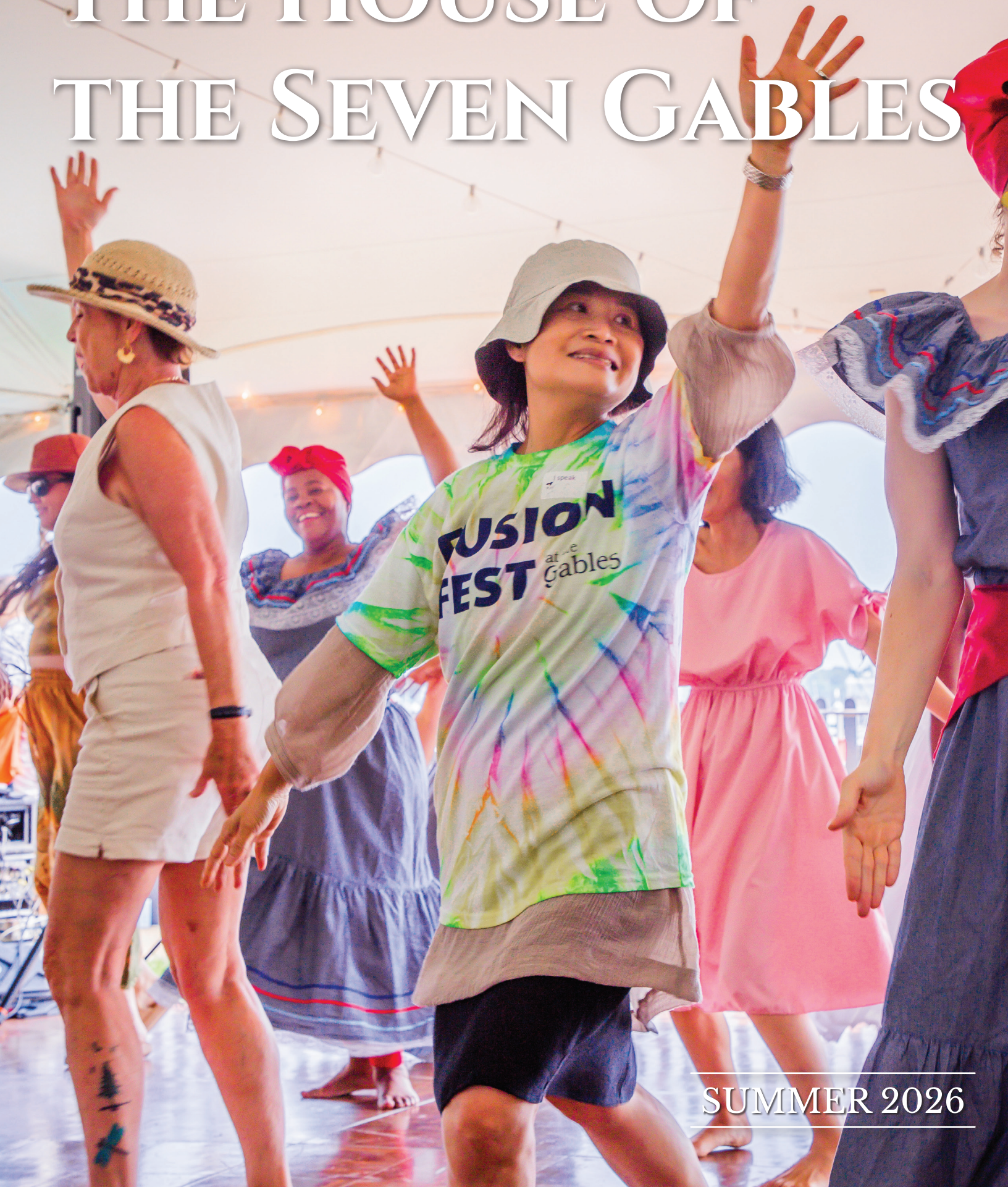


THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES



SUMMER 2026

A Message from our Leadership



Dakota Russell
Executive Director



José Nieto
Board President

The House of the Seven Gables was designed to be the heart of a neighborhood. When founder Caroline Emmerton and architect Joseph Chandler drew up plans for our museum and Settlement House in the early 20th century, they had transformation in mind. Through their vision, Hawthorne's rusty wooden house, hidden halfway down a by-street, became the centerpiece of the Derby Street District. The gardens blossomed, neighborhood kids played in the shade of the historic buildings, and adults gathered as a community.

Though we speak often of Emmerton's dream, Chandler doesn't always get the credit he deserves for translating it into landscape and architecture. We are correcting that oversight in this issue, with an article about Chandler's life and contributions to The Gables starting on page 4. No doubt he is in our thoughts because of our recent efforts to adapt our historic campus to meet the challenges of climate change. You can find the latest news on that project on page 10.

This year, we have felt particularly connected to our friends on and around Derby Street. The pirate festival we hosted with Real Pirates Salem in April brought both residents and businesses together to celebrate our maritime heritage and Derby District pride. We are committed to strengthening these connections and raising the visibility of our unique corner of Salem in the months to come.

While local bonds are important, today a neighborhood is more than just the folks on your street. The Gables is now the center of a community that stretches nationally, even globally. It includes people like many of you: members who make an annual pilgrimage to Salem each fall, or who may visit rarely but stay connected to home through this newsletter. Every one of you helps us to preserve this special place where we know all of us are always welcome.

At the risk of cribbing from Mr. Rogers: Thank you for being our neighbor.

Thank you,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Dakota Russell' and the second is 'José Nieto'.

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SUMMER 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events subject to change. Visit 7Gables.org/events for pricing, registration, and recently announced events.

June

Full Moon Yoga TUESDAY, JUNE 30 AT 6:30 P.M.

Wild Sea Wellness will be offering monthly yoga classes at The House of the Seven Gables throughout 2026. Be sure to check their website and calendar for details, dates, and links to register. WildSeaWellness.com/practice

July

Hands-on History SUNDAYS, JULY 5 – SEPTEMBER 6, 11 A.M. AND 3 P.M.

Why just look at history when you can hold it in your hands? This summer, visit The House of the Seven Gables for a fun Hands-on History activity designed to spark curiosity and get those creative gears turning. Included FREE with your Mansion Tour or Grounds Pass!



FUSION FEST

July cont.

Member Event: Celebrate the Fourth SATURDAY, JULY 4 AT 6 P.M.

With the best view of the fireworks in town, The House of the Seven Gables is the ideal spot for July 4th. Bring a blanket and chairs and relax on the seaside lawn.

Salem's 2026 Poet Laureate: A talk with J.D. Scrimgeour SUNDAY, JULY 12 AT 1 P.M.

The Gables is proud to present Salem's own 2026 Poet Laureate! J.D. Scrimgeour's *Poet in High Street Park: Prose & Poetry for Modern Salem* is a love song to Salem, by a writer who has grounded himself in the everyday realities of living in the city of the past 30 years, from playgrounds to classrooms to ballfields. Join us as he discusses the development and reads selections from this publication. Copies of the book will be available for purchase (card only) and signing.

Chronicles and Crafts in the Cove WEDNESDAY, JULY 15 AT 10:30 A.M.

Looking for a fun outing with your little ones? Join us for Chronicles and Crafts in the Cove, where we'll dive into a great book and get creative with a themed craft. It's a wonderful way for kids (ages 0-6) to explore our Kids' space at the museum!

Behind Closed Doors THURSDAY, JULY 23 AT 7 P.M.

The House of the Seven Gables has many stories to tell, but we can only tell so many on our usual tour. Join The Gables for a special "Behind the Scenes" tour where you will get into spaces the public generally isn't allowed, hear some of the lesser-known stories, and enjoy The Gables like few ever have!

Full Moon Yoga TUESDAY, JULY 28 AT 6:30 P.M.

See previous description.

August

Fusion Fest SUNDAY, AUGUST 2 AT 12 P.M.

Join us and enjoy a variety of food, music, culture, and more! We are taking this special day to celebrate the backgrounds and cultures of students in the ESL and Citizenship classes at The House of the Seven Gables and how they have contributed to the growth of such a diverse and colorful city. Entry is free and open to the public!

Songs of the Seafarer featuring Arpeggione Ensemble FRIDAY, AUGUST 7 AT 7:30 P.M.

The House of the Seven Gables' history is intimately connected with the sea, as are so many institutions here in Salem. This August, we are celebrating this connection through music. Please join us as we welcome the Arpeggione Ensemble, a collaborative group of musicians and composers making classical music more accessible to all in our community, as they present pieces from their newly released album, "Songs of the Seafarer"!

Chronicles and Crafts in the Cove WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 AT 10:30 A.M.

See previous description.

Member Event: The 1913 Pageant of Salem Lecture WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 AT 6 P.M.

In 1913, The House of the Seven Gables presented a "Pageant of Salem" on the grounds of the Kernwood Estate. Featuring costumes, spectacle, and a cast of hundreds, the pageant highlighted episodes both real and legendary from Salem's past. As we commemorate the city's 400th anniversary, join us for a look back at the history of...well, looking back. Join Executive Director Dakota Russell as he discusses this fascinating event created by our founder, Caroline Emmerton.



the CLOSET,
the SECRET STAIRCASE,
and the HIDDEN HEARTH

By Timothy Orwig,
Boston College and
UMass Lowell

Open a closet door in The House of the Seven Gables, and you encounter the Secret Staircase, leading to a seemingly hidden bedroom. Beloved by visitors since the house opened for tours in 1910, this secret passage conveys the intrigue and mystery of Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel, as well as the ancient house, which is its title character. It takes us from our conventional world into a Gothic romance of fear, discovery, and redemption. Might it also take us into the hidden lives of queer Bostonians?

Philanthropist Caroline Emmerton hired architect Joseph Everett Chandler to restore the 1668 Turner-Ingersoll mansion in Salem. Made famous by Hawthorne as the inspiration for his 1851 novel, the house shows the power of historic preservation. As the stage for Emmerton's settlement house, it taught immigrants the importance of American culture, housed workers, and brought in a steady stream of tourists to pay the bills.

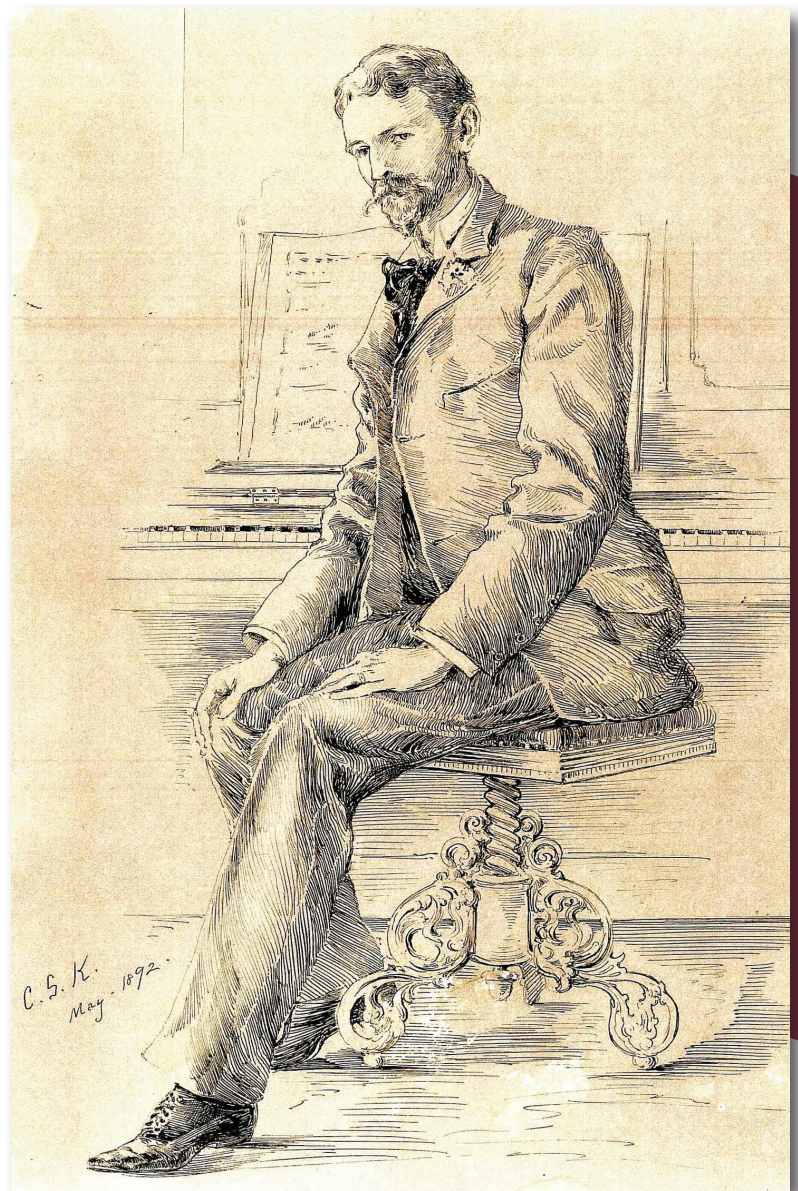
The themes of Hawthorne's Gothic romance are rumors, guilt, hidden identities, and the corrosive effect of family secrets: "The wrong-doing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and...becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief." The House represents the Pyncheon family. Colonel Pyncheon betrayed his neighbor, Matthew Maule, with a false charge of witchcraft and was cursed by Maule from the gallows. A Maule descendant disguises himself as Holgrave, the attic lodger, but falls in love with Phoebe Pyncheon. At the novel's close, they abandon the house and the power of its ghosts.

While Emmerton's personal life remains a cipher, Chandler clearly was at the center of a circle of independent women and bachelors, many of whom have since been recognized as queer Bostonians. No salacious Chandler letters have appeared, as in the case of architects Arthur Little and Ogden Codman, Jr., detailing a private, intimate life. But Chandler's diaries, now at Historic New England, provide a secret staircase into this hidden world.

Chandler came to Salem already acclaimed

for his work. He restored historic houses for private clients, but his first restoration for a museum came in 1904. Working for the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America, he restored the 1686 Quincy Homestead in Quincy. In 1907, he restored the 1681 Paul Revere House in Boston. In 1908, in addition to his work for Emmerton, Chandler was restoring the Old State House in Boston, the ca. 1678 Rebecca Nurse House in Danvers, and the ca. 1675 Isaac Royall House in Medford. Over his career, Chandler restored at least two dozen historic buildings, which are museums today.

Chandler's life and career show how elements



*Joseph Everett Chandler in 1892, by "C.S.K."
Private collection.*

of queer identity were evolving in Boston more than a century ago, from mentor-protégé relationships at the turn of the 20th century, to partnerships in the 1920s, to the more closeted environment of the 1930s. Early in his career, Chandler designed a mansion and landscaped estate in Weston for wealthy bachelor Horace Sears. Chandler traveled with Sears to Europe, acquiring furnishings for the estate, including a pair of marble lions from Italy. The Sears commissions gave him some financial independence and allowed him to buy land in Sudbury and build a stone cottage, which he named "Manalone."

Chandler designed at least two dozen new or restored houses for lesbian and gay clients. The best-known example was Red Roof on Eastern Point in Gloucester, with its sliding panels and secret rooms, which Chandler drew up for Harvard professor A. Piatt Andrew in 1902. Chandler first met Andrew in 1894; Chandler took him to a Monet exhibition, and they became friends. In 1899, they met in Paris, and Chandler took Andrew to Paul Durand-Ruel's gallery. By 1905, Andrew was expanding Red Roof on his

own, with the help of his admirer Henry Sleeper. Two years later, Sleeper, a colleague who referred clients to Chandler, built Beauport just down the road from Red Roof.

Their circle included Isabella Stewart Gardner and another queer couple, inventor John Hays Hammond and British actor Leslie Buswell. Chandler met them in 1921 and was fascinated with the pair. "Living over today, my experiences of yesterday—am much interested in their way of living." Chandler shopped for antiques with Buswell and consulted as he planned Stillington Hall, close to Hammond Castle. Chandler was greatly disappointed when Buswell hired another architect.

Chandler often opened fireplaces to find the original hearth. In 1904, Chandler wrote about his latest discovery at the Quincy Homestead: "It was wildly exciting pulling down that plaster facing painted in imitation of real brick work and finding the original old, scarred fireplace with blackened bricks and the supports for the crane still there, and even the old smoke flue for the oven." What can we discover in search of the hidden hearth?

Clifford's Room, House of Seven Gables, Built 1668, Salem, Massachusetts



Clifford's Room, with the hearth and the secret staircase.

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The House of the Seven Gables: A Vincent Price Affiliate Site

The House of the Seven Gables is now an affiliate site of the Vincent Price Estate! The new partnership was announced at a special event on Sunday, May 3, in The Gables' Visitor Center. The event featured a screening of the new documentary, *The Vincent Price Legacy*, with remarks by Victoria Price, the actor's daughter, and a sampling of bites from Price's 1971 cookbook, *Cooking Price-Wise*.

Vincent Price is best known today for his chilling performances in horror films such as *House of Wax* (1953) and *The Fly* (1958). His curiosity and passions, however, extended far beyond the silver screen. Price was an art collector and historian, author of several cookbooks, and a champion for civil rights and social justice causes.

Price, a descendant of Salem Witch Trials victim Rebecca Nurse, had many connections to The House of the Seven Gables. One of his early breakout roles in Hollywood was as Clifford Pyncheon in the 1940 movie adaptation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel. Price would adapt *The House of the Seven Gables* again in 1963, as part of the supernatural anthology film *Twice-Told Tales*. Price also narrated a 1990 video tour of the mansion.

Victoria Price, an author and arts entrepreneur who manages her father's estate and travels internationally to speak about his legacy, said the affiliate partnership is a natural one. "My father dedicated his life to advocacy for the arts of all kinds," said Price. "He treasured his close relationship with The House of the Seven Gables and the Salem community. I'm thrilled to bring that historic and artistic legacy of creative collaboration into the 21st century to benefit



contemporary artists, authors, filmmakers, chefs, historians—and of course, the next generation of creatives who will shape our future." Future plans with The Gables include an annual Vincent Price program series and art exhibition in Salem.

The inaugural event was held in partnership with Ferreira Foods, Salem Horror Fest, and Cape Ann Community Cinema in Rockport—another affiliate site of the Price Estate. The Gables is excited to continue this partnership and honor the memory of Vincent Price.





Refurnishing

The House of the Seven Gables

BEFORE

&

AFTER

By Susan Baker, Curator of Collections

This winter, we launched a major refurnishing project at The House of the Seven Gables. Fresh wallcoverings and paint now enhance the Dining Room, Parlor, and Great Chamber of the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion, reflecting the historic periods we interpret. Every update is guided by research and authenticity, ensuring our exhibits remain engaging and accurate for visitors.

The Dining Room (1790-1810) illustrates the lifestyle of the prosperous maritime family, the Ingersolls, during Salem's Great Age of Sail, when Captain Samuel Ingersoll and his family thrived through global maritime trade. The previous 1920s silk wallpaper and green woodwork were not accurate for this era. Scientific paint analysis showed cream was historically correct, and the wallpaper was replaced with hand-block-printed *Plymouth Stripe and Vine*, based on a late 18th-century American pattern. No fragments of original wallpaper remain in the room, so this design was chosen after extensive research into period styles from comparable houses. In this case, the design originated from paper found in the Jackson House in Plymouth, MA.



BEFORE

Dining Room



AFTER

In the Parlor (1840s), visitors can step into the lively social world of Susannah Ingersoll, a prominent Salem woman, and her acquaintances of the 1840s. This space highlights her close family ties to her cousin, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and his wife, artist Sophia Peabody. The narrative of the Parlor unfolds through three notable paintings: a sweeping landscape by Sophia, a portrait of her painted by Joseph Alexander Ames, and a youthful depiction of Hawthorne. These artworks help reveal how the house inspired Hawthorne's renowned novel, *The House of the Seven Gables*.

Paint analysis revealed that a yellow cream color was present during the 1840s, not the green color that had been displayed. Again, no historic wallpaper fragments exist for the Parlor. After researching 1840s styles, we chose *Kennebunk Foliate*, which was found in the Simpson House in Kennebunk, ME. Our new wallpaper captures the style of the era and allows the artwork to truly stand out, enriching the story of the Ingersoll-Hawthorne connection.



Parlor



Great Chamber



The Great Chamber brings the visitor to the 1740s and the world of the wealthy Turner family. The room reflects the Georgian style, with fine, symmetrical, high-style paneling considered some of the finest in America. As with the Parlor and Dining Room, no wallpaper fragments existed, and paint analysis confirmed a tan/cream finish. In 1740s America, wallpaper was typically imported from England and France, and the Turners likely adorned their bedroom with luxurious imported wallpaper and expensive bed hangings. For our restoration, we installed a hand-block printed wallpaper found in the Webb House in Wethersfield, CT. The paper has a flocked flowering vine with a diaper pattern, closely matching the fashionable look of the time.

We invite you to experience the newly restored rooms in person! Plan your visit today at 7Gables.org

PLANK FRAME WINDOWS FOR THE HAWTHORNE BIRTHPLACE

By Paul Wright, Director of Preservation and Maintenance

While the interior of The Gables saw extensive refinishing in the Parlor, Great Chamber, and Dining Room over the winter, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace underwent some repairs of its own. These repairs were much more routine, addressing water intrusion on the often weather-beaten northeast elevation. But as plaster and wood trim were pulled back and repaired, evidence of the house's history revealed itself.

Most of the windows on the Birthplace are "plank framed" windows, which use substantial 3-4" thick planks or timbers to frame the window sashes. Plank-framed windows were common in the 1700s, and the technique was used on several other buildings on our campus. These frames are joined using traditional mortise and tenon joinery, with the tenons visible on the underside of the exterior sill. The jamb is also one continuous piece from the inside to the outside.



Underneath the sill of a plank frame window, the tenon is visible

These details became important as we undertook repairs. We discovered that sometime in the 20th century, likely when the Birthplace was moved in 1958, the four windows on the northeast elevation were replaced with box frames made of thinner wood. This contemporary frame uses a typical exterior applied 3/4" trim, which left a gap that has allowed water to penetrate through the sill and into the wall. This gap was sealed up to protect the building from future damage.



Box frame window with 3/4" trim applied to the exterior, leaving a small gap

The plank frame window is solid from the exterior into the interior.



The builder who installed the new windows also attempted to match the exterior depth and profile of the plank-framed windows. However, they did not account for the added depth of the 3/4" exterior casement, which projected the windows 3/4" too far to the interior. This contractor made up for the extra 3/4" by covering it up with excess plaster. Rather than continue to cover up the mistake, we opted to leave the interior intrusion exposed on the bottom, letting it tell the history of the house.



The bottom edge of the box frame is visible just under the window sill, but painted white.

The buildings on our campus are full of modern interventions, some of which have an easier time blending with the historic building fabric than others. As usual, protecting our historic buildings requires thoughtful attention to detail.

FUSION FEST

Fusion Fest



Photos by Paige Besse

Our fourth annual Fusion Fest will take place on **Sunday, August 2 from 12–5 P.M.!** The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association was founded to help newly arriving immigrants become successful here in the United States. While the groups arriving in Salem have changed over the years, The Gables' drive to provide support and education has not. We are taking this special day to celebrate the backgrounds and cultures of students in the English Language and Citizenship classes at The House of the Seven Gables and how they have contributed to the growth of such a diverse and colorful city. Entry is free and open to the public. **Join us and enjoy a variety of food, music, culture, and more!**



The House of the Seven Gables

115 Derby Street
Salem, MA 01970

VIEWS FROM THE GABLES

What's Inside?

The Closet, the Secret Staircase,
and the Hidden Hearth

Refurnishing The Gables

The Gables Becomes a Vincent Price
Affiliate Site

...and more!

About the image on the cover: A group learning Haitian dance at Fusion Fest 2025. Photo by Paige Besse.



Sips by the Sea was a blast! Did you miss it? You can still donate by scanning the QR code!



PATRICIA FAE & GALEN I.
HO FAMILY FOUNDATION



SalemFive

