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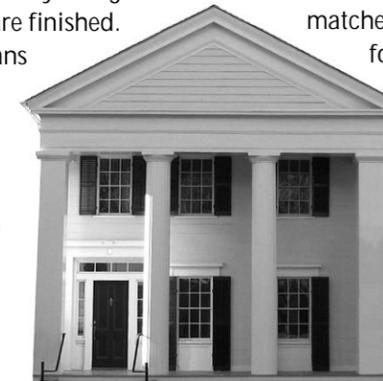
The Engager

FALL 2007

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GAGE HOME REHAB PROGRESSES

We've completed Phase One of the rehabilitation of the Gage Home. The roofing, cornice, chimney and gorgeous front portico are finished. Our architectural plans for the rest of the restoration stood ready when we received a \$290,000 matching grant from the state to add on a replica of the woodshed that once stood at the back of the Gage Home. The



woodshed will add a third more room to our building and allow us to put the toilet facilities, kitchenette, and handicapped accessibility in the woodshed so we'll have the whole historic portion of the building for exhibits and interpretation.

The only downside is delay: we need to match the grant, dollar for

dollar. While we have already raised a total of \$650,000 in grant money toward the rehabilitation, little of it matches the woodshed grant, for which we need to raise private funds. We received a \$10,000 grant from Heritage New York through the Upstate History Alliance to hire a consultant to help us plan a spring launch for a capital campaign to raise the

matching funds. In the meantime, much is going on behind the scenes.

We carefully investigated the house fabric and found wonderful details, including period wallpaper, which we'll replicate. Meanwhile, we scoured more than 500 family letters and newspaper articles, compiling

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Congressman Visits

U.S. Congressman James Walsh visited the Gage Home August 7 to see for himself the work done during the first phase of the home's rehabilitation. Walsh secured the single largest gift to the restoration project to date — a Congressional appropriation of nearly \$224,000.

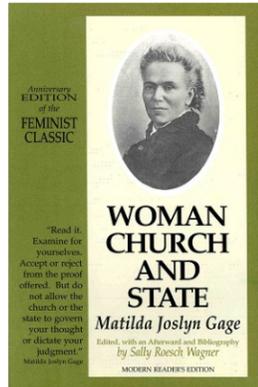


Said Walsh, "The people who lived and worked in this house affected so much of American society — the end of slavery, women's right to vote, which I think is as important an event in the history of mankind as any, because it really changed the way America looked to the future and the way democracy has been

AHEAD OF HER TIME

Are some of today's issues all that 'contemporary'?

More than a century ago, Matilda Joslyn Gage nailed timely but controversial topics in her epic work, "Woman, Church and State." Here are a few samples of what she wrote then about issues that are headlines now.



On priestly sexual abuse: The insolence of the priesthood was that of all periods. Claiming direct inspiration from God, they taught their own

infallibility and in [the] name of Him whom they professed to serve, the grossest crimes were committed. (43)

On polygamy: The belief is inculcated in woman that ... [w]ithout marriage there is no resurrection for her, and thus believing polygamy a requisite for eternal salvation, thousands silently endure the woes of this condition. (240)

On individualism: ... examine for yourselves; accept or reject from the proof offered, but do not allow the Church or the State to govern your thought or dictate your judgment. (Preface) No step so great in its far-reaching results is that of independent thought, none so greatly feared by priestly and civil power. (238)

On woman's equality: All the evils that have resulted from dignify-

ing one sex and degrading the other may be traced to one central error: a belief in a trinity of masculine gods, ... from which the feminine element is wholly eliminated. (309)

On progress: Reverence for the ancient in customs [and] habits of life, law [and] religion is the strongest and most pernicious obstacle to advancing civilization. (79)

Page numbers of quotations are shown above in parentheses. Thanks to the Gage Focus Group of St. Petersburg, Fla., for selecting these excerpts!

"Woman, Church and State — Modern Reader's Edition" (1998), edited by Sally Roesch Wagner, is available in the Gage Foundation bookstore or online at www.matildajoslyngage.org.

Archaeological Dig Uncovers More of Home's Past

Volunteers ages 2 to 82 grabbed trowels and buckets to take part in the third archeological dig at the Gage Home this summer. With guidance from Kim Christensen, a doctoral candidate in archaeology at the University of California Berkeley, they helped excavate a checkerboard of pits behind the Gage Home.

Christensen began digging test pits on the Gage

property in 2005 and 2006. This year, she returned with 10 Berkeley archaeology students, and together they marked off the backyard into one-yard squares and began digging. They soon unearthed the foundations of the woodshed that once stood at the back of the house.

As the dig progressed, people from the local
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Dig leader Kim Christensen shows artifacts to a group from Girls Inc., who spent a day helping with the excavation.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



organization to growth.

Realizing we can't all do everything, the board is moving to a form that allows members to specialize, each chairing a committee that will do a

Adolescence. That exhilarating spurt of energy is what it feels like around the Gage Foundation as we move from the start-up phase of our

piece of the work of the Foundation. We're gearing up for the chartering process, getting our education and tour programs ready, and hosting rehabilitation tours so folks can see our work-in-progress.

An August interpretive planning session, funded by Heritage New York and administered by the Upstate History Alliance, resulted in the consultant's recommendation that "The Matilda Joslyn Gage Home, as a significant historical site whose interpretation conveys the importance of the advancement of human rights (abolition, woman's rights, freedom

of speech, freedom of thought), should be included in the Sites of Conscience." Working with the team of consultants, we developed the theme of our interpretation: CONSCIENCE IN COMMUNITY, and have joined the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience.

Please join us during this exciting growth spurt as we strengthen and move forward the message of human freedom contained in the Gage Home. To volunteer as a consultant or committee member, please contact the Foundation office.

— Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner

Help Us Go Virtual (and Green)! To receive your newsletter via e-mail along with our new monthly e-mail updates, contact: Foundation@MatildaJoslynGage.org. Tell us if you want to stop receiving the paper version.

Engage in Oz in 2008

Mark your calendars now for the third annual Wonderful Weekend of Oz, Oct. 10-12, 2008. For the first time, The International Wizard of Oz Club will co-host the event with the Gage Foundation, and will hold its annual board meeting during the weekend.

The village government, local library, chamber of commerce, and Girl Scouts are among the planners as we look forward to the biggest and best WWO yet. There will be Oz and Gage exhibits, performances, movies, receptions, presentations by scholars and descendants, and a host of children's activities.

Come tour the home where L. Frank Baum and Gage's youngest daughter, Maud, were married, and which is being restored using photographs Baum took in 1887. Find the spirit of Matilda Joslyn Gage, the

Descendants of Matilda Joslyn Gage and her son-in-law, Oz author L. Frank Baum, visited Fayetteville for this year's Wonderful Weekend of Oz. From left to right: Gage Foundation Executive Director Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner, Amy Schwemm, Mac Hudson, Gita Dorothy Morena, Robert Baum, and Meagan Mantele.



woman who convinced Baum to write for children.

The 2007 Wonderful Weekend, Oct. 5-7, was a showcase of scholarship and entertainment. The highlights: a showing of the classic MGM "Wizard of Oz" movie, panel discussions funded by the New York Council for the Humanities, and the Gala Fundraising Auction, hosted for a sixth year by Tom Thomas at the elegant Wellington House.

Gage Study Group

The Gage Study Group held its first meeting Nov. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Foundation offices. The group began with the first chapter of Gage's Magnum Opus, "Woman, Church and State." If you'd like to come to future meetings, contact Donna Nortman at (315) 672-8344 or mnortman@twcny.rr.com.

UPDATES

GAGE ESSAY CONTEST

How do I exercise my rights as a citizen? What happens to people in opposition to authority? These questions form the basis of the 2008 Gage essay contest. Students from local high schools will explore how Gage dealt with the issues, comparing her strategies with those of activists today. The Gage Local Advisory Committee is organizing the annual contest and will announce winners on Gage's birthday, March 24.

CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP WITH SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Graduate students in Mary Elisabeth Lang's Museum Management course at Syracuse University focused on the Gage Foundation for two projects this semester. The museum chartering assessment report and the collections policy manual they created will be great resources as we develop the Gage Home as a museum. Intern Donna Nortman began organizing the collections management process for the museum.

BOARD & COMMITTEE NEWS

Donna Nortman, who completes her Master's degree in Museum Studies at Syracuse University in the spring, joins the Board as chair of the Museum Committee. Diana Green, a social studies teacher at Fayetteville-Manlius High School, also now serves on the Board while co-chairing the Education Committee with Vince Monterosso. New Board member Karen McMahon, President of ShopforMuseums.com, chairs the Marketing & Membership Committee. Plus a welcome to the new co-chairs of the Local Advisory Committee, David Kellogg and Stephanie Zwolinski.

DIG, cont. from p. 1

community — parents and kids, teenagers, and a dozen members of Girls Inc. — stopped by to join in.

During her stay, Christensen held field schools for local archaeology enthusiasts, both teens and adults, in conjunction with the William Beauchamp Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association.

Back at Berkeley this fall, Christensen has been working with undergraduates to wash, sort, label, and begin cataloging artifacts.

The dig helped piece together new details of the Gages' everyday life. Among the artifacts unearthed during the dig were glass bottles, a needle case made of bone, pieces of china and pottery, and a tiny but finely detailed toy horse made out of metal, which the Gage Foundation will reproduce for sale in our gift shop.

"We know the Gages had four children," Christensen told a local newspaper reporter last summer. "It's very easy to imagine them playing in

the yard and losing something."

While the dig yielded objects that the Foundation can use in restoring the Gage Home, it also gave community diggers a rare chance to learn about local history.



Community volunteers take part in the excavation.

"People think of archaeology as ancient artifacts in faraway places overseas," said Christensen. "But artifacts are everywhere. In a situation like this, it's part of the local history and the local culture. It adds to what we know about here."



A toy horse unearthed in the dig.

REHAB, cont. from p. 1

information about daily life at the Gage Home. Piecing together the physical details of the house with the social history, we are creating a richly textured history of this important site.

Jamie Callan, a Construction Management student at SUNY-ESF, is chairing an ad-hoc "greening" committee to explore ways, from salvaging to solar, that we can complete the rehabilitation and run the Gage Home in an environmentally friendly way.

Otis Deluca, president of Emerging Green Builders of CNY, and Naomi S. Burt, an architect/consultant with Northeast Green Building Consulting, LLC, make up the committee, along with Beth Crawford of our historic architecture firm, Crawford and Stearns.

We have all the village board approvals needed to go forward with the rehabilitation. Once we receive the contract from the state and approval of the archeologist's report, we will be ready to proceed as soon as we raise the matching money.