

News of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens



1710 HISTORIC HOUSE • GARDENS • TRAILS • CONSERVATION LAND
Weeks Ave. (off Rte. 33) • P. O. Box 93, Greenland, NH 03840
603-436-8147 • www.WeeksBrickHouse.org

A publication of Leonard Weeks & Descendants in America, Inc., a non-profit organization formed in 1975 to preserve the historic Weeks family house and farmstead.

‘Looking Back 40 Years’ and gundalow cruise draw cousins from all points to annual meeting



Silent auction offerings also draw broad interest

Spirits were buoyant at the Weeks Brick House Annual Meeting on Sept. 19-20, 2015, as the ancestral home welcomed new cousins and first-time visitors from distant points across the continent.

Months of planning converged with ideal weather for the two-day event, which celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Descendants of Leonard Weeks in America saving the 1710 Weeks Brick House and 1656 farmstead from development.

Sat., Sept. 19. Arriving attendees were welcomed at the Weeks Brick House early on Saturday afternoon, and after a quick forage through the improvised gift shop, a large contingent departed for the Great

Bay gundalow cruise, while others remained to enjoy tours of the house, farmstead, gardens, and walking trails.

The group sail on the replica of a Great Bay gundalow – a flat-bottom craft used for shallow-water transportation in the days before rail and truck transport – was a highlight. The gundalow replica is the type of craft that, in the early days, docked at the Town Landing at the end of Tide Mill Road, which was Greenland’s early connection with Portsmouth and the world beyond. During the cruise, which departed from Adams Point in Durham, N.H., Weeks Brick House president Tom Ayres shared some of his first-hand knowledge of the gundalow form, relating his childhood encounter with Capt. Edward H. Adams (1860-1950), one of the last gundalow craftsmen.

Following that undeniably “bouyant” experience, spirits were further bouyed upon reconvening back at the Weeks Brick House for the wine-and-cheese social in the garden. The bubbling conviviality of that event was synchronous with the grand opening “reveal” of items available at the much anticipated WBH Silent Auction.

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Attendees enjoyed a gundalow cruise on Saturday, Sept. 19, with background on the craft provided by WBH president Tom Ayres. (Photo by Rebecca More). At left is a 1930s postcard view of the Weeks Brick House – in contrast to the 2015 painting donated to the silent auction by Dominic White.

Visit us on Facebook and show us some love!

If you are a Facebook user and have not yet checked out the Weeks Brick House page, what are you waiting for? Board members Cathy Wescott and Amanda

Nelson are making a concerted effort to keep the page abuzz with fresh content. Further, the very nature of Facebook, aggregating contacts that multiply faster than rabbits, is certain to raise the Weeks Brick House public profile far and wide.

Visit us today at www.facebook.com/WeeksBrickHouse/ and show us some love! ■

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'Looking Back 40 Years: Saving the Weeks Brick House' prompts a fresh look at a timeline of accomplishments

By R.W. Bacon

A feature at the 2015 annual meeting of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens was the group discussion "Looking Back 40 Years: Saving the Weeks Brick House & Farmstead." Relatively few of the players remain from the days of the bold initiative of Weeks descendants to purchase the house and farmstead to save it from commercial development, but several in attendance – Cynthia Weeks, Pamela Weeks, and Ken Weeks – brought an immediacy to the story that prompted a look back at this timeline of organizational milestones:

1975 - Bought back the 1710 Weeks Brick House (on a two-acre lot), which, after being lived in by nine generations of the Weeks family for over 250 years, was sold out of the family in 1968. The house attained designation on the National Register of Historic Places on June 20, 1975, and was also designated a New Hampshire historic site. On September 3, 1975 Leonard Weeks & Descendants in America, Inc. was incorporated as a New Hampshire non-profit foundation. Nationwide mailings to Weeks descendants and fund-raising followed. On December 19, 1975, the organization obtained designation as an exempt organization under IRS code, section 501(c)(3). For financial sustainability, secured a rent-paying tenant to live in the 1710 house, at the time a forward-looking strategy for historic house preservation.

1976 - Bought back the adjoining 31 acres of the original (1656) Leonard Weeks farmstead.

Relatively few of the players remain from the days of the bold initiative of Weeks descendants to purchase the house & farmstead and save it from commercial development.

Commissioned a survey by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now known as Historic New England). The first annual meeting picnic drew 225 people from 13 states.

1977 - Distinguished the Weeks Brick House further by designing and planting an authentic colonial herb garden and orchard, in collaboration with garden historian Ann Leighton (Isadore Smith).

1992 - Secured for posterity a Conservation Easement for approximately 30 of the 33 acres of the original Leonard Weeks farmstead.

1993 - Our colonial garden co-designer, Katharine C. (Kitty) Weeks wrote an illustrated book, *Gardening With New England Colonial Plants: Their History, Uses, & Culture*, sold at Weeks Brick House, Sturbridge Village, and similar outlets.

1994 - Retired the mortgage. Created an Endowment Fund to help assure available funds for maintenance, preservation, and restoration. Engaged a preservation consultant for expert advice.

1997 - Enhanced the rural setting of the house by closing one end of Weeks Avenue from busy Rte. 33 and rerouting the driveway. Received a gift of family

furniture and memorabilia from the last resident Weeks family member in the house.

1998 - Restored the colonial herb garden. Created a display in the Weeks Brick House "Great Room."

2000 - Repaired and weatherized all 25 windows. Developed walking trails with necessary footbridges on our conservation land for community use.

2002-2003 - Hired an archaeologist to conduct background research on 300 years of farmstead ownership and land use in preparation for a future archaeological dig. Dr. Neill DePaoli completed *Three-and-One-Half Centuries in Greenland: The Weeks Brick House Farm in Greenland, N.H.*

2004 - Hired a part-time office administrator.

2006-2007 - Engaged geologists to survey the property with ground-penetrating radar in preparation for the archaeological dig. In summer 2007 Dr. Neill DePaoli conducts the archaeological dig behind the Weeks Brick House, and presents his findings in a series of lectures throughout the region.

2009 - Developed a new content-rich website. Memorial Brick Walkway added. (Add a brick to this walkway! Visit www.WeeksBrickHouse.org for details.)

2010 - 300th anniversary of the Weeks Brick House drew 104 members and friends. In frenzied preparation, the garden was restored, interpretive materials developed, and interpretive panel added.

Annually since 1975 - Annual meetings with tours, education sessions, guest speakers, visiting genealogists, and social events.

Ongoing since 1975 - Consult with preservation carpenters and masons to identify and prioritize maintenance and building conservation.

Ongoing since 1975 - The need for your support to ensure WBH preservation for future generations. ■

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Fall 2015

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Greenland and WBH lose a true friend in Adele Ernst Wick

The Greenland, N.H. community and the Weeks Brick House & Gardens lost a faithful and true friend with the passing of Adele Ernst Wick on Sept. 27, 2015.

An active, upbeat presence in Greenland for the past 30 years, Adele Wick served the Weeks Brick House in various roles – board member, treasurer, and even president – and remained a supportive friend after her long board service.

Born in Ohio in 1950, Adele earned a B.A. at Wellesley College, and an M.A. at the University of Chicago. She taught economics at Tulane University in New Orleans, La. until moving to Greenland, N.H. in 1986.

As a full-time mother of four children, she scaled back her academic career to freelance editing, but still had energy to spare for her

community. In addition to her work for the Weeks Brick House, she served as a trustee of the Weeks Library, and was a leader in the launch of Greenland's recycling program.

She is survived by her sister, Mary Bole; children, Douglas Miller, Patrick Miller, Charlie Miller, and Elizabeth Miller; and grandchild Henry Miller.

A memorial service was held on October 10 at the Greenland Congregational Church. The report: Standing-room only. ■

Delayed fall newsletter nearly overlaps into 'the season for giving'(!?)

A "late fall" newsletter? Your editor's recent collision of conferences and seminar presentations pushed publication of the fall 2015 newsletter very nearly into "the season for giving." What a coincidence! Let's all take the hint and put the Weeks Brick House on "the list" this season. ■

Scenes from the Weeks Brick House 2015 Annual Meeting



Activities!



Silent Auction!



Friends!



New Weeks Family Cousins!

Thanks to our auction donors!

- Old Sturbridge Village
- Boston Red Sox
- Cabot Creamery
- N.H. Fisher Cats
- Jolly Grub

- Red Box
- Disney World
- Country View Restaurant
- Badger Balm
- Top of the Rock, NYC
- Dominic White Studio
- Jonathan's Restaurant
- Mr. Bubbles Car Wash

- Sticks & Stones Letter Art
- Alex & Ani Jewelry
- Nik & Charlie's Pizzeria
- Littleton Coin Company
- Flower Kiosk
- Kurgo Dog
- Dartmouth Women's Hockey
- Purely Oh Dog Bakery

- Applebee's Restaurant
- Aveda Products
- Manchester Monarchs Hockey
- Gundalow Company
- New England Curiosities
- Little Acre Gourmet Products
- Me & Ollie's Restaurant
- UConn Women's Basketball



Edification!



Mingling!



... and Cake!

Thanks to Rebecca More, Amanda Nelson, and Cathy Wescott for photo documentation of WBH Annual Meeting activities.

www.WeeksBrickHouse.org

Weeks Brick House & Gardens Membership Form

(Use this same handy form for annual renewals or for new membership!)

— Renew & Contribute Today! —
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Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please indicate your preference: E-mail newsletter in PDF format Hard-copy postal mail newsletter

Please return this form with payment to: Weeks Brick House & Gardens, P. O. Box 93, Greenland, NH 03840. Thank You!

Make check payable in U.S. currency to "Weeks Brick House." All gifts are tax deductible. Thank You!

Membership Dues Categories:

- \$15 Student/Senior
- \$25 Individual \$50 Family
- \$100 Contributing
- \$250 Sustaining \$500 Leader
- \$ _____ to the Chimney Fund
- \$ _____ to the Garden Fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Annual meeting recap ...

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The Silent Auction Fund-Raiser. The over-the-top advance effort of Cathy Wescott of Beavercreek, Ohio, amassed items from 56 donors. The items up for bid – which ranged from gift certificates, to sport tickets, to autographed memorabilia, to Disney World passes – were packaged in gift baskets and attractively displayed in the Great Room of the Weeks Brick House. From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. attendees inspected the variety of items, sipped wine, nibbled on cheese-and-crackers, hemmed-and-hawed, and jotted down bids. Then came more sipping, hemming, hawing, and re-bidding. After the last gasp of hem-and-haw as the clock struck 7 p.m., the bidding closed, the winners were announced, and the most generous bidders claimed their selections. The end result was nearly \$1600 raised for the Weeks Brick House & Gardens.

Sunday, Sept. 20. Registration for new arrivals opened at 9 a.m. at the Brick House, but for those on a perky rebound from the previous evening's silent auction, the destination of the day was the Great Bay Discovery Center a few miles away, for our guest speaker and panel discussion.

Guest speaker Mark Willis, trustee of the Weeks Public Library in Greenland, gave an overview of the library's history, current challenges, and plans for the future.

Celebrating 40 Years of Preservation. In the group discussion that followed, "Looking Back 40 Years," attendees on the scene at that time revisited the struggles

and triumphs that saved the Weeks Brick House and farmstead from development and residential subdivision in 1975. (See the timeline of organizational achievements from 1975 to the present on page 3.)

A fine lunch prepared by Mary Groebner, Amanda Nelson, Cynthia Smith, and Kate White was punctuated by a one-of-a-kind dessert: A cake emblazoned with a full-color edible image of the Weeks Brick House.

Business meeting. The business meeting was called to order by WBH president Tom Ayres at 1 p.m. Treasurer Cynthia Smith reported an income through the first eight months of 2015 of \$11,879.88, and expenses of \$9,145.32. The underwhelming checkbook balance was \$5,490.30.

Our president's 2015 report noted stable tenant occupancy, attentive oversight by Cynthia Smith, prompt maintenance by Steve Pike, and several "sweat equity" work sessions on the grounds and trails.

The slate of officers was re-elected unanimously, as was Cathy Wescott, elected to the board to replace Nicola Astles, who recently resigned.

President Ayres noted again this year that the organization's major concern is the decline of membership, and the resultant decline in financial support. He concluded on a hopeful note – that our celebration of the preservation triumph in 1975 will prompt a surge of renewed support for the iconic 1710 Weeks Brick House and farmstead. ■

Hot off the press: The Visitor's Guide to the Weeks Brick House

Hot off the press for sale at the annual meeting in September was a new book of interest to WBH members, *The Visitor's Guide to the Weeks Brick House & Gardens*.

Because the historic 1710 brick house continues to be a home and is not open for public visitation, the new book serves the desire of architecture/history enthusiasts and Weeks descendants alike for an authoritative self-guided tour of exterior and interior features. Illustrated with maps, diagrams, and photos, the information-packed 64-page soft-cover book also

includes summaries of early Weeks family genealogy and early Greenland history, as well as self-guided tours of the Colonial-era herb gardens and the walking trails on our 30-plus acres of conservation land.

Authored by museum professional, WBH board member, and Leonard Weeks descendant R. W. Bacon, the book is available from the publisher through the WBH website, www.WeeksBrickHouse.org. The cost is \$16.00, which includes book-rate shipping in the U.S. All profits from sales of the book go to support the Weeks Brick House. ■



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