



# Longfellow House Bulletin

Volume 6 No. 1

A Newsletter of the Friends of the Longfellow House and the National Park Service

June 2002

## Longfellow House Re-opens Its Doors After Three-Year Rehabilitation!

*We have just returned to our home & are enraptured with its quiet & comfort. It has now, too, the sentiment of the Future as well as the Past to render it dearer than ever. . . . We are full of plans & projects with no desire, however, to change a feature of the old countenance which Washington has rendered sacred.*

—Fanny Longfellow, 1843

After closing its doors in October 1998 to improve its infrastructure, paint inside and out, and conserve part of the collections, the Longfellow House will open its doors once again to the public on June 5th.

Visitors will be able to see the original nineteenth-century wallpaper cleaned and restored as well as some previously dirt-encrusted chandeliers returned to glistening beauty. Many rooms will display objects and works of art previously held in storage (see article below and page 2).

The first floor of the House is finally

wheelchair-accessible. A new geo-thermal heating and cooling system and a state-of-



the-art sprinkler system are now in place.

The re-opening will be celebrated on Saturday and Sunday June 8th and 9th with a Japan Festival featuring Japanese arts and music, flower-arranging, and origami demonstrations, among other things. (See Summer Schedule on page 7 for more details.) Japanese objects from the collections will be on exhibit for the weekend.

The House will resume its opening hours of Wednesday through Sunday from 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. until it closes again in October for the winter. Tours of the interior will be offered every hour. A special tour detailing the Longfellow family's involvement with music will begin later in the month of June (see page 4).

The carriage house with its renovated space for public lectures, programs, and conferences will be finished by early summer.

## Japanese Screens Displayed in House for the First Time in Decades

For the first time in almost a century, several Japanese screens from the Longfellow collection have been taken out of storage, conserved, and placed on exhibit in the rooms of the House.

These screens were restored through funds from Save America's Treasures. T.K. McClintock, Ltd. of Somerville, Massachusetts, specialists in the conservation of fine art and historic works on paper, treated these Japanese screens for almost two years.

Displayed in the library is a six-panel screen (pictured here), showing a boatman navigating through a spring landscape with hills, flowering trees, and a temple in the background. The ink and tempera color painting on buff paper is signed by the Japanese artist Kano Moritsune (1829-1866).

In the guest room are two interior panels of a six-panel folding screen painted in ink and tempera color on silk entitled "Seasonal Portraits of Women (Summer, Winter)."

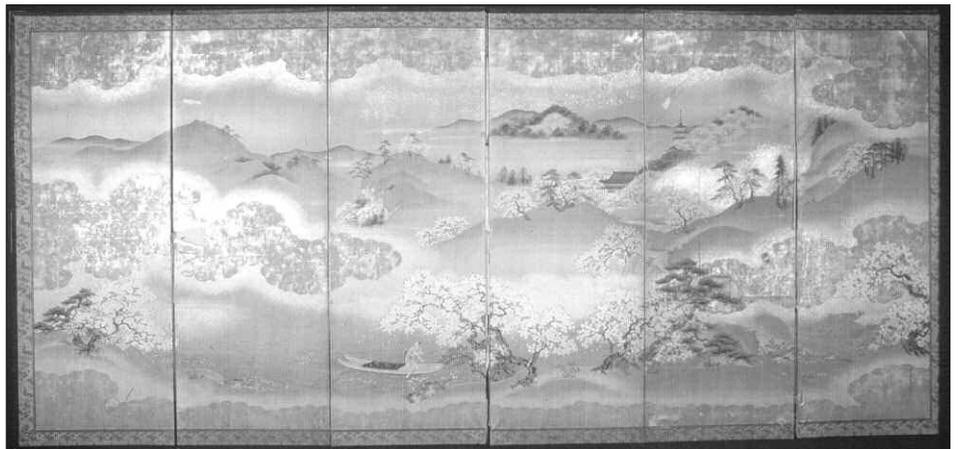
A two-panel folding screen in ink and tempera color on paper stands in Henry W. Longfellow's bedroom. The painting, "Fans Over a River," depicts eight unfolded fans (six images from nature, a mounted rider, and a woman at a calligraphy table) suspended above a stylized river background,

represented by gold leaf.

One other Japanese screen, a pastiche of poems and calligraphy, will continue to be displayed in the back hallway.

The newly displayed screens are part of a larger Japanese collection at the Longfellow

*(continued on page 2)*





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## Japanese Screens *(continued from page 1)*

National Historic Site. Hundreds of artifacts—ranging from books to fine arts to household items—reflect several generations of the Longfellows’ interest in Asian art, culture, and literature. The collection is particularly significant because many objects were obtained in Japan before many Westerners arrived there. They were purchased out of sheer enthusiasm for their beauty and to be used in the family home.

Much of the Longfellows’ Japanese collection was acquired by Charles Appleton Longfellow, Henry and Fanny’s oldest son. During his sojourn in Japan from June 1871—just three years after the Meiji Restoration and the opening of Japan to foreigners—until March 1873, Charley obtained a wide range of ceramics, textiles, paintings, bronzes, and photographs. He shipped more than twenty crates of these decorative arts home to his family in Cambridge.

“We shall need an addition to the house to accommodate all your boxes,” Alice wrote to her brother Charley on November 3, 1872. “Don’t quite turn us out of house and home. The barn might be turned into a universal museum and curio shop...”

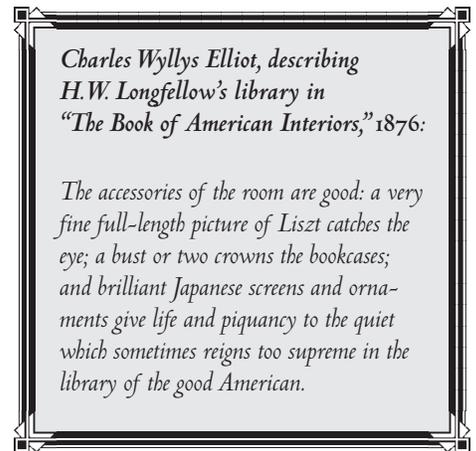
Boxes must still have been arriving over a year later when his father wrote to him on February 19, 1874: “We are now opening the other cases, and taking the beautiful things out to keep from the damp.... Last night the Library was gay, with screens.”

Shortly after his return, Charley and his cousin Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow Jr.

re-decorated his sitting room in the House with many of his Japanese souvenirs. Above the lacquer furniture, they covered the ceiling with ornate fans and adorned the walls with artwork and photos from Japan.

The Longfellow House’s Japanese collection is the earliest collection of Japanese items in the Boston area and one seen in the context of the house it was bought for rather than in museum. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japanese culture became increasingly Westernized. In return, late nineteenth-century Americans’ lives were enriched by the increased number of Japanese imports and trips to Japan. During the 1870s-1890s a “Japan craze” spread through Boston and beyond.

Portions of this extensive Japanese collection have been and will continue to be on permanent exhibit within the historic rooms.



## Longfellow Art Collection Seen Anew

When the House reopens, the public will be able to see several works of art recently donated or moved to be in more historically accurate places, as well as the roughly 200 works previously on exhibit within the historic rooms.

The fine arts collection of sculpture, paintings, drawings, and prints includes works acquired by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his family from the 1830s until 1928 through commissions, gifts, or inheritance.



Among the newly displayed works is an oil painting entitled “Dana Beach” by the poet’s son Ernest Longfellow. Donated in 1996 by the artist’s great niece Lenora Hollman, it is signed and dated 1875 by the artist and hangs in the Blue Entry.

John Kensett’s oil painting of a waterfall has moved to the parlor, where it had been

in the 1910s. One of the most admired landscape artists of the period and a Longfellow family friend, Kensett gave this canvas to Henry Longfellow in 1856.

French landscape painter Emile Charles Lambinet’s (1815-1877) pastoral oil “Marshland” has been relocated to the Blue Entry. Longfellow probably purchased it during his 1868-1869 trip to Europe.

An oil painting attributed to John Enneking called “Shore Scene” (pictured here) is probably a New England scene. Signed “J.E.” and dated August 1877, it has also been moved to the Blue Entry.

Some of the other works on view are by Eastman Johnson, George Healy, Thomas Crawford, Gilbert Stuart, Mather Brown, J. Appleton Brown, Anna Klumpke, Albert Bierstadt, and Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot.

## Interview with a Friend...Meet Richard Nylander

Richard Nylander, a member of the Friends of the Longfellow House Advisory Board, has spent thirty-five years with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) where he has done “just about everything.” Currently, he is Chief Curator and Director of the Collections Department, which is responsible for more than 100,000 objects. Half of these items are kept in the thirty-five historic houses owned by SPNEA.

**Longfellow House:** Why do you feel house museums are important?

**Richard Nylander:** What has always fascinated me is the combination of houses and objects. In fine arts museums, the objects are on a pedestal, out of context. SPNEA has extraordinary houses which—like the Longfellow House—have their associated contents and the papers, so you get a much fuller story about the people who lived there and what appealed to them. I’m also interested in period interiors, how people decorated their rooms and how they lived in them.

**LH:** Your goal is to keep all the archives, furniture, and objects inside the building?

**RN:** You need the whole picture to understand the material culture of the past, how people lived. An empty building isn’t going to do that. When the preservation movement first started, people were very concerned about saving the building, and then they didn’t know what to do with it. I think there’s real value with buildings that have the associated materials—like Longfellow House and some of the SPNEA buildings—because you know exactly what happened. The archives give you the background and the people’s thoughts, and the photographs tell you what they looked like, what their environment looked like, what they were interested in.

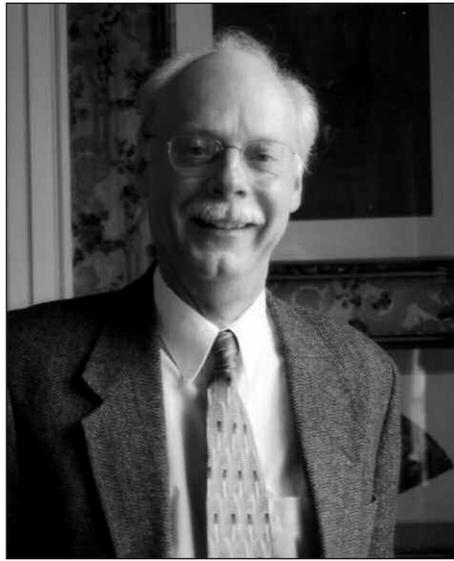
I was just driving down Brattle Street, and it’s great that it looks the way it does, but that’s architectural preservation. So many people these days are buying old houses and tearing the guts out, and they don’t take the time to understand what the house can tell them. So much is being lost today with the throw-away generation.

**LH:** When did you first come to know the Longfellow House?

**RN:** Probably in 1959 or 1960. My parents and late brother Robert were very interested in architecture. We were always going to antique shops and historic houses. In high school I got interested in decora-

tive arts, especially Victorian. It was difficult to find any houses in New England with a concentration of Victorian furniture or smaller household furnishings. Longfellow House was one of the few.

I think I memorized Harry Dana’s guide book [to the House]. It had the floor plans, and I could see how much I wasn’t able to see because only the first floor rooms were on view at that point. You could always hear people living on the second floor. In 1962 Frank Buda [the House guide and curator] took me on a behind-the-scenes tour of the second floor and let me take photographs.



The photographs of the second-floor rooms and the other side of the rooms not usually photographed are now considered historic.

**LH:** How has your long-term connection with the Longfellow House influenced you?

**RN:** Some of the contents in this House have contributed to things I’ve done in my career. The parlor set of Adam Hains furniture is something I was doing an article on and trying to discover the story behind our very similar set at the Lyman House. It was so well documented in Andrew Craigie’s correspondence. And the painting of the Dutch interior in the hall certainly piqued my interest in old master paintings in Boston in the early nineteenth century. And the whole Appleton connection. William Sumner Appleton, SPNEA’s founder, was related to Henry’s wife Fanny Appleton Longfellow. I’ve done a lot with that at SPNEA—this House is the next place you think of when you think of the Appleton family.

**LH:** You are an expert in the history of wallpaper. When we make a discovery, you’re over here in a second.

**RN:** Well, I was especially intrigued when you took down the mirror [in the parlor] to find Craigie’s Chinese wallpaper, which is really one of the most exciting wallpaper discoveries in recent years, because there are so few. We hear about these Chinese papers, or India papers as they were called at the time. Everybody thinks they were appropriate for colonial buildings because they were installed in Colonial Williamsburg in the 1930s, and there was never much record of their installation. They just didn’t survive on the walls.

It was really intriguing when the wallpaper conservation in the House first took place in the late 1970s, and Anne Clapp uncovered just a small section. I kept saying, ‘Why don’t you take down that mirror?’ because it’s a non-repeating pattern so you’ve got to see a big expanse of it. When the big mirror between the windows came down, it was pretty exciting to see obviously that great expanse of the Chinese paper but also the fact that the Longfellows knew they were going to have a big mirror there, and they papered around it, that they didn’t want to waste paper. A little New England right there. And some of it might have been something in Longfellow saying, well, we’ll save a little bit, because he had known this room as it was decorated by Andrew Craigie in the 1790s for so long when he boarded here. He would have seen the House with that paper, with the French-style furniture, which he ended up buying, just for sentimental value, I think. It was a conscious effort on his part to preserve a little of the past.

**LH:** What relevance do you think house museums have today?

**RN:** I don’t think they should serve as an escape to the past. That’s our perception of what happened in the late nineteenth century. It will be interesting to see if attendance will increase after September 11th. People, hopefully, are going to look to these historic sites and what they contain and what they can offer to reinforce some values and help us focus on what’s important. I hope that we who administer these houses are going to be able to get that across. It’s a challenge.

**LH:** Any other challenges for today?

**RN:** We need to grab kids at a certain age and get them interested in historic sites through school programs, which are both fun and challenging, and expose them to historic houses. Hopefully, we’ll excite them, and they’ll want to come back.

## New Theme-Tour of House Highlights the Longfellows' Love of Music

Beginning this summer, the National Park Service will offer a special tour of the House which focuses on the Longfellow family's interest in music and highlights music-related objects in the rooms.

When Henry Longfellow took over the House in 1843, he converted the room which had been used as a ballroom, and previously as banquet hall, to his own library and a music room. Throughout his life, he was as devoted to music as to the written word.

Music was a central part of Longfellow family life. The poet himself played flute and piano. His daughter Alice wrote that her father "would often pass the twilight hours at the piano, recalling bits from favorite operas."



"Alice Longfellow at the Piano," 1870, watercolor by her brother Ernest Longfellow

The family often invited friends to play music at their home. Ole Bull, the internationally renowned Norwegian musician, stood with his back to the fireplace and filled the library with Scandinavian melodies from his violin. He inspired the colorful character of the musician in Henry Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

Other musicians and renowned composers visited the House over the years, including Anton Rubinstein, Ernst Perabo, German pianist Frederic Rakemann, Amy Beach, Amy Fay, Clara Doria Rogers, Christine Nilsson, and John Knowles Paine.

Guests sometimes performed folk songs and ballads, and the family often joined in their performance. Longfellow describes a visit from Miss C. who accompanied herself on a guitar and sang "strange Spanish and Indian songs from New Mexico." Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble) was a frequent guest

who entertained the family with German and Scottish songs.

Conversely, the Longfellows often attended musical parties and concerts. Henry Longfellow especially enjoyed hearing vocal music and opera. His favorite operas were those of Mozart. In 1850 after hearing Jenny Lind for the first time, he wrote to his friend Charles Sumner, "She sings like a morning star, clear, liquid, heavenly sounds." A year later he heard her sing his favorite aria from *Le Nozze di Figaro* and wrote in his journal, "With what delight Mozart would have listened to her interpretation of his delicious compositions." Jenny Lind would later come to visit him at the House.

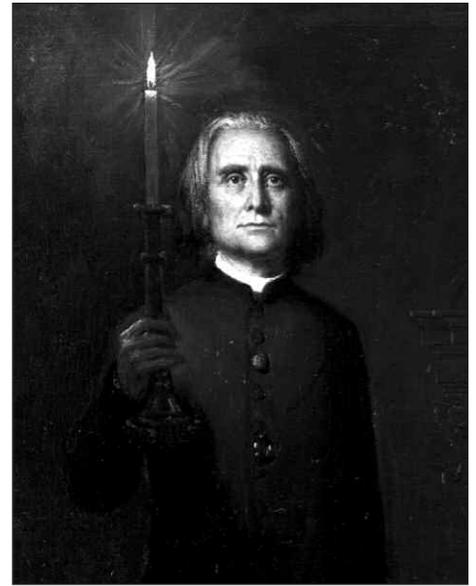
Henry Longfellow also loved Beethoven's music, which he called "simple and beautiful. His music, though past in form, has always a present signification."

Many musicians, known and unknown, wrote music of varying quality to accompany Longfellow's poetry. In 1847 after listening to a vocal rendition of "The Rainy Day" and "The Footsteps of Angels," the poet said, "The first I liked, the second is not a piece to be sung in public." The Hungarian composer Franz Liszt, however, set several of Longfellow's poems to music, much to the poet's delight. A large collection of music written to accompany his poetry resides in the House archives.

After Longfellow's death, the family befriended the great Polish pianist and composer Ignace Jan Paderewski. In 1897 Alice Longfellow purchased the Steinway & Sons, New York City, Model "C" concert grand piano now in the library possibly so he could play it when he visited. On one side of the fireplace in her bedroom, Alice

hung a charcoal portrait of Paderewski in profile attributed to Sir Edward Burne-Jones, and on the other she framed a poem by Richard Watson Gilder, editor of *Century Magazine*, entitled "How Paderewski Plays" with an engraving of the pianist.

The art and furniture at the Longfellow House reflect the family's love of music.



Franz Liszt (detail), G.P.A. Healy, 1869

Outside the library in the Blue Entry hangs a late nineteenth-century plaster relief plaque depicting three winged-cherubs playing a harp, a lute, and a flute respectively. In the library a mid-nineteenth century French Renaissance-revival walnut music stand still holds music books and sheet music. A historic Spanish lute with pearl inlay also resides in the library, and a full-length portrait of Franz Liszt hangs nearby. In 1868, Longfellow accepted an invitation from Franz Liszt to visit him in a monastery in Santa Francesca, Italy. So taken with the image of Liszt in the darkened doorway with a lit candle, Longfellow commissioned his friend and artist George P.A. Healy to paint the portrait.

In the dining room, two other portraits of musicians adorn the walls: a large portrait known as "Mandolin Player" by an unknown, possibly Italian, artist from the second half of the nineteenth century, and a miniature oil portrait in the style of Raphael called "The Violin Player" by Maria Carlotta Greene, dated 1830-1843.

The House has a significant collection of historic music books and sheet music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which is located in several rooms.

### *Henry W. Longfellow's Journal, June 3, 1846:*

*A small musical meeting at our house. The Hortons, Miss Fay, Miss Loring, and a few more were the party. Rolker the only masculine musician present. We had however, in their music, Chopin, Schubert, DeMeyer, Liszt (sic). Some German songs sung. On the whole a delightful evening. We lighted the Library for the first time; and out of doors a lovely June night with a bright moon and the odor of the new-mown hay crowned and completed the whole.*

## The Making of the Longfellow National Historic Site: A Preservation History

The National Park Service is planning a gala celebration in September of the thirtieth anniversary of its stewardship of the Longfellow House. Prior to 1972 when the NPS formally assumed possession of the Longfellow home with its carriage house, grounds, and archives, family members had conscientiously and continuously preserved the House for ninety years, a quite unusual situation for a historic home.

Alice Longfellow, Henry's oldest daughter, continued to live in the House after her father's death in 1882. She and her brother and two sisters increasingly thought of the House as a memorial to be maintained as it was when their father had lived there. To that end, shortly after his death, the family donated property between the House and the Charles River to the city of Cambridge, and noted landscape architect Charles Eliot developed it into Longfellow Park.

But maintaining a historic home to share with the public was difficult. "I tried after your grandfather's death having the house open every day," Alice wrote to her nephew Harry Dana in 1913, "and nearly went crazy. Neither Abby nor I will ever try it again. Never." That year the remaining children created the Longfellow House Trust

The Longfellow papers do not reveal who first suggested a trust for the House, but it was probably the lawyers Richard Henry Dana III and Joseph Thorp, the husbands of Longfellow's daughters Edith and Annie respectively.

The family sought to preserve the House as a memorial, in perpetuity for educational and inspirational purposes, to both the poet and its nine-month occupant George Washington and as a "specimen of the best Colonial architecture."

The trust provided that Alice could remain in the House and that funds could be conveyed to a "corporation" or divided among the Longfellow heirs at the cessation of the trust. It also allowed certain possessions to be removed from the House (a painting then thought to be by Tintoretto was donated to the Museum of Fine Arts). The trust paid for all repairs, taxes, and insurance, while Alice paid \$2500



NPS guide Muriel Storrie with Tip O'Neill (right) and Cambridge Mayor Walter Sullivan, 1974

annual rent and all other expenses. Following Alice's death, any family member alive at the inception of the trust could live in the House. To ensure a family member remain in the House, Alice willed \$60,000 to cover the annual rent for such a person.

Three trustees were to manage the Longfellow House Trust. Between 1913 and 1972, eight men held these positions, of which seven were friends and associates of the Longfellows and only one was a family member. Harry Dana took up residence in the House with Alice in 1917 and continued to live there after Alice's death in 1928.

Passionate about the House and its contents, Harry convinced family members to change the provisions of the trust in 1919 so that the House would stay as it was when the poet had lived there, with its paintings and furniture unchanged. He offered tours to the public, and charged a small admission fee to help with costs.

"I trust you will soon cease to have any dread of those silent trustees, who certainly give me no concern," Alice had written to Harry in 1915. But his fears proved justified when in 1935 the trustees tried to "convey the premises to a corporation" following his arrest on a morals charge (of which he was acquitted a month later). After the trustees' deal to transfer the House to Harvard fell through, they tried to interest Radcliffe in it as the president's home, but the family members rallied behind Harry and blocked the transfer.



Anne Longfellow Thorp & cousin Isabella Halsted at dedication of Longfellow NHS, 1974

Harry's cousin William Sumner Appleton badgered him to consider where the House would go when he died. As head of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), Appleton in 1946 asked Harry to "swing it our way, for we are the logical folk to look after it," but he made no such deal. Following his death in 1950, no family member chose to live in the House. The trust rented out rooms to family members and friends, and Thomas de Valcourt and Frank Buda managed the House, which was overseen by Anne Longfellow Thorp, the poet's granddaughter. Meanwhile, the trustees, in their search for a corporation, approached the NPS. The Park Service was not interested because, at the time, it contained no site commemorating an author. Ten years later after contacting SPNEA and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the trustees returned to the NPS. This time the climate was right, and in 1962 the NPS conducted a field survey of the site and concluded that it met their standards for inclusion in the system. In 1969, Congressman Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill Jr. requested the NPS draft a bill establishing the site. In 1972 Congress authorized the Longfellow National Historic Site, and two years later the Park Service assumed management of the property.

"What is apparent," wrote NPS historian Dwight Pitcaithley in 1986, "is that the Trust was a very early, very carefully crafted, and very private New England family effort to preserve the home of an internationally acclaimed American poet. Its success is a tribute to its creators which, as far as can be discerned, knew little if anything about the growing preservation movement and sought no counsel during their deliberations. The existence of the Trust and its longevity ensured that the house today... is not a restored, refurnished, or otherwise recreated representation, but an original survivor of Washington's brief occupancy and Longfellow's extended one."

Watch for notices in September  
of the National Park Service's  
30th Anniversary Celebration  
of its stewardship  
of the Longfellow House.

## Recent Research at the House

*The Longfellow House archives contain over 700,000 manuscripts, letters, and signed documents and are used extensively by researchers from around the world. Here are a few recent researchers of the several hundred who use the archives annually.*

In preparing an exhibition at the MIT Museum called “Perils of the Sea” (March 7 through November 3, 2002), Money Hickman, former curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, researched Arthur H. Clark, captain of the yacht *Alice*, owned by Fanny Longfellow’s brother Thomas Gold Appleton. Charles Longfellow, Fanny and Henry’s son, sailed on an historic trans-Atlantic voyage on the *Alice* in 1866 and kept a log of the journey. Charley later sailed with Clark in Japan. Their friendship is documented by photos in the Longfellow NHS collection depicting Clark and his sisters on an outing in Castine, Maine, with Charley, his sisters, and cousins.

Kate Lennon of the U.S.S. Constitution Museum examined a journal of Henry Wadsworth, Henry W. Longfellow’s uncle, and letters he wrote while stationed aboard the *Constitution* in the Mediterranean. This was part of her research for an upcoming exhibit (Spring 2003) on the 200th anniversary of the Barbary War.

For his research on the history of the railroad that ran from Stonington, Connecticut, to Providence, Bob Suppich was looking for information regarding the rumor that Henry Longfellow was aboard the steamship *Lexington* (owned by the railroad) when it caught fire and sank on January 13, 1840. Longfellow himself read the report of his demise in the newspaper two days after the tragedy!

Glen MacLeod of the English Department at the University of Connecticut in Waterbury used the Longfellow House collections in his research on the nineteenth-century craze for collecting plaster casts of classical statues and painted copies of famous paintings. He hopes to trace how this episode in the history of taste impinges on American literature from (roughly) Hawthorne to Wallace Stevens.

For her dissertation on American writers in Florence, Italy, Sirpa Salenius, a Finnish student living in Florence, used Alice Longfellow’s and Anne Longfellow Pierce’s journals from their visit to Florence in 1868 with their father and brother respectively.

## Arts and Crafts Conference to Tour House

From June 19-23, New York University will sponsor a conference in Boston entitled “Sources and Inspiration: Boston as a Beacon for the American Arts and Crafts Movement.” Conference participants will tour the House to see Arts and Crafts items. Several Longfellow family members were involved with the movement.

Led by John Ruskin and William Morris in England, the movement called for a return to handcraftsmanship and uncluttered interiors, unifying all art objects embodying an “aesthetic of honesty.” It found supporters in the academic circles of Cambridge with such people as Henry W. Longfellow and his close friend Charles Eliot Norton. After twenty years of teaching fine arts and promoting a revival in handicrafts, in 1897 Norton became the first president of the Society of Arts and Crafts,

Boston, the first such U.S. organization.

Henry’s nephew Alexander Wadsworth “Waddy” Longfellow Jr., an architect trained at Harvard, MIT, and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and who worked for some years with H.H. Richardson, was one of the founding members of the society. Waddy worked with his cousin, the poet’s daughter, Alice Longfellow to incorporate twentieth-century improvements in the House while maintaining its historic integrity. He designed and oversaw interior and exterior architectural additions to the House.

Alice had a keen interest in this movement as reflected in her collection of books, pottery, jewelry, metalwork, lighting fixtures, textiles, wallpapers, and furniture in the House. Waddy very likely helped her select these Arts and Crafts furnishings.



## Recent Donations

Through a generous donation from Eastern National, which manages the NPS bookstores, facilitated by its president Cheslie Moroz, and from Longfellow descendant Frances Wetherell, Longfellow NHS acquired over a hundred letters from Longfellow’s daughter Edith Longfellow Dana to her sister Anne Allegra Longfellow Thorp during the years 1876 to 1905.

Edith Longfellow’s correspondence contains chatty, detailed accounts of the Longfellow and Dana families’ social and political activities, travels, domestic issues, family events, and relationships. Edith describes the family’s trip to the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition; the work of the “Bee,” a local women’s charitable group; and President Hayes’s offer of Secretary of Legation in London to her husband Richard Henry Dana III. These letters include information not documented elsewhere and add significantly to the House archives.

Marisa Coogan and her children—in memory of her late husband, Theodore Havemeyer Coogan—recently donated a wallet of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and four letters written by him to his son Ernest. The light brown leather wallet, in surprisingly good condition, contains two notes in Ernest Longfellow’s hand stating it was owned by Longfellow and used by him until his death.

In the letters, written between 1863 and 1866, Longfellow shows his abhorrence of Andrew Johnson, expresses his concern for his son Charley’s health, affectionately relays the activities at Craigie House, and notes his formation of the Dante Club. The adventures of Trap, the family dog, are duly noted: “His latest misdemeanor was stealing a partridge from the supper table of the Dante Club. That was his view of the Divine Comedy.”

The whereabouts of these letters had been unknown for many years. When Andrew Hilen published them in 1982 in his six-volume *The Letters of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, he had used photostats copied by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana because the originals were listed as “unrecovered.” Mrs. Coogan found the letters tucked away in her family’s vacation home, a former residence of Longfellow’s great-grandson Henry Longfellow DeRham. The House archives had previously contained no personal correspondence from the poet to Ernest Longfellow. These letters will help fill a major gap in the collection.

## Longfellow House in the Media

In September 2001 *Down East* magazine published an article entitled “Spreading the Light” about H.W. Longfellow’s nieces Mary King Longfellow and Lucia Wadsworth Barrett, who traveled to Palestine in the 1920s and purchased many bolts of middle eastern fabric. When they returned to Portland, Maine, they created period costumes for a Christmas program that is still performed today with the same costumes.

*The Catalogue of Antiques & Fine Art*, Spring 2002, is using Albert Bierstadt’s painting “Departure of Hiawatha” from the House to illustrate Marilyn Richardson’s article “Hiawatha in Rome: Edmonia Lewis and Figures from Longfellow.”

A photograph of Charles Longfellow’s house in Tokyo will be published in a book by Professor Seiro Kawasaki of Tsukuba Women’s University, Japan, on the history of the foreign settlement at Tsukiji, Tokyo, from 1868 to 1899. Prof. Kawasaki intends to have his book translated into English.

An Excerpt from Henry W. Longfellow’s

### *The Builders*

*Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen;  
Make the house, where Gods may dwell.  
Beautiful, entire, and clean.*

## Longfellow Summer Festival Schedule 2002

Sponsored by Friends of the Longfellow House, New England Poetry Club, & Longy School of Music

*All programs take place on the side lawn at Longfellow NHS and are free and open to the public. Seating is limited so blankets and lawn chairs are welcome. No parking available.*

**Japan Festival** celebrates the House’s reopening and the reinstallation of Japanese screens: **Saturday June 8, 1-3 P.M.** Demonstrations of pottery making with Makoto Yabe, ikebana (flower arranging), origami, and calligraphy. Participation by Japanese students from the Brookline campus of Showa Women’s University, Tokyo.

**Sunday June 9, 1 P.M. & 3 P.M.** Illustrated talk on conservation of Japanese screens by a conservator from T.K. McClintock, Ltd.

4-5:30 P.M. Readings of Japanese poetry by Etsuko Takino and Victor Howes. Traditional Japanese music performed on the koto by Ayakano Cathleen Read and students.

**Saturday July 6, 1-3 P.M. George and Martha Washington**—Based on letters, a theatrical performance by Mary Wiseman of Colonial Williamsburg and Robert Kratz.

**Sundays at 4 P.M.:**

**July 7 Poems and Music of Freedom** features poets Ifeanyi Menkiti, David Ferry, and Frank Bidart from Wellesley College and vocalist Laura Marshall of Longy School of Music.

**July 14 Mercury Consort**, chamber ensemble, presents music for wind instruments.

**July 21 James Tate**, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, reads from his recent volume of poetry, *Memoir of the Hawk*. Longy School of Music vocalist Liana Bishop and friends present a musical interlude.

**July 28 Leven**, a women’s cappella ensemble, will perform madrigals, folk music, and an arrangement of Longfellow’s “A Psalm of Life.”

**Aug. 4 Donald Hall**, award-winning poet, reads from his recently published book of poetry, *The Painted Bed*, and other works, including *Without*.

**Aug. 11 Ensemble Chaconne**, with Peter H. Bloom, Carol Lewis, and Olav Chris Henriksen, performs works of the great Baroque masters J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Handel, etc. on period instruments (flute, viola da gamba, lute).

**Aug. 18 Cleopatra Mathis**, author of *What to Tip the Boatman?*, & **Diana der Hovanessian**, author of *The Burning Glass*, will read their poetry. Dan Teager and Friends add a festive touch with traditional Armenian and Greek music.

**Aug. 25 BEAT CITY**, a dynamic multicultural percussion duo, explores the world of drums and rhythm. Bob Schulz and Bill Manley demonstrate a variety of rhythmic instruments and encourage audience participation.

## Scalamandr ’s Donation to Textiles in the House

Scalamandr , the textile manufacturer renowned for their reproduction fabrics at the White House, Monticello, and other historic buildings, has meticulously recreated and generously donated fabric for drapes in the Longfellow dining room.

Scalamandr ’s owners, Adriana and Edwin Bitter, visited the House to examine various window treatments. After analyzing photos of drapes hanging in place as well as the fabrics stored in the House, they decided to reproduce the early twentieth-century dining-room drapes. Working with NPS staff, they sent preliminary samples to match color and weaving before completing the cloth.

Far more comprehensive than at most historic sites, the House textile collection provides a broad overview of American textile consumption from 1843 to 1950. It rep-

resents a wealth of items ranging from mantle fringes and summer slipcovers to family clothing and upholstery. The textiles are documented by letters in the House



“Library of Craigie House,” Mary King Longfellow, 1876

archives which reveal when and where they came from and why the family chose them.

Although Fanny Longfellow’s father, Nathan Appleton, was one of the founders of Lowell, Massachusetts, and made his fortune in the textile industry, she purchased most of her luxury fabrics from Europe. Fanny kept careful records of textiles for her and her children’s clothing. These provide a fascinating look into the history of changing tastes.

Scalamandr ’s newly reproduced drapes help to get us a step closer to completing the furnishing of the House as it was during Alice Longfellow’s residence in the 1910s. The library and other rooms still lack curtains because the originals are not in good enough condition to hang. The NPS is in need of the necessary funds to finish this project.

## Spotlight on an Object

In each issue of the newsletter, we focus on a particular object of interest in the Longfellow House collection. This time our spotlight shines on the "Heidelberg Chest," which is neither a chest nor from Heidelberg.

Recently, conservator John Driggers of Robert Mussey Associates discovered that what was thought to be an eighteenth-century German secretary was actually a pastiche of elements from various periods. Although the structure of the upper case and drawers is consistent with mid-eighteenth-century German construction, the techniques used elsewhere in the interior assembly are from the nineteenth century. Driggers theorized that major portions of the eighteenth-century German piece were destroyed and that the rest was rebuilt using parts from other furniture. Decorative elements, panels, and bases were added to blend stylistically with the serpentine shape of the original case and drawers.

The handwritten note inside the secretary which reads "Cabinet at the Castle of Heidelberg" is probably a dealer's claim. Fanny Longfellow's aunt Mary Lekain Gore Appleton bequeathed the secretary to the poet and his wife, but no one knows how or when she acquired the secretary. While the piece may not be what the note purports, Henry wrote of it: "I shall prize it very highly and keep it as a sacred memorial of her whom we all loved affectionately."



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