Building on Tradition:
HAGEN-WENSLY HOUSE GETS A TOTAL MAKEOVER

The location is perfect. Fronting the glittering lake and just across from the Athenaeum and its dining room, Chautauqua’s Wensley House is also as close to the Amphitheater’s stage door as any accommodations on the grounds. For half a century it has provided guest quarters to the Institution’s most distinguished lecturers and performers. Pick up a guest book in any room and the names on every page read like a who’s who of American life and culture in the twentieth century. The library is filled with signed volumes by guest authors. It has been an essential part of the hospitality and sense of community Chautauqua provides to its presenters. But for some years now the Wensley, built in 1891, has been sagging.

Longtime Chautauquans and philanthropists Susie and Tom Hagen decided this summer to take on the situation. “The quality of the program and partnerships at Chautauqua have so improved over the last few years,” says Susie Hagen, “but the accommodations have not. This house was simply worn out.”

HVAC, and interior layout—while maintaining the exterior appearance of the historic structure with all new windows and siding. The signature porches where guests gather in the afternoons will be maintained as community space, while four guest rooms each on the second and third floors will now open onto interior hallways. Thicker walls will enhance privacy, and a wider central stairwell and new elevator will improve access throughout the building.

“On the first floor,” Tom Hagen explains, “there will be a decent-sized sitting room, especially useful when there’s inclement weather. Further in on that floor will be a galley kitchen, and an expanded library and business center, both of which have been really needed.” Quarters for staff—two bedrooms on the ground floor—and a new front entrance from the lake side of the building will help staff provide proper orientation and welcome to first-time guests. New plantings around the house and walkways will round out the improvements.

The Wensley House, partially gifted of Chautauqua in 1966 by Nina Wensley and used since then for the purpose of accommodating performers and lecturers, will be renamed the Hagen-Wensley House.

The Hagens’ $2 million gift will thoroughly modernize the Wensley—the foundation, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and interior layout—while maintaining the exterior appearance of the historic structure with all new windows and siding. The signature porches where guests gather in the afternoons will be maintained as community space, while four guest rooms each on the second and third floors will now open onto interior hallways. Thicker walls will enhance privacy, and a wider central stairwell and new elevator will improve access throughout the building.

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A Great Time
TO BE A CHAUTAUQUAN

Excitement and an energetic exchange of ideas characterized the Trustees’ weekly porch sessions at Hultquist this season just past. Our focus this year was to gather your input on the Institution’s recent strategic document which propels us toward the year 2018 and calls for efforts on all our parts to make Chautauqua better known, to realize the potential we have to encourage more civil discourse, and to bring more Chautauquans into the fold. In so doing, we also have the chance to enhance our philanthropic base. You responded positively to all of these initiatives, and the year ahead of us has several important opportunities for us to tell others about Chautauqua and where we are going.

Most of you already know that a team from WNED, the public television station in Buffalo, has created a hour-long documentary called “Chautauqua: An American Narrative.” This very special program will be scheduled for broadcast across the nation on PBS at different times in 2011 depending on your local station’s preferences. We will do our best to keep you apprised of when it will be shown in your area. The film provides a tremendous opportunity for you to share Chautauqua with friends and to revel in the beautiful high-definition footage that was shot on the grounds. You’ll recognize your friends and neighbors and some of our favorite lecturers and performers. We will also be conducting special screenings of the video in various locales throughout the fall.

As Tom Becker has said, we are embracing the marketing of Chautauqua aggressively as we move forward with the film, partnerships, and outreach to media. In his speech to the Bestor Society in August, Tom put it this way:

“In part, we seek that broader awareness to bring more people to the experience, to broaden the racial diversity of the experience, to cultivate the atmosphere of philanthropic support for the undertaking. But we also seek to inspire the imagination of our fellow citizens .... We need more Chautauquans in this world of ours. We at this Institution are devoting ourselves to the investments in the capacity to enrich and renew the facilities and content of our work. And we seek a voice that can capture the imagination of a people that the pursuit of happiness—while nearly impossible to succinctly describe—is worth every bit of the effort.

We have also hired the Institution’s first-ever chief marketing officer, George Murphy, whom many of you know as a Chautauquan with an impressive vita that includes senior global marketing positions with DaimlerChrysler, Ford, GE, and Coca-Cola. George’s charge is to take us forward, not incrementally but geometrically, as we continue to project Chautauqua into the digital environment and in other ways engage more Chautauquans across the nation 52 weeks a year.

At the Foundation, we believe these efforts by the Institution to attract new Chautauquans and to impress upon the thoughtful leadership of this country the greater awareness of Chautauqua’s contribution to the exploration of the best of human values are critical to our own work. As our contribution is better understood, as current Chautauquans recognize more fully the importance of this place beyond the intimacy of our existing community, and as new people identify themselves as Chautauquans, our opportunities for philanthropic investment will grow.

It is an exciting time to be a Chautauquan. In this issue of Pillars, we introduce you to some of the ways your fellow Chautauquans are contributing to that excitement.

COVER STORY continued

resources despite the wear and tear on the old building. “We’ll still use much of the furniture,” Hagen says, “and we want to be sure the overall space is bright, airy and cheerful.”

The Hagens divide their time between Chautauqua, Erie, and Sarasota, Florida, and Susie expects to check in on the project every six weeks or so throughout the reconstruction process. Work began immediately after the end of the 2010 season. “Chautauqua has always been one of my favorite places,” she says. “I have been coming here since I was four.” The Hagens, who have also endowed an annual lecture, regard the Wensley gift as a way to have a lasting impact on the program of the Institution as well.

Foundation CEO Geof Follansbee affirms that such substantial improvements to the Hagen-Wensley House fit the larger goals of the Institution. “Our strategic planning process has emphasized the importance of having our guest speakers and performers spend more time on the grounds and have additional opportunities to interact with the community as well as to get to know each other and become resources to each other. Improving the amenities we can offer helps us achieve this goal.”

Hostess Rachel Borzilleri, who manages the house, says, “Magic happens on those front porches with our guests in a very short time. Lifelong friendships begin here. Collaborations, new ideas—they get hatched all the time. I am so grateful to the Hagens for enhancing the magic to come.”
Revamping the Amp:

PART 1

Like most Chautauquans, Bill Laubscher has powerful memories associated with the Amphitheater. Emotion wells up when he recalls the Mormon Tabernacle Choir performing a boisterous program of African music some years back or Natalie Cole’s poignant concert as she sang with her famous father, the late Nat King Cole, whose recorded performance from decades past was projected on screens hung high above the Amphitheater stage.

Laubscher, an architect who also studied at Harvard Business School and spent his career designing buildings around the world, thinks a lot about the Amp these days. He’s the retired president of the Cleveland office of URS, a leading provider of engineering, construction, and technical services for public agencies and private companies. Now Laubscher has agreed to represent the Institution as it develops a plan to renovate the 117-year-old Amp. It’s a multi-year, multi-million dollar project whose time has come. Revamping the Amp will decidedly be the centerpiece in the Institution’s next major capital fundraising campaign.

“I don’t need a job,” Laubscher grins. “But how can you turn down something this important?” Laubscher, now a full time resident of Mayville, will facilitate a thorough process including an updated needs assessment that incorporates the scope of present programming in the Amp while anticipating the next hundred years in the life of the facility.

“This is a millennium project,” Laubscher says. “If you think about it, the Amp is Chautauqua and Chautauqua is the Amp. That is the gravity of our task. One hundred years ago, the designers of this building could never have imagined certain aspects of the programs presented here today, but they did an amazing job creating a space that would serve us so long. We hope to do the same.”

As the Board’s current strategic planning document affirms, the range of programming in the Amp today is staggering. With the recent addition of opera to the Amp stage and the intent to further collaborate across program areas, the complexity of staging, lighting, and diverse acoustics will only increase. Likewise, more and more lecturers come to the grounds expecting state-of-the-art technology to enhance their presentations, while traveling performers regularly arrive with truckloads of gear to produce special effects on stage. Moving the benches from the front of the house out into the yard to accommodate different staging needs is a regular inconvenience.

“Who knows what the future may bring,” says Laubscher. “We may have lecturers who are somewhere else yet standing before us as holograms on the stage, or clergy from sites around the world conducting services under this roof. We may be looking at real time images from the Voyager space program, mediated by a technology we can’t imagine just yet.”

No matter how fanciful the possibilities, Laubscher, the administration and the Board of Trustees will follow a disciplined approach to consider all alternatives and take into account all aspects of the facility. “We will look at the context—how the Amp connects to Bestor Plaza, the brick walk, the lake,” Laubscher explains. “What are the possibilities for new elevations, a longer span structure?” Nothing will be off the table to begin, he says, while readily noting the need to be sensitive to the historical importance of the facility. With regard to structure, contemporary engineering techniques could make better sight lines and improved acoustics possible in addition to aisles that are less steep and hazardous. “These are the kinds of factors that will help determine whether this is a full replacement project or a major or minor upgrade,” Laubscher says.

The Institution will consider other examples of engineering innovations that have come on line in recent years. “Think of the roof of the Denver airport,” Laubscher suggests, “or we might look at some of the theaters where they can turn around a show in five to ten minutes. What are the features there that might work for us?”

The process will move through several stages: development of a direction, a concept recommended by the administration and approved by the Board of Trustees, then final working drawings, and a schedule for the renovation in stages that will not disrupt the season. Once the preliminary concepts are on paper, the Board will engage other Chautauquans who want to offer ideas and feedback—especially building users, program administrators, residents, and prospective benefactors. The planners may also tap the experiences of other experts in the field—symphony conductors, sight line designers, and others who have knowledge of outstanding facilities that fit Chautauqua’s aspirations.

“An architect wouldn’t be doing his or her job if we didn’t consider all the alternatives. That would be irresponsible,” says Laubscher. “Of course people have preconceived ideas of what is needed, but we mustn’t jump to conclusions. Chautauquans are brilliant and inquisitive people, so I know we will come out with a good solution. That’s why I agreed to be involved.”

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—Bill Laubscher

ThisBlueprints article is the first in a series that will outline our progress toward the renovation of Chautauqua’s Amphitheater.
In 1996 Chautauquan Tara VanDerveer coached the U.S. women’s basketball team to a gold medal victory in the summer Olympic games in Atlanta. Today, she’s ranked seventh in career wins among all active collegiate basketball coaches—women’s and men’s—in the nation. The handful of coaches ahead of her are legends: names such as Pat Summit of Tennessee, Mike Krzyzewski of Duke, Jim Boeheim of Syracuse, and Vivian Stringer of Rutgers.

Back in 1985 VanDerveer took the calculated risk of leaving the winning program she had built at Stanford athletes must meet where losing had become a ritual. Winning program she had built at Ohio State to take on head coaching by phone from the porch of her family quarters where Rita, now in her early 80s, spends the entire season, we could never go back to the place. Tara pledged to buy and renovate it instead. With a new foundation and scrupulous adherence to historic district standards, VanDerveer had the bottom floor converted into a three-bedroom, two-bath apartment that sister Beth now manages and rents by the week. Upstairs are the family quarters where Rita, now in her early 80s, spends the entire summer, while the other VanDerveer siblings—Marie, Heidi, and Nick—and their friends and families come and go. Given the demands of her work, Coach VanDerveer only manages at most two weeks a year on the grounds. She also owns a handsome house in Menlo Park, California, and a getaway cabin in Minnesota, but VanDerveer insists that Chautauqua is home to her more than anywhere else. “I feel this calm come over me as soon as I enter the gates,” she says. When she’s on the grounds, she’s usually up by six, watching the sunrise over the lake from her room on the third floor. VanDerveer then makes her way to the workout facility in Turner. She’ll usually take in the 10:45 lecture and will get out on the lake most days, either in a kayak or her Laser sailboat. This year she took up duplicate bridge, a new obsession, and there is always time set aside to play the piano. VanDerveer began learning the instrument as an adult and insists on having a piano available to her when her Stanford team is on the road. Five years ago she brought her teaching and fifteen other piano students to the grounds for a week.

Excellence, Community, and Belonging:
TARA VANDERVEER ON THE LESSONS OF CHAUTAUQUA

“I think I was drawn to Stanford because it reminds me a lot of Chautauqua—so many accomplished, upbeat people in a very stimulating place. Building a team is also about excellence and community and belonging, being part of something special.”

VanDerveer and Scrabble champion Joe Edley at the Lakeside Lodge

The magic of the mix for VanDerveer extended far beyond sports at Chautauqua, however. “Chautauqua was always a smorgasbord to me,” she explains, “and I loved filling up my plate with all that was going on. I was in three operas as a child here. My family went to all the rehearsals. And I heard Van Cliburn, Robert Kennedy, and Marian Anderson in the Amp.” VanDerveer was asked how Chautauqua has affected her life away from the grounds. “You know,” she says, “I think I was drawn to Stanford because it reminds me a lot of Chautauqua—so many accomplished, upbeat people in a very stimulating place. Building a team is also about excellence and community and belonging, being part of something special. That’s what I tell my players. We are part of something special. It’s not just about showing up, dribbling and shooting.” Of her coaching style, a New York Times reporter once wrote that “VanDerveer knows how to bond and her players. She loves coaching, the strategy, the game films, and solitude of thought on a crowded team bus.” VanDerveer credits Chautauqua for helping to create her appetite for engagement, reflection, and critical thinking. “So now I try to create a Chautauqua experience for myself all year long. My life is so rich, I travel all over the world. I went to the Olympics. I’ve met incredible people. But I don’t know too many places better than Chautauqua.”
“Every art group on the grounds is so busy in their own right that collaboration must be supported and cared for as something above and beyond.”

—Vivienne Benesch

“Of course creating something new takes time and money,” says Benesch, but by scheduling the two performances within the same week they were able to curtail some of the expense of guest artist salaries and housing. “We also knew we couldn’t afford to hire outside singers for the big solo parts as they had done in L.A. nor could we put together a chorus of sixty voices,” Chelimsky adds. “In any case, our intent was to create something that married the talents of many different departments at Chautauqua.” So the CTC tapped the talents of Marlena Malas’ students in the Chautauqua Voice Program to stunning effect.

“Six voices replaced a whole chorus, and these voices became an extension of the psychology of the characters. It forced an aesthetic on the event that was quite remarkable,” explains Benesch, who also pruned and adapted the script to accommodate the scale of the music. She worked closely with JoAnn Falletta in choosing which parts of the script should be underscored with music and to determine where a lengthy piece of music would be able to hold the audience and not undercut the narrative drive of the story.

“At one point in the script the character Salieri references basset horns in one of the Mozart compositions he’s describing, and we quickly learned that there were no basset horns available within a 300 mile radius of Chautauqua,” Benesch laughs. (A basset horn is a tenor clarinet pitched a fourth lower than a standard B flat clarinet.) Falletta suggested that four clarinets could be used to replace the basset horn. Stefan Sanderling initially disagreed.

“I learned so much working with these two conductors who come from very different points of view about what is most important. And we were working on a play that is, of course, a study of fierce musical ambition and passion,” Benesch says. “It was inspiring to see that interpretation of a score is as defining to conductors as the text is to me as a theater director. Stefan, for his part, had a wonderful sense of what would work theatrically and how to texture it with music.”

CTC was fortunate to receive underwriting support from the Rieser family—Rick and Susie, longtime Chautauquans who live outside Chicago, along with Rick’s father and stepmother, Dick and Elaine Rieser, who live in Sarasota. The Riesers, who are originally from Buffalo, made a generous gift to cover the expense of bringing the production to Buffalo for the CTC performance there. “We could not have done it without them,” says Benesch.

She also praised designer Lee Savage, who managed to create a simple and evocative set that worked in two different spaces—the wide open Amp with its yellow paint and the dark, covered proscenium stage in Buffalo’s Artpark. But the biggest challenge in this marriage of full orchestra and stage play was rehearsing the actors without the benefit of the musicians until the day before each performance. “In the orchestra world, they are used to coming to the table ready to go,” Benesch explained. “In theater we are used to a rehearsal process where we explore and discover the play. Working with two different orchestras and conductors meant that I had to make sure the theatrical storytelling was complete so that the musical envelope could influence and change the production, but that we’d still be sold.”

Benesch likens it to watching a play where one of the leading actors is replaced in the course of a production run. “When casts change,” Benesch says, “I like to go back and see how the show changes.” The same phenomenon was at work between the CSO and BPO performances. “The personality was different,” she says. CTC hopes that future collaborations with Buffalo arts groups are possible in the future. “We very much want to affiliate and connect more with the city and have invited their arts leaders to come down and see our productions,” Benesch says. She is also eager to work again with the Buffalo Philharmonic.

But first and foremost are future interdisciplinary collaborations at Chautauqua. Collaborating across arts programs within Chautauqua is a priority in the Institution’s new strategic plan—including commissioning new works for music, dance, voice, and theater—when resources are available. “The big challenge in doing more is both financial and in managing the schedule,” says Robert Chelimsky. Benesch agrees. “Every art group on the grounds is so busy in their own right that collaboration must be supported and cared for as something above and beyond. To sustain and keep creating new works at the level our audiences have come to expect is not a given. Chautauqua has something few places have in terms of multi-media and multi-disciplinary artists in residence. We very much hope to produce more productions like Amadeus as philanthropy and time allow.”
Embracing Chautauqua’s Future: JIM AND BARBARA BRADY

Jim Brady is a CPA with years of experience in auditing multinational corporations and nonprofit organizations. His work with Deloitte and Touche has carried him from posts in Rhode Island, south Florida, North Carolina, St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia, to Washington D.C. and then Atlanta. Now he is CEO of a new Deloitte venture in India, where he, his wife Barbara, daughter Alexandra, 13, and son Chris, 11, have lived for nearly two years.

Traveling from their residence in Hyderabad—India’s sixth largest city, with a population of some seven million—the family could hardly wait to arrive at Chautauqua this summer for their eighth season on the grounds, this time for six weeks. “That initial feeling of being back on American soil was good,” says Barbara, a native of nearby Olean, New York, who came as a child to Chautauqua to see an occasional play or opera. Her sister worked on the grounds as a housekeeper. “Hyderabad is dry and hot, and everywhere we’ve been is a sea of humanity and poverty,” she says. Barbara volunteers at a local orphanage and home-schools the children. Before their time in India is over, the family will travel south, visiting the Taj Mahal and other landmarks.

“It’s been a good experience,” she says. “Our kids have made a lot of friends in India—from France, South Africa, Britain, and India.” The family went to France for New Year’s and visited New Zealand for spring break this year. Still, coming back to Chautauqua was their most highly anticipated destination. Settled into a rental on Scott Avenue, the Bradys have entertained family and friends they hadn’t seen in months. Barbara has taken Special Studies classes in self-awareness and movement. She and daughter Alex have also become seriously dominant Scrabble players, thanks to a course they took together. Reading and watercolors have also been among Alex’s pursuits this season.

For Chris, who has developed some familiarity with the game of cricket during his time in India, it has been a summer of daily sailing, shuffleboard, and golf. Jim, who is a new member of the Chautauqua Board of Trustees, has tackled his role at the summer trustee porch meetings with relish, while also house hunting on the grounds. Near the end of their stay, the family signed a contract on a house on Wiley near University Beach and planned to move in before the end of the season.

“When Barbara first brought me to Chautauqua in 2002,” says Jim, “we’d been married for six years. I couldn’t believe this place. ‘Why haven’t you shown me this?’ I asked her. ‘Why did it take so long?’” He shakes his head. “What hooked me right away were the pillars of education and religion. I love studying cultures and different religions. I love looking at all 13 sides of an issue. The hardest thing is figuring out your day at Chautauqua!”

Jim Brady moves to the edge of his seat. He is just beginning to warm to his subject. Brady brings the force of all his accumulated leadership, communications, and marketing skills to bear in his passion for Chautauqua. “Where else can you get a Scrabble class the same week you are studying the threat of nuclear weapons? It’s like camp for the whole family!”

“He’s like this about everything he does,” Barbara whispers as an aside, smiling at her husband. “We plan to be here full time in ten years, and I know great things are ahead for this place,” Jim says. He is most enthusiastic about the Trustees’ new strategic document that envisions the next eight years in the life of the Institution and advocates for Chautauqua becoming a more powerful presence in this country, particularly in fostering civil dialogue and encouraging a more respectful, less polarized form of national discourse. Chautauqua’s programming is a model of what is possible and even essential to the survival of our society, Brady says.

“We can’t be proud of being a best kept secret,” Jim spreads his arms. “Chautauqua must have a wider mindset and embrace the idea of national recognition. Let’s make these next eight years a breakout period. Tom Becker’s legacy is not incrementalism. We are moving toward something that is a quantum leap. Tom is not settling for ‘good,’ he is pushing us to reach farther.”

Jim notes that attendance at the trustee porch meetings this season has been strong and the tone upbeat, focusing on the larger issues of mission and vision for the Institution. “That’s very positive,” Brady says. “You know, it’s hard to make the program here much better. It’s always been great, but becoming a force nationally or internationally is the next step. It will require that the 24 trustees and 16 foundation directors carve out a couple hundred hours a year to get the message out, remain focused on the strategy, and be very intentional in our work to promote Chautauqua’s role in American dialogue. This is not just about being theoretical. It’s about moving the needle.”

When asked about the role of philanthropy at the Institution, Brady is no less exuberant. “Barbara and I have been very blessed, and I believe that it is incumbent on people who can make larger contributions to make them so that a place like this can fulfill its potential. Chautauqua is in our will—one of a very few organizations we are supporting at that level. We are committed in a serious way to this place. Chautauqua is a community where you can live that commitment first hand all day long. It’s all in the mix. There’s nothing else like it.”
Two High-Profile Partnerships 
EXPAND CHAUTAUQUA'S REACH

Chautauqua’s recent partnerships with a variety of peer institutions—National Geographic, Sesame Workshop, George Eastman House, and Colonial Williamsburg, to name a few—have stirred Chautauquans and enriched the mix. They are also an important way that the Institution fulfills its strategic goal of reaching like-minded individuals beyond our regular spheres who are likely to identify with the ethos of Chautauqua and become engaged with us, either on or off the grounds.

To this end, Chautauqua is initiating another partnership, this time with the 92nd Street Y in Manhattan. On Sunday, December 5, writer Roger Rosenblatt, already a favorite at both institutions, will be joined by actress Sigourney Weaver and novelist E.L. Doctorow in an evening conversation about the importance of the written word.

Earlier in the afternoon, New Yorkers will also get a flavor of Chautauqua’s Abrahamic Initiative through a panel discussion led by director of religion Joan Brown Campbell. Campbell will be joined by Rabbi Joseph Telaskin of the Synagogue for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles, Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister of Erie, PA, and Iman Feisal Abdul Rauf, a leader in the Islamic Cultural Center in New York City. The day-long event, called “Chautauqua at the 92nd St. Y” is a first for both organizations.

Chautauqua’s education director Sherra Babcock explains that the partnership with the 92nd Street Y is a natural fit. Both organizations were founded in 1874 with similar missions. In addition to a robust lecture series and classes for all ages across a spectrum of topics, the 92nd Street Y focuses on art, music, dance, literature, theater, and fitness.

“The Young Men’s Hebrew Association began as a Jewish organization and is still proudly so, but the Y is also inclusive of all faith traditions,” says Babcock. The organization reaches some 300,000 people a year. “They have an enviable situation in that people only need to cross the street or get on the subway to take in their offerings, while most Chautauquans have to travel a bit longer to reach us,” says Babcock. But, she notes, the 92nd Street Y has a lot more competition around them than does Chautauqua.

Susan Engle directs the lecture program at the 92nd Street Y and has been struck by the similar values and themes of study that the two organizations have explored. “Our audience is very much concerned with the life of the mind and spirit,” she says. “And they want to spend their leisure time to learn and grow just as Chautauquans do.” In her 29 years at the Y, Engle has witnessed the lecture program grow from 30 to 150 speakers per year. “The program just gets better and better,” she says.

Drawing from the wealth of leaders, thinkers, and artists who live or frequently visit Manhattan, the 92nd Street Y has an impressive list of speakers and performers who have graced the stage of their 900- and 300-seat auditoriums over the years, including Martha Graham, William Carlos Williams, and Paul Robeson. Poet Billy Collins, who gave the 10/4/5 lecture at Chautauqua this week in Week Five, once exclaimed that the podium at the Y “remains the absolute center of the universe of literary performance in America.” And like Chautauqua, the 92nd Street Y has recently taken advantage of the Internet by making available some of their most memorable presentations and literary readings from years past, even as they are also creating short videos of current speakers through an on-line project called “MindCapsules.”

“We can learn so much from each other,” says Babcock, “and I know we will continue to learn.”

Tickets to “Chautauqua at the 92nd St. Y” are available at http://www.92y.org. Enter the keyword “Chautauqua.”

Chautauqua has also launched a new partnership with the National Museum of African American History and Culture—a Smithsonian project that begins construction on the Mall in Washington, DC, in 2012 with a projected completion date of 2015. The museum has a mission of not only celebrating the culture and history of African Americans but also of presenting the African American experience as a lens through which all citizens may consider our complex international origins, the struggle for freedom, and this country’s present role in a global society.

The program partnership, which will also include Colonial Williamsburg, will first find expression at events in February at the Smithsonian and Colonial Williamsburg. Week Nine of the 2011 season will bring the partnership to Chautauqua, focusing on “Pathways to the Civil War.” Sherra Babcock explains: “We will be looking at the conflicts that arose at the founding of this country, that, unresolved, led to the Civil War, and at how many of these conflicts remain unresolved today—issues such as states rights, racial and economic inequalities, how often we elect people, and who has the right to vote.”

Babcock notes that 1619 was, ironically, the year that the first democratically elected assembly gathered on this continent to pursue a dream of freedom and liberty and also the year the first enslaved people were brought to North American shores. Beginning at this juncture, the three program partners will work together to create a 360 degree view of the pathways that led to the Civil War. A performance piece featuring historical interpreters will also be written expressly for the theme week at Chautauqua.

The three-way partnership will be officially announced in Washington, DC, at the Smithsonian Institution and over President’s Day Weekend. Colonial Williamsburg will host a preview performance of the commissioned performance piece during Black History Month. For more information, visit: www.cweb.org

A Gift for the Community...

FOUNDER-PHELPS RESTORED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Looking from Strohl Art Center across to the back porch of Fowler-Kellogg Art Center

Cafe seating on the back porch

Restored stairway to the second floor of Fowler-Kellogg Art Center

"Chautauqua School of Art Annual Student Show" first floor gallery

"State of Grace" exhibit in the Turret Gallery

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT WWW.CHAUTAUQUAFoundation.ORG