

Francis Wyman Association  
c/o Virginia Muccaccio  
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Dedham MA 02026-4911



# The Wyman Journal

Issue 25    A Publication of the Francis Wyman Association    2011  
Visit us at [www.wyman.org](http://www.wyman.org)

## President’s Message: Phase II Nears Completion!



Dear Cousins:  
My message to you will be brief as I want to fill this newsletter with NEWS. There are exciting things going on at the house and I have asked several of those attending the weekly briefings to submit their reports giving you a many-sided view of the project. Your President has so often felt like the “little boy who cried wolf” asking all Wymans to give, time and again, their financial support to us. But, if you could see the dedication of John Goff, our Restoration Architect, and his enthusiasm and love for “our house”, you would empty your pockets. The “trinkets” like the clay marbles and buckle, and the summer beam in the kitchen have thrilled both John and Caroline Miller, a member who is deep into not just genealogy but living history. My deepest thanks to Peter Hamm, our Restoration Contractor, for his dedication to replicating as closely as possible to what is known historically, the work on the stairwell and surrounding area; to Jonell Kenagy, Pam Meppelink, Caroline Miller, and Jon Wyman for attending the meetings as “family”; Mike Tredeau and Norman Biggart representing the Town of Burlington and its historical organizations; and of course, John Goff for the giving of his time above and beyond what is included in his contract with us. We will present all this to you on Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, and hope many of you will join us for the ribbon-cutting celebration.

*Ginny*

## Francis Wyman Association                      Special Appeal for 2011

The Francis Wyman Association is grateful for your past support for the Restoration. We do, however, continue to need your donations! The Phase II Restoration has depleted our savings! Funds are now needed for insurance, utilities and continued operation of the homestead. All contributions are tax-deductible! All gift amounts are appreciated! Please pledge your support! Thank You!

Donation Categories:	Benefits include:
\$ 20    Settler	<i>The Wyman Journal</i> newsletter
\$ 35    Colonial	Annual Meeting Invitation.
\$ 50    Pioneer	Updates of the restoration.
\$ 100    Minuteman	Visits to the homestead.
\$ 250    Patriot	
\$1000    General Washington	Here is my donation of \$_____ towards the \$1000 purchase of the Abel Wyman painting!

*Your donations are tax deductible.    Your contributions benefit the Francis Wyman Homestead!*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town/State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable: **Francis Wyman Association**    c/o President Virginia Muccaccio; 14 Thompson St. Dedham MA 02026-4911  
The Francis Wyman Association is a private, nonprofit 501c3 organization. Your contributions are fully tax deductible. Consult your tax preparer for additional information. All contributions will be acknowledged in writing.

### *A Special Offer:*

▪ **Your name on a dedication plaque for each \$1000 gift.** Your name or the name of a loved one will be added to a large plaque that will be available for display purposes when the museum is open for visitors. Please print the name for display:  
\_\_\_\_\_



*Hear Yea! Hear Yea!    Please Join Us for the -----*  
**Francis Wyman Association “Unveiling of the Homestead Interior Restoration”**  
**Sunday, June 26, 56 Francis Wyman Road, Burlington MA**  
*11am. Association Meeting                      1pm. Ribbon Cutting*  
Bring your own lunch, chairs.

## RESTORATION ADVANCES AT WYMAN HOUSE    by John Goff and Peter Hamm



Last year, in 2010, the Francis Wyman Association engaged John Goff with Historic Preservation & Design of Salem, MA to apply for a new Massachusetts Preservation projects Fund (MPPF) grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to support continued restoration work on the Francis Wyman House in Burlington. A \$50,000. grant was approved to fund a new \$100,000 project that would primarily work to advance restoration work and fire damage repairs on the burned Wyman House interior.



While some repairs were to be made on the exterior of the house, including repainting, most of the work was inside. **Interior work has included replacing the wide pine floors in the kitchen and back hall and front stair hall, replacing burned interior walls on all sides of the front stair hall, widening four door openings for accessibility, installing new view windows to see interior parts of the walls and structure, soot and char removal, and replacing the burned newel posts, treads, risers and stair railing near the front door of the house.**

The project was competitively bid, and on February 15th Peter Hamm with Historic Preservation Associates of Wales, MA was hired as the restoration contractor. Peter came to the project with a lot of experience working on similar historic timber framed houses, recreating historic woodwork and restoring existing historic architectural components.

He noted: "The Wyman House in Burlington is an architectural treasure that during the course of recent repairs has been revealing more of its history, and allowing us to sort of time travel. Many surprising discoveries were made between February and May. For example, while disassembling some of the burned boards in the front stair hall, I found a colonial stone whetting stone was left on a beam above the door to the basement. It was as if the original joiner had just left the house for a lunch break."

He continued: "In addition, major new discoveries include an early colonial arched oven that survives in situ behind the existing Federal style fireplace in the kitchen. Early pit-sawn joists and a half-dovetailed summer beam were also found beneath the kitchen floor. Furthermore, a lug-pole hole was found in the major central chimney by Richard Irons of Maine. All these discoveries suggest that the Francis Wyman House has many important stories to tell from the Colonial, and Federal periods."



There is an old saying that "many hands make light work." One of the best parts of the Wyman House Restoration Project in 2010-2011 has been that it has been a true team effort, with many people adding to the success of the project.

Peter Hamm has been supported by his subcontractors Jack Cadwell, Chris Albrecht, Tom Trafford and Mike Arsenault, as well as blacksmith Rob Lyons. The Wyman Association has been capably represented by Ginny Mucciaccio, Jonell and John Kenagy, Jon Wyman, Pam Meppelink and Caroline Miller. A barn lumber project is being advanced by David Ottinger. Masonry research was advanced by Richard Irons of Maine, and archaeological study by Marty Dudek of John Milner Associates, Inc. The Burlington Historical Commission has been well represented by Norman Biggart, Mike Tredeau and Toni Faria while Ross Dekle has been our project administrator for the MHC.



A number of newspapers and TV stations have also enthusiastically promoted and supported the project, including the Boston Globe, Burlington Times-Chronicle, Burlington Union, Salem Gazette, and B-CAT television. New plans are now being made to develop regional tours with other museums, and we look forward to the Wyman House being used as a new history educational center. Many thanks to all for making the Francis Wyman House restoration in 2010-2011 such a success!



Board member **Pam Meppelink** and descendant **Rebecca Lofgren** examine artifacts from Wyman homestead with an eye toward educational programs. Rebecca and **Dave Meppelink** are working on the website [www.wymanassociation.org](http://www.wymanassociation.org) to develop education and restoration efforts.



**Mike Tredeau, Co-Chairman of the Burlington Historical Commission**, is the producer of a series for Burlington Cable television, about Burlington history. Three episodes of that series, and two sequels, deal with the Francis Wyman House.

These DVDs will be available for purchase for \$15 by contacting: [mtredeau@burlingtonmahistory.com](mailto:mtredeau@burlingtonmahistory.com)

**What the Heck Is It?** Part I & II deal with the stone chamber in the wall near the house. These videos tell what we know of the chamber, and what is speculated about it.

**Where Did They Go?** Part I & II deal with the fate of the Native Americans who once inhabited this region and who may have constructed the chamber.

**A New Beginning** deals with the beginning of Phase II in the reconstruction of the Francis Wyman House. This video will be available in both broadcast and extended versions.

*This is an ongoing series, and future episodes will deal with the history of the Francis Wyman House and its continuing restoration*

## A Ramrod, a Two-Tined Fork, and a Stock Clasp... By Caroline Miller



....a Civil War era button, a shard of Wedgwood pearlware, and a stone sharpening tool are among the several items uncovered during the recent restoration work on the interior of the Francis Wyman House. Identification and the approximate date of manufacture of each object has been researched, and perhaps the most interesting of the collection is a brass, one and a half inch buckle, that turned out to be part of a Revolutionary War era stock clasp; its purpose revealed upon further research.

Men's neck cloths of the 18th century were elaborate affairs that could be tied in a variety of creative styles, each with its own descriptive name. Soldiers, however, found the process time consuming and difficult to maintain, and adopted a solution by wrapping a three inch band of leather around the neck and over the neckcloth. This was called a stock, and fastened in the back by a brass clasp, the entire arrangement keeping the neckcloth securely in place. It was worn by the Redcoats during the Revolution, and by the rebelling colonists, and is listed among the clothing required to outfit military personnel:

*"all noncommissioned officers and soldiers who are or may hereafter be enlisted during the war be annually furnished with one regimental coat, full made; one cloth vest; one pair of cloth breeches; one pair of woolen overalls; two pair of woolen hose; two pair of woolen socks; one felt hat or leather cap; four shirts; two pair of linen overalls; four pair of strong shoes; one blanket; one rifle shirt, and one pair of woolen gloves; also, one pair of shoe buckles and one stock clasp every two years."* June 18th 1781.

Legislative History General Staff Army of the U.S. from 1775 to 1901

Though we cannot establish its ownership with certainty, the Wyman who fought in the Revolution and owned the house where it was found, was Abel Wyman (1732-1826), a painting of whom has recently surfaced. (See story below.)



**Original Abel Wyman Painting Found! We Desperately Need Your Help to Purchase! Appraised by Skinner, Inc. Auction House at \$1200, the owner is willing to sell to FWA at \$1000.**

**Presently all current FWA funds are dedicated to the restoration. \$1000 is the purchase price that must be raised. It is important that the painting not disappear again. \$300 has been pledged. We urge you to help. Please see page 4 of this newsletter to contribute. Caroline Miller, FWA Providence RI.**

**How It Was Discovered:** In the last newsletter, I described a photo of a painting Abel Wyman (1742-1826), Revolutionary War soldier, and owner of the Francis Wyman house. Since that time and by coincidence, the FWA received an email from Katie Pattee of Iowa, asking if we would be interested in a piece of the wedding dress of Ruth Putnam, the wife of Abel Wyman. It was part of a small collection of Wyman genealogical items recently inherited by her husband. I replied that we would love to have the fabric, and that we had recently acquired a 'photo' of a painting of Abel and did she know anything about it. She wrote back that she had it in her possession! Ms. Pattee stated the scrap of wedding dress, a floral calico on a brown background, had been attached to the back of the painting, which was described by Abel's descendant, Ruth Putnam Merrill:

*"Portrait by St Emmon. He never signed his works but was a noted artist in the lists of Gilbert Stuart's time 1799 + or – He sold his works around Boston. His works are known as pastels and are done on paper (etchings) with pencil and crayon. Not the usual so-called "Crayon Portrait" of later days."*

Ms. Pattee generously donated several old depictions of the Francis Wyman house; genealogical notes written by Ruth Putnam Merrill and her mother, Bertha (Crocker) Merrill, and an eight inch colorized photo of Abel Wyman's great grandson, James Edward Stubbert, ca 1865. Curiously, on the back of the oval frame is the photographer's label: *WYMAN & CO. PHOTOGRAPHERS, 335 Washington Street, Boston.*

**The painting of the patriot, Abel Wyman, was appraised at \$1200, and Katie has offered it to the FWA for \$1000. How wonderful and fitting it would be, if it could be returned to the old home where once it hung, and placed beside Ruth (Putnam) Wyman's framed square of wedding dress, and the photo of their great grandson, James Edward Stubbert.**



FWA acquired photo in 2008 on EBay.