



## Hands-On Butter Making

Join open hearth cook Mercy Ingraham on Sunday, March 2, 2014 in the kitchen of the Bouman-Stickney Farmstead as she churns butter and demonstrates its relationship with curds and whey. Located at 114 Dreahook Road in Stanton, NJ, this Sunday Open House program will run from 1:00-4:00 p.m. The program, as well as a tour of the 1741 Dutch bank house, is free but donations are gladly accepted.

Mercy Ingraham began cooking over a fire as a young Girl Scout, and

continues to do so today as she demonstrates for museums throughout the East Coast. The walk-in fireplace in her 18<sup>th</sup> century house inspired her to learn more about the history of American Foodways, which led her to study recipes from Early American cookbooks.

Groups of six or more please call for a reservation. For more information please call our Program Director Margaret Smith at 908-236-2327. For directions please visit [www.readingtonmuseums.org](http://www.readingtonmuseums.org).

## Long Lasting Impact of Museum Programs

*By Cheyenne Smith,  
Museum Volunteer*

On the first day Brittany Gajewski began interning at the Readington Museums, former Program Director, Kimberly Costa had every intention of showing her the ropes and introducing her to what she would spend her summer doing. That plan went downhill fast when one of the guest speakers for the next day's program canceled. Costa turned to Gajewski and said, "Well, I guess you're teaching country dancing tomorrow."

On her first day at the Museums, Gajewski learned one of the most important lessons she learned during her time at the Museums-- flexibility. Costa taught Gajewski the dance steps all in one day, and Gajewski went home and watched YouTube videos of the dance non-stop that

night. "It was one of those experiences where it was sink or swim-- for sure. I just either had to perform or I didn't, and Kim obviously had some amount of faith in me to pull it together, and we managed. But it was fun," she said.

According to Museum Board member, Betty Ann Fort, the mission of Readington Museums is to teach all people the history of the area. "Our mission is to help people understand the history of this place and the fact that there was life before... anybody... to give kids a hands on experience because that's the way they really remember what their learning. It's to make history living and real so that people really do understand it," said Fort. The Readington Museums has succeeded in its mission because many community members have realized their love for history through the Museums' programs and field trips, and have been inspired to pursue it further. *(Continued on page 3)*

### Readington Museums

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Recent donation from Howard Helfman & Jessica Spado of an early American primitive colonial pine cradle.

# A Successful “Taste of the Past” Cooking Class



Jack Kille preparing to spit and roast the venison.

from the modern sink, eggs did come fresh from a farm, but they were bought, not collected by the students, and on occasion an extra bit of salt or sugar was added. We also needed to adjust one of the period recipes as it advised, “to beat the hare with its own blood”.

The most rewarding part of the afternoon was sharing the meal with each chef.



Helen Farrant beats eggs for pumpkin pancakes.

The January 18<sup>th</sup> cooking class held at the Bouman-Stickney Farmstead used the original open hearth to prepare an 18<sup>th</sup> century meal. Taught by open hearth cook, Connie Unangst, the students learned fire safety, translating receipts as they were called in the 18th century, proper fire maintenance, and open hearth cooking skills. The six students each chose a recipe to prepare, and immediately began cutting, grating, peeling, and “hacking”. The students mostly kept to the 18<sup>th</sup> century way of cooking by using period correct kitchen tools, and foods of the season, but on occasion some adjustments needed to be made. Water came



Standing: Helen Farrant, Jack Kille, Heather Martin, Ann Marie Anderson, Sitting: Mary Gamarello, Connie Unangst, and Susan Luczu. Photo by: Margaret Smith

The menu included:

*Turnip Soup,  
Venison Dressed  
Colleps,  
Roasted Quail with  
Sauce,  
Carrot Pudding,  
Pumpkin Pancakes,  
Hare Stew,  
Pear Tart, and Very  
Fine Syllabubs.*

## New Exhibit in Readington Municipal Offices

The Readington Museums proudly displays its most recent acquisitions to the Lindsay/ Stickney archive in the lobby of the Readington Township Municipal offices. This famous couple lived in the 1741 Dutch house, known today as the Bouman-Stickney Farmstead, located in the Stanton section of Readington Township. Playwright/Producer/Actor Howard Lindsay bought the house and its 65 acres as a gift for his wife, Dorothy Stickney. Most famously known as a Broadway actress, Stickney starred with her husband, Lindsay,

in the longest running Broadway play, *Life with Father*, which was written by Lindsay and his partner, Russel Crouse, in 1939. Included in the exhibit are photos showcasing Dorothy Stickney as early as 1928 as Molly Molloy in *The Front Page*, and as late as 1971 photographed with Josephine Hutchinson, playing Emily and Mamie



Baldwin in *The Homecoming: A Christmas Story*. Also included, a letter written by Stickney in 1978 to playwright and friend, John Patrick. It tells about a fire that burned down the original guest house. The exhibit is free and open to the public inside the front lobby located at 509 Route 523, Whitehouse Station, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

## Impact of Museum (Continued)

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Gajewski's addiction to colonial history and the Museums began when she attended Museum Camp as a fifth grader. She and the other campers would come in each day, put on colonial clothing, and then begin their daily chores. "One day we were in the garden... then the next day, we learned how to stitch. And we would play colonial games, like hoop and stick. Basically do what children in colonial times would have done," she said.

One day at Museum Camp, Stephanie Stevens, the town historian, had on her petticoat, apron, and bonnet while role playing as a woman from colonial times. While describing her colonial lifestyle, she made a comment about having only one or two shirts. One of the kids said, "Well I have like 30 shirts." In Gajewski's head she thought "I have way more than that." This little experience stuck out in Gajewski's mind and caused her to think about the possibility of not being able to shower or wear different clothes of her choosing. "I think that was really scary to me, as a fifth grader nonetheless," she said.

Thought provoking experiences at the Readington Museums like this one encouraged Gajewski to study history at Rider University and come back to the Museums for her summer internship. "It was always very interesting to me-- colonial America, and anytime I was at the Museums as a child, I loved it-- I mean, I couldn't get enough," she said, "When it came down to looking at my program at Rider, I saw that I could do a history internship that would allow me to receive class credit for an upper level history class, but do something over the summer where I was actually working in a historical environment."

Just like Gajewski, Samantha Lelah, a Hunterdon Central senior, was so fascinated by the field trips she attended at the Museums during elementary school that she decided to come back as a volunteer. "I really like the atmosphere, like everything's so antique and so fragile that it just, it really makes me feel a part of something bigger. I know that's what everyone says all the time, but it really makes me feel a part of my history," she said.

When Lelah found out that the Museums had stopped running Museum Camp, she was disappointed that children would be missing out on the experiences she had at the Museums. So for her Girl Scout Gold Award, she worked with the Museum staff to create a program similar

to Camp, called "Monday Mornings at the Museum." Children ages 5 to 14 went to the Bouman-Stickney location every Monday morning for four weeks during the summer. Lelah taught history and colonial times through crafts and games that she had developed. "I really wanted to have children of this community learn about history the way I did because I really remembered it," she said.

Even though Museum Camp no longer runs, the Readington Museums hosts many other events. The Museums consists of four buildings at three different locations. School groups attend the Cold Brook School location during the fall to experience a typical early 19th century school day. Students also attend the Eversole-Hall House location during the spring to learn about the Revolutionary War period. The Bouman-Stickney farmstead location, which also houses the Wade-Wyckoff Barn, is where most of the programs are held. At this location there are two barn dances each year, school programs, Open Houses on the first Sunday of each month, Friday Night Lecture Series during the summer, and Monday Mornings at the Museum during the summer.

Through these programs many community members are prompted to become more involved with the Museums. "It's really fun to show people the sites for the first time," said Fort, "A lot of people that live in Readington who come as chaperones with their kids say, 'I never knew this was here.' That's always fun to see. And then they come back." This is exactly how Lelah and Gajewski became involved with the Museums.

Lelah, hoping to attend Rowan University for journalism, learned a lot from her Gold Award experience at the Museums that she hopes to apply to her career. "I gained so much leadership skills, so much knowledge about history, so much communication, [and so much] advertising skills. They've just all come together and really impacted me to be a journalist, to be someone that can inform the public on what they don't know," she said.

Gajewski attended Rider University and majored in secondary education and history. She is currently attending graduate school at Rutgers University for school counseling while working at the Liberty Hall Museum. Gajewski's experiences at the Museums prepared her for (continued on page 4)

## Impact of Museum (Continued)

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this job. "I learned a lot from [the Museums], especially about time management, being able to work school programs, but also [to] make sure the house was kept up and tidy and make sure that all the items in the house were accessioned and taken into our inventory," she said. She continues to work with school programs as a museum docent, or tour guide, at the Liberty Hall Museum.

As a history teacher, Gajewski hopes to teach her students with the same hands on approach that caused her to be so passionate about the subject. "I really hope I receive some type of funding to make sure that I could bring my students to places like Readington Museums, or the

place where I am now, Liberty Hall. I think it's really important," she said.

By interning at the Readington Museums, Gajewski learned the necessary skills that she needs for her career in the best and most hands on way-- by actually living it. "Just being with Kim and Readington Museums and learning things so on the fly, and understanding that I had to be flexible, just really helped me. Not only for working in a Museum, but just for life in general. [You] Just have to be ready for anything that's thrown your way," said Gajewski.

## Calendar 2014

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The Bouman-Stickney Farmstead is located at 114 Dreahook Road, in the Stanton section of the township. Donation for all lectures and programs are gladly accepted.

**Sunday, March 2**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Hands-on Butter Making  
Mercy Ingraham

**Sunday, April 6**  
Photo Walk  
Donna Herrmann  
1:00-4:00 p.m.

**Sunday, May 4**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Antique Tools  
Bob Garay

**Saturday, May 10**  
7:00-9:30 p.m.  
Barn Dance with Betsy Gotta  
\$5.00 per adult and \$2.00 per child. Refreshments served.

**Friday, June 27**  
7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Lecture: Marty's Clock Clinic  
Martin Ridder

**Friday, July 25**  
7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Lecture: TBD

**Friday, Aug 22**  
7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Lecture: Hunterdon County in the Civil War  
John Kuhl

**Sunday, September 7**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Open House: TBD

**Sunday, October 5**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Open House: TBD

**Saturday, October 18**  
7:00-9:30 p.m.  
Barn Dance with Betsy Gotta  
\$5.00 per adult and \$2.00 per child. Refreshments served.

**Sunday, November 2**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Open Hearth Cooking Demonstration  
Connie Unangst

**Sunday, December 7**  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Dutch Christmas