



Longfellow House Bulletin

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June 2004

First New Biography of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in Forty Years

In order “to discover the real Longfellow,” Charles C. Calhoun has written the first new biography of the poet since 1964. *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life* will be published this month by Beacon Press.

“Henry Longfellow had a voluminously documented life, but the paradox is that the more documentation there is, the harder it is to know the real person,” says Calhoun, who is a staff member of the Maine Humanities Council in Portland, former Rhodes Scholar, and a newspaper reporter by training.

After six years of research at the Longfellow House and other archives including Harvard’s Houghton Library—thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities—Calhoun describes the poet as someone beset by losses and familial responsibilities. He was wounded early in life by the death of his first wife, Mary.



Charles Sumner and Henry W. Longfellow, 1863

He later lost an infant daughter and his beloved second wife, Fanny, who is said to have died from burns after her daughter Annie dropped a match which ignited her mother’s dress. For years, Henry Longfellow took care of his extended and troubled family—an alcoholic brother and his par-

ents who suffered mid-life breakdowns, among others. “He could have succumbed to the depression that haunted him, but he didn’t,” says Calhoun. “His poetry held him together. He used it to deal with the sorrow of life, and he discovered that his readers found a similar solace in his work.”

The idea for this biography grew out of Calhoun’s work in the late 1980s at Longfellow’s alma mater, Bowdoin College, when he was commissioned to write a bicentennial history of the college. This introduction to archival research instilled in Calhoun a desire to write the new book. He found himself asking:

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Teachers as Scholars Program Comes to the Longfellow House

Thirteen Boston-area teachers attended a seminar entitled “Longfellow and the Question of American Identity” as part of a two-day Teachers as Scholars professional development program held at the Longfellow NHS on March 22 and April 2.

A diverse group of teachers from nine different school districts—second-grade teachers alongside middle school English teachers and high school science teachers—analyzed Longfellow’s poetry, learned about his life and times, and grappled with questions of the poet’s waxing and waning popularity and influence. “If Longfellow has an unsteady place in the poetic canon, why do we still pay attention to him?” asked Charles Calhoun, the seminar’s leader and Longfellow’s most recent biographer, of his audience.

In preparation for the seminar, each



Park Ranger Nancy Jones leads Mr. Sousa’s class from Cambridge’s Kennedy-Longfellow School through the House teacher had received J.D. McClatchy’s *Longfellow: Poems and Other Writings* and had been assigned twelve poems to read, including anti-slavery poems from 1842. The Park Service prepared packages with background

on the life of Longfellow and his family and information about the House and archives. Following morning lectures and discussion, Park Rangers Nancy Jones and

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All images are from the Longfellow National Historic Site collections, unless noted otherwise.

“Why was so much written about Nathaniel Hawthorne, Longfellow’s classmate at Bowdoin, and hardly anything about Longfellow for the past half century?”

Calhoun says his book is not a traditional comprehensive biography but rather is designed to “re-introduce Longfellow to the public” and remind them that he was one of America’s first powerful cultural forces, a poet and teacher who helped define American Victorian life.

Although Cecil B. Williams wrote the most recent biography entitled *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, Calhoun feels the last good study was Newton Arvin’s *Longfellow: His Life and Work*, published in 1962. But it focused more on Longfellow’s poetry than on his life. In 1955 Edward Wagenknecht’s *Longfellow: A Full-Length Portrait* followed a relatively long drought in Longfellow biographies, possibly because the poet’s family

had not allowed authors to quote from family papers until that point. In 1938 Lawrence Thompson produced *The Young Longfellow*, covering only Henry’s first three decades. Samuel Longfellow—Henry’s brother who lived with him and his wife Fanny soon after they married—edited and published many selections from Henry’s journals and letters in the late 1880s, following the poet’s death. In an effort to preserve a certain image of his brother, Samuel avoided any passages suggesting conflict or strong emotion, thereby creating what Calhoun refers to as an “embalmmnt” of the poet.

In his book, Calhoun seeks to answer the question “How could someone reach such a peak of literary fame and fall so quickly?” Longfellow’s decline in popularity actually started in his later years when he began to be regarded as a children’s poet. By the 1930s and ’40s there was a lack of critical interest his work, and he had been targeted as “an enemy of the Modernists,” says Calhoun. “He was thought of as being too repressed, proper, elitist, patriarchal, didactic, and overly sentimental. Today we’re more sympathetic to Victorian visual culture, but we still haven’t overcome our resistance to Victorian poetry.”

“Some of the things I try to get across

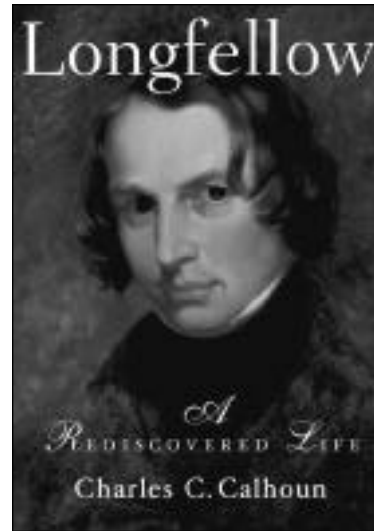
in my book,” says Calhoun, “are that Longfellow was deeply rooted in New England, but at the same time was extremely cosmopolitan. He championed the study of modern languages and brought European culture to Americans. There was a kind of transatlantic exchange going on because Longfellow was hugely popular in England, for example, where they could publish his works without copyright and in cheap editions.

In turn, foreign writers and artists of all kinds visited Longfellow at the Craige House when they came to America.”

In writing this biography, the author was keenly interested in Longfellow’s friendships with many well-known people, particularly his longstanding relationship with U.S. senator Charles Sumner, who had even accompanied the poet on his honeymoon with Fanny. “It was more than chummi-

ness—there was an emotional tone to it. It was an intense and well-articulated relationship,” says Calhoun who pored over the correspondence between the most popular American poet of the time and one of the most highly prominent politicians.

Calhoun read many letters in the Longfellow House archives, including those of Henry Longfellow’s parents for background, and found researching in the house where his subject lived “extraordinary.” Calhoun remarked, “You get the feeling that he [Longfellow] just stepped out of the rooms. You get the feeling of the rooms, of the relationship of the House to the river. It always helps a biographer to retrace the footsteps of the subject.”



Henry W. Longfellow, in his inaugural address at Bowdoin College, 1835:
I regard the profession of teacher in a far more noble and elevated point of view than many do. I cannot help believing that he who bends in a right direction the pliant disposition of the young, and trains up the ductile mind to a vigorous and healthy growth, does something for the welfare of his country and something for the great interests of humanity.

Interview with a Friend...Meet Henry Bolter, Educator

Henry Bolter founded and directs Teachers as Scholars, a professional development program for elementary and high school teachers. We spoke to him on the afternoon following one of the program's seminars—on Henry Longfellow held at the House.

Longfellow House: How did the idea for Teachers as Scholars come about?

Henry Bolter: Actually, Teachers as Scholars came out of more of a personal experience than sitting down and thinking up a program. I taught high school history for twelve years in Newton, and I went through a lot of professional development. What I noticed was it was usually held at the end of day, when people were exhausted, and it was almost always technical in nature—about delivery of services, about some educational program which came out of the latest educational research—or it could be politically driven. And it was rarely about ideas. That's what I thought teachers went into teaching for. I thought the irony was pretty striking: there are these people who dedicate to the mission of bringing ideas to their students, never getting it for themselves. If I was going to do a program, it had to be when teachers were fresh and ready and free of the distractions of school, and it had to be about ideas.

LH: Are there similar professional development programs elsewhere?

HB: There are other idea-driven professional development programs but in very competitive situations, like NEH institutes where you apply and are lucky if you are the one chosen. I felt this program should not be something that a teacher applies for and does on their own—I was looking for more of an impact upon the culture of the school. After running the program for a while, if I had enough teachers from that school, it starts becoming part of their professional lives. Other sites around the country have been modeled on ours, but many have problems with funding.

LH: Are you funded by grants?

HB: If I was going to do this, I wanted to make sure I wasn't writing a grant every six months. I've made it self-supporting. School districts pay a membership fee which entitles them to a certain number of slots in the program, and they can send as few as five or as many as fifty teachers—it depends on the kind of resources they have. It's tough, but we've been given a real vote of confidence. School districts are so strapped, but we've retained 90% of last year's membership. We

have fifty-three schools in the Boston area now and a couple in Rhode Island. We've reached capacity, but we still have two or three school districts that want in.

LH: How do individual teachers get to participate in the program?

HB: The districts select the teachers. Usually they hold lotteries, and people who've gone in previous years are often eliminated. The regret is that districts turn away three teachers for every one they take. Nine hundred fifty teachers go through the program in a year. Given the nature and size of professional development in public education, that's pretty small. It started with



public schools, but I had a private school come up to me and I thought, why not? We now have twelve private schools.

LH: How do you decide on topics for the seminars?

HB: We try to keep a balanced curriculum, but mostly we try to find people with a real passion for what they're doing and try to work them into the program. Sometimes we purposely go out and look for someone to teach economics, say. But usually we have enough connections that somebody will know somebody who'd be really good for the program, who loves what she or he is doing.

LH: How do teachers choose a seminar?

HB: We encourage teachers to take seminars that interest them. Most of them take seminars in their areas, but a lot don't. In a lot of the literature seminars, we get math people. We had an English teacher in a calculus course because he had once been really interested in math. The teachers are there not because they're necessarily going to use the material, but because of the power of ideas.

LH: Have you gotten feedback from the

seminar leaders?

HB: I think instructors like it, not only because they like teaching. These people [taking the seminars] really do the homework. I had a guy who taught a history seminar come out and say, "My God, they all read the book!" It's not graduate level. It's not adult education, it's somewhere else. And these people take it seriously.

LH: We know you hold these seminars not only at colleges, but at other kinds of places such as here at the Longfellow NHS.

HB: Most of these seminars are held at Tufts, MIT, Wellesley, or Brandeis. But it makes it even richer to have a seminar someplace like the Longfellow House, so we're at the M.F.A. and Gardner Museum, the Mass. Historical Society, the Peabody Essex Museum, the Fogg Museum... we try to really make use of the area and educational organizations. I think having a program at a historic site is valuable because it's "realer." We just finished one at the M.F.A. on women artists. Like the program today, I couldn't imagine it being any place else. And the program serves to connect teachers with these institutions. Just gauging from what I saw here, they're planning to come back with their students.

LH: Judging from what you saw today, do you think these teachers will incorporate Longfellow more in their curriculum?

HB: I don't think they knew the possibilities until they came here and did this. Longfellow is assigned now in the Social Studies curriculum to a particular little niche, but he had a much broader role. They do some of the well-known poetry as a kind of sidebar approach, but these teachers will find a way to work him into the curriculum. If they have access to the House, then it will become an even bigger part.

LH: Have you used any other National Parks for your seminars?

HB: I would love to. We almost worked with the Lowell National Historical Park, but you're the first.

LH: We saw smiling faces and heard enthusiastic comments after today's seminar.

HB: It's been inspiring to me too, just to see what happened here today. It's incredible to see these teachers re-engaged with the power of ideas and how transforming that can be. To take that back to the classroom, you just can't measure... Hopefully it continues like that. It's so satisfying to see teachers connect once again with that intellectual impulse that led them to teaching.

The Tradition of Teaching in the Longfellow Family

As the first professor of modern languages at Bowdoin College, beginning in 1829, and the second (following George Ticknor) at Harvard, Henry W. Longfellow found no suitable textbooks, so he decided to write his own: *Elements of French Grammar*, *French Exercises*, *Manuel de Proverbes Dramatiques*, *Novela Espanolas* (all in 1830), and *Syllabus de la Grammaire Italienne* and *Saggi de'Novellieri Italiani d'Ogno Secolo* (in 1832).

His students at Bowdoin and Harvard, where he taught from 1836-54, revered him. Longfellow's teaching was recorded by Daniel R. Goodwin, one of his first pupils at Bowdoin: "To a musical voice and singularly facile organs, to a refined taste, a ready command of the best English, and a thorough acquaintance with the language and literature he taught—he added an affable and winning manner, a warmth of enthusiasm, a magnetic power, a ready sympathy and an inexhaustible patience, which made his lecture-room and the studies of his department a joy and a pleasure at the time, and ever afterwards a happy memory."

Writing in 1944, Carl L. Johnson says of H. W. Longfellow and George Ticknor: "They gave the first advanced instruction in the modern languages. They opened the fields of the modern literature and were the first language teachers to provide work above the level of basic grammar and elementary reading. It was a liberal, progressive step. As a result, the Department of



William Pitt Preble Longfellow, c. 1900

Modern Language [at Harvard] offered the first advanced training in modern literature. This pioneer work led naturally to the development of graduate study."

Longfellow came honestly by his interest in teaching: his great grandfather Stephen Longfellow (1723-1790) had been a schoolteacher. After graduating from Harvard College in 1742, Stephen moved to York, Maine, to become a schoolmaster and then to Falmouth (now Portland). Henry must have valued several possessions from his great grandfather because they still remain in the House archives: his school account books, private and public school notices, and school muster rolls, dating from 1746-1760.

Henry's nephew William Pitt Preble Longfellow trained as an architect and became a Professor of Architectural Design at M.I.T. Later, in the 1880s and '90s he was a member of the Permanent Committee in charge of the School of Drawing and Painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In 1889 his cousin Ernest Longfellow, the poet's son, established the Longfellow Traveling Scholarship to send a young painter from the school to Europe. Upon his leaving the committee in 1896, its secretary, J. Templeman Coolidge, wrote in the school's *20th Annual Report*, "Mr. W.P.P. Longfellow has resigned after fifteen years of service in which he has given a most unusual amount of personal labor and devotion to its development."

After his education at Harvard, Henry's grandson Henry W. L. [Harry] Dana spent his early career teaching at several schools, including St. Paul's in Concord, New Hampshire; the Thacher School in Ojai, California; and Harvard University. In 1910, he taught for two years as *lecteur d'Anglais* at the University of Paris (Sorbonne). He then taught comparative literature at Columbia University, but was dismissed in 1917 because of his association with the People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace, an organization opposed to United States's entrance into the Great War.

Committed to political issues and workers' education, Harry continued to teach for the next thirty years at various trade and technical schools ranging from the Boston Trade Union College to Will Durant's Labor Temple School in New York City.

Delia Dana Hutchinson, Harry Dana's sister, also carried on the family interest in education. She and her husband, Robert Hare Hutchinson, established their own progressive Stony Ford School in upstate New York. "Our purpose was to have a

school based upon new and radical theories of education for children of all ages up to fifteen," they wrote in 1917, "and run on such terms as to make it accessible to children of all classes. Every child has some sort of imagination. And if the direction in which it tends can be found, an idealism and desire to do things well can be developed. The Aesthetic qualities of the children are appealed to through music, dancing, pictures, and the natural beauties of the environment. Education in the



Delia Dana Hutchinson, 1913

past has laid so much emphasis upon acquisition of knowledge that it has neglected the importance of developing qualities. . . .

"We are both socialists and regard the school as one of the many elements in society which are working to abolish our present economic and social system and to set up a more liberal and humane one in its place. For this purpose and for the purpose of human happiness in general it is necessary to have persons who think for themselves and play a part in society."

Harry and Delia's cousin Anne Longfellow Thorp Jr. attended Vassar College (class of 1917) and became a teacher of ancient and medieval history and English at Cambridge's Shady Hill School. Attracted by the progressive philosophy of the school, she remained there for twenty-eight years until 1950. Here she taught the future poet and memoirist May Sarton, who would later write a loving homage to her in the form of a novel, *The Magnificent Spinster* (1985).



Anne Longfellow Thorp Jr., 1950

Alice Longfellow, Pioneer in Women's Higher Education

“Alice Longfellow’s papers, housed at the Longfellow National Historic Site...offer a picture of Alice Longfellow as a committed and articulate advocate for women’s higher education whose work spanned several decades,” says Jill Lambertson, a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan, writing a dissertation on the history of women in higher education and researching at the House archives.

In the 1870s Alice Longfellow (1850-1928) joined a group of women linked to Harvard faculty who were exploring ways to give women the opportunity to study with Harvard professors. In 1878, one of this group, Stella Gilman, urged her husband, historian and educator Arthur Gilman, to propose the foundation of a college for women to Harvard’s president Charles Eliot. When Eliot approved, seven women were chosen to plan the new institution. Among them were Alice Longfellow, oldest daughter of the poet; Stella Gilman; Lilian Horsford, daughter of Harvard chemistry professor Eben Horsford; and Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, the widow of renowned naturalist Louis Agassiz. In 1879, the “Harvard Annex” for women’s instruction by Harvard faculty began operations.

The seven women, including Alice Longfellow, signed a flyer advertising “Private Collegiate Instruction for Women” at Harvard and pledged to ensure that “the students secure suitable lodging” in Cambridge and to “assist them with advice and other friendly offices.” “Because women’s education at the Harvard Annex was considered an ‘experiment’ in its early years—even by the small group of forward-thinking professors who offered instruction to women—hospitality, friendship, and advice were significant and necessary promises for the women who chose to study at the Annex,” says Lambertson.

Alice Gilman, daughter of Arthur and Stella, lived in New York City where she served on a committee to establish women’s higher education at Columbia College. Both she and Alice Longfellow shared a commitment to women’s higher education, and both tried to raise money for the cause. Like Alice Longfellow and her sister Anne Allegra, she took private courses with professors who were willing to tutor women. When Gilman visited the Longfellows in April 1883, the three women decided to spend a year at Newnham College, the women’s division of Cambridge University

in England “in order to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the plans followed there,” wrote Anne J. Clough, first Principal of Newnham.

Alice Longfellow kept a journal of that year at Newnham in 1883-1884. After reading the journal, Lambertson observed, “The three seemed adequately prepared for their courses, though they do struggle through



Anne & Alice Longfellow, Alice Gilman (l to r), 1883

ethics during their first term. Alice Longfellow finds her introductory course on Political Economy too elementary, and wants to attend the advanced lectures, but she is informed that women are not admitted to the advanced lectures, and with the help of Miss Clough, she eventually secures a private tutor for the subject...

“Because Alice Longfellow only kept a journal when she was traveling, the daily nature of her involvement with women’s higher education after she left Newnham is difficult to articulate,” says Lambertson. “She is mentioned early on as a founding committee member in institutional histories of Radcliffe, but does not remain a key figure in the existing written histories. This

is somewhat curious, for her own papers make it clear that her commitment to Radcliffe and women’s education remained strong. She studied at Radcliffe after returning from Newnham and served on various governing boards.

“Later in her life, Alice Longfellow composed an untitled essay on higher education for women. It is clear that her days at Newnham College shaped her thoughts on this topic, for she quotes Anne J. Clough extensively in the piece. Longfellow claims that the value of higher education for women is that it benefits ‘the whole community,’ and says that time at university is the ‘best thing that can come to any one in life,’ because it is a ‘great opportunity,’ the kind that ‘develops latent powers, that demands the best one has to give, that quickens life & fills it with interest.’”

In 1894 the Annex was chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as Radcliffe College, with Elizabeth Cary Agassiz as its first president.

In 1906 on behalf of the Council of Radcliffe College, William W. Goodwin wrote to express regret at Alice Longfellow’s resignation from the Council: “She has...been identified with every important step in the work of establishing the college education of women at Cambridge on a firm and lasting foundation; and she has encouraged and assisted it at every turn by her sound advice and her unflinching interest.... For her constant devotion during this unbroken period of twenty-seven years, Radcliffe College will always feel the deepest gratitude.”

The students of Radcliffe College shared this gratitude, for on Alice Longfellow’s fifty-fifth birthday nearly three hundred students contributed a birthday gift, “a silver loving-cup,” commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Memorial Day party she and her siblings held for Radcliffe students at the Longfellow House each year.

Henry W. Longfellow, in his novel *Kavanagh*, 1849:

(Mr. Churchill is the schoolmaster in this partly autobiographical novel.)

Nature had made Mr. Churchill a poet, but destiny made him a schoolmaster. Life presented itself to him like a Sphinx, with its perpetual riddle of the real and the ideal. To the solution of this dark problem he devoted his days and nights. He was forced to teach grammar when he would fain have written poems;... the trivial things of life postponed the great designs, which he felt capable of accomplishing.... Thus he dallied with his thoughts... and wasted his strength on trifles.

Teachers as Scholars Comes to Longfellow House

(continued from page 1)

Paul Blandford, with his repertoire of Longfellow's verse, led seminar participants on tours of the House and assisted with presentations. Anita Israel, NPS archives specialist, guided teachers through the archives and described the resources and research possibilities.

This seminar on Longfellow was one of many from which teachers could choose. Founded in 1996 by Henry Bolter (see interview on page 3), Teachers as Scholars offers almost eighty seminars ranging in topic from Ancient Nubian Art to Philosophical Problems in Quantum Physics. This seminar had the added advantage of using the site as part of the learning experience.

"These teachers were such an enthusiastic group that afterwards people volunteered to help at the House," said Jim Shea, NPS site manager, who sat in on the seminar himself. One teacher asked to come back during the summer to take photos to create a PowerPoint presentation for use with a poetry unit.

In comments collected after the program finished, one teacher wrote, "What a wonderfully conceived seminar. I come away with inspiration, material, and a deepened interest in the subject. I know what I have gained here will remain an influence upon my classes on nineteenth-century poetry. Yowza!"

"This program has been superb," wrote Alan Chaney of Newton South High School. "It has taught me much, inspired me to use Longfellow's work more in U. S. history, encouraged me to bring my daughters to the House. It has reminded me of why I became a teacher."

"In this time of intense focus on pedagogy, frameworks, and testing," Elizabeth Green commented, "it is a joy and an honor to be treated as a scholar. I enjoyed every aspect of the Longfellow program—from the authentic environment to the stimulating discussion between curators, scholars, and colleagues. Thank you very much for the opportunity to join you!"

Henry Bolter appeared pleased, and chuckled as he looked over the responses: "They selected the seminar. They are a self-selected group, and it works every time."

"I hope this becomes a tradition. I am already talking with Henry and Naomi Gordon [his associate] about future programs," said Jim Shea.

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.

Jiro Sawada, Associate Professor of Modern Japanese History at Shobi University, Saitama, Japan, is researching the interchange between certain American intellectuals and one of the most popular journalists in modern Japan, Ichiro Tokutomi (1863-1957). As an admirer of Longfellow, Tokutomi came to Cambridge in May of 1897, visited Longfellow's grave, and was shown Longfellow's study by his daughter Alice Longfellow. Prof. Sawada is seeking mentions of that visit in Alice's papers.

Working on her doctoral thesis in nineteenth-century cultural history at Carleton University, Ottawa, Kristina Guiguet is seeking materials concerning domestic music making. She inquired about musical instruments, sheet music, and concert programs, as well as the Longfellow family's diary and letter references to music. The Longfellows were lovers of opera and musical performances, and had many musical evenings at home, some with professional performers such as the Norwegian violinist Ole Bull or the Swedish singer Jenny Lind. The archives are rich with historic sheet music, many of which are Longfellow's poems set to music which he received from the composers.

Professor Don Olson of the Department of Physics at Texas State University came to research Longfellow's poem "Light of Stars" to see if he could determine from the astronomical references when the poem was written.

For her forthcoming book on New England marriages, Elisabeth Gitter, Professor of English at John Jay College in New York and author of *The Imprisoned Guest: Samuel Howe and Laura Bridgman, the Original Deaf-Blind Girl*, came to read Longfellow family papers and journals on Henry and Fanny Longfellow's courtship and marriage.

Maine Humanities Council Longfellow Project

The Maine Humanities Council is providing an opportunity for teachers to learn about Henry W. Longfellow and to do some original research of their own. Their collective findings will form a module on the Maine Historical Society's Maine Memory Network. The three-year program is called "Longfellow and the Forging of American Identity" and is directed by Longfellow biographer Charles Calhoun.

Through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, twenty-five Maine and five Massachusetts teachers of grades three through twelve spend two weeks in the summer and four Saturdays during the year studying a variety of topics such as Maine in the Early Republic, understanding traditional meter, and Longfellow's relationships with Hawthorne, Emerson, Dickens, and Sumner. The program includes speakers who are museum curators, archivists, and professors of nineteenth-century American literature, history, art, architecture, and popular culture.

Besides touring and working in the

Maine Historical Society and the Longfellow House archives, program participants have also visited Longfellow's birthplace in Portland, Maine; Lowell National Historical Park to see where the Appleton family (the poet's wife's family) fortune originated; the Wayside Inn to study Colonial Revivalism; and the Longfellow NHS, among others.

The teachers conduct independent research projects on a topic of their own choosing. One teacher is creating a virtual tour of Portland in Longfellow's youth. Another is studying New England blacksmiths.

The idea for this program grew out of Calhoun's work on Longfellow's biography (see page 1). Calhoun says he has a "blatant agenda" to re-establish Longfellow's importance in American literature and culture. "If you ignore Longfellow, there is a huge hole in American culture. Only a handful of literary scholars are interested in [him]. The college English department is not the place to start—the place to begin is as early as possible when people's minds are still open."

Longfellow House in the Media

The History Channel is filming three historic sites—Longfellow NHS, Montpelier, and Lincoln's Cottage—all associated with American presidents to be featured in an upcoming television series called "Save Our History: The President Slept Here." Steve Thomas, formerly of *This Old House*, and Andy Ames, producer of the show, will interview David McCullough, Sen. Edward Kennedy, and Sen. Hillary Clinton as well as NPS staff and Friends about the multi-year rehabilitation of the House and the current rehab of the formal garden. This segment will be aired in late August or early September. "Save Our History" is the History Channel's national initiative that promotes history education and historic preservation. This initiative encourages students to get involved both locally and nationally with the preservation of historically significant sites and/or artifacts.

For the 400th anniversary of the Acadian settlement, Layne Longfellow, creator of the CD *Longfellow Reads Longfellow* and a distant relative of the poet, will read *Evangeline* and other poems to Acadian festivals throughout Maine and the Maritime provinces in June and July. From August 1-15, at the request of Parks Canada, he will read daily in the church at Grand Pré, the village depicted in the opening segment of *Evangeline* as the site of the announcement of the deportation of the Acadians. The church became a major tourist attraction following the publication of Longfellow's poem.

Longfellow Summer Programs 2004

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.

Sundays at 4 P.M., unless otherwise noted

- Sat. July 3 Cambridge Discovery Walks with the Historic Cambridge Collaborative** presents 17 different free walks and talks throughout Cambridge including two tours originating at the Longfellow National Historic Site:
9-10 A.M. NPS ranger Paul Blandford conducts a walking tour, "A Tyranny of its Own: Tories and their Slaves," explores the lives of 18th-century Cambridge loyalists, their families, and slaves.
10-11 A.M. "Home-keeping Hearts Are Happiest," a tour of the Longfellow family's six Brattle Street homes, by NPS ranger Nancy Jones. Longfellow wrote: "Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest; Home-keeping hearts are happiest." Family stories interspersed with Longfellow poetry.
- July 4 Brass Connection:** This brass quintet features nineteenth-century music and rousing patriotic pieces, including marches by John Philip Sousa, whose music Longfellow and his children would have heard.
- July 11 Emily:** A chamber opera by Eva Kendrick based on the life of Emily Dickinson blends classical forms and the lyrical simplicity of American folk music with original lyrics and Dickinson's poems. Performed by Kendrick & cast.
- July 18 A Festival of Poets:** Poetry readings by literary critic and poet Dick Allen; poet, novelist, and children's writer X.J. Kennedy; and Pulitzer Prize-winner Maxine Kumin. Book signing.
- July 25 Publication Party for *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life*:** Talk by biographer Charles C. Calhoun, complemented by musical interludes performed by "2," flute and harp duo Peter H. Bloom & Mary Jane Rupert. Book signing.
- Aug. 1 Sharon Olds,** poet, reads from her works and will receive the Golden Rose Award from the New England Poetry Club. Book signing.
- Sept. 19 Family Day:** A Teddy Bear Picnic celebrating Horace the Longfellow family teddy bear's 100th birthday. Bring your favorite teddy bear to meet Horace and Longfellow's great granddaughters. Poetry and painting in the garden, music, special house tours, and outdoor activities for all ages. Bring blankets and picnic baskets. 1-4 P.M.



John Reed in coffin in Moscow, October 1920

Korzenik Fellow Named

The Friends of the Longfellow House awarded Alan W. Wald, Professor of English and American Culture at the University of Michigan, the second annual Diana Korzenik Fellowship. This grant enabled him to travel to the House archives for research for his forthcoming book on lesser known Communist writers from the 1930s. The book will include a chapter on the poet's grandson Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [Harry] Dana. "I am especially interested in Harry Dana's publications on Soviet theater in relationship to his political activities, views, and commitments," said Wald. Harry traveled to Russia in the 1920s and 30s and acquired photos of John Reed's funeral. (See adjacent photo from the House archives.) Wald had never seen photos of this occasion and felt they should be published.

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 chestnut tree chair which resides in Longfellow's study.

This black-stained armchair, designed by W.P. Longfellow and crafted by H. Edgar Hartwell of Boston in the style of English furniture designer Charles Locke Eastlake, is made of wood from the horse-chestnut tree described in Henry Longfellow's poem "The Village Blacksmith." The tree, immortalized in the opening line "Under a spreading chestnut-tree the village smithy stands," was felled in 1876 when Brattle Street was widened. Presented to Longfellow on his seventy-second birthday in 1879 by the school children of Cambridge, the chair is carved with designs of horse-chestnut leaves and blossoms, and the seat rail is engraved with lines from the poem.

Broken elements of the chair were recently repaired and replaced by conservator Robert Mussey Associates of Boston. Its well-documented personal association with the poet makes the chair one of the most significant pieces of furniture in the House.



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