a Season of Revolution*, Margaretta M. Lovell, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.** Focusing primarily on maritime settlements such as Salem, Newport, and Boston and viewing them within the larger framework of the Atlantic world, Margaretta Lovell considers the ways 18th century New England experience was conditioned by its source cultures and markets. Colonial material culture participated in a non subsistence international economy, deriving ideas, pigments, and conventions from abroad, and reexporting them in the effort to enlarge market opportunities or to establish artistic reputations in distant London. *Art in a Season of Revolution* illuminates the participation of pictures, objects, and makers in their cultures. It invites historians to look at the material world as a source of evidence in their pursuit of even very abstract concerns such as the nature of virtue, the uses of identity, and the experience of time. This provocative new book challenges established frameworks for understanding the production of art in British America during the tumultuous decades bracketing the Revolution.



***Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, Julie Decker and Chris Chiei (eds.), Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.** When World War II came along, the American military found itself in need of a prefabricated, lightweight shelter that could be easily shipped and quickly assembled. The Quonset hut—named after its birthplace, the Navy base at Quonset Point, R.I.—was the answer. Over a hundred thousand were produced as part of the war effort. In its aftermath, even more were built and existing huts were adapted to house the postwar population boom. Of course, it couldn't last: the American desire for permanence meant decay and neglect for many of these rough-and-ready shelters and quickie warehouses. But in the midst of its almost tragic tale of extinction, the Quonset hut has emerged as an unexpected icon of Americana and an oasis of architectural imagination. Travel the back roads of America and you will find the Quonset's distinctive shape enclosing everything from houses of worship to houses of pancakes. *Quonset Hut* tells the story of this unique architectural phenomena, from its birth during WW II as a mass-production shelter to its new status as an icon of American pragmatism, ingenuity, perseverance, and individuality. Essays on the history of the hut and its influence on contemporary architecture are interspersed with period photographs of Seabees erecting the structures, *House Beautiful* magazines spreads, and cheery ads from manufacturer Stran-Steel ("There's just no limit to how handsome a Quonset hut can be!").



***Buildings of Rhode Island*, William H. Jordy, 2004.** This is the ninth volume in the Society of Architectural Historians' Buildings of the United States. Rhode Island is the smallest state in the Union: slightly more than 1,200 square miles, 14 percent of which is taken up by the waters of Narragansett Bay. Yet this tiny enclave contains one of the richest concentrations of important historical architecture to be found anywhere in the United States. *Buildings of Rhode Island* is a guide to this heritage. Covering the state's thirty-nine cities and towns in some 900 building entries accompanied by approximately 330 illustrations and 55 maps, it combines the comprehensive approach that is a hallmark of the series with a special perspective on Rhode Island's built environment. It is one of the last works of esteemed historian of American architecture William H. Jordy, edited and updated by two of his collaborators and contributors for the volume, Ronald J. Onorato and William McKenzie Woodward.



***John Townsend: Newport Cabinetmaker*, Morrison Heckscher, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005.** John Townsend (1732–1809) is one of the most revered cabinetmakers of Colonial America. He spent his life in Newport, Rhode Island, leaving a uniquely large body of documented work. This handsome and generously illustrated book—the first publication ever devoted to Townsend—looks at the life and legacy of this extraordinary cabinetmaker. The book opens with an overview of Newport and a discussion of other important cabinetmakers, including Job and Christopher Townsend, John's father and uncle. John worked as an apprentice to his father before establishing his own shop when he was twenty-one. The catalogue section of this volume presents new color reproductions, including details of carving and construction and inscriptions and labels, of all 35 documented pieces by John Townsend. Comparative works by Christopher, Job, Job Jr., and Edmund Townsend as well as by John Goddard, another significant Newport cabinetmaker of the time, are also featured. Other documentation includes: a genealogical chart of the Townsend and Goddard families; wills and inventories of Christopher and John Townsend; a list of Townsend family furniture; names of John Townsend's clients; and a list of all documented Newport furniture.



***R is for Rhode Island Red: A Rhode Island Alphabet*, Mark R. Allio, Mary Jane Begin (Illustrator), 2005.** It may be our smallest state but its presence is unmistakable—rich in history, breathtaking beauty, and famous for its neighborhoods filled with character. With every turned page readers will be treated to Rhode Island's incredible scenery and have their many questions answered about our thirteenth state. Rhode Island has how many miles of coastline? The breathtaking beauty of Block Island is one of the state's how many islands? Readers will also learn how Rhode Island native Samuel Slater started the American Industrial Revolution, and what the quahog is.



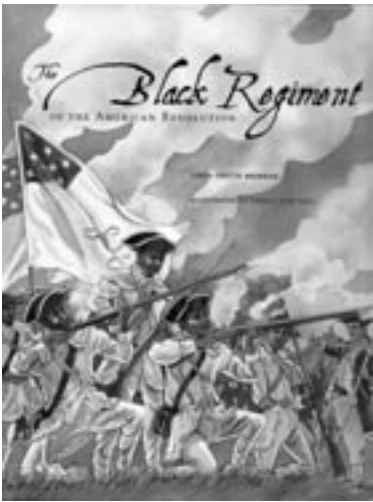
Recommended Reading

The Black Regiment of the American Revolution

By Linda Crotta Brennan Illustrated by Cheryl Kirk Noll

Moon Mountain Publishing, Inc. 2004

Hardcover, 32 pages



© 2004 Cheryl Kirk Noll, image courtesy of Moon Mountain Publishing.

Although most schoolchildren are introduced to the black regiments and the role they played in ending the Civil War, most are not that familiar with the part played by black Americans in the American Revolution. Linda Crotta Brennan's publication on Rhode Island's black regiment remedies that omission. A resident of Coventry, Rhode Island, Brennan is a well-known author of children's books. Aimed at an audience of nine through twelve-year-old readers, the work is well illustrated by Providence resident, Cheryl Kirk Noll, who included maps, original watercolors, and

documents. Sidebars on most of the pages clarify and expand points made in the text.

George Washington assigned Rhode Island to have two full regiments. However, after the bitter winter of 1777 at Valley Forge, less than 400 Rhode Island soldiers remained, barely enough for one regiment. The commanders combined the remaining soldiers into one Rhode Island Second Regiment. Where would they find enough men to make up a new Rhode Island First Regiment?

General Varnum made the startling proposal to enlist slaves. First, he had to convince the state legislature, which was comprised of a good number of slaveholders, that arming slaves was the only course. The legislature not only agreed with Varnum but also stipulated that the slaves in the new regiment would be paid the same as white soldiers and "upon passing muster by Col. Christopher Greene, would be free."

Two hundred black men, both free and slave, along with a few whites volunteered to make up the First Rhode Island Regiment. More would have joined had not Rhode Island stopped accepting recruits four months into the program. Caesar Updike from Smith's Castle plantation was among the volunteers. Unlike other black soldiers in the continental Army who worked in support operations, the men of the First Rhode Island Regiment were combat soldiers.

When the American plan to drive the British from Newport in 1778 was foiled by bad weather and the retreat of the French forces to Boston for repairs, almost 3,000 men deserted the Continental Army. However, the First Rhode Island Regiment remained steadfast and heroically fought the Hessians, British mercenaries, in three major confrontations.

When the British abandoned Newport the next year, the Black regiment, bolstered by 5,000 French troops, occupied the city. Two years later they united with the Second Rhode Island Regiment to "create one racially mixed unit of about 450 men." This was probably the last fully integrated regiment until the Korean War. They soon left to meet with General Washington's troops in New York.

After fighting in New York, the regiment moved south with Washington's army and a number of French troops. The Rhode Island Regiment, the majority of whom were black or mulatto, served in the last major battle of the war at Yorktown, Virginia, with distinction. They then marched north in bitter cold weather to Saratoga where they were dismissed. Like all Revolutionary War soldiers, they walked the entire way back to their home state, Rhode Island.

The book follows the lives of some of them after the war. A major problem they faced was that although they were free, their families were not. Postwar depression meant few jobs, especially for blacks. Some worked the rest of their lives attempting to purchase the freedom of their families. The new United States government, racked by financial problems, reneged on its debts and few soldiers, white or black, received the pensions owed them.

One year after the Revolution ended, the Rhode Island legislature became the first to gradually end slavery. No doubt the patriotism and heroism of this Rhode Island regiment was a major factor in this decision.

This book contains excellent action-packed illustrations, time lines, a glossary, a list of suggested readings, and places to visit, including Smith's Castle. Sidebars give views of various historians and explanation of things such as muskets and cannons. Although the book is aimed at young readers, ages seven through twelve, older students and even adults can also enjoy it. This highly recommended book is available at the Smith's Castle bookstore. ■

—Dr. Norma LaSalle

R.I. Black Battalion (from page 1)

could transfer ownership and authority from himself to the commanding officers of the new Continental Army. Many of these revolutionaries were also slave owners and in some cases they were slave traders, such as John Brown in whose boat Aaron Briggs had rowed to sink the *Gaspee*.

In January 1778 General Varnum of Rhode Island wrote to George Washington to propose the use of Rhode Island slaves in the revolutionary army. Since Washington was himself a major slave owner, he was hesitant in principle to use slaves as soldiers in a war supposedly waged for freedom. By this time, however, the war was not going very well, and he finally capitulated in a letter to Rhode Island Governor Nicholas Cooke that he would consent to the use of slave soldiers. By February it was proposed they would be freed in perpetuity for their service after being mustered in two Black Battalions under white officers. At this moment Newport was under British control, and the weak revolutionary forces feared a British attack on Providence. Funds from the state treasury were used to compensate slave owners for their loss. Some Rhode Island slave owners who feared giving military experience to slaves managed to have the legislation reversed by June 1778, but the Battalions had been quickly formed and were very much needed. Colonel Christopher Greene had already taken command of the Battalion. They were mustered on 6 July 1778 in four infantry companies, including 19 commissioned officers over the 144 fighting men. Later another company was added to bring together a total force of 226 men. The famous Battle of Rhode Island was soon to follow. The Black Battalion performed marvelously and held off two crack Hessian mercenary regiments along with British regulars. From this victory they went on to fight in the south and on other northern battlefields.

A surprise Tory attack in May 1781 brought the death of Col. Greene and the command was passed to Lt. Col. Jeremiah Olney who fought at Red Bank (New Jersey), Yorktown, and Ft. Oswego at the end of the war. After almost five years of service, the Rhode Island Black Battalion was dismissed at Saratoga, New York, to begin a long trek back to Rhode Island and further political struggles.

Slavery was still legal in Rhode Island during the Revolutionary War, although legal efforts had been made (but were much ignored) to curb the trade and import of slaves. Some slave owners wanted their slaves returned, and there were other issues of equitable compensation for military service. In 1784 the Rhode Island legislature passed the Gradual Abolition Act as a result of the Black Battalion's heroic and significant service. This was followed in 1787 by the Total Abolition Act that was also ignored by many commercial leaders who continued the Atlantic slave trade well into the 19th century.

Let us not forget some of the names of the members of the Black Battalion... or at least the family names of their slave owners: Priamus Babcock, Priamus Brown, Africa Burk, July Champlin, Newport Champlin, Sharper Champlin, Jack Coddington, Hercules Gardner, Priamus Gardner, Cuff Green, William Greene, Cato Greene, Caesar Harris, Bachus Hazard, Peter Hazard, Jabin Hazard, Jacob Hazard, Thomas Lafavour, Warren Mason, Cyrus Mawney, Philow Philips, Titus Pierce, David Potter, Mingo Robinson, Prince Rodman, Mingo Rodman, Richard Rhodes, Priamus Rhodes, Samuel Rhodes, Edward Rose, Cuff Tillinghast, Caesar Updike, and Prince Vaughan. ■

RICHARD A. LOBBAN JR. Dr. Lobban is a professor of anthropology and African studies at Rhode Island College, where he has taught for more than 30 years. During his tenure there, he has served as director of the Program of African and Afro-American Studies, the oldest such program in Rhode Island. He has contributed to the scientific and comparative study of slavery in the state, nation, and world and applies this closely to work on human rights and political asylum today. Currently he is the co-director of the URI Study Abroad program in Cape Verde, serves as the executive director of the Sudan Studies Association and as vice president of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, and is on the board of the R.I. Council for the Humanities and a member of the Providence Chapter of the NAACP. Dr. Lobban also has been closely involved in the creation of the Black Heritage Trail placing historic markers at places of historic interest to the Black community.



© 2004 Cheryl Kirk Noll, image courtesy of Moon Mountain Publishing.

The Women (and One Man) of Smith's Castle

The Castle Doll Collection

Jan Breault

The Smith's Castle doll collection, "Women of Cocumscussoc," was created by Anna Yost in 1960. She worked under the direction of Mary Whitlock, then chair of URI's Department of Clothing and Textiles, and Emily Greene.

The dolls tell the history of Smith's Castle from 1600 to 1812 when Wilkins Updike was forced to sell the property. Anna Yost crafted the dolls' attire with a high degree of period accuracy. This attention to detail extends from the style and decoration of the clothing—its buttons, laces, collars, cuffs, and trims—to the

Robert Izzo. Unfortunately, the dolls themselves are not marked with the name of the historic person they portray. Based on each doll's clothing style and chosen accessories, three of the dolls appear to have been misidentified in ...*Yankeeland* and have been shifted accordingly for this article.

Joan Smith (1) was the first, first lady of the Castle. She came from Gloucestershire, England, and was married to Richard Smith who set up a trading post at Cocumscussoc about 1637. They had five

Smith Jr., who often referred to her as his cousin. We do not have much information about her other than she was a Quaker and very quiet. She had no children and her husband traveled a great deal. She also made her mother-in-law's cheese recipe and gave it as gifts to visitors, such as the Connecticut Governor, John Winthrop Jr.

In 1692, upon the death of Richard Smith Jr., **Abigail Newton Updike (3)** became mistress of the Castle. She was the grandchild of Richard Smith Sr. She was born in New York about 1663, but she moved



1. Joan Barton Smith (ca. 1600–bef. 1651) is sitting on bench with her famous Narragansett Cheese on her lap.



2. Esther Smith (?–ca. 1691) is shown with a niddy-noddy, although her historic association with textiles is not known. [Portrayed in ...*Yankeeland* as Anstis Jenkins Updike.]



3. Abigail Newton Updike (ca. 1663–1745) is shown with a basket for picking herbs to make her medicines. [Shown in ...*Yankeeland* as Esther Smith.]

drawers, under gowns, and stockings beneath. Sadly, time has taken its toll on the dolls. Most of the dresses have faded, and a few (particularly Sarah Updike Goddard's wedding gown) are in a dire state.

The dolls were featured in artfully posed photographs at Cocumscussoc in Carl R. Woodward's *Plantation in Yankeeland* in 1971, probably the work of photographer

children. She brought her recipe for Cheshire cheese from England and began using the rich milk and cream to produce a local version that became known as Narragansett or Rhode Island cheese, which was exported from the colony.

Esther Smith (2) was first lady from 1666 until her death about 1691. She was married to Richard

to Smith's Castle, probably when she married Lodowick Updike about 1690. Lodowick was a lawyer and the couple moved in Newport Society. They had seven children. This is the family that planned the building lots for the homes of Updike's Newtown, present day Wickford, in 1707. Abigail was among the first converts to the Episcopal Church (St. Paul's) under Dr. McSparran. She was also



4. Anstis Jenkins Updike (1702–1744), the granddaughter of Polish aristocracy, was the elegant first lady of the newly restored Updike mansion in 1738. [Identified in ...Yankeeland as Abigail Newton Updike.]



5. Sarah Updike Goddard married Dr. Giles Goddard at Smith's Castle on Dec. 11, 1735. The book she holds symbolizes her later profession as one of the first woman publishers in America.

a doctress who is reputed to have developed an especially effective salve for fever sores from local herbs.

Anstis Jenkins (4) married Daniel Updike in 1722. She was his second wife and the mother of (the second) Lodowick, born in 1725. Her husband was the Colony's attorney general, and he served on the commission that settled the boundary

between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Anstis Updike entertained lavishly and had the best society had to offer at that time. She is the only one of the Castle's first ladies of which a life portrait survives. She died in 1744 and Daniel married a third time.

The next dolls represent **Sarah Updike Goddard and Giles Goddard (5)**. Sarah, the daughter of Abigail Newton Updike, was reared at the Castle but was never a first lady. She married Dr. Goddard on Dec. 11, 1735 at the Castle. She was one of the first American women

tion, she entertained a great deal. She also had the aid of servants and slaves. She was the mother of Anstis Updike Lee whose portrait hangs in the Updike dining room. Technically, she was the last first lady to live at Smith's Castle: her "right of dower" gave her lifetime interest in the property and under agreement with the house's new owners, Abigail continued to reside in several rooms of the Castle until her death in 1826.

The last doll represents **Abigail Watson Updike (7)**. She married Abigail and Lodowick's youngest



6. Abigail Gardiner Updike (1740–1826) is shown with a baby, a nod to the fact that she brought eleven children into the world and nurtured them all into adulthood.

to become a printer, publishing the *Providence Gazette and Country Journal* starting in the 1760s. The elegant clothing again shows the wealth of the Updike family.

Abigail Gardiner Updike (6) married Anstis Jenkins Updike's son Lodowick in 1760. She was the niece of Dr. McSparran. She had eleven children, five girls and six boys. Because of their social posi-



7. Abigail Watson Updike (1792–1843) moved with her husband Wilkins from Cocumscussoc in 1812 and set up a new family home at Kingston in 1819.

son, Wilkins Updike, in 1809. She was the mother of 12 children and a talented hostess. Due to family debts however, Wilkins was forced to sell the property in 1812 and move his family to Kingston. Still, the Updikes built a fairly grand home in Kingston, and Wilkins was later elected to represent South Kingstown in the state General Assembly. ■

Recent Events

Documents and Discovery Program Begins Fifth Year Forest Park Elementary Named Blue Ribbon School

Documents and Discovery is an ongoing collaboration, now in its fifth year, between Smith's Castle and Forest Park Elementary School in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. The program engages third grade students in a year-long, in-depth investigation of the Cocumscussoc site, its significance in Rhode Island colonial history, and its role in the evolution of present day North Kingstown.

Students participate in activities that include:

- investigating the 1692 inventory of the estate of Richard Smith Jr.;
- examining the architecture, interior spaces, natural resources, and artifacts of Smith's Castle;
- mapping and surveying the landscape of Cocumscussoc; and
- assuming the role of a child and exploring family life in a 17th century colonial community.

Follow-up activities include a performance piece presented at school and demonstrations at Smith's Castle special events.

The program is not limited to activities directed by Castle volunteers. Third grade classroom teachers Deb Britton, Kim Roberts, and Susan Imschweiber conduct classroom activities that enhance the student experience in the exploration of their community.

This spring, Robert Vincze, principal of Forest Park, has arranged for Brown University student interns to provide additional manpower. They will research primary documents to further enhance and expand the program.

Forest Park Elementary School was recently named a "No Child Left Behind" Blue Ribbon School by the U.S.



Reis Gecawich, Donovan Baker, and Austin Ledoux of Susan Imschweiber's third grade class pose on the Castle grounds during a recent Documents and Discovery event. Photo: Chris Kalina

Department of Education. It is one of only three schools in Rhode Island to receive this award for superior academic achievement, and it is the first North Kingstown school to receive a national award in 15 years. Smith's Castle is proud to extend its congratulations to Principal Robert Vincze and the dedicated faculty and staff of Forest Park! ■

—Chris Kalina, Chair
Education Committee

Mother Nature Did Us In!

Cold, rainy weather forced us to cancel October's Harvest Festival—both Saturday and Sunday were wash-outs.

A hearty thank-you, however, to all those who pitched in to prepare for the Festival, including the bakers who cleared their schedules to be ready to make the apple crisp and Indian pudding. Many thanks to all! There's always next year.

—Jules Cohen



Smith's Castle has posted *No Trespassing* signs on Rabbit Island, a move necessitated by a recent late night bonfire built by rowdy unauthorized guests. Photo: Chris Kalina

Ghost Stories and Graveyards— A Ghoulishly Good Time



In the dimly lit historic kitchen of the Castle, Anita Rafael delighted one and all with tales of haunted Rhode Island. The evening included a demonstration of how to properly make a gravestone rubbing, emphasizing the importance of preserving Rhode Island's historic cemeteries. Rafael is curator of the White Horse Tavern in Newport, one of the oldest tavern buildings in the United States. She also heads "Newport on Foot," conducting historical and architectural walking tours of the city. Photo: Kari Van Buren



Fall Clean-up Weekend. Master Gardeners, Debbie St. Pierre and Joy Gerstenblatt, attend to the gardens while Scouts from Troop 1 in East Greenwich make frequent runs to the compost bins. The Boy Scouts who pitched in were part of an Eagle Service Project, organized by Scott Veazey, Eagle Scout candidate. Photos: Paul Caianiello

Docents Visit ca. 1740 Connecticut House

On a crisp and clear fall day, several Smith's Castle docents enjoyed a field trip to North Stonington, Connecticut, where Gene Pouliot, Castle docent, and his wife Monica recently purchased a circa 1740 home. Their new home was "House of the Week" in the February 1, 2003 Real Estate section of the *Providence Journal* and has also been featured on the Home and Garden Network.

Known as the John York House, it is on the Connecticut State Historic Register and is notable for having survived from the mid-18th century to the present in almost original condition.

Architecturally, the house is strikingly similar to Smith's Castle. It has seven working fireplaces, two of which can be used for cooking. Sited on a well-traveled road, the building was originally a tavern. Prior to undertaking any restoration work and moving in, the Pouliots graciously offered a tour of the house and grounds to the Castle docents, and they spent a lovely fall day poking in every room of the house—from the cellar to the attic. Gene offers his appraisal of the Smith's Castle group:

"I would like to thank the docents and Kari Van Buren who visited the house for their interest, support, and suggestions of where and how I might research the house. As a tour group, however, they were a bit of an unruly lot, but I handled them—I've been well trained."

After a hike around the beautiful eight acre wooded property the docents enjoyed lunch and camaraderie at Mystic Pizza. Docents who participated: Kari Van Buren, Lou Sansone, Bill Prescott, Eunice Pratt, Louise Duckworth, Virginia Miller, Betty Fenik, and Chris Kalina.

Thank-you to Gene and Monica for their wonderful hospitality! ■

—Chris Kalina and Gene Pouliot

Gene Pouliot has passed along two points of interest that he did not share with the group during their visit. "First, the house has a reputation of being haunted. I hope to meet [the ghost] someday. I've been told he is a Revolutionary-era militiaman killed in the house in an argument over a woman (go figure). Second, somewhere within the walls of the house is a space large enough to hold about four adults, possibly a few more if they are diminutive. The space is accessible by walking into, not crawling or crouching. Just where is it located?"



The John York House in North Stonington, Connecticut, looks much as it must have in the 18th century. Photo: Chris Kalina.

Kids' Corner

Wild, wonderful whirligig is my favorite early American toy.

How do I use this gadget you say?

I put my fingers in the string loops with the whirligig in the middle then spin my hands in a circle to wind the string.

Repet the following steps: pull tight and release and string will rewind in the opposite direction.

Listen for the buzzing sound as it spins through the air.

I can go on like this forever or pass my whirligig back and forth with a friend.

Gee this is fun, fast, and old fashioned.

I use a metal whirligig, but in the 17th century they might have used a button.

Get yourself a 'gig at the gift shop and give it a whirl!

— Will Britton

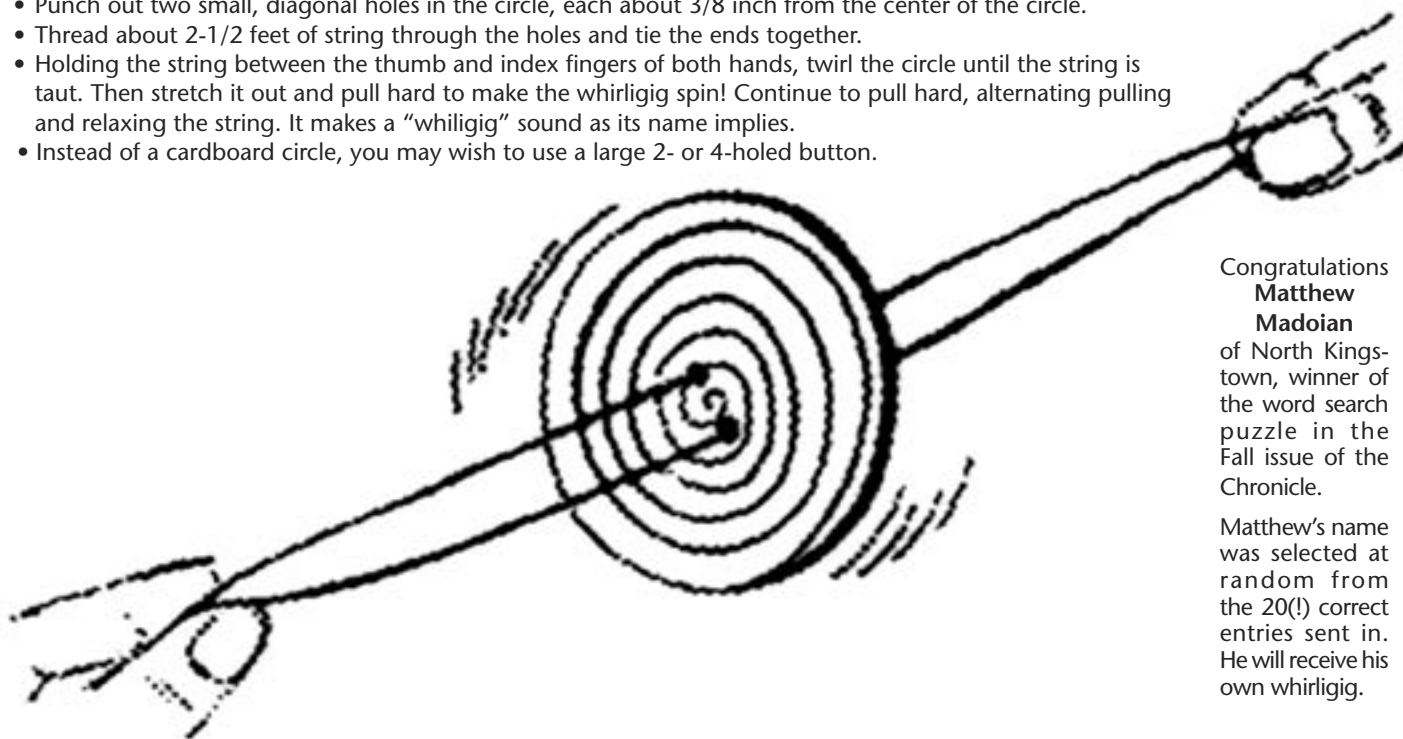


Will Britton is a seventh grader on Team G at Davisville Middle School in North Kingstown. He has been active in the Boy Scouts since first grade. He loves spending time at the Castle and has attended the Smith's Castle summer camp each year since it began.

Make your own whirligig—

- Use a compass, plastic lid, or a pencil and string to draw a 4-inch circle on stiff cardboard.
- Cut out the circle and color it as desired. Experiment with different geometric patterns, spirals, and colors!
- Punch out two small, diagonal holes in the circle, each about 3/8 inch from the center of the circle.
- Thread about 2-1/2 feet of string through the holes and tie the ends together.
- Holding the string between the thumb and index fingers of both hands, twirl the circle until the string is taut. Then stretch it out and pull hard to make the whirligig spin! Continue to pull hard, alternating pulling and relaxing the string. It makes a "whiligig" sound as its name implies.
- Instead of a cardboard circle, you may wish to use a large 2- or 4-holed button.

Activity courtesy of Stratford Hall Plantation, VA (www.stratfordhall.org).



Congratulations **Matthew Madoian** of North Kingstown, winner of the word search puzzle in the Fall issue of the Chronicle.

Matthew's name was selected at random from the 20(!) correct entries sent in. He will receive his own whirligig.



Kids' Corner

Holiday Gift Ideas for Kids— See page 4 for ordering books through Amazon.com and earning money for the Castle.



***The 12 Days of Christmas: A Pop-Up Celebration*, Robert Sabuda, Little Simon, 1996.** Robert Sabuda is to pop-up art what the International Grandmaster is to chess, and it isn't for nothing that he's described on the back of this book as a "paper engineer." As the title suggests, this whimsical, old-fashioned, elegant book embodies the Traditional Song of Abundant Giving—each verse of "The 12 Days of Christmas" is illustrated with a different pop-up creation. Some are relatively simple, such as the partridge (made of just two pieces of hinged paper) that opens its wings above some pears. Still, there is something unexpectedly bold about how the bird literally flies out over the top margin of the page. Other pop-ups are more characteristically bravura creations: the "Ten Pipers Piping" are crafted explicitly as decorative paper cut-outs, but the scissors that cut them are part of the pop-up, too. Perhaps the most complex of the set is "Eleven Ladies Dancing." Interpreted as an old-fashioned music box, the 11 ladies dancing are little ballerinas, and the music box is complete with drawer, back-mirror, and winding key. Sabuda's masterful *The 12 Days of Christmas* is full of nostalgia for the magic of childhood celebration. (Ages 3 to 103) —Richard Farr



***The Night Before Christmas*, Robert Sabuda, Little Simon Pop-Up edition, 2002.** The ingenious Robert Sabuda returns for yet another inspired pop-up book that retells Clement Clarke Moore's classic yuletide rhyme. Sabuda remains a master of the medium, constructing a series of varied and well-engineered scenes: Santa pops in and out of the chimney, beds fold out, a window shade rises and falls, and, in a clever nod to Moore's not-a-creature-was-stirring text, it's a family of mice who are receiving Santa's nighttime visit. A pull-out tab even lets readers interact when Santa's sleigh glides out on the clouds and over an intricately realized village. It's hard to pick a favorite scene here, but you can bet that kids will love the book's pop *de résistance*, in which Santa's lead reindeer nearly fly right up your nose (if they don't knock you out of your chair first). The book's first-rate production and lively pop-ups are enough to recommend it, but Sabuda goes one better by showing the thoughtful restraint to make most of the pop-ups almost entirely white. A few accents of color catch your eye (Santa's red suit and silver pipe), but—as befits such a dynamic book—the visual focus stays on the action. (All ages) —Paul Hughes



***The Christmas Alphabet*, Robert Sabuda, Orchard Pop-Up edition, 2004.** This seasonal, alphabetical pop-up book has become a Christmas favorite. Beneath each lettered flap is an intricate three-dimensional paper cutout of a holiday-related object that starts with the same letter (A for angel, B for bell, C for candle). The cutouts, emerging from colorful squares, are all made of crisp white paper—creating an origami elegance. Yet the paper sculptures are decidedly joyful and unpredictable, like the exploding shreds of paper beside the title "unwrap" under the letter U. Robert Sabuda made his first pop-up book when he was 8 years old, but abandoned the art when he failed to figure out how to make the cyclone twirl in *The Wizard of Oz*. Apparently, he's finally mastered the art of motion, since many of the pop-ups feature movements such as flight for the angel, and the tender joining of lips for the kiss of two reindeer. (All ages) —Gail Hudson



***Chanukah in Chelm*, David A. Adler, Kevin O'Malley (illustrator), Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, Morrow, 1997.** In Jewish folklore, the town of Chelm is where the foolish folk live. In this engaging picture book, Mendel is the bumbling yet lovable caretaker of the Chelm synagogue. On the first day of Hanukkah, the rabbi tells Mendel to place the menorah on a table by the window so everyone can enjoy its warm glow. Poor Mendel! He takes the menorah off the table in the storage closet and then embarks with his smart-alecky cat on an elaborate, all-day, fumbling, slapstick search... for a table. ("How many Chelmites does it take to move a table?" asks his cat. "One to hold the table and ten to move the earth.") By nightfall, Mendel accidentally stumbles on the original table from the storage closet, and the menorah candles can shine through the synagogue window after all. Families have been laughing together for hundreds of years over the funny foibles of the Chelmites, and this slightly irreverent holiday book enthusiastically embraces that tradition. (Ages 5 to 9) —Marcie Bovetz





Holiday Open House



Saturday, December 3 and
Sunday, December 4
Noon–4:00 p.m.

Your 18th century hosts, Daniel and Anstis Updike, invite you to join them in celebrating the joy of the holiday season at Smith's Castle.

Scents from beautiful evergreen decorations will spice the air as you sip hot mulled cider and listen to traditional carols. Father Christmas will be on hand to greet you and have his photo taken with children of all ages. There will be an inside colonial cooking demonstration and free crafts for children. Docents in period dress will guide you through the house and answer your questions. The well-stocked gift shop is the perfect place to select special gifts, and the ever-popular bake sale will tempt you with homemade goodies.

Saturday:

A reading of *The Night Before Christmas*
Music from the South Kingstown High
School Choral Ensemble, eSKAPE

Sunday:

Music by the Bell Choir of St Luke's Church

Admission: Members and under 10 free.
Non-members, \$2.

Photos with Father Christmas will be taken
on the half hour, \$2 per photo.

Member-Guest Holiday Party

It's time again for one of our favorite festive occasions, the Smith's Castle Member-Guest Holiday Party. This year it will be held on Saturday, December 10, 6–8 p.m. Guests will be welcomed with a Scottish flare and will enjoy a menu with old favorites as well as new savory delights. Tickets are \$35.00 per person. Proceeds will benefit Smith's Castle in two ways: Half will go to reducing the 2005 budget shortfall and half will be applied to the costs of launching a much-needed endowment fund. Come enjoy the festivities and support Smith's Castle!

Please RSVP with attendees' names to
294-3521 by December 5.

Annual Meeting Cocumscussoc Association



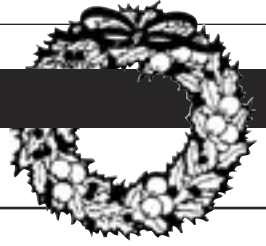
Saturday, February 4, 2006
Please join us to begin the Castle
New Year together!

Meeting 2:00–4:00 p.m.

North Kingstown Free Library

The Cocumscussoc Association

This Winter at Smith's Castle



December

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 3 & Sunday, 4	Noon–4:00 p.m.	Holiday Open House
Saturday, 10	6:00–8:00 p.m.	Member-Guest Holiday Party
Wednesday, 28	3:00 p.m., N.K. Free Library	Music by Mary King & Melany Cabell

January

Day	Time	Event
Friday, 20	4:30 p.m.	Volunteer hours due in office

February

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 4	2:00–4:00 p.m., N.K. Free Library	Annual Meeting
Saturday, 11	2:00 p.m., N.K. Free Library	Lecture, <i>Stone Walls of South County</i> ,

March

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 11	2:00 p.m., N.K. Free Library	Lecture, to be announced

The Cocumscussoc Association
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