



# Isaiah Davenport House Volunteer Newsletter

September 2011

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## EPIGRAM

Wit's a feather, Pope has said,  
And ladies never doubt it,  
So those who've least within their head  
Display the most without it.  
August 3, 1820. [Columbia Museum](#).

## Just Received

34 bbls. Whiskey  
23 do Gin  
4 pipes Gin  
4 do Cognac Brandy  
20 bbls. Country do  
2 do Alcohol  
100 kegs Dupont' Gun-powder  
In Store,  
30 bbls loaf Sugar  
Claret in Boxes, Champagne  
White Wine, Cologne Waters  
Wax Candles, Cordials  
Boulogne Sausages  
For Sale by  
Duhmale & Auze  
Jones' Upper Wharf  
September 15, 1820, [Savannah Republican](#).



## Hair Mattresses.

Of a superior quality—for low by  
JACOB MILLER,  
Broughton-street  
September 15, 1820. [Savannah Republican](#).

## Communicated.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> of July to the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, the average number in the Jail, has been one hundred and twelve: among that number, not one death has occurred, and there has been but one case of yellow fever. The greatest attention has been paid to cleanliness, and the removal of putrefaction; therefore, there must be some local cause of the disease in the city, which ought to be sought for removal. During the summer, and more particularly for the last four weeks, there has been very little electrical fluid in the atmosphere; there has been four weeks in which we have heard no thunder. The combination of these causes, is the probable reason for the prevalence of such an extraordinary portion of disease.  
September 20, 1820. [Savannah Republican](#).

## DAVENPORT HOUSE CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 2011

**Sunday, September 4** – Garden Rental (wedding ceremony)  
**Tuesday, September 6 at 4:30 in Kennedy Pharmacy-** Training Convention Consultants  
**Wednesday, September 7 at 5:30 to 7:30 in Garden and Kennedy Pharmacy** – Coastal Museums Association/Hospitality  
**Thursday, September 8 from 4 to 8 p.m. in Garden and Kennedy Pharmacy** - 13th Colony Event (HSF)  
**Friday, September 9 at 6:30 p.m.** – Madeira tour  
**Saturday, September 10 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.** – Kennedy Pharmacy wedding rental  
**Tuesday, September 13 at noon** – Davenport House Committee  
**Wednesday, September 14 at 9:30 a.m.** – Rehearsal for Roads Scholar Program  
**Friday, September 16 at 6:30 p.m.** – Madeira tour  
**Sunday, September 18 from 4 to 7 p.m.** – Garden Rental (ceremony only)  
**Tuesday, September 20 at 10 a.m.** – Docent Meeting/Yellow Fever and HSF Discussion  
**Friday, September 23 at 6:30 p.m.** – Madeira Tour  
**Thursday, September 27 at 6 p.m.** – Junior Interpreter meeting/Yellow Fever  
**Monday, September 26 at 5:30 p.m.** – DH All Staff Meeting/Yellow Fever and Fall Season  
**Tuesday, September 27 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** – Road Scholar Program  
- **At 6:30 p.m.** – JI orientation/Savannah Arts Academy program  
**Tuesday, September 27 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** – Road Scholar Program  
**Wednesday, September 28 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** – Road Scholar Program

**Thursday, September 29 at 6:30 p.m.** – Madeira Tour  
**Friday, September 30 from 9 to noon** – Shop Inventory  
- **At 6:30 p.m.** – Madeira Tour


## HAPPENINGS IN SEPTEMBER:

Fall Madeira tours begin, AASU Roads Scholar program begins, Yellow Fever rehearsal and volunteer meeting, Junior Interpreter meeting, All Staff meeting in conjunction with the production, word sent out about docent training, shop inventory taken, maintenance inspection conducted by volunteer team

## SHOP NEWS:

- Ben recommends [Savannah: Then and Now](#) by Polly Cooper and Ted Eldridge. It's a fine coffee table book at a good price - \$19.95.  
- The shop will conduct **inventory** on Friday, September 30 from 9 a.m. until noon. We need volunteers to help with the counting. A sign up is on the kitchen door or email Ben ([davenportshop@davenportmuseum.org](mailto:davenportshop@davenportmuseum.org)) or Jamie.

## FALL FIELD TRIP:

 **Rice Plantations Center, Civil War Pillage and Contemporary Art Colony! BLUFFTON, SC**

Mark your calendar for **Thursday, November 17** to travel with the DH to Bluffton. Departing from the DH at 9 a.m., travelers will begin their touring day visiting the 1840 **Heyward House** and then take a walking tour with personnel from **Bluffton Historical Society** including seeing the 1857 Gothic style **The Church of the Cross**. The group will find a rich story of early 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement and the development of the town. Fifteen structures survived the devastation wrought by Union troops during the Civil War. During lunch at Pepper's Porch, the group will hear a discussion on the preservation of flowers by Susan

Scoggins. Following lunch, the group will visit the **Coastal Discovery Museum** and hear a program which will combine the general history of the area with the Low Country during the Civil War. The last stop will be just inside Sea Pines' gate to see the ruins of the **Baynard Plantation**. The Baynard family owned the DH from 1840 to 1955.

The museum will rent a 12 passenger van. Private cars are welcome also.

When you reserve a place note whether you wish to ride in the van or private car, what your menu choice is, and if you have paid. The restaurant will send us a limited menu which travelers will select from before the travel date.

The price to travel by van is \$45 and the price per private car \$25.

The deadline to reserve and have your money into Jeff Thursday, November 3. Time: 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

**DOCENTS:**

The museum will conduct Docent Training in October. Please let Dottie or Jamie know of prospective tour guide trainees.



**JUNIOR INTERPRETERS :**

- **SAA JIs:** September is recruitment time for the new class of Savannah Arts Academy JIs. **Rod MacKay**, SAA American history teacher, will organize the recruitment and get students to the DH for orientation on **Tuesday, September 27**. Fifteen students will learn to be tour guides on Tuesday nights in October and November. The DH could not be prouder of

its JIs and the partnership it has with SAA to do the program.

- **NEW JIs SHINE:** Our small but delightful Summer 2011 JI class gave tours all day August 5. Thank you to **Betsy Chapman, Deanna Clarke** and **Gabrielle Rashleigh** for their good work this summer. Also, thanks to **Ellie Darbyshire** who mentored for most of the program and to **Carlie Ayn Williams** and **Madison Thomas** who assisted with tours and the execution of JI Day.

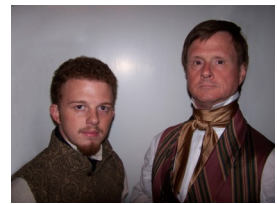
- **VETERAN JIs:** Ever so trying to keep the momentum with veteran JIs – There will be a meeting on Thursday, September 22 at 6 p.m. to see and critique the new Yellow Fever program. The museum will need JI volunteers for the YF program which is offered on Friday and Saturday nights in October.

**YELLOW FEVER:**

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!!!!**

- Just because we have been doing this for 9 years doesn't mean we have said all we have to say on the subject! The museum's October 2011 living history program **Mortality Prevails! Savannah's Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1820!** has about seventy-five percent new dialogue from previous years and there are new twists that will intrigue audiences. As the show begins, there will be a town hall debate involving the editors of the two opposing newspapers – one a Federalist (the party of Hamilton and Adams) and one a Democratic Republican (the party of Jefferson). Taken directly from original documentation and played by Iain Woodside and Jeff Freeman, the editors disagreed on where the fever started, when it started, how severe it was and who/what was to blame. The mayor, T.U.P. Charlton, played by John Leonti, is also caught up in the debate. Following the town hall meeting in the Kennedy Pharmacy, which will sub as the Exchange Longroom, the large

group will be divided into three smaller groups to visit the



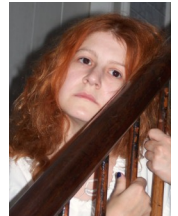
**Woodside and Freeman**

house. There, all will see free man of color Mingo performed by Ja-



**Touré**

mal Touré; a young lady reflecting the nature of the soul and the supernatural performed by Lauren Purcell, and ladies in the Drawing Room led by Mrs. Johnson (played by Jody Christie) discussing the symptoms and extent of the fever. At the end, the entire group will play the **lottery of life and death!**



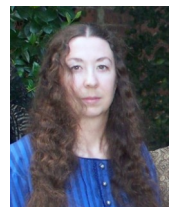
**Purcell**

- **There will be a docent meeting on September 20 at 10 a.m. to see a portion of the show and discuss it.** As you know, when you (the docent or shop



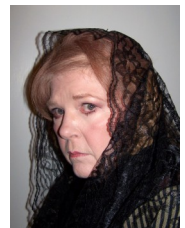
**Leonti**

worker) explain about and encourage guests to attend the program, it makes a tremendous difference in the success of the show. And you also know we would love to have you attend a performance!

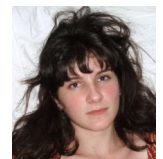


**Christie**

- Performing in the 2011 production of **"A Mortality Prevails!" Savannah Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1820** are: **Iain Woodside** as Mr. Fell; **Jeff Freeman** as Mr. Bartlett; **John Leonti** as The Mayor; **Lauren Purcell** as Miss Hestia Robinson; **Tiffany Miller** as Miss Portia Douglas; **Jody Christie** as Mrs. Theodosia Johnson; **Jan Vach** as Mrs. Susannah Humphries and **Shannon Wichers** as Char-



**Vach**



**Wichers**



**Miller**

lotte.

#### - **YELLOW FEVER KEEPS US**

**SAFE:** While rehearsing for Yellow Fever last night two of Savannah's finest showed up because someone had reported people walking around in the darkened DH with candles. No ghost, just Lauren and Raleigh - prepping for the fever (coming in October). It was nice to show the police the house. They thought it was fab! A good experience all the way around. Keep it safe!

#### **AH MADEIRA:**

Tyrone Power, the great-grandfather of the movie actor - but an actor none the less - had an arduous trip to the city in 1834. But after a five mile walk in the sandy soil, "*A capital dinner, and a glass of the finest Madeira in the States, made light of past labour. . . .*"



**MADEIRA TOURS:** The DH has had terrific support for its fall Madeira tours on Thursday and Friday nights. Program workers are: **Marty Barnes, Frances Colón, Karen Halloran, Laurie Halpin, Sherene Lamarche, Helen Lin-skey, John Miller, Katherine Owens, Charlotte Rehmert, Maria Sanchez, Abby Schreiber, Pat Se-guare, Roger Smith, and Brooke Wilford.** These folks have been emailed their schedules.

#### **COLLECTIONS NEWS:**

##### - **IF YOU ASK, "WHERE'S THE MAP?"**

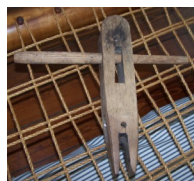
Can't remember if we told you this but when we got our fabulous Samuel Lewis map, it was installed by the Telfair's exhibits preparator. It is in a cradle hanging device to keep it from pulling apart by its own weight. Shortly after installation in the Office, Jamie went to Colonial Williamsburg and saw that all the maps on exhibit were reproductions. Anyway. We determined we were being good stewards of the 1821 document by watching it and having it hung in a sympathetic way. However, as time has passed,



we have notice that it has become "wavy" from exposure to humidity and parts are flaking. In September, Jeff will take the map to our conservator in Charleston (Marion Hunter) for evaluation. We hope he will clean and stabilize it. We are waiting to determine if it would be best to put the original back on exhibit or make a fine copy of it and put the copy on exhibit.

- **IRON GARDEN CHAIRS:** There has been a lot of hubbub about furniture that was supposed to have been on the SS Savannah - given by the Czar - and ending up in Savannah (the table formerly at the **OT** and now headed to **Ships of the Sea**). Legend has it that the two iron and very heavy garden chairs formerly outside DH's back door were part of this shipment. However, the museum has no provenance (history or records) for the chairs - nothing written down. And then Dottie said they were not from the Czar but from the King of Denmark or was it Norway - as a thank you to William Scarborough for the first shipment of cotton to which ever country. Because the chairs had no records and they have been difficult to maintain - having to be moved every time we have a large group or program on the back porch -- we called our friends at Ships of the Sea and asked them if they wanted the chairs for their new garden. They thanked the DH and took them away. We still are curious about the Czar and/or the King of Denmark/Norway connection. In any other town, such stories would end up being hoooweee but in Savannah you never know. If they end up being from a royal, having them at the Ships of the Sea is still a more appropriate location than the DH. Wonder if you miss them?!

- **Bed wrench** - The museum recently put on exhibit in the Boys room a bed wrench which used to tighten ropes.



#### **MAINTENANCE:**

- On several dates in August, the house got some strange looks when the iron work was white with new primer. This summer's painting, includes the fence, front façade, shop door, back door, and back steps. For this year's painting the DH made the switch from oil based to acrylic paint for the exterior of the DH. We were concerned about the appropriateness of this so we asked the fellow at our trusted paint store for his recommendation and he said the science/chemistry of acrylic paint is now superior to oil based. We will see.

- September is the month we call together our volunteer maintenance team to inspect the house and review maintenance/preservation issues. Volunteers for this committee are: **Tom Hoffman, Dirk Hardison, Roger Smith, and Daniel Carey.**

#### **NO MORE EXPO-**

##### **IT'S MAY DAY FOR US:**

You must have figured the Savannah Garden Expo has run its course. The 2011 event was the last of its kind at least for a while. In its place will be a May Day event held on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. HSF asked that the DH commit to partnering with this new event and eight members of the museum committee. Eight members of HSF's leadership are expected to develop and execute a new and exciting affair. You will hear a good deal about this as time passes and we hope you will feel a part of it all. The proceeds will go toward activities identified by the Davenport House committee and HSF.

#### **HOUSE LEADERSHIP EVOLVES**

The September Davenport House Committee meeting will witness several milestones.

**Debbie Critz, Ann Koontz, and Cornelia Groves** are all rolling off as DHC. And while this is the accepted scheme of things - to have board members periodically roll off

after committed service – it is still bittersweet. **Debbie** has been an important sounding board on financial issues and the community's perception of the museum.

**Ann** has served long and hard as a leader of the museum for two three-year terms including service as President. We will miss her leadership but expect her to continue to be active including playing a large role in the May Day event.

It's been a long time since **Cornelia** has not been on either the Davenport House Committee or the Davenport House Endowment Directors but as of September 30, Cornelia will be free. Wait a minute – no, not really. Because the DH and Cornelia are stuck together like glue. She will continue to volunteer and chair the Friends of the Davenport House Annual Giving Campaign. She just won't have to go to meetings.

Thank you our fine friends!!

Four new DHC members will be voted on in September. October 1 begins the new fiscal year and a leadership change. Please note that HSF's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Thursday evening, November 17 at 6:30 at Trinity Methodist Church. And, while this is our field trip day, it would be nice to have a showing from the DH to formally welcome new DH Committee and HSF Board members. Following the program and recognition, there will be a reception in Telfair Square.

#### SLAVERY AND FREEDOM IN SAVANNAH SYMPOSIUM:



We are fortunate that a symposium is being held in our city free of charge which can expand the DH's interpretation. The Owens-Thomas House/Telfair Museum is presenting a day and a half symposium, which will begin with a Keynote address at Second African Baptist Church on Thursday evening, October 13. At the Savannah

Theater, talks by scholars on African American life in the antebellum south and beyond will be offered Friday, October 14 and end at noon on Saturday, October 15. **Google** the topic and you will be able to bring up a copy of the agenda. You may register online. Or, call Cyndi Sommers at 912/790-8880 or email sommers@telfair.org The lectures content will result in a publication to be used to reinterpret the OT. DH volunteers and staff are encouraged to register and attend.

#### MORE ABOUT THE EMBARGO – HOPING YOU WERE ENTHRALLED ENOUGH WITH LAST MONTH'S ARTICLE ON "JEFFERSON'S EMBARGO" TO READ MORE ABOUT HOW IT PLAYED OUT IN SAVANNAH.

"The hotel of Colonel Shelman affords better accommodations than any other of the kind in Savannah; but there are two or three genteel boarding houses for those who prefer living in private. The Colonel received me very politely; but I was scarcely sat down, when he entered upon politics, condemned the embargo, which he declared would ruin him and his family, and deprecated the conduct of Mr. Jefferson and the government. At first I was cautious how I entered into conversation with him, for I had frequently met with democrats, who threw out a few words to sound the sentiments of people, and, if they did not happen to coincide with their principles, would abuse them unmercifully. But happened to spy a portrait of General Washington in the room, my doubts ceased, and upon a little conversation with him, I found that he was a staunch federalist. He had formerly been a Colonel in the continental army, under Washington; and, like all the old officers of that army, was firmly attached to the political principles of his great leader."

THE RAMBLER IN GEORGIA, P. 40-41.

"St Mary's is the frontier town of Georgia, on the confines of Florida, about 95 miles from Savannah. It is a small town, of no great importance, otherwise than as a receptacle of imposition and worthless characters. Smuggling and shuffling tricks are carried on here with success; and it was the medium for evading the embargo laws. It is separated from Florida only by the St. Mary's river. Vessels arrive here from the northern states, and run their cargoes in small boats across to the Spanish coast, from whence they are shipped to the West Indies. I met with several persons at Colonel Shelman's, who were going to St. Mary's on their mercantile speculations.

THE RAMBLER IN GEORGIA, P. 43.

#### WORTH MENTIONING:

- **DOTTIE SENDS WORD:** Everyone at the DH is grateful to the docents who did double and triple duty during the summer. We expect our friends of distant places to return beginning in September through November, so scheduling may not be as difficult.

- **DRINK UP!:** **Jake and Heather Anderson-Jones** dropped by during their annual Tybee week in August and brought us a bottle of wine. Meinhardt Vineyards of Statesboro has a "Davenport" red Georgia Muscadine Wine featuring the façade of the DH on the label. Fine advertising.

- **SO LONG GOOD FRIEND:** After nine years in the area our good friend **Beth Wichers** is moving to Spartanburg to join her husband who has an ROTC job there. After an ordeal to sell her house in Richmond Hill, she is on her way. We will miss her! Thank goodness we have Shannon through December. Shannon's brother and Beth's son, Jud, just completed boot camp! So much change.

- **INTERNS:** Thank you to our summer friends **Amy Jackson** of Wesleyan College in Macon who



put in time organizing and indexing newsletters and **Stephanie Blankshain** of SCAD who did a terrific job with documenting the museum's preservation inspection and collections inventory.

- **Get Well Soon:** Our friend and docent Pat Kelly is recovering from some health issues.



#### **DH SPOTLIGHT**

#### **CARLIE AYN WILLIAMS**

This month's spotlight is on one of our JI's – Carlie Ayn Williams, who is a senior at Savannah Christian Preparatory School.

**DH:** How did you come to be associated with the Davenport House?

**Carlie Ayn:** My school put out an ad for the JI Summer Program at the Davenport House. I signed up and the rest is history.

**DH:** What do you like to do outside of the DH?

**Carlie Ayn:** I write stories, draw illustrations, volunteer at my school's morning-care center, and attempt to take pictures of wildlife.

**DH:** What is your favorite thing about the Davenport House?

**Carlie Ayn:** Definitely Sarah Davenport's story. I rarely have a person on tour that's not impressed by what she did for her family.

**DH:** What's the most unusual thing that has ever happened to you at the DH?

**Carlie Ayn:** Last Valentine's Day I volunteered for *Weddings at the DH*. I'd never been to any weddings before, but I was a photographer for twelve that evening! One couple even asked me to be their maid of honor! What made it so special was that even if the bride was dressed in jeans, satin, or black tights, she always cried halfway through the ceremony; one even yelled "Dead Man Walking!"

**DH:** What do you love most about the Davenport House?

**Carlie Ayn:** The fact that the fam-

ily's and the Seven Ladies' stories are so inspiring. It creates a message for both creation of the future and preservation of the past.

**DH:** How long have you been in Savannah?

**Carlie Ayn:** At the moment, 17 years and counting. I was born at Memorial Hospital on December 23, 1993.

**DH:** Where else have you thought about living?

**Carlie Ayn:** If I lived somewhere else, I'd either live in a Nantucket fishing village or on a sailboat doing marine research.

**DH:** What is your favorite season in Savannah and why?

**Carlie Ayn:** Winter, because the whole month of December's like a party for me! Strange as it is, all my favorite things are wintery: gingerbread, my UGG hiking boots, and making boxes for Operation Christmas Child of Samaritan's Purse.

**DH:** What is your favorite thing to do in Savannah (besides being a docent at the DH)?

**Carlie Ayn:** I like to take a day and do all the touristy things; visit the forts, shop on Broughton Street, take a dip at Leopold's, etc. Walt Disney used to make his Imagineers go to Disneyland monthly and be regular tourists so their visitors' views would be fresh in their minds. I figure I'm doing the same thing for my job!

#### **A look at the DH guest register:**

During the month of July, Florida was the most numerous point of origin for our visitors, being listed more than twice as many times as the next highest state which was Georgia. All in all, our guests came from 35 states in the continental US. Texans, Tennesseans and North Carolinians were next most numerous museum goers to comment on their experience at the DH. We also had visitors from beyond our borders. They hailed from Canada, Cyprus, England,

Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand and Romania. Interesting hometowns included: Section, AL, Goodwater, AL, Lake Zurich, IL, Wicasset, ME, Edmore, MI, Kinsman, OH, Xenia, OH, Leetsdale, PA, Doylestown, PA, and Chewelah, WA.

#### **Where They Heard About Us (in descending order of frequency)**

Tour Guides (Andrew Low House, Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace); trolley tours (Old Town Trolley, Old Savannah Tours, Oglethorpe Tours); Internet; concierge (Kehoe House, Hilton, Hyatt, Marriott, Best Western, Inn at Ellis Square, Staybridge Suites); brochure; guide books (Frommer's, AAA); friend; Visitor Center; map; walked-by; **Group On**, historical research; repeat visit; relative; school; book (Eugenia Price); wedding.

#### **What They Had To Say**

"A wonderful history lesson." "Very interesting." "Wonderful tour." "Great tour." "Wonderful tour guide. Interesting." "It was a lovely tour." "Great & beautiful city." "Love the city." "Love it. Very beautiful." "Awesome." "Fantastic." "Thanks for the opportunity." "Can't wait to come back in a few years." "Great tour narrative." "Wonderful tour. Fantastic restoration." "Great job, nice." "Loved the tour. Lots of info." "Loved the history and appreciate the restoration." "Informative & interesting - enjoyed it." "Gorgeous house." "Beautiful home." "A very interesting piece of American history." "Wonderful city - beautiful homes." "Marty was a wonderful tour guide." "Nice tour guide. Marty was very knowledgeable." "Very educational." "Wonderful. Love the wallpaper."



## WHEN YOU THINK KEEPING IT *FRESH!* THINK *YUL BRYNNER!*

A colleague with a local tour company asked me, **“How do your tour guides keep their delivery fresh and lively?”** And, I said, “They like what they do and it shows.” But I guess it is a little deeper and more involved than that. Because we do not have a small, concentrated guide staff who works every day giving tours all day long, day in and day out, there is a huge variation in the way our tour is delivered by the 55 volunteer docents and the 13 or so staff guides. And, theoretically, the potential for a rote delivery is lessened. [Definition: **by rote**: *from memory, without thought or meaning, in a mechanical way*] Though I suspect if you give all three or four tours in your shift there is a chance that you could “cut off your brain” and let your mouth and legs do all the work. I know on SuperMuseumSunday after giving 5 or 6 interpretations of the same room I end up saying, “I apologize but since I have given several tours I can’t remember if I told y’all . . . “

So I started looking into what “fresh delivery” means. And, my first thought was Yul Brynner who performed as **The King** in **“The King and I”** 4,525 times. Don’t you wonder how he kept his performance fresh? Just like our visitors, a theater audience comes to a show to see “a story freshly told.” The patron loses, “if an actor speaks his lines and walks through his blocking like an automaton” giving “the audience a stale performance.”

One of our local tour companies calls its staff “a cast” – as in a theatrical troop, which performs for

an audience. This is an apt analogy for our docents as well. Docents are expected to **perform** in a friendly and lively manner in providing insightful information and enticing visitors with the value of historic preservation [along with being a security guards as well as a shop and museum membership sale people]. And, just like a theatrical performer I suspect docents are thoughtful in their make-up, costumes, set changes (new collections items), vocal warm-ups, physical warm-ups and accommodating changes to the production (painters and repairmen, etc.). But putting aside all of those tasks, “much like an athlete, the actor has to find a core of energy to use for the performance. She has to focus on the story to be told, how she . . . is telling it . . . then focus all her energy on the telling. And then she has to **listen**. . . . Most importantly, she has to listen to the audience.”

When asked about performing as King Mongkut through so many performances, Brynner said “it’s a new audience, like a new person that you talk to. You address then in a different way and it is always fresh, always new.” Of this interview an entertainment writer said of Brynner, “He listened for the very subtle cues an audience gives and shades his timing and his delivery ever so slightly to their collective taste. He told them the story in a way that they could hear it.”

So if you are wondering about where the energy comes from – **it’s your audience**. And the writer goes on to say, “It takes a

lot of work to really listen to everything around you so you can make the story work for an audience.” Wishing you the energy and focus to deliver a vibrant and Yul Brynner-worthy performance for DH visitors.

### WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT “FRESH”

In an article on **“How to keep your sightseeing tour fresh”** the writer directs her comments to step-on tour guides who are on a motorcoach with visitors for one or several days and whose delivery will make or break the experience in a location. She offers, “The best way to keep a sighting seeing tour fresh is to keep learning as a guide.” [This is why the DH puts effort into providing content articles, training, and volunteer field trips. It’s all about learning and using your brain.]

This writer suggests several avenues to “fresh”:

**“Learn the latest news of the place of guiding.** Travelers are interested to hear what is happening in the destination. It helps to learn more about local life. . . . History facts will not change often but people are changing in daily life.”

**“Expand your knowledge on what’s going on in the outside world.** . . . When a tour guide understands more of other cultures, you can present your own culture in a better way and make it easy for foreign travelers to learn.” [This is a strong suit for our well-traveled docents. They can relate, identify and/or understand the people who come from

all over the world to see us, because they have been there too.]

Another writer offers:

**“Keep up-to-date with what is new on the subject, or at the sight.”** [Read your newsletter!]

**“Strive for continuous improvement in the performance.**

[Think about and evaluate your tours on your drive home and make mental adjustments. Think about your tour on the drive in and what you hope to achieve with your visitors!]

**“Look at the site or attraction product through the eyes of the visitor.** [Remember what it was like the first time you visited the DH. I recently went on a tour with Jeff and it was terrific to hear how someone else interprets the site. You are welcome to come on tours with other guides to see how they perform!]

**“As a performer, draw on the group’s energy** [There goes that “energy” again.], the guide may feel renewed during the many tours. So look at visitor reactions, feel their enthusiasm then perk up those that may seem dull or distracted by asking open and probing questions.”

And, we asked one of our exemplary tour guides how she keeps it fresh and her comments were all about content! And she writes:

**“The tourists are definitely interested in the family.** They like the idea that Isaiah was not a fancy architect, but a really intelligent builder who seemed to be making a success of himself here, and they like the fact that Sarah seemed to be a very strong woman who raised a family alone.”

She notes having *stolen* good information from other guides.

And, please know that the sign of a terrific tour guide is one who can take information she has learned from someone else and adapt it to her tour.

“Another aspect is that it is the only museum house open to the public here (excluding the Flannery House) **not designed by a well-known architect of that era.** I think that's a real strong point, especially for those who come from the Owens Thomas. It helps put the Davenport House in a stronger perspective and they have a better respect for Davenport and the house itself--- that it was the work of a young craftsman living the American dream. They like the fact that Davenport used the house as a showcase. And if there's time, they really respond to the story about Cornelia dying and her husband taking the position in Austria etc. and Sarah raising Cornelia's children. The Davenport has to compete with the Owens-Thomas, the Andrew Low House, Juliette Gordon Low etc. and so the human side of the story is very important and the house has a very unique story to tell from its inception of being saved by the seven women to what happened to those who lived here.”

**“I think you have to weave a story about the family around the outstanding architectural elements of the house.** There has to be a touch of the human element in each of the rooms or the docents are just parroting back what's been given to them to say.”

As I said in the beginning, our docents like what they do and it shows. The DH is extremely grateful for your service and willingness to perform.



***A MORTALITY PREVAILS!***  
**Savannah’s Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1820**

**Friday and Saturday nights in October 2011** (October 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29)

Two performances: 7:30 p.m. and 8:45 p.m.

\$15 in advance for adults, \$10 in advance children (ages 8-17) and \$17 for adults and \$15 for children at the time of the performance

Reservations recommended. Limited attendance.

60 minutes

**Program description:** Participants in the living history performance experience the story of yellow fever’s dreadful consequences which transformed the bustling seaport of Savannah into a ghost town. The action commences with a war of words between competing local newspapers on the fever’s outbreak and the municipal action that followed. Moving through the house and garden by candlelight, visitors observe the 19<sup>th</sup> century inhabitants as their thoughts turn to the contemplation of their own mortality and feature a consideration of the nature of phantoms, spirits, supernatural happenings and the ultimate nature of the soul. The fate and experiences of the uncounted half to the city’s population, both free and enslaved Africans, are revealed. As a culmination each visitor will participate in a “Lottery of Life and Death.”

Not suitable from children under 8 years of age.

*The performance requires that guests be able to walk up and down stairs and maneuver in the candlelit rooms.*