

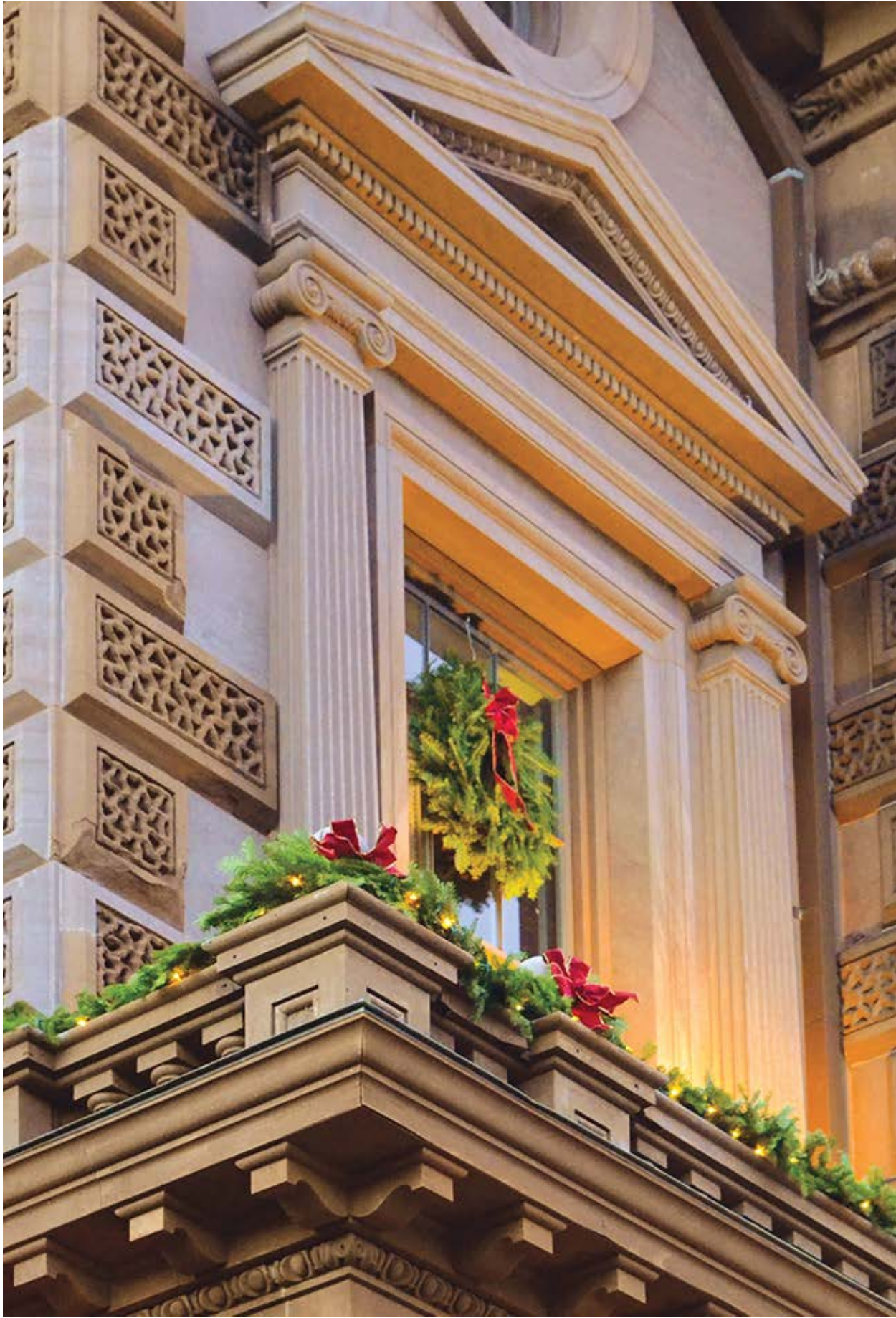
CHRISTMAS AT
VICTORIA MANSION

Stories of the Season



November 29, 2024 - January 5, 2025

WELCOME!



Victoria Mansion is justly famous for its elaborate Gustave Herter interiors, colorful fresco-style wall paintings, and romantic Victorian architecture. But in the years since it became a museum, Victoria Mansion's fame has grown in a new direction. *Christmas at*

Victoria Mansion, which began as a weekend holiday tea 44 years ago, has evolved into a six-week celebration drawing families from all over the region to see the house decked out in breathtaking splendor.

We owe the success of this event to the talent and generosity of our designers. This year's theme, *Stories of the Season*, invites you on a literary journey through time and around the globe. I hope you enjoy your visit, and thank you for supporting our work to preserve and share this one of a kind house.

-Timothy Brosnihan, *Executive Director*

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INTRODUCTION TO VICTORIA MANSION

History. Exploration. Wonder.

To people who are curious about art and history, Victoria Mansion is a triumph of 19th-century architecture and design with a wealth of stories to tell. Surviving intact with over 90% of its original interiors more than 160 years after its construction, Victoria Mansion is an historic house museum welcoming guests of all ages and backgrounds for a unique opportunity to explore and connect with the past. Our mission is to conserve, maintain, and restore the Victoria Mansion property and collections to the highest standards and to interpret them in their social and historical context to a broad local, state, and national audience.



The Mansion was built as a summer home for Ruggles Morse, a successful hotelier in New Orleans, and his wife Olive. Olive sold the house fully furnished after Ruggles's death in 1894 to department store owner J.R. Libby and his wife Louisa, who lived in the house with their five children and extended family. Completed in 1860,

the house is the crowning achievement of architect Henry Austin, a master of the Italianate style. The house's interiors and their lavish furnishings are the sole commission by Gustave Herter, founder of Herter Brothers of New York, to survive intact within their original location, and the decoratively painted walls and ceilings throughout the house represent the legacy of Giuseppe Guidicini, whose comparable commissions no longer survive. The building and its interiors are without parallel and are therefore of national and even international importance. Libby children lived in the house until the late 1920s. Facing demolition in 1940, the house was saved by retired educator Dr. William Holmes, who opened the house as a museum and named it in honor of Queen Victoria. Victoria Mansion was among the first buildings in America to be designated as a National Historic Landmark, in 1971.

Victoria Mansion is not a static institution. Since the 1970s it has been the site of major architectural restoration and art conservation projects. Many techniques for brownstone restoration now employed across the country were perfected in work undertaken here. On the interior, conservators treating the elaborately decorated spaces use cutting-edge techniques, often in full view of the visiting public. We not only interpret these and the fine arts aspects of the house, but provide insights into Victorian technology, domestic life and 19th-century culture.

In affirmation of its international significance, the

museum has been awarded two of the highly-coveted Save America's Treasures grants, as well as funding from the Museums for America program through the Institute of Museum and Library Services. In addition to grants, Victoria Mansion is supported by admissions and museum shop sales, membership, and private donations.

Throughout the year, numerous events and programs provide educational and social opportunities for our members and visitors. Special "members-only" events include behind-the-scenes access to basement, tower, and back spaces not normally accessible to the public. For more information, visit us at www.victoriamansion.org



A grand Victorian-style stair hall. A large, ornate chandelier with multiple glowing spherical lights hangs from a ceiling with intricate plasterwork. A wide staircase with a red carpet featuring a large floral pattern leads upwards. The staircase is flanked by dark wood balustrades with decorative balusters. To the right, a tall, arched stained glass window with colorful geometric and floral designs is set into a dark wood frame. The walls are white with decorative paneling and a small oval portrait. A dark wood chair with a high back is visible on the left. The floor is covered in a matching red floral carpet.

STAIR HALL

STAIR HALL

About the room

The dramatic space and decoration of the Stair Hall were intended to impart a sense of richness and awe upon entering that many still experience today. The “flying” staircase, double-tiered gasolier, stained glass, and painted and gilded walls, ceilings, and architectural features combine to create an impressive introduction to the splendors of the rooms within. In 1938 a hurricane destroyed almost half of the immense skylight; in 2001 the museum was able to use over 40% of the original surviving glass, augmented by faithfully reproduced infill panels, to re-create this stunning feature. Representations of three of the four cardinal virtues, Fortitude, Justice, and Prudence, are painted above the doors. Notably absent is the fourth virtue, Temperance. As a hotelier, Ruggles Morse made a large part of his fortune through income from the bars of his hotels, and when Victoria Mansion was built, it boasted a large basement wine cellar, which was unusual in the “dry” city of Portland.

About the design

Designed and decorated by the collaborative design teams of Emerald City Design (*Danny R. Hatt, Don Chouinard, Daniel Svenson, and Brandon Ouellette*), Chevaughn Marie Designs (*Chevaughn Laverriere*), and Saco Festival of Trees (*Theresa Ruel*)

Who would like a Christmas tree?

That all depends on who you ask.

January through April, the chickadees, field mice, deer and woodcock come to claim the tree.

It is their food source, their shelter and protection and a place to start a new family.

Can a Christmas tree be all that?

Yes, and even more...

The Grand Stair Hall comes to life this year with Maine author Ellen Bryan Obed's *Who Would Like a Christmas Tree? A Tree for Each Season*. The story tells of a Christmas tree farm in Maine where in December, families are on a mission to find the perfect holiday tree, but in the other 11 months of the year, it is the home to a wide array of wildlife. Our creative design team hopes that you enjoy our interpretation of this wonderful story. We challenge you to find all of the different animals, birds and insects just waiting to be discovered. Enjoy Christmas in the Stair Hall!

Thank you to Islandport Press for permission to adapt *Who Would Like a Christmas Tree?*



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RECEPTION ROOM

RECEPTION ROOM

About the room

The elaborate décor of this room was intended to impress visitors as they waited to be received by the Morses. Around the top of the wall are paintings that depict the creative arts, suggesting that Ruggles and Olive, whose portraits flank the fireplace, were educated people of refined tastes. Heavily gilded ornament implies the extent of their wealth. The small room accessed by the arched door straight ahead showcases a secretary cabinet that is widely recognized as a masterpiece of Herter craftsmanship; on the wall to its side is a painted head of Bacchus, the god of wine, suggesting that the cabinet may have been used to store and serve liquor.

The Reception Room was recognized as one of the fifty greatest rooms in America in 2010. Between 2016 and 2018 the room was fully conserved, with over a century and a half of soot and smoke removed from the walls and ceiling, revealing the original jewel-like tones of 1860. The carpet and furnishings are original.

About the design

Designed and decorated by [Emerald City Design](#)

Danny R. Hatt, Don Chouinard, and Marcedas Hatt-O'Toole

2024 calls for celebration, as it marks our 23rd anniversary at the historic Victoria Mansion. This year's theme, *Stories of the Season*, inspired us to bring to life the children's classic, *Hansel & Gretel*, by the Brothers Grimm.

Imagine a magical, edible cottage made of lollipops, peppermints, marshmallows, ribbon candy, gumdrops and cake pops... every child's dream. Now imagine being stuck in this sweet, sticky trap by a cruel witch with bad intentions... every child's nightmare. Do you see the Witch peering from behind the door, as Gretel stands in front of the Christmas tree? And what's that hanging in a cage? My, it's poor Hansel! What to do! What to do!

Even though *Hansel & Gretel* was written in 1812, its themes are timeless: the importance of family bonds and the strength of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable adversity. Thus, Hansel and Gretel prevail. Hopefully, our decorative depiction of this classic fairy tale will inspire you to reread this story and share it with your loved ones.

The Emerald City Design Team, along with our talented decorating crew – Daniel Svenson, Brandon Ouellette, and Larry Howe – wish you and yours the merriest of holiday seasons.

DINING ROOM



DINING ROOM

About the room

Designed in the Renaissance Revival Style, the hand-carved chestnut-paneled Dining Room was a grand setting for the lavish meals typical of the era. The plaster ceiling, painted to simulate various woods, is a masterpiece of *trompe l'oeil* (“fool the eye”) paint decoration. The original gasolier sports a “French Bronze” finish, providing illumination that highlights the intricate carvings and gold-leaf stamped leather of the original dining chairs and the sparkling surfaces of porcelain, silver, and cut glass that were ordered for this room in 1860.

About the design

Designed and decorated by Melinda Thomas, Gail Diamon, and Natasha Titus

The Snow Queen

By Hans Christian Andersen

The Snow Queen tells the story of a troll who creates a mirror that reflects only wickedness and ugliness. The kindest person could gaze into it and what is reflected back is cruelty. He tries to take this mirror up to

his home in the snowy clouds but it shatters into thousands of shards. Two children, Kay and Gerda, are best friends until Kay gets one of the shards lodged in his eye. He can't see Gerda's goodness and becomes hurtful, wandering off without saying goodbye. He soon finds himself in a snowy land where he meets the beautiful Snow Queen. She takes him to her palace where he forgets about Gerda and his home. Gerda does not forget Kay and goes on an adventure to find him, meeting many interesting characters and seeing marvels like talking animals and a garden with singing flowers. She finally finds Kay and is so happy she cries. Kay is moved by her warm tears and he also cries, dislodging the shard in his eye. They return home as friends.

We portray here the troll, whose mischief causes chaos, and the Snow Queen, who is selfish and rather cold hearted as she lives in a completely frozen world, represented by silver and blue. And of course we have plenty of mirrors! We also added some Scandinavian elements to suggest the region where this story takes place. We hope you are inspired to read the complete story – it is very imaginative and reminds us to treasure our friendships and forego vanity.

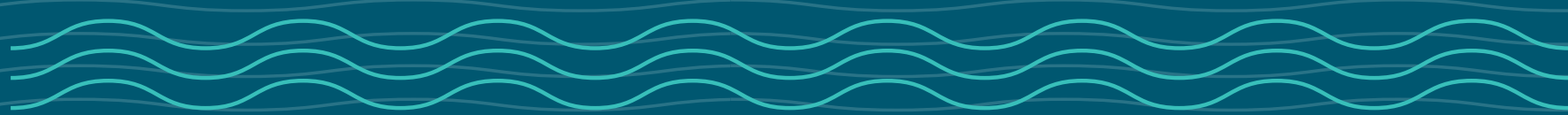


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VOLUNTEER

Volunteers at Victoria Mansion are the public face of the museum, and integral to the visitor's impression of the organization. In donating their time, volunteers have the opportunity to entertain and educate visitors from all over the world, while learning themselves, and getting to know other docents from throughout the Greater Portland area. Victoria Mansion is committed to the education of its volunteers and provides the highest level of training and mentorship at sessions held throughout the year.

Volunteers also have opportunities to attend lectures and special exhibits, visit other museums, and participate in a variety of continuing education activities, as well as being celebrated during a variety of appreciation events yearly. Volunteer shifts are flexible, and can be weekdays, weekends, or seasonal.

Interested? Please contact
Director of Education Staci Hanscom at
shanscom@victoriamansion.org
or (207) 772-4841 ext. 104

LIBRARY



LIBRARY

About the room

Sumptuously paneled in hand-carved black walnut, Morse's private study features pointed arches, trefoils, and other details associated with Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages. Some of the books on the shelves behind the plate glass doors are original to the Morses or Libbys. This is the only room in the house to have been altered by the Morses after it was built: sometime in the late 1870s a single window on the wall ahead of you was removed and replaced with the bay window now forming the alcove. Note the glass-paneled door to the left, which would provide the opportunity for Morse to receive visitors and business associates here without others in the house being bothered by their presence. The wood-paneled door led to Mr. Morse's private bathroom-a true luxury in 1860.

About the design

Designed and decorated by [Chevaughn Marie Designs](#)

Chevaughn Laverriere and Pauline Kacer

Mark Twain's heartwarming short story, *A Letter from Santa Claus*, is a touching note

written to his daughter Susy, disguised as a letter from Santa Claus himself. In it, Santa reassures the little girl that he's watching over her and promises to grant her Christmas wishes. The letter is filled with warmth, wit, and fatherly love, capturing the magic of Christmas from a child's perspective. Twain's playful yet tender tone not only highlights the wonder of childhood belief but also the deep bond between parent and child during the holiday season.

Inspired by the nostalgic magic of Mark Twain's letter, I am transforming the Library into a timeless Victorian Christmas scene, evoking the same sense of wonder a child feels on Christmas morning. The space is adorned with rich jewel tones of maroon, evergreen, and navy, accented with plaid notes that add warmth and texture. Hundreds of hanging letters cascade from the ceiling, representing the heartfelt wishes children write to Santa, creating a magical setting. An elegant Victorian Christmas tree, decorated with intricate ornaments, serves as the centerpiece, while antique toys enhance the cozy feel. The design transports you back in time, evoking a magical, nostalgic experience that makes you feel like a kid on Christmas once again.



PARLOR

PARLOR

About the room

As a formal space for entertaining, the Parlor expressed the cosmopolitan character and superior taste of the owners of the house. Focusing on the theme of romantic or seductive love, the presence of numerous cupids, putti, roses, and scallop shells bring this spirit to life. On the ceiling, scenes from *The Iliad* show Hera receiving the golden girdle from Aphrodite, then using it to seduce Zeus, to distract him from the Trojan War. Both paintings were removed in 2014 for conservation and only returned to the Mansion in 2021. This space is richly furnished with the original 1860 furniture suite designed for the room by Gustave Herter. On the far wall in the right-hand corner is a rectangle that appears darker than the rest of the surface around it. This is a control patch showing how the walls looked before the painstaking cleaning.

About the design

Designed and decorated by [Harmon's Floral Company](#)

Dan Kennedy and Jennifer Miller

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

The original name of this poem was *A Visit from St. Nicholas*. In 1823, a small newspaper in New York State published the poem anonymously. The author is widely credited to be Clement Clarke Moore, a writer, author, and real estate developer in New York City.

Soon the epic tale of Santa and his reindeer (the first poem to name the eight reindeer as we know them today!) sparked delight across America and around the world. Prior to this poem's publication, Christmas was a more subdued holiday, but these verses helped bring new celebration and whimsy to family traditions. Countless families would gather to recite the famous verses, delivering unimaginable Christmas spirit to generations.

As you enter the Parlor, imagine families gathered to enjoy this joyous poem as they still do, year after year.

We truly hope you enjoy our rendition of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

GIRLS ROOM



GIRLS ROOM

About the room

This room was used for many years as a staff office. It was opened to visitors in 2019 and interpreted as a housekeepers' office. However, further research into the Mansion servants has led to more questions than answers regarding this space. In the 1894 Morse inventory, the room was recorded as the "Girls Room" and contained bedroom furniture, crockery, a carpet, straw matting, and a hair mattress. The document does not specify who the girls were, but there is no housekeeper recorded as working here, and the term "girl" would never have been applied to someone in her station. Although maids and cooks might sometimes be referred to as girls, a "Servants Room" was clearly identified over the kitchen on the same inventory. It is possible that "girls" may have referred to the Morse nieces and that they used it as a bedroom when visiting, but at this point, there is no definitive answer.

About the design

Designed and decorated by [The Maine Irish Heritage Center](#)

Celtic oral traditions tell of the battle between

the Oak King, ruler of spring and summer, and the Holly King, ruler of fall and winter. Their battle was not a fight for territory or power, but rather a representation of the balance between the light and dark times of the year. During the Summer Solstice, the Holly King would prevail and the days would begin to shorten, but on the Winter Solstice, the Oak King's victory was marked by the returning light.

The Winter Solstice has always been a sacred time for people living in what is now Ireland. From the prehistoric builders who created the astronomical masterpiece at Newgrange, to the Celts sitting by the fire on a dark night telling stories of the kings' battle, these celebrations of light triumphing over darkness live on in winter traditions even to this day.

The Maine Irish Heritage Center is the hub of all things Irish in Maine and we are honored to share these traditional solstice stories. The Center is located in the former St. Dominic's Church, one block west of Victoria Mansion, at the corner of Gray and State Streets.

MANSSION INITIATIVES

Recent scholarship has led to the expansion of interpretation about some of the people who made Victoria Mansion possible. Through their stories we hope to better understand the times in which they lived, and its impact on our lives today.

The Unwilling Architects Initiative

While the Mansion was closed for the pandemic in 2020-2021, members of the Victoria Mansion docent corps took on research topics, including a project centered around the Morses' roles in the slave economy of New Orleans.

Their work, and the work of the staff, led to the formation of *The Unwilling Architects Initiative*.

This grant funded project is designed to research the lives of the 27 known enslaved individuals owned by Ruggles and Olive Morse. With the assistance of our DEI consultant Anisa Khadraoui and a SHARP Grant funded through the Maine Humanities Council, this ongoing research has begun to bring the lives of these individuals back into the story of Victoria Mansion, even though they never set foot on this property.

The Backstairs Lives Initiative


Beginning in the winter of 2021-2022, a handful of staff and volunteers began a deep dive into the lives of those who kept the Morse and Libby households running: the servants. While we previously knew a handful of names, there were always more questions than answers about the individuals who worked here.

Today, through extensive volunteer efforts, we know of at least 23 people who worked at the Mansion, and have discovered more about them as individuals from their descendants. In 2022 we received a gift of items from maid Hannah Shine's grandchildren. These are the first servant-related pieces to become part of our collection, and we are thrilled to continue to move forward on this project.

Want to know more? Click the title of each initiative or view materials about both of these initiatives in the Carriage House Museum Shop.

Nollaig Shona

Merry Christmas



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RED BEDROOM



RED BEDROOM

About the room

The Red Bedroom was likely used as a guest bedroom during the Morse era. When the Libby family occupied the house, this was a room for one of the daughters. The door on the far end of the room once led into a closet, which was turned into a bathroom by J.R. Libby to accommodate the needs of his much larger family. The bathroom connects to the Girls Room, which was also used as a bedroom by the Libbys. The basins and toilet set on and around the marble top double sink were decorated to match in France and were installed in 1860. Rosewood furniture in the room is the original set from the Herter workshop, with the exception of the bed, which did not belong to the Morses. Above the mantel hangs a posthumous memorial portrait of a Morse niece, who died at a young age.

About the design

Designed and decorated by [Saco Festival of Trees](#)

Theresa Ruel

In Gaelic mythology, the Cailleach is the symbolic embodiment of the old woman

of winter, the bringer of cold and darkness. The Gaelic witch is born every spring as a young maiden, and becomes the old woman of winter who dies at the end of the season, to be reborn again. She is the keeper of the forest and all the animals within. Traditionally, it was considered good luck to carve her face onto a log, or Nollig, and gather around to watch it burn in the fire on Christmas Eve. When the fire burned out, the festivities would start. This was believed to protect a family and ward off death in the coming year. Today that celebration has become the sharing of a Yule Log Cake commemorating the Cailleach. Another winter custom was the wearing of cow and sheep skins. The men of the family would wrap themselves in fur then dance and sing throughout the house and village, followed by drams of whiskey. This was also believed to bring protection for the entire family in the coming year. So, don't forget to have a dram of whiskey and leave a slice of cake out for the Cailleach this Christmas.

Past, Present, and Future is the theme of the *20th Annual Festival of Trees at the Saco Museum*. All activities are free of charge, thanks to generous sponsors. *The Festival of Trees* is open to the public from November 29th to December 30, 2024.

SITTING ROOM

A detailed photograph of a Victorian-style sitting room. The room features a high ceiling with intricate plasterwork and a large, ornate chandelier with multiple glass shades. A dark wood piano stands on the left, with a small stool in front of it. A large, ornate wooden table with a decorative base holds a teapot, cups, and a book. A window with wooden shutters is visible in the background, and a small statue sits on a side table. The floor is covered with a patterned rug.

SITTING ROOM

About the room

The Sitting Room was a private, feminine setting where Olive Morse and her nieces and friends could sew, read, play games, or sing around the piano. The walls, heavily veiled in the dust and grime of a century and a half, originally were brightly decorated in tones of grey, white, mauve, baby blue, and bright yellow. To the right of the door, the small silver handle operated the servant call bell system. The handle was attached to a wire that ran through the walls of the house to the kitchen, where it was attached to one of a row of bells. Each bell was identified by room so that servants could attend the family where needed.

About the design

Designed and decorated by Dan Gifford

For my 25th year as a Christmas designer at Victoria Mansion, I am presenting *Snegurochka, The Snow Maiden*. This is a version of a Russian folk tale about a girl named Snegurka who is made of snow. The tale was first published in 1869 by Alexander Afansyev. The story is about childless Russian peasants Ivan and Marya, who

made a snow doll that came to life. Snegurka grows up quickly and is invited by a group of girls for a walk in the woods. During the walk, they make a small fire and take turns leaping over it. When Snegurka's turn comes, she starts to jump but only gets halfway before evaporating into a small cloud.

In the Russian Empire, Snegurochka was part of Christmas celebrations in the form of figurines to decorate the fir tree and as a character in children's plays. She has acquired the role of the granddaughter of Ded Moroz or Old Man Frost, similar to our Santa Claus. She wears long silver-blue robes and a snowflake-like kokoshnik (a traditional Russian headdress). I hope everyone enjoys my representation of this folk tale.

It has been a pleasure to be a part of *Christmas at Victoria Mansion* for the past twenty-five years and witness the accomplishments of these fundraising seasons. During my time here, I have seen the restoration of the original stair carpet, tassels in the Smoking Room, hidden moths appearing around the bathtub, gasoliers gleaming like they first did, plaster ceilings that truly fool the eye to look like wood, and the skylight crowning it all once again. I am excited about Victoria Mansion and the future of this very special architectural gem.



Want to share your love of Portland history with others?
Become a Portland History Docent!

The Portland History Docent Program (PHD) is a collaborative effort by local historic sites to provide an 11-week training program for new prospective volunteer guides. Learn from experts, make connections, and embark on site visits to Eastern Cemetery, Spring Point Ledge Light, Maine Narrow-Gauge Railroad, Evergreen Cemetery, Maine Historical Society, Maine Irish Heritage Center, Fifth Maine Regiment Museum, the Portland Observatory, Western Cemetery, Tate House, and Victoria Mansion.

Learn more and register for this year's program (February-May 2025) at portlandhistorydocents.org.



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on earth, good
will to all!*

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The image depicts a richly decorated Turkish smoking room. The walls are adorned with intricate geometric and floral patterns in red, green, and gold. A large, ornate chandelier with multiple white, perforated spherical shades hangs from the ceiling. In the foreground, a plush sofa and matching ottomans are covered in a patterned fabric with red, gold, and brown tones, featuring tassels along the edges. A window on the right is dressed with heavy, patterned curtains and a lace valance. The overall atmosphere is one of traditional elegance and luxury.

TURKISH SMOKING ROOM

TURKISH SMOKING ROOM

About the room

This may be the earliest smoking room to survive in a private home in America. Islamic-themed decoration was favored for these male enclaves because smoking was associated with the Near East, and Turkey was noted for its fine tobaccos. The painted walls include motifs inspired by the Alhambra, the 14th-century castle built by Moorish rulers in Spain. In 2007, the Turkish Smoking Room was the first interior of Victoria Mansion to be completely conserved and restored to its appearance of 1860. Disfiguring soot and dirt were cleaned from the walls, ceiling, and gilt gasolier. Augmented by faithful reproductions of the original silk and wool drapery and upholstery fabric and more than 80 hand-tied silk tassels, the original brilliance of the room shines once more.

About the design

Designed and decorated by Dawn Hachey

The Three Kings

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1878)

“Three Kings came riding from far away,

*Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.”*

So begins the story of three wise men who were drawn to the west by a star so beautiful, large, and clear. They knew it foretold the coming of a child who would become king of a kingdom, not human, but divine.

And so, the three kings have stopped on their journey to rest in the luxurious smoking room today. They laid their robes aside and removed three caskets from their saddle-bows, the precious gifts they will present to the new-born king at the end of their journey. After they rejuvenate, Melchior, Gaspar, and Baltasar will leave tonight and continue their journey by starlight on their divine quest.

Dawn Hachey is a friend of Victoria Mansion and takes great pleasure in decorating the jewel box that is the Turkish Smoking Room.



GREEN BEDROOM

GREEN BEDROOM

About the room

The walls of the Green Bedroom were painted over in the years after the Mansion became a museum, so that the original painted green damask pattern panels and surrounding ornamental framing are now obscured. Given the elaborate Dressing Room and Bathroom Suite attached to this room, this appears to have been the master bedroom for both Mr. and Mrs. Morse. Carved figures representing dawn and dusk embellish the marble mantel of the fireplace, a supreme example of stone carving in white Carrara marble. On the ceiling are representations of the four seasons (Spring is awaiting restoration and is not on view). While summer and autumn display the conventional attributes, Winter alludes to the Morses' New Orleans connection through the Mardi Gras mask and the magnolia in her hair.

About the design

Designed and decorated by

Sarah Coughlin Fine Art Studio loves a good mystery, and for the 2024 season we are delighted to bring *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, by Sir Arthur Conan

Doyle, to life. This Christmas tale, set in a London hotel in 1892, reveals the theft of a precious gemstone from a wealthy countess. Throughout the investigation, a plumber is framed, a goose is swapped, and a jewel returned. In the true spirit of Christmas, detective Sherlock Holmes releases the culprit. The goose was not so lucky.

The Countess's bedchamber in the Hotel Cosmopolitan is a fascinating snapshot of the lifestyle and accoutrements of a woman of her station in the 1800s. Take a peek before her servants return to collect her belongings. I cannot imagine that she intends to linger at the scene of the crime!

Quickly - we have but a moment to step into 221 B Baker Street, before Mr. Holmes returns from the Countess of Morcar's hotel suite. He is very particular about his space, as you well know, but we can easily deduce that he's solved the case. That investigation board is the work of a true master - look at the connections between the suspects. Remember not to touch anything! He'll certainly notice if you try on Baker's hat! Even Dr. Watson will notice if we move the feathers off the gem. Pay no mind to Gladstone, Watson's faithful pup. What's that? You want to hold the gem? You belong in Bedlam, sir. Don't even breathe on it -

it looks as priceless as the Queen’s tiara.
Whoever would’ve thought that plump little
Christmas goose could conceal such a thing?

The studio offers heartfelt gratitude to The
Schoolhouse Arts Center, Nancy and Jim
Ames, and Victoria Mansion’s own Bob
Parker, Linda Levesque, and Kaye McDevitt.
Last but not least, thank you to the Art
Colony for their continued enthusiasm,
support, and hilarity in all things.



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BECOME A MEMBER



Today, Victoria Mansion is one of Portland's most beloved landmarks, but it almost wasn't so. In 1940, the house was slated for demolition.

Through the leadership of Dr. William Holmes, a group came together to preserve this museum for future generations.

Our Members are still the backbone for all that we do at the Mansion. Being a member of Victoria Mansion brings you closer to the museum and allows you to enjoy the opportunities and access being a Member of the Mansion affords. All Members enjoy a year's worth of free admission, a range of discounts, and advance notice of special events (many exclusive to Members). With a variety of membership levels, you're sure to find the group that's right for you.

Ready to learn more or join us? Ask about membership at our Carriage House Museum Shop or visit our [membership](#) page.

[MENU](#)



ELL PORCH

The original Ell Porch succumbed to deterioration in the early 20th century and was removed by 1940. What exists today is a painstakingly researched and detailed reproduction of the original design rendered, as originally, in sand-painted wood mimicking the brownstone of the main house.

The Docent Committee of Victoria Mansion graciously gave their time and energy to decorate the Ell Porch.

Interested in becoming a docent? Please contact Staci Hanscom at shanscom@victoriamansion.org for more information.

[MENU](#)

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CARRIAGE HOUSE

The Carriage House is contemporaneous with the Mansion and originally held the Morses' horses and carriages and then the Libby's automobiles. Upstairs was an apartment for use by a coachman/chauffeur. While the exterior remains true to its appearance of 1860, including the scored stucco in imitation of brownstone ashlar blocks (as would have also been on the rear ell of the Mansion), the interior now houses the Museum Shop and a handicapped-accessible restroom on the first floor and meeting space and offices on the second floor.

CARRIAGE HOUSE MUSEUM SHOP

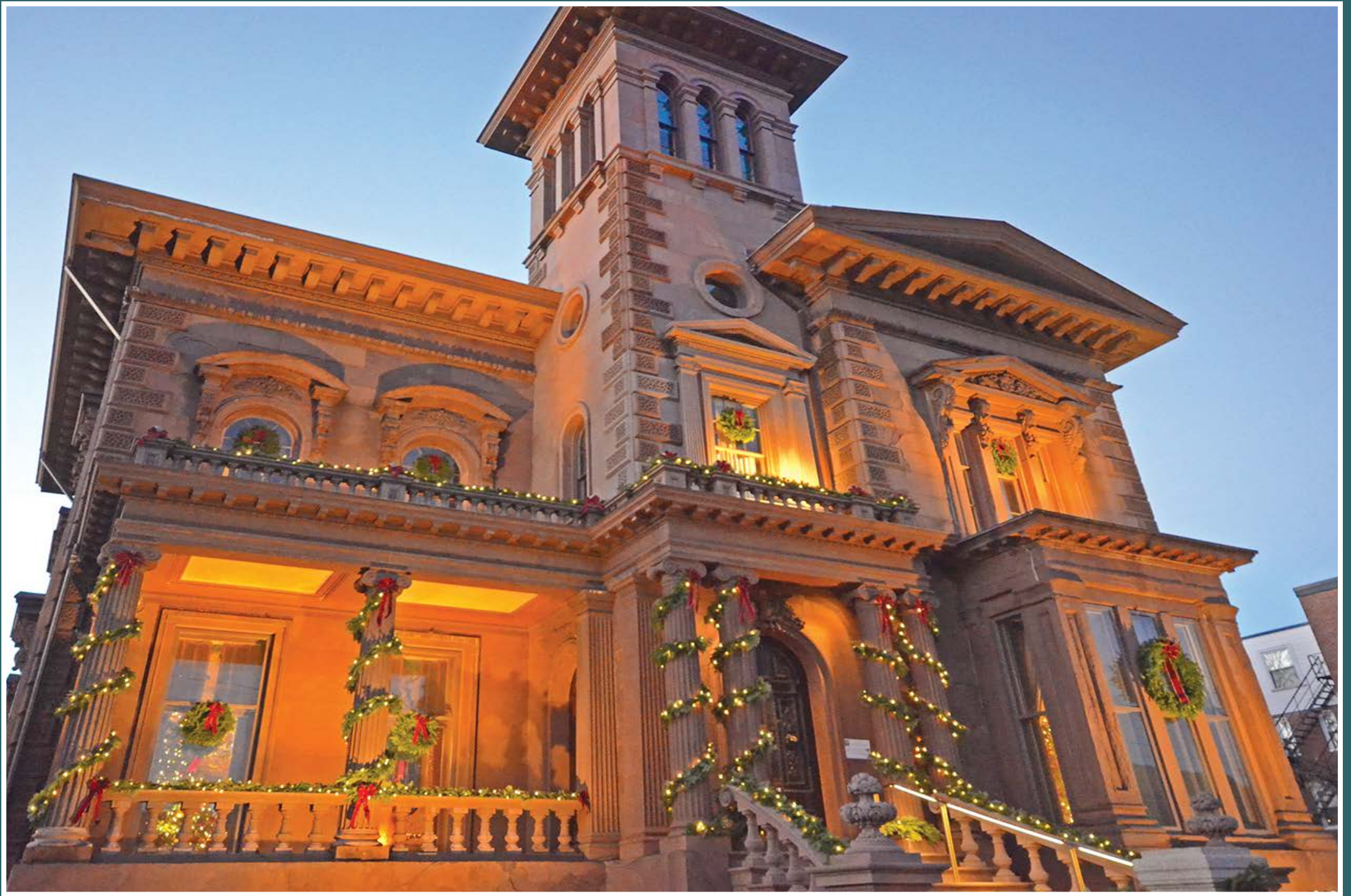
The Carriage House Museum Shop features Victorian style gifts, home décor, cards, jewelry, decorations, and toys you simply cannot find anywhere else. Browse our impressive selection of Christmas gifts and ornaments!

The Carriage House Museum Shop is open during regular Mansion hours.

Closed Christmas Day & New Year's Day



EVENTS



November 29

Open for the Season 10am

December 5

Holiday Gala 2024

5 -9:00pm

December 8 & 15

Night of the Nutcracker

with Portland Ballet

5:15 & 6:15pm performances

December 11

Ruffi Stuffie Sleepover

4:30pm

SOLD OUT

SOLD OUT

December 19

A Magical Dickensian Celebration

with Andrew Harris

5:00-6:30pm

Every Monday in December

Stories on the Staircase

10am-11am

January 4

Ring in the New

with Andrew Harris as Charles Dickens

5:00pm & 6:30pm performances



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DYER LIBRARY * SACO MUSEUM

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OF TREES

November 23 — December 29, 2024

The Festival of Trees, held annually at the Saco Museum, is a beloved holiday tradition for the community.

Now in it's 20th year, volunteers work tirelessly to transform our galleries into a enchanted, sparkling wonderland of beautifully decorated trees, each with its own special theme.

371 Main Street, Saco (207) 283-3861

sacomuseum.org



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SUPPORT THE MANSION



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.

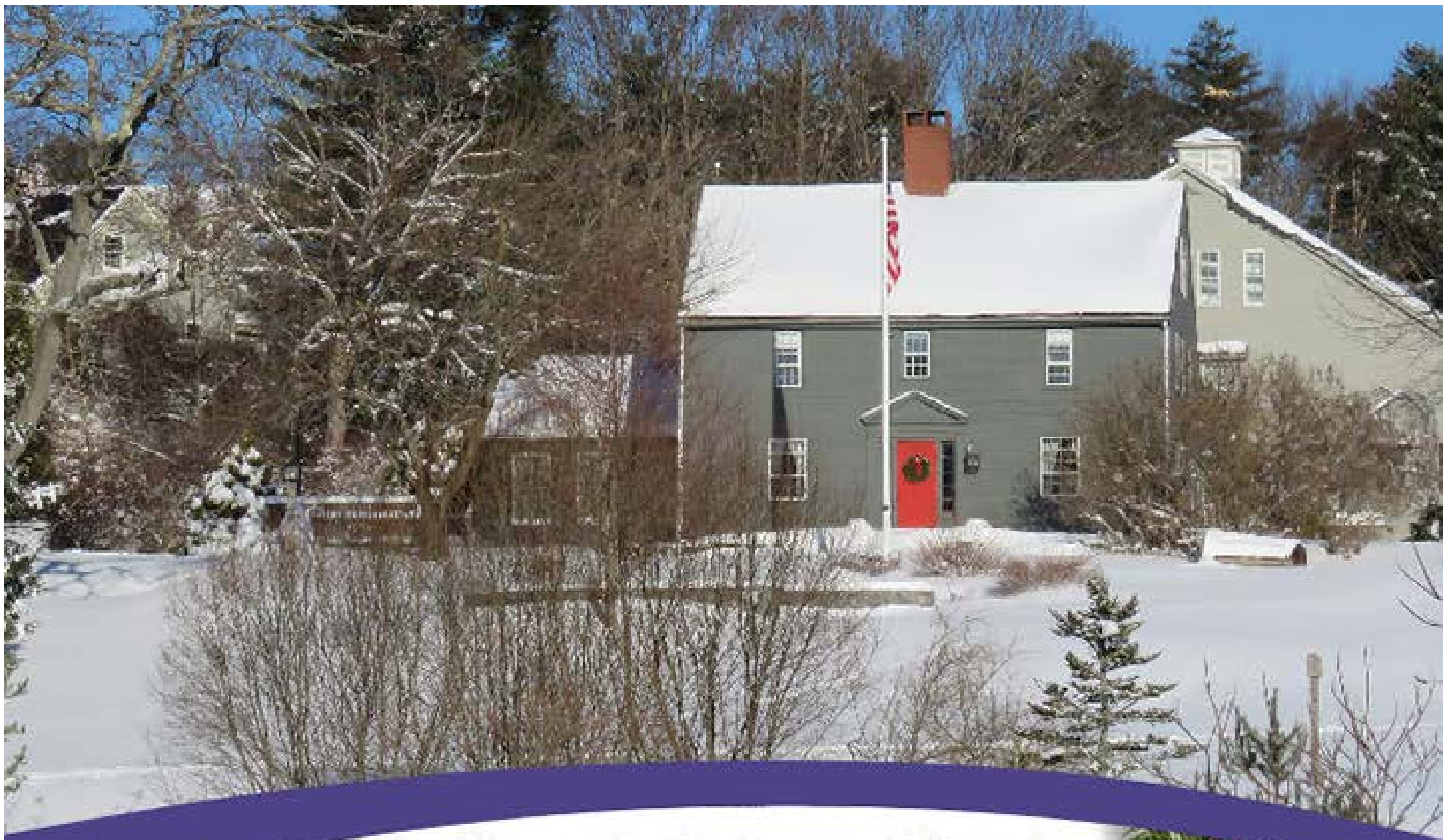
The work of preserving this unique building and its precious interiors is never finished and requires each successive generation to take up the cause. We cannot move forward without support from loyal friends like you and we are most grateful for your ongoing support.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Victoria Mansion thanks this year's florists, artists, and designers for their very generous donation of time, materials, and imagination:

Danny R. Hatt, Don Chouinard, & Marcedas Hatt-O'Toole
and the rest of the Emerald City Crew

Harmon's Floral Company

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Theresa Ruel - Saco Festival of Trees Design Committee

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*And a very special thank you to our docent corps for
making our holiday season a success!*

CHRISTMAS AT
VICTORIA MANSION

Thank you for visiting!



[MENU](#)