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Weeks Brick House finally joins the 21st century with new online membership renewal option

In response to the growing public desire for online payment options, the Weeks Brick House website can now accept online membership renewals and donations via PayPal. Be assured, however, that membership renewals and additional donations paid by checks that arrive by postal mail are still valued and warmly accepted. To renew membership online, go to our website, www.WeeksBrickHouse.org, and visit the Membership page for details.

Weeks Brick House Annual Meeting draws a crowd from near and far

First it’s the wine & cheese, then we’re ‘Dazed by Weeks’

The annual meeting of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens drew Weeks descendants and friends old and new to the ancestral 1710 brick house and 1656 family farmstead on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 10 & 11, 2016. Board members welcomed first-time visitors from half-way across the continent as well as from across the street.

By mere coincidence, this turned into a special meeting: Our tenants had vacated just a few weeks before, therefore all parts of the house were completely accessible for comprehensive tours, and the downstairs great room and living room were available for our gift shop, silent auction, featured speaker presentation, annual meeting, and Sunday luncheon. (Editor’s note: A few weeks after the annual meeting, we did secure a rent-paying tenant for the Weeks Brick House.)

Festivities began Saturday at 1 p.m., and early arrivals enjoyed tours of the house, grounds, gardens, and walking trails. At the house in the great room, the silent auction goodies were spread out to entice eager bidders. From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., attendees enjoyed wine and cheese in the gardens, and at the conclusion either celebrated the results of the silent auction fund-raiser. From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., attendees enjoyed wine and cheese in the gardens, and at the conclusion either celebrated the results of the silent auction fund-raiser.

Once again this year, our silent auction fund-raiser was masterfully coordinated by board member Cathy Wescott. The Weeks Brick House thanks the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org, and the following donors of the featured auction items: Old Sturbridge Village, the Boston Red Sox, the Dominic White Studio, Disney World, Chipotle, weeksbrickhouse.org.
President’s Report: A quiet year is good, but let’s make noise about membership

By Tom Ayres, President
Weeks Brick House & Gardens

This past year has been a relatively quiet year at the Weeks Brick House & Gardens. Our tenants moved out on August 1, so we are in the process of seeking new tenants, which is critical to our income covering the house and grounds routine expenses.

(EDITOR’S NOTE: We now have a new tenant.)

Cynthia Smith continues to provide her critical role as treasurer, in addition to being our primary contact with tenants, and she handles many of our routine maintenance needs. We all owe her a tremendous “thank you for a job well done” for her dedication to our organization.

Steve Pike continues to provide his usual fine job of managing the maintenance of the house, grounds, and trails. His spring report earlier this year provided a detailed work plan for our annual spring clean-up on of the grounds and trails on May 11. Thanks to Steve Pike and Skip Weeks, their trucks, and power tools, we are able keep the grounds in reasonably good condition.

After our tenants moved out, a second clean-up day, on August 16, was necessary to prepare the property for our Annual Meeting and new tenants. Thank you Amanda, Cynthia, Reg, Steve, and Skip!

Unfortunately, we have only a few members on our board of directors to handle these “sweat equity” jobs. It would be most helpful if some more volunteers assisted with these activities.

Reg Bacon continues his excellent work on the Weeks Brick House & Gardens newsletter as well as on our website. He is also our Historic New England point person.

Amanda Nelson continues to provide legal advice, as needed, and has spent many hours helping maintain the grounds. She and Cynthia have adopted our historic gardens, which is a major project by itself.

Cathy Wescott assumed primary responsibility for our Facebook page, including many updates, which increased our number of fans by 74%. She managed our silent auction last year, and it raised $1,472, which added significantly to our chimney fund. At present, we have a chimney that needs approximately $12,000 of restoration work, which we have delayed for the past few years due to lack of money.

Mary Groebner continues to provide her usual fine work in handling our many administrative responsibilities. If you enjoyed the wine & cheese party yesterday and the lunch today, you may wish to thank Mary, Cynthia, and Amanda for another job well done.

Cynthia and I met with our insurance agent, Judy Howard of People’s United Insurance Agency to review our Hanover Insurance Co. contract on the Weeks Brick House and grounds. This resulted in only a minor classification category change on our conservation land. We also reviewed our directors & officers policy. Both policies are appropriate for our exposures.

Rev. Frank Weeks, our genealogist, has published an updated 2016 edition of his Descendants of Leonard Weeks 1636-2016. This two-volume genealogy masterwork is packed with 43 photos and many historical notes among 1,118 pages. The cost is $175.00 plus shipping. To order, please contact Rev. Frank Weeks via e-mail at fhweeks@cox.net.

Our biggest challenge continues to be our declining membership. We now have 53 members – down from 55 last year. Members that support our organization are absolutely critical to the proper funding of the ongoing costs of maintaining our 306 year old brick house.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas D. Ayres
Weeks Brick House History: William Weeks I (1743-1813) & family

By R.W. Bacon

The first-time visitor to the Weeks Brick House & Gardens website strikes gold in its family history content. There is plenty of information about Leonard Weeks (1670-1746), builder of the brick house. This content is paraphrased from 3½ Centuries in Greenland: The Weeks Brick House Farm of Greenland, N.H. by Neill DePaoli, Ph.D. The content is second in a series that details later periods of ownership of the Weeks Brick House. This article introduces a great-grandson of Leonard Weeks, William Weeks I (1743-1813). The content is framed from Tracking the Weeks Family: Three Generations, a website, still available for purchase at the “Donate & Shop” page of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens website, www.WeeksBrickHouse.org. (1)

In 1773, Walter Weeks (1706-1774) willed most of his farm, including half of the brick house and barn, to his son, William. William was then a 40-year-old farmer, married to his wife, Elizabeth, and the father of the first three of seven children. The home was multi-generational, typical at the time. William’s mother, Comfort (Weeks) Weeks, widowed in 1774, lived in the brick house until her death in 1786.

When William Weeks took ownership, the American colonies were on the verge of declaring independence from England. Greenland supported the rebellion, and the town voted repeatedly from 1775 to 1783 to raise enlistment bounties and to provide supplies for troops. Support was not unanimous, however. There is no proof that William Weeks served in any capacity during the Revolutionary War.

Most of Greenland’s water-powered mills were on the Winnicut River at its junction with Portsmouth Avenue. In 1756 a tide mill was built on the Winnicut River just north of Greenland’s town landing, almost within sight of the brick house. William Weeks maintained much of what was passed to him by his father (Walter), grandfather (Samuel), and great-grandfather (Leonard). The brick house was still the focal point, but it was over 60-years-old and showing signs of age.

Evidence indicates that William Weeks was a successful farmer. At his death in 1813, his estate was worth $6,235. This included the house; the 100-acre farmstead; and two horses, three pigs, four oxen, 13 cows, 24 sheep, tools, and household goods. The above-average size of William Weeks’ herd of sheep indicates that he kept these animals for household consumption as well as for commercial use (i.e. wool).

As for crops, William Weeks grew the basics, as with earlier generations. He raised hay for livestock – five tons were on hand in his barn at his decease. William also grew corn, wheat, and flax. The last crop was indicated by flax seed, “two flax brakes,” and a flax comb. The presence of twelve yards of “homsipun Mill’d Cloth” suggests that William raised flax, in part, for home-based textile production. Apparently apple cider was still in production in 1813, evidenced by four “barrels of cyder” and a number of “Barrels, Hogsheads, kegs, trunnels” in the cellar of the brick house.

The house appeared to have two kitchens, one in the main house and a second in the ell. Items included ladles, skimmers, pots, kettles, frying pans, baking pans, sieves, bread troughs, a gridiron, and two lignum vitae mortars. Fire-tending tools included tongs and kitchen shovels.

The inventory also contained evidence of unlikely luxury for a colonial-era New Hampshire farm family: Three glass decanters, a “Japan Canister,” several porcelain “Tea Cannisters,” silver spoons, three wall mirrors, “and a clock worth $35.00.” Further upsetting the rustic farmer stereotype, William owned “Sundry Books & pamphlets” worth $3.00.

Upon the death of William Weeks I in 1813, the brick house and farmstead passed to his son, William Weeks II (1779-1849).

Children of William Weeks I (1743-1813) and Elizabeth (Hubbard) Weeks (1743-1829) (Always verify!):

(1) Joseph Weeks (1777-1853)
(2) Comfort Weeks (?-?)
(3) Walter Weeks (1769-1851)
(4) Elizabeth Weeks (1773-1798)
(5) William Weeks II (1779-1849)
(6) Joshua Weeks (1783-1872)
(7) Benjamin Weeks (1788-1860)


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Weeks Brick House & Gardens Membership Form

(Use this same handy form for annual renewals or for new membership!)

Name: ____________________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________
City/Town: __________________________ State: _____ Zip: _____________
Phone: ___________________________ E-mail: _______________________

Please indicate your preference: ☐ E-mail newsletter in PDF format  ☐ Hard-copy postal mail newsletter

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!

Membership Dues Categories:

☐ $15 Student/Senior
☐ $25 Individual ☐ $50 Family
☐ $100 Contributing
☐ $250 Sustaining
☐ $500 Leader ☐ $1000 Visionary
☐ $________ to the Chimney Fund
☐ $________ to the Garden Fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $________
Rev. Frank Weeks completes revision of massive two-volume Weeks genealogy

We are pleased to announce that longtime WBH member and genealogist Rev. Frank Weeks has published an updated edition of his genealogy masterwork. Descendants of Leonard Weeks 1636-2016, Vol. 1 & 2, is packed with photos and historical notes among its 1118 pages. The cost is $175.00 plus shipping. To order, contact Rev. Frank Weeks via email at fhweeks@cox.net.

www.WeeksBrickHouse.org