



# The Rough Writer

## The News of the Volunteers at Sagamore Hill

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This newsletter is produced by Milton Elis and the Volunteer Advisory Board for the volunteers and staff of the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR TAX TO BE ELIMINATED

*USA Today* published an article on May 26, 2006 about a tax on all Americans' telephone bills, in place for more than a century, that is to be cancelled. According to the article, "The Treasury Department said on May 25 that it will no longer collect a 3% federal excise tax on long distance calls and would refund about 15 billion dollars to taxpayers. The tax was imposed in 1898 to help pay for the Spanish-American War. It was designed as a tax on wealthy Americans, back when phone service was considered a luxury."  
Ed Note: It's about time.

### SAGAMORE HILL FIRST AID CLASS

On Monday, May 22, American Red Cross employee Nancy Mahlmann came to Sagamore Hill to teach a CPR/First Aid class. The eight hour class was attended by *Bo Stein, Josh Reyes, Shaun Roche, Ebony Richards, Andrew Buttermilch, Milton Elis, John Mahoney and Mark Koziol.*



For some of the participants, this was their first class, for others, it was a refresher course. New things learned included the fact that the Red Cross is once again recommending the use of slapping of the upper back when a person is choking and the need to remove all upper body clothing on the victim when administering the Automatic External Defibrillator shock. The reasoning behind removing the victim's shirts is to prevent igniting the shirt when using shock to help start the victim's heart. However, the site is currently precluded from using the device until arrangements are made for a medical doctor to certify the results. *Noreen Hancock* hopes to have a doctor on board shortly.



Students from East Hills



.38 Colt Revolver carried by TR at San Juan Hill



TR's African Safari Medicine Kit

## TR'S GUN MAKES A TRIUMPHAL RETURN TO THE SITE

Escorted by an armed posse of FBI agents, the .38 caliber pistol TR used in the battle of San Juan Hill has returned to Sagamore Hill. Stolen from the site in April, 1990, the odyssey of the pistol deserves to be told by an author such as *Edward Renehan* or *Edmund Morris*. *Bill Bleyer*, of *Newsday*, wrote three interesting articles on the gun and the resulting publicity is drawing people to the site. At the ceremony where the gun was formally returned to *Amy Verone*, every FBI agent for miles around was present. There is no truth to the rumor that our curator is strapping on the gun to make sure it and nothing else is ever stolen from the site.

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**The Volunteers of Sagamore Hill**  
20 Sagamore Hill Road  
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### NEWS OF VOLUNTEERS

*Ernie Honig*, who gives tours on Wednesday, is recovering from mesophelioma which is usually related to exposure to asbestos. Ernie is recovering from surgery and hopes to be able to make the July 14 picnic. He appreciates all the good wishes he has received. We welcome summer volunteer, *Michael Rostoker*, who is working for curatorial. Michael is a senior at C.W. Post.



Superintendent Greg Marshall



Mark Mershon of the FBI presenting TR's gun to Amy Verone.



Norman Parsons, President of the TRA

### TRIVIA ANSWER

The Parcheesi board is located in the North room on the table just to the left of the bench on which the jaguar skin hangs.

### SAFETY COMMITTEE NEWS

To ensure that all employees, volunteers, and visitors enjoy a safe environment at National Parks, the Park Service has asked each location to designate a "safety week." For its part, in June and July, Sagamore Hill staff will be conducting fire drills in all the main buildings. A walk through tour of the Old Orchard Museum, to educate staff and volunteers of where the fire alarms and evacuations routes are located, was held on June 21.

The TRH walk through was conducted on June 23 at 9 AM. An announced fire drill at the TRH will occur on Friday, June 30 at 9:30 AM. In the future, there will be unannounced fire drills in the above mentioned buildings.

Fire extinguisher training will occur in July for staff and volunteers. Dates and times will be announced shortly. Please feel free to contact the Sagamore Hill Safety Committee with your thoughts and concerns.

### SITE NEWS: EVENTS

Sagamore Hill has been a busy place since the last issue of the *Rough Writer*. With CPR training, a second *Elderhostel* program, the *TRA Police Awards* and **The Return of the Gun** ceremony, staff and volunteers have been hopping. A separate account of each special event appears in this issue.

### SITE NEWS: PEOPLE

Congratulations to *Shaun Roche* upon his engagement to *Angelica Vezzetti*. An August 5, 2006



wedding is planned. Welcome to new summer Park Guides, *Ebony Richards*, a junior at Winston-Salem State University and to *Tom Twiname*, a junior at Siena College. Back this summer are *John Mahoney, Joe Shannon, Jim Ferreri* and *Andrew Buttermilch*. Andrew will be leaving at the end of June to study in Ireland and will be replaced by returnee, *Lara Chmelea*. *Rich Althaus* is now working full time for maintenance.



## POLICE AWARDS CEREMONY, THE FINEST



Detective Margaret Tatarian

Sergeant *Michael O'Mara*, received the **Theodore Roosevelt Police Awards**. The citation they received reads as follows, "The **Theodore Roosevelt Police Award** is given each year to police officers who have overcome a major physical challenge or handicap, as *Theodore Roosevelt* triumphed over the illness of his youth; who remain on active duty; and who have rendered outstanding and praiseworthy service to their respective police departments,

as *Theodore Roosevelt* did in his years as President of the Board of Police Commissioners of New York City." *The Theodore Roosevelt Association*, through their local chapter, the *Friends of Sagamore Hill*, sponsored this event. After the event, lunch was served and those who wished were given a first floor tour of the house. In addition to all site staff who worked on the logistics of the event, special thanks go to *Joan Shannon* and her husband *Joe*. The Shannons kept the food lines moving and cleaned up after the event ended. Joe has returned north for the summer and is giving ground walks and house tours.



Joan and Joe Shannon the

## NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF SAGAMORE HILL



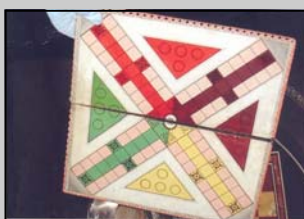
The last *John A. Gable Lecture* featured Dr. *John Staudt*, Executive Director of the TRA speaking on **TR and the Protection of America's Resources**. The program held on May 18, was well

attended and well received. *Ginny Uhlinger* of the Friends did a great job in coordinating the series.

The Annual Meeting on June 14 featured the election of officers and directors for the year beginning July 2006. *John Hammond* is continuing as Chairperson while *Joni Foote* takes over the reins as Treasurer. *Ginny Perrell* and *Stephen Gilroy* joined the Board as Directors. Other directors taking the oath of office from Superintendent *Greg Marshall* were *Walter Fish*, *Jim Foote* and *Marie Sasso*. *Marie Sasso* is temporarily filling the position of Recording Secretary. Curator *Amy Verone* spoke about the recently returned Colt pistol stolen from the site in 1990.



## TRIVIA QUESTION



Where in the house is this Parcheesi Board located?

## TR IN JUNE 1906

- 6/8 TR signed the Antiquities Preservation Act. ....A law was passed establishing the liability of federal agencies and common carriers for negligence-caused job accidents.
- ....Oklahoma entered the union as the forty-sixth state.
- 6/29 Niagara Falls was protected from hydroelectric despoilment (Edmund Morris's terminology).
- 6/30 The Railroad Rate Regulation Act was passed.
- 6/30 The Meat Inspection Act became law.
- 6/30 The Pure Food and Drug Act was passed.

## TR AND JOHN PAUL JONES



The April 2006 issue of *Smithsonian* contains an article on *John Paul Jones* by *Adam Goodheart*. The lengthy article chronicles the search for Jones's body in underground Paris at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and its discovery and return to the United States for proper burial. TR comes into the picture one hundred years ago on April 24, 1906. "...amid pomp and fanfare the likes of

which Annapolis had never seen, an American President laid to rest a national hero who had died more than a century before."

The body of Jones had been found by Ambassador *Horace Porter*, a Civil War Hero, after a six-year quest. President Roosevelt, in his delight at Porter's success, had dispatched an entire squadron of American warships across the Atlantic to receive the body. "I have never seen so many flags--big ones, little ones, French, American--all fluttering in the breeze," an eye witness recalled.

Jones's Annapolis memorial service was more splendid still. To quote the author, "On April 24, 1906, much of congress, the cabinet and the diplomatic corps gathered at the Naval Academy armory, along with French and American naval squadrons, the entire corps of midshipmen and thousands of onlookers." TR eulogized Jones and put in a plug for support for building up the Navy of the present.

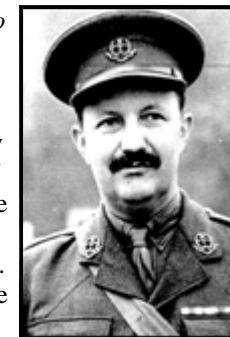
Jones's body was "was still warm" when questions arose if the body in the crypt was truly that of *John Paul Jones*. One writer suggested that the "tomb of the unknown French gentleman should have the following epitaph:

*Good friend for Porter's sake, forbear  
To doubt the dust enclosed here,  
Blest be the man that got these bones,  
And curst be he that says, "tain't Jones."*

There is a lock of Jones' hair at Annapolis, but what would be accomplished if the DNA proved the body wasn't *John Paul Jones*. Let the hero lie undisturbed.

## KERMIT ALMOST A GENERALISSIMO

The headline from the *San Francisco Chronicle* of February 29, 1940 cried out, "**Kermit Roosevelt: TR's Soldier Son Will Lead a Brigade Against Russia.**" The gist of the article, recently discovered in the site's archives, told of the formation of an international brigade in England that will go to Finland to fight against the invading Russian army. Five hundred of the 2,500 volunteers are already on their way.



Kermit, at 50, was a major in the British army. He had resigned his commission as a Captain in U.S. Army Reserve to join the British army. Field Marshal *Carl Gustave Mannerheim*, supreme commander of the Finnish forces, considered Kermit "an ideal man" to head the volunteer brigade composed of British, Scandinavians, Estonians and other nationalities recruited in England. Kermit was considered "ideal" because of his experience in rigorous climates.

The article ended and there was nothing further on Kermit in the files. Site personnel had no idea if Kermit did or didn't lead the brigade. *Edward Renehan* in his book, *The Lion's Pride*, supplied the answer to the question. Kermit didn't resign his British commission because the Russians overran the Finns and the Russo-Finnish War ended. Kermit did take part in a disastrous British raid on occupied Norway. He showed his bravery in that action.



Rich Althaus paints the flag pole and doesn't get dizzy

## SECOND ELDERHOSTEL BETTER THAN THE FIRST

Volunteer *Toby Selda* reported that the second in a series of four Elderhostel programs ran more smoothly than the first session. Curator *Amy Verone* refined her power point program with more pictures of TR's youth. Amy was under additional pressure since her parents had enrolled in the program and were monitoring her every word. Mom and Dad thought she did an outstanding job. The next two programs will be held in September of 2006.