Friends and members:
The last decade has not been especially kind to house museums. War, recession, differences of opinion about the teaching of history, and what may be a cyclical trend against historic preservation have left some preservationists wondering if the stand-alone house museum is a thing of the past in more ways than one.

Some historic houses have remade themselves, even erasing historic features in search of modern relevance. Others have accepted corporate branding, or switched to outsourced, on-line fundraising. These efforts are not to be disparaged as small museums look to the future.

But on the premise that the Historic 1699 Winslow House is a unique treasure, the governors of the Winslow House Association believe that the safest strategy for the long run (which is, after all, what preserving a "315-year-old" is all about) is to count on those who support the house in good times and bad only because they love it.

One of the advantages of the age-old governing structure of the New England town is that the Pilgrim from anywhere in the world becomes an instant native. We are looking for natives and instant natives for sustenance in times to come. I therefore invite you to renew your membership in the Association – or to join for the first time – and to give as much as you are able.

A few words follow from Aaron Dougherty, our talented director.

Yours faithfully,

David A. Mittell, Jr.
Acting President

*     *     *     *     *

I’ve been entrusted with the position of Executive Director of the Historic 1699 Winslow House and Cultural Center for less than four months, and in that time I’ve seen countless acts of generosity towards our small museum by visitors who arrived as strangers and left as supporters. Many went on to become members. It’s as much their House as the old family who once lived there.

They do it because they enjoy the tours, educational programs, and cultural events, or perhaps because they struck up a friendship with a volunteer. Some of them are Mayflower descendants. Many of them are simply fascinated.

This summer, I observed a docent weave a spellbinding tale of colonial life for an enthralled guest, who left a $30 donation – ten times our admission fee. A long-time Marshfield resident visited us for the first time at Tavern Night in July, and before leaving he bought a membership for his entire family.

Our 2015 calendar is currently being planned. If you’ve enjoyed the activities that we’ve offered in 2014, we ask that you consider helping to fund similar programs for 2015. If you find yourself coming to visit us again and again, you might consider a membership.

With gratitude for your once and future support.

Aaron M. Dougherty
Executive Director
The early history of Marshfield, Massachusetts is almost synonymous with the colonial history of its first family, the Winslows. And so it is not surprising that the local mythology of Marshfield is inextricably tied with the 1699 estate of Isaac Winslow, grandson of the pilgrim Edward Winslow. Today the Winslow House functions as one of the most remarkably preserved historic houses in New England. Here, volunteer docents are responsible for the public image of the house, acting as liaisons between the past and the present, whilst bringing various interpretations of local history into their tours.

The employee of a historic house, not unlike the author of a historic work, must interpret empirical fact in such a way as to provide a smooth and coherent narrative. However, the past does not lend itself easily to such a narrative. History is contingent, chaotic, and full of unproven lore that is nearly impossible to substantiate. For instance, it has been written that the giant linden on the grounds of the Winslow House sprouted from the walking cane of Dr. Isaac Winslow.

Other tales are rooted in more verifiable history, suggested by ostensibly reliable sources. In an article distributed by the Winslow House Association in 1996 an anonymous author describes a ‘hidden chamber’ on the second floor of the estate. The Mayflower Quarterly similarly mentions a “south-east room houses a cupboard which gives access to a secret passage to the attic.” The space is never mentioned in records of the Winslows living in the Careswell estate, and were it not for local tales, would prove of little historic interest.

This particular “Old Guide’s Tale” concerns Nathaniel (Nat) Ray Thomas, a wealthy civil servant living in Marshfield at the time of the American Revolution. Nathaniel Ray was perhaps most famous, or infamous, for leading a controversial Marshfield town meeting declaring loyalty to the English King. As the local story goes, shortly after the birth of Dr. Isaac Winslow’s first son in 1774, Nat. Ray visited the Careswell estate to offer his congratulations when an angry mob appeared to “remove the misguided tory.” According to the myth, this mob arrived in the bridal chamber only to find Elizabeth nursing her child while Nathaniel Ray was safely ensconced in the secret chamber. The aforementioned 1996 publication by the Winslow House affirms this; “we know that this chamber was used at least once, by Nathaniel Ray Thomas, in July of 1774.”

It is clear that the Winslow House once adopted this local mythology into the curriculum of house tours. A local

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**2015 Rentals**

Are you looking for a wedding venue or site for a meet and greet? Look no further! The 1699 Winslow House and Cultural Center can offer a rustic, vintage function hall and beautiful open lawn with the convenience of modern kitchen and washroom facilities. Spaces are already filling up for 2015, so to reserve your spot or view the House, contact us by phone at 781-837-5753 or email at info@winslowhouse.org.

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**2015 Donations**

It’s not too late to make your tax-deductible donation to the Winslow House for 2014. Your contribution will fund educational programs, new public events for 2015, and the preservation of one of Marshfield’s historic treasures.
newspaper even wrote the Careswell house “was the headquarters of the T’ries” and that “one time a number of Tories hid in a closet or the space around the chimney when being sought after by Patriots.” This circumstantial story actually originates in the Thomas family itself. William H.B. Thomas in ‘Remarkable High Tories’ cites; “The story of Nathaniel Ray Thomas at Dr. Winslow’s and escaping there from the patriots has been handed down in the family of the writer.” Clearly, this is hearsay.

Veteran Marshfield historians Cynthia Krusell and Betty Bates find contrary evidence on a 1784 map of Marshfield. This map marks the Careswell estate in which the bridal chamber is found as belonging to “Gen. Winslow”, while another house Northeast of Careswell is marked as belonging to “Dr. Winslow.” This adds to the current body of research finding that during much of the American Revolution Joshua Winslow and his family lived at Careswell, not Isaac, who had likely built his home elsewhere. Further confirmation comes in letters of Joshua Winslow and his family, one in which Sarah Winslow Deming, hearing a rumor that Marshfield was on fire, fears for her brother who “liv’d (sic) in Gen Winslow’s house” and prays for his safety. There is no link connecting the chimney hidden chamber at Careswell to Dr. Winslow, Nathaniel Ray Thomas, or to any other Tories.

Despite contrary evidence, the secret chamber in the Winslow House continues to be a popular part of docent tours. How then can we reconcile the popularity of “Old Guide’s Tales” with their historical inaccuracy? Local mythology is useful as an interesting introduction to more significant and verifiable history, and must be prefaced as such. As historians we use evidence to deconstruct the past, and in a historic house, we choose the content to be portrayed. There are stories much more interesting to tell than fabricated ones.

Thomas Macauley writes that “…no history can present us with the whole truth; but those are the best...histories which exhibit such parts of the truth as most nearly produce the effect of the whole.” We will never know the full picture, but by ridding ourselves of that which we know not to be true, our interpretation is much improved. It is not a form of elitist, academic snobbery to snuff out popular tales and local mythology, but it is a sense of justice in finding what really happened in the past. There is little harm in “old guide’s tales” when prefaced with explanation or used to expand upon the process of working in a historic house, but when it is presented within the frame of historic truth, we do injustice to the past we are trying to preserve.

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This is a snippet of a longer article. To see the full version, please visit http://www.winslowhouse.org/research/.

In Memory of William Riegel (1928-2014)

The Historic Winslow House Association is sad to announce the passing of Bill Riegel, one of our longest and strongest supporters. A Board of Governor's member for many years and a direct descendant of the Winslow family, Bill was devoted to the Winslow House and proud of his connection to the Winslow family. A graduate of Deerfield Academy and Williams College, he served as a Naval officer in World War II and had a long and active career in the paper and forest products industry. Settling eventually in Duxbury he became involved as a Director of the Winslow House and of the Manomet Observatory and Conservation Center. His enthusiasm for and devotion to our Winslow House is much appreciated and his quiet spirit and gentlemanly presence will always remain with us. We owe him our deepest gratitude and extend our sympathy to his wife Nancy and his extended family.
## Fall Events at the Winslow House

### Haunted Tavern Night

**Saturday, October 11, 2014. 7:00 PM**

Pub snacks and non-alcoholic beverages included in the price of admission. Drinkable spirits will be available for purchase; spectral spirits not guaranteed. Guests are invited to come at 6 PM for a Tour of the Historic House. $10/person

### Fall Scavenger Hunt

**Sunday, October 12, 2014. 1-4 PM**

Presented by Marshfield’s Historical Triangle; the 1699 Winslow House, the Marcia Thomas House, and the Daniel Webster Estate. Attendees receive a list of 15 items, to be found among the fields, nooks and crannies of three centuries of Marshfield history. It’s a fall afternoon full of food, drink, and fun at your favorite Marshfield attractions. $8 pre-register, $10 at the door.

### Twilight Tours

**Saturday, October 18, 2014. 6:30 PM**

Ever wondered how a colonial house would have looked lit only by candlelight? Now’s your chance to find out. It’s the Winslow House by twilight, just the way the Winslows would have known it! $5 suggested donation.

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**www.winslowhouse.org**

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**2014 Annual Meeting of the Winslow Association**

Will be announced shortly. Please stay tuned for further details.

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**Paul White Papers**

As reported in our spring issue, the Winslow House is cataloguing and digitizing the papers of the 18th century merchant Paul White, a cousin to the Winslows. This work will be presented to the public in the form of an exhibit at the 1699 Winslow House and a free public lecture. Stay tuned for further details.

**Staining and Painting**

The 1920s Tea Room has been successfully stained, providing the structure with protection against the elements. Painting and repair has begun on the ceilings of the Historic House, and are expected to be completed by next season.

**Digitizing the Collection**

In addition to the Paul White papers, we’re also converting our collections catalogue to Past Perfect, a robust collections management program. A huge thank-you is owed to volunteer Andrew Talbot, who spent many hot and muggy days this summer carrying out data entry.

**Marshfield Historical Triangle**

The 1699 Winslow House is working with the Daniel Webster Estate and the Marshfield Historical Society to offer this October’s Fall Scavenger Hunt (See Fall Events above). We hope that this will be the beginning of a long and beautiful relationship!
A Look at 2014
Photos courtesy of Julius Prince Jr. of Duxbury

Clockwise from top left:

1. Members of the Scituate Historical Society pose with author George Daughan.
2. Kids yukking it up at Big Ryan’s Tall Tales.
3. Learning about artifacts with the Massachusetts Archaeological Society.
4. Melodee Savage performs the “Negro Spiritual.”
5. Marshfield during the Revolutionary War, with “Elizabeth Winslow.”
6. Flexing muscles during Superhero Day.
7. Showing their colors at the Red, White, and Blue Dinner.
In Appreciation

Thank you to our Volunteers and Supporters in the 2014 Season. Your time, experience and generosity is invaluable. Of course we wish to express our gratitude to our Speakers & Lecturers as well as our members and guests in 2014.

Volunteer Support
Betty Bates
Josephine Bonafini
Jayne Bowman
Mickey Carr
Marie Dowling
Carey Eyerly
Nancy Field
Lori and David Goodsell
Jessica Guyon
Joe Hackett
Judith Johnson
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