August 3rd, 2010 Tales of a Wayside Inn Show

Samuel Herrup Antiques,

from the Hartford,

Chinese,

above the

high chest.

Sheffield, Massachusetts, brought

a circa 1760 cherry high chest

Connecticut, area, priced at

\$14,000. The English or Dutch

William and Mary dressing table

in oak was \$4800. The pair of

in elm wood, was tagged \$9500.

women are unusual, said Herrup,

maple drop-leaf table beneath the

Mark and Marjorie Allen of New

asked \$45,000 for the circa 1710

one-drawer painted-pine blanket

Massachusetts, area. The walnut

Winston-Salem, North Carolina,

was \$77,500. The 48" x 48" oval

table, a circa 1760 Boston-made

\$9500. The set of four Windsor

chairs, made in Massachusetts by

James Chapman Tuttle, had their

in their booth just prior to the

illuminated manuscripts, early

maps, botanical prints, and

illuminated miniatures, some

antiquities, and several maps,

including an early map of New

the British Isles, and an 18th-

century map of New Orleans.

Hyland Granby Antiques,

Hyannis Port, Massachusetts,

brought a selection of Chelsea

ship's-bell clocks, including a

diameter

rare Mariner model with an 81/2"

dial. Priced at \$35,000, the 1925

clock has its original numbered

original redbrass case, and a dial

signed "George W. Welsh's Sons,

New York." The clock is in the

corner on a two-part mahogany

with flip-out brass carrying

bracket feet, the circa 1880

English-made desk was

circa 1860 China trade

\$10,500.

campaign secretary. Brass-banded

handles and pulls and its original

tagged \$9500. In the foreground,

camphorwood chest was marked

the massive $(27\frac{1}{2}$ " x 60" x 25")

time-and-strike movement,

Their buyers were "mostly new

customers," Charles Puckett said.

York City, a 16th-century map of

gala's start, specialize in medieval

antiquities. They sold a couple of

walnut example, was tagged

original paint and sold.

Hampton, New Hampshire,

chest, made in the Taunton,

corner cupboard, made circa

1790 by Johann Krause of

who had the oil on canvas pair

marked \$24,000. Among other

portraits and the sampler from

Albany, New York, hanging

things, Herrup sold the tiger

armchairs, late 17th-century

On the wall, the circa 1820

Chinese export portraits of

by Jeanne Schinto

Sudbury, Massachusetts

by Jeanne Schinto

A glittering new show, the first annual Wayside Inn Antiques Show, took place in a suburb west of Boston over the weekend of May 14-16. Held under a massive white tent on the inn's property in Sudbury, Massachusetts, the event attracted 46 of the top dealers in the country, including nine who

exhibit at the Winter Antiques Show in New York City. In the weeks leading up to the show, no one was quite sure what to expect. The inn hadn't before hosted an antiques show. Now that it's over, the consensus is that it was a success. It will be repeated. "Our attendance was killer," said Jon Delli Priscoli, an inn board member who had the idea for

the show. He reported about 300 at the preview gala, 750 to 800 people through the gate on Saturday, and over 600 on Sunday. Though some dealers wished those attendees had bought a little more, even dealers who didn't do much (or any)

business see the potential for greater sales in the future. They love the location and setting. They like that the gala benefits the inn and its other historic properties. They approve of the larger concept behind the event, which is that people should come to Sudbury for the day or even overnight. "When you go to a typical antiques show, you walk into a gymnasium, armory, or something like that-and that's it. That's not what we wanted,"

said Delli Priscoli. "We wanted

to give people a full experience —the inn, the one hundred twenty-five acres to explore, the gristmill, cider mill, icehouse, chapel, little red schoolhouse, lunch or dinner at the inn's restaurant, horse-and-carriage rides, antique cars. It's a whole destination. Plus, the inn is real. It's been there since 1716." Delli Priscoli is well known to many of the show's dealers and to its presenting sponsor, Skinner Inc., which sold a portion of Delli Priscoli's collection of American portrait

American Impressionist art, French country furniture, early advertising, toys, nautical items (particularly prisoner-of-war material), and vintage automobiles. "I also look for Charles Dickens memorabilia because I'm putting together a Dickens library," said the owner of 30 acres adjacent to the inn and of a real-estate business, First in nearby Marlborough,

Delli Priscoli recruited Diana H. Bittel of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, to be the show's manager. The dealer is the liaison member of the Antiques Council, which manages Nantucket's August Antiques Show, and she manages the Newport Antiques Show in

required to pull off a first-time show of this caliber. "Working with the Wayside Inn was just fantastic," Bittel said. "They're the nicest people—just so up and friendly and enthusiastic. It was a learning process for everybody. There was no 'before.' It was all new. There was no real concept of

how much work it would be

and exit signs. There are so

many things that will be so

much simpler next year."

with permits and fire marshals

Bittel handled well the delicate issue of auction house participation in an immediately, and they're booked for next year. They did a lot for us, and I think the dealers realized it."

Joseph P. Vrabel of Milford, Massachusetts, president of the board, announced to us the startling news that this was the first antiques show

November, organizers described it as an Ellis alternative. So it was

including members of the defunct committee.

gratifying for Bittel and others to see attendance by their Ellis customers,

Still, the focus is on nurturing new collectors, and apparently even the

inn's board members could stand cultivation. "I think I'm the only

serious antiques-show person on the board," said Delli Priscoli.

and that I believe we were extremely successful in doing, with people coming here from all over the Northeast. They learned about the inn, what we do, and our history. This was a win for the inn." On Saturday alone, Vrabel observed, "The whole parking lot was full, with maybe four hundred cars. Besides the antiques show, the inn was having two weddings, a bridal shower, a baby shower, and there was a full restaurant for dinner. It was about the busiest I have ever seen the inn in my entire life. It was just a wonderful day, and the more people we can draw to this historic site, the better off we'll be." Never mind the buying public, many exhibitors were brand new to the

inn. A significant percentage had never before done a show in Greater

he replied, "I never thought it was a good idea." But now, he added, "I

thought it was time to give it a try, and maybe the key was that it was

Boston. Samuel Herrup of Sheffield, Massachusetts, was one. Asked why,

seventeenth century," Pattison said. Charles Clark of Woodbury, Connecticut, said that because he and his wife, Rebekah, had never before done a show in the vicinity, they had no one to send a mailing to. "So it was really our first opportunity. But we found the people to be very knowledgeable. And the people who maybe weren't so familiar, especially with the lighting we carry, were very interested in learning. We didn't do a ton of business, but we did a little,

large painting, as I had hoped to do." Brownstein added that her husband, Peter H. Eaton, sold one case piece and "a number of good and three Bellarmine jugs." Hamilton and Helen Meserve of Running Battle Antiques, Newagen, Maine, did no business at all. Still, they believe the show's first year was

auspicious. "The show was beautiful," Helen said via e-mail. "All the top

people from Boston were there...It was a good start for a new show, and

Americana dealers were there. The crowds were great. All the right

the Wayside Inn and Skinner did a fantastic job with advertising. It

While he acknowledged that "shows where you make good sales aren't happening that often," Allen did have this encouraging statistic to tell us all: "Last year we [he and his wife, Marjorie] did thirteen shows and lost money at ten of them. This year so far we've done five, including Wayside, and have cleared a profit in all of them. So the economy does seem to be changing around." For more information, phone (978) 443-1776 or see the Web site (www.wayside.org).

Deputy Postmaster General a pre-ZIP code era souvenir Benjamin Franklin. shows the Wayside Inn's location Direct descendants of Howe ran west of Boston. Author's the tavern through 1861. collection.

descendant, bachelor Lyman Howe, left it to Lucy Puffer Newton. Between 1869 and 1897, those same records show that it was passed down or bought by a series of people—James F. Puffer, Adazalia Puffer (widow of James), Lucy A. Newton, then S. Herbert Howe (unclear if he was distantly related to the other Howes), and Homer Rogers—who

According to Wayside Inn

archive records, the last

About the Wayside Inn

Whatever the case, when wealthy antiquarian Edward Rivers Lemon (1855-1919) purchased the inn in 1897, he renamed it "Longfellow's Wayside Inn" and marketed it as a destination for tourists. In 1923 Henry Ford bought the inn from Lemon's widow, Cora. Mrs. Ford recounted to a New York Times reporter her husband's reason for making the purchase. "We Middle Westerners were asked to join an

association of Boston people which attempted to raise money to save the old inn, but it failed," she is quoted as saying in an article published on October 15, 1928. "When Mr. Ford heard the fate threatening the old inn, he said, 'Let's buy it and save it." In her words, the inn had been in

danger of becoming "a common roadhouse." According to Sudbury, 1890-1989, 100 Years in the Life of a Town, Bostonians Charles W. Eliot, Allan Forbes, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Myles Standish had previously been asked to help save the inn but never did come up with the funds. "There was plenty of enthusiasm for the project, but little money was forthcoming," that account states. Ford expanded the property to 3000 acres by buying surrounding acreage in Sudbury and adjacent Marlborough. He also bought old buildings and

was to create a living museum of Americana at this site that predates established in 1929.

After Ford's death in 1947, the inn was governed by a board of trustees made up of Ford family members and their associates. In 1957 governance went to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since 1960 it has been governed by various boards of trustees, with no further involvement by the Ford family, Ford Foundation, or National Trust. Today the Wayside Inn is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt

miniatures a few years ago. Asked to mention some of his other collecting areas, he named Teresa and Charles Edwin Puckett of Akron, Ohio, pictured

> Colony Development Company Massachusetts. "My summer house [in Carver, Massachusetts] is early Gothic Revival, built 1852. The family who owned it before me owned it from day one, and its builder was a personal friend of Charles Dickens, who visited it in 1867."

Rhode Island. Bittel in turn got Ralph DiSaia of Oriental Rugs Ltd., Old Lyme, Connecticut, to be her facilities manager. The pair, along with DiSaia's wife, Karen, orchestrated the effort

antiques show. Being that auctioneers are rivals for their retail clients and their merchandise sources, dealers have traditionally bristled at auction house presence on show "turf." But as Bittel noted, a transition is occurring. The reality is, most dealers need the auction houses. After all, how many dealers don't ever buy or, for that matter, sell at auctions? "Skinner was fabulous," Bittel said. "It was a great fit for both of us. They couldn't have been nicer. They were so pleasant; they came on board Bittel was a longtime exhibitor at the old Ellis Antiques Show, whose committee decided last year that after nearly a half-century it would no longer continue the tradition. (See the story about the new Ellis Boston Antiques Show, scheduled to debut in October 2011, in M.A.D., July 2010, p. 9-A.) When the Wayside Inn show was announced last

he had ever attended. "And I actually bought something-two little English sterling silver mugs, made back in the 1820's, one for my wife and one for me," said the local attorney, who identified the sellers as New York City's Silver Plus. "They were wonderful people and spent a lot of time talking to me. I never knew about hallmarks and all the symbols. It was all new to me, but it's certainly easy to see how people can get wrapped up in it."

Vrabel may be new to antiques buying, but he has long been a fan of the

been with me most of my life," he said, describing how, as a boy growing

explored the surrounding area. "And I want to do whatever I can to help

inn. "I've loved the inn for many years. It's one of those places that has

up in nearby Framingham, he and a friend rode bikes to the inn and

it."

For many years the property's many structures were financially supported solely by the inn's restaurant. Lately, however, there have been more substantial expenditures. Last summer the gristmill got a new roof and its waterwheel got painted, and other costly ones are anticipated. Asked if the antiques show had achieved its goal, which was to raise money for repairs and upkeep on these properties, Vrabel said, "One thing we're trying to do besides fund-raise is raise the visibility of the inn,

outside of downtown Boston. I'm encouraged." He laughed. "I did well." Christopher T. Rebollo doesn't generally do New England shows either. "Because I'm a Pennsylvania boy, New England normally isn't my best market," he said. "But it was a very good experience for a first-time show. It was beautifully run with very good attendance, and I did sell things, both pre-show and during the show—furniture, paintings, prints, and some silver—so that was very nice."

J.N. Pattison of Washington Square Gallery, Philadelphia, has done the

Nantucket show for 25 years but had never before done a show on the

Massachusetts mainland. "In general, sales weren't as good as everyone

had hoped, but we did very well with older botanicals, from the

and we met a couple of people who might be interested in doing business with us in time."

Judith Livingston Loto of Russack & Loto Books, Northwood, New

Hampshire, said she heard many people commenting "on how nice it was

to have a Boston-area show that you did not have to go into Boston for."

She felt that was one reason the venue was able to attract newcomers. "I

saw some of the usual suspects, but for the most part it was a new crowd,

and that was great." Loto noted that many of them were younger people

"in their thirties, forties, and fifties. I often bring my children [ages four

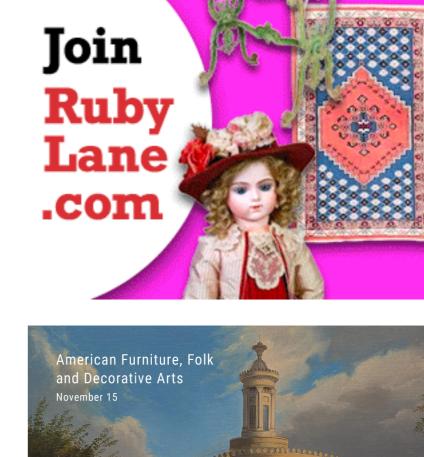
Joan R. Brownstein of Newbury, Massachusetts, was one dealer who expressed some disappointment in her sales. "The show was beautiful and well organized," she wrote in a post-show e-mail. "It was interesting, because we really did have good conversations, especially on Saturday, with collectors we hadn't known before. But the economy is still a strong factor in the business. I sold two very nice watercolors, but I did not sell a smalls," including "two lighting devices, a good piece of English slipware,

should be better the second time around." Mark Allen of New Hampton, New Hampshire, said many of the same things as other dealers. "I thought the show was very well attended and well organized. The people who came to the show were a knowledgeable and interested crowd. I'll definitely do it again."

The Wayside Inn, one of the oldest in the country, was founded as a tavern by David Howe in 1716. Situated in Sudbury, Massachusetts, on the MARLBORD Old Boston Post Road, it caught the coach traffic traveling the FRAMINGHAM routes between Boston,

either ran it like a boarding house or rented it out to tenant farmers. We wrote in a previous story ("New Antiques Show in Greater Boston Debuts in Mid-May," M.A.D., January 2010, p. 9-A) that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow visited the place with his publisher, James Fields, in 1862, and that the poet—reportedly inspired by the cozy atmosphere and pastoral landscape—penned a series of poems published the following year as Tales of a Wayside Inn. "The Landlord's Tale," better known as "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere," is one of them.

for a period of years, he furnished everything in antiques. His intention Ford's own Greenfield Village (now called The Henry Ford), which was









and six] to shows, and I'm often the only one. At this show there were plenty of families who came to spend the day, it seemed to me."

Worcester, and New York. One A101s A Mike Roberts Color Production, Berkeley 2, Calif. Published by Longfellow's Wayside Inn. South Sudbury, Mass of the first postal routes in the country, it was surveyed by A line-drawn map on the back of

The same details about Longfellow's visit are repeated on Web site after Web site, including the Wayside Inn's own. But a July 24, 1923, letter by J. William Fosdick, published in the New York Times, claims that Longfellow's friend Luigi Monti was the one with firsthand knowledge of the place and that it was Monti who related the stories to Longfellow that eventually became the Tales.

moved them onto the property. Going into "shop-till-you-drop" mode

Massachusetts Historic Landmark on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally published in the August 2010 issue of Maine Antique Digest. (c) 2010 Maine Antique Digest

comments powered by Disqus

This ad space now available.

Call 1-877-237-6623 for details.

Advertising | Subscriptions | Billing | Editor

1 (800) 752-8521 • PO Box 1429

This website uses cookies to