



▶ NEW PAINTING INSTALLED IN RECREATED LAW OFFICE.....4



▶ Smithsonian magazine museumday ...6



▶ NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED.....7

January / 2010

Legacy

A NEWSLETTER CELEBRATING THE DAVID WILLS HOUSE AND THE ENDURING SPIRIT OF GETTYSBURG.



8 LINCOLN SQUARE • GETTYSBURG
Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

Greetings and salutations from the David Wills House. We have had an excellent first year and have seen over 35,000 visitors since February 12, 2009.

Much has been happening since our last newsletter . We welcomed our new assistant museum manager, Kari Greenwalt. She brings an immense amount of knowledge and skill to the museum. We have also had the privilege of working with 12 new volunteers who bring their own special expertise and flair to the museum. In this issue of Legacy, you will learn more about the volunteer program and how you too can participate. We will also take time to feature one staff member from the David Wills House, in order that you can better know those who work and volunteer at this amazing museum.

Our website is now up, so if you haven't seen it, check it out soon. We will be continually updating programs, tours, exhibits and events.

We have made many improvements to the



recreated law office and the Lincoln bedroom. The new enhancements were showcased in November during dedication week and Remembrance Day. On November 17th the

Adams County Historical Society installed an original portrait of David Wills' father, James J. Wills, in the law office exhibit. A special thanks goes out to all the individuals involved with this project that made this a reality.

As we move forward this new year we will be focusing on the press and politics of the civil war era. We are launching an evening lecture series, living historian events and the museum will host a Gilder Lehrman exhibit "The Political Cartoons of Lincoln" November 3-30, 2010. Please join us this new season for these and our many new exciting programs.

-Jennifer Roth
Museum
Manager



Museum Visitorship Holds Steady

The David Wills House has had over 35,000 visitors tour the museum last year. We received excellent feedback and started a new survey to tell us more about what visitors enjoy and what they would like to see in the future. It is the hope of the museum and its staff to provide a quality experience to all our guests.

“The museum is a perfect tribute to the work of the Wills family and the people of Gettysburg.” (Rosmoyn, PA)



Joe & Chris Mieczkowski portray David & Catherine Wills.

Upcoming Events

- **Evening Lecture Series– The Press in the 1860’s**
March 24, 2010; 7-9 PM; Pre-registration required call for details
- **Learn about the Civil War Press Corp**
April 17, 2010; Free with general admission;



The David Wills House Museum unveiled a recently restored portrait of James Wills, father of David Wills. The portrait, by artist David S. Forney, was received by the Adams County Historical Society from a member of the Wills Family in 2004. The painting just underwent conservation by Cumberland County based conservator Brian R. Howard of Brian R. Howard Associates, Inc. The cost of the conservation work

New Painting Installed in Law Office

included the repairs to the actual canvas, cleaning of the work, and restoration of the frame.

This expense was underwritten by donations from the

Donors to the Adams County Historical Society, including the Strong Family Endowment; Military History Online, Battle of Gettysburg, Internet

Discussion Group; and Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable.



The portrait is on long term loan to the National Park Service from the Adams County Historical Society. Come view this historical

treasure and enjoy the other new additions to the law office and Lincoln bedroom exhibits. Visit our website to find out more.

DO YOUR PART TO PRESERVE THE LEGACY TODAY!



Become or encourage others to become a Member of Main Street Gettysburg. For more information on becoming a member today:

Call 1-866-486-5735
Local: 717-337-3491
www.mainstreet Gettysburg.org
Or www.davidwills.house.org



Above: Docents portray Victorian carolers for an 1859 holiday at the museum in December; Docents & Staff come together for the annual David Wills House Picnic.

New Volunteer Program!

The Wills House kicked off its volunteer program in mid June – just in time for the Fourth of July, holiday weekend. Several newly minted docents were able to step in and assist the large number of visitors over the battle anniversary weekend.

Since the initial meeting, the volunteer ranks have grown to include 13 docents, with two more currently in training. Since the end of June, these dedicated individuals have logged in 463.25 hours of service!

The volunteers act as docents – from the Latin word “docere,” meaning to teach. They answer many visitor questions, the most popular regarding the layout of the house during the Wills family tenure and what happened to the Confederate dead at Gettysburg.

Our volunteers range in age from just out of college to early 80’s and have a wealth of background knowledge. They include retired (and current) teachers, school administrators, retired museum workers, and nurses. They are from the military and marketing fields. Some are living history Re-enactors, others amateur chefs. All have a love of history and Gettysburg’s story.

This winter the volunteers will undergo more training on the history of the house and local area, as well as upcoming exhibits and programs. A committee, consisting of staff and several volunteers, is forming to draft the museum’s first interpretive tour – based on general information. The tour will be offered to groups in early 2010. Additional tours focusing on themes including President Lincoln’s visit and Mrs. Wills and the children will soon follow.

If you are interested in joining the volunteer staff, contact Kari A. Greenwalt, assistant museum manager, at 717-334-2499 or kgreenwalt@davidwillshouse.org.



Meet the David Wills House Staff

Each newsletter we will highlight a staff member of the David Wills House. This time we are meeting Leslie Selby. She serves as a visitor and retail associate at the museum. Leslie also specializes in reservations and group tours.

Leslie and her family live in Taneytown, MD on their farm. Leslie raises a variety

of sheep for both meat and wool. She is active in traditional fiber arts and enjoys spinning, knitting, weaving and felting wool.

Leslie has brought a wealth of experience to the David Wills House. Previously she has worked for Carroll County Government, the United States Postal Service, Rose Hill Manor Park and Museums, Shifferstadt Architectural Museum and Carroll County Farm Museum.

Next time you are in the museum stop by and meet Leslie. An outstanding member of the David Wills House team.

Smithsonian Museum Day Draws a Crowd



On Saturday, September 26, 2009, The David Wills House participated in the fifth annual Museum Day, presented by *Smithsonian* magazine. A celebration of culture, learning and the dissemination of knowledge, *Smithsonian's* Museum Day reflects the spirit of the magazine, and emulates the free-admission policy of the Smithsonian Institution's Washington, DC-based properties. The museum was free of charge to *Smithsonian* magazine readers and Smithsonian.com visitors. The David Wills House also featured free admission to Adams County residents.

"Museum Day is a way for institutions like the David Wills House to give back to the community and open their doors to the public free of charge. It also is an incredible opportunity to be associated with the Smithsonian Museum community and to use an established program like this in our own community," said Jennifer Roth, Museum Manager of the David Wills House.

The David Wills House hosted approximately 300 guests on September 26 and was a featured museum in the state of Pennsylvania. The program proved very successful and it is likely that the David Wills House will participate next year.



New Website Showcases Museum

www.davidwillshouse.org

On August 11, 2009 the David Will's House website went live. The website designed and created by FNP Interactive of Frederick, showcases all that the David Will's House Museum has to offer. Sections include information to plan your visit, educational pages, a photo gallery and information on upcoming events.

People from all over the world have accessed the site since its release and the response has been great. We are watching trends and trying to keep the site up-to-date.

In addition, FNP and the staff of the David Will's House will be

working together on a virtual tour. This will allow visitors to get a taste for the site before visiting. We also hope this will become a tool for teachers and groups to utilize before they visit, creating a familiarity with students and guests.

In addition to the website, the museum has also created a Facebook Fan site. Members can join and share their thoughts, discussions, photos and reviews with others. To become a fan just search for David Will's House.

The museum also has plans to launch a Youtube page to highlight videos of the David Will's House.



The David Wills House

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www.davidwillshouse.org

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