



On The House

News from the Gibson House



GIBSON HOUSE MUSEUM

Historic ✱ Authentic ✱ Illuminating

LOCATION:

137 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02116
617.267.6338

HOURS:

open year-round, visits by
guided tour Wednesday
through Sunday on the hour
at 1:00, 2:00, and
3:00 p.m.

Reservations are required for
group tours of 12 or more;
please contact us at
info@thegibsonhouse.org

ADMISSION:

members free; adults \$10;
students and seniors (62+)
\$8; children (under 12) \$3

MEMBERSHIP:

to become a member,
[please visit our website.](#)

VOLUNTEERS

The Gibson House Museum
is looking for volunteers. If
you are interested in historic
house museums and the
history of the Back Bay,
please contact us to discuss
volunteer opportunities.

MUSEUM STAFF

Museum Administrator
Michelle Coughlin

Curator

Meghan Gelardi
Holmes

Museum and Curatorial
Assistant

Barbara Callahan

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Samuel H. Duncan,
President



Friends and neighbors gathered at the Gibson House Museum's
2017 Holiday Open House.

The Gibson Society, Inc. 2017-2018 Annual Report October 1, 2017-September 30, 2018

Dear Friends,

Many thanks for your support of the Gibson House over the past fiscal year! We are pleased to report that the museum is in a strong and vibrant position and is poised to achieve even greater success in the coming months. The year's highlights included:

*The transformation of the museum's first and second floors with the installation of a historically accurate reproduction carpet. This fresh look for the museum represents the successful completion of a multi-year fundraising campaign. Thank you to our generous donors! Plans are currently underway to replace the worn carpets in the second-floor library and third-floor red study, thanks to "angels" Diane Gibson and Roz Allen.

*The introduction of a new tour with a focus on stories that connect the Gibson family, servants, and household to the social life of the period. The new tour addresses themes and issues our visitors have long expressed an interest in.

*Programs covering such diverse topics as the 1918 World Champion Red Sox, the Anglo-American gay men and women of Charlie Gibson's era, John Gardner Low and the artists of Boston's Gilded Age, and Boston's South End. We offered free tours on Smithsonian Museum Day and International Women's Day;

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Frances Duffly
David R. Hocker
Lorie K. Komlyn
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TRIP ADVISOR REVIEWS

"Great tour! This is an interesting house with a unique story. All of the rooms on the first three levels are accessible, and the rooms are authentically arranged with mostly original Gibson family furnishings. Though there is a tour guide, you can go at your own pace and are given a chance to walk around each room. Tour guide was friendly and relatable."

Reviewed July 2019

"I had the best time at the Gibson House Museum. The tour guide was super-friendly and knowledgeable. The house itself is charming [and] well preserved and there is so much to see....If you love history and museums, then you will enjoy this tour.... Highly recommend!"

Reviewed April 2018

"It really is a beautiful house and the tour guide was fantastic! If you love history and the Victorian era, this is the perfect tour for you. It really is like stepping into a time machine. Great museum!"

Reviewed May 2017

"Step back in time as you enter this house. Everything looks like the owner just stepped out. Simply amazing tour. See what it was like to live in 1860. Full of antiques, a must see."

Reviewed May 2016

"A really interesting hour spent with a great guide looking all around a house still furnished with genuine furniture and items from [the]

welcomed neighbors at our Halloween and Holiday Open Houses; and hosted an evening of Prohibition-era gaiety at our Sixth Annual Repeal Day celebration.

*The hosting of student groups from such diverse schools as the Berklee College of Music, the Boston Architectural College, Boston University, Mass College of Art, the North Bennet Street School, Suffolk University, the Triangle School, and Wentworth Institute of Technology. We also provided projects for interns from Brandeis University and Emmanuel College.

*Digitization of a selection of the museum's collections. Funds have been raised to further this effort, and soon information about these pieces will be available online.

*A successful Annual Benefit, held at the Chilton Club. It was our pleasure to honor preservation architect Jean Carroon for her role in the stewardship of more than a dozen National Historic Landmarks and her advocacy for leveraging sustainable building practices. All proceeds supported the museum's mission of preservation, education, and outreach.

We sincerely appreciate your generosity and your part in ensuring our continued success. Thank you, as always, for your friendship and support!

Sincerely,

Michelle Coughlin

Museum Administrator



Curator Meghan Gelardi Holmes welcomed visitors to the 2018 Smithsonian Museum Day.

Treasurer's Report

mid 19[th] c[entury]. The kitchen alone is a treasure trove, with cookware and utensils. Excellent."
Reviewed July 2015

by Lorraine Hanley

The Gibson House ended fiscal year 2017-2018 with a surplus of \$10,024, the highest surplus the museum has seen in a decade. This was largely due to rental income the museum received from serving as a filming location for a large Hollywood production.

Income generated from admissions and tours remained steady, totaling approximately \$20,000, similar to the prior year's figures. The museum's Annual Benefit, held in 2018 at the Chilton Club, raised \$30,000 for museum operations and over \$7,700 to fund the digitization of the museum's collections.

Museum operation expenses exceeded budget by \$5,300, primarily due to covering staffing transitions as Wendy Swanton, the museum's curator of twenty-five years, passed the baton to new curator Meghan Gelardi Holmes. The museum prioritized the completion of specific projects prior to Wendy's departure.

The museum ended the fiscal year with \$446,000 in its endowment funds. The endowment continues to increase, and the Board of Directors is committed to advancing this growth.



Preservation architect Jean Carroon was honored at the Gibson House Museum's 2018 Annual Benefit.



The 2017-2018 fiscal year brought visits from numerous school groups, including this Boston University class with instructor Melanie Hall, Director of the Museum Studies program.

The Gibson House Museum would like to thank the following supporters:

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John Burrows gave a popular talk on the world of Anglo-American gay men and women of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, "A Discreet Society."

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In honor of Wendy Swanton, from Barbara
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Jacqueline D. Blombach and Lauren Thomas for Benefit flowers

Sheila Donahue for Benefit musician
Frances Duffly for Boston Preservation Alliance membership
Frances Duffly for purchase of guidebooks
NVIDIA Corp. Employee Giving Program for Samuel H. Duncan
Ryan & Wood Distilleries for Repeal Day donations

In-Kind Services

Fisher College, for snow removal and lawn maintenance
David R. Hocker for museum maintenance support
Carlos A. Soto-Chaves, Garden Club of the Back Bay, for exterior floral plantings

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2018 Special Ask for purchase of Past Perfect software and support

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Museum Guides Program Endowment Fund

Cindy and Robert S. Goodof
Kenneth D. Roberts

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Second floor red study; photo by Mary Prince, Mary Prince Photography of Boston

The Gibson House Museum is an authentic Victorian row house located at 137 Beacon Street. Built in 1850, it is one of Back Bay's earliest houses and stands as the historic house museum of the Back Bay. The Museum is open to the public and preserved as a time capsule of the daily life of a well-to-do Back Bay Boston family and its domestic staff. The Gibson House Museum is a National Historic Landmark and listed on the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places.

Gibson House Museum A National Historic Landmark