



Summer
2018

Wentworth Lear News

From the Board

As the long winter slowly gives way to spring, I'm pleased to report that the planning and preparation undertaken by the Board and our various committees in recent months give promise of a most successful 2018 season.

The calendar of events included elsewhere in this newsletter possibly reflects the most ambitious listing of offerings in recent memory, with lectures, music, receptions, and even a season-opening production of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

Following on the footsteps of popular exhibits "Portsmouth Privateers" (2016) and "Lost Portsmouth" (2017), this year we will offer "The Evolution of Portsmouth's South End," in recognition of the important role our part of Portsmouth has played in the city's nearly 400-year history.



Assembling offerings such as these, along with managing our historic structures requires a very substantial commitment of time and energy on the part of the Association's Board of Directors.

We would most eagerly accept the help of volunteers to assist in any number of ways, and at any level of involvement. Particularly welcome would be help with events planning and oversight, membership development, and buildings and grounds needs, but an offer of help in any other sphere will be warmly embraced. Please let Jen King, our House Manager, know what interests you, and she will ensure that you are properly welcomed as a volunteer.

On which subject, I want to convey the Board's great satisfaction with the way in which Jen has quickly and expertly settled into her dual role as House Manager and Apartment Caretaker. Among many other long-neglected functions, she has catalogued decades-worth of files and records that had long been ignored (and often unknown). Perhaps most important, she has brought a technological expertise that has largely eluded most of us Luddites. We now have a robust, up-to-date presence on social media for the first time, and that has greatly expanded our outreach.

Richard Adams, President

Exhibit: Evolution of the South End

The Wentworth Lear Historic House Association is pleased to present the 2018 season exhibit: The Evolution of the South End. This exhibit will focus on the history of the neighborhood and the challenges of urban renewal and historic preservation. The story of an evolving landscape recalls the price paid for selective preservation and gentrification.

The exhibit will consist of photographs related to the narrative of Portsmouth's Puddle Dock and South End. The exhibit will run from May 24 through October 8. We hope you will join us for an opening reception on May 24 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.



Treasurer's Report

At the mid-point of our fiscal year, which runs from October 1 through September 30, our finances continue to be in sound condition. This year's Operating Budget is \$47,000. At the end of March our operating income was \$24,240 or 52% of budget. Our operating expenses were \$17,370 or 37% of budget. These figures are typical for this time of year. Although operating expenses show a relatively low percentage at mid-point, they will increase significantly during the summer visitation season. We expect that the Operating Budget will be slightly in the black at the end of the fiscal year.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, WLHH keeps money for day-to-day operations (the Operating Budget) separate from money held for special purposes such as the Participating in the Past Program, the LCHIP II project, long-term maintenance of the buildings, and upcoming deaccession costs. The money for these special purposes is held in several Funds - the most recent being the Lear House Deaccession Fund, which was established in March of this year. Altogether the Funds contain \$137,000.

As we move into the future we believe we are on a sound financial footing. The Operating Budget continues to be in the black. Our Funds contain sufficient money to meet anticipated special purpose expenses. Management will continue its focus on maintaining tight fiscal control.

Fred Engelbach, Treasurer

Participating in the Past (PIP) & Chamber Music



The Participating in the Past Committee has been actively organizing events and workshops for the 2018 season. Participating in the Past (PIP) is a hands-on series of programs exploring 18th and 19th century craftsmanship and artisanry.

Using the houses and grounds as the backdrop, canvas, and stage for these lessons in historic craftsmanship and cultural enrichment, the programs explore the fabric of Portsmouth history. The Board would like to thank Jane Nelson for her ongoing support of Participating in the Past programming.



In September, we are also pleased to hold an evening of chamber music with the Noree Chamber Soloists, graciously sponsored by Charles Lassen. Their performance in May 2017 at the Wentworth Lear Historic Houses was a wonderful success and we are thrilled to host them once more in our historic warehouse, which the musicians have said offers superb acoustics as well as a most appropriate setting for the period music they offer.

Do you have an idea for a workshop, a skill you can share, or interest in helping with programs and events? We would love to hear from you. Please contact Jen King by emailing housemanager@wentworthlear.org.

Buildings & Grounds

After completion of the 2016 LCHIP grant the committee has been considering other possibilities to improve and maintain the buildings. Some new grant possibilities are under consideration such as painting the entrance hall of the Wentworth Gardner house, and foundation repairs to the Warehouse.

The committee has also been working on the deaccession of the Tobias Lear house and has provided floor plans and elevations for the sale packet. A plot plan has been ordered to determine the exact boundaries of the property. Additionally, an archeological study is being arranged to determine the location of the former rear addition to the Lear House as well as locating and excavating the site of the original privy. It is anticipated that the archeology will take place in May prior to opening day, so we will keep you posted as this should be a very interesting opportunity to stop by and learn more about the history of the Lear family!



House Manager's Report

The past seven months have been dedicated to becoming better acquainted with the Wentworth-Gardner and Tobias Lear houses and preparing for the 2018 season. These long wintery months have yielded productivity and I am very excited for what we have to offer in 2018. But it was not until the 7 Stages Shakespeare Company was rehearsing *Hamlet* in the historic warehouse and out on the lawn that I realized what I was most looking forward to: people!

These houses were meant to be filled with people. With a full schedule ahead of us and each of our faithful guides returning for another season of historic house tours, I hope that you will join us. I look forward to seeing you at the Wentworth Lear Historic Houses soon.

Jennifer King, House Manager

Calendar of Events

April 27-29th and May 3-6th at 7 p.m. -
Hamlet with 7 Stages Shakespeare Company

May 24 -
Houses open for the season

May 24th from 5:30-7:30 p.m. -
Exhibit Opening Reception

June 8th at 6:30 p.m. -
"A Watery Kingdom Transformed:
Our Piscataqua Region"
with Professor Jeffrey Bolster

June 16th at 2 p.m. -
Notable Denizens of Portsmouth's South
Cemetery: A walking tour with Richard Adams

July 11th at 5:30 p.m. -
"American Patriotic Songs over the Ages"
with Ramblin' Richard

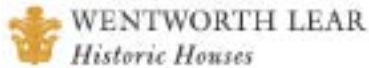
July 27th at 6 p.m. -
"Three Brides in Early America, 1735-1775"
with Kimberly Alexander, Ph.D.

September 2nd at 3 p.m. -
Noree Chamber Soloists

September 15th from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. -
"Weaving in Early Portsmouth"
with Sandra Rux and Susan Therriault

October 8th -
Houses close for the season





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Return Service Requested

Wentworth-Gardner Tobias Lear Houses Association Board of Directors 2018

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Enclosed is \$_____ for 2018 MEMBERSHIP Personal _____ BUSINESS _____
NAME _____
BUSINESS NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL _____ Membership Renewal _____ New _____

Open May 24 through October 8
Daily except Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 a.m - 4 p.m. Last tour at 3:30 p.m.