Our 300th Anniversary was a resounding success ... and if you couldn’t join us, here’s a brief recap

Over 100 registrants enjoyed a three-day immersion in Weeks family genealogy, Portsmouth area history, and social events at the Weeks Brick House & Gardens Tercentennial Aug. 6-8, 2010 in Greenland, N.H. The event drew Weeks descendants from as far west as California and as far south as Brazil to enjoy soaking up the atmosphere at the original Leonard Weeks family farmstead.

The weekend began on Friday with a Wine & Cheese Welcome Social in our acclaimed gardens – the picture-perfect setting for folks to get acquainted with cousins they never knew they had.

Saturday was buzzing with activity, as attendees chose from a menu of options: house tours, nature walks on the trails, walking tours of Portsmouth, consultations with Weeks family genealogy guru Rev. Frank Weeks, consultations with Master Gardener Leslie Stevens, a presentation on the local 17th- & 18th-century economy, a tour of the Warner House in Portsmouth, and a tour of a replica of a Great Bay gundalow. Saturday concluded with a New England lobster bake at picturesque Four-gundalow.

Sunday got off to a rousing start, with the high-spirited Rev. Frank Weeks leading the early arrivals in song. This was followed by an educational presentation by Brinson Weeks about the use of DNA analysis in genealogy research. House tours and garden tours were also featured on Sunday, before attendees departed for the nearby Great Bay Discovery Center for lunch, a business meeting, and the featured afternoon speaker, David Burdick, Ph.D., a scientist specializing in the ecosystems of tidal marshes like those in the Great Bay region.

A new look and focus for WBH&G newsletter

This issue of our newsletter introduces a new look – and a slightly expanded focus.

In an effort to elevate the profile of the organization, the new publication aims to include a bit of research-based content along with the news members have come to expect. Copies will be distributed to selected history and genealogy libraries.

Your volunteer editor is R.W. Bacon, a Weeks descendant, longtime publication editor/designer, and museum professional. Comments, complaints, suggestions, articles, bouquets, and brickbats may be sent to rwbacon@comcast.net.

From the Great Bay Discovery Center, Tercentennial attendees departed for distant home-ports well-fed, well-informed, and well-stimulated after a full weekend of celebrating the 300 years of the Weeks Brick House and farmstead. Thanks to all who attended – certainly if you have any questions about the house, farmstead, or local/family history, don’t hesitate to contact us. Plan now to join us for next year’s annual meeting – you really don’t have to wait till the 400th!

It was a season of events at the Weeks Brick House

Our 300th anniversary celebration drew the deserved attention from members in 2010, but it was our unprecedented full slate of events that very likely drew more visitors to the farmstead this season than ever before.

• In May, the Winnicut River Watershed Council held its annual meeting and informational open house on the grounds.
• In June, our gardens were included on the two-day Portsmouth Pocket Garden Tour. Also in June was a session of Dr. Neill DePaoli’s Archaeological Field School.
• In July, the WBH grounds hosted an Antique Tractor Show as part of the town’s Greenland Day celebration.
• In August, the farmstead hosted the 300th birthday of the brick house.
• In September, offsite, Master Gardener Leslie Stevens was the guest speaker at the meeting of the N.H. chapter of the Herb Society of America.

The 2010 season will be a challenge to match in the future, but with your volunteer help and financial support, we can continue to increase the public profile of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens.
From the President:

**Both membership & community involvement critical to our future, says new WBH president**

By Thomas Ayres
President, WBH Board of Directors

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who joined us to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Weeks Brick House. This truly historic occasion resulted in more than 100 registrants enjoying a perfect weekend in Greenland and Portsmouth for numerous events.

As I mentioned at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, the members of our fine organization are critical to sustaining the Weeks Brick House. Within this newsletter (on page 5), you’ll find our annual renewal membership form. We would very much appreciate you completing it and returning it promptly. Additionally, we have a separate Chimney Fund established, as we prepare to meet this expense (approximately $11,500) next year.

We’ve had a number of organizations (e.g., Winnicut River Watershed Coalition, Great Bay Community College archaeological dig) use our grounds, as we partner with local community groups. Leslie Stevens, our Master Gardener, gives talks to various groups, and in doing so, promotes the Weeks Brick House with our flyers and the sale of Kitty Weeks gardening books. We plan to continue our outreach to the local community.

Our gift shop has many Weeks Brick House articles for sale, including a few left from the 300th Celebration. Please feel free to contact us more details.

I’m looking forward to working in the next year with the membership and with the community, as we develop additional plans to make our historic brick house and grounds an attractive destination.

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**Treasurer’s Report:**

**Chimney & roof costs ensure preservation ... and strain our finances**

By Adele Wick, WBH Treasurer

With income on investments negligible, the Weeks Brick House relies heavily on dues, donations, and rent for basic survival. In the last few years, we have sent out newsletters to more than 300 recipients and received dues and donations from a little over 100, some giving up to three times a year. Members keep our organization alive and our spirits high.

Expenses have bounced all over the place. The Weeks Brick House is now 300 years old, and, just as with humans, house health and maintenance expenses increase with age. Since 2004, “illnesses” have mostly been furnace issues and fixing up with age. Since 2004, “illnesses” have mostly been furnace issues and fixing up with age. Since 2004, “illnesses” have mostly been furnace issues and fixing up between tenants. A total of $16,059.00 of 2007’s high expenses, for example, went to cleaning and fixing up between tenants.

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By R. W. Bacon, Editor

At the business meeting on the final day of our Tercentennial, members elected Thomas D. Ayres of Canton, Conn. and Jensen Beach, Fla., as the new president of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens board of directors.

Ayres, a Weeks descendant who is retired from a corporate career in the insurance field, succeeds outgoing president Amanda Nelson, a museum professional who led the board since 2005 before making plans to begin law school this fall. Nelson’s expertise remains an asset, however, as she will continue to serve on the board.

Our newest president, a native of Shaker Heights, Ohio, graduated from Miami University (1966), served in the U.S. Army Reserves, and followed an insurance management career that brought him to central Connecticut.

Ayres’ interest in genealogy began when he was a teenager, and since then he has contributed research and volunteer time to numerous museums and historical societies in Ohio, Connecticut, and Florida.

What follows are excerpts from a brief interview with Tom Ayres:

**WBH News:** When did you first visit the Weeks Brick House? And how long have you been a member?

**T.A.:** My wife, son, and I attended an annual meeting in the early 1990s, when the attendance was well over 100. We are box lunches while sitting on the grass in front of the house. I first joined in 1978, and still have the membership card.

**WBH News:** How do you hope to use your corporate experience to enhance the Weeks Brick House?

**T.A.:** I’d like to use my corporate experience to enhance the Weeks Brick House. This truly historic occasion resulted in more than 100 registrants enjoying a perfect weekend in Greenland and Portsmouth for numerous events.

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**Six Years of Weeks Brick House & Gardens Income & Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Net</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>$19,976</td>
<td>$18,453</td>
<td>$1,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$20,337*</td>
<td>$25,129</td>
<td>(4,792)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$24,120</td>
<td>$16,470</td>
<td>7,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$30,890**</td>
<td>40,890</td>
<td>(10,000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$29,677**</td>
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<td>7,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$29,393**</td>
<td>16,349</td>
<td>13,044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total includes an insurance payment of $4,177 for furnace issues.
** Total includes $6000 from a private foundation; its $18,000 commitment is now met.

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www.WeeksBrickHouse.org
Collections News:

**Weeks descendant and first-time WBH visitor donates an information-packed family Bible**

By R.W. Bacon

Your editor was pleased to meet John and Jean Burnquist of Canton, Ohio, at our Tercentennial wine & cheese welcome social. The Weeks descendant, along with his wife, was making his first pilgrimage to the Leonard Weeks farmstead. His more recent family roots are in the Midwest. The surprise news was that he was bearing a weighty gift to add to the Weeks Brick House collection, a long-held family Bible filled with genealogical information that traces the family’s move from Vermont to Wisconsin in the mid-19th century. The Burnquists’ wish is that the information be made available to interested descendants.

The genealogical information in the Bible extends just a few generations, to Jonathan Weeks (1794-1836), born in Lyndon, Vt. Cursory study suggests a descent from John Weeks (1702-1763, b. Greenland, N.H.), third son of Samuel Weeks (1670-1746).

Saved within the pages of the Bible are numerous newspaper clippings about family activities in Wisconsin in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Bible is now in secure, climate-controlled storage in the Weeks Brick House collections room. Contact the Weeks Brick House if you believe the information on this family is relevant to your genealogical research.

**More collections news.** Soon after the Tercentennial in August, work began in earnest to move the Weeks Brick House office and archives from its tiny over stuffed quarters to a larger room just across the hall. Our collections intern, Nicola Astles, a graduate student at the University of New Hampshire, began work on the larger workspace will greatly improve the process.

Moving the archives has already resulted in the “rediscovery” of some long-held artifacts, and selected items from the WBH collection will be featured in future issues of News of the Weeks Brick House.

2010 Garden Report:

**Gardens increase our public profile during 2010 growing season**

By Leslie Stevens, Master Gardener

With another growing season at the Weeks Brick House gardens coming to a close, here are some highlights:

We hosted several events this summer, including the Portsmouth Pocket Garden Tour and the Tercentennial wine & cheese social, and enjoyed a bountiful vegetable harvest and beautiful herbs.

The summer in the gardens was very busy and we had many visitors. The summer kicked off in June with our inclusion in the annual garden tour presented by the South Church in Portsmouth. Over the course of two days the gardens had over 150 visitors. We were thrilled and honored to be included. We made many new friends, and many people from Greenland came for the first time to see the house and gardens.

In July we participated in Greenland Day, and this year we featured antique tractors at the Weeks Brick House. Visitors also walked through the gardens, guided by our new garden plot plan that not only indicates the location of plants, but also describes the uses of the various herbs. This map can be found at the entrance to the garden in a weatherproof box, as well as on our web site.

Another major event this summer was our Tercentennial celebration in August. The event began with a lovely wine & cheese welcome social in the garden on Friday night. It was a perfect night, and a nice way to kick off the event with a meet-and-greet. Saturday saw many more visitors to the gardens and lots of tours and discussions. One of the youngest visitors asked so many questions he ended up getting his own private tour. Many were intrigued by our use of only heirloom vegetables, and they enjoyed trying a purple pole bean or two.

It has been an excellent year for tomatoes, and to date I have taken several boxes of tomatoes and squash to the food pantry in Portsmouth. I will deliver another several boxes to the pantry in Greenland. We still have green peppers, basil, Brussels sprouts, parsnips, winter squash, and zucchini growing in the garden.

The season draws to a close with a presentation to the Northeast Chapter of the Herb Society of America on September 21 about the restoration of our herb gardens over the last two years. Thanks to everyone for their support and help with the gardens this year. We had a great season, and look forward to some down-time this winter to plan for next year’s gardens.

Volunteer Service Opportunity!

**HELP WANTED**

We need a Treasurer!

The Weeks Brick House seeks a volunteer “Treasurer-in-Training” to take over next year for our retiring treasurer. Responsibilities include paying bills, depositing checks, acknowledging donations, keeping records in standard format, and filing accurate and timely annual reports. Local residence is desirable but not necessary.

Contact the Weeks Brick House & Gardens, P.O. Box 93, Greenland, NH 03840, 603-436-8147; weeksbrickhouse@aol.com.
A Notable Cousin:
‘Old school’ quarterback Harrison Weeks led U. of Michigan to two undefeated seasons and a victory in the 1902 Rose Bowl

By R.W. Bacon

As we move into the middle of the college football season, it’s the ideal time to remember a Weeks family cousin who made an impact on the gridiron in the early years of the 20th century, Harrison “Boss” Weeks (1879-1906).

Harrison Weeks was the quarterback of University of Michigan’s legendary “point-a-minute” teams under coach Fielding Yost in 1901 and 1902 – several years before the advent of the forward pass. Weeks was chosen to implement the coach’s new fast-paced offense, in which plays were often called “in the pile” of the previous play instead of in the huddle. Young Harrison apparently earned the nickname “Boss” in high school for his leadership skills.

“Boss” Weeks led Michigan to 11-0 seasons in both 1901 and 1902. The 1901 team outscored its opposition 550-0. The 1902 team scored 644 points, but gave up 12 points in 11 games. In the first Rose Bowl played in Pasadena, Calif. on Jan. 1, 1902, Michigan defeated Stanford 49-0.

Coach Fielding Yost later reflected on the seasons: “Weeks was the leader without reproach. ... Had he told the team to charge a stone wall, it would have done so.” Following graduation, Harrison Weeks was hired as coach at the University of Kansas for the 1903 season, where he posted a record of 6-3 before moving on to coach at Beloit College in Wisconsin. He died in a Washington, D.C. hospital in 1906 at age 27, after contracting diphtheria.

Harrison S. “Boss” Weeks was one of nine children born into a military family at various postings in the West. His father, also named Harrison S. Weeks (1845-1892, b. Allegan, Mich.), was a West Point graduate and son of Alanson S. Weeks (1812-1880, b. Wheelock, Vt.). Alanson Weeks headed west in 1834, and settled in Allegan, Mich.

Space precludes listing earlier generations of the family, which descends from Capt. Joshua Weeks (1674-1758, 3rd son of Leonard Weeks), who made his home in the “Bayside” area of Greenland, N.H.

Five sons of Harrison Weeks, Sr. played football for Michigan, another son wrote the school’s fight song, and two daughters were also accomplished athletes. The family history is not forgotten – a family reunion last year prompted a feature article in the Allegan (Mich.) County News that mentioned the Leonard Weeks farmstead.

Sources
(Editor’s note: During a rare lull in the action at the Tercentennial in August, your editor had the pleasure of chatting with longtime WBH member Rev. Frank Weeks of Cranston, R.I., about the early years of the organization, the struggle to grow the membership, and the successful efforts to save the farmstead from development. The subject of “commitment” kept bubbling up in our conversation. A few weeks later I asked Rev. Frank if he would share his thoughts with the entire membership. The very next day he sent me the paragraphs below.)

By Rev. Frank Weeks

I was searching the many boxes of Weeks Stuff and came across an article dated April 20, 1976 printed in the Daily Evening Item, Lynn, Mass. The headline: “Weeks mortgage has become cause for 2400 cousins.”

It goes on to describe the house in detail, and how, for the efforts of a local farmer, Newt Weeks, it might well have been turned into a restaurant. Joining him in his effort to save the house was a host of Weeks family members from various branches of the children of Leonard. They came from all walks of life, including farmers, silver manufacturers, stockbrokers, ice cream dealers, and descendants of two U.S. cabinet members.

They located 2400 Weeks descendants of Leonard, and many rallied to make a commitment to purchasing the property.

This group of men and women had vision, and they were ready and willing to make sacrifice to obtain their goal. Most of that group has passed from us. Some, having reached the “Golden Age,” are limited in what they can do, but still faithfully share their resources, and still with goals in mind, persevere to reach them.

They have passed their mantle on to each of us. We too, must rally to make a like commitment to family. Can anyone of us look at this house and not capture a vision of the Weeks families that once called it home? Can we escape the urge to commit ourselves to preserve so rich a heritage?

What were your thoughts as you came away from our 300th anniversary? I am reminded of the story of the circuit preacher who, with his teenage son, arrived on Sunday to preach.

A deacon greeted them and went on to explain, “We don’t take an offering; people are invited to contribute by putting money in this box. When the service is over whatever is in the box is your pay.” The preacher reached in his pocket and placed a dollar in the box.

When the service was over, he opened the box. Yes, there was his dollar. His son looked at him and said, “If you put more in, you’d get more out.”

Enough said, and summed up in commitment.

Calling all history buffs, old house enthusiasts, … and Weeks descendants: Join us! We need all of you!

Did you know that the Weeks Brick House … is more than just a house?

• Over 30 acres of conservation land laced with marked hiking trails.
• A reproduction Colonial-era herb garden designed by noted author & garden historian Anne Leighton.
• A historic 17th-century farmstead at the gateway to the Town Landing, integral to the town’s early growth.

And of course, one of the earliest brick houses in New England!

Remember, you don’t have to be a descendant to be a member! We need you … to hike the trails … to work in the gardens … to tour the house and enjoy the farmstead’s history.

Fill out the form below, and send it with your payment. Your commitment supports preservation efforts, and you’ll get our informative newsletter. Then we’ll see you at WBH!

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Weeks Brick House & Gardens Membership Form
(For Renewals and New Membership)

Name:_________________________________________________________

Address:________________________________________________________________________

City/Town:_________________________ State:________ Zip:________

Phone:_________________________ E-mail:_________________________

Please indicate your preference:
Do you prefer e-mail newsletters?  Y  N  Do you wish to be listed in any future member directory?  Y  N

Please return this form with payment to: Weeks Brick House & Gardens, P.O. Box 93, Greenland, NH 03840. Thank You!

Make check payable in U.S. currency to “Weeks Brick House.” All gifts are tax deductible. Thank You!

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Membership Dues Categories:

☐ $15 Student/Senior
☐ $25 Individual  ☐ $50 Family
☐ $100 Contributing
☐ $250 Sustaining  ☐ $500 Leader
☐ $_______ to the Chimney Fund
☐ $_______ to the Garden Fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $_________
Meet Tom Ayres ...

T.A.: I’ve worked for insurance companies for more than 30 years. As a manager, I was responsible for running efficient meetings, organizing projects to meet target dates, and supervising people to accomplish specified goals. If I can apply some of these skills to the critical activities of the WBH over the next year, I’ll consider myself successful. However, it will take more than a board of directors to accomplish our goals, as we need active volunteer services of other members of the organization.

WBH News: The Weeks Brick House has limited funds, a working board, and no staff, yet has managed to secure the building from the elements, rejuvenate the gardens, and welcome the public to our walking trails. Beyond sustaining current activities, do you have particular goals for WBH that you would like to work toward?

T.A.: We need to increase our membership by offering interesting activities. I think we need to develop more partnerships with the greater Greenland/Portsmouth community. Because of our relatively isolated location, we need to get more “boots on our grounds” to advertise our existence. Perhaps community gardens, an historic brick kiln, etc., would attract more people to our premises and increase membership.

WBH News: You have pursued genealogy as a hobby for 50 years, and the early Weeks family in Greenland counts among your ancestors. Who was your most recent Weeks family ancestor?

T.A.: My most recent Weeks ancestor was Martha Weeks, who was born in the brick house in 1744, a daughter of Walter and granddaughter of Samuel Weeks. Martha married Joseph Doe in 1767, at Greenland. Their grandson was Charles C. Doe, who became Chief Justice of the New Hampshire Supreme Court in 1876. Judge Doe was my great-grandfather.

WBH News: Apart from the Weeks family, what has been the focus of most of your research over the years?

T.A.: I’ve researched all branches of my family tree and maintain contact with descendants of the following lines: Ayres, Doe, Dunmore, Haven and Lockwood.

WBH News: Finally, when not doing WBH business, volunteering in a museum, or transcribing cemetery records, what do you like to do?!

T.A.: I walk my springer spaniel daily, and if he’s lucky, it includes a swim in the river, or the ocean, when we’re in Florida. I also serve on the Sand Dollar Shores Condominium Association board, so this keeps me busy during our six months at Jensen Beach. I try to devote afternoons to reading biographies and history books.

Treasurer’s Report ...

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www.WeeksBrickHouse.org