The House of the Seven Gables

March 2021

To preserve, share and continue the American story

A Monumental Year
A Message from our Leadership

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, we hope this letter finds you healthy and safe.

It is so hard to believe that it has been more than a year since the COVID-19 Pandemic began wreaking havoc in our country and community. When we closed our doors on March 14, 2020, we could not have imagined what would transpire over the next twelve months. But here we are. We feel fortunate to be here and are grateful to all of you that have helped us make it this far.

Throughout this difficult year, our staff and Board of Trustees have tried to make the best of a difficult situation and focus on ways to continue to fulfill our mission. We are proud to say we made great progress in some areas we may otherwise not have been able to focus on in ‘normal’ times, such as infrastructure planning and inventorying, preserving and digitizing archives. We are delighted we are now able to offer programs such as lectures, school field trips, and food demonstrations virtually. While we are very eager to begin welcoming visitors back in-person this spring, we are excited that we have this new ability to engage even more people near and far in our inclusive American story.

We hope you can join us for one of our online programs soon. We cannot wait to welcome you back in-person!

Until then, we wish you the best of health and thank you for your continued support and friendship.

With appreciation,

Kara McLaughlin
Executive Director

Patricia Fae Ho
President of the Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees

Patricia Fae Ho
President
Kenneth C. Turino
Vice President
Irene V. Axelrod
Secretary
Kevin W. Quinlan
Treasurer
Kara McLaughlin
Executive Director
Nina Anderson
Jeff Huebschmann
Pablo Jimenez
Richard A. Leavitt
Erick Lucera
Elizabeth McKeigue
Sharon D. Meyers
Robert C. Seamans, III
Christine P. Thomson
Mariflor Uva
Todd H. Waller
Jacqueline Washburn
Jeffrey B. Whitmore
Robin L. Woodman

STAFF

Kara McLaughlin
Executive Director
Pilar Garro
Director of Development
Julie Arrison-Bishop
Community Engagement Director
Susan Baker,
Collections Manager
Bruce Campbell
Grounds Keeper
Geneva Cann,
Development Associate
Deb Costa
Special Events Manager
Will Demick
Visitor Services Specialist
Francis Dybczak
Maintenance Staff Member
Stacey Harvey
Administrative Assistant
Brian Payne
Preservation Carpenter
Everett Philbrook
Museum Store Manager
Kaylee Redard
Visitor Services Specialist
Jacquie Valatka
Business Manager
A Monumental Year

Life changed dramatically for everyone in March 2020. Stay-at-home orders and spring business closures altered the way we interacted with one another. If you are a member of The Gables, you may have enjoyed a spot of tea over Zoom and wished Caroline Emmerton a happy birthday on Facebook Live. Some of you joined us for our Gardens and Grounds Experience and others savored some wine and cheese during the (rainy!) Seaside Soiree.

On March 13, 2020, The Gables staff hung on every word that Governor Charlie Baker spoke as work at our busy historic site came to a grinding halt. Our site closed for what we thought might be a couple of weeks. We packed up our work and disbursed laptops. From home, we managed the impact of the public health crisis on The House of the Seven Gables.

The months that followed saw a flurry of changes. Staff members devised new ways to do their jobs. Working from her son’s bedroom – the only quiet place in her house to record voiceover – Julie Arrison-Bishop, the Community Engagement Director created a new online tour. The functions manager, Deb Costa, talked to nervous couples about rescheduling weddings to 2021 or scaling back plans for an unknown 2020. Brian Payne found plexiglass and sanitizing wipes. In June, staff came back from furlough to work on preservation projects and oral history transcriptions with PPP funding our executive director secured. Our staff worked diligently to put a new point-of-sale system in place that has already proven its worth. This new system allows for easy online ticketing and staying in touch with our members and friends.

In mid-May, administrative staff returned to their offices. Until this point, only our preservation team was on-site. In early June, The Gables was granted permission to open as a botanical garden under the Phase II guidelines from the Commonwealth. On July 10, the Museum Store and Visitor Center reopened. Due to staffing challenges, The Gables was not able to open for guided tours until November 27. On December 18, the historic site again closed to visitors.

Welcoming back visitors was met with challenges and successes throughout the season. Visitation makes up 80 percent of the revenue that allows The House of the Seven Gables to preserve its National Historic Landmark District and provide educational opportunities for our local immigrant population. Not only did we miss visitors, but we needed them to continue our work. In a normal year, The Gables welcomes over 100,000 people. In 2020, about 20,000 visited our site. Thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Van Otterloo Family Foundation, as well as our members and donors, our staff was able to accomplish many goals.

The Gables implemented a number of staffing changes in 2020. Current staff are listed in the adjacent sidebar. Each staff member found new, innovative ways to do their job and work as a team. We are grateful for each of their contributions.
Thank you, members!

Dear Members,

I want to take a moment to let you know how much your support means to The House of the Seven Gables. Your membership allows us to preserve our National Historic Landmark District and to provide educational programming to many audiences. Your support has allowed us to move our programs, lectures, and events from in-person settings to the comfort and safety of home. Your online and virtual attendance has brought joy to our staff who miss seeing you on-site.

You know from our mailings and messages that 2020 was a year of challenges. 2021 will not be easier, but we do look forward to a better public health situation and more gatherings with all of you. Be sure to check our monthly E-Views from The Gables and monthly emails for up-to-date information. We have more member-exclusive events in the works. There is much to look forward to!

Thank you for all you do to be a part of our mission each day. We look forward to seeing you throughout the year!

Pilar E. Garro
Director of Development

Meet Geneva Cann
Development Associate

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am from Marblehead. I went to Smith College and St. Mary’s College of Maryland and have a BA in History and Museum Studies. Before joining The Gables, I interned at the Peabody Essex Museum. I also interpreted as an indentured servant from 1667 at Historic St. Mary’s City, a living history museum in Maryland. Besides my job at The Gables, I also work part time at the New England Historic Genealogical Society where I am a researcher. I enjoy traveling, reading about the history of the American West, playing piano, and continuing my role as my family’s archivist.

Why do you love working at The Gables?

The first two things that come to mind are the people and the beauty of the site. Everyone on the staff is so warm and they truly care for one another. I enjoy going to work and I have made some really good friends. And the beauty of the site — the houses and harborside location cannot be beat. The fact that I have a view of the mansion and the harbor from my office window is incredible. I’ll never take it for granted!

What excites you about working with members?

As big fan of history, I get excited when I learn about members that have connections to The Gables — whether it is recent or throughout multiple generations. The Gables is a very special place, and you can tell that members have a similar emotional connection to it as I do. I played piano at a member-exclusive event this past December. I really enjoyed being able to share some live music with our members, especially during these difficult times. It seemed to cheer them up! I am looking forward to our upcoming events because they will definitely do the same!

MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE EVENT

Naumkeag Settlers to Salem Shippers

March 13, 2021
Visit 7gables.org/event-calendar for details

This member-exclusive event is a hands-on history program featuring activities from our most popular school program. Perfect for history fans of all ages!
Stories are at the core of what we do at The House of the Seven Gables. They are not just a part of our past; stories are our present and our future. In 2021, we look forward to exploring the lore of our historic site and surrounding community with a special series of lectures, programs, and events.

The Gables has already had the pleasure of hosting its first lecture with Brunonia Barry who discussed the many ways that Salem has inspired her best-selling novels. The first-ever Online Book Club was a success with a small-but-mighty audience. The second book to be discussed, on March 11, is Hawthorne’s *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys*. On March 31, Visitor Services Specialist, Kaylee Redard, will host the final Colonial Classics food demonstration of the season, cooking up some sweet treats from the 1600s.

Other lectures include: On May 25, Instagrammers from #SalemMa share the stories behind their popular postings; in October, filmmaker Ben Wickey shows his 30-minute stop-animation version of “The House of the Seven Gables” in October; Mary Pilon, author of “The Monopolists,” reveals the backstory of the iconic Monopoly board game on Thanksgiving weekend.

Our Community Conversation series entered its seventh season this year. Two events are scheduled with Community Supported Film. Each event will feature two short films made by immigrants in Greater Boston. Each conversation will feature a subject and filmmaker taking a deeper dive into their story and giving the audience a chance to have a conversation about immigration and immigration reform. The first conversation will be held on March 24 at 6 p.m. All of our events are listed on 7gables.org. Most of our events will be held online in 2021 to help us manage the changing public health guidelines. Our staff looks forward to sharing our continuing American story with each of you.

**In Case You Missed It**

This January, *The Salem News* published a series titled “Young Nathaniel Hawthorne.” Look for these lively stories about a part of Hawthorne’s life that is less well known but vital to a readers’ understanding of the celebrated author and Salem native son. These fun and surprising stories ran on consecutive Mondays in January. The Gables greatly appreciates The Salem News’s generous support and effort.

**March Events — Free for members!**

Up-to-date details and information can be found at 7gables.org.

*Online Book Club*
Thursday, March 11, 6 p.m.

*Community Conversation*
Wednesday, March 24, 6:30 p.m.

*Salem Women’s History Day*
Sunday, March 28

*Colonial Classics*
Wednesday, March 31, 5 p.m.
Visiting The Gables in 2021

The House of the Seven Gables is pleased to announce that we will reopen our historic site in early April. In 2021, we will encourage our visitors to take advantage of our Gardens and Grounds Experience and Semi-Private Guided Tours. The Gables will adhere to all state and local guidelines to keep staff and visitors as safe as possible.

The Gardens and Grounds Experience will bring the stories of our inside spaces out onto the grounds with a history-filled audio tour. Visitors will have access to the gardens, grounds, Museum Store, and Visitor Center.

In early 2020, many of our members had the opportunity to take our fresh, new tour of The House of the Seven Gables. As soon as the public health guidelines allow, the mansion will open for semi-private guided tours. Visitors will have the chance to spend an hour exploring The Gables and Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace with a professional interpreter. Tourgoers will also have access to the gardens, grounds, Museum Store, and Visitor Center.

All visits to the site will include access to the virtual tour, a self-guided 3D tour, and a new online game that focuses on work and labor at The Gables over the past four centuries. Gables members will continue to enjoy a 10 percent discount at the Museum Store and free admission for both the garden and semi-private guided tour experiences.

We expect to use online ticketing as the standard way to visit The Gables in 2021. Online ticketing allows us to control our capacity and offer a high-quality visitor experience to everyone at our site. Members will be notified via email for early and exclusive ticket availability.
The House of the Seven Gables Timeline Project

The first stop on the guided tour experience will feature a newly designed timeline that describes over 350 years of history at the site. Dates on the timeline range from pre-1626, recognizing the land as the seasonal fishing area for the Naumkeag tribe, and will then weave through the fortune of the families who owned the property, the fame of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the philanthropic mission of Caroline Emmerton and how that inspires our mission and work today. This space will feature rotating items from our collections and archives as well as never-before-seen images that bring the story of The House of the Seven Gables to life.

We created this timeline in response to the 2018 interpretive master plan. An interpretive plan helps a historic site or museum find unique methods to share history and stories that best meets the needs of the audience. The need for a timeline came up in our many interviews and surveys with visitors.

We are grateful to Essex National Heritage Area for providing 50 percent of the funding for this important project. White Light Visual of Beverly kindly provided services at a price that met our budget needs for the completion of this project. Their design and installation services are some of the best in the industry.

Please join us for a guided tour in 2021 to enjoy this enhancement to The Gables.

[Timeline installation in the Turner-Ingersoll House]

[Draft of the timeline installed]
VIEWS FROM THE GABLES

What's Inside?
A Monumental Year
What's the Story?
Visiting in 2021
Timeline Installation in the Mansion
...and more!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP