

The Grey Towers Legacy



Information and Calendar of Events



Volume 14, Issue 1

USDA Forest Service

2012

The Pinchots and The Greatest Good: How One Family Improved Social Justice and Civil Rights in America

The Pinchot family has a long-standing goal of conservation, civil rights, and social justice. Gifford Pinchot was not just a conservationist and a forester—he was a trust buster, fearless explorer, and a proponent of public electric power. He fought the corruption in which the rich and powerful dominated the agenda of government.



Gifford Pinchot

Pinchot is known for reforming how forests in the United States were managed and developed and for advocating the conservation of the Nation's forest reserves through planned use and renewal. He called it "the art of producing from the forest whatever it can yield for the service of man." We also know it as "the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run." As governor of Pennsylvania, Pinchot concentrated on popular reforms: improving the government economy, enforcing Prohibition, regulating public utilities, providing relief for the unemployed, and constructing paved roads to "get the farmers out of the mud."

This altruism is rooted in generations that came before, during, and after Gifford's time. His ancestors and relatives fought slavery; campaigned

for rights for Native Americans; provided free college education to men and women; supported the arts; founded and supported civil rights organizations; campaigned tirelessly for the rights of workers, women, and children; and much more. Few wealthy families of the nineteenth century can point with pride to such dedicated efforts on behalf of the less fortunate.

The U.S. Forest Service and its partners continue to explore this family's efforts to improve the basic human rights that we enjoy today. Grey Towers National Historic Site, Pinchot's ancestral home in Milford, PA, continues to deliver public programs and interpretive tours to thousands of visitors annually.

These Pinchot family members continue to inspire us and our visitors:

Amos Pinchot:

At the risk of alienating himself from his family and his niche in society, Gifford Pinchot's younger brother Amos fought vehemently for basic human and civil rights. We can learn from Amos' perspective that as a society, we must help people first meet their basic human needs. Once those



Amos Pinchot

needs are met, people will then think about the environment.

Amos Pinchot spent the majority of his adult life fighting for people he thought were bullied by "Big Business" and government. In 1915, he headed an organization called the Little Civil Liberties Bureau, a group of lawyers who offered pro bono defense of cases that protected basic civil liberties such as free speech, free press, peaceful assembly, liberty of conscience, and freedom from search and seizure. The Little Civil Liberties Bureau eventually became the American Civil Liberties Union. Amos served on its Board until his death.

Cornelia Pinchot:

Cornelia, Gifford Pinchot's wife, was a suffragette who helped get women the right to vote. She worked tirelessly for public good, helping to put an end to child labor, taking a stand against low pay and poor working conditions for women, and pursuing fair and just treatment of minorities in our country. She joined committees, started trade union leagues, and walked picket lines with working women who were demanding equal pay for equal work. She was a founding member of the Committee 100, which was dedicated to justice and equality for African American citizens, and helped increase the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) legal defense and education fund by \$120,000 within the first 7 years. Today we



Cornelia Pinchot

(Continued on page 2)

The Pinchots and the Greatest Good (continued)

can revisit Cornelia's viewpoint that women—as a strong block of constituents—can bring about change in a society.

Antoinette Pinchot

Johnstone: Like her brothers Gifford and Amos, Antoinette (Nettie) was raised in an atmosphere surrounded by the arts, natural beauty, and humanitarian causes. In 1892, she married Sir

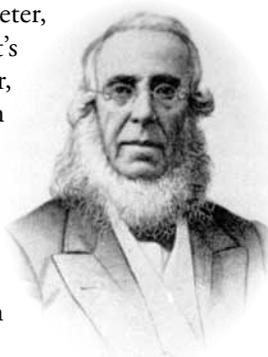
Alan Johnstone, a British Diplomat. She was known to direct her energies toward promoting social causes. During World War I, Antoinette organized and managed the large American hospital near Paris. While living in Holland, she was instrumental in bringing relief to British soldiers who escaped from German prisons.

Peter Cooper: Peter, Cornelia Pinchot's great-grandfather, was an American industrialist, inventor, and philanthropist. Because he believed that men *and* women deserved a free

education, he created the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in 1859 in New York City. Cooper Union provided a location for local citizens to participate in social and political debates and hear free lectures on science and government. It also served as the place where some of our country's most important organizations, such as the Red Cross and NAACP, were organized.



Antoinette Pinchot Johnstone



Peter Cooper

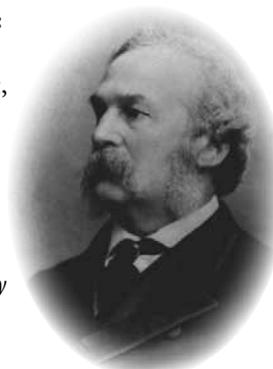
Cooper organized the privately funded United States Indian Commission, dedicated to protecting and elevating Native Americans in the United States and eliminating warfare in the western territories. His altruism was felt throughout the generations, as evidenced in a letter he wrote to the governor of New York in 1867: *"A good human intelligence feels bound to use all its powers to accomplish the greatest good for the greatest number of people."* Hmmm....sounds familiar!

James Pinchot:

According to Gifford Pinchot, it was his father James whose *"...foresight and tenacity were responsible...for bringing Forestry to this continent. That being true, he was and is fairly entitled to be called the Father of*

Forestry in America." It was James who encouraged Gifford to pursue a career in forestry when no such profession existed in America. He also endowed the Yale School of Forestry and dedicated a portion of his Grey Towers estate to establish the Milford Forest Experiment Station, the first of its kind in the United States.

James participated in the financing and founding of the National Academy of Design and the American Museum of Natural History. He was also instrumental in bringing the Statue of Liberty to America. He held positions with the National Geographic Society, Washington Academy of Sciences, and the Society of American Foresters. He was founder of the first association in America for providing model tenements for the poor, a project in which he remained actively involved until his death in 1908.



James Pinchot

Amos Richards Eno:

Gifford's maternal grandfather was a successful businessman and philanthropist from Simsbury, CT. He was a founding benefactor of the Simsbury Free

Library, among other philanthropic gestures. Amos built the Fifth Avenue Hotel at 23rd Street in New York City, known in the 19th century as "Eno's Folly" since it was considered too far uptown to be successful. He founded the Second National Bank of New York, headquartered at the hotel, which was hit by scandal when Amos' son embezzled millions of dollars and then fled to Canada to avoid prosecution. Amos personally repaid the millions that were stolen to the depositors. He owned the land that is now occupied by the iconic Flatiron Building and the swampy hunting grounds now known as Madison Square Park, where the official rules of baseball were developed because he allowed baseball teams to practice there.

Want to learn more about these fascinating family members? If so, ask us about the walking tours of both Milford and New York City, the lecture/film series, and the publication "The Pinchots of Grey Towers: One Family, One House, One Legacy."



Amos Richards Eno

"A good human intelligence feels bound to use all its powers to accomplish the greatest good for the greatest number of people."

—Peter Cooper

Cornelia's Moat Adds Architectural Cleverness to the Landscape

When Cornelia Pinchot was redesigning the Grey Towers landscape after she and her husband Gifford inherited the property, she wanted to increase the amount of flat terrain that was next to the mansion. From 1927 to 1931, Cornelia worked with landscape architect Chester Aldrich to design an extension of the East Terrace and the half-moat that sits about 14 feet below it.

The resulting wall helped dramatize the view of the mansion as visitors approached from below by visually heightening the house from that angle, an effect that is still visible today. The moat is a clever play on the French chateau style of the home.

Cornelia covered the new curved stone wall in cascading branches of forsythia planted in pockets in the wall. She then added several varieties of water lilies and goldfish to the moat and planted a hemlock hedge east of the moat to enclose this new garden feature.

Today the moat is a favorite spot for all Grey Towers' visitors, especially on a warm summer day when one can sit along the stone walls and enjoy the lush plant life, goldfish, frogs, and the pair of 350-pound lead turkey sculptures.



Blooming forsythia in the moat dramatizes the view of the mansion.

The sculptures were purchased from Mr. Aldrich, although he originally offered them as a gift "as a slight token of [his] thankfulness for Milford hospitality." The moat is a wonderful place for visitors to reflect, be inspired, and imagine what life was like at Grey Towers almost a century ago.



Water lilies in the moat are enjoyed by visitors and frogs.

Here are some commonly asked questions about the moat:

How wide is the moat?

The curved moat is 17 feet wide.

How much water does it hold?

35,000 gallons.

What happens to the fish and frogs in winter?

They overwinter in the moat without any problems. A larger threat is the great blue heron that stops by for breakfast throughout the spring and summer!

How is the moat cleaned?

Every spring the Forest Service staff catches the fish in nets and places them in temporary water tanks so the moat can be drained and cleaned. More than 2 tons of beech leaves and nuts are removed each year and stored for use as compost.



Local artists gain inspiration from such Grey Towers landscape features as the moat.

New Guide to Trees of Grey Towers Available in 2012



A new guide that introduces visitors to more than 30 prominent members of the Grey Towers' tree community will be available in 2012. Use the illustrated booklet on a self-guided stroll through the landscape or during one of our guided tree walks. It is filled with interesting facts and tidbits about the 30 trees, what products they provide, and what threatens them today, among other information.

Visitors who enjoy the new **Guide to Trees of Grey Towers** will understand and appreciate why Gifford Pinchot said, "By George, I'd like to come back 100 years from now and see my trees."

Ask to borrow a copy of the tree guide at the ticket counter while you are visiting Grey Towers and be inspired by the same tranquil landscape that encouraged the Pinchot family to accomplish all that they did for our Nation!



Festival of Wood Promotes “Goods From the Woods” August 4–5, 2012



The Festival of Wood helps us recognize the many ways we use wood in our everyday lives and how sustainably managed forests can provide that wood today while ensuring forests for the future.

The Festival of Wood will be held August 4–5 in 2012. This popular festival has gained a reputation for helping thousands of people make the connection between a sustainable marketplace and sustainable management of forests. Since 2004, we have successfully expanded the festival’s activities, programs, and events to help celebrate our natural and cultural heritage of wood. Most events are free!

Highlights of the 2012 Festival:

Unique wood crafts and art will be exhibited, sold, and demonstrated. These include wood furniture, pipe boxes, Shaker boxes, sawdust folk art, wooden snowflakes, wooden bowls, wood turning, fretwork, and hand-carved sculpture, among others. The crafts component of the festival, which is cosponsored by the Pocono Arts Council, illustrates how wood is used to create beautiful objects that we use in our everyday lives.

Children’s activities will include games and toys that contain wood and wood products. Children can build bluebird nest boxes (from wood, of course!) and learn about habitat conservation. Live amphibians and reptiles will visit.

Free music with wooden instruments will be provided each day.

Educational exhibits and handouts will be provided by a variety of organizations and agencies. Topics will include reintroducing the American chestnut, the next generation of landowners, tree identification, U.S. Forest Service wood technology initiatives, and reducing your carbon footprint.

All three floors of the historic mansion are open for visitors both days. There will be a \$5 fee.

The Festival of Wood is a collaborative project of the U.S. Forest Service at Grey Towers; Grey Towers Heritage Association; Pocono Arts Council; and many, many community partners.

Applications for food vendors, wood crafters, and educational exhibitors can be downloaded from our Web site at www.fs.fed.us/gt. Festival programs and site maps will also be available on the Web site.



Local craftsman Ed Yountz demonstrates wood turning on a lathe.



Bill Dauer (right), a U.S. Forest Service employee from Durham, NH, explains the intarsia wood craft technique to a festival visitor.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION AT GREY TOWERS OFFERS UNIQUE FOREST PROGRAMS, PROMOTES NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP



Teachers: Are you looking for a way to...

- Link the past with the present and make it relevant to the future?
- Bring history, civics, and forest ecology alive?
- Illustrate the connections between the disciplines that your students study in school?
- Provide your students with an opportunity to earn extra credit?

Our conservation education programs provide these opportunities by focusing on...

- Why it is important to care for our forests.
- The belief that the natural resources on our public lands should benefit all citizens.
- Conservation history and our individual responsibilities as citizens and stewards of the land.

In addition, a visit to Grey Towers National Historic Site will introduce your students to the Pinchot family legacy and the contributions they made to social, economic, and political reforms at the local, State, and Federal levels as well as their support of the arts and education.

Visit our Web site at www.fs.fed.us/gt to learn more about specific programs for students, or call us at 570–296–9630.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is Grey Towers?

Grey Towers is a 44-room French chateausque mansion that was built in 1886 by James Pinchot. Today it is administered by the U.S. Forest Service and serves as an education and leadership development center for natural resources. It was donated to the public in 1963 by Dr. Gifford Bryce Pinchot to carry on the legacy of his father, Gifford Pinchot, eminent conservationist and two-term Pennsylvania governor.



Grey Towers serves as an education and leadership development center for natural resources.

What did Gifford Pinchot accomplish?

As founder and first chief of the U.S. Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot introduced and then put into practice the groundbreaking concept of conservation—the sustainable use of our natural resources. Gifford was an eminent conservationist who helped create the National Forest System, which today comprises over 190 million acres. Gifford and his wife, Cornelia, made tremendous changes in the economic, social, and political climate of the Commonwealth.

Who were some of the other Pinchots?

James and Mary Pinchot, Gifford's parents, built Grey Towers in 1886. James grew up in Milford and became a wealthy businessman who made his fortune in wallpaper. As patrons of the arts, James and Mary were supporters of the Hudson River School, and James was co-founder

of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. James had a strong conservation ethic and vision for the Nation, and both parents encouraged their son Gifford to pursue forestry as a career. Amos Pinchot, Gifford's brother, was his political confidante and advisor, a lawyer who helped found the American Civil Liberties Union. Their sister Antoinette married a British diplomat and focused her energies on social causes in Europe, including running the American hospital in France during WWI.

Were the gardens at Grey Towers always so lavish?

No. Although the grounds included a large rose garden and apple trees when James and Mary Pinchot lived there, Grey Towers was mostly a working farm. It wasn't until Gifford and his wife Cornelia Bryce Pinchot moved to Grey Towers in the 1920s and 1930s that the gardens, under Cornelia's planning and vision, began to take shape. Cornelia worked with landscape architects and designers to add all the plantings and stone features in the landscape, including the buildings. She and Gifford planted over 100 trees.

Why can't we see the upper floors of the mansion?

The second and third floors of the mansion have been renovated as an active conference center, in keeping with the original intent of the gift of Grey Towers from Dr. Gifford Bryce Pinchot. He wanted to make sure Grey Towers continued to be a place where dialogues and conversations about natural resource conservation continue to take place, just as they did when his father lived there. Check the calendar schedule to find out when a three-floor tour or an Open House is offered to give visitors a look at those upper floors.

Who can use the Conference Center at Grey Towers?

Any natural resource agency, group, association, or organization that is working on conservation or has natural resource conservation as its mission.

What can I do at Grey Towers?

You are encouraged to join us on a guided tour of the first floor of the mansion and

the grounds. You can also walk around the grounds, see the historic gardens, or take a hike on our Forestry Trail. We show free visitor films throughout the day. We also plan a number of public programs throughout the visitor season. Grey Towers hosts school programs, conferences, and leadership development programs.

Can I have my wedding or take wedding photos at Grey Towers?

As nice as the landscape is, it is not within the scope of our mission to host weddings or other private social functions. There are a few locations in the landscape outside of the historic corridor where we allow wedding photos, as long as they don't interfere with our primary functions and use. You must obtain approval to use these locations in advance.

How do we get to the falls?

The waterfalls are located on private property, and the landowner no longer allows public access.

Is Grey Towers haunted?

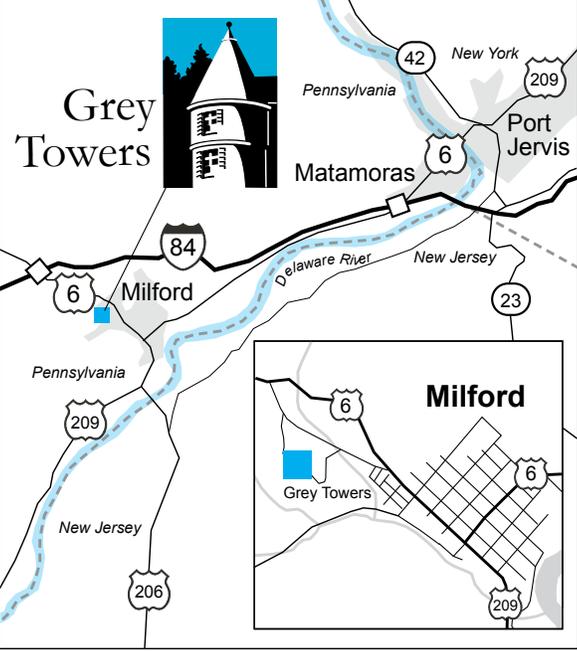
There have been no documented sightings of ghosts, though some claim to have "felt" a presence. It depends on your personal interpretation and beliefs.

Why isn't there a dining room in the House?

Grey Towers served mainly as a summer home, and Gifford and Cornelia Pinchot spent a lot of time outdoors. The outdoor dining table, also known as the Fingerbowl, served as their dining room and is the most popular feature in the landscape.



The Fingerbowl is the most popular feature in the Grey Towers landscape.



Grey Towers

Phone: 570-296-9630

On the Web: www.fs.fed.us/wo/gt

E-mail: greytowers@fs.fed.us



151 Grey Towers Drive
PO Box 188
Milford, PA 18337

Volunteer/Internship Positions Available

Have a passion for history? An interest in conservation? Do you love to garden? Enjoy talking to people? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might enjoy volunteering at Grey Towers. Opportunities exist for volunteers to:

- Guide tours
- Work in the gift shop
- Help with gardening and landscaping
- Participate in research and curatorial work
- Help with Grey Towers maintenance and facilities

Throughout the year, Grey Towers relies on its volunteers, who contribute thousands of hours. Volunteers have an opportunity to share years of valuable experience, skills, and knowledge. And it's a rewarding experience—Grey Towers volunteers are invited to two volunteer appreciation and recognition events each year and can earn incentive gifts.

COLLEGE STUDENTS: Do you have an internship requirement? Do you want to get some work experience or build your resume? Consider a 12-week internship with Grey Towers—perfect for students majoring in history, environmental science, arts, landscaping, and more!

For more information, call 570-296-9630 or send an e-mail to greytowers@fs.fed.us with the word "Volunteering" in the subject line.



Published by the
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
State and Private Forestry
Sidney R. Yates Federal Bldg., 4 NW
201 14th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

*This newsletter was edited, designed,
and produced with assistance from the
Northeastern Area State and Private
Forestry.*

For information about this and other
Grey Towers publications, contact
Lori McKean at lmckean@fs.fed.us or
call 570-296-9672.

The USDA is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.

Printed on recycled paper using
environmentally friendly ink.