The Surprising History of Two of Wistariahurst’s Signature Pieces

What does a scandalous Murder in 1906 have to do with Wistariahurst in 2017? New York architect, Stanford White (1853-1906) was an agent of interior taste for the wealthy during the Gilded Age. In June 1906, in what was then dubbed “The Scandal of the Century,” White was murdered by Harry Thaw in a jealous rage over the glamorous “Gibson Girl” and starlet, Evelyn Nesbit.

To settle White’s outstanding debts after his sudden death, the contents of his Gramercy Park home were sold at two auctions, one April 4-6 and the other November 25-29, 1907. William and Belle Skinner attended these auctions with other elites Hearst, Vanderbilt, Morgan and Whitney. The Skinner purchases are enumerated in several New York newspaper articles describing the items they bought including a couch, a bed, several antique instruments and decorative items.

Fast forward to 2017, Skinner family descendant Fred Waterman, while researching other family information, comes across this image and description from the American Art Association Managers Auction Catalog showing the sofa in its original home, White’s residence. In 2010 Waterman had donated to Wistariahurst this sofa with distinctive round feet that had been handed down to him from his grandfather, R. Stewart Kilborne. Additionally, the Chinese bed, which has been on loan from Katharine Skinner Kilborne Cornwell since 1972, was discovered to have been purchased from the White auction as well.

Journeys Home: Connecting the Path of America’s Immigrants

In celebration of Immigrant Heritage Month Held in collaboration with the Office of the Mayor

Please join us for a special series of programs and events this June in celebration of the immigrants who came to Holyoke in the past and of those who continue to make Holyoke their home.

Join us on June 2 at 6 p.m. in the Gallery to kick off this month-long celebration of immigration. Programming will include an art exhibition, speakers, cultural events, and more.

Please visit our website for the full list of activities.

Keep an Eye Out for Our New Holyoke History App!

This April Wistariahurst is launching a digital app to connect more people with Holyoke’s history! The app will feature a self-guided history tour of the Wistariahurst gardens, a map with places of historic significance around Holyoke marked, and lists of local cultural events. The tours will include historic photos and video and audio clips. Text on the tours is automatically translated for those whose phones are set to Spanish.

The app was developed by Cuseum, which has created apps for museums across the country. Cuseum powers digital experiences that help museums engage their visitors. Watch our website for more details.

WINTER 2016/17: Annual Production of the Nutcracker brings over 800 people to Wistariahurst. More than 200 people enjoy concerts with musicians from the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. Over 350 attend a performance by Climbing PoeTree at the Holyoke War Memorial. 4 new Wistariahurst Docents and 7 Self-Guide volunteers are trained & ready!
Holyoke Heritage Donations

Holyoke Heritage State Park (HHSP) in conjunction with the Commonwealth’s Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) have donated to Wistariahurst and the Holyoke Public Library approximately 10 boxes of archival materials and historical artifacts. The items had accumulated at HHSP over the years as parts of exhibits and educational programs. Collecting artifacts is outside of the HHSP/DCR mission and the items were inaccessible to researchers. Artifacts include signs, ledgers, blueprints, photographs and advertising ephemera.

One particular item of interest is the Certificate of Incorporation of the Monarch Civic and Social Club, Inc. dated March 29, 1949. The Monarch club, was an organization for the “negro” in Holyoke. This item is a rare piece that tells the history of African Americans in Holyoke. Not only does the charter give us a date when the organization was active, but also lists names of the founding members of the organization, which will help us in our on-going efforts to build the record of African American history in Holyoke.

The Art of Steven Huerta

Opening
Friday, June 2, 6 – 8 p.m.
On view Sunday – Tuesdays, 12 – 4 p.m. Through June 27.

Former California native, Steven Huerta, made New England his home in 1996, and now currently resides in Holyoke, MA. From singing to the visual arts, Steven has fostered a spirit of discovery that he attributes to his Buddhist practice, and the never ending inspiration he derives from his friends, and the experiences he’s acquired in this lifetime.

For a complete listing of Art, Music & History events visit WISTARIAHURST.ORG
**UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

**Yoga in the Gardens with Vega Yoga**
Sundays, May 7 - June 25

*9 a.m. VegaFlow Yoga*
Level 3 Aaron’s signature class with dynamic sequences, custom mixes and always taught with modifications for deeper challenges.

*10:30 a.m. Open Levels Yoga*
Beginner-friendly classes open to students of all levels of yoga abilities, from basic level to intermediate.

Drop ins $15. 4 class card for $48 or 8 class for $88.

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**Women’s Experiences**
Creative Writing Workshops
Tuesdays April 11 & 25, May 16 & 30, June 13 & 27
2 – 3:30 p.m. Free and open to all.

Do you like to read? Do you want to write your own poetry? Short stories? Short scenes? Your own memoir? Do you want to strengthen your skills in the English language while also having the opportunity to write about what matters to you?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then join us for a Creative Writing Course held at Wistariahurst and focused on Women’s Experiences. Drop-ins will be welcome throughout the course which runs from January through June, but pre-registering is encouraged!

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**Latinas con Pluma**
A Staged Reading in Celebration of Latina Writers
April 28, 7 p.m., FREE

*Featuring Diana Alvarez, Singer & Guitarist*

Latinas con pluma is a staged reading of poetry, prose, and drama by Latina writers. Selections include excerpts from *When I Was Puerto Rican* by Esmeralda Santiago, poetry by Magdalena Gomez, and plays by Dolores Prida, among others.

The readers are students from Holyoke Community College and the community. The works were compiled by and the readings directed by Patricia Sandoval. After the performance there will be an opportunity for talk back with the director and performers.

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**Holyoke Art League Annual Exhibition**
Opening Reception
Opening Sunday, April 30, 2 – 4 p.m., FREE

The Holyoke League of Arts and Crafts returns to Wistariahurst this spring for their annual Spring show. Artists from Holyoke working in a variety of media will have pieces on display in the juried show.

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**Annual Plant Sale**
Saturday, May 13, 9 a.m.

Wistariahurst’s Annual Plant Sale is hosted by our Volunteer Gardeners, who spend spring, summer, and fall creating and maintaining the magical, historically inspired gardens at Wistariahurst.

All proceeds from the sale go straight back into the care and maintenance of the gardens. For the best selection, makes sure to come early!
WISTARIAHURST
238 Cabot Street
Holyoke, MA 01040

Coming Soon: Women Making Change: A Holyoke History Traveling Exhibit

This summer be on the lookout for Wistariahurst’s traveling museum as it roams the City telling the stories of women from Holyoke’s past who made change in the city, in the state, and across the national scene.

This exhibition is supported in part by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Become a Member to Support Local Art, History, and Music!

For as little as $30 annually, start enjoying the benefits of museum membership and become part of a growing community of individuals who take interest in local history, art, and music! Wistariahurst, as an established resource for local memory and creative expression, provides year-round programs, exhibits, and special events, history and culture throughout the region.

Member benefits include free house tours, discounted tickets to events, members-only events, subscription to The Vine, and access to the museum at your leisure.

Your Membership support helps us fulfill our mission of preserving the history of Holyoke and inspiring an appreciation of people of all ages.

For as little as $30 annually, start enjoying the benefits of membership today by visiting www.wistariahurst.org.