

## **The Fabric of Marriage: Wedding Dresses, 2008 - 2009**

An elaborate display of wedding gowns from the Gunn's vintage clothing collection focused on the history of weddings and wedding dresses, spanning the mid 19th and early 20th centuries, while tracing Washington's history through the people that wore them. One of the prized pieces displayed during the exhibition is the wedding dress made and worn by Abigail Brinsmade when she married Frederick Gunn on April 16, 1848. An extensive display of wedding photographs from Washington residents, spanning the last century, accompanied the wedding gowns throughout the museum.

### **Wedding Dress Preservation Workshop - July 26 & August 23, 2008**

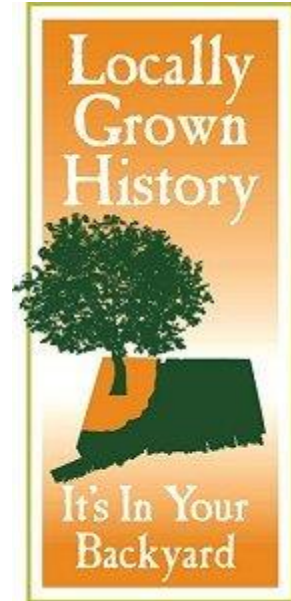
In conjunction with the exhibition, "The Fabric of Marriage: Wedding Dresses," we offered a two-part workshop in July and August on



preserving historic wedding gowns and costumes. Sarah Griswold, curatorial consultant, has many years of experience working with the preservation of vintage textiles. She offered an educational lecture on the proper archival materials and housing required for professional storage and care of historic costumes on Saturday July 26th in the Wykeham Room of the Gunn Memorial Library. Mrs. Griswold also demonstrated proper techniques for storage of vintage clothing and showed how not to store them, with examples of recently donated items in non-archival boxes and plastic wrapping. At this program, interested individuals were able to purchase and order archival materials, including boxes and tissue paper. The second part of the workshop took place on Saturday August 23rd. Participants picked up their supplies and got assistance in properly storing their garments for preservation.

## Locally Grown History Day at the Gunn: Roundtable Discussion on the History of Marriage

On Saturday, October 18, 2008 -- Locally Grown History Day — the Gunn Memorial Museum hosted a roundtable discussion of the history of marriage practices with local clergy. Marriage has evolved over the centuries and is still evolving today. Discussions included the difference between Christian marriage and state licensing, the relationship between marriage and procreation, the sacramental nature of marriage and where same-sex unions fit into the equation. Participants included: The Reverend Dr. Catharine Randall, the newly ordained minister of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, The Reverend Dr. Christopher Webber, the author of *Re-Thinking Marriage*, the complete background to the current debate over a definition of marriage, and Universal Minister and Justice of the Peace, the Reverend Joseph A. Mustich, et al. This discussion was held in conjunction with the exhibition "The Fabric of Marriage: Wedding Dresses."



Northwest CT museums joined together this fall to highlight their treasures, culminating with a multitude of events on Locally Grown History Day. Maps and passports to visit museums throughout the area were available at the Gunn Museum.

**"The Victorian Lady"** performance was sponsored by the Gunn Museum on June 14th at the Washington Club Hall in conjunction with the 4th annual Connecticut Open House Day.

While dressing in vintage clothing and accessories, Kandie Carle adds humor, history and intriguing anecdotes about fashion, home life and the etiquette of men and women. Ms. Carle created this one-woman show in 1996. She has assembled a vast collection of authentic Victorian and Edwardian clothing and accessories dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the turn of the twentieth century. With many years of research in social history and fashion behind her, along with humor and grace, Ms Carle shared her passion for history and love of these eras.