

FEATURES

Forbes House Museum Dinner Features Historical Perspectives

By Denise Gilardone

“Whose history is it?” was the theme of the Forbes House Museum’s Keechong Dinner on Wednesday, Oct.18.

Vivian Wu Wong of Milton Academy moderated a discussion with Fran Colletti from Facing History and Ourselves, L’Merchie Frazier from the Museum of African American History, and Jeffrey Gonyeau,

historic preservation consultant, as panelists.

Guests contributed many questions to the discussion, which the panelists considered from their varied historical viewpoints.

“They conveyed the idea that history is not a frozen picture, but an evolving construct that deepens and grows as we develop a more detailed understanding,” Milton resident Jeanne Eckard said.

The evening began with a video featuring community leaders and residents sharing their thoughts about why history is important. Jeffrey Bernier, chairman of the museum trustees, and Mary Wendell, board member and Milton resident, then recognized Anne Malone, former chairman, for her dedicated support of the museum, especially during its recent renovation. “Sean Lopresti and his students at the MHS Wildcats News Room were very helpful in producing and editing the video. It set the stage perfectly for the evening’s conversation and reinforced the Forbes House Museum’s mission of historic preservation and education,” said Heidi Vaughan, the museum’s executive director. “We’re grateful to our sponsors, panelists and guests for making our event so memorable.”



From left, Heidi Vaughan, L’Merchie Frazier, Vivian Wu Wong, Fran Colletti, and Jeffrey Gonyeau

The Keechong dinner, inaugurated in 1879 by Robert Bennet Forbes, John Murray Forbes, and other prominent entrepreneurs active in the 19th-century China Trade, is now an annual fundraiser for the Forbes House Museum. Proceeds from this year’s dinner will fund ongoing education initiatives. Later this year, the museum will unveil a renovated rotating exhibit space featuring key museum artifacts returned from the recent “The Irish Atlantic” exhibit at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Future plans include an exhibit on the Grand Army of the Republic and local veterans, culled from the museum’s extensive collection of Civil War memorabilia.

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