



THE VINE

News from Wistariahurst Museum

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Wistariahurst's Golden Anniversary Campaign: A Vibrant Future



Photograph by Denis Luzuriaga.

On June 17, 1959, Katharine Skinner Kilborne deeded Wistariahurst to the City of Holyoke to be used for educational and cultural events. This year, 2009, marks the 50th Anniversary of Wistariahurst as a significant cultural and historic site. The City of Holyoke, with the help of grants, charitable contributions from local businesses and individuals and a dedicated corps of volunteers operates Wistariahurst as a museum with popular programs. The Museum continues to serve the region as a museum, a center for learning and a place of artistic endeavor.

Our aim is to ensure that the future of Wistariahurst remains vibrant. Through serious efforts and support from the community, the **Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund** awarded \$414,000 in state funds for the rehabilitation of Wistariahurst's historic Carriage House. The

Skinner Family's Carriage House will be restored to become a repository for the Archive Collection and serve multiple purposes, including much needed space for programming. The **City of Holyoke** generously matched the Cultural Facilities grant funds. The **United Bank Foundation** also contributed \$3,000 of funding for the Carriage House Renovation. We recently broke ground on this exciting project in April. The Carriage House Improvements will be completed in the Fall of 2009.

The **Wistariahurst Gardeners** and **Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association** has supported restoration of the gardens according to a Cultural Landscape Report by offering their expertise and giving grant funding valuing over \$1,000. Dedicated volunteer gardeners are creating an inspiring urban green space by restoring the landscape to reflect the breathtaking gardens and grounds Belle Skinner worked so attentively to sculpt. Their generous contributions are reflective of continued commitment to help the community preserve and maintain this historic property.

Presently, New England weather and the ravages of time have taken a toll on the house where chipped and peeling paint has become an embarrassing eyesore. Therefore, the urgent focus has become painting the exterior of the house and preserving the building. Under the direction and leadership of the **Board of Historic Holyoke at Wistariahurst**, a campaign plan has been outlined to raise funds to paint Wistariahurst. Contributions from **Skinner Family Members** and a generous pledge from the **Friends of Wistariahurst** are testament to the wide base of public support. Even more extraordinary is the commitment from **Sherwin-Williams Company** to donate *all* of the paint needed to repaint the exterior of the main house.

Wistariahurst is seeking donations from supporters to assist with this goal. A generous contribution from *you* would significantly impact the success of this project and support preservation efforts at Wistariahurst for continued operations while raising the visibility of this site as a public space and community asset.

Wistariahurst Museum

238 Cabot Street, Holyoke, MA 01040
413-322-5660 www.wistariahurst.org

Father's Day Flashback: Classic Cars and Classic Music Sunday, June 21st from 3-7 p.m.



Looking for a great way to celebrate Father's Day? Wistariahurst Museum and the Holyoke Parks & Recreation Department will present Father's Day Flashback: Classic Cars and Classic Music at Wistariahurst from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. You and your friends are invited to a classic celebration featuring classic cars, live music and jivin' dance! The event will feature swinging sounds of the Jack Kowal Swing Band and entertainment with live performances by local singer Jimmy Mazz and international tribute artist Patrick Tobin as "Frank Sinatra".



Tap your feet to the live beats of the Jack Kowal Swing Band. Take a ride thru the music of the Fifties and enjoy everything from Bobby Sox tunes to revving motors and black leather jackets. Jimmy Mazz covers great artists like Buddy Holly, Dion, Fats Domino, Chubby Checker, Chuck Berry and Bill Haley. Enjoy the smooth voice of Patrick Tobin, known not only for his great tribute to Frank Sinatra, but also for his easy laid back style and his affinity for having fun with the audience.



Antique autos will also be out for viewing. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this lively event! The program is *free* and open to the public. Themed events will begin at 3 p.m. Enjoy a classic root beer float, snacks, great music and spend the afternoon relaxing! Please bring a blanket or lawn chair, as seating will not be provided. Tour the grounds and gardens; Wistariahurst gardeners continue to enhance the landscape to its former elegance and charm as part of the Garden Restoration.

The Holyoke Parks & Recreation Department is pleased to sponsor this event and other performances from cultural groups offering concerts, programs and public events throughout Holyoke. Wistariahurst Museum offers a variety of historical, educational and cultural programming for a wide range of audiences. Both organizations are proud members of PassportHolyoke, a network of organizations that promotes the diverse cultural, educational and recreational assets of Holyoke. Visit PassportHolyoke.org for a calendar of community events.

Vehicle for a Small Planet: The History of the Bicycle Exhibition at Wistariahurst: June 3rd through July 31st



This summer Wistariahurst will exhibit extraordinary antique bicycles and present information on bicycle safety, bicycles as green transportation, bicycle racing and the wonderful history of bicycles. On Wednesday, June 3 at 6:00 p.m., Guest Curator and Bicycle Historian Vicki Elson will provide a talk on the History of the Bicycle. Learn how the bicycle started out in the 1860s and discover what innovations led to the creation of the "safety" bicycle that revolutionized women's lives. On Saturday, June 27 at 2:00 p.m. the history of bicycle will come to life with The Bike Lady - a spirited presentation on the history of the "noblest invention" with a costumed historian. Wistariahurst's last Historical Perspective Lecture of the season will be on Clean Transportation on Wednesday, July 1 at 6:00p.m. Join James Lowenthal, Astronomy Professor at Smith College and Chapter President of Mass Bike in the Pioneer Valley as he opens our eyes with an inspiring talk on bicycles as clean transportation. Admission to these programs is \$3 per person; \$10 per family.

Exciting Updates on *Creating Holyoke: Immigrants' & Migrants' Search for Community*



Creating Holyoke Permanent Exhibits - Three permanent exhibits will soon be installed at Holyoke Heritage State Park, The Children's Museum at Holyoke, and Wistariahurst Museum. The exhibits at Heritage State Park and the Children's Museum are slated to open this summer, while the Wistariahurst Museum exhibit will open in the fall. Stay tuned to our upcoming Creating Holyoke events that will be associated with a Grand Opening of all these exhibits in the fall of 2009!

Creating Holyoke Mural Project - The mural project entitled "Youth of Holyoke = Future of Holyoke" is currently under the direction of muralist Deborah Savage. The mural depicts the past and current activities of Holyoke youth organizations. In July, it will be installed on the Children's Museum at Holyoke, as part of the Canal Walk revitalization efforts for downtown.

Creating Holyoke Institute - A five-day professional development program for Holyoke educators in expeditionary learning styles for incorporating historically sound research methods and creative interpretation techniques for classroom use will be launched this summer. The Institute is designed to give teachers both theoretical and practical applications for using primary source documents and arts integration pedagogy as dynamic teaching tools in the classroom. The week-long program includes tours of several local history resource sites, and the development of creative curriculum projects based on historical research. The institute will be facilitated by an Enchanted Circle teaching artist, a Western Massachusetts Writing Project teacher consultant, and the curators of the History Room and Wistariahurst Museum. The Institute will run from July 20 to July 24, 2009.

Creating Holyoke Resource Website - www.creatingholyoke.org is a website currently in development that will provide primary source documents for educators and local historians. Local Simmons graduate student, Kirstin Kay; Penni Martorell, Curator of the Holyoke History Room & Archives; and City Historian, Kate N. Thibodeau, will be providing the primary source documents for a beta version of the website that will be ready for the Creating Holyoke Institute in July 2009. Oral histories will be included on this website as well. Check back for recent additions!

Creating Holyoke WGBY Documentary - WGBY producers, City Historian Thibodeau and writers from Enchanted Circle Theater are currently writing a script for a 45 minute documentary on the themes of Immigration & Migration, Water Power, and the Vibrancy of Holyoke, Massachusetts. Look for this on your local WGBY station in late fall or early winter!

Oral Historians in Holyoke

In fall 2008, Wistariahurst Museum received a grant from the Massachusetts Foundations for the Humanities for a new oral history initiative called Holyoke's Memory Book. Wistariahurst, with the help of a University of Massachusetts Public History Graduate Student, Laura Miller, has been training oral historians from the community since November. The program has included a training session with local scholars on how to conduct oral history interviews; a library of oral history texts; trainees collecting digital oral histories from local institutions; oral history opportunities for classrooms; and access to these oral histories via the museum website and in a local repository. Oral historians have started interviewing local Holyokers and are transcribing those interviews. There are four oral historians working on educating local teachers on how their students can conduct oral histories and why it is important to preserve them. Each classroom will have an Oral History Classroom Kit that includes digital voice recorders, microphones, introductory texts, and sample questions developed by the oral historians. Mass Humanities has generously funded many ongoing projects at Wistariahurst. Mass Humanities has blog site on the Valley Advocate website called The Public Humanist. Visit the site at: <http://masshumanities.org>.



WISTARIAHURST MUSEUM

238 Cabot Street
Holyoke, MA 01040

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Holyoke, MA

Wistariahurst Museum Staff

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Events & Programs

Marjorie Latham

Curator & City Historian

Kate Navarra Thibodeau

Weekend Supervisor

Julie Bullock

Maintenance Supervisor

Jerry Deschenes

Maintenance Associate

Thomas Wilhelmi

Support Our Anniversary Campaign:

If you have not already had the opportunity to participate in our fundraising efforts, please consider making a gift towards the Restoration Fund and contribute to our campaign goal to raise \$100,000 to paint the house. A generous contribution from *you* would significantly impact the success of this project and support preservation efforts at Wistariahurst for continued operations while raising the visibility of this site as a public space and community asset.

Your Gift is Meaningful. Thank you for your Generosity.

_____ \$50 _____ \$250 _____ \$1000 _____ \$ other
_____ \$100 _____ \$500 _____ \$1500

Please make checks payable to *Historic Holyoke at Wistariahurst Museum*.



To find out more about giving, please go to the support page of our website at

www.wistariahurst.org/support.

The Museum is open for guided tours every Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 12-4 pm. Historic House Tours are \$5 general admission and \$3 for students and seniors. The Gallery is open every Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 12-4 pm. For more information or a schedule of other upcoming events, please visit our website at www.wistariahurst.org or call us at 413-322-5660.