LCHIP Challenge met! The Warner House received an LCHIP grant from New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program’s annual grant program last spring. LCHIP receives its funding from fees on real estate transactions.

Our LCHIP project, which will be completed over the next two years, focuses on mitigating moisture and addressing structural needs.

Thank you and congratulations to all those who made it possible for us to reach the $25,000 challenge set by an anonymous member. Because of that generous contribution, we have now met our $50,000 part of the matching grant. Work should begin this winter. Follow the Warner House on social media or sign up for the e-newsletter for updates as the LCHIP work progresses.

You’re invited! During the spring and summer, the Warner House will have hard-hat tours to look at the work in detail.

Warner House 300th Anniversary (1716–2016)
Marketing Chair James Smith will lead the 300th committee. If you are interested in serving on the committee or would like to share ideas, please e-mail James at: 300th@warnerhouse.org

New tour for the 2015 season! Beginning in May, the Warner House will offer “Architectural Secrets of the Warner House” tours, conducted by Sandra Rux, Jeff Hopper or Neil Depaoli. It will be offered once a week, by reservation and cost $10 per person. Visitors will be able to see into the nooks and crannies of this almost 300 year-old treasure, handle some of the architectural fragments and relate archaeology to architecture. The tour will be promoted through the Chamber of Commerce, local hotels and social media. A combined tour of architectural secrets of the Wentworth-Gardner House will also be available.

Archaeology from Excavation. Excavation for the new building that is replacing Connie Bean Center gym turned up an 18th century privy site. The developer notified Independent Archaeology Company who conducted a survey of the privy. The majority of the shards found are 18th century creamware (a type of earthenware with a deep cream body developed about 1720.) This property belonged to the Macphedris/Warner families until 1835.

Several pairs of shoes from the Warner House collection will be included in “Cosmopolitan Consumption: New England Shoe Stories”, an exhibition held at the Portsmouth Athenæum featuring a rich exploration of New Englanders and their shoes. Viewers will be introduced to the lives of figures both prominent and middling, through both stunning and well-worn examples of this significant American accessory and will explore the process of how shoes were made, sold and worn in New England. The exhibition will run from February 14 through June 5, 2015. The co-curators are Kimberly Alexander, Sandra Rux, Tom Hardiman, Elise Daniel and Meaghan Reddick.

Shown at left are Elizabeth Wentworth Warner’s Silk brocade shoes, probably from a London cordwainer, c. 1760s with later alterations.
"Death of Jonathan Warner" A THEATRICAL EVENT 2014

In the 2014 season, the Warner House celebrated Jonathan Warner's life by honoring the 200th anniversary of his death, and many of the programs focused on remembering the man who lived in the Warner House for 54 years. The July theatrical event was quite a hit with attendees.

As the mourning bell tolled at St. John's, guests entered the house and were led to the bedchamber of Jonathan Warner (Alan Haesche) to hear his last conversation with his nurse (Carol Seely).

Next the guests traveled to the front setting room to pay their respects to the recently deceased Warner.

Finally, they crossed the hall to the reception room to watch the heirs find out what dear Uncle Warner had left them in the estate. Heirs Elizabeth Pitts (Emma Nelson), Elizabeth Sherburne (Anne Rehner) and John N. Sherburne (James Smith) listen as Warner's lawyer Daniel Humphreys (Peter Michaud) reads the will.

This event would not have been possible without assistance from The Nathan Hale Homestead Museum in Coventry, Connecticut for the coffin, both Strawbery Banke Museum and Garrison Players for costumes, and to the following individuals: Ronan Donohoe (props); Elizabeth Farish (guiding); Alan Haesche (acting); Steven Hemeon (photography, props, refreshments); Jeffrey Hopper (acting); Carolyn Marvin (refreshments); Peter Michaud (script, acting); Emma Nelson (acting); Sharon Olinsky (greeting); Anne Rehner (acting); Louise Richardson (refreshments); Sandra Rux (guiding, props); Carol Seely (script, acting, costumes); Scott Seely (videography); James Smith (script, acting, props, refreshments); Kerry Vautrot (refreshments). Thank you to St. John's Church and to the incomparable Larry Kent for leading a tour of the church the next day.

A NEW SIGN FOR THE WARNER HOUSE featuring Polly was installed in October on the corner of Chapel and Daniel Streets. It is part of a long term effort by the Marketing Committee to improve Warner House's visibility to the public and was designed and produced by former board member Susan Kress Hamilton at Phineas graphic design/printing in Portsmouth.

Save these dates on your 2015 calendar:
April 15-May 31 preopening weekend tours by appointment ($10 per person)
June 1 Warner House opens for the season
June 6 Spring Fling, 5-8 p.m. in the garden
Look for the complete calendar of events on the website.

THE WARNER HOUSE Newsletter

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Gravestone Rubbing. Special thank you to Gravestone Artwear of York, Maine, for leading an unique gravestone rubbing demonstration at Point of Graves, the site of the only known gravestone of the early occupants of the Warner House, Sarah Macheadris. Participants made their own rubbings to take home, beautiful works of art in their own right. Based off the Macheadris gravestone, Gravestone Artwear designed a T-shirt exclusively for the Warner House and is available in the gift shop and online. All proceeds support the Warner House.

A Special Invitation to a Costumed Tea. Guests gathered in their costume of choice on Saturday, June 21, 2014 for an open house with tea, cookies and a tour. Shown above left Tani Vose Raiselis and Julia Roberts. Photo: S. Wordsworth Hemeon

Cassandra Davidson of Gravestone Artwear in York, Maine, leads a rubbing demonstration and workshop at Point of Graves, Mechanic Street, Portsmouth, NH. Photo: S. Wordsworth Hemeon

The t-shirt is available online or in the gift shop during the season. Price is $18 plus shipping and handling. Photo: S. Wordsworth Hemeon

Portsmouth Garden Club Party. On June 25, 2014 volunteers from the Portsmouth Garden Club honored Anne Nelson, shown at center greeting guests, for her many years of devoted service as chair of the Warner House Garden Committee. Committee members provided delectable comestibles, highlighted by an elderflower-champagne punch. Caroline Fesquet replaces Anne as garden chair. Photo: S. Wordsworth Hemeon

"Last of the Cocked Hats" lecture series. The "Last of the Cocked Hats" lecture series was successful with four fantastic speakers. Thank you to Laura Johnson of Historic New England as well as Warner House board members Peter Michaud of the State of New Hampshire's Division of Historical Resources, Sandra Rux of Portsmouth Historical Society and James Smith of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. For Laura, we appreciate the travel to New Hampshire. Thank you to the Portsmouth Historical Society for hosting two of the talks at the Discover Portsmouth Center. For the two talks at the Warner House, the Reception Room was an ideal place to learn more about the Warner House family.

Much appreciation to everyone who supported the Warner House — your donations, visitation, participation, your likes and comments on social media all contribute to the Warner House mission statement. Please remember the Warner House's 300th anniversary is fast approaching in 2016 and while planning is underway, your help to ensure a fantastic celebration is needed. Please e-mail James to find out how you can help: 300th@warnerhouse.org.
Putto “Ornaments”  PART I

By JEFFREY HOPPER
Photos Parts I and II by Alan P. Haesche

In 1716 John Drew charged Archibald Macpheadris for crafting ‘ornaments’ for the front door, the cupola and the ‘luthermans’ or dormers of his new house. What did Drew mean and Macpheadris understand by the term ‘ornament’? The current front door surround looks like a perfectly good Palladian example of the mid eighteenth-century. If the current door surround is a later remodel, what might have been there originally? There has been speculation that the present front doorway was a later eighteenth-century ‘improvements’ obliterating a 1716 style doorway. The scale of embellishment is difficult to ascertain. There are indications in the brickwork that a flat hood once stood where the current half-round entablature sits. The robust carvings and projecting baroque hooded doorway of 1716 may have been tellingly outdated by 1760, but without a surviving example it is difficult to imagine. Then again perhaps something did survive.

Archibald Macpheadris (1680-1729) contracted John Drew (1675-1738) to build his house in 1716. As noted in pages 10-11 of The Warner House, A Rich and Colorful History, it appears that Drew received part of his training as a builder-joiner in Deptford in the United Kingdom. Between 1707 and 1711 John Drew subcontracted work to Thomas Lucas (1662-1736), a real estate developer and builder, who converted some of his land holdings on Union Street in Deptford into housing for the town’s rising maritime and merchant class. Union Street, named for the recent union of England and Scotland, was renamed Albury Street in 1882. (Old Deptford, part 2) To give some sense to the style of the building Drew was erecting it may be worth looking at Albury Street. In 1979 Professor Anthony Quiney, an architectural historian, researched Thomas Lucas and Albury Street. This research formed the basis of an article published in the Archaeological Journal in 1979 (see the following quote). The original research paper lay in the Lewisham Local History archives and was found by Andrew White. He contacted Dr. Quiney who allowed the publication of the work online through White’s blog “Old Deptford.” The online serialization of the paper ran between 2010 and 2011. In part six of the online publication from August 11, 2011, Quiney noted,

“The fronts of the houses in Union Street are, in their modest way, Baroque in style rather than the Palladian of a later generation, where the brickwork is flat and the articulation achieved by recessed window openings of carefully graded heights to each storey. This Baroque sensibility distinguishes the Union Street facades from these developed after the Great Fire which have flat walls of red brick, with squarer, casement windows, all dominated by heavy, and often luxuriously carved eaves cornices. In Union Street luxurious carving was reserved for the brackets of the door-hoods, which seem earlier in style than the houses to which they are attached.”

In the same blog posting, Dr. Quiney reasoned that while Lucas left no prior examples of his work (as of 1979), based upon his existing buildings he must have had training in London rather than the provinces. His style is akin to that of the City, Holborn and Westminster, not that of the prevailing style found in Deptford. Additionally, he employed the restrictive building measures required in the City after 1707, but not in Deptford. If that is the case then his colleague Drew may have formed some of his design aesthetic from the larger metropolis through Lucas’s design sensibilities.

Albury Street declined and survived as a backwater street; by the 1920s photographers captured the streetscape with its antiquated doorways, some of which are held in the English Heritage archives (British-History online). During the urban renewal of the 1960s Albury Street suffered the fate of similar neighborhoods throughout London. Eighteenth-century houses were deemed uninhabitable and demolished, leaving a broken streetscape. Luckily the entire street was not deemed substandard and a number of houses stand intact retaining their 1710s carved baroque door surrounds. For the Warner House the closest link with the baroque carving on Albury Street may be the putto head over the ‘beaufort’ in the front drawing room. This head is similar to examples carved into some of the projecting hood supports that protect the front doors of Albury Street. However another link or pair of links to this carved past
may be two putti that have been in the collection of the Portsmouth Historical Society since the 1940s.

These putti are standing figures approximately three feet tall, carved in wood and painted white. There has been some loss to the figures, but they are essentially intact. Each putto is mounted on a flat architectural platform with a simple band-cove-band profile on three sides and is solid, i.e. with no carving, on the side that corresponds to the back of the putto. Each putto is carved in the round. By placing the flat side of the platform against a wall each putto stands free of the wall, indicating that the backsides were to be seen, at least, to some degree. Each putto has one uplifted arm with an open grasping hand and this arm is the opposite arm for each, so they are mirror images of each other. The opposing arm of each is carved in an angle and down the side. The hands of both putti are carved holding a round object. Additionally, a carved sash sits over the upright arm, then falls to the hip and clenched fist and then returns across the back to the upright shoulder.

With their upstretched arms and hands the carvings have the look of architectural support elements. The upstretched arms can either support the outside corners on the hood or support it in a cantilevered style with the outstretched arms closest to the door and the hands holding the round objects to the outside. The more natural pose would be that of the arms supporting the edge of the hood. This pose would also allow door users to see the clenched fist with the round objects. Architecturally, the examples on Albury Street employ flat pilasters that act as bases for the carvings, which support the door hoods. The Portsmouth putti resemble the Deptford versions both in scale and style. (Cruickshank 202-3)

While remnants, the putti are not without some voice. Each putto clutches a sphere, which may be a pearl, a device used in the seventeenth-century and early part of eighteenth-century to symbolize America. The pearl also symbolized wealth, a propitious symbol for the house of a newly wed couple. Similarly, the putti symbolize familial and financial prosperity. The symbolic and allegorical meanings of these carvings may have formed part of a larger allegory now lost. The examples that exist on Albury Street are more fully realized decorative carvings replete with allegoric and symbolic elements. The existing example of putti on Albury Street with nautical and marine devices may have indicated to visitors and passersby that the owner had maritime connections and while alluding to other allegorical associations. Based on the British examples, it would seem likely that if the putti once formed part of the door surround of the Warner House then other decorative elements that might have completed the 'story' have been lost. Without the missing documentation of the years between 1729, when Macheadris died, and 1760, when Jonathan Warner took possession of the house through his marriage to Macheadris's daughter, Mary Osborne, this may always be a game of shadows. However, on the surface there appears to be a stronger stylistic link between the houses of Deptford and Portsmouth than just the architectural style and builder. The possibility of a carved baroque architectural relic of the British Atlantic world is intriguing. Certainly the house does contain the other carved remnant of the London baroque, the cherub head at the crest of the arched beaufort (buffet). If nothing else, this further illuminates the influence of a master builder on a street in Deptford and a house in Portsmouth, NH and just how important current taste was in a colony separated by three thousand miles of ocean.


* * * * *

Putto “Ornaments” PART II

By SANDRA L. RUX

How can we associate two relics that came from the Ursula Cutt farm with the Warner House? The two wooden putti have belonged to the Portsmouth Historical Society for about sixty years, having been donated by the heirs of Mark Hunking Wentworth. It seems that when the farm was sold to the American Agricultural and Chemical Company in 1910, the “cherubims” were removed and remained with the heirs until 1956, thus escaping the fire that destroyed the house in 1912. While preparing for the exhibition at the John Paul Jones House on the Treaty of 1713, I wanted to determine if the putti could have been there in 1694 when the Indians killed Madam Ursula. However, evidence leaned toward a later owner of the putti. Madam Ursula’s house as inventoried had only two rooms with very little furniture; she apparently spent summers at the farm and the rest of the year in Portsmouth. Also, the Cutt family were staunch Puritans and not likely to have decorated with such frivolous characters.

Continued on Page 6
John Pike and Cotton Mather recorded the Indian attack when it happened and later by Charles Brewster and Sarah Haven Foster in their accounts of Portsmouth history. There is no mention of the wooden “cherubim” or putti until 1902 when C. W. Gurney published *Portsmouth Historic and Picturesque*. A photo of the house, now a rather typical 18th century dwelling with additions, shows the pair on top of the front door surround. Gurney relates that Ichabod Bartlett, who purchased the farm in 1835, stated that they had been there long before his day. Gurney also says that Bartlett was the first owner after the Cutt family. Gurney surmises “it is reasonable to believe that Madam Ursula herself had placed them there. The design very evidently, represents the artistic taste of woman’s genius.”

Since Bartlett died in 1853, Gurney obviously had a source among the old folk of Portsmouth.

Off to search land and probate records! A short search showed that Samuel Cutt, younger son of John Cutt, who inherited the farm, died in 1698, leaving what he described as his mother-in-law’s farm (often used for step-mother) to his infant son Samuel. Samuel Jr. became a blacksmith in Boston. In 1720 he sold the farm to Robert Pike of Portsmouth. In 1731 Christopher Rymes, merchant of Portsmouth, bought the farm from Pike’s estate. Neither Pike nor Rymes had any connection to the Cutt family, so it was out of the original owners’ possession in 1720. Rymes likely improved the house, as he expanded the farm in 1740 by buying an 82-acre lot at “Gravelly Ridge” from heirs of Richard Cutt. However, Rymes died in 1741, entailing this property and others in town on his son Christopher Rymes. This Christopher became a merchant in Exeter (perhaps because his mother lived there with her fourth husband, Peter Gilman) and sold his Portsmouth property to Jonathan Warner in 1765. This was the first of many farm purchases made by Warner.

When Warner purchased the farm from Christopher Rymes, Jr., only the original Cutt farm had buildings as the 82-acre piece is described as a tract of land. In 1766 Warner purchased another farm next to the Cutt land from Richard Downing. This became his primary summer farm. However, he probably made improvements to the Cutt house and used it as summer farm in the early years of ownership. Warner was also busy making improvements to the house his wife Mary inherited from her father Archibald Macphedris. Could the putti be the “ornaments” made by John Drew for the Macphedris House?

Jonathan Warner still owned the farms at the time of his death in 1814. The original Cutt farm was sold to Henry Sherburne Langdon, great nephew of Jonathan, and used by him as a summer retreat. However, he lost the property in 1822 due to foreclosure. It was broken up in various lots to satisfy debtors. Ichabod Bartlett bought most of the pieces in a series of purchases in 1835. Bartlett’s heirs sold the farm to Mark Hunking Wentworth, a Wentworth descendant who had made a fortune in an Ohio dry goods store. He returned to Portsmouth where he purchased the Thompson house (next to Langdon house). He also inherited the old Wentworth House on Pleasant Street where Gov. John Wentworth had lived. He then purchased the farm. The survey he commissioned in 1855 gives a detailed layout of the property.

All of this leaves Jonathan Warner, who owned the farm for 50 years, as the most likely person to have put the putti on the enhanced Cutt house.

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1 *Portsmouth Herald*, August 27, 1912.
3 C. S. Gurney, *Portsmouth...Historic and Picturesque* (Portsmouth, 1902), 54-56.
4 Rockingham County Land Records, V 13, 80.
5 Rockingham County Land Records, V 18, 229.
6 Rockingham County Land Records, V 25, 155.
7 Rockingham County Land Records, V85, 490.
8 Rockingham County Records, V85, 478.
9 Rockingham County Land Records, V209, 378.
10 Rockingham County Land Records, V291, 393; V292, 196; V289, 465; V310, 52.
11 Rockingham County Land Records, V358, 428,429 and 430.
12 Survey of Mark Wentworth Farm 1855, original manuscript at Portsmouth Athenaeum.
REMEMBERING MARGO HARRINGTON
By BARBARA ENGELBACH

The recent death of Margo Harrington (Mrs. William F.) at age 98 brings to mind the long history of her service to the Warner House and the crucially important role that Margo played in the structuring of the Warner House Association.

Margo and her family moved to Portsmouth in the early 1950s. Evie Wendell was their next-door neighbor and a devotee of the Warner House Museum founded by her mother-in-law, Mrs. Barrett Wendell. Evie introduced Margo to the Warner House and other historic properties. Margo became very active in managing the house. She increased her knowledge of museum management by attending numerous seminars and conferences in Williamsburg. When Evie Wendell became ill and unable to manage the house, Margo took over. She was aware of developments in the management of historical properties and she was instrumental in establishing a Board of Governors to manage the affairs of the Warner House. Margo continued her interest in the Warner House by attending meetings and “checking in” every once in a while until well into the 21st century – over 60 years!

Margo’s interest in historic preservation was not limited to the Warner House. When Strawberry Banke was founded she became an early president of the Strawberry Banke Guild that helped raise public awareness and badly needed funds for the nascent museum. She was also on the Board of Managers for the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in New Hampshire (NSCDA-NH) that owns and operates the Moffatt-Ladd House and Garden.

Historic Preservation was not Margo’s only interest. She took a very active part in World War II with the Red Cross’ Clubmobile Service by driving a specially adapted GM truck named the “Bay State”. She landed in Normandy soon after the Allied invasions. Margo and her fellow volunteers drove this truck and served donuts and coffee to the troops and lifted spirits by playing American songs on a Victrola. They drove in the dark without headlights, using only flashlights so they wouldn’t be seen from the air while GIs used metal detectors to sweep for mines in the fields just ahead of them. She continued to do this for a year and a half, driving through France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. In 2012 Margo was recognized for this service when the U.S. Senate honored her and 300 unsung volunteers with S. Res. 471. Why did she do this? “I just got itchy feet.” Those words were entered into the Congressional Record, courtesy of an admiring Senator Jeanne Shaheen.

THE WARNER HOUSE ASSOCIATION • 150 DANIEL STREET, P.O. BOX 895, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03802-0895

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We wish to thank PISCATAQUA Savings Bank who sponsored this issue of the newsletter.

And thanks to our Business members:  
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HOURS: Open June through October. Daily except Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.