

# Sands Ring News

Volume 1 Issue 3

September 2009



## *Special points of interest:*

- Critical need for new roof
- Facebook Fans
- Homestead's new boiler
- Raccoons in the Homestead
- Did Washington Sleep Here?
- Sands Family History
- Thanks to our members, volunteers, and benefactors, and the Town of Cornwall
- Membership Application

*Sands Ring*

*Homestead Museum*

*P.O. Box 226*

*Cornwall, NY 12518*

*845-534-4829*

*sandsringfriends@yahoo.com*

*www.sandsring.org*

*Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum is a non-profit organization organized exclusively for educational purposes under Section 501 c(3).*

## Sands Ring's Roof Needs an Angel

By Bruce J. Stanley

After examining the current state of the roof on Sands Ring Homestead Museum, Albert Conley, Head of the Town of Cornwall Building and Grounds Department, says we need a new roof as soon as possible. The Board of Trustees agrees that the Homestead needs the help of an angel or maybe the help of many angels. The estimated costs to replace our aging roof with cedar shakes is about \$50,000. The Town also got a quote on replacing the shake roof with architectural asphalt roofing material and the story there isn't much better. The cost for this is approximately \$30,000. According to Conley, it is costly because they have to get to bare wood and put down a new underlayment.

The Town's budget, given the current financial state of all governmental agencies, is so tight that for the foreseeable future only basic services across the town can be covered. Conley hopes that the roof will last at least thorough this winter. Safety will never be compromised.

The current cedar shake roof was donated by the generosity of Ralph E. Ogden back in the 1960's. Thank goodness for people like Mr. Ogden. The Board of Trustees is discussing our alternatives. We continue to investigate aggressively all grant leads, but again, given the current financial climate a lot of these have dried up

I guess Albert Conley is right ... we need help now. An angel or maybe many angels can assist us and the Town of Cornwall deal with our short and long-term crisis. It would be a crime to let such an historical piece of Cornwall's history deteriorate to extinction.

If you have any ideas or contacts regarding this project, contact the Board of Trustees at sandsringfriends@yahoo.com or call the Homestead at 845-534-4829. Also, we are creating a Roofing Fund. If you would like to send a donation, please send it to

## Sands Ring Now on Facebook!

By Colleen A. Zlock

In April, Sands Ring launched its official page on the social network Facebook. After only a few short months, we already have an impressive 172 fans. Many are former students and parents using the wall to express their gratitude for the school programs we offer and others showing their support for the preservation of

the homestead and the history it keeps alive in the community.

Please find us on Facebook and become a fan, too! Learn interesting facts about Sands Ring history, keep posted on upcoming events, open houses and news. We invite you to

share your memories of the homestead.



## We Appreciate Our Members

*Your encouragement and support helps us grow!*

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### **Membership Benefits:**

*Receive Sands Ring News*

*Email notifications of events and programs*

*Discounts on museum programs*

*Tax Deduction*

*The satisfaction of knowing that you are helping to preserve and maintain a 1760 colonial homestead*

### **Not a member? Become a member! Join Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum!**

Contributing Member	\$100	Name _____
Institutional Member	\$50	Address _____
Family Member	\$15	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Individual Member	\$10	E-mail _____

As a non-profit organization we are eligible for company matching funds. If you wish to participate, please enclose your company form. Thanks!

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here if you wish to volunteer at the Museum. Your participation helps us staff our events.

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send your membership application and check to:

Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum

P.O. Box 226, Cornwall, NY 12518-0266

# Board of Trustees Wishes to Thank

Gerry Wagner and the entire Board of Trustees would like to give

Special **THANKS** to:

Bruce Perry / Perry Plumbing Heating & Cooling

Tim Markel, VP of Mestek, Inc / HydroTherm Boilers

Mickey McPhillips / Taco, Inc.

Al Conley / Supt. of Buildings & Grounds Town of Cornwall

The Board of Trustees is very grateful to Gerry Wagner for his leadership in the Sands Ring Boiler Project and also for his generous donation of a new boiler.

Many, many thanks!

### Thanks to our Friends:

**Amos Zeigler** for an 1880 sled and a hanging click wheel. Both are family heirlooms. We are pleased to share these with our museum visitors and our program participants!

Thanks to Bruce and Sally Stanley for helping outfit the new upstairs office with a bookcase and a desk lamp.

## Thanks to our Volunteers!

Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum is very grateful for the support and assistance of our volunteers, including:

Floranne Moulton	Eileen Tullock
Brooke Garfinkel	Jayne Petersen
Rayna Walters	Sally Mattausch

### Thanks to our Corporate

**Benefactors:**

**Becton Dickinson**

## Upstairs Improvements

Thanks to Cornwall's Building and Grounds Crew for the renovations in the upstairs kitchen and bathroom area. These include installing new floor tile (donated by Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum), removing old, non-working appliances and bathroom fixtures, and reconstructing the bathroom walls. Also, Thanks to Bruce Perry for relocating the sink and other bathroom repairs.

Thanks again to Town of Cornwall Supervisor Kevin Quigley for your continued support!

## Need for Additional Volunteers

With a small Board of Trustees and an even smaller educational staff, we need additional volunteers to help us with our 2010 events. If you enjoy history and wish to help out, please join Friends of Sands Ring and indicate your wish to volunteer .

*If you're on our current list of volunteers, Thank you! We will be contacting you.*

*If you would like to volunteer, we really need and appreciate your assistance. Call us at 845-534-4829 or e-mail us at sandsringfriends@yahoo.com.*

## A Chance Meeting Leads To New Heating System for Sands Ring Homestead

By Gerry Wagner

I attend virtually all Cornwall Town Board meetings. I have questioned my own sanity at times for doing so as there does seem to be a heavy dose of masochism involved.....that said, I'm glad I did attend a work session meeting earlier this summer.

Town Board meetings tend to attract the same audience month to month, (I call us the "peanut gallery"). This particular meeting however, I noticed a couple who I had never seen at a meeting before and they were sitting right next to me. As the meeting was opened up to public comment they introduced themselves as Bruce and Sally Stanley with whom the board seemed very familiar.

Bruce and Sally began to describe the needs of the Sands Ring Homestead Museum and as they went through their list which seemed similar to most "to do lists" for any home, I became particularly attentive when they mentioned the need for a new heating system.

Comfort systems have been my career virtually my entire adult life, (started working for a local boiler manufacturer right out of high school because they had a college tuition reimbursement program). I knew when I heard Bruce and Sally's need for assistance that I could help with this particular project.

I have to admit I didn't know exactly what Sands Ring Homestead was but I had been looking for an opportunity where I could give back to the town where my wife and I have lived for more than fourteen years and this seemed right up my alley. Once I learned that Sands Ring is a home built in 1760 the opportunity to install a boiler in a home with such history, (and mechanical challenges), really got my creative juices flowing.

I have been in the heating business for 29 years now and I have been very fortunate to have encountered many wonderful people in the industry who have influenced my career and helped me along the way. I knew I could call on many of these people to provide needed materials for the project so I began writing some emails requesting assistance in the form of required components for a new heating system.

I had one huge obstacle which I was very concerned about however.....it was myself. Twenty nine years of heavy lifting and working in strange positions in small boiler rooms had taken its toll on my knees and I knew I could not do the work required at the Homestead by myself. That's when I called on a dear friend who is a life long resident of Cornwall, Bruce Perry of Perry Plumbing, Heating & Cooling.

Bruce and his wife Leslie are great friends of myself and my wife and we often travel together but now I needed to ask a huge favor of Bruce.....could he provide much of the labor required to install the boiler at Sands Ring? I have to admit I was trying to come up with some clever way of asking him because I knew this was no small favor but I decided to just hit him straight on with it and before I was able to complete my request he said "sure I will help"!

As you can imagine, the Homestead posed some unique challenges with the install.....none the least being getting a 350 pound cast iron boiler up the stairs to the second floor mechanical room, (a closet really). Bruce and his employee Pete had to maneuver the boiler gently through the 90 degree turn in the narrow steps which at times, I have to admit, I thought might be a deal breaker for the project. Persistence paid off and once the boiler was upstairs we began the process of installation and within 48 hours the Homestead was ready for whatever a cold Cornwall winter could throw at it.

Some technical details of the project:

- Boiler is a HydroTherm HW-100-CON providing 72,000 BTUH of heat to the home.
- The home presently requires only about 2/3 of the boiler's output so there is plenty of capacity to expand the radiation in the home at a later date if needed.
- The home is split into two heating zones, (upstairs and downstairs), and additional piping for a third zone was installed for future projects.
- All components of the heating system are brand new, valves, circulator, expansion tank, etc.

My experience with this project has inspired me to accept a position on the Board of Trustees at the museum and I have thrown my name into the hat for the position of vice president on the Board as well. I am thankful for the opportunity the project offered me to contribute to the town I love so much and to be work with others who feel the same way.

## Did Washington Sleep Here?

By Sally A. Stanley

*Many historical homes can claim that George Washington or one of the other Founding Fathers visited there, but what's the true story at Sands Ring?*

Our museum staff is often asked whether General George Washington slept at the Sands Home (a.k.a. Sands Ring Homestead Museum). This is a good question and a logical one as the home predates the Revolutionary War and Washington's presence in the area. Years ago a newspaper article appeared that categorically stated that Washington did sleep here. Unfortunately, the writer of the article didn't cite sources, the newspaper editor did not check facts, and the story is occasionally reprinted. In our quest to relay the truth as our records indicate, I'd like to share with our members and our readers the information the museum has regarding this question.

Fortunately, the Sands Family left many written records. In addition, the Sands Ring Families have graciously shared their family stories. Catherine Sands Ring, David's daughter, had her father's journal and letters published in 1840.

Here is what we know as fact.

We know that Washington's Army "drank the well dry" at Nathaniel Sand's second home at the intersection of what is now Main Street and Willow Avenue, presently the location of Bryan's Bikes. The army was traveling on what was then referred to as Newburgh Road to Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh.

We also know that soldiers camped on the grounds of the Sands home during the Revolutionary War. Written records indicate that the soldiers were suspicious of the Sands family and suspected they might be Tories. The soldiers remained on the premises until a letter from David Sands to his wife Clementine arrived. The soldiers intercepted the letter and satisfied with its contents, left the grounds. At this time David was away on one of his numerous preaching and teaching tours and Clementine was left to care for the homestead, the farm, and her four children.

Many colonial Quakers were successful businessmen, including David Sands who opened his general store in the Homestead during the Revolutionary War. Initially, some Quakers were not in favor of independence as they were concerned as to how this would affect their business with England. In addition, records indicate that many colonists were suspicious of the Quakers as they did not fight in wars nor did they take oaths of allegiance to any country. This suspicion of Quaker loyalties would have made the Sands home an unlikely place for General Washington to rest his head. Also, Washington's headquarters was just miles away in Newburgh and Knox's headquarters was in Vail's Gate. Both would have been safer places for Washington to rest.

So our answer to this question is no, Washington did not sleep at Sands Ring Homestead Museum. Nowhere in our records do we have any indication that Washington was here.

### Tories or Patriots?

For those of you who are wondering if the Sands Family were in fact, Tories, or were they sympathetic to the patriotic cause.

Our answer is yes we believe they were patriots. From their actions we can surmise they were in favor of independence.

Clementine hid the flint from the British army when they came knocking at the door. Emptying the flint keg in the hollow of a nearby tree, she showed the empty keg to the soldiers saying, "I fear the keg is empty."

Years later, as the tree decayed, Clementine's grand children and great grandchildren found pieces of flint on the ground.

#### **Sands Family Genealogy**

Nathaniel Sands II (1721-1783)

*Married* Mercy Sands

Son: David Sands (1745-1818)

*Married* Clementine Hallock

Daughter: Catherine Sands

(1772-1855)

*Married* Elias Ring

## FRIENDS OF SANDS RING HOMESTEAD MUSEUM

P.O. Box 226  
Cornwall, NY 12518-0226

Phone: 845-534-4829

E-mail: sandsringfriends@yahoo.com  
www.sandsring.org

*Sands Ring Homestead is one of the oldest Dutch colonial houses still standing in the Hudson Valley. The Homestead is open to the community during our seasonal Open Houses and during other events held throughout the year. Since the early 1970's students have participated in the living history programs at Sands Ring Homestead Museum.*

### Board of Trustees

President: Sally A. Stanley

Vice President: Margaret Vatter

Secretary: Bruce Stanley

Treasurer: Lidwin Goodwine

Trustees: Gerry Wagner

Colleen Zlock Doris Wickiser

Marjorie Krupa Elsa Cameron

### Our Mission:

*To foster an understanding of the colonial period by sharing stories of the Sands and Ring Families showing how one family lived and prospered in the Hudson Valley.*

*To provide hands-on-workshops in an historical 1760 homestead using original artifacts and reproductions to illustrate life in colonial America.*

## Our Wish List

The Homestead has stood strong over the years. But nearing the age of 250 years, its needs are many.

- New Roof
- New chimney liner and hearth repair in the Meeting Room
- Reinforcement of the brick back wall of the Old Kitchen fireplace
- Modern downstairs bathroom that is handicapped accessible
- Glass display cabinets for the upstairs exhibit room
- New counter and sink for the upstairs mini-kitchen
- Additional volunteers to help us with our 2010 events

## Future Events 2010 Celebrations

Our Board of Trustees is busy planning and creating a calendar of events for 2010. Built in 1760, Sands Ring Homestead Museum will be celebrating its 250 year birthday in 2010. We want to make next year special with all sorts of events, including a birthday party, a classic car show, an art auction, numerous open houses, and more to come. Check our website in the spring for our event calendar.

**[www.sandsring.org](http://www.sandsring.org)**

## Roof Visitors

Again, the raccoons have tried to nest in Sands Ring Homestead Museum. Last winter a raccoon entered via the chimney. In its quest to secure nesting materials one of our antique dolls was destroyed. The creature was relocated and the chimney was secured. This fall we found that one of your roof patches had slipped and a raccoon had taken up residence. Again the wildlife trapper was called in and the raccoon was caught.

Our present roof dates from the 1960's and was a gift from Ralph E. Ogden. The roof in need of replacement. Please consider a donation and/or membership to Friends of Sands Ring Homestead Museum to help preserve and maintain this historic homestead.