



THE WAYSIDE INN®  
FOUNDATION

Vol. 6 Number 2

*The Wayside Inn Foundation Member Newsletter*

*Fall-Winter 2025*

# *Innkeeper's Tales*





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**Cover image:** Martha-Mary Chapel in Winter by Gary Christelis, c. 2024

### OUR PROPERTY INCLUDES

Longfellow's Wayside Inn  
Grist Mill  
Martha-Mary Chapel  
Redstone Schoolhouse  
Gate House  
Cider Mill  
Ice House  
Old Barn  
Longfellow Memorial Garden  
The Pavilion



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As we enter a new year, I'm reminded of how deeply The Wayside Inn is rooted in my own life. And for that, I am grateful. Grateful for the land we steward, for the history we preserve, and for the people who make this place come alive every day. Stepping into the role of President of the Board of Trustees, I feel that sense of gratitude more strongly than ever.

This has been a year of meaningful progress. We've strengthened our community programming, welcomed a record number of visitors, advanced preservation work across the campus, and continued developing new spaces that will serve the community well into the future. All of these activities reflect our important mission: to protect this historic landscape, to share it widely, and to create opportunities for learning, connection, and reflection.

As the world grows more complicated and more divided, our work matters even more. The Wayside Inn stands as a place of continuity and common ground, where people can step out of the noise, engage with history firsthand, and reconnect with each other in a meaningful way. That sense of shared experience is not accidental; it is the result of deliberate, mission-driven stewardship.

And so, as this eventful year draws to a close, I want to express my sincere appreciation. To our volunteers, whose passion keeps our stories alive. To our dedicated staff, whose care shapes every visitor's experience. To my fellow Trustees, who give their time, expertise, and vision to guide this institution forward. And to the many supporters, partners, and neighbors who believe in the importance of this remarkable place.

Together, we will continue to ensure that The Wayside Inn remains a place where history is lived, shared, and carried forward with purpose.

With appreciation,

President, Board of Trustees

# A PLACE TO GATHER

## The Pavilion at The Wayside Inn

By Nicollette Tanzi

This past July, The Wayside Inn was delighted to unveil The Pavilion - an outdoor cruck-framed structure designed to be a gathering space for our community events. From August to October, The Pavilion was the site of our popular 1716 Beer Garden as well as the site for many free public programs. Look forward to more events in 2026 and the re-opening of the 1716 Beer Garden in the spring! The Pavilion was made possible by a generous grant from The Cummings Foundation. Part of this grant will also go towards repairing the Grist Mill.

### The Build

The Pavilion was built by the hardworking members and volunteers of The Timber Framers Guild, a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to promoting, honoring, and advancing the craft of timber framing. Since 1988, the Guild



*Above: The finished frame. Left: Members of the Timber Framers Guild lifting up the frame.*

*Right: The Guild working on construction.*

has organized programs that have resulted in the raising of nearly a hundred timber frames for communities across North America and beyond. As an educational organization, the Guild provides hands-on learning while creating their structures. Guild members shared the story of timber framing to onlookers throughout the build and presented more detailed information for Wayside Inn members at a special event in our Parlor followed by a site tour.

The Guild collectively built The Pavilion in just one week. Community members helped by hammering in pegs and raising the structure itself - a literal demonstration of community building.

## 1716 Beer Garden

In August, the 1716 Beer Garden opened at The Pavilion. The beer garden operated Friday-Sunday for ten weekends, where visitors enjoyed a variety of beer, wine, and soft drinks, food trucks of various cuisines, and live music by local musicians.

Whether it was a warm and sunny August afternoon or a brisk autumn evening, the beer garden was constantly buzzing with families, friends, dogs, and children. People celebrated birthdays, anniversaries, or just enjoyed a refreshing beer after a workday. Our bartenders, Chris, Mike, and Charlie always greeted customers with a smile and were happy to give their recommendations on which beverage a customer might like (the New England Hazy IPA was the most popular).

The food trucks from local restaurants, like Indian food from Tandoor and Curry on Wheels, BBQ from Big T's Jerky House, and Mexican cuisine from Lalo's, were the perfect addition to pair with our selection of drinks and make the most out of a visit to the beer garden. Many local musicians and bands, like folk-style Red Horse Oldtime, rock band Hullfire, and singer-songwriter Jacqueline Burns, perfected the ambiance and engaged visitors with crowd-favorite songs.



Guests enjoying the 1716 Beer Garden's Grand Opening, August 2025.



Thank you to our bartenders:  
Mike, Chris, and Charlie.

While we are sad to see this season come to a close, we are elated by the positive turnout from our community week after week. Seeing so many people enjoy their weekends together demonstrates the incredible community-building potential of The Pavilion, and we look forward to seeing many of you next spring.

## Public Programming and the Future of The Pavilion

The Pavilion does not just serve as a seasonal beer garden; it is a year-long gathering space where we have hosted free family and community events with many more to come in the future.

In early October, we hosted a Children's Storytime and Crafts event with local author Judy Luca. We welcomed over a dozen local families, several of which had not yet visited The Wayside Inn. These families were delighted to enjoy free activities nearby and look forward to coming back for more. Judy read from her independently published books *The Tiny Acorn* and *The Tiny Seashell*, and the children enjoyed coloring, a bubble station, and left with a goodie bag.

Later in the month was our first annual Pumpkin Carving Contest. The contest was free to enter and took place during beer garden hours. Participants dropped off their pre-carved/decorated pumpkins for judging and enjoyed food, drinks, and music by local musician Steve Robb, who also MC'ed our first Open Mic Night earlier in the month. The winning prize was dinner for two at the Inn, but all participants received a goodie bag as we were so grateful to have such a positive and creative turnout for our first ever Pumpkin Carving Contest!

As we look forward to the future of The Wayside Inn, we are delighted to add The Pavilion to our list of community spaces on our grounds to hold many more free public programs to come. Thank you again to The Cummings Foundation for making this possible.



Free Family Storytime, October 2025.



Pumpkin Carving Contest, October 2025.

## PORCH RENOVATION UPDATE

### Reintroducing a Piece of The Wayside Inn's History

By Gary Christelis and Nicollette Tanzi

Last spring, we announced an exciting project: the reconstruction of our historic porch. The porch, along with other sections of Longfellow's Wayside Inn, was destroyed during a devastating fire on December 21, 1955. The restoration of the porch was made possible by life-long Sudbury resident, Jim Hill, who not only donated the funds for the porch, but also had a hands-on role in managing its construction from beginning to end, working with local post-and-beam contractor and craftsman, Bud Haworth.



The original porch in 1915.

As a former Trustee of The Wayside Inn Foundation and now an Advisory Trustee, Jim is passionate about The Wayside Inn and historic preservation. The porch was donated to celebrate the special place the Inn has had in the life he shared with his wife, Susan Litowitz, who passed away in 2023. Jim and Susan were married in The Martha-Mary Chapel and made many happy memories at The Wayside Inn. Through this gift, the joy they shared will be immortalized and enable others to make their own memories at the Inn. We are deeply grateful for Jim's generosity and this special and beautiful restoration of our Inn.



The porch under construction, September 2025.

We are thrilled to announce that the porch has now been completed. In the spring, the porch will be open for seasonal outdoor dining.



Our new porch, completed in October 2025.



A close-up view, January 2026.

## A PEAK INTO THE ARCHIVES

By Mitali Krishnamurthy, The Wayside Inn Foundation Summer Intern 2025

Inns and taverns have long played a crucial role in New England's cultural and economic development, at the center of the political and social worlds of settlers. Alcohol was an essential part of the early New England diet, as water was often unsafe to drink and simple beverages such as beer and cider were easily accessible. Taverns and inns created a space for public gatherings, often located near meetinghouses, encouraging community building in between Sunday morning services and afternoon prayers. As the eighteenth century progressed, Puritan ideology was replaced by growing beliefs in a Revolution. Cider was the most popular alcoholic beverage, easy to brew from the abundant number of apple trees growing throughout the region. By the middle of the century, cider had replaced beer as the primary family beverage and was only increasing in popularity. Rum was another drink favored by New England colonists—the region served as a leader in rum production, with over 150 distilleries in the area.



The Tavern in the late-1920's.

However, inns and taverns served as more than a cultural center. They were essential stops for any traveler, whether they were on foot, horseback, or in a stagecoach. Inns were typically placed every ten miles along major roads and travel routes, offering a place for weary guests to rest. Additionally, inns and taverns provided guidance for the

journey ahead, acting as landmarks and offering directions for the surrounding area. The building's sign was typically symbolic and easy to comprehend, appealing to settlers that may be illiterate, and adjusting over time through mistranslation. For example, a tavern called "The Bacchanalians" became "The Bag o' Nails," and another called "St. Catherine's Wheel" was simplified to the "Cat and Wheel".

While taverns typically had communal spaces upstairs for travelers to sleep, inns came with the luxury of a private room. Inns and taverns were carefully regulated, serving as a way for towns and local governments to control the supply of alcohol and regulate overconsumption. Any settler could own a tavern as long as they possessed a license. Inn and tavern owners were expected to contribute to the community, occasionally receiving land grants or exemptions from taxes in return for their services. Though most tavern and innkeepers were men, widowed or single women occasionally turned to the business to make a living.

The businesses served as centers of communication, receiving incoming mail, legal documents, and newspapers. They also fueled political thought, with specific establishments like Boston's The Green Dragon Tavern acting as the central meeting point for patriotic groups such as the Sons of Liberty. Militias targeted inns as areas of recruitment and deployment, finding a common and easily identifiable meeting place for their peers. Their role as a stage for discussion and debate made inns and taverns unpopular with the social elite, leading to attempts from legislators and ministers to control the blossoming popular culture within the establishments. Practices such as shooting contests, cards, gambling, and dancing flourished within the tavern environment, hosting everyone from intoxicated guests to court sessions and public meetings.

Although taverns and inns would lose importance with the rise of trains and railroad lines in the nineteenth century, they long stood as the hearts of local communities, attracting wandering travelers and local townspeople alike. The businesses were crucial to the development of the general population's culture, expressed through the consumption of alcohol and community activities. Additionally, taverns and inns fueled political and social beliefs, nurturing the seed of the American Revolution and the events that would follow, continuously pushing history while serving as historical artifacts themselves.

## 250<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATIONS

By Michael McCluskey

This year, The Wayside Inn Foundation began celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the American Revolution—and we will offer more special events in 2026. In March 2025, we launched our ongoing exhibit “A Revolutionary Inn” with a special gathering for our members. This exhibit features artifacts from our archives that help to tell the stories of the events and people around the Inn in the 1700s—with a particular focus on our community’s connections to the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The exhibit is free and open to the public in our second-floor exhibit space and will run through 2026. We also hosted a “Fireside Chat with Paul Revere” in collaboration with The Paul Revere House Museum in Boston and featuring Paul Revere historical interpreter, Michael Lepage. The was a sold-out event that filled our Main Dining Room as participants listened to “Mr. Revere” tell stories about his early days as well as his famous ride that took him through our neighboring towns. Of course, *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* was made famous in a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose *Tales of a Wayside Inn* features the characters Longfellow met in what we now call our Longfellow Parlor. Visit the “A Revolutionary Inn” exhibit for more information about Longfellow’s poem—and then see the very room that inspired him.

In April 2025, we marked the start of the American Revolution with the annual flag-changing ceremony in front of the Inn. This ceremony is conducted each year by the Sudbury Companies of Militia and Minute, who change the flag flying above our front door from the King’s Colors to the Grand Union, the first national flag of the United States of America. The ceremony is always open to the public and includes celebratory musket fire, the sound of the fife and drum, and the cheers of the crowd who come to watch the event. In July, we welcomed local author Jane Sciacca, who discussed her recently published book *Enslavement in the Puritan Village: The Untold History of Sudbury and Wayland, Massachusetts*. This important work tells the stories of the enslaved people in our area, including a man named Portsmouth, who lived here at The Wayside Inn. We also feature his story in our ongoing exhibit.

On July 4th each year the Militia and Minute return to change the Grand Union to the Betsy Ross Flag in recognition of America’s Independence Day. We celebrated this occasion with a special gathering in 2025—and plan to have an even bigger celebration in 2026. Keep updated on our events through our weekly newsletter (available via email), Facebook, and Instagram. And please consider becoming a member or giving a donation to help us continue to provide community-based programming.



*Left:* Our flag-changing ceremony is held on April 19th each year and is open to the public. *Right:* “Paul Revere” talks about his life with Wayside Inn guests.



## A WEDDING TALE

By Michael Maskery-Birch

### **Michael Maskery-Birch & Ryck Birch**

*Wed at The Wayside Inn on October 14, 2022*

Our wedding day at the Wayside Inn was nothing short of magical. My history with the Inn runs deep—I spent years working with Frugal Flower/Just Bloom'd, located in Sudbury, Massachusetts, just down the road from The Wayside, setting up countless weddings on those very grounds. So when it came time to choose a venue for our own celebration, The Wayside Inn felt like the most natural choice. We looked at a few other places, but we kept coming back to the same feeling: this was home. This was family.



The day itself exceeded every hope we had. We were cared for so thoughtfully, every detail handled with grace and ease. But one moment will stay with me forever—my husband walking into the main dining room for the first time, seeing it filled with our closest friends and family, the space overflowing with flowers and warmth. The look on his face was priceless. It was everything I had dreamed of and more.

I'll never forget it. Our wedding at The Wayside Inn wasn't just beautiful—it was the perfect beginning to our life together.



Photos by Taylor Rousseau Photography

## LEGENDARY TALES. TIMELESS FELLOWSHIP.

We want to express our sincere thanks to all current members of The Wayside Inn Foundation. Your ongoing support enables us to further our mission and support our work with educational programming, collections care & management, site management, and buildings & grounds maintenance.



Apple Fest, September 2025



Jerusha's Ball, October 2025



Ladies Night Out, November 2025

A special thank you to our Community Partners and Photographer Members for your support:

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FOUNDATION

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OUR UPCOMING SIGNATURE EVENTS

**Roaring 20's Fundraiser**  
Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Apple Fest Family Day**  
Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026

**Jerusha's Halloween Ball**  
Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026

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