Pardee-Morris House Opens for the Season


Another major attraction was the display by Leslie Martino (left) of her proposals for the renovation of the Pardee-Morris House gardens. Ms. Martino is a landscape designer based in Woodbridge who is completing a certificate in Landscape History and Design at Harvard University’s Landscape Institute. She selected the design for renovation of the historic house’s gardens as her independent project and volunteered her services. After extensive research in the Whitney Library on the history of colonial gardens and the gardens of the house and careful study of the site itself, she drew up several proposals, which she presented for public comment on opening day. The displays attracted much interest and feedback. Most of her suggestions were enthusiastically received, particularly the espalier fruit tree and the edging of the existing brick path with perennial beds.

The Pardee-Morris House, located at 325 Lighthouse Road, is one of the oldest buildings in New Haven. It was closed to the public for ten years prior to the commencement of renovations last summer. It will be open for public visits and tours this summer on Sundays from 1 PM to 4 PM, from July 11 until the end of the summer. It is anticipated that the restoration of the gardens will take place over a period of several years, along with the ongoing renovation of the historic structure itself.

Casting Calls at the Museum!!

Actors were ringing the doorbell at the Museum last month to audition for the voices of some of our most famous Museum “characters,” such as Cinque and Eli Whitney. The try-outs were conducted by Emmy-award-winning video producer Karyl Evans, who supervised the casting of the voices for our new Listening Posts. When the Listening Posts are installed, visitors to a gallery will be able to pick up a device that looks like a portable telephone and hear an overview of the exhibit in the voice of the character. The scripts were written by Deb Townsend, who conceived the project. Listening Posts will be installed initially in the New Haven Illustrated and Amistad Galleries. The New Haven Illustrated Gallery will also feature a video of the workings of the original cotton gin.
Music Returns to the New Haven Museum!

Music from South America:
Thursday, August 5 at 7 PM: From the beaches of Brazil to the cafes of Buenos Aires to the mountains of Chile and Peru...

Sergio Pallottelli, flute, and Scott Hill, guitar, will present an exciting evening of Latin music: Brazilian samba, Argentinian tango, Chilean folk. Music of Piazzolla, Granados, Lezcano, Pujol, Villa Lobos and Pintos plus Brazilian choros and Peruvian folk music. Reception to follow.

Tickets: $20; seniors $15; Members $10.

Swan Songs: Schubert’s Last year
Thursday, August 26 at 6 PM: The immortal music that so many of you have wanted to hear. Performed by William Braun, piano, and Christopher Grundy, baritone. Reception to follow. Tickets: $20; seniors $15; Members $10. Reservations recommended. (203) 562-4183 x 12.

Upcoming–

A special treat at
The New Haven Museum:

The Wall Street Chamber Players, who have presented a series of chamber music concerts in New Haven homes for the past 25 years, will also be performing at the New Haven Museum starting this fall. The group currently offers four concerts a year in different locations on Thursday and Sunday evenings. Beginning on October 1, 2010, they will present the program on Friday evenings at the Museum.

For the general public, subscriptions will be available for the four-concert series at the Museum at $110, with available individual concerts at $30. Discount prices for both the series and any available individual tickets will be offered for seniors and for members of the New Haven Museum. Watch for announcements of additional dates and programs.
Over the past year, the New Haven Museum has made truly remarkable strides forward to where it is now once again a vibrant and thriving part of the New Haven community. We have again begun mounting new exhibits and cooperating with local institutions and organizations to our mutual benefit. We have been able to innovate and progress without having to invade the endowment. In a relatively short time, we have accomplished much. For example, our programming has expanded with the introduction of new topics around which we build our programs. One of these is immigration, an important recurring theme throughout this city’s history. We are attracting new and larger audiences all the time, most recently with the restoration, after an absence of some twenty years, of music to the Museum.

We have made long-needed repairs to our main building, including renovations to the heating and cooling systems and repainting the façade and some interior rooms. We will continue to improve the appearance and environment of the building for both visitors and staff.

At the Pardee-Morris House, we are building on the substantial work accomplished last summer, both in repairing and restoring the house itself, as well as reintegrating the house with the community. Last summer, we addressed major structural problems, repaired windows broken by vandalism, and removed the flaking paint on the exterior clapboards. This year we put a fresh coat of paint on the exterior and we have begun repainting interior walls and ceilings on the first floor. Security has been upgraded by reinforcement of the barn doors and installation of a second security door on the house itself. Much remains to be done but even, with reduced income from the Pardee Trust, we will continue to expand our efforts. We are pleased that the Pardee-Morris House is now open to the public on a regular basis for the season.

Our 150th anniversary will be coming up in 2012. We are now starting work to reorganize and revitalize the institution and especially to continue to reconnect with the community in preparation for that historic year. I look forward to your joining me in our efforts as we move toward the celebration of this important anniversary.

Hopkins School Receives Museum’s Seal of the City Award

On April 15th, at a ceremony at the New Haven Museum attended by over one hundred Hopkins alumni and friends, Pres. Walter R. Miller (left) presented the Museum’s Seal of the City Award to Hopkins School. The award, traditionally presented to a New Haven institution in recognition of outstanding service to the community, was given to the school in honor of its 350th anniversary. Hopkins is the second-oldest secondary school in the United States.

Receiving the award for Hopkins was President of the Committee of Trustees David Newton (right). A special recognition plaque with a copy of the seal was presented to Head of School Barbara Riley.
This photograph is from Front Street, the oldest street in Fair Haven. Front Street has long been home to various oyster companies and assorted industrial complexes that rose along the banks of the Quinnipiac River in the late 19th century.

By the 1940s this area, which would become the Front St. Park, was occupied by scrap yards, oil tanks, and crumbling wharves. The oyster market had dried up due to pollution and over-harvesting. In 1969, in the later stages of New Haven’s urban renewal, the city designated the shore along the Quinnipiac River south of the Grand Avenue Bridge as a park.

Today, the local community of Fair Haven relishes the charming four-acre park. Completed in 1989, the Front St. Park (also known as Quinnipiac River Park) is filled at all hours of the day with families of diverse backgrounds, a testimony to the eclectic makeup of the neighborhood.

Spotlight on Volunteers

Museum volunteers perform many different functions. Anne MacMahon may be found greeting visitors at the front desk and sometimes wielding a feather duster in the galleries. A Master Gardener, she is often seen planting or weeding in the small garden around the Museum kiosk. Before moving to New Haven, Anne guided visitors around Newport’s famous mansions, the so-called “Cottages.” Museum President Walter Miller calls volunteer hours, “Money in the bank,” because, when the Museum applies for grants, volunteer hours can often be used as ‘matches’ instead of cash. In the last fiscal year from 7/1/09 to 6/30/10, Museum volunteers contributed nearly 6000 hours, at an estimated value of about $250,000.

New in the Colony Shop

A handsome recent addition to the Museum’s Colony Shop is the Rochambeau Bowl. The six and one-half inch bowl was commissioned by the Alliance Francaise to commemorate the 225th anniversary of George Washington’s and French General Rochambeau’s March to Victory at Yorktown in 1781. Each bowl is individually hand thrown by Boston Pot and Tile of Woodbury CT. It is stamped with motifs from Revolutionary War uniform buttons—one French and one American—that were found along the historic route. Food and dish-washer safe; suitable for hanging. An ideal gift for the history lover. Only $15. Museum members always enjoy a 10% discount in the shop.
Children’s Books Collection

The Whitney Library houses a rather fine collection of children’s books, beginning in the late 18th century.

Many of these were published in New Haven by Sidney Babcock in the early decades of the 19th century. Babcock (1797-1884) published and sold books from his store on Church Street. Many of these books were stories and poems addressed to children, not just instructional works such as primers and spellers. Many had rather charming woodcuts as illustrations and the covers were often colorful.

In that period, copyright laws were not an issue in America. British books were routinely republished in the United States without the payment of any royalty to their author or publisher in Britain. Notable printers such as Isaiah Thomas engaged in such practices. In reflecting upon Babcock’s republishing endeavors, Christopher Bickford, writing in 1975 states: “Pirating children’s books was admittedly a prevalent part of 18th and 19th century printing on both sides of the Atlantic, but there are few, if any cases where the theft can be so carefully scrutinized.”

Whatever the legal and moral impropriety of his work, the result is a wonderful view of life in the period. Both the content and the form of these little books illustrate something of the views of childhood in the early 19th century. The work of Babcock also shows the spirit of the times in his entrepreneurial approach to this aspect of the publishing and bookselling business.
What’s going on...?

Pardee-Morris House visitors enjoyed a new exhibit on Opening Day.

Kenneth Minkema drew an overflow crowd for his talk on ‘Jonathan Edwards in New Haven.’

The Clement Room hosted a piano recital by Laura Richling’s pupils.

Prof. Eric Lehman, author of Hamden: Tales from the Sleeping Giant, signed books for visitors.

What’s going on...

The Pardee-Morris House welcomed spring.

Music returned to the Museum after many years’ absence with a classical concert featuring (l. to r.) Joanna Becker, violin; Sergio Pallottelli, flute; Tom Hudson, cello; Gretchen Frazier, viola; and Jaroslav Kargin, viola.

Wilber Cross High School grads received awards from The Student Parenting and Family Services- Daycare Center.

Page 6
Coming in September:

“90th of the 19th”

In celebration of the 90th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, (woman suffrage), the Museum and the Greater New Haven League of Women Voters will present an exhibit and a series of programs:

Saturday, Sept. 11 at 2 PM: Judith Schiff: New Haven’s Suffrage Heritage; Illustrated talk followed by dialogue with current and former League members.

Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 5:30 PM: Iron Jawed Angels, a classic documentary film on the struggle;

Saturday, Sept. 25 at 2 PM: Susan B. Anthony - the Invincible, a dramatization by Sally Matson; a special mother-daughter event;

Saturday, Oct. 2 at 2 PM: Women in Politics Today.

All 90th of the 19th events are open to the public free of charge and will be followed by discussion and refreshments. Younger women especially invited.

New Haven suffragettes demonstrating outside Winchester’s in 1916

Photograph from the Photographic Archives Collection, New Haven Museum
Upcoming Events and Special Exhibits

At 114 Whitney Avenue

Thursday, August 5 at 7 PM: Music of South America: Brazilian samba, Argentinean tango, Chilean folk. Sergio Pallottelli, flute, and Stephen Hill, guitar.

Reception to follow. $20; seniors $15; members $10

Thursday, August 26 at 6 PM: Swan Songs: Schubert’s Last Year:

William Braun, piano, and Christopher Grundy, baritone. Reception to follow.

$20; seniors $15; members $10. To reserve, call 203-562-4183 ext 12.

At the Pardee-Morris House, 325 Lighthouse Road

Open Sundays 1 to 4 PM. Free admission.

June 5 - August 29: East Shore Views: A Photographic Visit.

August 1 - 29: Inspiration New Haven: James Ayers, photography; Emilia Dubicki, paintings; Jonathan Waters, sculpture; Brian Gill Wendler, paintings. Artists’ reception, Thursday, Aug. 12, 5:30–7:30 PM.

For more information on upcoming programs and events, call (203) 562-4183, or visit www.newhavenmuseum.org.