

VICTORIA MANSION

Annual Report
2023-2024



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Above: *Detail from the stairway to the Tower*

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As usual, Victoria Mansion is a hive of activity this spring. While we are still four weeks away from opening our doors to the general public, the house is already ringing with the voices of school children circulating through the first floor rooms for lessons and tours. Every so often they pause to gaze at Tony Castro, who is restoring grain painted decoration on the wainscoting. Hovering above on a floating scaffolding deck, conservators from Gianfranco Pocobene Studio are meticulously cleaning the painted decoration above the stairs. Still one more level up, Vivian Cunningham is cleaning textiles on a makeshift workstation on the third-floor balcony while Siobhan Lindsay works in the adjacent room organizing and digitizing our collections records. All this in addition to busy preparations for the upcoming season among staff in the office and Carriage House. Indeed, we're even taking our show on the road, with lectures, classroom visits, and a team-taught course on Victoria Mansion at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Like the crocuses now pushing their way up through the lawn, Victoria Mansion is blossoming and turning outward this spring. A small museum, we aspire to do meaningful work commensurate with the national significance of this magnificent and unique building. Just yesterday we launched our first preservation trades training workshop (*see story page 6*), one of a very few initiatives in the country focused on passing along endangered trades skills to the next generation. This program will hopefully benefit us in our efforts to care for this National Historic Landmark, but will also have spillover benefits for the stewards of other historic buildings across the region. It's one of the many ways in which we're determined to think beyond our four walls and to do big things with the resources at our disposal.

I hope the high level of positive energy I feel pulsing through this organization comes through in this report. If you're reading this, you undoubtedly played some role in generating and sustaining this energy, and for that I thank you. Much as we've accomplished this past year, we've got great things in store for the next.

-Tim Brosnihan

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Tours

This museum, as a source of artistic wonder and inspiration, belongs to all of humanity, as reflected in our mission to serve the broadest possible audience. Visitors from all over the world come to delight in the building as a work of art, to learn about the people who created and occupied it, and to see a living preservation laboratory, with conservators working in full view.

Delivered by a skilled and dedicated corps of docents, our public tours are constantly evolving as new information comes to light and restoration of the building's magnificently appointed interiors continues to reveal astonishing glimpses of Herter and Guidicini's original vision. The tour introduces visitors to the Italianate style of architecture, the use of the leading technologies of the time, the significance of its splendid European-inspired interiors, and the social history of the period.



In 2023, Victoria Mansion's regular season tours hosted about 21,000 visitors from all over the country and the world. Historically, about 49 percent are adults, 30 percent are seniors, 11 percent are children, six percent are college students, and one percent are active members of the military. And each year *Christmas at Victoria Mansion*, now in its 43rd season, welcomes an additional 6,000 visitors to this cherished holiday tradition.



Clockwise from top right: Docent Mary Spugnardi with guests during the 2023 holiday season, Guide Jada McMillan with guests during the 2023 holiday season, Paid Guide Eoin Trimble outside the Turkish Smoking Room in early 2024, Site Manager Jean Piekart with guests during the 2023 holiday season, Guide Kylie Josephson.

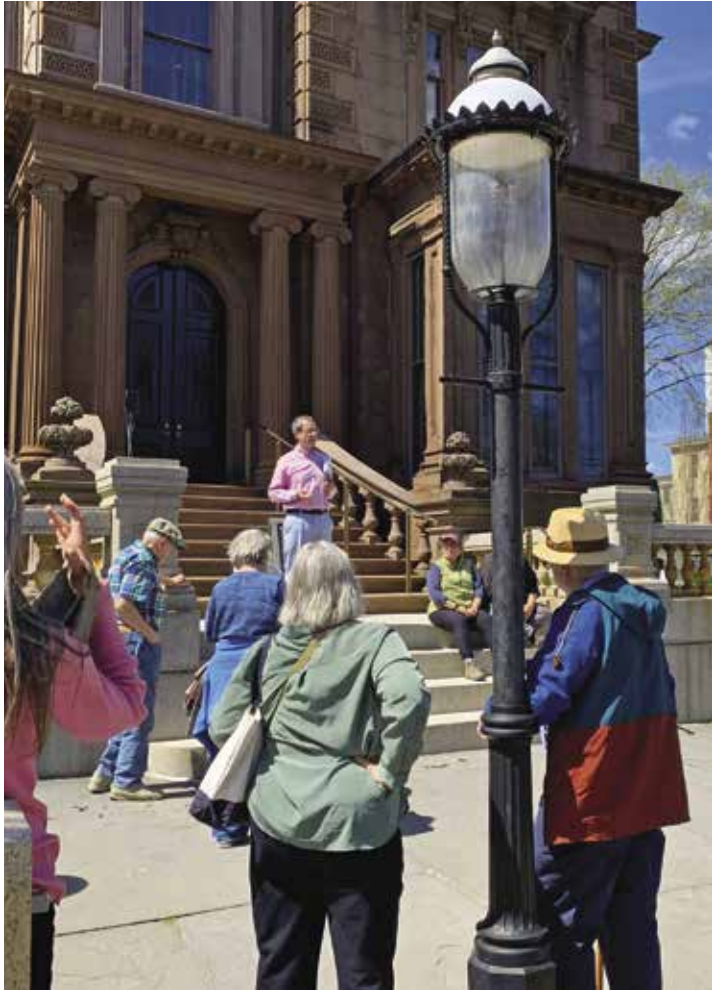
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Jane's Walk May 6, 2023

On May 6, 2023, Executive Director Tim Brosnihan led the Mansion's first Jane's Walk – a walking tour entitled *Victoria Mansion in Context: Forces of Change and Continuity in a Beautifully Preserved 19th-Century Neighborhood*. Tim discussed the forces of both preservation and change that have shaped the streetscapes we see today, as well as near misses – from the Great Fire of 1866 to urban renewal efforts of the mid-20th century, which skirted the neighborhood but ultimately passed it by unscathed.



Jane's Walk, an international walking tour event named for community activist Jane Jacobs, takes place on the first Saturday of May each year and is organized for our state by Maine Preservation. A crowd of over 40 people joined Tim and Development Director Ann O'Hagan for our 2023 Jane's Walk. Another neighborhood walk is planned for 2024.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Morse Associates Outing

September 28, 2023

Morse Associates traveled to Boston for a behind-the-scenes look into the work of the Poorvu Family Conservation Center at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. In the afternoon the group received a private tour of the Gibson House Museum, an 1860s townhouse in Boston's historic Back Bay neighborhood. Lunch was enjoyed at historic the Omni Parker House Restaurant, and later, tea & wine with Tinker Newick in York, Maine.



Members tour the conservation lab at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and hear from Holly Salmon, John L. and Susan K. Gardner Director of Conservation for the museum. Holly discusses conservation needs for this iconic John Singer Sargent portrait of museum founder Isabella Stewart Gardner.



Guide Isabella Dobson gives members a private tour of the Gibson House Museum. Like Victoria Mansion, most of the objects on view at the Gibson House are original to the family who lived there.



Sheila Clark-Edmands & Peter Edmands at the Gibson House.



Members enjoy lunch at the historic Omni Parker House restaurant, located just a short distance from the Tremont block where both of Victoria Mansion's owners, Ruggles Morse and J.R. Libby, began their careers.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A Bizarre Victorian Bazaar: An Exhibition of Oddities and the Obscure

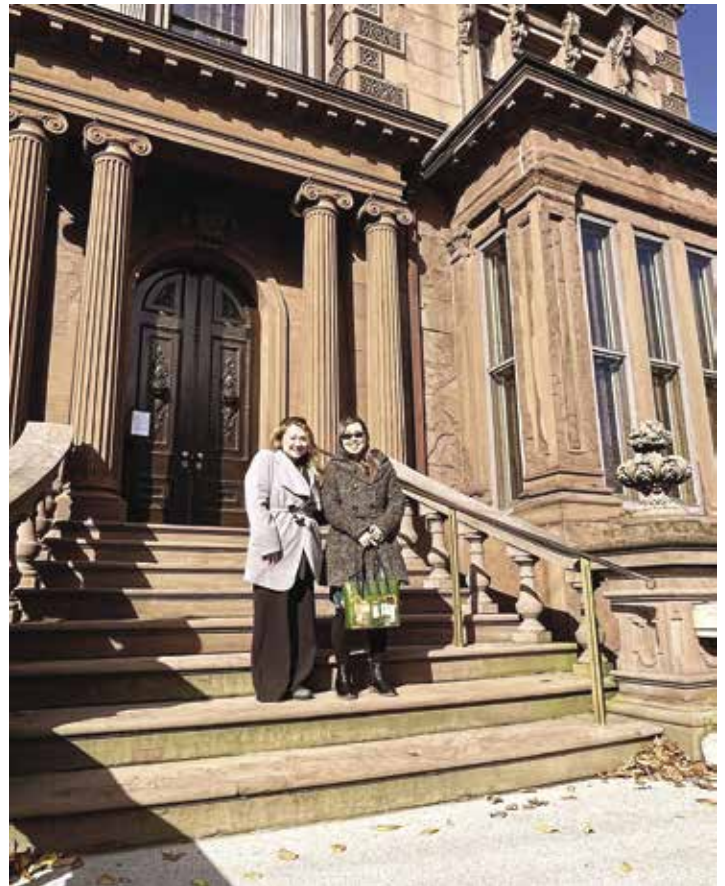
On Saturday, October 7th, The Mansion's Education Committee put together a brand new event, focusing on the unusual practices that were popular in the 19th century. Visitors learned about phrenology, mummy unwrapping parties, patent medicines, Spiritualism, Cottingley Fairies, and many more intriguing topics. Over 400 attendees experienced the Mansion and the educational programming throughout the day, and we hope even more can be accommodated in 2024. Thanks to all of our staff, volunteers, and partners for making this such a successful event!



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Author Grace Lin Visits Victoria Mansion

Scheduling coordinator Sarah Coughlin had the wonderful opportunity to take author Grace Lin around the Mansion on November 12 while we were closed to prepare for the holiday season. Known for her children's books, including *The Ugly Vegetables* and *Thanking the Moon*, Lin was visiting Portland to do a signing in support of I'm Your Neighbor Books, and we are thrilled she made a stop at the Mansion while she was in town.



Sarah Coughlin with author Grace Lin 2023

Mr. Dickens and His Carol

Andrew Harris brought his stellar interpretation of Charles Dickens back to the Mansion on December 2nd, celebrating the 180th anniversary of the publishing of the classic *A Christmas Carol*. Held in the Stair Hall of the Mansion, Andrew spoke of the origins of the tale, and of Dickens' visit to Portland in 1868, which apparently was not the highlight of his trip to the States. Thanks as always to Andrew for his generosity and talent – we look forward to seeing him once again at Christmas, and at the Bizarre Victorian Bazaar.

Night of the Nutcracker

Continuing our wonderful partnership with Portland Ballet, the Night of the Nutcracker took place on December 3rd and 10th this holiday season. All four performances were fully attended, as always, and guests marveled at the costumes, many of which were inspired by designs in the Mansion. We are excited to work with Portland Ballet again in 2024.



Portland Ballet dancers perform selections for Night of the Nutcracker - December 2023



Portland Ballet presents Waltz of the Flowers from A Victorian Nutcracker.

CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

EXTERIOR

Preservation Trades Training

Excitement has been building all winter for our first ever preservation trades training class. For years we've wrung our hands about the shortage of people with the skills needed to work sensitively on this landmark building. Of course, there are highly talented people in the area who are up to the task – they can be found throughout these pages – but there are simply too many problems around this large, complex building and too few people to stay on top of them. And though we hate to admit it, some of our most skilled partners will eventually want to retire.

We're far from alone in this struggle. A 2023 study published by the Northeast Regional Initiative for the Preservation Trades put a little data behind what we knew from our own experience: in northern New England, most preservation trades skills are in short supply. Seek them out and you're likely to find yourself on a long wait list.



Here at Victoria Mansion, we began talking about ways to grow the pool of qualified preservation professionals by folding training into work already happening on the building. In time, this evolved into plans for a series of intensive, hands-on classes taught by master practitioners and aimed at students already working in the building trades. The goal was to work with people with a baseline level of competency and bend the arc of their careers towards preservation. The results would benefit not only Victoria

Mansion but also other historic buildings in the region. In the fall of 2023 we held a public demonstration workshop showcasing window glazing, sand painting, and architectural woodcarving on the Mansion lawn. This generated some good publicity and a small but growing list people interested in hands-on learning.



Our inaugural class (*pictured opposite*), taught by locally based but nationally recognized preservationist John Leeke, focused on the care and repair of historic wood windows. To our





delight, we received more than three applicants for every slot, a confirmation that the appetite for this type of training is strong in our community. On April 1st, a group of five trainees joined John in the Mansion's basement for a two-week intensive, learning to conduct conditions assessments, remove and strip window sash using lead-safe work practices, and undertake repairs using both traditional and state-of-the-art materials and techniques. Core principles of preservation philosophy, including individualized repair over wholesale replacement, the selection of reversible treatments to ensure the long-term survival of original building fabric, and a respect for the high level of craft, artistry, and technology embodied in traditional

building systems, was covered throughout. This was the first of what we hope will be many trainings to come. Plans are in the works for a second training on woodwork repairs in 2025. In time, we hope to expand the scope of the initiative to include masonry, plasterwork, and other traditional building skills. Our thanks to the Cascade Foundation and contributors to Victoria Mansion's Restoration Fund for underwriting this essential work.

CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

Front Balustrade Project

Bob and Sebastian Cariddi are hard at work in their Buxton shop assembling a series of balustrades that will soon adorn the rooftops for the front piazza, portico, and bay. Over the spring Peter de Paolo will be using 19th-century sand painting techniques to transform wood to stone, blowing crushed brownstone into wet paint to create a durable and beautiful finish. He'll be joined by several understudies eager to learn this nearly lost art.



Reception Bay Project

We are on the cusp of restoring Victoria Mansion's front brownstone bay window, a challenging project more than a decade in the planning. We'll be using Portland Connecticut brownstone (*bottom*) – the same material used in the Mansion's original 1860 construction – to restore the bay in-kind, including the recreation of carvings and moldings lost to weathering over the last 160 years. Project partners include Ivan Myjer of Building and Monument Conservation, Arlington, MA (traditional masonry consultant), Structures North, Salem, MA (structural engineers, *pictured below*), Granite Importers, Barre, VT (stone suppliers and fabricators), and Stone & Lime, North Brookfield, MA (general preservation masonry contractors).

Over the coming year you will likely see scaffolding rise on the front of the building. Fear not, we will remain open to the public throughout and share regular updates on this fascinating work as the project progresses! Our thanks to the Nicholas and Louella Martin Charitable Trust of the North Texas Community Foundation and to contributors to Victoria Mansion's Restoration Fund for support of this work.



CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

INTERIOR

Restoring Damaged Hall Graining



The grand central Stair Hall was designed to make a fitting first impression for guests entering the Mansion's palatial interiors. However, time has not been kind to its elaborately carved, cast, and painted decoration. When we began conservation of the walls and ceilings in this soaring three-story space in 2021, it quickly became clear that the wood-grain painted wainscoting on the ground

level would need serious attention. Last year Corrine Long (*above*) made her way around the first floor, gently removing disfiguring black overpaint and decades of soot, grime, and waxy residue from past cleanings.

While Corrine's work firmly reattached flaking paint and dramatically brightened the dingy faux woodwork, thousands of tiny pre-existing losses allowed the white plaster substrate to show through. In some areas, particularly where radiators were situated during the Libby era, the graining was almost totally gone.

Enter Tony Castro (*right*), a decorative painter and conservator from New Gloucester, Maine. We sought Tony out because he is one of the few people in the region skilled in faux wood graining techniques, a process where special tools are used to manipulate paint, creating patterns mimicking the grain of real wood.



We initially thought Tony would in-paint tiny losses with a brush and use graining tools to recreate areas of near-total loss. In the end, however, Tony elected to complete the entire restoration with brush techniques, in large part because it enabled him to weave every tiny fragment of original graining into his work, incorporating information from little islands of 1860 decoration to guide his final design.

The result has been remarkable, with once illegible passages of graining suddenly snapping back to life. In the end it was Tony who pointed out that the graining in the hall imitated the real wood chestnut paneling in the Dining Room, a fact that was not readily apparent prior to restoration. Over the course of many months, Tony digested and absorbed the style of the anonymous grainer who decorated the hall 164 years ago. Tony's restoration is as masterful in its own way as the original work.



Before



After

CONSERVATION & RESTORATION



Stair Hall – First Floor Paint Conservation

Work continued throughout 2023 on the west wall of the first floor stair hall. Inch by inch, conservators removed yellowed 20th-century varnish from the decoratively painted walls and erased grime from the delicate, water-soluble painted finishes of the balcony ceilings. Flaking paint on several colorful wall canvases was consolidated and reattached using sturgeon glue, a miraculously effective substance made, strangely enough, from fish bladders.

Stair Hall – Second Floor Paint Conservation

This fall we received the thrilling news that Victoria Mansion had been awarded a prestigious matching grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to undertake conservation and restoration of the decoratively painted surfaces on the second story of the Stair Hall. The project will include the stabilization, cleaning, and in-painting of the fresco-style painted walls and overhanging balcony ceilings and their eight attached paintings on canvas (*above*). It will also include the stabilization and cleaning of the carved wood and cast plaster moldings and brackets encircling the space.ⁱ



While Victoria Mansion and our partners at Gianfranco Pocobene Studio can now look back on six projects worth of shared experience in caring for the building's painted interiors, we approach each new effort as a fresh challenge. Though work on the second

floor of the Stair Hall is, in many ways, a continuation of the project that began on the first floor in 2021, some things are a bit different. There is, thankfully, no 20th-century varnish on top of the wall paintings on the second floor. Yet there is more overpaint, and this has been found to be masking considerable staining and water damage in some areas. There are also greasy stains from touching hands which proved stubborn to remove during test cleanings. For years we've used these to show school children why we shouldn't touch!



Last fall we welcomed paintings conservator and conservation scientist Chris Stavroudis (*below left*), who flew in from Los Angeles to help the team develop a custom cleaning agent to lift away a century and a half of soot and grime. Using an array of chemicals laid out on the stair landing, Chris, Gianfranco, and Corrine dialed in a solution that will safely break up unsightly accretions that have built up on the wall.

Work began in earnest this winter in what we're calling the "tree house", a custom scaffolding designed and built by Bob and Sebastian Cariddi to provide access to the areas overhanging the stair landing (*above left, top and bottom*). In the weeks since, the team from Gianfranco Pocobene Studio has been cleaning and restoring the walls and balcony ceilings, which suffered considerable water damage in the early 20th century. Jon Sampson, a skilled ornamental plasterer, pitched in to carefully reattach sagging sections of ceiling and fill gaps and losses (*above right*). The clock is ticking now: the scaffolding needs to come down by the end of April to allow public access to the second floor for our May 1 reopening. But the work is progressing smoothly, skillfully, and on-schedule. If you visit this season, you'll likely see the team at work, gradually making their way counter-clockwise through the space.

ⁱThis project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, grant number MA-253203-OMS-23. The views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this article do not necessarily represent those of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Public engagement is at the center of all that we do at the Mansion. We look forward to seeing you once our regular season starts on May 1.

Members and visitors alike come from all over the world to delight in the building as a work of art, to learn about the people who created and occupied it, and to see a living preservation laboratory, with conservators working in full view.

Mark your calendars for some exciting events planned for 2024. And stay tuned! Check out our events page as we add more throughout the year.



May 1

Opening Day

May 2 - 5

A Celebration of National Textiles Day

May 2: Member Exclusive

Textiles preview reception

May 3: First Friday Art Walk

Selected historic textiles on display for regular weekend tours

May 4

Jane's Walk: Historic Perspectives of Park Street

May 23

Member Exclusive: Basement to Tower Tour

June 6

Member Exclusive: Backstairs Lives Servant Tour

July 12

Brownstone Brews & Bites: Brought to You by Allagash

July 24

Ruffi Stuffle Sleepover & Storytime

August 15

Member Exclusive: Open Shutters Reception

October 5

A Bizarre Victorian Bazaar:

An Exhibition of Oddities and the Obscure

December Mondays

Stories on the Staircase

December TBD

Night of the Nutcracker

December 19

A Magical Dickens Celebration



Scan this code to see all of the Mansion's events!

COLLECTIONS

The past year saw a number of interesting additions to Victoria Mansion's collections. Emma Willman, a Libby step-granddaughter, contributed several interesting articles from the Libby family, including a Bible given by J.R. Libby to his wife Louisa in 1870 and a hand-written address composed by Louisa for her graduation from Limington Academy during the Civil War. The ever-vigilant Paul Lafavore spotted and donated a rare stereo view image of the City Hotel in New Orleans, c. 1861-1870. Ruggles Morse ran the City Hotel from 1855-74 and was half-owner of the building itself from 1865-1887. So not only does this image show a Morse hotel, it almost certainly shows it during the time of his ownership.

Staff Conservator Siobhan Lindsay has been hard at work organizing and digitizing the Mansion's collections records and physically numbering all collections objects as part of a multi-year project aimed at making information about the collections more accessible. Conservation Technician Vivian Cunningham is wrapping up a project to clean and rehouse a number of original textiles that are migrating from the Billiard Room to dedicated storage across the hall on the third floor.

A generous bequest from museum curator, decorative arts scholar, and Victoria Mansion friend Christopher Monkhouse established Victoria Mansion's first ever collections acquisition fund, which will be used to purchase original and period appropriate objects to help the museum present and interpret its authentic 19th-century interiors. This winter the fund allowed us to acquire the exquisite Bohemian vase highlighted on the following page.

Textiles

Textile Conservation Technician Vivian Cunningham has been working with Victoria Mansion Conservator Siobhan Lindsay

to clean and properly store textiles from the Mansion's original collection. These have ranged from Turkish Smoking Room curtain panels to Red Bedroom textiles to Parlor tassels and beyond. The original trunk room for the Mansion was converted in 2014 into a climate-controlled textile storage space; Vivian's work will help to keep these textiles in stable condition for future research and reference as we begin to explore options for window treatment restoration in the Reception Room and Parlor.

Marble Mantels



Docent Research Committee member John Aden's 2023 project began as an inquiry into where the Mansion's seven Carrera Marble fireplace surrounds may have been carved. During his research, he embarked on a photographic inventory of each unique mantel, documenting details for current and future study. While questions remain about which workshop may have been commissioned for the carvings, having this inventory has already sparked further study: guide Eoin Trimble has begun researching the flowers carved into the mantels and their corresponding elements in the Victorian "Language of Flowers", utilizing John's detailed photographs as a starting point.

Library Inventory

In early 2023, Mansion staff members Sue Flaherty and Michelle Josephson catalogued collections from within the library and other books from the Mansion's collections, discovering many keepsakes and stories in the process. Collections belonging to the Morses and Libbys, as well as donations from the early years of the Victoria Society, were enumerated in a Library database, and books were reshelfed in the library based on provenance.



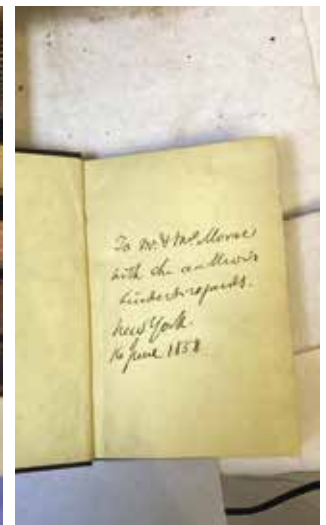
Textile Conservation Technician Vivian Cunningham cleans an original Parlor tassel.



Vivian Cunningham cleans an original Turkish Smoking Room curtain panel.



Michelle Josephson (left) and Sue Flaherty cataloguing collections in the Library 2023



A book inscribed to the Morses by the author - dated 16 June 1858.

COLLECTIONS

Bohemian Gilt Ruby Glass Vase



The completeness of the Mansion's collection of original furnishings is astonishing: comparing the contents of the house today with an inventory taken in 1894, we find that over 90% of the items listed sit in the exact same spaces they occupied at the end of the Morse residency. It appears that nothing ever changed, though this isn't exactly true. Most objects left the Mansion during the 1930s to have adventures in the homes of the various Libby children and grandchildren. Indeed, we mostly have the Libby family to thank for returning original furnishings over the last six decades.

Between the 1894 inventory and a handful of interior photographs taken between the 1890s and 1930s, we can develop a pretty good sense of what the house was like in 1860, when decorator Gustave Herter designed and coordinated the furnishings. Yet while we've had amazing success in piecing back together these 1860 interiors, there are still several items on our wanted list.

Chief among these are objects purchased by Morse from wealthy New Orleans banker and businessman James Robb. Robb was an avid art collector with the means to satisfy his discerning taste. His lavish New Orleans residence was a veritable gallery, with paintings, sculpture, and exquisite decorative objects displayed in a series of artistically painted interiors. Morse clearly admired his style, and swooped in in 1859 when financial reverses led Robb to auction off the majority of his collection. Morse was the second highest bidder, purchasing 19 objects including the paintings "Jacob's Dream" and "The Iconoclasts" that hang in the Parlor.



We've long sought two pieces from this collection, a monumental

pair of Bohemian gilt ruby glass vases that once graced the Parlor mantle (*one is pictured, below left*). Sold sometime in the 1930s, they disappeared so long ago that we have never been able to track them down. But this winter we received welcome news: an eagle-eyed friend of the Mansion spotted a near-identical vase at auction in Los Angeles. Using funds from the Christopher Monkhouse Collections Acquisition Fund, Victoria Mansion bid and won. The excitement was palpable as staff gathered round to see the piece emerge from its packaging in February. Set up on one of the Parlor pier tables, the vase looked amazingly at home in its new surroundings. While not original to the house, its display in the Mansion (*left*) takes us one step closer to the elusive goal of presenting the house just as it was during the nineteenth century.



Tim Brosnihan unpacks the newly acquired Bohemian ruby glass vase on February 28, 2024.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

In 2022, Mansion staff met with the Director and staff of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USM (OLLI) about teaching classes for their members. OLLI offers learning opportunities to Mainers ages 50+ in a wide variety of topics, including history. As part of our partnership, the Mansion offered a summer workshop on the Mansion and its Neighbors, a Fall workshop on Looking Beyond the Morses and examining the other people who lived here, and a Winter lecture on Mythology. This spring we are offering an 8-week course called, "A Century on the Move: The Victorian Period Through the Lens of Victoria Mansion." Each week staff and volunteers teach on a variety of subjects including: Mansion architecture and design, immigration, temperance, hotels, boarding houses, Spiritualism, mourning rituals, slavery, technology, servant life and department stores. We look forward to continuing this partnership in the years to come.



Senior Site Manager Michelle Josephson with OLLI class participants in the former sanctuary at the Maine Irish Heritage Center September 23, 2023.



Director of Education & Public Programs Siaci Hanscom and Senior Site Manager Michelle Josephson lead their OLLI Tour September 23, 2023.



Paid guide Eoin Trimble with a school group in the Parlor in early 2024.



Guide Kylie Josephson with a school group in the Dining Room in early 2024.

School Tours

In 2023 school tours began to be part of the regular off-season once again. As part of the *A Century of Change* curriculum, 3rd and 4th grade teachers select a lesson from the 8 offerings, and an educator goes into the classroom to teach on subjects ranging from Immigration to Etiquette, Technology to Symbolism. A week or so later, the students come to the Mansion for a tour, which focuses on the subject highlighted in class. We were excited to welcome the students back to the Mansion after 2 years of Zoom teaching and look forward to seeing them again in the spring of 2024 and beyond.

Interns

Victoria Mansion was fortunate to host three fantastic interns during the summer of 2023 and the winter of 2024. Sylvia Brock, an art history major at USM worked with the Mansion staff on a wide variety of projects, including writing curriculum, assisting Siobhan in database work, transcribing historic documents, and doing research to prepare for the Bizarre Victorian Bazaar.

Our second summer intern Jack Watson, a history major at USM, worked primarily with Brittany Cook on the Unwilling Architects Initiative. He combed through historic documents, including Freedman's Bureau records, looking for connections to the individuals enslaved by the Morses in New Orleans.

This winter/spring we are working with Rosie Haibon, another USM history major, who has been transcribing interviews that were recorded on cassette tapes in the 1980s. She has also started writing curriculum for middle and high school students on the Libby family and the North/South connections prior to the Civil War.

Thank you to Dr. Ashley Towle of the USM History Department for helping connect us with interns. We look forward to a continued partnership!



Intern Sylvia Brock's work on re-adhering decoration to Mansion doors.

Ruffi Stuffed Sleepover

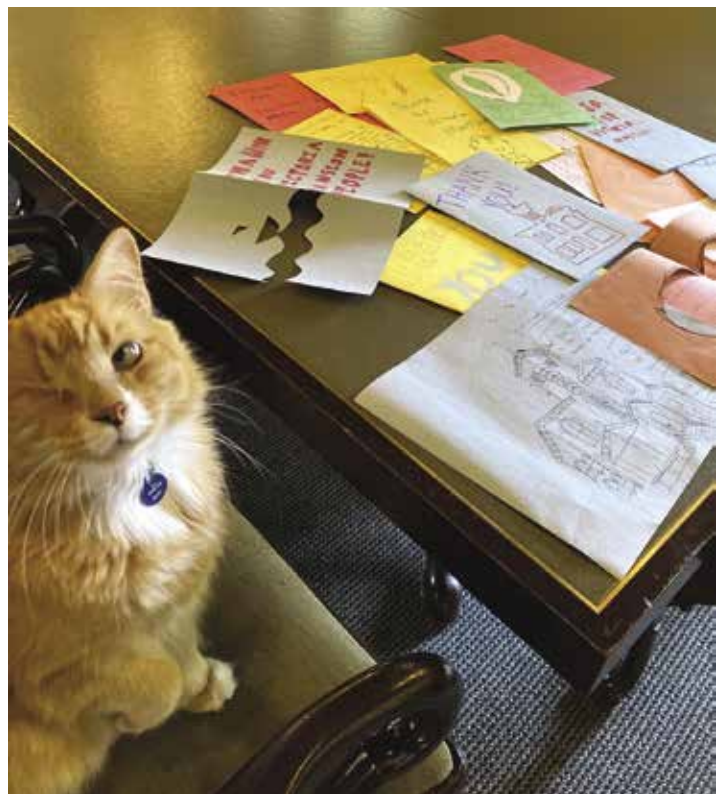
The Mansion hosted a special sleepover for stuffed animals during the holidays. Children came with their parents for a storytime with long time Victoria Mansion friend Kim Block. They then got to look at the holiday decorations around the house. Afterward, the children left their stuffed friends in care of Mansion staff for a special night hosted by the toy version of Ruffi the Museum Cat. They got to explore many parts of the mansion including a trip to the tower. Children picked up their stuffie the next morning and got to see photographs of all the fun they had at the sleepover.



The stuffies.



Kim Block reads a story to the stuffies and their friends.



Ruffi the cat with cards from Reiche students, June 23, 2023.

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Portland History Docent Program

Victoria Mansion has been part of the Portland History Docent Program for many decades, and we always love to collaborate with our partner sites in Greater Portland. In 2023, Greater Portland Landmarks asked Brittany Cook, Development & Communications Coordinator, to teach lessons on Object-Based Learning and Creating Your Narrative for tours, with the help of Director of Education & Public Programs Staci Hanscom. The Mansion also recruited ten new docents for the regular and holiday seasons, and we were happy to welcome them to our family!

Docent Recruitment

Victoria Mansion loves to bring in new volunteers and paid guides, whether it is through the Portland History Docent Program, or reaching out to us independently. We are always excited to welcome people with a variety of stories and backgrounds into the Mansion family. During the 2023 season, we had a record number of younger docents and guides join the Mansion's established group. They brought new ideas and perspectives to the mix while learning from the docents who had been here for many years. Interested in finding out more? Reach out to Staci Hanscom, Director of Education & Public Programs at shanscom@victoriamansion.org for information.

Volunteer Appreciation

Every year the staff of Victoria Mansion puts together two events to thank our amazing volunteers for all of their time and contributions. The summer event in 2023 was held at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI). With the generous support of Green Bee Craft Beverages and Bird & Co. for drinks and food, the Mansion staff and volunteers were able to hear about the work being done at GMRI, and see the spaces they use in their work with school groups and the public.

Additionally, the docents are invited to an event called "Meet the Designers," held on the Monday before Thanksgiving. This event gives volunteers and staff the opportunity to see the decorated Mansion before the visitors, which is both a special treat, and an opportunity to prepare for the general public's visit. At this event we offer the "Ruffi Award" to the docent who gives the most hours during the regular season, in honor of our Mansion cat who spends more time here than anyone. This year the award was two-fold: the first to Larry Perkins, the second to Tom Lafavore.

Docent Outings

The Docent Committee at Victoria Mansion plays a vital role in planning and advocacy for the docents and guides here at the

Mansion. The committee helps plan for continuing education opportunities, puts together an annual potluck lunch, and discusses ways to get input on training and support. They further support the Mansion by planning spring clean-up days and decorating outside for the holiday season. They also plan outings for the group to other sites in the Greater Portland area. This year, the docents were invited to a private tour to Western Cemetery, led by fellow-docent Mary Anne Wallace, and a behind the scenes tour and lunch at the Saco Museum and Dyer Library, organized by Mansion supporters Elsa Geskus and Sandy Riley. Thank you to the Committee for all of your help this year and always.

Brown Bags

The Mansion is open May through October, and again from Thanksgiving to the first week of January. During this season the docents and guides have lots of time for social and educational interaction. During the closed season, however, there is often a loss of those opportunities. To help alleviate this, the Brown Bag Lunch Lecture series was started in 2019. During the last calendar year, lectures have been given on: Brownstone by Tim Brosnihan; Mythology by Brittany Cook; and the Mansion collection by Siohban Lindsay. All talks are recorded to be shared with docents who are unable to make the event in person.

Research Committee

During the time the Mansion was closed for COVID, the Docent Committee put a great deal of effort into making sure the docents had the opportunity to stay connected at a time where it was easy to become isolated. From this effort the Docent Research Committee was born, to allow interested docents to research topics related to the Mansion that might not otherwise get in-depth study. In 2023 and 2024 the Research Committee was going strong, with lots of new topics under investigation. Once reports are finished, they are shared with the docents through the Docent Google Drive.

Book Club

The Docent Book Club is still active, led by docent Pat Allen. This program, begun by Charisse Gendron and the Docent Committee in 2020, continues to be held on Zoom on a monthly basis in the winter/spring and in the fall season. Thank you Pat for your continuing work to keep this resource moving forward!

VOLUNTEER AT THE MANSION!

Want to join the fun? If you are interested in history and art and enjoy interacting with people from all over the country and world, we would love to welcome you into our volunteer corps. Full training is provided. For more information, please reach out to Education Director Stacia Hanscom at shanscom@victoriamansion.org.

Clean-up/Planting Day

Every spring, the Victoria Mansion Docent Committee organizes two events to get the house ready to start the season. The first, taking place in late April, is a clean-up day to get rid of yard debris and sand left over from the winter. A few weeks later, docents arrive to add flowers to the planters located in the front yard and in the rear courtyard. When November comes, the Committee also gives of their time to decorate the rear ell porch and the walkway between the Mansion and the Carriage House. Thank you to the docents for all of your work keeping the house looking its best!



RESEARCH & INTERPRETATION

NEMA Conference/Community of Practice

Over the past three years, Victoria Mansion has built a close relationship with the New England Museum Association (NEMA). Part of this stems from the involvement of Staci Hanscom, Director of Education & Public Programs, and Brittany Cook, Development & Communications Coordinator, in co-facilitating the *Interpreting Slavery and Freedom Community of Practice* on NEMA's behalf. This group meets every other month to discuss the challenges and progress seen at sites throughout New England in this important work.

Additionally, the 2023 NEMA Annual Conference was held in Portland, and Mansion staff were integrally involved in helping plan for the visit, and offered a variety of programs during the conference. Sessions included presentations about the Portland History Docent program (PHD) and docent engagement and retention in conjunction with Greater Portland Landmarks; a workshop on how to expand on research into servant stories, led by Senior Site Manager Michelle Josephson and paid guide Hannah Field; and a program by Executive Director Tim Brosnihan on how Victoria Mansion works conservation projects into our regular tours. The conference overall was a huge success, and we look forward to being involved in the 2024 conference in Newport, Rhode Island.

Unwilling Architects Initiative

The *Unwilling Architects Initiative*, launched in 2021, aims to expand our knowledge of the Black and mixed-race individuals who played an unwilling part in the rapid accumulation of the Morses' fortune, which underwrote the construction of Victoria Mansion. Research and interpretation for this initiative expanded in myriad ways in the past year, including:

Visiting Scholar: Following an *Unwilling Architects Initiative* virtual lecture by DEI consultant Anisa Khadraoui and Victoria Mansion staff member Brittany Cook, a retired attorney, Charles Goldberg, reached out to us from New Orleans, where he now trains guides to give historic walking tours. Mr. Goldberg kindly offered and presented two lectures for Mansion staff in the spring of 2023 regarding Louisiana Property Law as it would have pertained to the individuals enslaved by the Morses in antebellum New Orleans. His presentations provided an essential understanding of legal history that helped with the interpretation of the updated exhibit accompanying this initiative, which has been on view throughout 2023 and will remain on view for the foreseeable future.

New Research: Among the 27 individuals we have been researching, new information discovered about one man, David Wilson, has shed more light on the political landscape of Reconstruction-era Louisiana. Born in Kentucky, David worked as a barber from



at least 1854 to the 1880s. He had been enslaved by William Wilson of the St. Charles Hotel, a former coworker of Ruggles Morse, who purchased David (left) from William in 1853. Ruggles had sold David back to William by 1854, when David was emancipated. Newspapers, particularly the *New Orleans Republican*, show that David quickly became involved in local politics, serving in various organizations within the

Second Ward, where his home on Calliope Street was located. Most notably, David was among the 49 Black delegates elected to the Louisiana Constitutional Convention of 1867, where he and high-profile contemporaries such as P.B.S. Pinchback and Oscar J. Dunn (the future, and first Black, Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana) discussed the statewide ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, enfranchising Black men to vote and hold political office. The minutes of this convention show that David was particularly passionate about public education, advocating for all children “regardless of race, color, or previous condition [i.e., enslavement]” up to age 21 to have access to state-funded schooling. Thanks to an 1868 engraving of all Black delegates to this convention, we have also discovered a portrait of David from the height of his political career. Further information about David and the other individuals we have been researching can be found on our website.



Above: *Extract from the Reconstructed Constitution of the State of Louisiana, with Portraits of the Distinguished Members of the Convention & Assembly, 1868. (Reproduced with permission from the Historic New Orleans Collection, object 1979.183)*

Backstairs Lives Initiative

We have continued our research into the lives of individuals who were employed by the Morse and Libby families as domestic servants, including finding several relatives who were able to visit the Mansion this year.

Through some old obituaries online, we were able to find Keith Johnson, who was great grandson of Libby coachman **John Johnson**. Keith didn't know John, or that he had worked for the Libby family. We were happy to tell him the little bit we knew about his great-grandfather and take him through the Carriage House where he would have lived and worked.

We were delighted to finally welcome all of **Libby cook Hannah Shine's** granddaughters to the Mansion. Teresa Keahon lives locally, but her cousins Hannah Sullivan and Anne Parra visited this summer and were thrilled to see their grandmother's items that they donated on display in the Girls Room.

WMTW's coverage of the Mansion's Christmas decorations connected us with Cathyllen Burke. She recognized a photograph of her cousin, **Libby maid Katherine Cullinane** on display in the Girls Room and reached out to ask where we had found it. (It was from her naturalization record.) Cathyllen was young when Katherine passed away, but she remembered visiting her on Park Street and that she always wore large hats!

We had an unusual discovery of one new person who likely worked for the Morses. A woman named **Julia Foley** entered a drawing at a local jewelry store and won a butter knife. An advertisement in the *Portland Daily Press* let her know she had won, and indicated that she lived at 109 Danforth Street. Likely Irish given her last name, she was most probably a domestic servant working for the Morses and living at the Mansion.

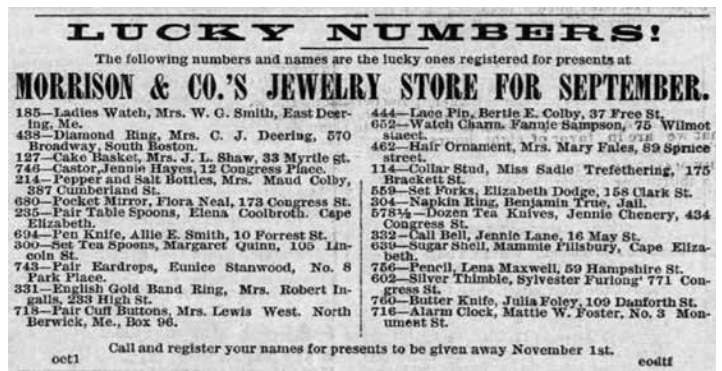
Beyond learning about the people who worked for the Morses and Libbys, the Backstairs Lives Initiative also seeks information about the working spaces at the Mansion. We invited **Sheila Alexander from Skyline Farms** in North Yarmouth to share what she knows about proper stables of the time and how our spaces in the Carriage House may have been used.



Cathyllen Burke with her son James and granddaughter Bernadette.



Keith Johnson



Newspaper clipping of Julia Foley's win.



Hannah Sullivan, Anne Parra and Teresa Keahon in front of Girls Room case.



Michelle Josephson and Sheila Alexander

INSTITUTIONAL

Our supporters have generously helped us continue our mission to conserve, maintain, and restore this one-of-a-kind property and share its history with the public. Through it all, our donors have shown a remarkable degree of loyalty for which we are incredibly grateful.

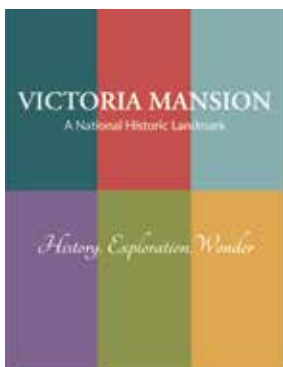
Over the past year donor retention has remained steady, and the number of first-time donors increased by 88 percent. Because of the generosity of supporters like you, the total raised through our development efforts has increased by 23 percent over last year. This has helped fuel all the progress and achievement you've been reading about in this report.

From this durable foundation, we are excited and hopeful about the opportunities that lie ahead of us. Over the last several months, we've made important progress that will serve as a springboard for future growth.

DEVELOPMENT

Development Committee

Our revitalized Development Committee has been hard at work reinvigorating our plans for community outreach. By working to position the Mansion as a vital community resource in an evolving cultural context, we'll bring a renewed energy to the work of preserving and sharing this landmark property. This important work builds a foundation from which we can accelerate the work of cultivating and sustaining our robust development program.



New branding

Working with our graphic designer, Gina Platt, members of the Development Committee needed to look no further than the Mansion itself for inspiration. The colors for our new branding palette were drawn directly from the decoratively painted surfaces in the Reception Room, one of Giuseppe Guidicini's most vibrant spaces. We're very

excited to enter the new year with a refreshed look that captures a new sense of excitement.

Case for Giving

Victoria Mansion is not a static institution. The work of preserving the building and its precious interiors is never finished. Saving what is so special and unique about this National Historic Landmark always requires devoted champions. The Development Committee has thoughtfully and carefully refreshed our *Case for Giving* – the roadmap we use for engaging with the community and communicating the

Mansion's interpretive mission for a new age.

Foundations & Grants

The Mansion has a strong record of receiving grants and support from both government and private sources and this year we've been particularly successful. Not only were we able to secure funding for a wide variety of priority projects, we were honored to receive a very competitive matching grant from the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS)* through their Museums for America grantmaking initiative. This prestigious award now allows us to begin stabilizing and conserving the painted surfaces on the second floor of the Stair Hall, extending the reach of our most ambitious conservation project to date.

*This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, grant number MA-253203-OMS-23.

Fundraising Events

After a three-year hiatus, we were thrilled to bring back our two most popular fundraising events. In July, the long-awaited return of our summer fundraiser, reimagined as *Brownstone Brews & Bites*, brought to you by Allagash (below and next page), was a big success – marking our 17th year of partnership with Allagash Brewing. And the return of our holiday gala, this year styled as the *Colors of the Season Gala* (next page), brought a festive crowd that enjoyed a champagne toast and mingling in the sumptuously decorated rooms before gathering at the Cumberland Club for drinks, bites, and music by Goldenwood Ensembles.

Ticket sales and sponsorships for these events are critical cornerstones that support Victoria Mansion's ongoing historic preservation and educational initiatives.





Planned Giving

Over the past few years, Victoria Mansion has been most fortunate to receive several significant bequests. Our planned giving program, the Holmes Benefactors, creates a legacy in the donor's name that lives on, helping to ensure that our important work continues into the future. Planned gifts are easy to arrange, flexible, and beneficial to both the donor and Victoria Mansion. To learn more about the Holmes Benefactors and shaping a legacy with Victoria Mansion, please contact the Development Department at (207) 772-4841, ext. 101.

Thank you!

While we remain a relatively small museum, we aspire to a level of activity – both hands-on and intellectual – that puts us on par with much larger institutions. Indeed, in our work to preserve and restore this important building, we seek to set standards worthy of emulation nationally.

The work of preserving this unique building and its precious interiors is never finished and requires each successive generation to take up the cause. We cannot move forward without support from loyal friends like you and we are most grateful for your ongoing support.

A SIMPLE WAY TO GIVE

Scan this QR code to donate to Victoria Mansion. Your tax-deductible contribution helps to support education, conservation, and restoration initiatives.



Previous page: *Brownstone Brews & Bites, Mansion guides Erich Chase & John Babin*

This page (clockwise from top left): *Rob Tod with Tim Brosnihan & Drew Oestreicher, Volunteers Linda Levesque & Mary Spugnardi, Gala night at The Cumberland Club, Goldenwood Ensembles, Tim Brosnihan & Drew Oestreicher at the Mansion Gala.*

INSTITUTIONAL

FINANCIAL

Financial Report, April 2022 – March 2023

The following chart contains audited figures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023. They represent an organization that is growing while living within its means. Noteworthy is over \$800,000 in contributions, a combination of bequests, project-specific gifts, and annual gifts. While these contribute to what appears to be a hefty bottom-line surplus (increase in net assets), they will in time be spent down on important restoration, conservation, and education projects.

Victoria Mansion Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ending March 31, 2023

REVENUES

Admission and Tours	\$397,549
Contributions	\$847,907
Membership	\$32,662
Income (loss) on investments, net of fees	
Interest & Dividends	\$28,240
Realized loss on sale of investments	(\$44,637)
Net unrealized loss on investments	(\$100,868)
Sales, net of cost of sales	\$60,600
Special events, net of expenses	\$7,500
Total revenue, gains, and other support	\$1,228,953

EXPENSES

Education	\$432,387
Membership and Development	\$139,045
Management and General	\$71,366
Total expenses	\$642,798

INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$586,155
-------------------------------------	------------------

THANK YOU TO

Our Supporters

KEY

† Deceased M Morse Associate

\$10,001 and above

Allagash Brewing Company
Cascade Foundation
Institute of Museum and Library Services
North Texas Community Foundation
The Louella and Nicholas Martin Charitable
Fund at North Texas Community
Foundation, in Honor of Cynthia &
Robert Macdonald
Robert J. Trulaske, Jr. Family Foundation

\$5,001-\$10,000

Marian H. Morgan M
Sue Nutty M

\$1,001-\$5,000

Karin & Richard Anderson
Nancy Armitage M
Elizabeth Astor M
Robert & Linda Ayotte M
Julie Bartage, in Memory of Annette
McLellan Ambrose
Tim Brosnihan & Sarah Maciejewski M
Catherine Bunton M
Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust
Kelly & Greg Caiazzo M
Jonathan Carr M
Arthur & Diane Chamberlain M
Sheila Clark-Edmands & Peter Edmands M
Arlene DiMillo
Marc Engelsman
John E. Gibson
John Hatcher & Dan Kennedy M
Cynthia and Robert Macdonald M
Maine Community Foundation
Carol & Rick Malone M
Sarah Newick M
Drew & Alexa Oestreicher M
Kathleen Phillips & Scott Lombard M
Phineas W. Sprague Memorial Foundation
Tim & Kathie Propp M
Randal Rucker & Jim Becker M
Dr. Sue Sturtevant M
Katharine J. Watson M
Robin Webber M

\$501-\$1,000

Bird & Co.
Jane G. Briggs M
Suzanne & Joe Bruno
Mary C. Doughty
Elsa Geskus
Maureen M. M & James W. † Gorman
Thomas L. Hinkle & Gary E. Duford M
Sandra & Lee Liggett
Nancy & Mike Marino
Norman & Eleanor Nicholson
Gianfranco Pocobene
John S. Rozos
Jane Sawyer M
Phineas W. Sprague Memorial Foundation

\$251-\$500

Anonymous
Abacus
Diana Bean
Linda L. Bean †
Stephen Barton M
Michael & Connie Beck
Lauri & Jennifer Bolton
Michael Devine
Holly Doggett & Daryl "Cheese" Turicek
Margaret J. Fenderson
Grala Family Donor Advised Fund –
Bronislaw E. Grala & Katharine B. Brown
Elizabeth Hope
Susan Kepes & Alan Hull
Keith & Mary Johnson
Paul Lafavore MD
Candice Thornton Lee M
Mary Allen Lindemann
Brian Maxine
Stephanie Nichols
Arthur N. & Mrs. Deborah Pierce
Lynn Reese M
Anne & David Ryan
Judith C. Scott
Monte & Anne Wallace
Mr. & Mrs. Neil Wallace
Breda & David White

Up to \$250

Janice Adler
Tawny Alvarez
Reverend Dennis Andersen
Anonymous (2)

Anonymous, in Honor of Staci Hanscom
Ellen Asherman, in Memory of Adrian Asherman
Charles T. Baird & Deborah Moulton
Lew & Carol Barnes
Joyce Berlucchi
Linda L. Boentgen & Michael A. Liff
Diane Brackett
Katharine Brown
Diane J. Bullock
Josh & Susan Burns
John & Charlotte Calhoun
Hannah Calkin
Robert Cariddi
Donald & Patricia Carter
Dr. Donna Cassidy
Curt Dale Clark
Carolyn & Christopher Colpitts
Karen & Michael Cook
Ernest & Helen Copley
John B. Corbett
Robert Crane
Mary V. Cullinan
Cumberland Historical Society
Mark Curtis
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Laurie & Peter De Paolo
Linda Docherty
Paul & Frances Doucette
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Elaine B. Duffus
Linda Eastman
John F. Edwards
Joy Elsner
Anne Emlein
Adam T. Erby
Bob & Wendy Ferns
David Field
Jacqueline Field & Mr. James Roberts
Mimi Findlay
Rosie Fink & Gerry Goldammer
Lea & Kevin Foley
Celine Frueh, in Memory of Nancy Hiatt
Michael & Malisa Gatje
Carlene Gavin
Mary & Martin Gavin, in Honor of
Andrea Krasker Gavin
Phyllis & Bernard Givertz
E. Kent Gordon
Jerry & Marcia Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Ward I. Graffam
Alicia Grundhoffer
Sarah Hansen
Leslie & Paula Harris
James & Joan Hatch
Katherine Haynes
Alison D. Hildreth
Hurd Family Charitable Fund,
in Memory of Josephine A. Hurd

Janet Igel
 David Jester
 Andy Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. Frederic Kellogg
 Sally Anne Kellogg
 Robert & Caroline Knott
 Dianne & Rick Kidder, in Memory of
 Katherine Webb
 Linda Levesque
 Tom & Susan Lyons
 Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Macdonald
 William A. Macleod
 Kathryn MacLeod
 Carlene D. Magno
 Miriam Malkasian
 Ryan Maloney
 Rachel McBeth
 Judy E. & Philip McCormick
 Sheila McGarr
 Nina McKee
 DeCourcy McIntosh
 Barbara A. McManus
 Florence R. Meyer
 Nancy & Mr. Peter Mills
 Jacqueline Moss
 Jean K. Nishiyama, in Memory of
 Charlotte Brown
 Nancy Noble
 Nicholas Noyes & Dr. Margaret Hourigan Ed.D.
 Sally & Ted Oldham
 Amy Nolan Osborn & Jim Osborn
 Robert Parker
 Noel & Cynthia Pelliccia
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 Lois Pike
 Pamela & Peter S. Plumb
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 Jeffrey and Andrée Pride
 Lorraine Ramsay
 Mr. & Mrs. Frank Reilly
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 Sandra & Robert Riley
 Warren & Susan Roberts
 Jan Rodriguez
 Mr. & Mrs. James Sargent
 David L. Savage
 David Schmerler
 Roche Schulfér & Mary Beth Fisher
 Shelley Serber
 Heather Shannon & Stewart Field
 Earle G. Shettleworth Jr.
 Bill & Julie Simpson
 Jeremiah Spaulding
 Laura F. & Mr. Seth Sprague
 Diana C. Stanzione
 Yues States
 Caroline Stevens

Doris S. Stockly
 Louise Sullivan
 Vicki Sullivan
 Gregory & Jennifer Sundik
 Michael Taylor
 Sarah Terriciano
 Edith Wacksman
 Mary Ann & Brian Wallace
 Sheila Wellehan
 Bruce Wood
 Alessa & Stephen Wylie

Bequests

Anonymous
 Estate of Charlotte F. Brown
 Estate of Christopher P. Monkhouse

In-Kind Supporters

Anania's Variety
 Cellardoor Winery
 Green Bee Craft Beverages
 The Pink Waffle
 R. Cariddi Fine Woodwork
 Nothing Bundt Cakes
 Carlene Magno

Partners

Abyssinian Meeting House
 Allagash Brewing Company
 Bird & Co.
 Kim Block
 Briar & Bone (Inge Graham)
 Burr Signs
 Casco Bay High School
 Sam Cook
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 Gail Diamon
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 Ashley Gagnon
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 (Gianfranco Pocobene & Corrine Long)
 Charles Goldberg
 Goldenwood Ensembles
 Greater Portland Landmarks
 Gulf of Maine Research Institute
 Anna Halloran
 Andrew Harris
 Historic New Orleans Collection
 Savannah Irish
 Tom Kelleher
 Anisa Khadraoui
 John Leeke
 Lippitt House Museum
 Merrill Lewis & Rick Seferian
 Maine Historical Society
 Maine Irish Heritage Center
 Ivan Myjer, Building & Monument Conservation
 Nellies Teas
 New England Museum Association

Heather Nichols
 Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USM
 Osher Map Library
 Pete Kilpatrick Band
 Gina Platt
 Portland Ballet
 Portland Downtown
 Portland High School
 Portland History Docents
 Edward Reilly
 Saco Museum & Dyer Library
 Svea Seredin
 The Shank Painters
 Teafarers Tea
 Dr. Ashley Towle
 travelMAINE
 Visit Portland
 Mary Anne Wallace

*Christmas at Victoria Mansion
 2023 Designers*

Dan Gifford
 Emerald City
 (Danny R. Hatt, Don Chouinard,
 Marcedas Hatt-O'Toole)
 Harmon's Floral Company
 (Dan Kennedy and Jennifer Miller)
 Maine Irish Heritage Center
 (Susan Flaherty, Hannah Field and
 Michelle Josephson)
 Chevaughn Marie Designs
 Clipper Merchant Tea
 (Melinda Thomas and Natashe Hudnor)
 Bob Parker and Charles Powell
 Dawn Hachey
 Saco Festival of Trees Design Committee
 (Theresa Ruel)
 Sarah Coughlin Fine Art
 (Sarah Coughlin, Kay Murchie, and
 Kerry Smith)
 Victoria Mansion Docent Committee

Note: While we aspire to perfection, errors do happen. If any name was inadvertently omitted from this listing, we apologize, and ask that you contact us at information@victoriamansion.org or (207) 772-4841, so that we can correct our records.

In Memoriam



Linda Bean

Linda Bean, whose world-famous grandfather L.L. did so much to shape popular perceptions of Maine, took enormous interest and pride in the history of her home state. She was passionate about preservation, buying and saving numerous buildings associated with her own family and the Wyeth family of artists. Recognizing Victoria Mansion's unique place in Maine history, she generously supported our work through the years, most notably during the conservation and restoration of the Turkish Smoking Room in 2008.



Franklin Lawrence

Franklin Lawrence (*pictured at left with his mother, Ellen Libby Lawrence*) was the great-grandson of J.R. and Louisa Libby, Victoria Mansion's second owners. His mother, Ellen Brazier Libby Lawrence, was one of the greatest champions this house has ever known. Some of this passed on to Frank, who served on the Mansion's Board of Trustees in the 1990s and remained a generous friend in the years since. His was part of the enormous legacy of support that the Libby family has provided for Victoria Mansion in the nearly 100 years since they occupied the house.

and James Gorman
Harry C. Jester
Harry Konkel
Dr. Harold Osher
Kathleen Schneider

CARRIAGE HOUSE MUSEUM SHOP

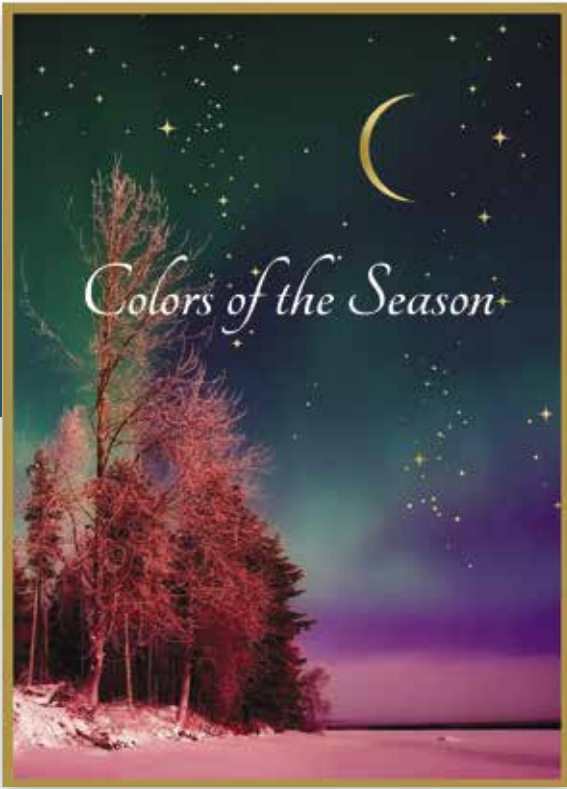
Welcome to the Carriage House Museum Gift Shop!

We are pleased to report that 2023 was a banner year for us, exceeding historic shop records. Now, we set our sights on the upcoming season and, to that end, are working to fill our shelves with all manner of delightful temptations.

At this writing, we are busy unpacking boxes filled with beautiful, intriguing, and unusual objects. We have jewelry (new and antique), items for teatime, good reads, informative histories, glass ornaments, cards for correspondence, and two styles of pens made from a retired Mansion floor joist. Come choose a new spring hat, or a birthday gift for a friend!

As of our annual May 1st re-opening, we invite you in to peruse this wonderful, thoughtfully curated collection of items with ties to Victoriana and our beloved Pine Tree State. We look forward to seeing you!





CHRISTMAS AT VICTORIA MANSION

a look back at the 2023 season...

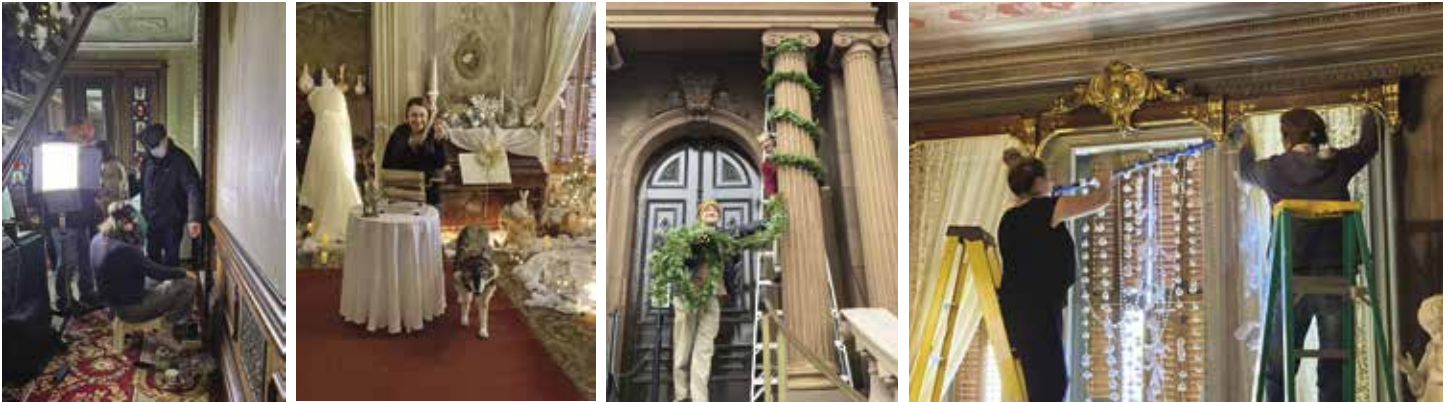


photo by Amy Paradyz



photo by Amy Paradyz

Top row: Designer Robert Parker (left) and Guides Eoin Trimble (center) and Kylie Josephson (right) install garlands and trees

Second row: Conservator Corrine Long explains her process to some Christmas visitors; Designer & Scheduling Coordinator Sarah Coughlin picks the winning ticket for the Wolf raffle; Nik Josephson & Tim Brosnihan wrap the columns in garland; Sarah Coughlin & Conservator Siobhan Lindsay hang decorations in the Sitting Room

Third row: Siobhan Lindsay & Kylie Josephson assemble a tree in the Reception Room; Designer Dan Kennedy & Board Member John Hatcher at the Gala, Nick Laverriere & Designer Chevaughn Laverriere at the Gala; guests admiring the Reception Room tree

Bottom row: Volunteer Designers Kay Murchie & Sarah Coughlin at the Gala; Bob and Cynthia Macdonald, Cameron Foster and Catie Macdonald pose at the Gala



VICTORIA MANSION

109 Danforth Street
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 772-4841

WWW.VICTORIAMANSION.ORG