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Honored by Mass Humanities

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### 2013 Season Tour Hours

May 25 through Nov. 4  
Saturdays and Sundays  
Tours at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00,  
and 4:00 p.m.

### Admission

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Children \$4  
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### Royall House and Slave Quarters

15 George Street  
Medford, Massachusetts  
RoyallHouse.org



## Changing How We Teach About Slavery

“Imagine life then and now.” “An artifact treasure hunt.” “A time line activity.” “Math conversions.” Fifth grade teachers from Medford, Malden, Cambridge, and Newton suggested these and other activities during the Royall House and Slave Quarters’ recent educator panel. Nine teachers accepted an invitation to tour the Royall House. After the tour, they brainstormed ways to make elementary students’ experience engaging and interactive using the Royall House’s wealth of primary sources.

Two Medford teachers, Angela Snow and Debra Notaro, knew the Royall House well since they visit annually with their fifth grade classes. They were looking for a more hands-on experience for their students and hoped to include pre- and post-visit activities as well. The other teachers had never been to the Royall House and were awed by what the museum has to offer. “I am looking for a new site to teach resistance to slavery,” said veteran Cambridge teacher Kathy Drew.

School visits to the Royall House have been steadily increasing to 700 students annually. The compelling story of northern colonial slavery has attracted classes from a wide range of communities, including Boston, Beverly, Hamilton, and Somerville, and from as far as Lunenburg.



The Royall House and Slave Quarters board made it a strategic plan priority to develop an interactive school program that is tied to the Massachusetts curriculum standards. This winter the organization received a \$5,000 matching grant from Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. This matching grant allows the museum to develop third and fifth grade educational programs



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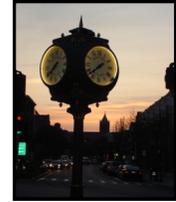


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that focus on northern colonial slavery, the economics of the slave trade, and the lives of enslaved Africans in the Massachusetts colony.

With the Mass Humanities grant in hand, the Royall House hired museum educator Olivia Searcy as the project consultant. Olivia brings extensive education and curriculum development experience. As education manager at Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow, NY, a 17th-century farm that tells the story of slavery in the colonial north, she designed K-12 programs and revised upper elementary activities. Olivia has been a fifth grade teacher herself, and is currently a museum educator at the Constitution Museum and Historic New England's Otis House in Boston.

As Olivia explained to the teachers who visited recently, "We hope to change the foundation of the way enslavement is taught, and help students think differently about slavery and the social and economic systems that supported it. Although slavery is a challenging concept for elementary students, the Royall House and Slave Quarters can help students understand and appreciate the significant contributions of enslaved Africans to the development of New England and introduce them to the complex issues of race and identity, economic and social justice, and personal freedom."

Over the summer, Olivia will synthesize the teachers' suggestions and develop new curriculum and hands-on activities. Teachers and their students will return in fall 2013 to pilot these new programs and give feedback. Tufts University education students will help with the program evaluation.

Beyond the development of these new programs, the Royall House plans to address several important issues in order to serve elementary school students. The classroom space requires

some physical improvements, and a part-time teaching staff is needed to publicize and present the new school programs on an on-going basis. The Royall House also hopes to be able to pay for buses for those public school students whose districts could not otherwise afford to send them.

The cost of developing and offering these school programs is well beyond the annual operating budget, so the Royall House continues



to search for funding opportunities. In addition, the Royall House is grateful to all those who contributed to the annual appeal this past winter when funds were designated to support the start up of this education project.

We look forward to sharing updates with our members and supporters as this exciting initiative moves ahead.

## Royall House and Slave Quarters Honored by Mass Humanities



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*Margen Kelsey, Gracelaw Simmons, and Tom Lincoln received the 2013 Massachusetts History Commendation from Pleun Bouricius.*

On Monday, June 3, Mass Humanities presented the Royall House and Slave Quarters with the 2013 Massachusetts History Commendation at its annual Mass History Conference. This award recognizes groups or individuals who do outstanding work to make history more relevant and meaningful to the people of Massachusetts.

Explaining why the organization was chosen for recognition, Pleun Bouricius, assistant director of Mass Humanities, said, “During the past decade, the Royall House and Slave Quarters has acted upon the recognition that its concrete and physical connection to the local history of enslavement of African-Americans needed to be brought to the fore. The organization committed itself to historical honesty, wrote grant proposals and researched its history, collaborated on extensive archaeology work, and created and implemented a plan to adjust its identity as a historic site. With the help of dedicated volunteers, the Royall House and Slave Quarter is emerging as a leader in its field in Massachusetts, and an example to other organizations with small purses and large plans.” Past recipients of the Commendation include State Representative Byron Rushing and the *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*.

The award further strengthens the relationship between the Royall House and Slave Quarters and Mass Humanities. Over the past several years, Mass Humanities has awarded several grants to the museum to support its work. These have included funding to develop on-site school programs, research into the correspondence of the Royall family, and the launch of a new website to better tell the museum’s story.

## News Briefs

More than 400 **Medford fifth graders** and their teachers toured the Royall House and Slave Quarters on May 29 and 30. This longstanding tradition is made possible by our generous volunteer guides and helpers: **Margen Kelsey, Ryan Hayward, Beth Fuller, Clara Read, and Dale Rider**. Executive Director **Tom Lincoln** gave introductory talks and students visited both the Slave Quarters and key portions of the main house.

**Tom Lincoln** participated in a discussion panel entitled “Mission and Identity: Redefining One Without Losing the Other” at the annual Mass History Conference on June 3 at The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. He spoke about the ongoing transition from a traditional house museum to a site focused on eighteenth-century Massachusetts slavery as it existed in Medford, while retaining our central identity. The goal of the conference was to “examine and present organizations, programs and projects that have successfully harnessed myths, expanded their narratives, and redefined their mission without losing their identity.” The Royall House and Slave Quarters also received the Massachusetts History Award at the conference (see page 4).

The Landscape Committee, chaired by **Lindsay Rider**, has been working all spring on the grounds. Post-winter debris has been cleared, flower beds planted and weeded, and general sprucing has taken place. **Dale Rider** and **Ted Raia** made repairs made to the wood edging of the stonedust garden paths, and Dale has replaced several of the wooden downspout diverters.



**CACHE (The Coalition for Arts, Culture, and a Healthy Economy in Medford)**, the citywide consortium of arts and cultural groups, held their second annual meeting in the Slave Quarters. The Royall House and Slave Quarters is a constituent member. We look forward to again participating in the Arts Across Medford activities in October as part of our outreach and partnership building.

Since early fall, **Allison Funk** has been working on the third floor of the Royall House, opening drawers and closets, moving furniture, and installing shelves in an effort to bring more organization to our collections storage. Allison has also been assigning inventory numbers and writing brief object descriptions. The results are more organized storage, better records, and increased safety for the objects. Although the project was suspended for the colder months, Allison hopes to return this summer to complete work in the remaining third floor spaces. Allison is a recent graduate of Northeastern University in Public History and also has a graduate certificate in Museum Studies and History from Tufts University.



In early May, staff from **Historic Newton** came to carefully wrap and transport two eighteenth-century mirrors from our collection which are going on view in the Durant-Kenrick House in Newton. The mirrors will be installed in the northwest chamber where a period room has been recreated to explore the events leading up to the Revolutionary War and the Newton Committee of Correspondence’s response to the Boston Tea Party. The mirrors on loan to Historic Newton were in storage, and the Royall House and Slave Quarters is pleased that they will be seen and enjoyed by thousands of people each year.

## Welcome Our New Board Member

Maddy Staub has a head for numbers and a heart for history. As the daughter of a professional costumed interpreter, Maddy’s love of history and interest in old homes was engrained from an early age. “I was impressed by the organization’s dedication to teaching all sides of the property’s history.”

A business administration major with a concentration in accounting, Maddy graduated *cum laude* from Georgetown University in 2011. She’s currently employed as a staff accountant at Marcum LLP in Boston, where she performs audits for clients in the high-tech, financial services, and nonprofit industries. Her experience preparing audited financial statements for nonprofit organizations is proving enormously valuable in strengthening our museum’s financial management and reporting systems. “I wanted to help preserve this historic and aesthetic treasure, and the best way I knew how to do that was through number-crunching. I’m so pleased to have this opportunity to share my skills, and to learn from the other board members and volunteers who have such incredible knowledge of historic interpretation and museum development.”



Having spent several summers working with Breakthrough Manchester, in her New Hampshire home city, where she helped prepare low-income middle school students for the path to college, Maddy understands the importance of engaging young people in a way that makes education both exciting and important. Since that’s the Royall House and Slave Quarters’ current focus, it’s a perfect fit.

### Digging for History



This estate is a powerful reminder of slavery in New England. In search of evidence of this often overlooked aspect of the region’s history, archaeologists from Boston University documented building remnants, traces of landscaping activity, and buried objects. These discoveries shed light on the vastly different experiences of the two groups of people who lived here.

More than 65,000 objects and fragments were recovered from the Royall House grounds, some 5,000 of them from the pre-Revolutionary era. A selection is on view here.

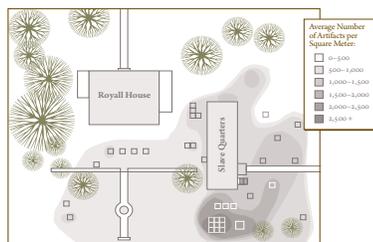
To understand the historical meaning of these objects, we must examine not only the artifacts themselves, but also where they were found, relevant documentary evidence, and their cultural context. Considered in this way, the objects unearthed around the slave quarters and the mansion illuminate the daily lives of the property’s past residents. ♦

#### BONDAGE

The operation of a northern plantation required seemingly endless hours of labor, both general and specialized. Enslaved Africans tended gardens, planted and managed crops, preserved food, cared for animals, and fed and clothed all the residents. Yet they somehow found time for family life and spiritual traditions, as well. The surviving traces of these activities are either handmade or household objects that have been reworked for alternative purposes, reflecting creativity in the face of restricted access to goods.

#### BOUNTY

By any measure, the Royalls were remarkably wealthy. The variety of tableware found during the dig illustrates their taste for luxury goods as well as their status in colonial society. They drank punch, coffee, tea, and chocolate from imported porcelain cups made specifically for each beverage. Also recovered were more than a hundred bottles—many of them stamped with the Royall family seal—that once contained beer, gin, port, and European wines.



## Telling Our Stories

Visitors to the Slave Quarters will see two new interpretive panels this season. Upon entering, they will find a panel that provides an introduction to the site, describing the property’s history, from Isaac Royall Sr.’s arrival to its use as a headquarters by General Stark and Revolutionary leaders. Illustrations include excerpts from the 1739 inventory of Isaac Sr.’s personal property, including some of the more than sixty individuals held in bondage. This panel was underwritten by a grant from the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Wars.

“Digging for History” introduces visitors to archaeology at the site and contextualizes the surviving fragments in nearby display cases. This panel joins “Learning from the Landscape” to give visitors a clearer idea of life at the site in the eighteenth century. Progress continues on the conjectural drawing of the Slave Quarters which will be completed and installed this year.

## Henry Wiencek on Jefferson

Since its release last fall, Henry Wiencek's book, *Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and His Slaves*, has again invigorated the discussion of the relationship between the founding father and the several hundred enslaved men, women, and children who lived and worked at Monticello and other plantations in the family, in addition to raising new questions about Jefferson's thoughts and actions related to slavery. Wiencek, born and raised in the Boston area but now living in Charlottesville, Virginia, shared his challenging interpretation of Jefferson and his world with a large audience of members and friends of the Royall House and Slave Quarters following the annual meeting on April 15. In a presentation drawn from the book's material and his experiences with Jefferson historians who have openly contested his arguments, Wiencek offered the audience an engaging look at the interpretation of slavery in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Virginia.

Wiencek began with a brief reading from one of the later chapters of the book, "The Effect on Them Was Electrical," which describes the journey of seventeen enslaved people's to freedom in the in 1819:

*"The master has arrived at the Monongabela ahead of his slaves, and there he purchased two flat-bottomed boats, sixty feet long and twelve feet wide, on which the party embarked. Because his slaves were all mountain people who knew nothing of boats, the owner hired a river pilot but had to put him off at Pittsburgh because the man was constantly drunk. At Pittsburgh the Monongabela joins the Ohio River, the great water route to the West and a dividing line between slavery and freedom. On its left bank lay Virginia and then Kentucky, slave states, while on the right stretched the shores of Ohio, which was free. . . .*

*"The master deliberately chose this stunning panorama as the backdrop to reveal their destination. He ordered the boats lashed*

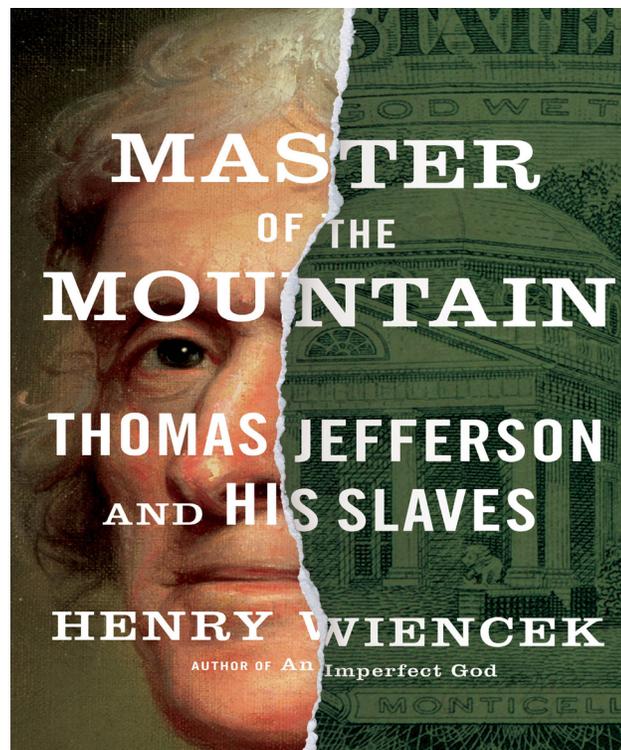
*together, assembled the people and 'made them a short address': I proclaimed them in the shortest & fullest manner possible, that they were no longer Slaves, but free—free as I was, & were at liberty to proceed with me, or to go ashore at their pleasure." (p. 234)*

Their master, Edward Coles, who later became governor of Illinois, came from a prominent Virginia family and not only knew Jefferson, but had told the former president about his plan. Jefferson did not support Coles' action and told him not to go through with it. Wiencek's excerpt hinted at the larger argument of the book. Although early in his political career Jefferson espoused a belief that slavery could be

ended in the Colonies, by the 1790s he had become firmly committed to retaining the status quo. He also came to realize the profit that resulted from the "increase" of Monticello's enslaved population as the women had children roughly every two years.

Wiencek also discussed the uneasy reaction to his book's premise at Monticello. Two prominent Monticello and Jefferson historians have challenged the book directly. The debate that has ensued is one example of what keeps

the stories of people, places, and events now over 200 years old engaging and dynamic. The constant questioning of the past, demonstrated by Wiencek in this book and his previous work on George Washington, keeps places like Monticello and the Royall House and Slave Quarters dynamic, as well.



## Mary and Elizabeth Royall Return Home



John Singleton Copley's 1758 painting of "Mary and Elizabeth Royall" is prominently displayed in the new Art of the Americas wing at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. And now, thanks to a multi-faceted community partnership, a large, high-quality reproduction of Copley's portrait of the adolescent daughters of Isaac Royall is on display in the Royall House, as well.

In a very generous example of nonprofit partnership, the Museum of Fine Arts offered our museum an archival replica of the painting at cost. The Medford Arts Council—a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency—awarded a grant to enable us to make this purchase. An anonymous private foundation's grant paid to frame the reproduction, a task that was undertaken with great professionalism by Stanhope Framers.

Copley was just twenty years old when he completed this work, one of his few paintings of children, and believed to be his first double portrait. According to the portrait's descrip-

tion by the MFA, "Royall's love for fine things is evident in the portrait he commissioned of his daughters, which was designed to show off the family's wealth and social status: the girls are dressed in expensive silk gowns trimmed with imported lace, and the velvet drape behind them was intended to bring to mind portraits of English aristocrats who had themselves painted in such a setting. Even the pets in the picture conveyed status: the King Charles spaniel was a favorite of British royalty, and the hummingbird perched on Mary's finger may have been imported from the West Indies, where Royall conducted profitable trade. The obedient pets and the girls' modest demeanor were also meant to indicate the girls' character, showing them to be polite, disciplined, well-mannered young women—good daughters and good future wives."

### Volunteer Spotlight

Tufts University graduate student Andrea Williams contacted the Royall House and Slave Quarters last fall looking to volunteer some time. She was near the completion of her Master's degree in museum education and was looking for some new experiences in the museum field. Since the Royall House is near to where she lives and studies, we were an ideal match. Her first project was working this fall to help with the reorganization of the third floor storage in the mansion. Over the winter, Andrea completed a much-needed reference tool for the new web site that includes all the known people enslaved by the Royalls between 1736 and 1775, complete with footnotes. This has become the core of the slavery page of the Royall House and Slave Quarters website as it lists the proper names and all references for each known African and Caribbean person we can find in the historical record. Andrea is currently working with the education team on the development of the new school programs that we will pilot this fall. In the months that she has been volunteering with us, Andrea Williams has made herself an indispensable part of our volunteer work force.



# A New Look for RoyallHouse.org

Recent visitors to the Royall House and Slave Quarters website have noticed a big change. Six months ago, a team of board members, in collaboration with website consultant Al Stevens, began developing a new model for how visitors interact with the website. We interviewed members and first-time users to find out what they thought we should present on our new website, and it soon became clear that we needed to provide easier navigation, richer content, and a less cluttered overall appearance. After months of work, beta testing, and revisions, on May 7 project manager Theresa Kelliher pushed the button that brought the museum's website into the twenty-first century.

Visitors to the new website will immediately find it easier to locate the most important information, including museum hours, directions, and details about upcoming programs. In a new pull-down menu en-

titled "What You'll See," visitors will learn about the buildings and landscape, and can also take a photographic tour of the site. In the "Learn" menu, visitors will find information on both the Royall family as well as the enslaved people who lived on the property. A vast collection of primary source material is also referenced on the new website, which will steer researchers to public and private repositories.

Of course, it is also easy for visitors to the website to become a member of the Royall House and Slave Quarters or make a financial contribution online.

The new RoyallHouse.org is still being tested and evaluated. If you have comments or suggestions for how we might improve our most public outreach tool, please don't hesitate to contact us. You can either reach us through [Info@RoyallHouse.org](mailto:Info@RoyallHouse.org) or click the "Contact Us" link at the top of the home page.

**ROYALL HOUSE & SLAVE QUARTERS**

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**Welcome To the Royall House and Slave Quarters**

In the eighteenth century, the Royall House and Slave Quarters was home to the largest slaveholding family in Massachusetts and the enslaved Africans who made their lavish way of life possible. Today, the Royall House and Slave Quarters is a museum whose architecture, household items, archaeological artifacts, and programs bear witness to intertwined stories of wealth and bondage, set against the backdrop of America's quest for independence. The Slave Quarters is the only remaining such structure in the northern United States, and the Royall House is among the finest colonial-era buildings in New England.

The museum is open to the public for tours on weekends from June through October, while school and group tours are available year-round. The museum also presents a range of public programs throughout the year. Members receive free admission to the museum and free or discounted admission to most programs.

**News and Events**

**Giving Voice ~ Annual Benefit Celebration**  
*"Marked with the furrows of time": Belinda, the Royalls, and Accounts of Freedom* ~ Featured presentation by literary historian Lois Brown. Saturday, June 8, 2013 -- 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. [Details.](#)

**The 2013 tour season has begun!**  
The museum will be open to visitors every Saturday and Sunday afternoon through November 3rd. Guided tours are offered on the hour at 1, 2, 3, and 4 p.m. Tours are always free for members, and a modest admission fee is charged to non-members. Admission to the Slave Quarters, which also houses the archaeological exhibit, gift shop, and restrooms, is free of charge. [Details.](#)

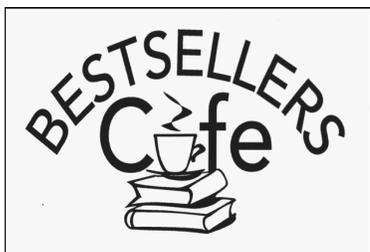
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The Royall House & Slave Quarters thanks emdesign and Michael Mauceri for generously donating graphic design services toward the museum's reinterpretation efforts.

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### *Please Join Us!*

Membership in the Royall House and Slave Quarters supports maintenance of the only freestanding slave quarters in the North, a significant example of Georgian architecture, surviving remnants of a great estate, and more importantly, our educational mission, exhibits, tours, programs, and public outreach.

Members receive free admission, our newsletter, regular museum updates, and invitations to programs and other activities taking place on site.

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