
Pickering House Newsletter

Issue #3

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July 1998



Tag, Leland, Sherrie and Nathaniel Goodhue

Introduction

by Sherrie H. Goodhue

Executive Director

While attending my first Board meeting and listening to a discussion of the future alternatives of the Pickering House, I began thinking about what a great job it would be to care for the most wonderful house and property in Salem. I went home and talked to Tag about the possibility of changing our lives, selling our home, moving into the Pickering House and caring for the house and property. After getting over the initial shock of turning our already busy lives upside-down, Tag thought it was an idea worth pursuing.

We both thought it would be an excellent experience for our family. Our children would grow up surrounded by the rich wonderful history associated with the house and the Pickering family. They would be immersed in a respect of antiquities that is extremely important to both Tag and me.

For those of you who do not know us, my husband, Tag (Albert III) grew up in Marblehead. His family is originally from Salem. His grandparents lived in Salem and summered in Marblehead and after they retired, they took

up permanent residence in Marblehead. Tag grew up spending a lot of time with his grandparents on Cliff Street and eventually his father, Albie and his Mother, Betsy, built a wonderful house on Corn Point. His family's passion was sailing and they spent most of the summers sailing the Marblehead waters and cruising in Maine.

Tag has been a stock broker for 35 years and is currently working at Moors and Cabot in Boston. He is active at the House of Seven Gable, Harmony Grove, the Marine Society of Salem and the Salem Female Charitable Society. After some research we have determined that Tag's great, great, great, great, great, great uncle was married to a 5th generation Pickering.

We have two wonderful small boys, Leland who is about to be four and Nathaniel who just turned two. They seem very excited about their new house and have a hard time deciding which stairway to use to get downstairs. Hopefully we will be able to keep their Tonka toys out of view of the Pickering House visitors.

We spent a few months preparing the Pickering House for our arrival. With the help of lots of people, most of the house has been scrubbed clean, there is fresh paint on many of the walls and woodwork inside the house and there has been a major cleanup of the barn and surrounding area. I would really like to thank Henry Pickering and Henry Binney for all their help in the coordination of the cleanup. They both worked very hard and were fun to be with.

In trying to establish a new schedule for visitation I have been contacting some of the visitors guide groups in Salem. I have been meeting and talking to a wonderful, helpful, generous group of people. They all seem genuinely interested in what is happening at the Pickering House, and everyone is looking forward to our opening for the season.

The Pickering House is truly one of the most wonderful homes in the area. It is a privilege for our family to be entrusted to manage this great house and property. We look forward to caring for your house.

President's Report

Richard L. Pickering

This spring's annual meeting, open to the membership for the first time, has been an attempt to reach out to our constituents and to elicit from them their ideas and energies. I have been thinking about ways to broaden the benefits of membership in an unashamed effort to widen and deepen the participation of our members, neighbors, and friends. We as a Board have, under the by-laws, the sole authority to elect Trustees and Officers of that Board, so that members do not have voting rights, but we certainly don't have any monopoly on good ideas to expand the scope and service of the organization.

The first order of business for the Board of Trustees of the Pickering Foundation is the preservation of the House, its contents, and our status as a "public charity." Along with that comes the obvious need to ensure its future by being responsible stewards of its financial assets. Our current endowment is barely sufficient to maintain the



Tag Goodhue working the grounds

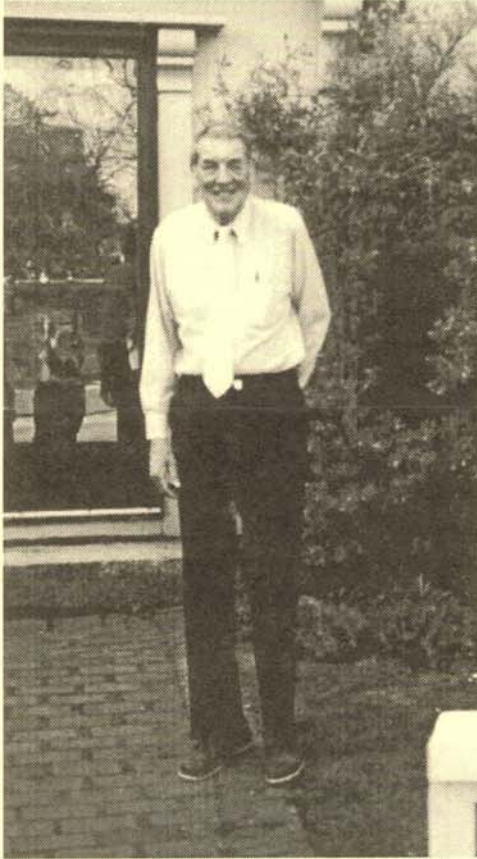
House in the present, and is insufficient to guarantee its secure future. So I ask myself, what are the benefits of membership? Clearly the first is the knowledge that by being a member one helps support one of the most historically significant houses in The United States. Other benefits are the opportunity to visit the House without paying the admittance charge, a priority position in making use of the facilities, such as renting the grounds for a garden party or some such function, receiving our newsletter, attending the annual open house cocktail party each spring, etc. One of the many things that Sherrie and I have been talking about lately is opening up the grounds to members who would like to use them for a community garden, a place to have a Easter egg hunt, a Halloween party for children in the neighborhood. Last year we held a cookout and game day for The Chestnut Street Association. Henry also had a magician at the House following an event at The Atheneum on Easter. Both of those activities point at the kinds of things we can do. One of our most valuable and underutilized assets is our yard, which at just under two acres, is probably the biggest expanse of grass in our part of Salem. I would like to see us repeat those events of last year and expand our offerings to include perhaps some of the mentioned, a lecture series, a string quartet, who knows? Here is a place for the valuable contribution of ideas from our members.

Nothing is more valuable to a non-profit than the contributions of its members whether those contributions are in dollars, labor, or ideas. We currently need your financial support, but we could use your help in the yard work, if any are just itching to get some dirt under your fingernails; we could use help with our mailing list which needs to become centered at the House, with any number of volunteer activities.

These are just some of our thoughts as we ready ourselves for this year's annual meeting. I, for one, have not seen the House since the Goodhues have taken up residence as our new directors, and I look forward immensely to seeing the fruits of their labors over the past six months. I also look forward to seeing as many of you as can possibly attend.

Final Report From Interim Curator

Henry Benson Pickering



*Henry B. Pickering
Interim Curator 1997 - 1998*

I wish to express my gratitude to the President and Trustees for my appointment as Interim Curator for the past year. It has been a rewarding and nostalgic experience showing the house with pride during the summer months and trying my best to keep the records straight during the winter (all outgo and no income!). I have also had time to learn more about Colonel Tim and his first son, John the Sixth. Very important men of their times.

We are all excited about the Goodhue's timely move and to add some interest, I have found that Tag's sixth great-grandfather, Benjamin Goodhue, married a Pickering of the fifth generation. Tag and Sherrie have been most patient and helpful in moving themselves in and moving me out.

I was slightly overcome during the last week of the move to think that I may well be, for some time, the last Pickering to live in the House since 1651. Somewhat sad, but I'm sure for the good of the House and Foundation.

I will long remember the kindness and friendship of my cousins, the Binney family, and also the help and good times with Racket and Martha Shreve.

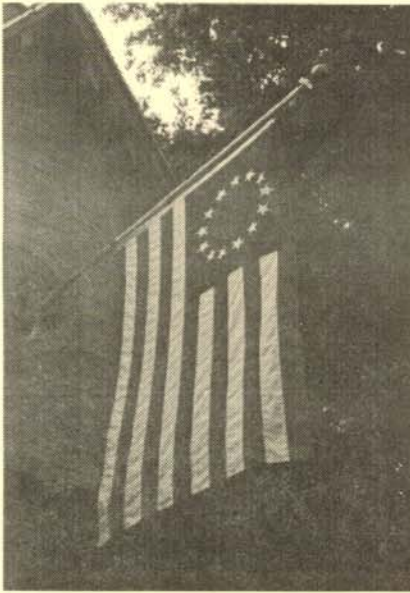
THE LOSS OF A FRIEND

Alfred P. 'Bunny' Putnam, 91

While not news to most of our readers, it is with a great sense of loss that we note here the passing of one of our longest standing members. Bunny was always a most enthusiastic and cheerful attendee at every Pickering Foundation annual gathering. His many memberships and active participation in virtually every non-profit organization in Salem are legendary. The editor did appreciate seeing Rebecca, his daughter, at a small gathering at the House, April 1st, and hope to enjoy her attendance often in his place. We all miss him.

Treasurer's Report

John Pickering II

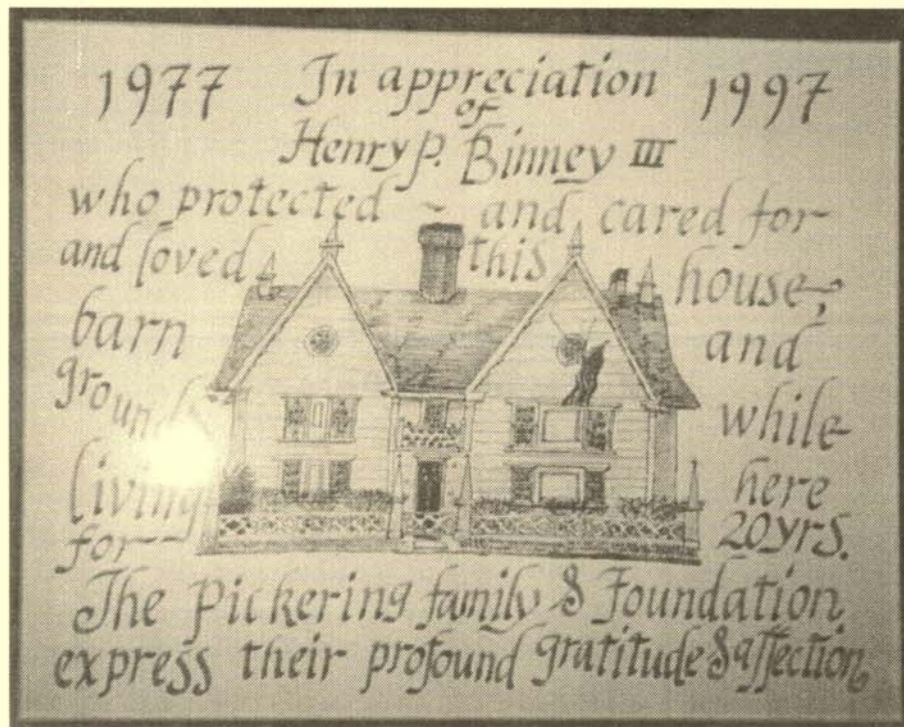


This picture shows our new flag pole, built and installed by Racket Shreve.

Solid performance by our endowment in 1997 enabled the Foundation to (re)purchase a dining room table and to undertake several overdue projects, including much-needed roof work. Overall revenues received were nearly \$28,000 in excess of expenses paid. Membership volume was up 35%, but Admissions were soft (down 33%). Interest income rose and dividend income was stable.

The cash realized from the sale of certain stocks funded a much higher than normal level of expenditures: \$35,000 versus 1996's \$19,000. Of this \$16,000 increase, \$8,000 was spent on Repairs and Maintenance and \$3,500 was for the purchase of the table. Unfortunately, all other expense categories were up as well, by a total of \$4,300, or 26%. The last figure is a concern, but a couple of large items in it should be non-recurring.

Overall, we clearly can't count on being able to take large gains out of our endowment each year. The Board and the Goodhues are working together in 1998 to increase the revenues we can control, particularly in the membership and admissions areas, and to reduce our expense burden. We look forward to your continued support in the revenue categories!



This framed picture of the House and calligraphy, painted by local artist and Board member Racket Shreve, was presented to Henry Binney by your President on April 1st. It reads: "In appreciation of Henry P. Binney III who protected and cared for and loved this house, barn, and grounds while living here for twenty years, 1977 to 1997. The Pickering family and Foundation express their profound gratitude and affection."