

News-Letter – May 2006

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY ELECTS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Two officers were reelected and four new directors were elected at the Dedham Historical Society's 2006 Annual Meeting. They are as follows:

James D. Kaufman – President, reelected, has been a Dedham resident for 22 years. He has a BA from Amherst College and is a principal of Federal Hill Investment Services, a securities brokerage firm. He is the immediate Past President of the New England Region of the American Jewish Committee, a human rights and intergroup relations organization.

Kaufman is volunteer curator of the Dedham Pottery and Chelsea Ceramic Art Works pottery collections for the Dedham Historical Society. He is Chairman of the Board of the Boston China Students Club, the country's oldest ceramic study organization, and a member of the American Ceramic Circle, the American Art Pottery Association, the Wedgwood Society of Boston, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Historic New England. He is also on the board of directors of the Rashi School and WorldBoston.

Kaufman is married to the former Lisa Nachman, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for Children's Hospital, Boston. They have two children.

Stephen K. Brayton, Vice President, reelected, is principal of Brayton Communications, a public relations and marketing firm based in Dedham. Before starting Brayton Communications, he was Manager of Corporate Communications for The Gillette Company, and prior to that was a journalist with The Patriot Ledger and the Boston Herald. He holds a BA in History from Stanford University and an MA in Russian Studies from Harvard University. Brayton's special interest is Civil War history. He is involved with the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Old South Meeting House, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He is married to Lisa Brems.

Dr. John J. Herrmann, Jr., PhD, elected a director for three years, is the John F. Cogan, Jr. and Mary L. Cornille Curator of Classical Art, Emeritus at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He holds a BA from Yale, and an MA and PhD from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

Herrmann has curated many exhibits at the MFA as well as other museums in the US and Europe. His latest exhibit was *Games for the Gods: The Greek Athletic and Olympic Spirit* for which he co-authored a book of the same title. He has written a number of other books on art and archaeological subjects and has been published in numerous other media. In addition, he has lectured extensively on subjects related to art and antiquities, and has been in charge of many excavations, especially in Florence, Tivoli, and Rome.

In addition to being a long-time member of the Dedham Historical Society, he is a member of the Association for the Study of Marble and Other Stones in Antiquity, and American Institute of Maghrib Studies.

Herrmann is married to Annewies van den Hoek, and is the father of Dr. David G. Herrmann of New York and Alexander Herrmann of Rome, Italy.

Suzzara F. C. Durocher, elected a director for one year, has served on the Society's Worthington Committee for five years and is Chair of the Education Committee. She was Chair of the Society's Spring House and Garden tour, has assisted with the Soirée and other fund-raising events, and will take over as Chair of the Worthington Committee.

Durocher is on the Board of Trustees at the Frick Art & Historical Center in Pittsburgh, PA, where she serves on the Committee of External Affairs. For six years, she taught at the Brimmer and May School in Chestnut Hill, MA, and was recently appointed to Brimmer's Board of Visitors. She holds a Master's Degree in Education from Lesley University and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Brown University. She worked in the mental health field and then as a teacher before starting a family.

Durocher is married to John Durocher. They have two sons.

Andrea M. Gilmore, elected a director for three years, has been involved with the Society for years as a volunteer in various capacities. She is the Director of Building Conservation Associates, Inc. She earned a BA from Carleton College and an MS from the School of Architecture at Columbia University.

Gilmore is a member of the Dedham Historic District Commission and the Historic Boston Advisory Board. She has written a number of chapters in books on subjects such as exterior paints and other finishes, paint in America, The Hunnewell Cottage, and the history and conservation of painted wood, as well as articles for magazines including the Old House Journal and others.

Gilmore is married to David Gilmore. They have two daughters.

Peter H. Reynolds, elected a director for three years, was born in Canada, raised in Massachusetts, and has lived in Dedham for the last 20 years. He graduated with a BS in Communications/Media from Fitchburg State College. He is founder and CEO of Fable Vision (1996), Peter H. Reynolds Studios, and the Blue Bunny. His business endeavors combine learning, children, families, and community with his love of storytelling, the arts, media and technology. In doing so, he has worked with PBS, museums, educational organizations and educational technology players. He founded the Blue Bunny Books & Toys in 2003. His involvement in Dedham Square led him to help found The Dedham Square Circle, a "Circle of Friends Who Care About the [Dedham] Square."

Reynolds serves on the Board of Trustees of Everybody Wins Metro Boston, and the Board of Directors of the Dedham Community Association. He has won an Emmy for "**Fatherhood**" PSA, the Christopher Medal for **The Dot**, and the Carnegie Medal for **The Dot** film.

The Dedham Historical Society is one of the oldest and most important historical societies, museums and libraries in the U.S., founded in 1859. The organization's staff is headed by Ronald F. Frazier, Executive Director and CEO.

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR SET FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 4

The Dedham Historical Society's *2006 House and Garden Tour* will feature some fascinating and beautiful homes as well as their gardens. The tour will start at 12:00 noon, and tickets will be available at the Historical Society at 11:30 AM that day. The Society's current exhibits will also be on view. Advance purchase tickets are \$16 for members and \$20 for non-members. All tickets purchased on the day of the tour will be \$22.

For a number of reasons, the Society does not announce in advance the homes that will be included on the annual tour. However, this year an exception is being made by noting that the one of the properties will be the **MIT Endicott House** at 80 Haven Street. In addition to the tour of the house and its gardens, the Society will be holding a plant sale on the grounds.

In the 1870s, Stephen Minot Weld, Civil War general, author, businessman and horticulturalist, built an Italianate villa on the property and named it "Rockweld." Frederick Law Olmsted developed the landscape plan for the estate. The house was located on a rocky hilltop facing the Charles River, and the surrounding 1,000 acre estate included several natural ponds that are still used to irrigate the gardens today.

The gardens Weld developed include the sunken garden, the "glacial bowl," a clock garden with a sundial, and what is generally considered to be the first rock garden in America which had over 500 species of plants. Weld, a former president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, was famous for his colorful massed plantings.

H. Wendell Endicott bought the estate from Weld's descendants in 1929 and razed the house, but he retaining most of the landscape design. The present stone and brick mansion, "Endicott House," was designed by Charles Platt of New York, one of the country's foremost architects of

the period, and was built between 1929 and 1934. Masons and craftsmen, along with materials and decorative artifacts, were brought from Europe to construct and decorate the interiors.

Endicott specified in his will that the mansion and 25 acres, including the rock garden pond, be donated to an educational, scientific or religious organization. MIT now uses the property as a conference center, and the gardens are maintained and enhanced by their horticultural staff.

The tour of the house will start at the elaborate bronze and glass vestibule that opens into the limestone clad entrance hall. A glazed brick tile floor in the hall paves the way to a wide stone staircase to the first floor where the limestone walls are hung with Endicott family Flemish tapestries.

The reception hallway on the first floor leads to the dining room at one end and the spacious living room at the other. In between is the magnificent oak paneled library/gun room. The walls of this room are lined with book and trophy cases filled with rare guns and rifles, fishing tackle, trophy cups and other memorabilia. A number of stuffed animal heads are mounted on the walls, and a portrait of Wendell Endicott hangs over one of the twin fireplace mantels in the room.

Several other rooms, including an expansive bedroom suite, will be included on the tour. Visitors will then pass through the French doors leading to the terrace and proceed down through the adjacent gardens.

Another unusual home, built in 1932-3, is approached through a handsome corbelled motor court and landscaped terraces to the main flagstone terrace with wrought iron railings. The original owner of the home provided landscaping and built the pond on the property, which included the Gay Tavern, and replicated the original tavern's gambrel roof form.

This new wing was built to provide a formal entertainment area and master bedroom suite to augment the small spaces next door. The buildings were originally linked with a glazed connecting corridor (used as a library) to the living room in the tavern. The aura of this great space recalls the grandeur of a medieval hall, complete with the railed musicians' gallery which leads to two small guest bedrooms. The property contains lower landscape planting beds and the pond beyond.

The home includes many unusual features such as carved wooden crests of Harvard College, the seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the seal of the City of Boston which are alleged to have come from the mayor's desk at Boston City Hall. Their presence is attributed to Gaspar Bacon, Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth in 1933-34, who purchased the property in 1940.

A High Street home, built in 1941, sits behind a stone wall and fence that shut out the noise of traffic. This imposing residence sits on a tranquil plateau overlooking the marshy flats along the Charles River. This natural fieldstone and brick Tudor reproduction is a copy of a 16th century Tudor English church parsonage at Coln-Rogers in Gloucestershire, England.

Aside from the new kitchen area, the house footprint remains original. There is a small paneled library on the street side and the original riverfront dining room with painted raised paneling at the rear of the house. The French doors at the south end of the living room lead through the old tiled floor conservatory to the refurbished brick-walled English garden beyond. Multi-level terraces surround the house, embraced by extensive landscape plantings, providing vistas of the distant river flowing beyond.

A circa 1800 home, renovated circa 1900, is an illustrative example of a Dedham home that has evolved over two centuries into a complex dwelling today. It was originally built as a classic, simple, center-entrance Federal farmhouse around 1800, with a small rear kitchen ell and connecting sheds.

Early in the 20th century, the entry was relocated from the center of the Village Avenue facade to the current location at the north end of the house under a formal columned Colonial Revival porch. The long internal connecting hallway, staircase, living room overlooking the garden, and its adjacent garden porch were all renovated at this time, with typical Revival details to correspond.

The property was purchased shortly after these renovations by Louis D. Brandeis. He continued to own and occupy the house after his appointment as Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1916. He allowed Mrs. Sacco to live in the house while the Sacco-Vanzetti trial was going on in the Dedham Court House. Brandeis sold the house in 1921.

The gardens for this home are also on the tour and are described by the owner as an English cottage garden. An informal perennial border in front of a collection of flowering shrubs and trees on the north side of the property has a mixture of perennials and spring bulbs—asters, peonies, phlox, daylilies, nepeta, mixed with ornamental grasses and even bamboo. Her goal is continuous bloom throughout the summer. The pool area is kept private with spirea hedges combined with butterfly bush, clematis and climbing roses. Another seating area close to the house is surrounded by boxwoods, and fragrant herbs are planted between the flagstones.

The Gardens on Tour

One garden on the tour overlooks the Charles River and has a new entryway, herb garden and rose garden. Along the street is a rejuvenated rhododendron garden with additions of birches and summer-blooming azaleas. The walled garden to the right of the house is a restored formal English garden with traditional perennials such as hollyhocks, delphiniums, peonies, columbine, asters and foxglove. Tree hibiscus are a new addition. Two bluestone patios—one new, with a staircase to the lower gardens, and one restored—provide seating overlooking the river in the back of the house. Over the entire property, many existing specimen trees including crabapples, black walnut, and even a cork tree, have been carefully pruned and in some cases moved to new locations.

One more garden is located at the Crow farmhouse, built in 1792, and now an elegant home with terraces, pools and several garden rooms. The design of the gardens was inspired by many sources. The owner's first husband was president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and she has studied Frederick Law Olmsted's work at his home and studio in Brookline. She also travels widely, meeting famous garden designers such as the late Christopher Lloyd at Great Dixter in England and visiting historic gardens in Europe. Vita Sackville West's renowned garden, Sissinghurst, is her favorite. The influence of her world-wide travels and studies is clearly evident in her magnificent gardens which must be seen to be appreciated.