THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

To preserve, share and continue the American story
A Message from our Leadership

One of the duties of my job is to hear peoples’ confessions about how they never finished reading *The House of the Seven Gables*. I’m always sympathetic to their frustration with Hawthorne’s verbosity, but I always encourage them to keep going. The message of the book is so meaningful and matters so much today. To me, it has always been a story about finding a way to honor our history without becoming a prisoner to it. It’s about embracing change.

Change is inevitable, even in preservation. Boston Public Radio aired an excellent story over the summer about The Gables’ efforts to adapt to the climate crisis, and it reminded me how our visitors tend to see historic sites as frozen in time. That’s true to an extent — we do try to minimize change. But if we resisted it entirely, we would surely lose everything we are trying to save. You can read more about how we strike this balance in our climate planning on page 9.

The stories we tell and the work we do have also evolved with time. This year, we rolled out an improved Gables tour with more information about groups who were once totally ignored — Indigenous people and enslaved and indentured people. I also write on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter about our early years as a Settlement House. Much has changed since those days, and I doubt we’d still be here if we were unwilling to reimagine ourselves every few years.

Our volunteer leadership changes, too, as longtime Trustees reach the end of their terms and new Trustees are invited to join the Board. We will say goodbye later this year to Ken Turino and Mariflor Uva, our past President and Treasurer, who can both take much credit for the Gables’ strong leadership, vision, and financial security. We also welcomed Diann Slavit Baylis, Cheri Grishin, Christopher Hale, Alison McCarthy, Kurt Steinberg, and Regina Zaragoza Frey to the Board of Trustees this year.

Our new President, Elizabeth McKeigue, took office in July. She will build on The Gables’ many accomplishments over this past years, while also taking on some exciting new initiatives. You can learn more about Elizabeth on page 10. I’m proud to share our latest projects and successes with you in this newsletter. Remember as you read that none of this would be possible without the continued support of you and other dedicated members. Some things never change, and we’re glad for it.

With appreciation,
A primary vision of The House of the Seven Gables has always been to share the history of our institution with the public. We fulfill this vision in a variety of ways. Countless tours tread in the footsteps of those who’ve come before us. These tours keep the history of The Gables alive while honoring the Settlement work and active legacy of our founder, Caroline Emmerton. Each year, we also host educational events and actively expand our programming to engage visitors in new and exciting ways. The Collections Department is happy to join these efforts to expand accessibility. We’ve long been the custodians of fascinating pieces of history. Now, thanks to a generous donation from Selina Little, we will be able to share our archives on our website.

Over the past year, we’ve digitized significant portions of our archives, rare book catalog, and objects collections. Each piece of the puzzle tells a small part of the American story. Our archival collections include the personal papers of some major characters in the history of The Gables. These include letters written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Upton-family keepsakes, and Caroline Emmerton’s handwritten manuscripts. The online platform will also include pieces from lesser-known creators. Among these works are Elizabeth Upton Haywood Eaton’s handmade greeting cards, which she designed for Boston’s Chilton Greeting Card Co. during World War II. Meanwhile, the online library catalog will be much more than a list of titles and authors. A descriptive field allows us to tell the histories behind the books in our collection. Besides several first editions, we house Susannah Ingersoll’s childhood books and President Ulysses S. Grant’s personal collection of Hawthorne’s works. As recently as January 2023, Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll made use of our collection when she used the Upton Family Bible for her swearing-in ceremony.

Information and images of objects, including furniture and framed artwork, will also have space on our website. These objects have graced our rooms and helped us bring our historic homes to life. Photographs and information on objects’ creators, materials used, and dates will be provided. Some highlights include Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1780 Chippendale desk, and a framed painting of Mary Turner Sargent on ivory.

In publishing images and information on these items, we will be able to interest a broader audience and better represent the scope of our collections. We hope this generates curiosity, and that, in addition to being well-cared for, our collections will also inspire and be utilized. History belongs to everyone, and it is the tradition of The House of the Seven Gables to share it. To learn more and access the archives, visit 7gables.org/collections-archives
In the first years of the 20th century, a new idea took hold in our city. “An interest in Settlement work had penetrated to Salem,” wrote Gables founder Caroline Emmerton, “with the result that a committee of ladies was formed to try out its possibilities here.” The Settlement Movement was indeed having a moment in America. Between 1900 and 1910, the number of Settlement Houses jumped from 100 to more than 400. The House of the Seven Gables would soon join that number.

The concept behind the Settlement Movement was as simple as it was revolutionary. Charity in the 1800s mostly aimed to address the symptoms of urban poverty, not its causes. The new movement proposed to tackle problems at the root, by “settling” social workers into impoverished neighborhoods to live and work alongside the people they served. This firsthand experience helped them address needs that might otherwise be invisible.

Since the Industrial Revolution, those needs were many. Factories created scores of jobs, but at poverty wages. Multiple members of a family might have to work full-time, 60 hours a week, to afford food and housing. In Salem’s Derby Street neighborhood, sandwiched between leather manufacturers and cotton mills, workers lived in cheaply constructed tenements or dilapidated mansions that had been subdivided into cramped apartments. Factory work mostly attracted immigrants, many of them fleeing political or economic instability back home. The first
immigrant families to arrive in the Derby Street neighborhood were Irish. They were soon outnumbered by immigrants from Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Syria, and countless other places.

In 1908, The House of the Seven Gables was still a private home. At that time, The Salem Settlement Committee operated out of the building next door—Seamen's Bethel, a former church. The Committee's earliest efforts centered on activities for children. With parents working long hours, kids were often left unsupervised. Gangs and juvenile delinquency ran rampant. The Committee organized sports, arts and skills classes, and even holiday parties to keep children engaged.

Caroline Emmerton saw potential in this work, but she knew the Committee could do more. Emmerton was then in her early forties, and the beneficiary of a large shipping and railroading fortune. When The Gables came up for sale, she acted swiftly. Using her own funds, she purchased the mansion and began a major remodeling. Most of the mansion became the museum it is today, but Emmerton also created living space inside for 10 Settlement workers. Even the historically furnished rooms served as classrooms or meeting spaces when not hosting tours.

The Committee reorganized in 1910 as The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, and Eleanor Hoyt came aboard as Head Worker. Hoyt had followed the success of Jane Addams’ Hull House Settlement in Chicago and crafted an ambitious slate of programs for The Gables. She added English to the class offerings and revitalized the sports program as the Hawthorne Athletic Association. She also coordinated a summer camp in New Hampshire. Workers began outreach to adults, as well, mainly through the Polish Mothers’ and Jewish Mothers’ Clubs.

Plans to hire a public health nurse, set up a dental clinic, and start a kindergarten program were all put into action that first year. Every new program required more space, so Emmerton purchased the Hooper-Hathaway House in 1911 and had it moved to the property. In 1914, she bought Seamen’s Bethel, which she renamed Turner Hall. By the 1920s, the Settlement Association had become a fixture of the neighborhood, as if it had always been there.

One goal of the early Settlement Association, and the movement at large, was “Americanization.” For all the good they did, Settlements also tried to strip away the parts of immigrant life that Americans found uncomfortable, unpleasant, or just too foreign. These prejudices can be seen in early reports from The Gables. Kindergarten teachers, for instance, complained about “indigestible lunches” sent by immigrant parents, and replaced them with a blander diet of milk and crackers. But neighborhood residents resisted losing their identities, and Americanization efforts were inconsistent at best. Well into the 1920s, The Gables still offered lectures in Polish and Yiddish, and traditional folk songs and dances were part of the annual May Festival for years after that.

Over the past 115 years, The Gables’ Settlement Program has been reimagined many times. We still aim to help our newest arrivals thrive on the North Shore, but today we also recognize that we all benefit from the knowledge, experiences, and culture they bring with them. So long as it is able to evolve, there is hope that the Program will continue to do good for another 100 years.
Upcoming Member Event:
Nathaniel Hawthorne & His Novel Tour of The Gables

Thursday, November 16 at 6:00 P.M.  $15 for Gables members

Want to know what it was like to be a guest at The House of the Seven Gables during Hawthorne’s time? Walk down Turner Street and enter the mansion through the front door. Wonderful surprises await, as you are led by historians and staff members, Everett Philbrook and David Moffat, on a tour of the life of Nathaniel Hawthorne and his novel, The House of the Seven Gables. This specialty tour is for Gables members only, $15 per ticket. It will take place on November 16 at 6 P.M. Visit 7Gables.org/events to register.

Please consider donating to our Annual Fund. Your gift to the 2023 Annual Fund will help us preserve our shared history and build a stronger community for the future.
On Sunday, August 13, history and culture converged at The House of the Seven Gables as we hosted our first-ever FUSION FEST! This vibrant celebration was dedicated to honoring the English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship students who enrich our community and institution. The event was a huge success, drawing in over 900 visitors who immersed themselves in a day of festivities, unity, and cultural appreciation.

Among the countries represented at Fusion Fest were: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Columbia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, Italy, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain and Ukraine. Highlights of the event included Mansion Tours conducted in Spanish, live performances, food trucks, collaborative art, and games.

The event's success underscores the importance of celebrating cultural diversity and creating spaces where different communities can come together. Thank you to all who joined us at Fusion Fest!
TRY THESE OCEAN-TO-TABLE SEASIDE ADVENTURES!

Inquisitive explorers discovering connections between maritime history and seafood work up big appetites. Naturally, you’ll want to sample the delicious seafood the North Shore is so well known for — from crispy fried clams to buttery lobster rolls to the many luscious variations on chowdah...and that’s just for starters! Lobster bibs optional!

One of several restaurants specializing in seafood preparation in Newburyport. Image courtesy Rae Padilla Francoeur.

FIVE HIDDEN SPACES AND MAGICAL PLACES ON BOSTON’S NORTH SHORE

From a medieval castle to a secret staircase in an iconic historic home, Boston’s North Shore is full of unexpected things to see and do. Here are five to include on your next visit.

The Turner-Ingersoll Mansion’s secret staircase. Image courtesy The House of the Seven Gables

ARCHITECTURAL WONDERS ON BOSTON’S NORTH SHORE

Venture off the beaten path to climb 156 steps to the top of a lighthouse. Feel the joy as you take in the craftsmanship of a tiny Federal-style tea house. Or, head to the coast to walk the halls of the opulent Crane Estate overlooking the Atlantic.

One of the two lighthouses on Thacher Island, along with a small museum, off the coast of Rockport. Image courtesy Rae Padilla Francoeur.

Funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
After the conclusion of year one of our Coastal Zone Management research project, we’ve been finding ways that climate resiliency will impact what we do here at The Gables. While lots of the research is focused on what we can do in the long term, we have been finding areas that can be improved right away, as well.

Our most pressing task is repointing the seawall that runs up against Salem Harbor. This summer, we plan to fill in all the gaps in the mortar of our stone seawall, which was last repointed almost 30 years ago. This work will protect the seawall from the impact of wave action and reduce soil loss as water moves in and out of the wall assembly.

But stormwater can come from more than one direction, impacting both the seawall and buildings on site. The recent heavy rain has shown just how much back pressure can come from stormwater runoff, as a large stone has been dislodged from one of our neighbor’s seawalls. At The Gables, this means that we need to focus on better retention and routing strategies for stormwater runoff.

Along with replacement of the roof on the Tea House and Barn connected to the Visitor Center, funded through the City of Salem’s Community Preservation Act, we will adjust existing gutters to better catch roof runoff and direct it into our existing underground drainage system. We have also begun some maintenance work on other downspouts to better direct discharge and keep it away from basements.

The Gables also recently purchased three dehumidifiers, each capable of removing 100 pints of water per day. Two will go in the basement of The Turner-Ingersoll Mansion, and one in the Hooper-Hathaway basement. The dehumidifiers will help remove excess moisture in these basements that cannot be diverted. We will monitor their performance closely to ensure they create the optimal interior environment without sacrificing structural integrity.

Want to learn more about our preservation efforts?

Listen to GBH's Hannah Loss interview Paul Wright as well as our community partners about historic preservation and our Coastal Zone Management grant.
The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association is proud to announce our new Board President, Elizabeth McKeigue!

Elizabeth McKeigue serves as the Dean of the Library at Salem State University, where she directs the Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons and oversees the Salem State University archives.

Prior to Salem State, she was the Associate University Librarian at Santa Clara University in California, which won the American Library Association’s Excellence in Libraries award in 2017.

Ms. McKeigue began her professional career at Harvard University, where she held several leadership positions, including coordinator of library reference services for the Lamont and Widener Libraries. She also served as a subject librarian to Harvard’s departments of Celtic, Germanic, and Slavic Languages and Literatures.

While she pursued her graduate degree, Ms. McKeigue worked full-time at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., managing the library stacks, a collection of nearly 1 million volumes. Ms. McKeigue has published articles and reviews in several professional journals and books. Her research interests include topics related to student learning, open educational resources, and new models of library services.

A native of Danvers, with deep ancestral roots on the North Shore, she holds a bachelor’s degree in English literature, a master’s in library science, and has completed additional graduate work in history, all at the Catholic University of America. She completed additional coursework in history and literature at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David in the U.K. She holds a certificate from the Harvard School of Education’s prestigious Advanced Leadership Institute for Senior Academic Librarians.

Meet the Board President

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Board of Trustees
October Performances

Haunted Fables at the Gables
October 4 - 10, 2023
Join Salem’s master storyteller, Nathaniel Hawthorne, for a frightful evening of thrills and chills in the gloomy shadow of The Gables!

Tales of the Macabre
October 15-29, 2023
A one-woman show performed by The Petticoat Pages. From Poe to Irving with a dash of Dickens, Jennifer whips up a maudlin Victorian performance.

Daemonologie: Sinew and Soul
October 23 - November 3, 2023
An interactive theater experience by Intramersive! It is 1794 and Americans lust after the bounties of their newfound freedom. Harvard Medical students, eager to get ahead of their soft European counterparts, will do anything to succeed. Chief among them is Jon, driven to cure his dying sister.

Visit 7Gables.org/events to learn more and purchase tickets.
**VIEWS FROM THE GABLES**

**What’s Inside?**
- A Settlement for Salem
- Collections Corner
- Meet the Board President
- October Performances
  …and more!

**MISSION**
To be a welcoming, thriving, historic site and community resource that engages people of all backgrounds in our inclusive American story.

**VISION**
To preserve, share and continue the American story.

**VALUES**
- We value Caroline Emmerton’s founding mission of preserving the legacy of our site to sustain our Settlement programs for local immigrants.
- We value our designation as a National Historic Landmark and the preservation of our buildings, collections and gardens.
- We value the literary legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- We value being a center of and for the community.
- We value education as a central tenet of our programming.

**The House of the Seven Gables is open daily from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

Planning an October visit to The Gables?
Visit 7Gables.org/blog for everything you need to know before purchasing tickets.