The House of the Seven Gables

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

As we come to the end of another banner year at The House of the Seven Gables, it is exciting to both reflect on our successes these past few months and to look toward the future.

We enjoyed an extraordinary fall season. Our annual Sips by the Sea celebration in September was a tremendous success, raising almost $65,000 for upcoming projects. It was a pleasure to reconnect with so many of you at the event. We are always inspired by how much you care for The Gables and our mission.

In October, we welcomed our biggest crowds of the year as the world came to Salem to celebrate Halloween. Our staff and volunteers did an amazing job engaging the record number of visitors to our city. Guests raved about the guided tours at The Gables and appreciated the peaceful escape that our gardens and grounds provided. Our Museum Store, long known as one of the best shops in Salem, broke through all past sales records. We also premiered three new evening theatrical experiences, to great acclaim.

With autumn now in the rear view, we are now shifting focus to new and ongoing projects. In the months to come, you will hear more about our planned improvements for our Derby Street signage and pedestrian entrance, and for our innovative reimagining of the exhibits in the Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace.

Additionally, we will bring one important project to completion. Over the winter, we will return the Dining Room Chamber on the second floor of the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion to its historical appearance in the early 1900s, when it served as living space for Settlement House workers. This new interpretation of the space will allow us to talk about our history as a Settlement House, and our continuing work to be a neighbor and partner to immigrant communities on the North Shore.

We are also excited to welcome new leadership as we continue bringing our Board of Trustees back to full strength. Madden Brown, Trenton Carls, and Kate Criscitiello recently joined the Board, and we look forward to the knowledge and perspective they will bring.

We wish you the best for the holiday season, and we hope to see you soon at The Gables!

With appreciation,

Elizabeth McKeigue
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Stephen D. Immerman
Vice President

Christopher Hale
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Alison McCarthy

Sharon D. Meyers

Kurt Steinberg

Christine P. Thomson

Robin Woodman

Board of Trustees
A Successful Year for Programming

By Zoë Quinn, Director of Visitor Services & Public Programs

2023 is fading quickly, but we are happy to announce the success of this last quarter's programming.

September saw the return of “Enduring Hawthorne,” in collaboration with Theater in the Open, National Parks Service, Essex National Heritage, Salem Athenaeum, and Salem Lit Fest. The reimagined event took visitors through performances of four of Hawthorne's short stories, including a musical version of “Young Goodman Brown” adapted by Dan Blakeslee and accompanied by a hand-cranked scroll of illustrations by Ben Wickey.

For Trails and Sails, we collaborated with St. Peter’s Church and Salem Historical Society to host local author Ben Shallop as he discussed his book, “The Founding of Salem: City of Peace,” and later signed copies for attendees. We were also honored to welcome Alice Hoffman to The Gables to talk about and sign her recently published book (featuring our own Hawthorne Birthplace), “The Invisible Hour.”

“Haunted Fables at The Gables” and “Tales of the Macabre” were enthusiastically attended and ushered in the return of our evening October literary performances! Our collaboration with Intramersive for “Daemonologie: Sinew and Soul” brought a completely new audience to The Gables and activated the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion and Hooper-Hathaway in new and creative ways. Flip to page 10 to see pictures from each of these performances.

With the end of the spooky season came the start of the holiday season, and we dove headlong into it with Ken Turino's lecture, “Deck the Halls: Female Abolitionists and the Evolution of Christmas.” In this talk, Turino traced the origins of some of today's common Christmas and holiday traditions to the Christmas fairs of the female abolitionists of the 19th century. History Alive Inc.'s “Tis the Season” celebrated New England’s winter history by telling tales and singing songs from before Christmas was the holiday we know today!

2023 also included the introduction of a specialty tour entitled “Behind Closed Doors.” This intimate, two-hour tour takes guests into parts of The House of the Seven Gables the public generally does not access and introduces little-known elements of our history and architecture. We look forward to continuing presentations of this tour in the coming year.

As a year of programming comes to an end, we are so thankful to our collaborators, staff, supporters, and attendees. Without you, we could not create or continue to offer innovative and engaging programming. Cheers to 2023 and here's to 2024!
“Flight Into Egypt” Returns to The House of the Seven Gables

By Rae Francoeur

The Gables marked the start of its festive holiday season with the much-anticipated unveiling of “Flight Into Egypt,” by Sophia Peabody Hawthorne. The prized work of art has been newly conserved, thanks to a generous grant by the Wyeth Foundation for American Art.

“I am thrilled with the outpouring of support that made conserving this painting possible,” says Executive Director Dakota Russell. “Nathaniel Hawthorne casts a long shadow, and Sophia’s accomplishments are often lost in it. With the restoration of ‘Flight Into Egypt,’ she will now have her own well-deserved spotlight in The House of the Seven Gables.”

“There are only about nine of Sophia’s paintings still accounted for,” says Collection Manager Susan Baker. She says that the work’s significance can be measured in several ways beginning with the fact that Sophia is known to be one of this country’s first and most talented female professional artists. She was mentored and taught by three of the country’s leading painters of that era — Chester Harding, Washington Allston and Thomas Doughty. Such mentoring was a rare occurrence for a female at the time. Sophia was committed to her art and thought her work would help support her should she remain single. But her 1842 marriage to Nathaniel shifted her priorities.

“Flight Into Egypt,” which was painted around 1834 and measures 44.5 inches by 33 inches, depicts the biblical story of Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus fleeing into Egypt to escape King Herod. The scene is tranquil, lush and filled with evocative details. Cows graze, a young man plays a lute, a river rushes by in the background and, off in a corner, members of the young family are led to safety by an angel.
“There’s a lot of detail in the area of the figures,” says Theresa Carmichael, the conservator who spent 150 hours examining and restoring the painting. “Sophia was quite adept at her figure drawings,” she says. “It was fun to see these figures come to life from under the gloom during the conservation process. You can tell that Sophia had a fun-loving side in the way the cattle were coming to the water, in the way the man played his lute. You can tell that there was some fun there. The figures are beautiful, and the waves and the water are really stylized and artfully done.”

The painting was in rough condition when Carmichael received it. The paint itself had bubbled up, separating from the canvas. There were tears, once repaired, but later failed. The painting had experienced scorching, water damage and abrasions. The gloom that the conservator referenced came from the much-darkened varnish applied at some earlier time.

It isn't even clear how or when The Gables came to acquire “Flight Into Egypt." Most authorities conjecture that Gables founder Caroline Emmerton is responsible for the painting's eventual presence at the museum.

Susan Baker had flagged “Flight Into Egypt” as needing expert care and had sought support for its conservation. Thanks to the Wyeth Foundation of American Art, the necessary expert intervention brings to the fore a much more vibrant, stunning work. And a Gables' fundraising campaign recently allowed for the purchase of a suitable period frame.

“We are custodians of the artwork,” says Conservator Carmichael. “It’s been nice to have the opportunity to work on something like this, to change it from perilous to a stable and secure condition. We try to do the best we can. ‘Flight Into Egypt’ should remain in good stead for a very long time.”
What’s New in Settlement

By Ellen Berry, Settlement Programs Manager

In the past 18 months, 54 students in our Settlement Program have been sworn in as new U.S. Citizens! On November 4, Citizenship Class instructors Nestor Grullon and Eliud Alcalá held a celebration for these students in the Visitor Center. Hats off to Nestor and Eliud, who do a great job preparing the students for the exam and the interview!

As our program expands, I am so happy to welcome two new teachers to our English as a Second Language program. Beverly Trice teaches our new ESL Level 3 program in the evening at the Peabody Essex Museum. Beverly comes to us with 10 years of experience teaching adults at North Shore Community College. Kathleen Burke has been teaching in our daytime ESL program at Espacio since the summer. Kathleen’s students have visited Mass Hire, Salem Public Library, and the Punto Urban Art Museum to learn about community resources. Kathleen has over 20 years of experience in adult higher education.

One of the aspirations of The Gables is to become an accredited institution able to provide a range of services related to naturalization and immigration. As part of the process to become an accredited U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services site, four Gables staff members (Eliud Alcala, Nestor Grullon, Zoë Quinn, and Ellen Berry) completed an introductory immigration law class where they learned some of the fundamentals of immigration law. Staff members are taking additional immigration courses as we continue on the path to accreditation.

Check out the new Settlement landing page of our website! Students can now easily access information about ESL and Citizenship classes in four languages. 7Gables.org/settlement-classes
What’s New in Preservation

By Paul Wright, Director of Preservation and Maintenance

The House of the Seven Gables is known for its dark and brooding atmosphere, but with our sometimes winding and uneven pathways, there has long been a desire to make our campus more inviting as the sun goes down. Thanks to a facilities grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, this summer we began the installation of a new landscape lighting system to help correct this issue and enhance the beauty of our site in the evening hours.

Light Positive Design and Atlantic View Landscape Lighting worked with The Gables for the design and implementation of Phase 1, and installation began in late August. The fixtures are solid copper and brass construction and are pre-weathered to a dark gray to complement the gardens and buildings around them. We primarily utilized LED and low-voltage fixtures for energy efficiency and to minimize disruption to the site, as low-voltage wires do not require deep trenching and conduits. Automated controls also allow the system to be turned on and off with minimal staff intervention.

The first phase of lights was installed just in time for our fall fundraiser, Sips by the Sea, helping light our guests’ path to the lawn and back for the evening get-together. This lighting has also helped our interpreters and October tour groups make their way from house to house as the sun sets earlier and earlier in the fall. With sunsets occurring as early as 4 P.M., these lights are a welcome sight for our staff and guests alike.
February
Exclusive Member Reception of the Completed Dining Room Chamber

March
Gables Movie Night

April
Delve into The Gables’ Archives

April or May
The Wenham Museum Patton Family Archives Tour

July
Celebrate the Fourth

August
Gables Through the Ages: An Architectural History

September
A Visit to Boston – Leadership Level only

September
Visit to Harmony Grove Cemetery

November
Member Appreciation Week

December
Member Holiday Shopping Weekend

Give the Gift of The Gables This Holiday!

A membership to The House of the Seven Gables is a perfect gift for the holiday season.

Scan the QR code to learn more and purchase.

Official dates and more information to be announced at 7Gables.org/events
Meet the Visitor Services Manager

We are excited to welcome our new Visitor Services Manager, Tanya Rose Lane! Tanya is an educator, public historian, and museum professional. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in English from the University of Connecticut and a Master of Arts in History with a concentration in public history from Southern New Hampshire University. A descendant of early settlers, her experiences living as a visitor on Nanticoke, Mashantucket Pequot, and now Massachusetts lands inform her approach to working in the cultural sector. Tanya has supported institutions including the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Mystic Seaport Museum, and Connecticut Valley Tobacco Museum. She recently became a TEDx speaker and is an aspiring author. In her personal time, Tanya enjoys visiting other museums, going on long walks, and serving as the preeminent Bachelor-franchise historian of her friend group.

Save the Dates for Our 2024 Fundraising Events!

Sunday, April 7 at 1 P.M. – A Tea for Caroline
Saturday, June 1 at 6 P.M. – Sips by the Sea
Saturday, October 19 at 6 P.M. – Hawthorne’s Halloween Bash

More information and links to register to come in the new year.
October 2023 Spotlight

Thank you to all who attended our October performances, and thank you to our spectacular performers!

Haunted Fables at The Gables by Paul Riopelle. Photos by Julia Wacker.

Daemonologie Sinew & Soul by Intramersive Media LLC. Photos by Paige Besse.

Tales of the Macabre by Jennifer Emerson of The Petticoat Pages. Photos by Julia Wacker.
On September 28, Gables Executive Director Dakota Russell and Past President Ken Turino took part in a webinar exploring the past, present, and future of the American Settlement House movement. The event was presented by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and also featured speakers from Jane Addams Hull House Museum in Chicago and Henry Street Settlement in New York. Attendees logged in from all around the world.

Russell, who coordinated the webinar, said he was interested in how other organizations honored their history as Settlement Houses. “The House of the Seven Gables still functions as both a museum and a community organization,” Russell said, “which made me curious about Settlement Houses that are now museums, and about nonprofits that talk about their Settlement House roots.” Russell recruited Nadia Maragha, Education Manager at Hull House, and Katie Vogel, Public Historian at Henry Street Settlement, to join him for the webinar. Turino moderated the conversation.

During the webinar, Maragha told the story of Hull House, one of the earliest and most famous Settlement Houses in the United States. Hull House was founded in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, and while it offered a full range of social services, it also focused on access to the arts and civic engagement. The founders, Maragha said, “believed that having access to creative and cultural spaces gave people a stronger incentive and ability to be involved in change within their communities and on larger levels, as well.” The Hull House Association closed in 2012, but the museum continues to collaborate with arts and civic organizations to preserve the organization’s legacy.

Vogel said that Henry Street Settlement, originally located in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, shared a lot of history in common with Hull House. Founded by Lillian Wald in 1893, Henry Street became famous for its public health nursing program. “Nurses actually went out in the community and into people’s homes,” Vogel said. Many immigrants did not seek medical care due to discrimination and cost, so the nursing program was particularly valuable. Henry Street Settlement still provides community health services alongside a broad range of other social services. The organization currently has 18 locations across New York City.

Russell described how The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, founded in 1910 by Caroline Emmerton, drew a lot of inspiration from the work of both Jane Addams and Lillian Wald. All three organizations were part of the National Federation of Settlements established in 1911. The Gables was unique because of Emmerton’s vision to use the historic house to generate revenues for the Association’s social work. “While tours were running in and out of the house,” said Russell, “you also had Settlement classes taking place—sometimes in the furnished rooms!” The Gables carries on Emmerton’s legacy by offering free English as a Second Language and Citizenship preparation classes today.

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, which hosted the webinar, is the only worldwide network of sites of conscience—museums, historic sites, and other places devoted to drawing lessons from history and making connections between past and contemporary human rights and social justice issues. The House of the Seven Gables is a longtime member of the Sites of Conscience. A recording of the webinar is available on the Sites of Conscience YouTube Channel.
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.

December Hours: Open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Friday through Monday. Closed Dec. 24 and 25. The Gables will be closed January through early February for annual maintenance.