

MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE FOUNDATION

THE ENGAGER

FALL/WINTER 2003

BID ON YOUR DREAM VACATION & SUPPORT THE GAGE FOUNDATION

Dream of lounging on the beach in the British Virgin Islands in February? Playing golf in Myrtle Beach with condo provided? Time traveling in an old sea captain's mansion (now a B&B) in Key West? Being on a working ranch, next door to Marsha Mason, in Abiquiu, New Mexico?

These vacations are among the items up for bid at our **November 23 auction**, hosted once again by generous supporter Tom Thomas at the Wellington House, providing everything from exquisite food to valet parking.

Grammy Award Nominee **John Fricke**, author of newly released *Judy Garland: A Portrait in Art and Anecdote*, is Master of Ceremonies for an afternoon of food, entertainment and holiday shopping. Actress/author **Mimi Kennedy**, Dharma's hippie mother Abby in the TV comedy series "Dharma and Greg," joins us again as a Special Guest, as does **Mac Hudson**, a descendant of Matilda Joslyn Gage and L. Frank Baum.

Other special auction items include:

- The voice of Dharma's mom on your answering machine
- First edition (1893) of Gage's classic *Woman, Church and State* (difficult to find today)
- Oz Collectibles
- Rare and old New York state maps worth \$1000+
- Full set (all 6) of *History of Woman Suffrage* (Gage co-edited first three volumes)

A wide variety of silent auction items includes framed artwork, children's clothing made in the South of France and collectible (some signed) baseball cards.

Cost: \$50 / person, \$75 / couple, \$150 / patron couple.

Space limited to first 100 reservations

If you live outside the area and are interested in bidding on the auction items, contact the Gage Foundation for information. Mjgagfoundation@aol.com



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- November 23 – Auction at the Wellington House
- November 28 – 5-7 pm Oz Celebration at the Gage House
- November 29 – 11am-3 pm Oz Celebration at the Gage House
- December 4 – Syracuse Stage Special Evening

GALA INCLUDES SYRACUSE STAGE PREMIER OF *THE WIZARD OF OZ*

Silver Shoes and Yellow Gold: Was *The Wizard of Oz* Really About Politics and Economics? is the intriguing title for Ranjit Dighe's lecture/discussion at a special gala **December 4**. Guests enjoy a private reception at Syracuse Stage, silent auction of unique Oz memorabilia, and view an exhibit of L. Frank Baum's early life in Central NY prepared by Kathy DiScenna, founder of Land of Oz Preservation Company.

Dr. Dighe authored *The Historian's Wizard of Oz: Reading L. Frank Baum's Classic as a Political and Monetary Allegory* (Praeger: 2002), is Associate Professor of Economics at SUNY Oswego, and a member of the Gage Foundation Local Advisory Committee. DiScenna serves on the Development Committee.

The evening begins at 6:00 pm, capped by the preview performance of Syracuse Stage's production of *The Wizard of Oz*, based on Baum's classic. Mother-in-law Matilda Joslyn Gage heartily encouraged him to write down his children's stories and is thus indirectly responsible for the Great American Fairy Tale.

Tickets (\$30.00) limited to the first 100, available only from the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation
mjgagfoundation@aol.com or (315) 637-9511



Sally Roesch Wagner

DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2003

It's hard to believe WE ARE ONLY THREE YEARS OLD! Incorporated in 2000, we became tax-deductible in 2001, bought the Gage House in 2002 and have raised \$325,000 this year toward restoration. **You** helped us grow that fast!

Our primary mission, to "promote an increased understanding of the life, work, times, and co-workers of Matilda Joslyn Gage," directly touched over 3500 people in 2003, from Rotary Clubs to K-College classes (and seniors) to TV appearances.

At a New York City fundraiser held in March by JP Morgan Chase for the proposed women's history museum, a Gage performance brought in more new friends, as did a talk at the Native American Service Agency's "Wisdom Keepers" luncheon. Also in March, Girls Inc. named Gage for their *Honoring Herstory* award.

Gage's words reached Wells College graduates last May, when I had the honor of delivering the commencement address.

In September, I received a grant from the Upstate History Alliance to attend the New Museum Director's Institute at Sagamore, and returned with lots of new ideas and the firm realization that we're on the right track.

Last month in D.C., at the founding convention of the National Collaborative of Women's History Sites, my panel presentation on our fundraising activities had

other sites wanting to adopt our ideas. I serve on the steering committee of this new organization.

The miracle is that we have done all this work with an Executive Director and Office Manager working only ¾ time, aided by a lot of volunteers. *FULL THROTTLE IN 2004* is our goal, to bring Foundation staffing to full time. Restoration funds provide no operating funds—so it's up to you, dear supporters, to help us reach that goal!

GAGE HOUSE RESTORATION: GOOD NEWS!

REPORT BY JUDITH WELLMAN, CHAIR-HOUSE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

After technical delays, we are delighted to have Liz Mathers from the Syracuse Metropolitan Development Agency helping us coordinate our restoration grants: \$223,000 from HUD, gotten for us by Rep. Jim Walsh; \$75,000 from the Empire State Development Corporation,

through Nancy Lorraine Hoffman; \$20,000 from the Community Foundation and \$7,000 from the Preserve New York Grant Program.

Randy and Beth Crawford, of Crawford and Stearns, Preservation Architects, met with the Board in October to outline

basic things we can do to keep the house safe through the winter. We hope to begin actual restoration work in the spring. Stay tuned for further information.

The young man measuring and photographing the Gage yard is Michael Comisso, graduate student in

landscape architecture at SUNY's Environmental Science and Forestry. For his capstone project, Michael has chosen to do an overall treatment plan for the Gage property. As we restore the house, Mike will be developing a plan for rehabilitating the landscape.

FRIENDRAISERS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Our first *Fundraiser* was in Louise Bernikow's NYC living room in 2002. A gathering of who's who in feminist writing learned about Gage and efforts to restore her to her rightful place in history. "What can we do to help?" Gloria Steinem asked. She is now on our National Advisory Committee.

This September Louise followed up with "The Shoulders We Stand On: Women as

Agents of Change," a fundraising slide/lecture co-sponsored by Onondaga Community College.

St. Petersburg, FL kicked off 2003 with a *Fundraiser* sponsored by Jan Loeb Eisler, B. J. Star, organizer, and M.J. Hardman hosted one in Gainesville. Albuquerque supporters Joan Robins and Denise Wheeler held one in May; Scottie Daugherty hosted another in Santa Fe the next

day.

Next year: Tucson, AZ; San Diego and Santa Barbara in southern CA.

The plan is simple. Invite friends for refreshments and Gage education. Sally Wagner brings the message, gift shop items for sale and information on how people can join the work of the Gage Foundation.

Want to host a *Fundraiser*? Let us know. We'll help with arrangements.

"WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?"
GLORIA STEINEM ASKED

GUESTS FROM NEAR AND FAR

The 2,700 miles between Santa Barbara, CA and Fayetteville, NY didn't stop 77-year-old Margaret Broughton from giving herself a visit as a graduation present. The oldest to graduate from the University of California at Santa Barbara, Margaret stood in Matilda's home where so much history was made and exclaimed, "I cherish my time in the Gage House!"

The Smithsonian Institution included the Gage House in their September Weekender tour, "Women's Rights: Working for the Vote" along

with a lecture by Dr. Wagner on the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) influence on the woman suffrage movement.

We entertained the New York State Women's Bar Association in May and two groups of Russian women leaders, who visited in June and November as delegates from the International Center of Syracuse' Open World Program.

These visitors were among the many, from a reception for *Manifesta* author Jennifer Baumgartner, to a tea-

booksigning by Rev. Betty Bone Scheiss, who sat in the front parlor this year and discussed Gage's challenging ideas. Be among them in 2004!

Visit our web site: www.matildajoslyngage.org or call (315-637-9511) for tour information or to learn how to arrange a meeting at the House for your organization. It's never too late to learn more about Matilda Joslyn Gage—just ask Margaret.



Board of Directors:

Loretta Zolkowski, President
Jeanne Shenandoah, Vice President
Judy Wellman, Secretary
Jackie Charette, Treasurer
Rosemary Agonito
Barb Evans
Mac Hudson
Jack Manno
Francis McMillan Parks
Ruth Putter

National Advisors:

Louise Bernikow
Michael Patrick Hearn
Coline Jenkins-Sahlin
Mimi Kennedy
Mary Ann Krupsak
Barbara Seaman
Gloria Steinem

Descendant Advisors:

Jocelyn Birch Burdick
Harry Carpenter
Janet Baum Donaldson
Gita Morena

Local Advisors:

Barbara Brown
Alan Byrne
Dora Lee Dauma
Connie Lowe
Tom O'Shea
Barbara S. Rivette
Betty Bone Schiess

Executive Director:

Sally Roesch Wagner

GAGE HAS RIPPLE EFFECT IN NEW YORK CITY

There is a word sweeter than mother, home or heaven—that word is liberty.

Helen LaKelly Hunt pointed proudly to the Gage pin she wore during the New York City fundraiser she co-hosted in October for Women's Advocate Ministry. Founder and President of The Sister Fund, which gave us a \$10,000 challenge grant toward the pur-

chase of the Gage House in 2002, Dr. Hunt quoted Gage's slogan and remarked,

Matilda Joslyn Gage illuminated for us a hundred years ago what the women of WAM have learned from their two decades of close relationship with incarcerated women – that the most important human right is liberty.

All 200 attendees went home with a Gage pin, compliments of the Foundation Board and the Syracuse Cultural Workers.



OZ CELEBRATION AT THE GAGE HOUSE



Memorable characters from the fourteen Oz books by Matilda's son-in-law L. Frank Baum will decorate The Gage House for the holidays.

Local Girl Scouts and Brownies will create colorful pictures of Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, the Patchwork Girl, Ozma, and others.

On **November 28** from 5:00 – 7:00 pm and on **November 29** from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm, the house will be open to the public for a *one-weekend-only free admission* during the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce's *Carrier and Ives* celebration. Come and see the girls' artwork!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2003 SPIRIT OF GAGE AWARDEES:

Barbara Rivette, historian, for preserving the memory of Gage and her struggle for women's rights when she was almost lost to history;

Antje Lemke, Syracuse University professor emeritus, for promoting religious freedom through her study of Albert Schweitzer;

Cynthia Baum Tassini, niece of L. Frank Baum and last surviving member of the Baum family who knew him, for keeping his memory alive;

Audrey Shenandoah, Onondaga Nation clan mother, for teaching the Haudenosaunee culture much as it was taught to Gage 150 years ago;

Vivian Moore, educator and diversity advocate, for continuing the struggle for racial equality of the abolitionists.

2003

Spirit of Gage Awards



LIBERTY BRIGADE DOUBLES ITS CHALLENGE

Pat Cross responded to our call to join the "Liberty Brigade" last spring with a challenge: she would pledge \$500 a month to support the Foundation's work if others would match her. Others

met her challenge, giving us \$1,000 a month assured income. Now Pat and the others want to double the challenge. They invite you to consider making a monthly donation to bring the Liberty

Brigade up to \$2,000 a month.

[Meet the challenge and watch us grow!](#)

CURRENT INTERNS AND STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Mike Commisso
SUNY ESF—preparing landscape plan for the Gage House

Briana Newton
Syracuse University—filming our Jerry Rescue (UGRR) 2003-2004 sister city program with Kingston, Ontario

April Palmer
SUNY Empire—tracking down published writings of Gage

Lauren Tipton
Wells College—Gage, Stanton & Anthony's writings on reproductive rights

THE WONDERFUL MOTHER OF OZ

The Wonderful Mother of Oz by Sally Roesch Wagner, the first in our new Matilda Joslyn Gage Reader Series, is now rolling off the press! The booklet carefully details Gage's influence on the fourteen-Oz books of her son-in-law, L. Frank Baum.

Gloria Marvin and Sue Boland are now editing the next book-

let in the series, *Gage's Woman As Inventor*, which will be available March, 2004. Our goal of reprinting Gage's articles and speeches in affordable, annotated booklets, as well as essays about her, is made possible by a generous donation from an anonymous donor.

Beautifully designed by Mary

Jane Broadbent of MJ Broadbent Design in New York City, the series, rich with rare photos, will be produced in-house with the state-of-the-art equipment we purchased with the \$50,000 grant we received from the Ludwick Family Foundation in 2001.

GAGE GOES NATIONAL—AND INTERNATIONAL

David White addressed the South Place Ethical Society in Conway Hall, London this July on the life and times of Matilda Joslyn Gage. David and his wife Linda have established a Gage Study group in Rochester, NY. Greg Chester took the message of Matilda to his Unitarian-Universalist congregation in Minnesota, while Gloria Marvin's UU Gage Study Group

in St. Petersburg, FL has moved on to reading the *Oz* books, comparing them with Gage's *Woman, Church and State*.

Gloria and B.J. Star both organized celebrations of Gage's March 24 birthday in St. Petersburg, and Gage descendant Mac Hudson did the same in Tucson.

We began a partnership with the Kingston, Ontario Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship

which will culminate in a 2004 program of young people in Fayetteville and Kingston learning about the famous Syracuse fugitive slave rescue, the Jerry Rescue, and traveling to each other's cities to share their understanding of the story. We are everywhere!

J

MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 192
210 E. Genesee Street
Fayetteville, New York 13066
(315) 637-9511 phone/fax
mjgagfoundation@aol.com

We're on the Web!
www.matildajoslyngage.org

THERE IS A WORD SWEETER THAN MOTHER, HOME, OR HEAVEN. THAT WORD IS LIBERTY.