



## GORE PLACE

# THE AGRARIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF GORE PLACE | FALL 2019 | ISSUE NUMBER 7

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### Social Media Moments



A field of clover on the South Lawn—one of our most popular posts so far in 2019!

Eric Workman | TMP Images



Luna and her baby got a lot of likes on Facebook this spring.

Share your memories and photos with us. Tag @goreplace on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Francesco Piranesi (c. 1758-1810). Fête pour la Paix Générale donnée à Paris le 18 Brumaire. Pont et Place de la Concorde, 1801-2. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A bridge to the Tuileries with clouds lit by fireworks on November 9, 1801. The Gores watched from their rented room on the river Seine.

## Charmed in Paris

On the morning of May 13, 1801, Christopher and Rebecca Gore sailed aboard a packet ship out of Dover, England, bound for Calais, France. The weather was dry and quite warm. Along with their luggage, they brought their private carriage. With a hired coachman and footman, they arrived in Paris six days later.

The next morning, they went shopping. One imagines Rebecca eager to purchase the latest French fashion for their attendance at the Opera that night. They returned around midnight to their apartment at the Hotel de Caraman. The Gores found the apartment most agreeable. Christopher wrote his friend Rufus King: "We are on the ground floor opening into a garden, planted a la mode anglaise. Our rooms are two dining parlours, one small and the other quite large—a saloon, a bedchamber, &c."<sup>1</sup> Rent was 15 louis per month. After a few days touring Paris, Gore wrote to King that he was unaware of the latest news—a usual topic in letters between these two friends. "Neither do I expect to know, either news or politics," he explained, "as they are not my objects at present." The city's charms had captured Gore's attention.

He needed the diversion. Christopher and Rebecca had spent the past five years in London, where he served on the Maritime Commission under Article VII of the Jay Treaty, negotiating Revolutionary War claims between the two countries. The Gores expected to be away for three years when they left for London in 1796. But three years passed, and the Commission's work, not yet complete, came to a standstill. They left for Paris two years later with negotiations still on-hold. Paris, perhaps, could relieve the boredom and sooth the fretting over this endless waiting to get back to work, and thus, finally, back home to America.

The Gores would see the Paris of Napoleon. He had pledged to build the France of the future, advancing the arts, sciences, and industry, a France that would "dazzle and astonish."<sup>2</sup> Gore loved books, ideas, and new technology. He found Napoleon's France the best possible place "to improve the mind."

*Continued on page 3*

This issue of *The Agrarian* highlights stories of the Gores' time in Paris. Turn the page to read more.



## GORE PLACE

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### Guides

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 Prentice Crosier, Mike Dudal, Sue  
 Martin, Cheryl Mezack, Anna Newberg,  
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## Letter from our Board President

Dear Friends of Gore Place,

We are so pleased that this issue of *The Agrarian* highlights the Gores' French connection! During their stay in Paris, they enjoyed the latest in technological innovations and found an architect worthy of consideration. Rebecca would have the home of her dreams! Christopher writes that Rebecca designed their home with an objective to impress—and that he had to go back to work to pay for it! We can

appreciate his point of view but, as far as their Mansion is concerned, *c'est une histoire incroyable!* We are still celebrating her creative spirit and marvel every time we restore a space and realize how perfectly it all fits together. Monsieur LeGrand may have been the architect, but Rebecca was surely the visionary!

We now have two signature social events, summer and winter, both of which Rebecca would have appreciated. The Spring into Summer dinner dance was particularly lovely this year. If you missed it, your next opportunity to enjoy the gracious surroundings with friends, new and old, will be December 10th. I know that the plans are well under way and we will be bringing back carol singing and dancing. Do mark your calendars now.

I will close with my continuing sentiment: I encourage you to join us in spreading the word far and wide about this marvelous historic estate! We are humble enough to say that we honestly can use your help; we genuinely appreciate it!

Sincerely,

Thomas Thaler

## DEVELOPMENT NEWS

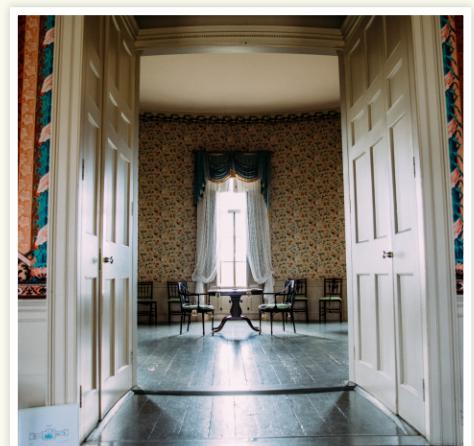
### Our New Community Partners Program

Director of Institutional Advancement, Diana Roberts, is reviving our Community Partners Program to engage business leaders. Community Partners receive valuable benefits while supporting our mission.

### Create your Legacy at Gore Place

You may be considering a charitable bequest to Gore Place. If so, you are in good company: according to the recently released *Giving USA 2019*, Americans gave almost \$40 billion in bequests during 2018. By designating a planned gift through your will, you can provide vital, long-term support to Gore Place.

For more information about our giving programs, contact Diana Roberts at (781) 894-2798 ext. 24 or [dianaroberts@goreplace.org](mailto:dianaroberts@goreplace.org).



A view into the oval withdrawing room of the Gore Mansion.

### Save the Date

The Gore Place Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, September 23 at 6:00 pm in the Mansion. Scholar Clark Pearce will share his enthusiasm about Gore Place and its collection. Light refreshments.

### Charmed in Paris continued from page 1

The Gores “frequently” visited the Louvre, recently reopened by Napoleon with an expanded art collection, including pieces acquired as his spoils of war. The museum exceeded Christopher’s expectations and his “anticipations were not small.” But it was not the paintings that drew him back again and again—although many were great masterpieces. The paintings “only surpass what I have often seen,” he said. It was the sculpture that dazzled and astonished, to borrow Napoleon’s words. Gore declared the statues “infinitely beyond what I have ever before observed, or supposed within the reach of human talent, and in my visits to the Museum, this almost always occupies my whole time.” Most amazing was the Apollo Belvedere. From ancient Greece, this Apollo is a young man, nude, a cloak draped over his shoulders and arm, poised as if having just shot an arrow. Brought from the Vatican after Napoleon’s military victories in Italy, the *Apollo* became the centerpiece of Napoleon’s new Gallery of Antiquity. Gore found himself thinking: “the Apollo Belvedere is really alive, and a God.”

By mid-July, Gore expected the call to return to London and the Commission. He wrote to King, who, as America’s minister in London, was working to end the delay. We have seen “almost all there is to see” in Paris. “I shall be ready to return, notwithstanding the charms of Paris, and it surely has many for all tastes,” something for those who wish to view the “skill and beauty in art” and for those who desire to study the sciences. The Gores had sampled these varied charms, among them a performance by Mr. and Mrs. Garnerin, famous hot air balloonists, who provided dramatic demonstrations, parachuting from a balloon with accompanying fireworks. The Gores saw the couple “mount in the balloon” but watched, Christopher joked, “without any desire of asking for a seat.” Paris offered the latest in architecture, and the French architect Legrand was now a part of Gore’s social circle. Rebecca worked with him to design the couple’s future country house in Waltham (see Sidebar).

As Legrand helped Rebecca bring her ideas to life, anticipating this new house perhaps added to Christopher’s growing impatience. “I indulge a daily and hourly hope for news that I am required in London,” he informed King. But days passed with no news, and so the Gores left on a two-month journey to Switzerland. In Basel, King’s letter arrived with the long-awaited update. An agreement with the British would soon restart the Commission.

### Charmed in Paris continued on page 4



**Gore spent many hours at the Louvre, spending most of his time contemplating and admiring the sculpture.**

Hubert Robert (1733-1808). *The Grand Gallery of the Louvre between 1801 and 1805*. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.

© RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY



**Napoleon moved the annual Exhibition of Industry to the Louvre courtyard to encourage French innovation in industry and give manufacturing the prestige of the fine arts.**

Anonyme. *Exposition des produits de l'industrie dans la cour du Louvre, en l'an IX (1801)*. Aquarelle, gouache. Paris, musée Carnavalet.

© Musée Carnavalet/Roger-Viollet

Rushing back to Paris, the Gores prepared to leave for London on a day's notice. They only needed the official summons. Bags packed, they read King's much anticipated letter with "extreme regret." More delay. Gore faced another winter of inaction. Would they winter in Paris or London? What if this impasse continued beyond winter? For weeks he struggled to decide his future and wished for "something to decide me." Facing the frustrations and expense of living as an "idle minister," Gore thought he might resign his diplomatic post and return to America in the spring.

In the meantime, there was Paris. "We visit the Louvre frequently and sometimes go to a play," Gore told King. "We were at a famous concert the other night to hear Madame Grassini." Likely opera was Rebecca's choice, for Gore continued, "My vocation is not much, you know, for these amusements, last of all for opera music, so I could seek my pleasure in observing the beauty of the company and in anticipating the end." Gore was more impressed with Abbé Sicard's lecture on teaching the Deaf. This man through "signs chiefly of his hands" could communicate "to his scholars" many "complex and abstract ideas." Just as impressive was Phillipe Lebon's ability to distill gas from wood and coal. Seeing a demonstration, Gore wrote that the new invention "promised to give us heat and light without smoke." Imagine! The experts, Gore heard, rated this "the most important discovery of the age and a power far beyond the steam engine."

An unexpected letter settled the question of winter quarters. The Kings' fifth child was due in late winter. In London, Rebecca could keep Mrs. King company during her long winter confinement. We'll be at your fireside within three weeks, the Gores wrote back.

There was one last dazzling Paris experience. The Gores had seen several of the city's popular fêtes—large public celebrations with military parades and fireworks. Napoleon ensured the most spectacular for the 18 Brumaire (November 9), the anniversary of his 1799 coup. Just for the day, the Gores rented a room with a clear view of the celebrations. Gore described their plans to King that morning. The weather was "cloudy with some rain. We however go to the Quai de Voltaire to the Fete." Here, just across the Seine from the Jardin des Tuileries, "We have a chamber six pair stairs high, but it is one of the best to see the fireworks and &c in the Thuilleries and on the bridge— and for this we pay only 4 louis, and it has three windows." Should this seem extravagant, Gore added, "You may be assured this is a monstrous bargain."

"The fete was brilliant," Gore later said. "We saw it without a crowd and perfectly at our ease." He noted that "few accidents happened, a man or two killed by the falling of some of the works into the pavilion." That firework accidents were common may explain why Gore seems unfazed. For the amusement of the Kings, he described the accidental explosion of the "bouquet"—the set of fireworks meant for the

grand finale, to "crown the splendor of this part of the fete." With onlookers unaware it was by accident, the bouquet went off at the beginning of the show. Such a grand beginning left the observers expecting an even grander ending. "We looked for something exquisite indeed at the close, and mounted our expectations as high as the constitution of each individual would admit, but after standing on tip-toes mind and body, for a quarter of an hour," waiting, nothing happened; "we were told it was finished, the bouquet was no more."

Paris had dazzled, amazed, and informed but it was time to go. Gore was back at work in London by February 1802 and the Commission concluded work in 1804. That spring, Christopher and Rebecca sailed to America. Their once anticipated three-year stay had turned into eight. It was time to restart their lives. They would remember the "charms of Paris" and build Paris memories into their new country house.

Researched and written by Diann Ralph Strausberg, Historian.

1. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are from Transcribed Letters. Christopher Gore to Rufus King. Letter file 1801 at Gore Place Society, Waltham, MA. Originals in the New-York Historical Society Museum and Library.

2. Louis—Antoine Fauvalt de Bourrienne. *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1836, I, 315. As cited in Andrew Roberts. *Napoleon: a Life*. New York: Penguin Group, 2014, 233.

Editor's note: In this issue of *The Agrarian*, some of our articles feature unedited text of Christopher Gore's letters. These letters include phrases in French. Readers may note discrepancies between his text and contemporary French spelling, style and grammar.



## Wool for Sale

**\$18 per skein**  
and members get a discount

We are very excited to announce that Gore Place is now selling a limited quantity of 100% Leicester Longwool yarn, hand shorn from our own flock on the estate! This all-natural wool is organically washed and ready for knitting.

The conservation of rare breeds such as Leicester Longwool sheep preserves these animals and their unique characteristics for future generations. Gore Place is proud to be part of this important preservation program!

To purchase, call (781) 894-2798  
or visit our shop.

## Save the Date

**Handmade for the Holidays  
Shopping Party**

**November 20-21, 2019**

Our holiday shop is popping up again! Buy holiday gifts directly from artists in the rooms of the Gore Mansion. Enjoy sips and nibbles while you cross everyone off your gift list!

## A Fortuitous Encounter

In a letter from Paris dated 20 June 1801, Gore sang the praises of Europe's leading city to his friend Rufus King. "Paris," he said, "offers the greatest advantages for improvement of the mind, the attainment of science, & the study of the fine arts." It also offered the Gores a fortuitous encounter with a well-known French architect. Gore told King a mutual acquaintance, a Captain George Izard, had introduced the Gores to the architect Jacques-Guillaume Legrand. Regarding Legrand, Gore's praise was effusive. He wrote, "I do not mean to deprecate the character of the French, English or American, but such a kind of man is not to be found in the two latter."

That Izard should introduce the Gores to a leading French architect would prove instrumental in a project then very much on their minds. Just two years prior, their home in Waltham had burned. They would need to build a new house. Now, living in the world's architectural capital, they found themselves with access to one of France's leading architects.

By the time of their meeting, Legrand, along with his partner Jacques Molinos, had completed several noteworthy public projects including erecting a dome over the central court of the Halle aux blés (Corn Exchange) and designing the Théâtre Feydeau. The former had become something of a tourist attraction and Thomas Jefferson had praised its design.

One month later, Gore wrote, "Mrs. G. (Rebecca) is now with Monsieur LeGrand in the adjoining parlour building houses." Clearly, Rebecca was assuming a leading role in the design of their new home.

The Gores returned to London in December 1801. They continued their association with Legrand via correspondence with their friend Rufus King who was visiting Paris at that time. In an 1802 letter to King, Gore wrote "Mrs. G. has sent the plan of our intended house with a wish that you would explain it to LeGrand and request him to make a complete and perfect plan according to her sketch."

Neither Rebecca's sketches nor Legrand's formalized drawings survive, so it is impossible to know how much influence the Frenchman had over her final design. However, the mansion we see today reflects design principles of French neoclassicism and eclecticism embraced by Legrand.

Returning to Massachusetts in 1804, the Gores brought their high regard for French design to the construction of their new home in Waltham. Rebecca's design eliminated central hallways and connected the entertaining and public spaces directly with the rooms radiating from a central point (see illustration below). This arrangement increases flexibility in room use and facilitates the flow of guests between rooms, an arrangement that, according to historian Elisabeth Dougherty Garrett, "(facilitates)...ease of effort, ease of manner;" attributes as desirable in the early 19th century as they are today.

We can also see French influence in the oval salons, the entresol (mezzanine) level above the east and west hyphens and the lunette windows which grace the north and south facades. Hinged in the middle, the French lunette windows open inward offering a cleaner profile when opened. French wallpapers, dinnerware and chairs in the Louis IV style also reflect their admiration for French decor.

In March 1806, Gore wrote to King from Boston, "My House in the Country will be finished & habitable by the first of June, and I think you would call it a convenient and comfortable Mansion, the great objection is to its Dimensions. It is too large for our Family, and though built with economy, & perfect Freedom from ornament, will cost me more money, than I could have wished..."

Despite Mr. Gore's objections, Rebecca's wonderful design offers glimpses of elegance and style, a reflection of the Paris they knew and admired.

Researched and written by Thom Roach, Director of Programs and Interpretation.



### Spacious Apartment. Prime Location. 15 Louis a Month!

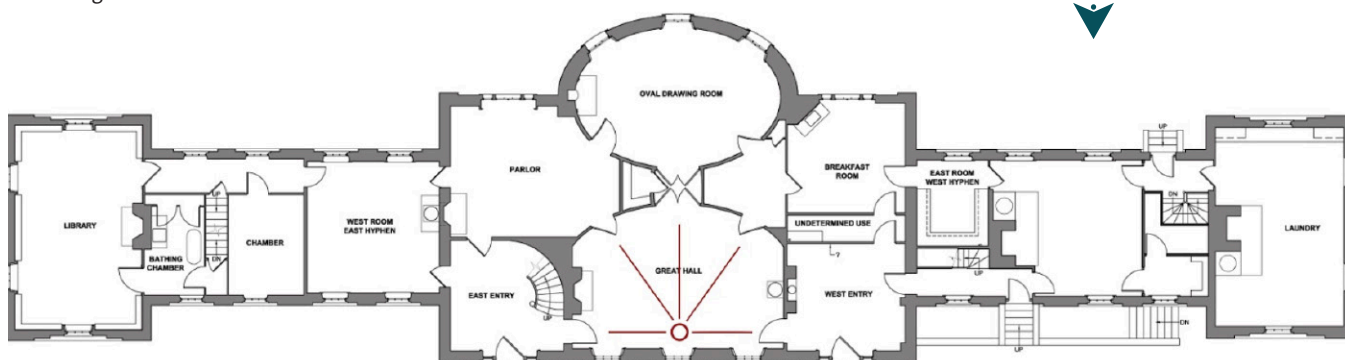
So, how much were the Gores paying for their fabulous apartment in Paris? Gore tells King they are on the ground floor opening onto a garden with two dining parlours, a saloon, bed chamber, etc., furnished for 15 louis per month. But, how much is that in today's money?

The louis d'or, a gold coin introduced by Louis XIII in 1640, was issued up until the time of the French Revolution (1789) when it was replaced by the 20 franc piece. In 1801, four US dollars equaled 20 francs. Therefore, Gore's rent was \$60 per month. It is difficult to make exact comparisons between money then and now, but one calculation based on the Consumer Price Index puts the Gores' monthly rent at around \$1,200 today. What a deal!

Image credit: National Numismatic Collection, National Museum of American History

The layout for the ground floor of the center block of the Gore Mansion shows rooms radiating from a central point, a plan which provides easy access to the main entertaining spaces for family, guests and servants.

Plan by Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects.



## Finding Robert Roberts

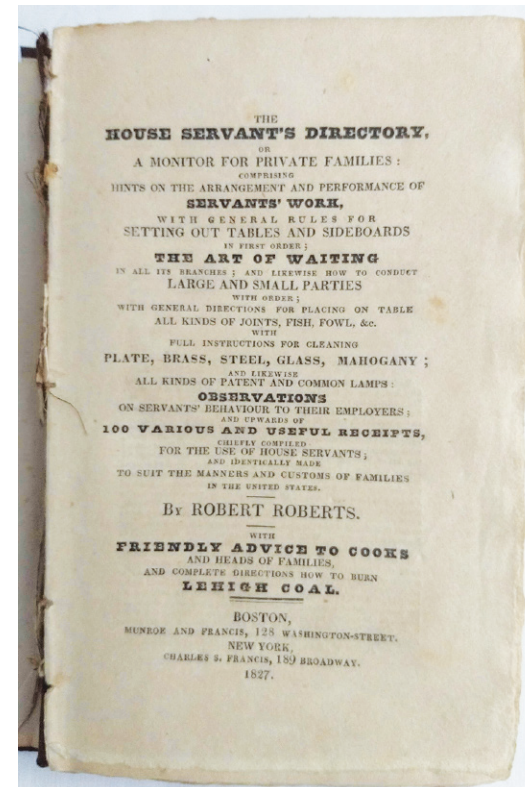
We are very pleased to announce that Mass Humanities has awarded Gore Place a Project Grant to develop a tour focused on the life, writing and activism of Robert Roberts. Roberts was a leader in Boston's free black community, an author and a servant at Gore Place.

Roberts published *The House Servant's Directory* in 1827, while employed as Christopher Gore's butler. Among the first black-authored commercially published books in America, the *Directory* advises young men on how to excel at service in elite households. Today Roberts' book is valued for its details of domestic life among early nineteenth-century elites and servants. But Roberts' life extended beyond his role as servant. While a domestic, he rose to leadership in Boston's free black community, active in its vibrant civic life, and reform and anti-slavery movements.

The life of this remarkable—yet little-known—author and activist deserves a wider audience. With that goal in mind, we set out to find Robert Roberts—to better understand the man and

his world. We asked new questions: Why did he write the *Directory*? What did he say about his writing? His activism? How did his social, economic, and political context influence his writing? With questions like these, along with new research and scholarship, we can recover his world and most important, put Roberts at the center of his story.

With the generous support of Mass Humanities, we plan to engage new and current audiences with Roberts' story through a tested tour experience, entitled "To do the good I expected: Robert Roberts – Domestic Servant, Author, Abolitionist," scheduled to open to the public in February 2020. As Mass Humanities puts it, at the highest level, the tour "explores the relationship between work, life and activism and the challenge of trying to save the world while also surviving in it." Roberts' story illuminates the past while remaining highly relevant to today. This project will inform future works such as lectures, exhibits and a republication of the *Directory* with a new foreword.



The title page of an early edition of *The House Servant's Directory*. Collection of Gore Place Society.

## Noteworthy

**The president of our Board, Tom Thaler, was honored** by The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in The Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Tom was added to their Roll of Honor for his efforts and commitment to the mission of the Dames. Congratulations!

**Thanks and good luck to our summer intern Brian Martin** of Stamford, CT. Brian came to us through the Carroll Center for the Blind's IWORK program for college students. Brian researched early 19th century abolitionists for our Robert Roberts Project that is funded by Mass Humanities.

**Gore Place recently made the Boston Central "Hidden Gem" list** for "the best places to go with kids in the Greater Boston area." Boston Central, the Boston events online guide, creates the "Hidden Gem" list to describe places that people may not have heard about but that are definitely worth checking out!

**The archaeologists from the Fiske Center at UMass Boston return to Gore Place** this fall to begin an examination of the formal garden on the estate. This is the first step in the restoration of the garden that was located on the north lawn of the Mansion.

**The Gore Place Memory Project launches this September.** This course is designed for adults 55+ to incorporate their memories in a watercolor painting. This project is funded by Foundation for Metrowest.

**We note the passing of Joan Metcalf Lee, wife of Henry Lee.** Joan's great grandfather, William Cushing Paine, was born in 1832 at Gore Place.

**Historian Diann Strausberg will speak at Historic Deerfield's symposium, *Wined & Dined—Setting the New England Table*, October 6, 2019.** Her lecture is entitled "Conducting Dinner: Robert Roberts and the Art of Service."

**Volunteer Coordinator Aaron Rawley is highlighted in recent articles** in the Carroll Center for the Blind, Newton newsletter and the Waltham Tribune newspaper on his experience with the Real World of Work program at the Carroll Center and on his work at Gore Place.

**Annual Fund and Membership Coordinator, Kali Noble, has just passed the Adult Pre-Bronze Moves in the Field and Free Skate tests** with the U.S. Figure Skating Association. She has already begun training for the corresponding Adult Bronze Tests.

**More than 800 guests enjoyed Free Fun Friday in August at Gore Place.** This program is supported by the Highland Street Foundation.

**Gore Place will team up with financial advisors Appleton Partners** to offer a special presentation, "Investment Trends on the Horizon," in October at Gore Place. Reservations are required. Please call Diana Roberts at (781) 894-2798 for further information.



More than 175 guests enjoyed a perfect early summer evening at the estate, with hors d'oeuvre and a preview of *Be Inspired: A Celebration of Floral Design* in the Gore Mansion, followed by dinner in the tent by Revolution Catering and dancing to the sounds of the Bo and Bill Winiker Orchestra.

# Upcoming Programs—Join Us!

## ONGOING

*Check the website for dates and details.*

### Daytime Tours

*Visit Boston's finest early 19th century mansion.*

### Babywearing Tour

*Tour the Mansion with baby!*

### Tot Time

*Kids explore the farm and Nature Playscape.*

### Moonlight Tours

*Experience the Mansion at night!*

### Concerts in the Carriage House

*Great classical and traditional music in a historic setting!*

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### Annual Meeting

September 23, 6pm

### Gore Place Memory Project

*Watercolor workshops for older adults.*

Session I—September and October

Session II—January and February

### Gore Place Century Party

*Celebrate the country club years with music, food, games and more!*

October 5, 12 to 4 pm

### Fiddlers on the Farm

*Enjoy traditional music under the tent.*

October 6, 1 to 4 pm

### Frightful Fridays

*Hear spooky tales told in the Mansion.*

October 11, 18 and 25, 7 and 8:15 pm

### Handmade for the Holidays

#### Shopping Party

Wednesday and Thursday, November 20 and 21,  
5 to 8 pm

### A December Evening at Gore Place

*Join the best holiday party in Boston!*

Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 pm

### Holiday Concerts

*Start your season with classical and traditional holiday music.*

Tuesdays, December 3 and 17, 7:30 pm

### Santa Teas in the Carriage House

*Have tea and stories with Santa!*

Saturday, December 14, 10 am and 1 pm;

Sunday, December 15, 1 and 3:30 pm

### Holiday Teas in the Mansion

*A great way to celebrate the season!*

Saturday, December 14, 4 pm; Saturday,

December 21, 3 pm

### Edgar Allan Poe

*Rob Valella brings the famous author to life!*

January 18, 3 and 5pm

### Gently Used Book Sale

*Donations gratefully received!*

January 18 through 31, M-F 10am to 3 pm,

Sat 12 to 3 pm

### Sips and Stories

*Your Valentines/Anti-Valentines event!*

February 14, 7 to 9 pm

**Advance tickets required for some programs.**

**Please check our website [goreplace.org](http://goreplace.org) for complete information.**



FIFTY ACRES & THREE CENTURIES

52 GORE STREET  
WALTHAM, MA 02453