

The Times Record

Dining with Longfellow

BETH KOWITT Times Record Contributor

In conjunction with the first annual Longfellow Days, the Brunswick Bed and Breakfast will hold a Longfellow Dinner Thursday. The meal will be one of the first events in the three-day celebration of the life and work of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who was an 1825 graduate of Bowdoin College.

The dinner will be from 6:15 to 9 p.m. and will include favorite Longfellow-family dishes. Dr. Layne Longfellow, host of events throughout the three days, will present a poetry reading during the evening.

His presentation at Bowdoin College a year ago helped to initiate the celebration. Dr. Longfellow was a professor of psychology. After retiring from a Hall of Fame

professional speaking career, he discovered the poetry of his relative. Now he is the Poetry Ambassador of the Friends of the Longfellow Historical Site.

The Brunswick Bed and Breakfast innkeeper, Mercie Normand, is preparing an authentic menu that includes tomato farcies, which are baked, stuffed tomatoes; roast beef, which Normand said is today's equivalent of pot roast; vegetable soup and, for dessert, sponge cake. Period-appropriate wine will also be served.

"The Longfellow National Historic Site has very helpfully shared his (Longfellow's) food preferences. There are a lot of references to food in his writing," said Normand. "We will bring them to life."

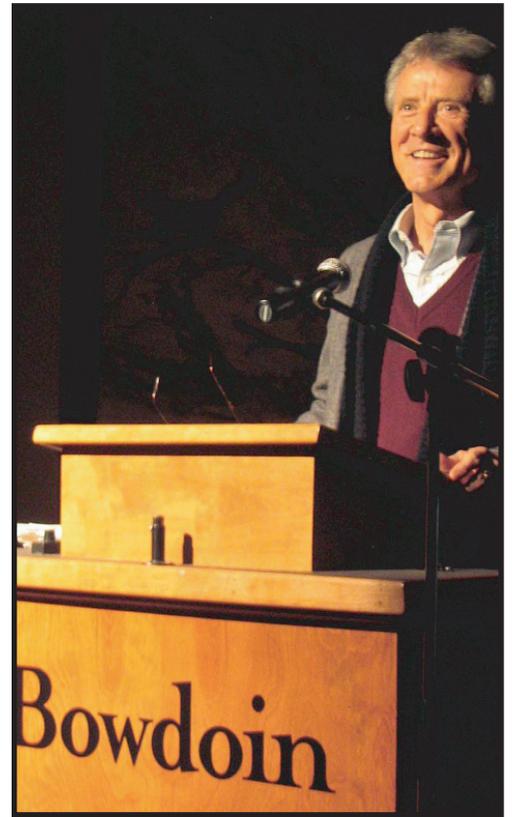


Photo by Maryli Tieman

Layne Longfellow hosts Longfellow Days events.

Dr. Longfellow, whose great-great-grandfather Michael was the younger cousin of Henry, will read what he called "gentle, reflective dinnertime poems."

Dr. Longfellow will read the poet's work in period costume and to music composed by Michael Hoppe. "I'll do poems that relate to Maine and to dinners that he had in his home. It will be historically authentic," he said of the dinner, which will seat from 35 to 40 people.

Tickets for the dinner are \$50, and proceeds will benefit Longfellow Days 2006.



SIDE DISH

"I verily believe that the love of bread and butter goes with us from the cradle to the grave. It is perhaps the one taste which time, travel and luxury cannot change. It requires an apprenticeship to learn to eat olives - one has to study hard to acquire a taste for shrimps and frogs and pates de fois gras - but a love for bread and butter comes by intuition, it is an instinct! Long live bread and butter!"

- From Henry W. Longfellow's Journal, Sept. 25, 1835