The Weeks Brick House Annual Meeting Weekend, on September 14 & 15, 2019, was once again the setting for greeting old friends and making new ones.

Members, descendants, and friends that arrived on Saturday first enjoyed tours of the house, gardens, and trails. After an optional afternoon tour of the Woodman Museum in Dover, N.H., attendees sipped wine in the Great Room and bid on the array of items offered at our silent auction.

On Sunday, September 15, the Great Room was packed for “Taverns, Travelers, & Tanbark: The Roots of Popular Culture in New England,” an illustrated lecture presentation — with real-time performance examples — by historian/author R.W. Bacon that took a lively look at the role of taverns, “long rooms,” and early popular entertainment in the region.

After a convivial lunch and gabfest, members attending the business meeting on Sunday afternoon elected Amanda Nelson as the new president of Leonard Weeks and Descendants in America, Inc. She replaces Tom Ayres, who chose to step down after nine years of extraordinarily committed leadership. He will continue to serve on the WBH board of directors. (See his annual president’s report on page 2.)

Our incoming president, who began her career as a museum professional, is now a practicing attorney with a specialty in museum and arts law. She has served on the board of directors since 2003, including as the organization’s president from 2005 through the 2010 Tercentennial year. (See the interview with our incoming president on page 3 of this issue.)

If you missed this year’s Annual Meeting Weekend for whatever reason, and this report sounds like a veritable Piscataqua-gundalow-load-of-fun, make sure to join us next September.

Rev. Frank H. Weeks (1930-2019): The keeper of Weeks family history … and longtime friend of the Weeks Brick House

Rev. Frank H. Weeks, longtime member and friend of the Weeks Brick House, and tireless genealogist of the Weeks family, died October 5, 2019 in Cranston, R.I. at age 89.

The following is paraphrased from his obituary as published in the Providence Journal on October 9, 2019:

He was the husband of Madelyn V. (Penney) Weeks for 66 years. Frank was born February 9, 1930 in Revere, Mass., son of Elmer and Annie Mae (Treat) Weeks. Rev. Frank Weeks was a beloved husband, dad, grandfather, great-grandfather and
2019 PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Enthusiastic fund-raising support for window project and 12% membership growth are highlights of 2019

By Thomas D. Ayres, President, Weeks Brick House & Gardens

This past year has been another fairly quiet year at the Weeks Brick House & Gardens.

Our number-one priority this year was a major house preservation project. The “Grandpa Sam Weeks Needs You” spring newsletter (thanks Reg!), Window Replacement Fund Phase I, resulted in a very encouraging response. We were able to raise $11,000 and we took $2,000 from our checking account. This will cover the $13,000 cost for the following: (1) repair 10 first floor window frames and sashes; (2) replace 10 aluminum storm windows; (3) repair two exterior entrance doors and frames; and (4) repair of the front and rear wooden gutters. We thank all of you who contributed to this successful project.

Next year we will need to raise approximately $12,000 for Phase 2 of the Window Replacement Project, which will include the following: (1) repair 11 second floor window frames and sashes; and (2) replace 11 aluminum storm windows.

Hopefully, we may qualify for grant funds to cover a portion of this cost.

Cynthia Smith continues to provide on-site management of our historic house and gardens. In her role as our treasurer, she has been very busy receiving donations for our Window Replacement Fund.

Steve Pike provides excellent service in managing the maintenance of the house, grounds, and trails. There were a number of willing workers at our clean-up day this past June, including: Amanda, Cynthia, Reg, and Skip. The trails required the usual removal of fallen tree limbs. The garden and flower bed weeds were removed by Cynthia and Amanda. The split rail fence around the garden was replaced over the past year, with the able assistance of our tenant, Steve, Reg, and Skip.

Amanda Nelson provides our legal service and has researched preservation grants that may assist in paying for necessary window replacement expenses.

Reg Bacon provides his usual support in three critical areas: the Weeks Brick House website (www.weeksbrickhouse.org), our spring and fall newsletters; plus our Annual Meeting Weekend notice.

Mary Groebner continues to handle our numerous administrative responsibilities, including regular mail, e-mail, phone calls, and the mailing of our newsletters.

Cathy Wescott, who, along with Amanda, manages our Weeks Brick House Facebook page, is pleased to report that we now have 263 “friends” on Facebook, up from 200 last year.

Our treasurer Cynthia Weeks reports that Weeks Brick House membership has increased this past year. We now have 81 members, up from 72 last year. Additional members are always welcome.

In summary, this past year, though quiet, has been a busy one at the Weeks Brick House & Gardens.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas D. Ayres, President

*‘Grandpa Sam Weeks’ led the fund-raising, and you responded … but he’s not done yet*

The spring 2019 Weeks Brick House newsletter sounded the alarm about the urgency of window preservation work at our 1710 house. The $25,000 project addresses the repair-and-paint needs of all 25 window frames and sashes, replacement of 21 storm windows, repair-and-paint of exterior doors and frames, and conservation and painting of the wooden gutters.

Due to limited maintenance funds, the WBH board decided to complete these repairs in two phases. The first phase (lower windows, entrance doors, gutters) cost $13,000. The remaining repairs (upper windows, requiring a lift), at a cost of $12,000, are projected for later in 2020.

We are pleased to report that WBH members responded generously to the call.
WBH elects Amanda Nelson as president at annual meeting

At the Sunday, September 15 business meeting during this year’s Annual Meeting Weekend, members of Leonard Weeks and Descendants in America, Inc. elected Amanda Nelson as its new president. A longtime museum professional as well as a practicing attorney, Amanda has served on the board of directors since 2003, and was the organization’s president from 2005 through 2010. Your editor recently engaged Amanda for an “email interview” to give members an in-depth refresher on what she brings to her new term as president.

WBH News: I know everyone is thankful you have agreed to serve again as president of the Weeks Brick House & Gardens. When did you first become involved with the Weeks Brick House? And what drew you to the house and setting?

Amanda Nelson: I first became involved with the house in 2003. At the time the board was looking for new board members, and reached out to a friend of mine who is a business owner in Greenland. Historic sites are not her thing, but she knew that they were something I was very interested in (I was currently working as a curator at a historic house museum), and passed my contact information along. What drew me to the house was not only the charm of the house itself and all of the land surrounding it, but the sheer potential of the spot.

WBH News: Your interest in the Weeks Brick House dovetailed with your early museum career. Tell us about the progression of your years in museum work.

A.N.: I graduated with a master’s degree in history and museum studies from the University of New Hampshire. While in graduate school I had the opportunity to intern at many historic house museums in New Hampshire. It was through those internships that I focused my career on collections care, although with a small historic site you end up learning all aspects of running a museum. I worked as a curator and then as a curatorial consultant for several years before going to law school.

WBH News: You served as president of WBH from 2005 to 2010, some of that time with a co-president, the late Adele Wick. What were the imminent challenges when you first served as president?

“I’m planning a strategic planning retreat for the board this spring to discuss long term plans, including diversifying our revenue stream, building public awareness of the site to bring in visitors, board and member development, and other ways to make the organization stronger.”

– Amanda Nelson

Weeks Brick House & Gardens Member/Donor Form

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

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 Garden Fund
☐ $__________ to the General House Preservation & Maintenance Fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $__________
An interview with Amanda Nelson

continued from page 3

building from the weather, and that is being addressed now with our two-phase window project. But beyond the immediate needs – which are difficult enough to meet – what do you envision as a path to sustain the property, both physically and economically, into the future?

A.N.: Our members have been extremely generous over the years as issues have arisen. I’m planning a strategic planning retreat for the board this spring to discuss long term plans, including diversifying our revenue stream, building public awareness of the site to bring in visitors, board and member development, and other ways to make the organization stronger.

Generous support for Phase I of window project, but Phase II awaits

continued from page 2

for preservation action. We extend a giant “thank you” to all who contributed. One anonymous donor stepped up to match, dollar-for-dollar, up to $5,000 for these repairs. We are especially grateful for that donor’s show of leadership, and thanks to that, Phase I is in motion.

Phase II funding, of course, is still a need, and there are multiple ways you can donate to the preservation of our 1710 Weeks family home:

• A handy hard-copy, on-paper, double-duty membership/donation form is on page 3 of this and every newsletter, so you can send a check in any amount by postal mail.

• Donations of any amount can be made online via Paypal at the “Donate & Shop” page or the “Membership” page of the WBH website, www.WeeksBrickHouse.org.

The future of the Weeks Brick House depends on the support of its members and friends. Members and friends made a great effort for Phase I. Can we count on your donation for Phase II, to preserve “Grandpa” Sam Weeks’ historic house?