



# NEW ENGLAND HISTORY & HERITAGE JOURNAL



A JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

VOLUME 1

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## New England: Entertainment Capital of the U.S.

By Kristie Poehler

Maybe New England is known for its history of powerful politicians with serious men like John Adams, Benjamin Franklin (born in Boston), and the Kennedys and Bush families.

Maybe New England is known for its tried and true history in sports with the Red Sox, Patriots, the birth of both Volleyball and Basketball, and Rocky Marciano.

But many people might not equate New England with a long-standing reputation for first-class, world-renown entertainers, going back more than two centuries. New England-born composers, playwrights, actors, singers, and more have given New England an unbeatable history of bringing enjoyment to people of all ages.

### George M. Cohan

The son of Vaudeville players, George was born in 1878 in Providence, Rhode Island. From a young age, music and dancing was a prominent feature in their household as the family (including sister Josephine) began to travel as the Four Cohans. By the time young George was thirteen he was the star of the traveling show Peck's Bad Boy.

Even with occasional touring, George always rejoined his family group until the turn of the century. The Four Cohans had much success. By the time he was in his early twenties, he was regularly being paid for songs and short skits that he wrote. *The Governor's Son*, his first full Broadway production, starred his family, and was the beginning of his love for patriotic music. Sadly, it only lasted a little over thirty performances. He also became known around this time for a terrible temper and a raging jealousy over his sister's popularity.

George's emotions began to mellow when he met and married actress Ethel Levey in 1899. Soon after, he partnered with Sam Harris and wrote *Little Johnny Jones*, one of Broadway's most popular shows, which included Cohan's most famous song, "Yankee Doodle Dandy."

*I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy, a Yankee Doodle do or die. A real live nephew of my Uncle Sam's, Born on the Fourth of July.*

He also debuted "Give My Regards to Broadway" in that show. As Cohan worked hard to find his footing, Ethel's star took off. Soon they divorced and Cohan married showgirl Agnes Nolan. Together they had three children.

Cohan would become known as "the first superstar in American show business." He officially stopped appearing with or near his family, and embraced his songwriting and producing skills. *Over There* was released to great acclaim during World War One.

Like the ebbs and flows experienced by so many talented performers, Cohan's fame began to cool into the 1920s and 1930s. A friend convinced him to get back on the stage

instead of behind it. Cohan successfully played the father in Eugene O'Neill's *Ah Wilderness*. He continued to perform in other Broadway shows as well, thoroughly enjoying his new-found fame.

In 1940, President Roosevelt presented Cohan with the Congressional Medal of Honor for the anthem *Over There*. His partner Sam Harris had passed away and his own health was failing, but George Cohan helped with production on *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942), the popular film starring James Cagney. Legend has it he snuck out of his apartment in a wheelchair to watch the crowds, and when he heard the cheers for his songs, only then did he have his nurse take him home.

George M. Cohan died at 64 on November 6, 1942 in New York City.

### Mark Twain

Samuel Clemens was born in Missouri, but became an honorary son of Hartford, Connecticut, when he moved his young family there in 1871. He was not a stranger to the capital city. His publisher was based out of there and he had friends he visited frequently.

Clemens traveled the country as soon as he was able. As a young man, he left his home for the hustle and bustle of New York and Philadelphia. He hoped to make it as a writer and began as a journalist for different local newspapers.

With the Civil War looming, Clemens returned to Missouri and began piloting a riverboat along the Mississippi River. He joined a Confederate unit but quit shortly after he was mustered in. Not wanting to have to choose sides during the war, he accepted an invitation from his brother in a territory in Nevada far away from the war. Traveling by stagecoach he was awestruck by the land he saw along the way. The people he met inspired ideas for his first short stories, many of which were printed by local newspapers. His anecdotes, sharp wit, and unique sense of humor set him apart from other writers. After the war ended, Clemens went to Hawaii, California and then onto Europe. He then decided to make his home in New York.

He met his wife Olivia through her brother Charles. The newlyweds moved to Buffalo and then Hartford. While in Hartford, one of their children was born, while another died of diphtheria. The family would remain there for nearly two decades.

His star was rising and he began lecturing and publishing books full of witticisms, humor and social commentary. His first in a string of popular books was published in 1872/ *Roughing It* talked about his time visiting the western United States. The voice of Mark Twain was born.

Next to come were his iconic young adult books: *Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Samuel Clemens did not make much of a profit from his books because he was plagued by bad investment choices,



The Four Cohans in a rare performance photo (photo courtesy of Musicals101.com)

but he continued to put his all into his work. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) and *Prince and the Pauper* (1881) both made commentary on social class issues alongside the pros and cons of technological expansion.

During this time Clemens began his own publishing house, The Charles L. Webster Company. Through this business, he aimed to get more control over the publication of his work and hoped to leave a legacy for his wife and three daughters. In 1884, Clemens would publish the memoirs of President Ulysses Grant. Written right before the Civil War general's death from throat cancer, the two-volume set was incredibly profitable, both for the Grant family and the Clemens family.

The death of his daughter Susy of meningitis plunged him further into despair. Sam Clemens would never return to Hartford again so he and his wife continued to travel the world. His wife died in 1904 in Italy and soon after Clemens returned to New England, and Connecticut.

"I came in with Halley's Comet in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it. It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go out with Halley's

Comet," he wrote. His prediction correct, Mark Twain died of a heart attack on April 21, 1910, just one day after the comet passed closest to Earth.

### Bette Davis

The factory city of Lowell, Massachusetts was the birthplace of screen legend Bette Davis. She was born Ruth Elizabeth in 1908 to Harlow and Ruthie Davis.

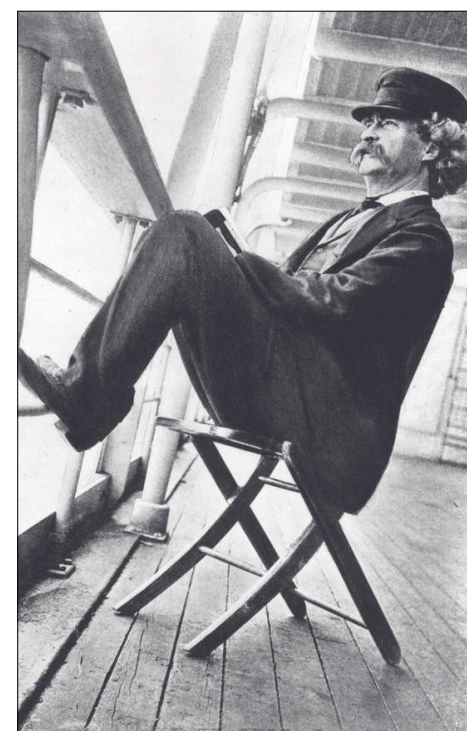
After her father completed law school, Bette's parents divorced and through lots of hard work, Ruthie was able to put her two daughters through boarding school in Ashburnham, Massachusetts.

At twenty, Bette left New England for drama school in New York. She stayed in the Big Apple only briefly, and auditioned for director George Cukor's stock theater company. Cukor was not impressed but did give Bette her first role as a chorus girl in a play called *Broadway*. Alternating roles on stage with her time as a lifeguard on Ogunquit Beach in Maine, Bette eventually had a lead role in *Broken Dishes* on Broadway.

Davis left for Broadway soon after that to test for Universal Studios. She failed that test, but kept at it. The head of Universal Studios thought Bette Davis had amazing eyes so he gave David her first screen role in *Bad Sister* (1931). However, her contract was not renewed.

Befriending actor George Arliss helped Davis achieve her big break in *The Man Who Played God* (1932).

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Mark Twain on the SS Warrimoo (photo courtesy of Library of Congress)

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## MY THOUGHTS

In 2003, I took over a small newspaper called *The Battlefield Journal*. The previous editors gave me the rights to everything lock, stock and barrel. The idea of being at the helm of anything like that was both terrifying and exhilarating to me. As a Civil War writer and historian, I had contributed to *The Battlefield Journal* a few times and enjoyed the paper.

Once I became editor and publisher, I made a few changes to make the newspaper my own: including more scholarly articles and I added my take on all kinds of amazing events like a Presidential inauguration (for George W. Bush), a movie premiere (*Gods & Generals*), special tours of Richmond, St. Louis, and even a 7-day American Queen riverboat tour of Civil War battlefields. The experience was incredible for me and I hope, for my readers. And our readers came from all over the world.

Once I adopted my baby boy, life happened and I wanted to be a mom. Book signings, guest lectures, and even doing any writing went by the wayside. I knew that someday I wanted to publish another newspaper, one with the same impact as *The Battlefield Journal*, and I hoped to focus on my home region of New England.

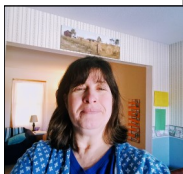
This is a proud day for me. Here we have the premiere issue of *New England History & Heritage Journal*. This is the culmination of many years of planning and dreaming. Right now we are quarterly, but soon we will go to monthly.

*The New England History & Heritage Journal* explores the amazing history of this region, showcases great heritage tourism sites, shares regional recipes, shows off our architecture in historic buildings, finds ways to teach our children about all we have to offer and so much more. And we have decided to stick with the newspaper-style that was so popular with the readers of *The Battlefield Journal*.

In this issue, our New England Entertainment issue, we will look back to the history of New England on Television with shows like Zoom, Soap and Dark Shadows. We will meet the talented New Englanders who have entertained us through the years. We will learn about one of the most iconic historic theaters in Boston, and talk to the host of *Museum Access!* Plus news, events and more. Please send letters, questions and suggestions to us at [nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com)!

Enjoy!

Kristie Poehler  
Editor



### NEW ENGLAND HISTORY & HERITAGE JOURNAL A Journey Into the Past

**Editor/Owner:** Kristie Poehler  
**Inspiration:** Shirley Poehler

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## CORRESPONDENCE

*Dear New England History & Heritage Journal:*

I loved your *Battlefield Journal* so I am so happy to see a publication like this coming out from you! I have lived in New England all my life and our history is so complex: a little scandalous, a lot inspiring and very educational. I like to read about military history but don't see enough about New England, except due to the Revolutionary War. Will you be doing anything in a future issue about the military history of New England?

Keep publishing and thank you!  
Terry K., Norwich, CT

*Hello Terry!*

Thank you so much for your great letter! You are very correct in your summation of the history of New England. Our stories are multifaceted and incredibly interesting. That is what I hope *New England History & Heritage Journal* will convey to our readers. We have exciting history and plenty of it. That does include military history. Stay tuned for our spring issue! The theme will be all military! We will cover some stories about the Revolutionary War, but we will also learn about New England officers and soldiers who took part in the Civil War, and wars throughout the early Twentieth Century. We will also learned how New England contributed to those wars, including production of war materiel, naval forces, medicine and more. Can't wait for you to see it! Tell your friends and subscribe to get the *New England History & Heritage Journal* right to your door. Or pick it up for free at many places around you!

Kristie Poehler, Editor

*Dear New England History & Heritage Journal:*

I love to cook and I love history! Will you be including any recipes in your interesting newspaper? Some of my favorite New England foods include Succotash, Clam Chowder, Boston Baked Beans and anything Italian. Looking forward to reading the *New England History & Heritage Journal*!

Maureen T., Watertown, MA

*Dear Maureen:*

I love to eat! So I'm right with you on all of the great dishes New England has to offer. We plan on not only including historic and iconic recipes from all over our vibrant region, but we will also have the next issue (winter 2020) devoted entirely to foodways! We have a great account of the Molasses Flood of 1919 in there too! Culinary tours in New England, chefs who have tried and succeeded in bringing back the hey day of New England cuisine, and New England fair foods are all included. Subscribe today!!

Kristie Poehler, Editor

*Dear New England History & Heritage Journal:*

I'm very excited your first issue will be about entertainment. I love the stage and theatre all over, but we have some amazing theatres in New England. I love the Ogunquit Playhouse especially but I also love the Stratford too! Keep up the good work!

Ken F., Colchester, VT

*Dear Ken:*

Thanks for your kind words. We love theater too and thought having our first issue devoted to New England entertainment would be fun, and maybe a not totally-expected way to begin. You are so right about the theaters in New England. We are so well known for our summer stock shows. You mentioned Ogunquit Playhouse—so famous for its summer performances. And the Berkshires in Massachusetts has so many summer playhouses! I remember seeing the great Ralph Waite play President Warren G. Harding in the phenomenal *Camping with Henry & Tom* in Great Barrington years and years ago.

We also have stages, both inside and outside for the symphony, Shakespeare, Poetry, Festivals and so much more. The Athenaeum is also so historic in New England. Author's nights, poetry and prose readings, classical music, and other forms of entertainment have taken place behind those walls for centuries. Boston Magazine did a great list of some of these including Boston, Portsmouth, Salem, Providence, St. Johnsbury, VT and Nantucket, MA.

In this issue, we learn about the Howard Athenaeum (the Old Howard Theatre) in the West End of Boston on Scollay Square! Send us an email at [nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com) to let us know how you liked it! And thanks so much for sharing!

Kristie Poehler, Editor

*Dear New England History & Heritage Journal:*

Where do you find your ideas for stories? Is it possible for anyone to submit or contribute ideas or articles to your newspaper?

Thanks, John M., Jamestown, RI

*Dear John:*

That is a great question and one I always love answering! We try to theme out each one of our issues because it makes it even more fun to gather articles, stories, recipes, book reviews, and more if they are all related in some way. At that point we spread the word to find authors, photographers, museum professionals, artists, chefs, history enthusiasts, and educators who would like to tell their stories!

Long story short, we would love for you to submit to the *New England History & Heritage Journal*. If there is a subject you are passionate about, drop us a note and ask if we have an issue coming up that relates to it. Or if you think we should be including a certain theme, let us know.

The themes coming up in the near future are: January—Foodways, April—Military, July—Education, October—Transportation, January—Traditions and Legends...these are, of course, subject to change and we may be moving to monthly before 2020 is out.

Please send any ideas or contributions to the editor at [nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com)!

Kristie Poehler, Editor

*If you have a question, idea, or suggestion for the New England History & Heritage Journal, please email us at [nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com). We look forward to reading and (sometimes) publishing your correspondence!*

## New England History & Heritage News

### CELEBRATING FANNY PALMER— THE ARTIST BEHIND CURRIER & IVES

Although her designs adorned the walls of homes and businesses across the United States, the name Frances (Fanny) Flora Bond Palmer (1812-1876) remains largely unknown. The Springfield Museums celebrated the accomplishments of this important and talented lithographer with the new exhibit *Fanny Palmer: The Artist behind Currier & Ives's Greatest Prints* at the Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, and on display through February 23, 2020.

"The prints displayed in this exhibition may be familiar to visitors, as Fanny Palmer's designs are among the most quintessential scenes of American life in the 19th century," said Maggie North, Acting Curator of Art at the Springfield Museums. "But most viewers are unlikely to recognize her name." Palmer was arguably the most prolific artist working behind the scenes for the Currier & Ives lithography firm. She produced and designed over 200 prints, many of which today are regarded as the best examples published by the firm.

"Despite her work's quality," North said, "Palmer has been overlooked by art history."

Fanny Palmer: The Artist behind Currier & Ives's Greatest Prints incorporates the scholarship of the late Charlotte Streifer Rubinstein and Diann Benti, who published the first-ever monograph on the artist's work in 2018. "Their book, *Fanny Palmer: The Life and Works of a Currier & Ives Artist*, diversifies our understanding of art history by adding new voices, stories, and perspectives to the narrative," North said. "Our exhibition explores Palmer's artistic vision, and offers a renewed examination of Palmer's approach to commemorating, documenting, and influencing the American experience."

"Palmer is an especially intriguing artist as she was an avid outdoor enthusiast and often accompanied her husband on fishing trips," said Heather Haskell, Vice President of the Museums and Director of Art Museums. "Her detailed drawings, created from direct observation while out in the wilderness, add a veracity to her lithographic compositions that was especially popular with the print-buying public."

Currier & Ives prints, some scholars suggest, were like the Instagram of the 19th century because of their popularity and their ubiquity—everyone had at least one print on display in their home or business. Before partnering with James Merritt Ives in 1857, Nathaniel Currier estab-

lished a successful New York City-based lithography firm in 1835. He produced thousands of hand-colored prints that together created a vivid panorama of American life. Among the many artists he employed was Fanny Palmer, who was already an accomplished printmaker when she arrived in the city from England in 1843. As an artist and designer who was also able to transfer her compositions to lithographic stones for printing, Palmer was invaluable to the firm. Currier & Ives relied on many different hands—artists, lithographers, colorists, and salesmen—to produce in great number the spectacular American scenes people collected with enthusiasm. By the time Currier & Ives became a household name, Palmer was well on her way to producing hundreds of images that contributed to the success of the company.

Though she passed away at the young age of 64, Palmer's 26-year career with Currier & Ives left a lasting legacy. "We look forward to sharing her important work with our visitors," Haskell said.

### About the Currier & Ives Collection at the Springfield Museums

The Lenore B. and Sidney A.

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## History & Heritage News (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

Alpert Currier & Ives Collection at the D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts is one of the largest holdings of lithographs in the nation. "We are also the only museum that continually displays the prints from 'the printmakers to the people,'" Haskell said.

### BERKSHIRE MUSEUM CHIEF OFFICER HONORED

[Pittsfield, MA] – Berkshire Museum is pleased to announce that Craig Langlois, the Museum's Chief Experience Officer, was recognized at Town Vibe and *Berkshire Magazine's* Berkshire 25 event for his dedication and thought-leadership in education and museum access for all on Thursday, September 5, 2019.

Langlois, who has been a member of the Berkshire Museum team since 2008, rose to the role of Chief Experience Officer in 2016. In this position, he oversees the development and execution of exhibitions, public programs, and educational curriculum based on an interdisciplinary model that integrates art, science, and history.

As a member of the Berkshire Museum's Senior Leadership Team, Craig Langlois has dedicated himself to education and museum access for all members of the Berkshire community. In fact, his aspirational dream is making every community member feel welcome and able to join in the fun and learning (and when they can't, he wants the Museum to come to them!). And at nearly every step of his career with Berkshire Museum, this aspiration is apparent. In 2012, as Education and Public Program Manager, he launched a series of Free Community Night events that have brought more than 10,000 visitors into the Museum free of charge over the past 7 years.

In 2017, he oversaw the implementation of free class visits for any teacher, of any grade, at any school, graciously sponsored by Greylock Federal Credit Union, the Beauregard Family, and members of the community. In 2014, Langlois led the Berkshire Museum team in developing and publishing a school-readiness publication titled *In Kindergarten* for distribution to Berkshire County students, which this year was made available to every student entering kindergarten throughout the state of Massachusetts in partnership with Berkshire Bank. Langlois is also the creative mind behind Berkshire Museum's WeeMuse programming, a "first in the region" program that focuses on early learners and their families from birth to grade 2; the annual Ten Days of Play festival, a celebration of child-directed play that takes place each February vacation week; *If/Then*, a 5,000 square foot exhibition exploring creativity, memory, and play; and the arrival of PechaKucha, the global 20x20 presentation format, in western Massachusetts.

In addition to his many accomplishments at Berkshire Museum, Craig Langlois also serves his community on several boards and committees, including: Pittsfield Promise, Transition Team, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts ITQ (Improving

Teacher Quality) Steering Committee, Berkshire STEM Pipeline, Berkshire Community College's Early Childhood Steering Committee, 1Berkshires Creative Economy Practitioners Focus Group, Berkshire Athenaeum's 3D Printer Lab Steering Committee, Race to the Top Museums and Libraries Project, Boston Children's Museum School Readiness IMLS Project, and Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area. Langlois received a B.F.A. and M.F.A. from Long Island University.

Langlois has previously been recognized as part of Berkshire Community College's Forty Under Forty.

Craig Langlois will join early childhood education expert Beth Fredericks at *Voices and Visionaries: What Everyone Should Know About the New Brain Science and Our Youngest Citizens* on Saturday, September 14, at 5:30 pm. The event will feature a lively presentation and discussion with the evening's Visionaries at 5:30 pm, and a wine and beer reception with selections from SPIRITED Wines and Bright Ideas Brewery at 7 pm, followed by a seated, locally inspired dinner. Talk only tickets are \$18, Talk & Beer and Wine Reception Tickets are \$30, and Premier Talk and Dinner Tickets are \$100 each, or \$170 for a pair. Tickets may be purchased at [berkshireremuseum.org/discussion-series](http://berkshireremuseum.org/discussion-series), or by phone at 413.443.7171 ext. 318. Active educators may reserve a complimentary Talk & Beer and Wine Reception Ticket by calling Amanda Nardini at 413.443.7171 ext.318 through Friday, September 13.

### About Berkshire Museum

Located at 39 South Street in downtown Pittsfield, MA, Berkshire Museum combines art, science, and history to create thought-provoking experiences for the whole family through interactive programs and interdisciplinary exhibitions. The Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday noon to 5 pm. Admission is \$13 adult, \$6 child (under 18); free admission for Museum members, EBT cardholders, and children age 3 and under. Visit [www.berkshireremuseum.org](http://www.berkshireremuseum.org) or call 413.443.7171.

### LEGACIES OF 1619 SERIES BEGINS THIS FALL AT MHS

Presented by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Museum of African American History in Boston, and Roxbury Community College, this series will look at the history of Africans and African Americans in the American past.

In 1619, the first enslaved Africans arrived in English North America. To mark the 400th anniversary of this historic event, the Massachusetts Historical Society, Museum of African American History, and Roxbury Community College offer four panel discussions about the history of Africans and African Americans in the American past. Each program features leading scholars who will elaborate on a theme from the perspective of the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Programs will take place on November 16 at Roxbury Community College; and December 14 at the

Massachusetts Historical Society. Each program begins with a reception at 3:30 PM; the panel discussions begin at 4:00 PM. The programs are free and open to the public.

About the Legacies of 1619 Series: The series is made possible by the co-sponsorship of the Museum of African American History and Roxbury Community College.

### Saturday, November 16: Black Radicalism / Black Power

Location: Roxbury Community College, 1234 Columbus Avenue 3:30 PM reception | 4:00 PM panel; Panelists: John Stauffer, Harvard University; Jeffrey O. G. Ogbar, University of Connecticut; and Adriane D. Lentz-Smith, Duke University; Moderator: Valerie Roberson, Roxbury Community College

Facing the hegemonic force of slavery, discrimination, and disenfranchisement, communities of color have resisted and presented radical models of empowerment. Along with countless and often little-known stories of personal courage, acts of large-scale resistance, such as Nat Turner's Rebellion, go back to the very beginnings of the United States. This program will explore the different forms African Americans have taken to assert their agency and autonomy.

### Saturday, December 14: Citizenship & Belonging

Location: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1154 Boylston Street 3:30 PM reception | 4:00 PM panel; Panelists: Manisha Sinha, University of Connecticut; Elizabeth Herbin-Triant, University of Massachusetts—Lowell; and Hasan Jeffries, Ohio State University; Moderator: Marita Rivero, Museum of African American History, Boston

For 400 years, Africans and African Americans carved out a distinctive culture for themselves even as they sought equal rights in American society. This program will consider how African Americans struggled to gain equal access to political and social rights, all while making the American experience their own.

### NEWPORT MANSIONS CELEBRATE 40 MILLION TOURS

NEWPORT, RI—In July the Preservation Society of Newport County (PSNC) delivered its 40 millionth tour of the Newport Mansions since its founding in 1945. David Denmark and Robin Levine Den-

mark, residents of Cross River, New York, became the 40 millionth tour visitors when they entered the The Breakers at approximately 10:00 the morning on July 29. After completing their scheduled tour, the Denmarks were honored in the Great Hall of The Breakers by a host of dignitaries and was awarded a special 'Gilded Age' package by Preservation Society CEO and Executive Director Trudy Coxe and Preservation Society Chairman Monty Burnham, which includes an array of Newport experiences including two round-trip airline tickets on United Airlines, a two-night/three-day stay at a deluxe Newport property, a \$150 gift card from Newport Restaurant Group, membership in the Preservation Society of Newport County for one year, a private tour of the mansions for two and a \$250 gift card to The Newport Mansions Gift Shop.

The Preservation Society first began giving tours in 1948, but it was not until 1965 that the organization reached the cumulative total of one million tours. It took 17 years to reach the first million tours, at an average rate of just under 59,000 tours a year, and now hosts an average of one million tours annually. "We are so proud of achieving this milestone. Elevating our attendance numbers from 59,000 tours annually to one million per year is quite a feat," said Trudy Coxe. "We were created to preserve the buildings and landscapes of Newport. I'm sure our founder, Kathyne Warren, would be so proud of this moment."

"This milestone is proof that Americans still care about history and the rest of the world still cares about American history," said Monty Burnham, Chairman of the Board, The Preservation Society of Newport County. "People come from all 50 states and 125 countries every year to tour the mansions."

The Newport Mansions currently consist of nine houses, The Breakers Stables and the Green Animals Topiary Garden. The Breakers was the first property to open for tours in 1948 with the purpose of raising money to save Hunter House. Not long afterward, Hunter House opened for tours along with The Breakers Stables, and in 1962, The Elms joined the lineup. In rapid succession, Marble House, Chateau-sur-Mer, Kingscote and Rosecliff also opened to tours. Green Animals Topiary Garden followed suit, followed by Chepstow, and the Isaac Bell House in 1996.

## Calendar of Events

### October

25- "Stories in Stone" at the Buckman Tavern, Lexington, MA. 1pm. \$ For information, visit [lexingtonhistory.org](http://lexingtonhistory.org).

26- "Arts and Crafts Houses of Massachusetts Book Talk" at the Connolly Branch Library, Jamaica Plain, MA. 11am. Free. For information, visit [jphs.org](http://jphs.org).

26- "In Death Remember'd" Lecture at the Old Colony History Museum, Taunton, MA 6:30pm. Free. For information, visit [oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org](http://oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org).

27- "Ladder Blocks Walking Tour" sponsored by Boston By Foot, Boston. 2pm. \$ For information, visit [bostonbyfoot.org](http://bostonbyfoot.org).

27- "Mayflower Cemetery Tour" at the Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury, MA. 3pm. \$ For information, visit [duxburyhistory.org](http://duxburyhistory.org).

28- "Vincent Price: Horror's Gentle Giant" at the Langley-Adams Library. 6:30pm. Free. For information, visit [langleyadamslib.org](http://langleyadamslib.org).

30- "Palatine Wreck: The Legend of the New England Ghost Ship" at the Central Library, Copley Square, Boston. 6pm. Free. For information, visit [bpl.org](http://bpl.org).

30- "History of the Natick Fire Department: 175 Years Strong" at the Morse Institute Library, Natick, MA. 7pm. Free. For information, visit [natickhistoricalsociety.org](http://natickhistoricalsociety.org).

31- "Beacon Hill with a Boo!" sponsored by Boston By Foot, Boston. 6pm. \$ For information, visit [bostonbyfoot.org](http://bostonbyfoot.org).

31- "Halloween at the Gibson House" at the Gibson House Museum, Boston. 6pm. Free. For information, visit [thegibsonhouse.org](http://thegibsonhouse.org).

### November

1- "Tiles to Teapots" at the Forbes House Museum, Milton, MA. 11am & 2pm. \$ For information, visit [forbeshousemuseum.org](http://forbeshousemuseum.org)

2- "Burial Hill Tour" at the Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, MA. 1pm. Free. For information, visit [pilgrimhallmuseum.org](http://pilgrimhallmuseum.org).

2- "A Revolution of Her Own: Deborah Sampson" at the Medway Senior Center, Medway, MA. 2pm. \$ For information, visit [medwayhistoricalsociety.org](http://medwayhistoricalsociety.org).

2- "Function and Family: A Mid-Century Modern Cocktail Party" at the Lexington Depot, Lexington, MA. 7pm. \$ For information, visit [lexingtonhistory.org](http://lexingtonhistory.org).

4- "Dinner with David Macaulay" at Old Slater Mill, Pawtucket, RI. 5:30pm. \$ For information, visit <https://bpt.me/4332917>.

4- "Searching for Black Confederates" at the Longfellow House, Cambridge, MA. 6:30pm. \$ For information, visit [nps.gov/long](http://nps.gov/long).

6- "Intro to MHS: Library Tour" at the Maine Historical Society. 1pm. Free. Space is limited. For information, email [info@mainehistory.org](mailto:info@mainehistory.org).

7- "Back Bay Through Time" at the Central Library, Copley Square, Boston. 6pm. Free. For information, visit [bpl.org](http://bpl.org).

8- "Tiles to Teapots" at the Forbes House Museum, Milton, MA. 11am & 2pm. \$ For information, visit [forbeshousemuseum.org](http://forbeshousemuseum.org)

9- "Veterans Day at OCHM" at the Old Colony History Museum, Taunton, MA. 12noon. For information, visit [oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org](http://oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org).

(Continued on page 5)



Berkshire Museum (photo courtesy of NonProfit Quarterly)

## New England Entertainers (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

He helped her sign a five-year deal with Warner Brothers, where she stayed for nearly two decades.

At the start of her Warner Brothers career, Davis was married to Harmon Nelson, whom she had known since her school days in Ashburnham. The couple divorced seven years later. In 1940, she married Arthur Farnsworth, a ski instructor she met in New Hampshire.

Davis knew New Hampshire well and loved the scenery there. She once said: "A New Englander never forgets New England, the change of seasons and these mountains that really make you feel like you belong here. You don't get that personal attachment to the gigantic, barren mountain ridges out West. I guess I've just got the New England blood in my veins."

The newly married couple purchased a home in Littleton, New Hampshire, where Davis felt she could be a regular person, not a movie star. They called their renovated colonial-era house "Butternut."

While living in New Hampshire, Bette Davis became part of the community. She gave money to different organizations, including the Franconia Ski Club. She participated in a fashion show to help raise money for the Red Cross.

Tragically, Farnsworth, a former airline pilot, had taken a fall at their home in June 1943 and two months later fell again outside on Hollywood Boulevard. This fall fractured his skull and he did not recover.

At the start of World War Two, Bette could be found selling war bonds for the cause. It was said she sold over two million dollars in war bonds in just 48 hours. She performed for troops whenever she could, and starred as herself in Hollywood Canteen in 1944. The Hollywood Canteen was a renovated serviceman's club. Many studio greats helped serve food and entertain the troops. Davis would be awarded a Distinguished Service Medal for her work with the soldiers.

Davis would marry two more times, but neither would be long-lasting. She also had three children during her prolific movie career. In 1950, she was offered and took the role of aging actress Margo Channing in *All About Eve*. She worked sporadically through the 50s and 60s but her work was still iconic, including *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* (1962). That film proved to be one of her biggest successes.

Davis fell ill with breast cancer in her 70s, then suffered a stroke. She continued to work as much as she could until her death in France in 1989. The feisty spirit that made her famous in her films could be seen when she boarded a plane on foot, rather than in her wheelchair. She told her nurse that she would not let her fans have what could be their last glimpse of her any way but strong, vibrant, and upright.

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Bette Davis in *Jezebel* (1939), one of her most successful roles  
(photo courtesy of FanPop.com)

## Interview with Leslie Mueller of Museum Access

By Kristie Poehler

Museum Access is one of those shows you watch and say "we have GOT to go there!" It is insightful and brings us inside some really cool places all over the world. It fulfills a need for all of us who love both travel and history. The website says that Museum Access "explores these museums in a way that everyday visitors cannot."

I, personally, love anything that gives me a "behind-the-scenes" feel and host Leslie Mueller does just that, every single episode. She has visited Leonardo Da Vinci's workshop in Italy and gone inside of a World War II submarine! I wanted to know how Museum Access was born, and of course, how she felt about New England Museums! She was gracious enough to answer some of my questions. [Ed. Note: Special thanks to Karin McKie from Winger Marketing]

**NEHHJ:** Tell me a little about yourself and how you came to be part of Museum Access?

**Leslie Mueller:** As a child, I loved going on field trips to museums. They were magical places where dinosaurs and dolphins lived.

As a teen, I spent my Saturdays taking art classes at the Art Institute of Chicago. Many times, to learn more about a particular painting in the collection, we were asked to try and copy it. Since those paintings were hanging in the different galleries, museum guests were walking past us and sometimes even commented on our work. I became comfortable in the museum environment. I was especially interested when I saw work being cleaned after hours in the conservation areas, or see pieces coming out of storage being wheeled past us on a cart for a new exhibit. The behind-the-scenes activities were fascinating to me.

The art classes throughout my high school years had an impact on me. I graduated with a Fine Arts Degree from Meadows School of the Arts at SMU in Dallas. I enjoyed a long career as a graphic designer, art director and eventually creative director at the consumer products powerhouse, Chesebrough-Ponds and Unilever in Greenwich, CT.

My fine art was never set aside as I continued to take art classes and exhibit my own artwork until I decided to make the break from the corporate world completely and produce and exhibit art full time.

I simultaneously began producing an award-winning local cable

program called Art & Style, focusing on area artists, museums, galleries and style makers. This program morphed in Museum Access because I saw a need for programming that spotlighted national treasures. Remembering my days at the Art Institute, I decided to revisit the museums of my childhood and realized I was hooked...again.

Now I have a wonderful platform on Public Television to share my adventures with folks who have already been to some of the museums I visit and others that have never set foot into one of America's marvelous museums. It's an honor to share what I learn during my museum visits with our viewers and particularly what we see when we go behind-the-scenes in each episode. We like to say that Museum Access lives at the intersection of entertainment, education and inspiration.

Our viewers are full of curiosity and they are lifelong learners.

**NEHHJ:** I love the viewer/fan interaction. What are your favorite few fan contributions?

**Leslie Mueller:** I love it when our viewers share their thoughts about their own personal favorite museums. Our website features just some of these "Museum Moments." A young boy named Ryan shares his feeling when he saw an actual musket at a museum in Plymouth, MA, when he was learning about the Revolutionary War. Young Abby she tells us about seeing a barrel being made at the Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, CT. Others share their memories of the Mona Lisa, Van Gogh, Inaugural Ball Gowns and Mother Nature, all on view in museums.

**NEHHJ:** What New England museums have you shared with your viewers? And which ones would you like/are you going to share?

**Leslie Mueller:** We've had the opportunity to shoot at the Wild Center Nature Museum in the Adirondacks and The Bruce Museum in Greenwich, CT. We also visited the Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, CT, where we went behind-the-scenes to learn about a color lithography process used by artist Toulouse-Lautrec. We have a few surprises lined up for Season 3 for our New England museum enthusiasts, so stay tuned.

**NEHHJ:** What is coming up in the future for Museum Access?

**Leslie Mueller:** We're thrilled that Museum Access has exploded onto the scene the past two seasons. As we continue to produce new episodes, we are also turning our attention to Museum Access Education. Parents, grandparents, caregivers, teachers, home schoolers and unschoolers alike can use our free, downloadable fun sheets filled with facts and simple DIY projects that pertain to every episode. We've also just developed the Museum Access Classroom Series. This program includes a download of one of our episodes, the fun sheet and a ten-page lesson plan of activities, challenging projects and lesson extensions. We also offer a curated collection of STEAM-related toys (the sciences plus the arts) in a variety of categories such as nature, art and music, space, science, dinosaurs and archeology, engineering and more. Of course, you can't go on a museum adventure without a stylish travel bag so we've chosen some of our favorites that have all the pockets you'll need for a day at your favorite museum. When you get home, you can catch up on past episodes on Amazon Video.

**NEHHJ:** What would you like to share with our readers about the importance of museums and historic sites?

**Leslie Mueller:** There are over 35,000 museums in the United States and over 850 million Americans visit them each year. That's twice as many people than attend all major league sporting events and those parks combined!

Museums are the keepers of our cultural history. They tell important stories by collecting, preserving, researching and interpreting artifacts, living specimens and historical records. They are considered the most trustworthy source of information in America, rated higher than local newspapers, the U.S. government, or academic researchers.

We believe in the power of museums. They ignite our imaginations, expand our knowledge and, most importantly, they help us better understand and appreciate cultural diversity.

**NEHHJ:** How can our readers be a part of Museum Access?

**Leslie Mueller:** The best way to keep up with Museum Access is to follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and subscribe to our monthly newsletter at <https://>

(Continued on page 5)

# Leslie Mueller (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

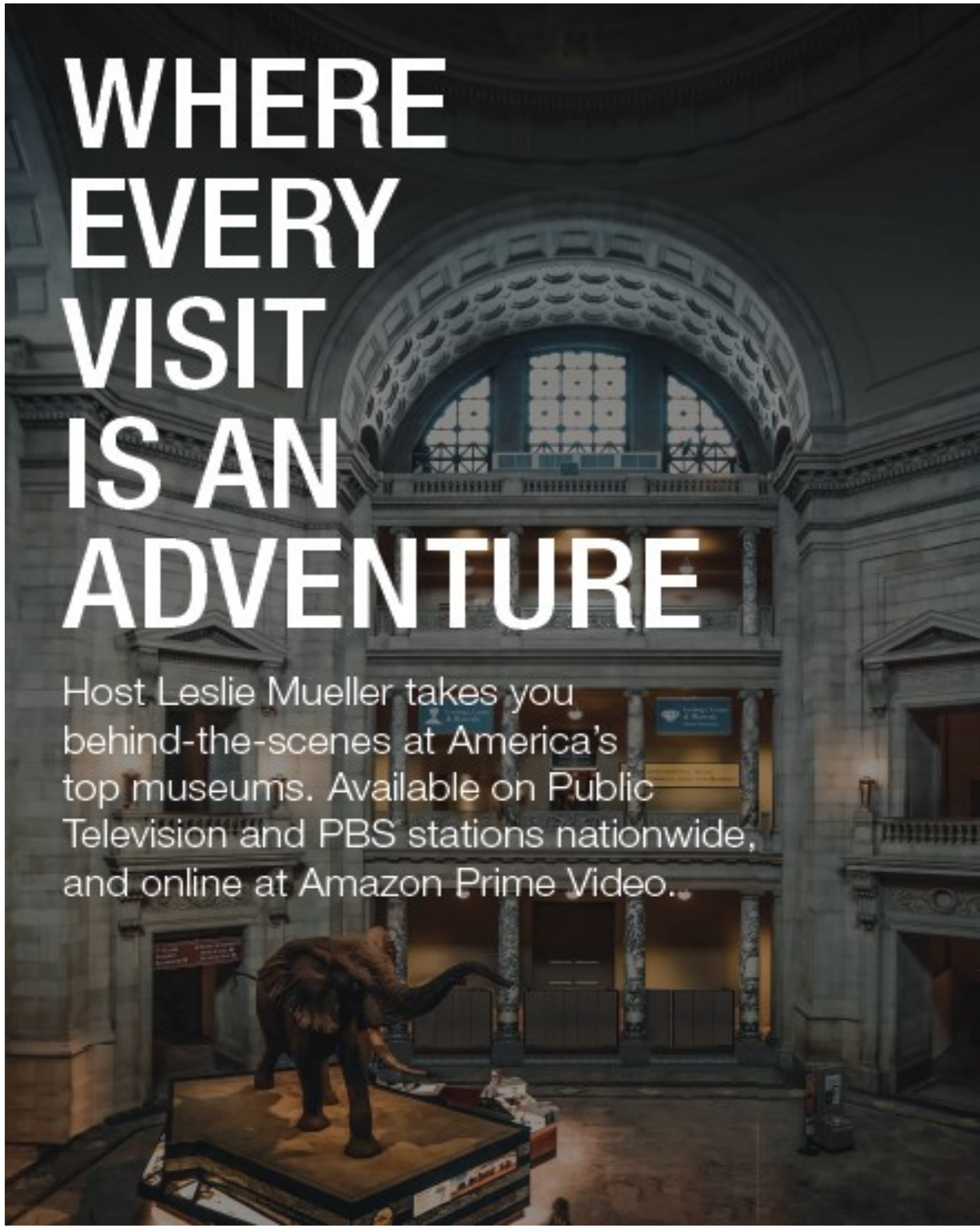
museumaccess.com. We cover behind-the-scenes, viewer moments, not-to-miss exhibitions nationwide, and more. Although Season 3 will not begin airing until spring 2020, we are posting from shoots each month to keep our viewers informed. We love hearing from our viewers too, so send in your favorite Museum Moment and we'll share it with other viewers.

We're very excited about Museum Access' future and we hope more folks will join us on our journey, online and on television!

Thank you Leslie Mueller and Museum Access! We will all be watching!



**Bruce Museum**  
(photo courtesy of CT Trails.org)



# WHERE EVERY VISIT IS AN ADVENTURE

Host Leslie Mueller takes you behind-the-scenes at America's top museums. Available on Public Television and PBS stations nationwide, and online at Amazon Prime Video.

## Calendar of Events (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

**13- "Housing as History: the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Orchard Gardens"** at the Dewitt Center, Boston, 5:30pm. \$ For information, visit masshist.org.

**14- "The Sugar Planters of Brattle Street"** at the Longfellow House, Cambridge, MA. 6:30pm. \$ For information call 617-876-4491.

**15- "Tiles to Teapots"** at the Forbes House Museum, Milton, MA. 11am & 2pm. \$ For information, visit forbeshousemuseum.org

**16- "Thanksgiving Parade"** at Plymouth, MA. 11am. Free. For information, visit ahac.us.com.

**17- "New England Witchcraft Tales"** at the Bridgewater Senior Center, Bridgewater, MA. 2pm. Free. For information, visit, oldbridgewater.org.

**20- "A Rendezvous with Rachel Revere"** at the Groton Council on Aging, Groton, MA. 12:45pm. Free. For information, call 978-448-1170.

**20- "Quincy Book of Days: A Treasury of Quincy History"** at the Central Library, Copley Square, Boston. 6pm. Free. For information, visit bpl.org.

**20- "Black Radical: The Life and Times of William Monroe Trotter"** at the Royall House and Slave Quarters, Medford, MA. 7:30pm. \$. For information, visit royall-house.org.

**21- "American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Women Who Defied the Puritans"** at the Old Colony History Museum, Taunton, MA. 7pm. Free. For information, visit oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org.

**23- "Adams Family in Boston Walking Tour"** sponsored by Boston By Foot, Boston. 10am. \$ For information, visit bostonbyfoot.org.

**28- "Marlborough Genealogy Workshop"** at the Peter Rice Homestead, Marlborough, MA. 6pm. Free. For information, visit historicmarlborough.org.

### December

**1- "The Flat of Beacon Hill"** sponsored by Boston by Foot, Boston. 2pm. \$ For information, visit bostonbyfoot.org.

**4- "Intro to MHS: Library Tour"** at the Maine Historical Society. 1pm. Free. Space is limited. For information, email info@mainehistory.org.

**4- "Henry Beston's Cape Cod: How 'The Outermost House' Inspired a National Seashore"** at the Central Library, Copley Square, Boston. 6pm. Free. For information, visit bpl.org

**13- "Tiles to Teapots"** at the Forbes House Museum, Milton, MA. 11am & 2pm. \$ For information, visit forbeshousemuseum.org

**14- "Recording the Past for the Future"** sponsored by the Massachusetts Society of Genealogists. 10:30am. \$ For information, visit msoginc.org.

**14- "Christmas at Norlands"** at the Washburn-Norlands Living History Center, Livermore, ME. 11am. \$ For information, visit norlands.org.

**14-15- "Christmas at King Caesar House: Open House Tours"** at the King Caesar House, Duxbury, MA. \$ For information, visit duxburyhistory.org.

**15- "Boston Area Chantey & Maritime Sing"** at the USS Constitution Museum, Charlestown, MA. For information, visit ussconstitution.org.

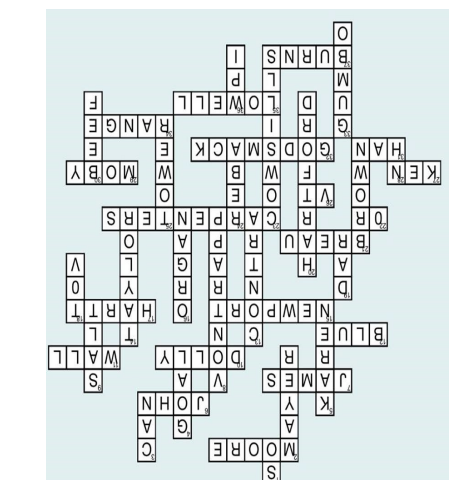
**18- "Mohawk Trail Quilt Guild"** at the Historical Society of Greenfield, Greenfield, MA. For information, call 413-774-3663.

**18- "Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England"** at the Royall House and Slave Quarters, Medford, MA. 7:30pm. \$ For information, visit royallhouse.org.

**26- "Marlborough Genealogy Workshop"** at the Peter Rice Homestead, Marlborough, MA. 6pm. Free. For information, visit historicmarlborough.org.

**27- "Tiles to Teapots"** at the Forbes House Museum, Milton, MA. 11am & 2pm. \$ For information, visit forbeshousemuseum.org

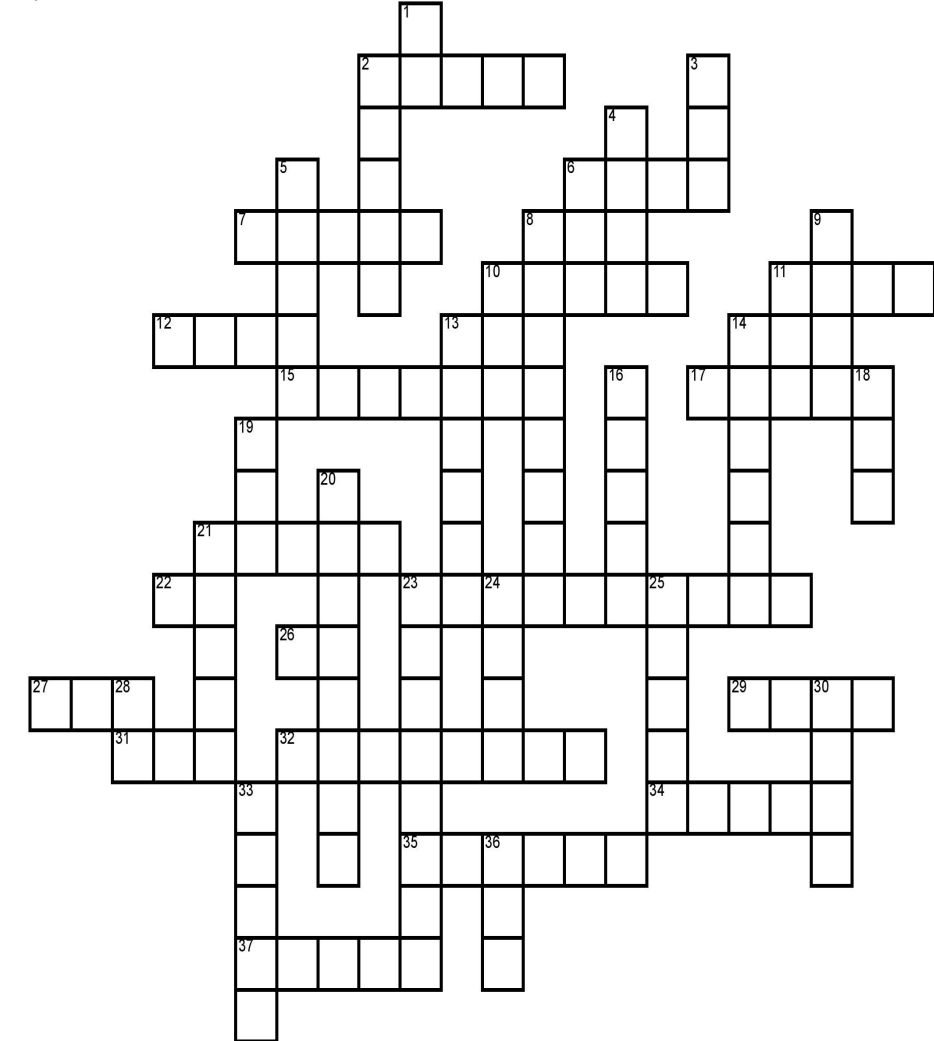
Please confirm before attending events as times and dates are subject to change. Add your event by emailing us at [nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:nehistoryandheritage@gmail.com).



**Crossword Answer Key**

## MUSIC IN NEW ENGLAND CROSSWORD

By Lisa Poehler



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Across</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 NH native and 2019 EMMY nominee, Mandy</li> <li>6 With 2 Down, singer-songwriter, guitarist and Bridgeport native</li> <li>7 With 29 down, Lenox, MA resident, "JT"</li> <li>10 "Hello, ____" Carol Channing Vehicle</li> <li>11 Humpty fell from it</li> <li>12 ____ Bloods, Tom Selleck hit</li> <li>15 This Music Festival began here in 1969 as a summer season of the Metropolitan Opera</li> <li>17 The performing arts conservatory at the University of Hartford</li> <li>21 Maine Native and gifted jazz guitarist, Lenny</li> <li>22 Partner with either</li> <li>23 This CT duo had 3 #1 Billboard Hot 100 hits</li> <li>26 First state to support and fund its own symphony orch</li> <li>27 Contry Music documentary Filmmaker with 37 across</li> <li>29 Musician raised in Darien, CT</li> <li>31 Luke's best friend</li> <li>32 Ozzfest act formed in Lawrence, MA</li> <li>34 Buffalos roam here</li> <li>35 This MA city boasts the is the longest running free folk festival in the US</li> <li>37 Contry Music documentary Filmmaker with 27 across</li> </ul> | <p><b>Down</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 "____ what?!"</li> <li>2 With 8 down, sin ger-songwriter, guitarist and Bridgeport native</li> <li>3 Have permission to</li> <li>4 Hockey objective</li> <li>5 Lead singer of 22 across</li> <li>8 Musical Family of Film and Stowe, VT</li> <li>9 Pepper's partner</li> <li>13 Type of New England folk dance</li> <li>14 With 30 down, Lenox, MA resident, "JT"</li> <li>16 Frist one of these for church use was installed at Trinity Church in Newport, RI in 1733.</li> <li>18 Good (Heb.)</li> <li>19 National Society promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism</li> <li>20 This symphony orchestra is the fourth-oldest orchestra in the country</li> <li>21 University in Rhode Island</li> <li>23 RI-born inspiration for the Partridge Family</li> <li>24 Featured in 31 Across</li> <li>25 It leans in Pisa</li> <li>28 Has 9 state songs</li> <li>30 "Where's the ____"</li> <li>33 LA stew</li> <li>36 The J. Geils Band formed at this NE College</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## AS SEEN ON TV

## New England on Television

By Kristie Poehler

Whether as a fictional location or a city we know and love, New England has been the setting for many well-loved television series. Why? The idyllic scenery of northern New England: mountains, valleys and rivers and the bustling, cultural, vibrant cities of this region make the perfect location for active, dynamic shows. Some of the television shows that called New England home are below.

### ZOOM

“Come on and Zoom, Zoom, Zoom-a Zoom”...that was a theme song I still remember vividly to this day. The skits, science projects and songs, while very relevant to the 70s, were some of the best that Boston-based PBS station WGBH produced.

A small group of regulars led the series that ran from 1972-1978 in its first run (another Zoom series ran in the mid 1990s as well). Among the 49 “Zoomers” were Joseph Shrand, Kenny Pires, Maura Mullaney, Ann Messer, Luiz Gonzalez, and Jay Shertzer and each season that the cast changed, it remained multi-cultural and hip. Each episode had an energetic dance number in the opening sequence, where each of the children, ranging in age from nine to thirteen, introduced themselves. Throughout the show, each child would showcase something educational and fun.

Over 125 public television stations ran Zoom. Phrases like “Ubbi Dubbi” pig Latin became familiar. Viewers couldn’t wait to see what fan suggestions were going to come out of the Zoom Barrel. A weekly craft project was called the ZoomDo. Most importantly, the young cast talked about difficult and sometimes controversial topics, like divorce.

Viewer response was overwhelming. An estimated 20,000 letters came to the show each week. The show’s uniqueness was in the fact that it was hosted by children and completely children-centric. No adults were in any episode unless they were there to specifically showcase something the cast introduced.

The show had a line of merchandise including a “Zoom Catalog” published by Random House, that included poems, stories, songs, and photos created and authored by the staff. A record of songs from the show came out in 1973 (first season cast) and again in 1974 (second season cast). About 10 years ago, WGBH released videos on what the cast was doing now. In 2012, the PBS station had a 40th reunion party to once again check in with the fun cast.

And the letters keep coming in. One past viewer wrote, “I grew up loving this show! I’m 54 now and still remember “Write Zoom, z double o m box 350, Boston, Mass 02134! Send it to Zoom!” Also, learned what a SASE was (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) and collected my Zoom cards for years! Donna was my favorite!”

“I absolutely loved Zoom! The show was such a delight with a spar-

ling cast of highly talented children. I used to get so excited when the Zoom kids would sing, “Let’s roll out the barrel and find out what’s inside today!” They’d sing this sprightly ditty as the opening to reading viewers’ letters on the air. There was also one Zoom episode where one of the kids was making an ice cream cone snowman. I thought that was so adorable.”

### NEWHART

Named one of the best series finales of all time, Newhart, the series about Bob Newhart’s life after New York City, took place in Vermont. The show ran during the 1980s on CBS.

Despite the fact the show was called Newhart”, the main characters were the Loudons. Dick Loudon was travel writer who purchased the Stratford Inn in Vermont. The Inn was filmed partly at the Waybury Inn in East Middlebury, Vermont. The Inn is still in operation with a wonderful history going back to 1810.

The eccentric characters the Loudons interacted with every week was the main premise for the show. Mary Frann played Dick’s wife, Tom Poston portrayed the Inn’s handyman. There was the inn’s maid, owners of the local café, the town mayor, chief of police, librarian, First Darryl and Second Darryl, and so many more great characters introduced in Newhart. Besides owning the Inn, Dick began hosting a show at the small local television station.

Newhart lasted for eight seasons and it was a sad day for star Bob Newhart when he started filming the final episode. The show had strong enough ratings to make it into a ninth season, but network executives were unable to reach a financial deal to move on so the show was ultimately cancelled. Newhart said, “Everyone on the show is a second family to me. I had spent as much time with them as my own family.”

But the finale would always be remembered in the annals of history. The Vermont town is bought by wealthy Japanese investors, planning to build a resort. The Loudon’s refuse to leave. There is a Fiddler on the Roof parody in there, Bob Newhart waking up with another woman as his wife, and referencing to the television show “Dallas”. Eccentric and memorable, the final show was much like it’s star.

### DARK SHADOWS

New England-based from every angle, the gothic soap opera Dark Shadows revolved around the wealthy Collins family. They lived in Collinsport, Maine, a fictional town. Their amazing mansion, however, could be found in Newport, Rhode Island.

Dark Shadows aired each afternoon from 1966 to 1971. Even for the psychedelic age of the 1960s, Dark Shadows was edgy and sometimes, plain weird. The show was nearly cancelled in the first season, hence, the introduction of 175-year

old patriarch Barnabas Collins. Creepy in a American Horror Story kind of way, the show brought Collins in as a vampire who had a good heart. Once distant relative Quentin Collins came to town, however, things turned really weird. On any specific episode viewers could see werewolves, witches, zombies and ghosts.

Another gimmick the show took part in was time travel. The show would often go back to 1795 Collinsport so Barnabas could connect with viewers before he became a vampire. Said a Woman’s World article about Dark Shadows, In 1795 Collinsport, “...Barnabas was engaged to be married to Josette du Pres, but had an affair with Josette’s servant, Angelique Bouchard (played by Lara Parker). When he attempted to end the affair, Angelique, revealing herself to be a witch, cursed him with vampirism, setting him down his long, lonely path. The blast-to-the-past storyline concluded when Barnabas’ father, who was unable to kill his son, imprisoned him in the coffin from which he’d be freed in the present-day narrative.”

What resonated with watchers of Dark Shadows was Collins’s vulnerabilities. The actor who played him, Jonathan Frid said, “He was a man with an addiction who drank blood only to survive. The audience felt pity for him, and many of the women wanted to mother him.”

The show was cancelled without much notice so the writers moved quickly penning the final episode. The show had little fanfare but ended with the announcement that the Collins family were part of a distant past..

The town of Collinsport was filmed in Essex, Connecticut and the Collins’ Mansion was actually the Carey Mansion, also known as Seaview Terrace, on the campus of Salve Regina University, in Newport, Rhode Island.

Seaview Terrace was built in the height of the Gilded Age—the 1920s by Edson Bradley at a cost of \$2 million. The mansion is located on Ruggles Avenue. Visitors cannot miss the building as it literally sprawls across the lawn in the French Renaissance Revival style.

Sadly, once the original family left the property, the mansion sat unused until World War II when officers used it during training. In the 1950s, the house was used as a private school. The Robert Redford hit movie Great Gatsby was filmed next door.

In 1974, the mansion was bought by Martin Carey and his wife and then leased to Salve Regina because of the cost of the upkeep. It is used as student dormitories today.

### SOAP

Another fictional New England town was introduced in the whacky comedy Soap. Dunn’s River, Connecticut was the home of Jessica Tate and her sister Mary Campbell. The inimitable Katherine Helmond played Tate and the sublime Cathryn Damon played Campbell. The cast of characters were definitely an integral part of the show’s success.

The show did not have a particularly long run, starting in 1977 and ending in 1981. The idea was to make fun of daytime soaps in the form of a night time soap opera. Soap did not leave out any part of the necessities of a soap opera: affairs, family intrigue, mobsters, murder, cults, and more. Enough to make every episode a cliff-hanger of sorts. The narrator’s voice carried over the end of each show asking the questions the viewers undoubtedly had: Will this character be discovered? Will Benson (played by Robert Guillaume) even care? And the familiar words: “All these questions—and more—will be answered in the next episode of Soap!”

Soap maintained good rating throughout the first three seasons then began to fall a bit. On CNN, Katherine Helmond called the show “American folklore” and felt the audience had accepted them for what the show was, a satire “poking fun” at “self and sexuality.”

This was the 1970s however, and the show caused its share of controversy. Reported USA Today, “Soap’s pilot episode featured story threads of homosexuality, gender-reassignment, patricide, racism and multiple affairs, including a mother and daughter unwittingly sharing the same tennis-pro lover..”

One of the biggest elephants in the room at the time revolved around the character played by Billy Crystal. The alarm bells went off for network executives when they learned he was openly gay on the show and his boyfriend was pro-football player. Soap was raunchy, bawdy, and fun. Even the National Gay Task Force had concerns, and voiced them. Conservative groups mounted letter-writing campaigns, but oddly once ABC saw the first few episodes, they liked it. For awhile it did have a much later time slot, so adults knew it was for them, and not younger viewers, but soon, it would be praised for its clever writing. And there could be no doubt, it made stars of its cast-members. For one, Billy Crystal’s career took off thank to Soap and the controversy of his character.

The *Connecticut Post* called Soap the “most popular show set in Connecticut.”

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Opening Credits of Zoom on WGBH  
(photo courtesy of Zoomseries.Wikia.com)



Jonathan Frid as Barnabas Collin in Dark Shadows  
(photo courtesy of highlighthollywood.com)

# HERITAGE TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS

## Old Howard Theatre/Howard Athenaeum

By Duane Lucia & Kristie Poehler

On a west end Boston street that no longer exists sat a legendary playhouse—the Howard Athenaeum. The Scollay Square theatre opened its doors in 1846 and was designed by Isaiah Rogers. Rogers was a notable architect, designing the Merchant Exchange building and the Tremont House Hotel in Boston, the Astor House in New York, and the Treasury Department in Washington DC. *The Cincinnati Daily Times* even went so far to say that Rogers was “perhaps, better known than any other person in the country.”

The Howard had 1600 seats, a dress circle and orchestra section, and a stage that was 43 feet deep. Prior to the American Civil War, the theatre and Scollay Square were very involved with the Abolitionist movement. Sarah Parker Redmond, a free black woman from Salem, Massachusetts, had purchased tickets to a performance at the Howard and was made to give up her seats to move to a gallery for blacks only. Redmond sued the theatre and won. Soon after, thanks to William Lloyd Garrison, who printed his *Liberator* newspaper nearby, the theatre became a beacon for civil rights.

After the Civil War was decided the theatre attracted local audiences by introducing Shakespeare and other stage plays. In 1912, to keep up with the new technology, a movie screen was added. By the 1920s, the Howard had an even larger following because of its minstrel shows, burlesque acts and vaudeville performers. One of the most popular performers was Ann Corio.

Corio was originally from Naples, but her family moved to Hartford, Connecticut. She was introduced to the stage life at the young age of eight, and when her father passed away during her teenage years, she learned quickly she could make much more money for her family as a stripper than in any other kind of stage act. Eventually, she would go on to serious stage plays, films and even to author a book about her life. Corio died in 1999 and is buried in Mount Saint Benedict Cemetery in Hartford.

One of the most notorious actors to perform there was presidential assassin John Wilkes Booth. President

John F. Kennedy was said to have visited the Old Howard many times while he was a student at Harvard. Entertainers like Gypsy Rose Lee and Fanny Brice welcomed large audiences; famous comedians like Abbott & Costello, Jerry Lewis, and Jimmy Durante performed there; prize fighters John L. Sullivan and Rocky Marciano were often booked for boxing demonstrations; and the burlesque shows grew more daring each year.

Due to public outcry over the indecency of the shows, the city did not approve the Howard’s license in 1953. After the theater was closed, the Howard National Theatre and Museum Committee formed a decade later to raise money to restore the building. Work stopped with a fire that all but devastated the building.

Recently, The West End Museum premiered a new exhibit, “The Old Howard Theatre,” in celebration of Boston’s oldest and best-loved playhouse, which stood in the heart of Boston’s Scollay Square just steps from the old West End. The Howard’s origin, glory days, and ultimate demise are recounted through photo-

graphs, artifacts, and graphic panels. The show reception takes place on Thursday, October 17 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Concurrent programs—a film screening, an author talk, and an evening of burlesque music—complement the show, which runs through February 15, 2020. The exhibit and reception are free; concurrent programs require admission for non-Museum members.

“Scollay Square and the Old Howard will always be connected to the history of the West End,” said Duane Lucia, the Museum’s executive director and exhibit curator. “By the 1950s, the Old Howard had become synonymous with vice and ‘burly,’ and like the West End, a symbol of a bygone Boston deemed by the powers that be as incompatible with the vision of the ‘New Boston’ and urban renewal.”

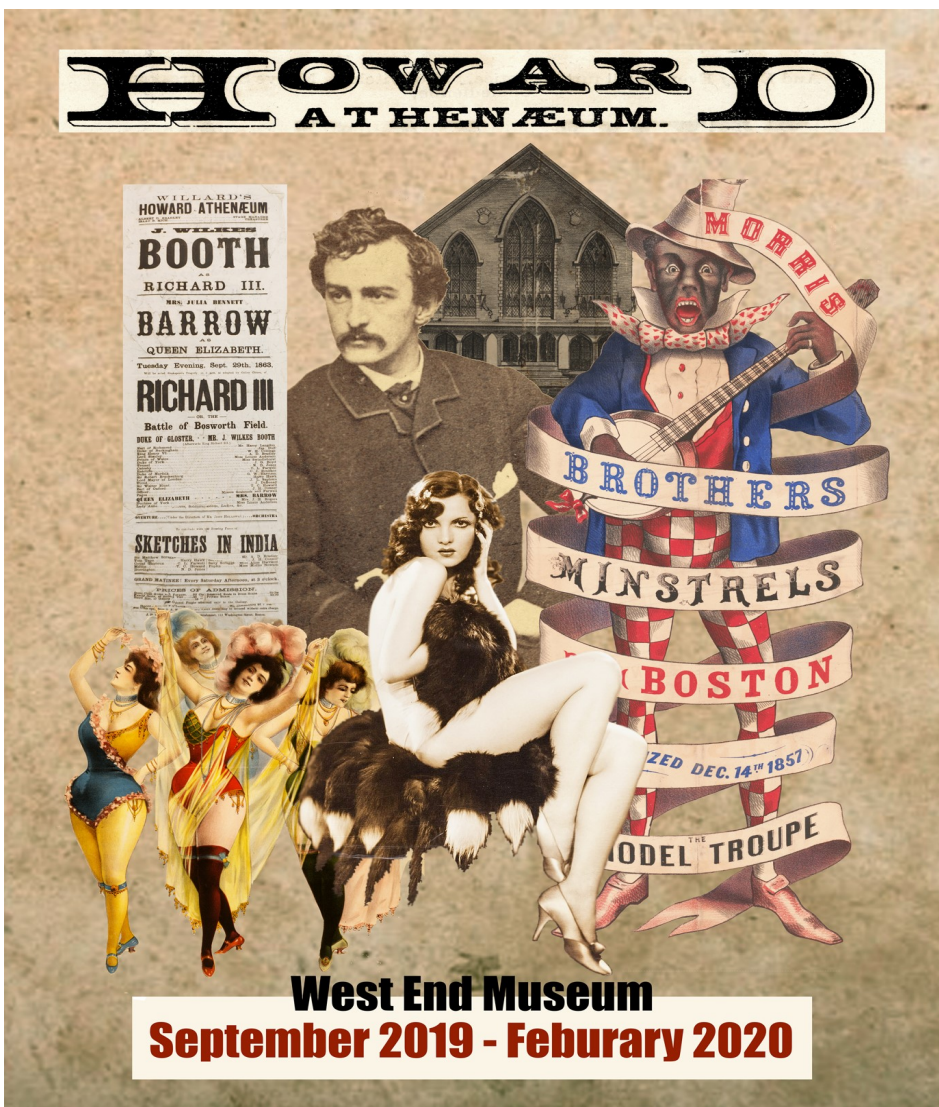
On October 10, the Museum honored Ann Corio as part of its Italian Heritage Month Honoree Night. Other renowned entertainers who will be featured in the exhibit during this period include Abbot and Costello,

W.C. Fields, Jackie Gleason, and Jerry Lewis.

The West End Museum’s detailed exhibit also tells visitors about the downfall of the Howard Athenaeum, thanks to the Watch and Ward Society and vice raids by the Boston Police Department. From the rise of the committee to restore the Howard to the fire in 1960 and through to when the City of Boston swooped in and demolished the building, the West End Museum presents the entire life of the Howard.

**Sources**

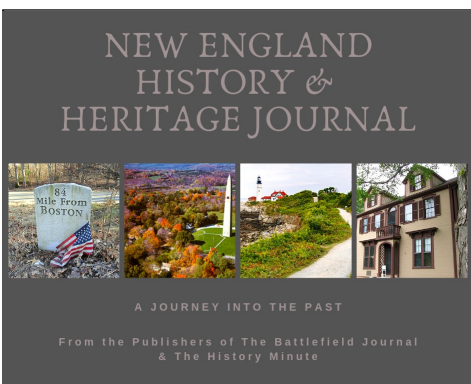
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*Destruction of the Howard Athenaeum (photo courtesy of Bambino Musical)*



*Ann Corio, Queen of The Old Howard Theatre (photo courtesy of Bambino Musical)*



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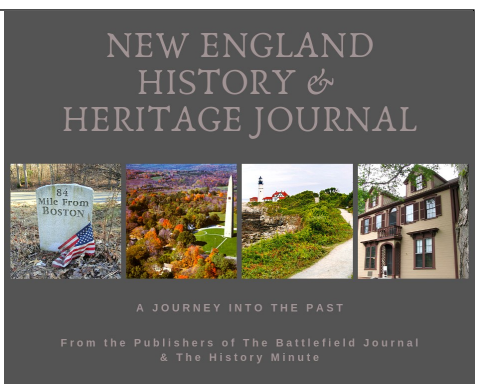
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## THE HISTORY TRAIN

### V is for Von Trapp by William Anderson and Linda Graves

By Kristie Poehler

The History Train encourages young readers to get excited about history-related books. Through the Reader & Explorer's Club, we provide the resources for books clubs that are student-run, in the form of a subscription book club kit. We also provide lesson plans, printables and more for classroom teachers; finally, we help libraries and museums to host their own History Train events.

In this issue of New England History & Heritage Journal's HISTORY TRAIN column, we are spotlighting *V is for Von Trapp* by William Anderson, and illustrated by Linda Graves. (Sleeping Bear Press, 2010)

Age Range: 6-9  
Grade Level: 1-4

The Von Trapp family is internationally known, thanks to the timeless classic movie, *The Sound of Music*, starring Julie Andrews. The movie tells the tale of Maria Kutschera, an orphan who was a postulate nun studying in Salzburg when she met the von Trapp family.

Georg VonTrapp, a captain in the Austrian navy had married Agathe in 1911, and the couple had seven children. While there was no doubt he loved his family, he was a military man through and through, even calling his children to attention using a naval whistle. He also taught them to sing and play many different instruments including guitar and violin.

During a bout of Scarlet Fever that ran through Vienna, Agathe von Trapp died, leaving the captain a widower and his children devastated without their loving mother.

Georg von Trapp left military service to find other ways to support his large family. He also hired a tutor, Maria Kutschera. She was asked to tutor von Trapp's daughter, also Maria, as she was weak and could not walk to the schoolhouse the other children attended. She became close to the family and she was a gifted singer and guitarist in her own right. Von Trapp admired her devotion to his family and fell in love with her. He asked her to marry him. As she loved the family, not necessarily Captain von Trapp, she accepted. The rest is history...and it had much to do

with New England!

Anderson's and Grave's children's book *V is for Von Trapp* uses the alphabet to tell the story about the von Trapp's exciting and suspenseful life together.

Many people are not aware that Georg was twenty-five years older than his second wife. And that the couple had two more children to add to their seven. But through each letter of the alphabet, the young reader learns many more interesting and intriguing facts about the family.

#### Book Club Discussion Questions:

- 1)What did Maria Kutschera do before she was a tutor for the Von Trapp family?
- 2)Talk about Austria. What do you know about this country's geography? Exports? Food?
- 3)What was going on in the world during the time the Von Trapps were starting to make music as a family?
- 4)Why did the family feel they needed to leave their home to come to the United States?
- 5)What about the state of Vermont made the Von Trapp Family want to settle there?

#### Individual Activity—Family Tree

Using the family tree in the *V is for Von Trapp* book, make your own family tree. Have the students involve their parents and grandparents. They should start with their own box in the center with their name, birth date and place of birth. Then draw boxes on each side for their parents, with boxes above each parent for their parents and so on.

#### Historic Site Information

The history-related books the History Train spotlights mention important places in the United States where the main characters or pivotal events happened. The History Train works hard to connect young readers to the history about which they are reading. So each Book Club Kit includes information on one historic site featured in their monthly book!

*V is for Von Trapp* brings the musical family from Austria to Vermont, where they remained for the rest of their lives and where family is still greeting guests at the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont.

When you look at the Trapp Family Lodge website, you will see Von Trapps on the manager's list because they still have a very active hand in the running of the lodge.

As the Nazis took over the Von Trapp's native country of Austria, the family used that as impetus to take their popular concert on a tour of the United States. One year later, they had officially taken asylum in Pennsylvania, where Maria had their son Johannes.

Georg and Maria were familiar with Vermont and decided the mountains reminded them so much of their home that they purchased Gale Farm in 1942. The house they called One Heart would later become known as The Trapp Family Lodge.

The land lent itself perfectly to a camp and within a few years, the Trapp Music Camp opened. That first summer, 1944, over 400 students enjoyed the mountain air and the Trapp family hospitality. These "Sing Weeks" were reminiscent of this popular Austrian pastime.

After Captain Von Trapp passed away in 1947, Maria wrote a book about their life and adventures and their settlement in Stowe, Vermont. Maria won a book award from the Catholic Writer's Guild for best non-fiction book. This book was also the inspiration behind the Julie Andrew movie, *The Sound of Music*, which

premiered in 1959, three years after the Trapp Family officially performed their last concert.

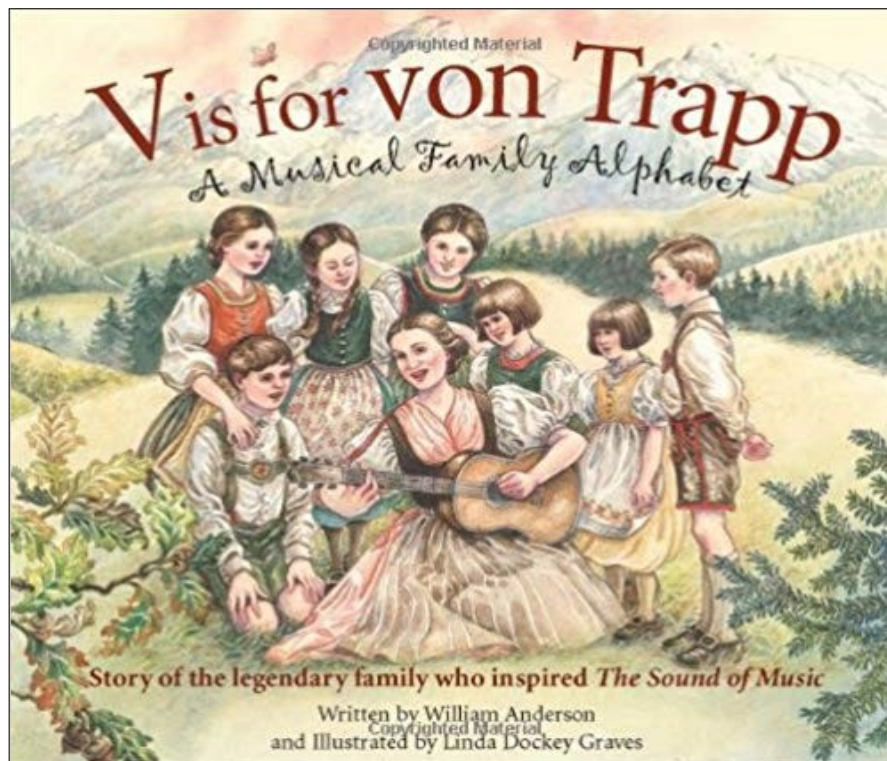
In 1950, the family first welcomed guests to stay in the 27 room lodge. Maria's son Johannes opened the first commercial cross country ski center in the United States from the grounds of the Trapp Family Lodge in the 1960s. The center still has 100 km of cross country trails, well groomed, and perfect for not only skiing but snow-shoeing.

A devastating fire destroyed much of the original European, chalet-style house in 1980, but the family began work immediately replacing it with a 96-room Alpine-style lodge. It reopened as a full resort with both indoor and outdoor activities. Today, Johannes's son Sam runs the Trapp Family Lodge.

For more information or to make a reservation, contact the Lodge's reservations manager at 802-253-5702.

#### Sources

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*V is for Von Trapp* by William Anderson, Linda Dockey Graves

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