

News & Events

In This Issue

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Director's Message | 2 |
| News Briefs | 3 |
| Civil Rights Panel Discussions | 5 |
| Education Programs Expand | 5 |
| "Precedents/Currents" Show | 6 |
| Garden News from DK | 7 |
| Calendar of Events | 8-9 |
| Kenrick Family | |
| Civil War Letters | 11 |
| Stella Lee Joins Board | 12 |
| New Staff, Volunteers | 12 |
| Donor Spotlight: Doug Hanna | 14 |

HISTORIC NEWTON

527 Washington Street
Newton, MA 02458

www.historicnewton.org

Jackson Homestead and Museum Hours

527 Washington Street
Wed-Fri 11 am to 5 pm
Sat & Sun 10 am to 5 pm

Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds Hours

286 Waverley Avenue
Wed-Fri 11 am to 5 pm
Sat & Sun 10 am to 5 pm

Admission

\$6 Adults, \$5 Child/Senior
\$5 Newton Residents
Members: Free

The 2016 Newton House Tour Showcases Old and New Homes

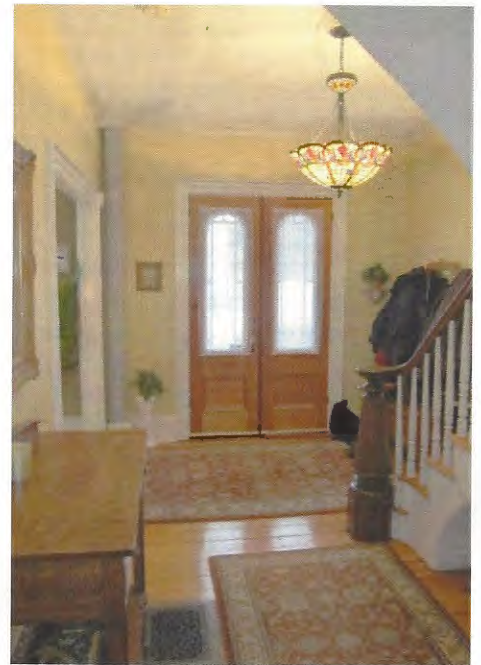
by Jay Walter

House Tour Committee Chairman

As we put our fear of heavy snow behind us, we can look forward to sunnier days and the 34th Annual Historic Newton House Tour. The House Tour committee is busy selecting the houses for this year's tour on Sunday May 22 from noon to 5 p.m. Currently we have secured six sites that reflect the diversity of the city's housing stock:

- » In West Newton we have a sweet Victorian with a very modern rear extension. The rich, Victorian woodwork is counterbalanced by an

Continued on page 13



Jackson Homestead Unveils Upgrades

In June, many months of renovations at the Jackson Homestead will conclude and we will reopen the entire museum. This major construction project started in September 2015 to create new facilities for our archives and visitor reception, plus an access ramp to the building.



During the fall and winter, excavators and power tools brought clamorous reminders of the 21st century to the Jackson Homestead. Much of the work occurred outside the main building in the ell, which was once a garage. The interior was completely gutted and rebuilt

Continued on page 4

Donor Spotlight: Doug Hanna — Digging Up and Restoring the Past

By Roger Fusca, Director of Development

Asked what he dreamt of becoming while growing up, Doug Hanna has a ready answer: "When I was a little kid, I wanted to be a fireman, but then, later on, I wanted to be an archaeologist." Many years later, these childhood passions connected at a 19th-century North Cambridge firehouse.

Doug is co-principal of S+H Construction, the much-honored (six "Best of Boston" awards) and esteemed residential renovation and custom home building company. Several years ago, while replacing the foundation of a North Cambridge carriage house, S+H unearthed a 600-pound, 5-foot-long engraved granite stone.

Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, identified it as the lintel from a 1800s North Cambridge firehouse, a structure that most recently served as a Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) hall.

In researching the stone, Hanna discovered at the Cambridge Historical Commission a 19th-century photograph of men in front of the firehouse. The picture listed the men's names. Lo and behold, one man pictured was Doug's great-grandfather, a Civil War veteran who owned a plumbing store next door and served as a volunteer firefighter. Coincidentally, Cambridge had slated to remake the old firehouse, still with its hose tower and other essential features, into affordable housing. S+H donated the lintel, which now rests in the property's front yard.

Doug was not finished with archeological work. In 2013, a company building a luxury community in Cambridge's Fresh Pond area discovered a 3,000-pound granite slab. The workers cleaned away the impacted dirt and grime to reveal an engraving: "Site of the first Meeting House in Cambridge. Erected A.D. 1632." Cambridge history experts identified the marker as originally coming from an 1869 building in Harvard Square. Until demolition in 1929, the building had stood at Dunster and Mount Auburn streets—in fact the location of the first meeting house. Debris from the demolished building went to a landfill at the Fresh Pond site. To return the stone to Harvard Square, the Cambridge Historical Commission's Sullivan enlisted a historic restoration expert with

broad shoulders: S+H Construction, which had won the Commission's preservation award in 2008. Although the work meant pausing a construction project, S+H donated the time to haul the stone back home.

Doug's journey to this archeological history began in 1972 at the age of 18 because he loved construction and working with his hands. That year, he joined a Boston-area masonry restoration and waterproofing company. "This was the era," Doug remembers, "when construction workers, including the ones I worked with (mostly WWII vets), would go out for boilermakers in the middle of the day. If I was reluctant they would say, 'Go ahead kid, it will take the edge off the day.'" (Note for the uninitiated: a boilermaker is a glass of beer with a shot of whiskey).

For an 18-year-old kid, the veterans had plenty of stories to share over those drinks. One co-worker had served in the Pacific on the aircraft carrier the USS Franklin. In March 1945, the USS Franklin was nearly destroyed by a Japanese bomber, with over 800 men killed. Only the heroic efforts of sailors who volunteered to stay onboard prevented the Franklin from sinking. "In the summertime, we'd often work with no shirts on, and he had a tattoo of the USS Franklin

on his chest," Doug remembers. The tattoo enveloped his entire chest, and Doug adds, "he and I would often get into sort of political discussions. I mean the Vietnam War was going on, and he would say to me, 'If it weren't for guys like me, you guys would be speaking Japanese right now.'"

That year, Doug, who had graduated from Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, enrolled at the University of Massachusetts Boston, where he studied anthropology and political science. A few years later, Doug relocated to California, where he worked as carpenter's apprentice while enrolling at Palomar College. In 1978, he returned to Cambridge and reconnected with Alex Slive, a friend from UMass Boston, hence the birth of S (Slive) + H (Hanna) Construction. In the beginning, they restored and renovated buildings and condominiums on Boston's waterfront and in the North End.

Eventually, Alex and Doug built a company now numbering 60 employees. S+H proudly lists in its logo the



words "quality," "value," and "integrity," and it has won over 25 industry awards. In 2013, the Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston named Doug "Remodeler of the Year."

Doug, the father of three children, is a self-described history buff. Asked for book suggestions, he recommends *Rebel Yell*, a biography of Stonewall Jackson. For fascinating contemporary history, he offers *The Big Short*, a book by Michael Lewis about the build-up of the housing and credit bubble that burst in 2009. In addition to reading, Doug devotes leisure to playing the guitar and mountain biking. He has also traveled the world, including Europe, China, and India. "My dream home is in Paris," he told Boston Magazine, "or in the mountains, or near the ocean somewhere. It wouldn't be too big—just a small, compact home. All I need is 2,500 square feet, now that my kids aren't at home."

Doug, who has also served on the Governmental Affairs Committee of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce and as a member of the Board of Directors for Cambridge Youth Hockey League, has lived a busy and meaningful life. In reflecting on his boyhood dreams and his dreams now, he has another ready answer: to live a life of continuous education, ideally in the liberal arts. The universe recently presented just that opportunity when the Cambridge Historical Society named him to its board. For our part, Historic Newton is proud to list S+H Construction as the lead sponsor of the annual Newton Preservation Awards, which Historic Newton co-presents with the Newton Historical Commission. Thank you, Doug, for making a difference.



Education Programs *(Continued from page 5)*

After the pilot's success, our education staff connected with the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, and we are excited to announce that this program will be featured in the 2016-2017 Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts' "Ultimate Guide" to programs and trainings. Scouts from across Eastern Massachusetts are invited to visit Historic Newton for this program, and participate in a special activity designed just for them. The "Ultimate Guide" reaches 35,000 girls and 15,000 volunteers in 178 communities in eastern Massachusetts. We hope to see many of those Scouts and their families at the museums soon!

In addition to building on the strong groundwork of programs for school groups, we have also expanded our offerings for adult groups. We are now pleased to offer eight education programs for adults presented by professional educators and designed to stimulate discussion and further inquiry. These programs include a talk with images about the Underground Railroad and slavery in Massachusetts, and a screening of *Return to Norumbega* with discussion of the popular 20th-century amusement park in Auburndale and artifact handling. We also present a talk on the history of tea from ancient China to the American Revolution that concludes with a discussion over a cup of tea. These program expansions encourage audiences of all ages to discover new perspectives on U.S. history by exploring Newton's past. Stay tuned for information about our new birthday party offerings, piloting this spring!

Civil Rights Panels *(Continued from page 5)*

Daunasia Yancey of Black Lives Matter in Boston and James DeWolf Perry of the Center for Reconciliation planned to discuss the legacy of this history today.

The *Created Equal* series is made possible through a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, as part of its Bridging Cultures initiative, in partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Historic Newton is one of 473 institutions across the country awarded a set of four films chronicling the history of the Civil Rights Movement. *Created Equal* programs bring communities together to revisit our shared history and help bridge deep racial and cultural divides in American civic life.