

Two Portraits: John Wendell Mellen & Eleanor Bradish Wilde Mellen

by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

Visitors who ascend Woodlawn's graceful circular staircase do so under the watchful eyes of several portraits which include George Washington and Henry Knox. Near the top of the stairs hangs a pair of paintings of an engaging early nineteenth century couple, a handsome young man in one and a fashionably dressed young woman and child in the other. Unlike Washington or Knox, John Wendell Mellen, Eleanor Bradish Wilde Mellen, and their son John Wendell Mellen, Jr., are not readily identifiable historical figures. Yet their story deserves our attention, for this young family was well-placed in the New England society of their day.

John Wendell Mellen was born in Barnstable, Massachusetts, on September 11, 1794, while his father, the Reverend John Mellen, was serving as the minister of the First Parish of Barnstable. John was the third of the four children of Reverend Mellen and his wife Martha Fitch Wendell Mellen.

When John Wendell Mellen was six years old, his father left his ministry in Barnstable to relocate the family in Cambridge because of his wife's health. The Mellens settled into a house on Kirkland Street, and Reverend Mellen pursued a varied career of religious, political, and military activities until the loss of his eyesight. Living in Cambridge gave John Wendell Mellen the opportunity to prepare for and attend Harvard College, where he graduated at the age of nineteen in 1814. To his B.A. degree he added an M.A. from Harvard in 1817. He was the third generation of John Mellens to receive a Harvard degree. His father was in the Class of 1770 and his grandfather the Class of 1741.

Instead of following his father and grandfather into the ministry, John Wendell Mellen became a lawyer. In October, 1817, he established his practice in North Yarmouth, Maine.

continued on page 3...



Eleanor Bradish Wilde Mellen, with her son, John Wendell Mellen, Jr.



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The Director's Desk

Joshua Campbell Torrance, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

You Can Be a Woodlawn Volunteer!

On August 20th 1929, Woodlawn opened to the public as a historic house museum. Mr. Richard Hale, a principal in the Boston law firm Hale and Dorr, and the first Chairman of the Museum's House Committee, led the early efforts to preserve Woodlawn and organize it as a public museum. He spearheaded an amazing effort by countless volunteers, for 75 years, to care for Woodlawn.

Recently, Woodlawn Museum has again become a very busy and active place and there is an ever-greater need for volunteers. There are committees, projects and events that could use an extra pair of hands, or a new set of eyes to look for new ideas. Here are some of the ways you could get involved.

The Museum has numerous committees you can join. In addition to the standing committees (Finance, Education, Collections, Buildings and Grounds, Development, and Long Range Planning) there are also special ad hoc committees formed from time to time. A person is appointed to a committee by the President and usually has demonstrated expertise in an aspect of the committee's work. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact Stephen Shea, President of the Board of Trustees, by calling the museum.

Rather than a joining committee, you could volunteer to be "on call" to work on special events, such as the Living History Day, or to help with the very popular summer teas,

held during July and August. You could be available to help with such tasks as stuffing envelopes for a large mailing, setting out refreshments for a large reception, distributing publicity materials, directing parking at events, or helping on "work days" during spring and fall clean-up projects.

Do you like meeting new people? Are you comfortable speaking in public? You might consider volunteering in the gift shop or volunteering to lead tours. It is fun meeting new and often interesting people, and we have a wonderful team to work with at Woodlawn. Most importantly, you could be Woodlawn's ambassador to the rest of the world, telling others about the unique contents of the house, or about the programs offered, or about the need to preserve this treasure for future generations.

To celebrate Woodlawn's 75th Anniversary year, the board and staff have developed a variety of special events, a lecture series, and a Gala celebration (to be held August 20th)*. Yet, to make these events and other functions a success, we need YOU to become a part of the Woodlawn family. ***Please consider becoming a Woodlawn Museum volunteer.***

For more information or to sign up, please call me at (207) 667-8671. Together, we can preserve Woodlawn and our heritage for the next 75 years.

**Make sure to see the calendar of events listed in this Newsletter.*



Two Portraits... (continued from page 1)

The next year on August 8, 1818, he married Eleanor Bradish Wilde, the daughter of Samuel Sumner Wilde, a justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and Eunice Cobb Wilde. The Mellens moved to Dover, New Hampshire, in December, 1823, where John's brother-in-law John Williams was the superintendent of a textile factory. While on a trip to New York, John Wendell Mellen died suddenly on July 22, 1829, at the age of 34.

His widow, Eleanor Bradish Wilde Mellen, was left with a daughter and two sons, the youngest of whom, John Wendell Mellen, Jr., appears in the portrait with his mother at the age of three. Considering the comfortable circumstances of both her in-laws and her parents, it would be safe to assume that Eleanor and her family were well provided for after the death of her husband. She was the daughter of the prominent lawyer and judge Samuel Sumner Wilde and Eunice Cobb, whose father was General David Cobb, a Revolutionary War soldier, physician, politician, judge, and land developer in Eastern Maine. Eunice Cobb's sister Mary married John Black, who worked with General Cobb on the management and sale of lands in Hancock and Washington Counties. This connection probably explains why the Mellen portraits are at Woodlawn. Eleanor Bradish Wilde Mellen was born on August 4, 1798, in Warren, Maine, while her father was practicing law there. She outlived her husband by eight and a half years, dying in Andover, Massachusetts, on March 7, 1838, at the age of 39.

The two Mellen portraits at Woodlawn are signed by Joseph Greenleaf Cole, and the one of Eleanor Mellen and her son is dated 1828. Given the death of John Wendell Mellen in 1829, one could assume that his picture was painted at the same time as his wife and child's. This is collaborated by a Cole portrait, signed and dated 1828, which was sold at auction in 1995. The pose of the male sitter was identical to Mellen's, looking directly forward with his arm resting on a table.

Born in Newburyport, Massachusetts in 1806, Joseph Greenleaf Cole was a prolific portrait painter from his teens until his death in 1858. His father Moses Dupré Cole and his brothers Lyman Emerson Cole and Charles Octavius Cole were also active portrait painters who worked in Massachusetts and Maine. While Joseph used Boston as his base during much of his career, he is known to have painted in Portland in 1825, 1826, and 1832 as well as in Brunswick in 1826. With their close ties to Cambridge, it is likely that



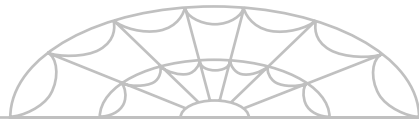
John Wendell Mellen

the Mellens sat for Cole in Boston. There the images of a young family, soon to be severed by the death of a husband and father, were captured by the brush of a talented artist. The results of his efforts now hang at Woodlawn, a poignant reminder of the brevity of life for many in early nineteenth century New England. 🍷

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., DIRECTOR, MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION and STATE HISTORIAN

May is for Mainers! Opening Day 2004!

The opening day of the 2004 season at Woodlawn is May 1st. Who will be the first visitors of 2004? All Maine residents are admitted at half price in May! Don't miss out on this great chance to visit Woodlawn.



Christmas Memories at Woodlawn: 4th Annual Candlelight Evening



500 luminaries, carolers, hot chocolate and cookies, a bon fire, and wagon rides helped mark another successful Candlelight Evening at Woodlawn which was sponsored by the Union Trust Company. The event, occurring for now the fourth year in a row, was held on December 13th, 2003, and was attended by approximately 400 people. The Board of Trustees and the Staff at Woodlawn are grateful to Mark Remick and his team of volunteers whom made this special community event happen.





Woodlawn Receives Grant to Preserve Historical Collections

Woodlawn Museum has received a grant of \$900.00 to preserve and provide better access to its historical collections. The grant was provided by the Maine Historical Records Advisory Board with funds from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Funds will be used to purchase archival storage boxes and file folders to store historical material related to the Black family, Maine's lumbering history, and the records of the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations. "This project to re-house some of our most important archival documents would not be possible without the support of this grant," according to Woodlawn's Executive Director Joshua Campbell Torrance.

Many of Maine's historical collections (photographs, paintings, natural history collections, letters, etc.) are in danger of being lost to mold, mildew or misuse. Maine has an estimated 200 million historical records, many of which are in facilities with little or no security, fire protection, or environmental controls.

"These local grants support community efforts to protect the stories of our birth, property rights, government, and how we lived our lives," noted Jim Henderson, Director of the Maine State Archives. "People need to document their birth to obtain a passport or to get medical care; others research their property boundaries; some seek long lost relatives or to understand the history of the old saw mill down the road. Without these precious records, most questions like this would remain unanswered."

Small grants have stimulated local citizens and organizations to commit more of their own resources to

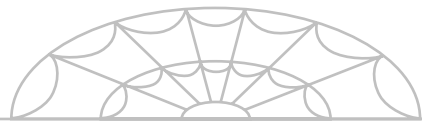
these projects. "Although financial support is important, recognition of local concerns and effort through an award also generates a substantial amount of enthusiasm," Henderson said.

The Historical Collections Grant Program has been a joint project of the Maine State Museum and the Maine State Archives, a Bureau within the Department of the Secretary of the State. Recent state budget cuts have ended grants for museum objects and reduced amounts available for historical records. 🌱



Mom's Admission Free on Mother's Day!

Give Mom a break at the Woodlawn Museum on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9th. We cordially invite all mothers to tour the Black house at no cost on Mother's Day. The flowers on the grounds will be budding for her enjoyment. Take a leisurely hour or two to consider the life and times of Mary Cobb Black, her husband, Col. John Black, their eight children and their children's children. Plan a picnic for Mom on the grounds of Maine's premier historic estate, using the new Woodlawn picnic tables. And don't miss the chance to hike the beautifully wooded trails behind the mansion. Mother's Day tours are from 1-4 PM with all tours starting on the hour. And for Mothers only, there is an extra 20 percent discount in the Museum's unique gift shop.



Woodlawn Museum 20

May 1 - Opening Day at Woodlawn.

Admission for Maine residents half price in May.

May 1 - Ellsworth Rotary Auction, James Russell Wiggins Down East YMCA

Proceeds to benefit Woodlawn Museum. Preview at 8 AM, Auction starts at 9AM.

May 8 (8 AM)- Spring Clean-Up Day

Help get the grounds ready for another busy season and enjoy a free picnic lunch sponsored by Ellsworth Hannaford.

June 5 - Family Game Day at Woodlawn

Historic games, special tours of the Black House for families, and a lot of fun. Details to come!

June 12 (1 PM) - Chamber Music & Chocolate

Free classical concert for children featuring student musicians from Kneisel Hall. Rain or shine.

June 14 (5:30-7 PM) - Garden Lecture: Home Composting, Worm Composting

Marjorie Peronto and Lee Fay

Free lecture presented in conjunction with the Hancock County Extension Office.

July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & August 6 (1 PM) - Kneisel at Woodlawn

Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy free classical concerts featuring student performers from Blue Hill's Kneisel Hall.

July 8 (4 PM & 7 PM) - 75th Anniversary Lecture & Tour Series: Woodlawn's Portraits

Earle Shettleworth, Jr., DIRECTOR, MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, STATE HISTORIAN

4 PM Free Lecture open to the Public

7 PM Private tour of Woodlawn led by Mr. Shettleworth with a small reception to follow. \$25 per person (\$20 per member). Reservations required, space limited.

July 10 - Family Game Day at Woodlawn

Historic games, special tours of the Black House for families, and a lot of fun. Details to come!

July 19 (5:30-7 PM) - Garden Lecture: Intelligent Premeditated Murder of Insects

Dr. Colin Stewart

Free lecture presented in conjunction with the Hancock County Extension Office.

July 25 (3 PM) - Special 75th Anniversary Tea

Celebrate our 75th anniversary as we unveil our own line of delightful tea blends. Call the museum for details and reservations.



2004 Schedule of Events

Afternoon Teas TBA Wednesday Afternoons in July and August

August 12 (4 PM & 7 PM) - 75th Anniversary Lecture & Tour Series: The Furniture of Woodlawn

Tom Johnson, CURATOR, OLD YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

4 PM Free Lecture open to the Public

7 PM Private tour of Woodlawn led by Mr. Johnson with a small reception to follow. \$25 per person (\$20 per member). Reservations required, space limited.

August 14 (10 AM-4 PM) - Living History Day

Historic reenactment day featuring craft demonstrations, horse & carriage driving, games, sheep shearing, and more.

August 16 (5:30-7 PM) - Garden Lecture: Defining Flower Garden Spaces in the Larger Landscape

Dr. Lois Stack

Free lecture presented in conjunction with the Hancock County Extension Office.

August 20 - 75th Anniversary Gala Event

We will celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Woodlawn Museum on the actual anniversary date of August 20 with a reenactment of opening ceremonies and a dinner and dance on the lawn. Please join us for what promises to be a very special evening!

September 9 (4 PM & 7 PM) - 75th Anniversary Lecture and Tour Series: The Tables are Set: Tablewares & Entertaining in Federal Maine

Laura Fecych Sprague, INDEPENDENT MUSEUM CURATOR, PORTLAND

4 PM Free Lecture open to the Public

7 PM Private tour of Woodlawn led by Ms. Sprague with a small reception to follow. \$25 per person (\$20 per member). Reservations required, space limited.

September 11 - Family Game Day at Woodlawn

Historic games, special tours of the Black House for families, and a lot of fun. Details to come!

September 11 - Appraisal Day (details TBA)

October 9 (10 AM- 4 PM)- Autumn Festival

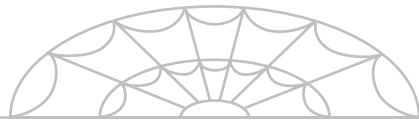
Celebrate Autumn with fun activities for all ages. Some activities ticketed, many are free.

November 6 (8 AM)- Fall Clean Up Day

Help prepare Woodlawn for the long winter season and enjoy a free picnic lunch!

December 11 (4-7 PM)- 5th Annual Candlelight Evening

Horse-drawn wagon rides, a bon fire, and lots of holiday cheer add to this free holiday event that features the lighting of the Ellsworth Community Christmas Tree and 500 luminaries!



Woodlawn Community Garden Prepares for Another Growing Season

by Kay Wilkins

Oh what gorgeous carrots! Too many tomatoes, not enough squash. Those were some of my experiences in my first year, 2003, tending my spot in the Woodlawn Community Garden.

2003 was a successful gardening year, and we appreciated the opportunity extended to us to garden at Woodlawn, such a beautiful place, such excellent soil. Another contributor to our success was that after the problems the first year, 2002, erecting deer fencing effectively protected the garden.

In addition to the garden, we and the broader community benefited from three educational programs on composting, drip irrigation, and preserving our harvest. We are grateful to the Union River Healthy Communities Coalition and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension for their assistance.

Planning is underway for another successful gardening year in 2004. Ten plots were used in 2003 and we have room for several more gardens this year. We again offer educational programs, with a compost workshop already in the planning stages.

My role as Coordinator of the Community Garden was formalized this fall. Paul Fox who graduated from Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener Volunteer Program with me in 2003 has also offered his assistance. Paul helped us till the garden last fall and will take leadership in helping us start and maintain composting bins adjacent to the gardens. I will also be recruiting another volunteer from this year's Master Gardener class to assist us in formalizing and strengthening our program of donating produce from the garden to Loaves and Fishes, Emmaus and similar programs for

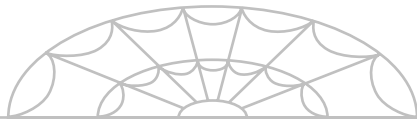
feeding hungry people in Hancock County.

Two of our plots were drip-irrigated as a demonstration of the value of that technique. Many of the gardeners want to drip irrigate their plots this year. Paul Fox and I will lend our expertise to that effort.

Woodlawn Community Garden is a wonderful opportunity for anyone who has no space for a vegetable garden, but who wants to raise food for themselves and others. If you or someone you know might like to join in, please encourage them to contact Joshua Torrance at Woodlawn or me. I am also available to speak to community groups who might be interested in hearing about this wonderful community resource.

*Kay Wilkins, Coordinator Woodlawn
Community Garden 667-2901 🐾*





Black's Woods

by *The Honorable Herbert T. Silsby*

One of the most beautiful roads in downeast Maine is state Route 182 leading from Franklin Road in Hancock to Cherryfield, a distance of 23.3 miles. It is the great short-cut route for travelers headed downeast, saving about nine miles over Route 1.

The road has acquired over the years several names, the first one being "General Cobb's Road", later "Black's Woods," and "Ellsworth-Cherryfield Mail Road."

The first landmark going east is Egypt Stream, the boundary between Franklin and Hancock. At some four miles along the road is the Franklin Historical Society's Memorial Park, two acres of gardens and granite exhibits, a blacksmith shop, and a galamander, an under slung wagon for hauling large granite blocks. Outside the granite industry, these wagons were called jigger wagons.

Fox Pond, the beginning of what is now called Black's Woods, is located about thirteen miles from Franklin

Road. The road follows the winding shore of the pond. From here, the road begins to climb up Catherine Mountain. At the top is a good view of Burk's Mountain and other hills serving as the boundary between Hancock and Washington Counties. Catherine Mountain has an elevation of 942 feet. The decent down the mountain is long and steep and ends at the narrow strip of land separating Spring River Lake and Tunk Lake. Here ends Black's Woods, and at 23.3 miles from Franklin Road, Route 182 rejoins US Route 1 at Cherryfield.

From a historical point of view, it is likely that "General Cobb's Road" is the most accurate. It was Cobb who conceived and built the road, and John Black improved and maintained it.

In 1795, General David Cobb began cutting a road through the woods from Gouldsborough to Passamaquady. John Peters "marked out the road," and Cobb hired eight laborers from the westward at 10 and

20 dollars per month to cut through the woods.

After many difficulties and many years work the road was completed. In 1817, John Black drew a map of the road indicating the completion of the job. The road is now Route 9, also called the Airline.

Alexander Baring, one of the agents for the proprietors, described the road situation in 1796 "...This is the post road but so bad that you cannot find it without a guide in the woods. What is understood by making a road in a new country is merely cutting down and removing some the large trees, leaving the stumps and small wood. It is not easy to ascertain in a thick wood the direction for a road, and the surveyors accustomed to this often make mistakes." 🐾



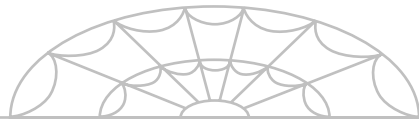
Board President Stephen Shea hard at work.

Free Leaves, Free Food!

The Woodlawn Museum will be holding its annual Spring Clean Up Day on Saturday, May 8th starting at 8 AM. The 180-acre public park at Woodlawn needs to have leaves and debris raked and removed from the lawns. Volunteers from the Ellsworth Hannaford Food Store will be lead the volunteer effort and the store will provide a picnic lunch for all volunteers.

If you would like to volunteer, please come to the Museum at 8 AM on Saturday, May 8th and bring a rake and gloves. Call 667-8671 for more information.





Ellsworth Rotary Club

ANNUAL AUCTION



Saturday, May 1

↔↔↔↔↔

Preview 8:00 a.m.

Auction begins at 9:00 a.m.

**James Russell Wiggins
Down East Family YMCA
Ellsworth**

↔↔↔↔↔

**• Lots of Great Stuff •
• Refreshments •**

↔↔↔↔↔



**Benefit of
Ellsworth Rotary Club
Charities and
Woodlawn Museum,
The Black House**

Ellsworth Rotary Auction to Benefit Woodlawn Museum

The Ellsworth Rotary Club will partner with the Woodlawn Museum for this year's Ellsworth Rotary Club Auction. The Auction will be held on May 1st at the James Russell Wiggins Down East Family YMCA. The preview starts at 8 AM with the Auction starting at 9 AM.

The Auction has been an annual community event for over 30 years. Each year the Rotary Club picks a partner to help manage the Auction. Half of the proceeds from the Auction go to the partner institution and the rest of funds are used to fund other Rotary Club charities.

With the Museum's Board of Trustees having launched a \$1 million capital campaign to preserve the buildings and to increase the size of the endowment, the Rotary Club felt that Woodlawn was perfect fit for this years Auction. The proceeds from the project will be used to fund much needed preservation work. The Ellsworth Rotary is committed to ensuring that this remarkable treasure is preserved for future generations.

There are two ingredients for a successful Auction: great gifts and willing buyers. To that end, a special invitation is extended to Woodlawn Museum's friends, Members, and donors to participate in the Auction. We need volunteers to help out during the Auction. Also, we need donations of items or gifts. Do you have a used, but in usable shape, piece of furniture that you would like to donate? Great gifts would be a mini vacation, such as the use of a cottage on the water for a week or a boat ride. Most importantly, we need you to be at the Auction bidding and buying. The Auction is a great chance to purchase holiday gifts early, and it gives peace of mind to know that your money is going to a worthy cause.

If you would like to make a donation, volunteer at the Auction, or would like more information about the event, please contact Rick Honaker, Woodlawn's Administrative Assistant, at 667-8671.



Here Comes Peter Cottontail!

For the fifth year in a row, the Easter Bunny visited the Woodlawn Museum! The Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, April 10th and was a tremendous success - despite cold and flurries! Children in three age categories searched for 1,800 Easter eggs, which contained candy and prizes.





Annual Appeal Update

by Nancy Payne Alexander,

ANNUAL APPEAL CHAIRPERSON

Our Annual Appeal to you, our friends and members, has fallen seriously short of our needs for the coming year. Programs we have instituted in the past three years are in jeopardy. We appreciate the number of demands on limited resources, but we are asking you to continue your support of Woodlawn Museum's ongoing development of these programs. We have found them to be very helpful for our visitors, educating them about the museum, its contents, and the history of downeast Maine that the house represents so well. No other institution in this part of Maine speaks so eloquently to this rich history.

Recent efforts include organizing and improving access to the extensive archives, developing youth-oriented "backpacks" of information and games that encourage young people to think in terms of changes in living styles, improving the offerings of the gift shop, and restoration work of the period gardens. Several of the programs are designed to increase the availability of information to teachers, students, and families.

Our visitation has increased, our visibility has increased, and recognition of our economic benefit to the area has increased. We are moving forward as a prime attraction in Ellsworth, helping to make the area a destination rather than a drive-through experience. We are currently researching the possibilities of using Woodlawn's beauty and grounds, and

its innate grace, as a setting for private events.

Woodlawn also offers an outstanding outdoor experience, far from the busy streets and distractions of everyday living. Numerous people and groups enjoy its woods and trails, its ice skating and sledding, and the wildlife that shares it with us. These facilities all require maintenance and repair, and with your continuing help, we can accomplish it all.

Please help us out with your generous donation for the Annual Appeal. We all stand to gain from it. To make a donation to the Annual Appeal, please send a check to Woodlawn Museum c/o Annual Appeal, P.O. Box 1478, Ellsworth, Maine 04605.

The 2003 Annual Appeal began on July 1, 2003 and ends on June 30, 2004.

Explore the exciting benefits of a Museum Membership and help preserve the Black House and Public Park for Future Generations!

Individual \$25 (18 or under \$5): All members receive free admission to the museum, invitations to special member events, a subscription to the Museum's quarterly newsletter, a 10% discount in our gift shop for purchases over \$10.00, an invitation to the Annual Members Tea, and notification of other special events at the Museum. All memberships expire one year from the anniversary date.

Household \$40: Membership benefits for two adults and all household members under 18, plus a 25% discount on events for which there is a fee, and 4 free guest passes for Black House tours.

Supporter \$100: Membership benefits for two adults and all household members under 18, plus a 25% discount on events for which there is a fee, and 8 free guest passes for Black House tours.

I enclose \$ _____ for Membership Dues at the _____ Level

Dr. _____ Mr. _____ Mrs. _____ Ms. _____ Miss _____

Name(s) _____ Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

I would like to charge my membership on _____ Visa _____ Mastercard

Card Number _____ Expiration Date ____/____/____

Card Holder's Signature _____

In addition to my Membership, I would also like to make donation to the Museum's Annual

Fund in the amount of \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 _____ Other _____

Membership dues and other contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.



Please mail completed form with your membership dues to:

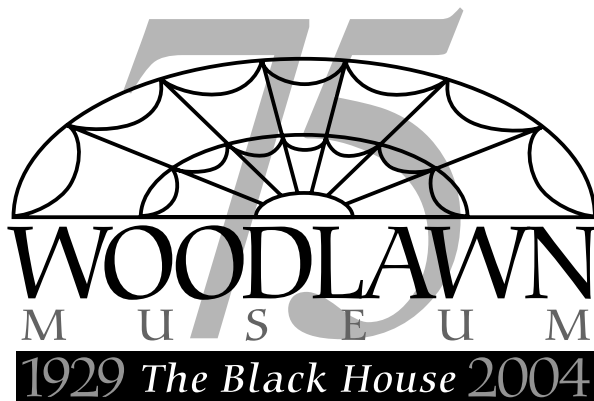
**Membership
Woodlawn Museum
P.O. Box 1478
Ellsworth, Maine 04605**

Please make checks payable to the Woodlawn Museum.



Woodlawn Museum is celebrating its 75th Anniversary!

*Save
the
Date!*



*Save
the
Date!*

Friday, August 20, 2004
with a Gala Dinner-Dance



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