

Bidwell House Museum Announces 2025 Season Program

Monterey, Mass – April 30, 2025. The Bidwell House Museum is thrilled to announce its 2025 season program today. Throughout the summer, the Museum will be highlighting traditional trades via programs and a small exhibition visible at the end of the house tour. Favorite programs from past years, including the Reenactment Weekend and the Summer History Talk series, will be returning along with a theatrical performance, a concert and nature walks.

The Museum's third annual member's week begins on May 19th and Museum members are invited to visit the house for a tour, without an appointment on May 19th, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th at either 1 p.m. or 3 p.m. The official season of guided tours of the house will begin on Memorial Day, May 26th and are by-appointment only on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. Tours must be booked 24 hours in advance and can be booked by calling 413-528-6888 or emailing the museum at bidwellhm2@gmail.com. During these personal, small- group tours of the home and gardens, visitors will learn about the 18th century Berkshires, early American architecture and everyday life in that era, through the story of the Bidwell family and their descendants. The museum grounds—194 acres of flower, herb and heritage vegetable gardens, woods, fields, historic stonewalls, trails and picnic sites—are open all year, free of charge and can be explored via two self-guided tours, the Native American Interpretive Trail and the "Outside the House" tour created in 2020.

2025 Season Program Schedule

Programs take place at the Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road, Monterey, unless otherwise noted. More programs will be added throughout the summer, check the Museum's website for more information.

MAY

May 17, 2-4 p.m.

A Personal Conversation in Mrs. Washington's Bedchamber

Spend time with Mrs. Washington as she completes dressing for her day, in this interactive and informative program. During your time together, Mrs. Washington will share news of her family, and how the current events in which her husband is so deeply involved have impacted both her family and her developing nation. There will be a small reception and light refreshments after the program. Admission is free for members/\$20 for non-members.

JUNE

June 14, 11 a.m.

History Talk – Accommodating the Republic: Taverns in the Early United States

In the first of our four-lecture summer history talk series, Associate Professor of History at Florida International University, Kirsten E. Wood, will discuss her recent book “Accommodating the Republic: Taverns in the Early United States.” This talk will explore how entrepreneurial, improvement-minded men went to taverns to raise capital and rally support for favored causes. Their unrivaled freedom to use taverns in their pursuits of happiness helped flesh out the evolving meaning of citizenship in the young United States. But, they often shared these taverns with other Americans not of European descent and this intensified their struggles to define what, and for whom, taverns—and the nation-- should be. To be held at the Tyringham Union Church, Main Road Tyringham. Admission is \$15 for members/\$25 for non-members for in-person and free for members/\$15 for non-members to attend via Zoom. Pre-registration is required to attend via Zoom.

June 24, 4 p.m.

Concert - Historic Songs of the American Revolution with Cosby Gibson and Tom Staudle

As part of the Revolution 250 series of events happening throughout 2025 and 2026, the Bidwell House Museum is excited to partner with The Berkshire County Historical Society at Herman Melville’s Arrowhead to present a concert of music from the Revolution. The history of the American Revolution is detailed with many battles, conferences, and personalities. But it was also a time of patriotism, inspiration, and song. This musical program includes nine historic songs, and will give a brief narrative of the history of this war through song. The concert will last about one hour. Admission is \$15 for members/\$20 for non-members

June 28, 11 a.m.

History Talk – A Mason’s Tool Chest: 18th and 19th Century Stone Work with Dennis Picard

In our 2nd history talk of the 2025 season we take a look at the history of masonry work in New England. From foundations to fence posts; millstones to gravestones, the work of the Early American mason is still evident around us to this day. Come see examples of these works and learn about the tools and techniques that were used to create them. Dennis D. Picard has been a museum professional in the living history field for over forty years. To be held at the Tyringham Union Church, Main Road Tyringham. Admission is \$15 for

members/\$25 for non-members for in-person and free for members/\$15 for non-members to attend via Zoom. Pre-registration is required to attend via Zoom.

JULY

July 25

Summer Fundraising Party – Bidwell Roadshow, 4-7 p.m.

Join us for our annual fundraising party and this year bring one of your family heirlooms to be evaluated by our three antiques experts, Charlie Flint, Lorraine German and Sam Herrup. All funds raised go towards preservation of the historic house, creation of educational programs and maintenance of the 194 acre property. There will be music from DJ Drew and light hors d'oeuvres. Tickets go on sale in June.

July 26, 11 a.m.

History Talk – Plan, Form and Construction: The Bidwell house as an example of 18th century New England domestic architecture

For the Museum's third history talk lecture, join architectural historian Eric Gradoia as he examines the significance of the Bidwell House Museum in 18th century architecture and shares details on its many important features. Admission is \$15 for members, \$25 for non-members for in-person and free for members and \$15 for non-members to attend via Zoom. Pre-registration is required to attend via Zoom.

AUGUST

August 2, 11 a.m.

History Talk – The Battle of Louisbourg

For the Museum's final history talk lecture of the 2025 season we will discuss a little known battle of the mid-18th C. In 1745, New England colonists launched a successful expedition to conquer Louisbourg, a port in present-day Nova Scotia, which was then controlled by the French Empire. Reverend Adonijah Bidwell was witness to this battle as the Chaplain of the fleet. In this talk, Dr. Amy Watson, Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, will explain why New Englanders launched this invasion of a frigid Canadian port, why they were forced to return it, and what the Siege of Louisbourg can tell us about both British party politics and the origins of the American Revolution. This lecture will be held via Zoom. Admission is and free for members and \$15 for non-members. Pre-registration is required to receive the Zoom link.

SEPTEMBER

The Museum will host two Housatonic Heritage walks in September. More information can be found on the Museum website over the summer.

September 13 - *Knox's Noble Train of Artillery Through Monterey* with Rob Hoogs, 1 pm

September 28- *Native Tree and Shrub Identification and Ecological Forestry Concepts* with Local State Forester Tom Ryan, 12 pm

OCTOBER

October 3-5

18th Century Living History Weekend at the Bidwell House Museum

Experience life during the Revolutionary War during this exciting and immersive weekend-long event. Reenactors portraying British and Continental soldiers will set up camp on the Museum property and spend the weekend educating visitors, having the occasional skirmish and creating the world of 18th century New England. There will be talks on Mercy Otis Warren, Martha Washington, Tavern keeping, midwifery and sutlery. Journeying down Art School road will take you back in time for this amazing event. More details will be shared in the Museum website over the summer along with the link to get your tickets. This program is supported in part by grants from the Massachusetts Society of Cincinnati along with the Lee, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Sheffield and Tyngham Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.