



The Babcock-Smith House Museum *Newsletter*

Volume 7 Number 2

November 2011

Granite Book's Hometown Debut

Hundreds of people came to pick up their copies of **Built From Stone: The Westerly Granite Story** and get them autographed by the authors, the local granite men, and our local historians. The line was steady as folks shared their granite stories with each other, asked for special inscriptions, and sneaked a peek inside the book. Many folks had a hand in the production of the book, and we are proud of the final outcome. Sales continued steadily all summer at the *Other Tiger* bookstore, our sole distributor beyond the museum. As of this writing, there were fewer than fifty copies left, so we know that the effort was worth it.



Granite historian Dwight Brown joins in the signing as Docent Co-president Ron Brunelle assists.



Authors Linda Smith Chaffee, Ellen L. Madison, Ph.D, and John B. Coduri happily sign books.



Granite men Isaac Smith, Jr., Richard Comolli, and Harold Buzzi sign the pages on which they are featured.

Curriculum Guide Receives Funding

Betty-Jo Cugini Greene and Susan Sullivan Brocato applied for a grant through the Westerly Education Endowment Fund to work with middle school teachers to create a curriculum guide dealing with Westerly's granite history. The Rhode Island Foundation awarded \$2,187 to fund the curriculum development.

Six lessons will be created for each grade (4, 5 and 6) to

enhance the study of local history. The lessons will include components in art, science, social studies, English and math. Parents and community members will be involved. Tim Ryan, publisher of *The Westerly Sun*, has agreed to print classroom questions and provide answers online. The grant also provides for the preliminary steps in creating a granite video. The curriculum is scheduled to be implemented in the fall of 2012.

Docent News

Fashion Exhibit Being Planned

Because the museum has recently acquired a significant collection of vintage clothing and accessories, plans for a new exhibit are underway. Docents will be involved in assessing the collection, researching the styles and eras of the clothing, and developing the exhibit and plans for a tea to debut the exhibit in the summer of 2012.

Internship Program under Development

Jen Davis, a new docent, brought a well-developed proposal to docents and trustees for a museum internship. Both groups enthusiastically endorsed the proposal. Jackie Brennan will coordinate the implementation of the program which will include all facets of operating a museum. Jen will serve as our first intern, and one of her major responsibilities will be coordinating the fashion exhibit. She will also work with budgeting, marketing, archiving and other aspects of museum life. This program has the potential for collaboration with area colleges and universities for possible credit.

Fifth Grade Tours

In May, 235 fifth graders toured the museum. Their visit included an introduction to the museum, trying colonial crafts, and a tour. Ed Fazio served as coordinator with assistance from Sharon Wright, Wanda Butler, Cathy Larsh and Jan Tunney, as well as twenty other volunteers.



Docent Meg Barclay shares an introduction to the museum with fifth grade students, May 2011.

Fundraising

Mary Cool and Jan Tunney chaired another successful *Doll Tea*. This year's doll tea featured Linda Dellarco from the New London Doll Club. Sharon Wright organized this year's *Veggie Luncheon* held in October. A cookbook of this year's recipes was available. Wanda Butler is the new chairperson of the *Christmas Bazaar*. Many thanks to Mary Lou Walter who has chaired both the bazaar and the veggie luncheon for many years. Carolyn Longolucco coordinated two *Candlelight Dinners* this fall. Tony Smith is coordinating the *raffle* of an elaborate birdhouse donated by Kathy Niles and built by Tony Costa. The raffle will take place on the day of the bazaar.

opportunity to work with the Westerly Historical Society on some of these programs is an additional plus, and Maria Bernier, society president, is busy exploring a grant to enhance these efforts.

Library Lends Granite Exhibit

The Board of Trustees of the Westerly Public Library voted to partner with the Museum by sharing the granite artifacts that were on display prior to the Library renovation. This long-term loan enhances the Museum's ability to share Westerly's rich granite heritage with the public once again. Larger pieces will be placed outside the Carriage House, smaller pieces may be stored in the new storage space created by the cement floor in the museum, and valuable pieces will be stored in the vault when not on display.

Trustee News

Richard Webb Resigns

It is with great regret that we have accepted the resignation for health reasons of Dick Webb from the Board. Dick could always be counted on when a specific task was needed, such as researching a historical marker sign, getting specs on the new furnace, or researching a new bit of technology. We will miss him.

Programming Takes Central Role for 2012

The Board held a special workshop to focus on certain aspects of our business plan, particularly planning programs which will build bridges with various components of our larger community. One of these programs will feature a decades-old documentary about power tools used at the Sullivan Granite Quarry. Other programs will be hands-on workshops for both adults and children. The continued

From the Chair

The current year is quickly drawing to a close and 2011 will certainly be remembered as a very busy and exciting one for the museum, the Board of Trustees, and docents. Our property improvement initiatives this year included the replacement of the museum furnace and oil tank and conversion of the basement dirt floor to cement. Both of these



Dirt floor

Cement floor

building improvement projects were made possible due to a generous grant from the Forrest and Frances Lattner Family Foundation. We are extremely appreciative of the foundation's ongoing support and confidence.



New furnace generations to enjoy.

The furnace replacement also included the installation of a chimney liner, thereby increasing the long-term operational efficiency of the new heating unit.

During the late winter our building security system was replaced with a more updated version which will help us keep the treasures at 124 Granite Street safe for future

As spring arrived, the Board of Trustees decided to consolidate our property management services with a single

vendor for both snow removal and lawn and shrubbery care. Many of you may have noticed the enhanced attractiveness of our landscaping during this past "growing season."

We are very fortunate to have a dedicated group of docents. There would not be a Babcock-Smith House Museum without their tireless efforts. They are a group of wonderful community-minded volunteers responsible for much of the service that the trust provides to our community.

I am greatly appreciative of all the volunteer and financial assistance that the Babcock-Smith House Museum received this year from so many people throughout our southern New England region. Very special thanks to our Board of Trustees and all of our museum members for their ongoing support and belief in our education and preservation mission that guides our efforts throughout the year.

Each year the museum is heavily dependent on its Membership Program as a major source of income that significantly helps preserve one of our town's oldest residential properties, educate local area students on the colonial way of life and preserve Westerly's granite history legacy. I strongly encourage everyone to become a part of the growing Babcock-Smith House Museum family. Museum members will be able to enjoy, at no charge, the numerous educational programs and skills classes currently planned for 2012 and beyond.

John B. Coduri

Museum Library Expanded

The museum library has grown over the last five years. Trustees Ellen Madison, John Coduri and Linda Chaffee and docent Tony Smith grabbed hammers and screwdrivers to assemble four new bookcases for the library. The museum welcomes the donation of books dealing with genealogy, local history, and colonial antiques. Please consider donations to the museum library when you downsize or make space in your own library for new acquisitions.



The Babcock-Smith House Museum does not discriminate. Men and women are invited to participate equally in all phases of operations.

Historic Granite Documentary Film Sunday, November 27, 2-4 PM



The **only known motion picture of the quarrying process in Westerly** will be shown. The film of the Sullivan Quarry in Bradford was professionally produced in order to document the drilling process for the U.S. Bureau of Mines circa 1920. The ninety-year-old film, donated by Dwight Brown, was difficult to view. Stephen Cersosimo of Granite Photo made arrangements with a New York City firm which specializes in the restoration of old films to restore the film for the museum. Amazing in its clarity and detail, the restored silent film will be shown from beginning to end initially. Then granite experts and researchers will repeat the film, stopping to explain the processes shown.

Showings start at 2 PM
repeated at 3 PM

On display will be photographs and artifacts of the quarrying process. Lift a long drill for “deep holing,” pick up a length of quarry chain, see still photos of the quarrying process and Sullivan products. Susan Sullivan Brocato, great-granddaughter of John B. Sullivan, founder and first president of the Sullivan Granite Company, will be available.

For your shopping convenience the granite book and the DVD of Ike Smith’s granite talk will be on sale. Authors will be available to sign books.



Christmas Bazaar Saturday, December 3, 2011 9AM —2PM

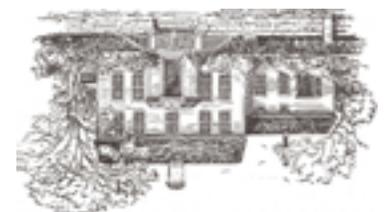


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