



# The Patriot

*Latest News from Fraunces Tavern® Museum & Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York*

Vol. 5 No. 9 (September 2011)

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## **"Time For Another Chukker" Annual SRNY Polo Outing**

By: Anthony Wellman



SRNY 2010 Polo Outing

After last year's successful polo outing The Sons is re-establishing this former annual rite with another gathering at the Greenwich, CT Polo Club on Saturday, September 17, starting at 1:00 pm, for a fun, relaxing afternoon of Polo and fellowship. Attire: "Garden Chic".

Costs:

SRNY Charge: \$10 per person to cover soft drinks and snacks. (No alcohol except as sold by the Polo Club bar.) This fee will be waived for prospective SRNY members.

Polo Club Charge: \$40 per car entry.

Attendees must RSVP by September 15.

More details are available. Please contact Margaret O'Shaughnessy [2administrator@sonsoftherevolution.org](mailto:2administrator@sonsoftherevolution.org) or Fred L. Baker at 203-637-0525 or [flbaker3@yahoo.com](mailto:flbaker3@yahoo.com)

## **A Note from the President: Donald Westervelt**

As the summer comes to an end, I know that as I write this many of you are still reeling from the effects of hurricane, Irene. However, I am pleased to inform you that our beloved Fraunces Tavern has stood firm. Neither eath tremors nor hurricanes can shatter her foundation.

As we all know, the Sun will shine again, the winds will die down and the floodwaters will reside. As President of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York, I am duty bound to plan ahead and in that capacity I must remind you that the Fraunces Tavern Museum opened on Monday, less than a day after the storm and the planned exhibit, "Youth Remember 9/11" sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution is at this time being mounted in the Davis Education Center/Flag Gallery.

I sincerely wish all of our members, families and friends all the best as we approach the coming days.

## **Come and Salute a Great Patriot of 1776!**

By: Anthony Wellman



*SRNY Color Guard Chairman, Jonathan Ridgeway at Nathan Hale statue, City Hall Park      Public school children participating in the 2010 Nathan Hale Day, City Hall  
(Images compliments of Lynne Ridgeway)*

The Nathan Hale Day Commemoration, September 22nd, 2011

Take a moment at lunchtime and join us by the historic Nathan Hale statue in New York's City Hall Park, on September 22, at 12 noon, to commemorate the 235th anniversary of this great Patriot's execution by the British.

Ceremonies will include proclamations, songs by school children and of course a fine display of Revolutionary War flags by the Color Guard of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York.

The activities center around the grand statue of Hale, erected in 1893 by the Sons of the Revolution. To learn more about the statue go to:

[http://www.sonsoftherevolution.org/sotr\\_nathanhale.html](http://www.sonsoftherevolution.org/sotr_nathanhale.html).

The event is co-sponsored by Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York, Inc. and New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

## Comment Book Quote of the Month

By: Jessica Baldwin, Museum Director/Curator

Fraunces Tavern Museum has maintained a comment book since 2005. This book, which located in the Mesick Gallery, provides an open forum for visitors to offer open-ended feedback on the institution's content and services. It is currently the most participatory part of the visitor's experience.

The Museum receives anywhere between 500 to 1200 comments annually. Comments range from children's drawings of George Washington to paragraphs in foreign languages. This type of interaction promotes an increase in personnel involvement in the Museum. People love to leave their mark, especially with a quill pen!

Over 113 comments were written in the month of August. Here are two you might enjoy:

**8/1/2011 "Finally made it here! Awesome history + artifacts. A great history lesson for all."**

**8/9/2011 "Brought my family to visit a great historic place! One in which my Great Grandfather, William Mersereau played a part in restoring to its historic accuracy."**

## Docent Outings

By: Jennifer Patton, Director of Educaiton



Pictured left to right: Anne Siemer, Mel Birnbaum, Jennifer Patton, Leah Charles, Emily Westervelt, Larry Bauman, Marion Marino, Alice Soderberg, Sheila Feivelson, Sami Steigmann. Not Pictured: Janet Foreman, Mara Bernstein, Kayla Desroches

Since the month of August tends to be quite free of tour commitments with children out of school and enjoying their summer break, we thought it would be a perfect time to have a couple docent appreciation outings. Both were very enjoyable and it was great to catch up with the volunteers who hadn't seen each other in awhile.

Early in the month we gathered at the Tribute WTC Visitor Center for a tour given by one of our own docents, Mel Birnbaum. Along with volunteering with us, Mel also serves as a docent at the Tribute Center and the Eldridge Street Synagogue which we had the pleasure of visiting last spring. Joining us on the tour were Mel's fellow volunteers and interns from Eldridge Street. Having worked at the World Trade Center many years ago and experiencing the first attack in 1993, Mel gave an excellent tour detailing what the memorial will soon look like as well as recounting his experience with the first bombing and the events of 9/11. Though the subject matter was very somber to think about, it was also comforting to share the experience with others who dedicate so much of their time teaching others about history and fully understanding how important it is to never forget.

Our second outing was more uptown in Manhattan to tour the beautiful historic art and architecture of the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine at 112<sup>th</sup> Street and Amsterdam Avenue. Once again through a connection of one of our public tour docents, Michael Wolf (who also volunteers at the Cathedral), we were given an amazing tour of this historic place by Kevin Blum, the co-director of public education and visitor services. Walking through the massive Cathedral which has seen so much of the city's history and growth since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was fascinating, especially with Kevin pointing out amazing details that we would not have noticed on our own.

The month wrapped up with our annual fall breakfast meeting for both our returning and new school program docents. Some exciting changes are planned for this year! Everyone always looks forward to the breakfast meeting as it is the perfect time to catch up on everything from summer trips to sharing personal reflections on how last year's programming went.

Without the volunteers' dedication and commitment, we would not be able to fulfill our mission to educate both the children and adults who walk through our doors every day. Their contributions are priceless. It is a pleasure to work with these wonderful people and it has been truly rewarding to get to know them over the years. We are all looking forward to what the 2011/2012 school year has to bring and can't wait to share our love of history with students, both young and old, over the next 9 months!

## Evening Lecture Series

By: Jennifer Patton, Education Director

Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm\*

### **The Dubious Achievements of the 1st and 2nd Continental Congress**

Presented by James Thompson

In September of 1774, two cousins, Samuel and John Adams, rallied with the chaotically varied pro-loyalist and pro-separatist opinions of the 1<sup>st</sup> Continental Congress in Philadelphia to defend their own mission: that natural law implies the right to revolution, allowing American colonials to abolish a tyrannical government. James C. Thompson details this initial struggle and expands on how Adams, along with other separatists, faced an uphill battle on the road to revolution. On special display this evening will also be a painting from the Museum's treasured John Ward Dunsmore Collection depicting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Congress, where John Adams stood to once again contribute his perspective – this time proposing that Colonel Washington of Virginia be named Commander-in-Chief while Washington quietly slips out of the room upon hearing his name. Just one of four

Dunsmore works in the Museum's collection still in need of conservation, this painting is another example of the country's complex and uncertain beginnings.

\**Please Note* – Due to high attendance at our lectures as of late, the Museum now has a limited number of reservations available for members only. Contact [curator@frauncestavernmuseum.org](mailto:curator@frauncestavernmuseum.org) for more information

**Mark your calendars – you don't want to miss these upcoming events!**

**Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>**

*John Barry: An American Hero in the Age of Sail*, Presented by Tim McGrath

**Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> +**

*Independence: The Struggle To Set America Free*, Presented by John Ferling

+ Please note this is a different date than what was previous announced in The Patriot

**Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**

*The Whites of Their Eyes: Bunker Hill, the 1<sup>st</sup> American Army, and the Emergence of George Washington*  
Presented by Paul Lockhart

## **Curatorial Interns: Hard at Work**

By: Jessica Baldwin, Museum Director/Curator

Fraunces Tavern Museum's mission is to educate the public on Colonial America, the Revolutionary War and the Early Republic. This is accomplished through exhibits, educational public programming, research publications and maintaining a manuscript and object collection. The Museum has been fulfilling this mission since 1907.

Over the past 104 years the Museum has acquired over 2,300 objects, including archival documents. The preservation, conservation, and research of the collection are crucial in staying mission focused. With a collection that varies from 300 year old pieces of brick to Chippendale furniture there is much stewardship needed, which is why the Curatorial Department hired four summer interns, Josh Levine, Victoria Musselman, Diandra Wong and Christina Pisano to help.

With the guidance and supervision of the Curator, these four interns started the cornerstone tasks of collection management, wall-to-wall inventory and condition reports. The purpose of the wall-to-wall collection inventory is to provide accurate and up-to-date locations for every object in the collection. The condition reports will present an accurate and informative account of each objects state of preservation at a moment in time. Knowing the location and condition of all 2,300+ objects are enormous and necessary tasks.

In July, starting with the first object every collected by the Museum (a pew railing from North Dutch Church used as a prison for Patriots during the Revolutionary War – see image below), Josh, Victoria, Christina and Diandra were able to locate and conduct condition reports on over 100 objects! Christina, a Master of Arts candidate at Brooklyn College took on the special task of transcribing a piece from the General Henry Burbeck

manuscript collection, “History of the Straits of Gibraltar, Lt. Col Thomas James, Royal Reg’t of Arty, London.” She was able to complete the transcription, providing better access to researchers and visitor inquires.



Pew railing from North Dutch Church, which was used as a prison for those captured by the British during the American Revolution.

In less than three full months these four dedicated interns gave a combined 261 hours. On behalf of myself and the entire Museum staff, I would like to thank Josh, Christina, Victoria and Diandra for spending their summer at Fraunces Tavern Museum! In a show of appreciation, each intern was gifted a copy of the Museum’s publication, *Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers* by Kym S. Rice.

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Published monthly by The Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York

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