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NEWS FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE

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New Exhibition's National Tour Begins in New Hampshire

***America's Kitchens* Opens at the New Hampshire Historical Society in June**

CONCORD, NH—*America's Kitchens*, a new traveling exhibition organized by Historic New England, begins its national tour in New Hampshire. The exhibition opens at the New Hampshire Historical Society's museum, located at 6 Eagle Square, Concord, on June 11.

America's Kitchens showcases the important role of kitchens throughout American history. Based on extensive research and authentic historical kitchens, the exhibition features recreated kitchens, artifacts, photographs, and the personal stories that bring them to life.

Kitchens tell stories—about families and women's roles; preparing food without running water, electricity, or refrigeration; new technologies; changes in gadgets and appliances; and shifts in values and everyday life. The exhibition features vignettes of historic kitchens in colonial New England and 19th-century Illinois, as well as a traditional adobe kitchen in the Southwest, and a 1950s bright blue, "show kitchen." Through interactive experiences, visitors can learn what it was like to churn butter, share a kitchen memory, or jot down a recipe from one of the many cookbooks available.

Each item in the exhibition tells a story and excerpts from letters and diaries reveal both nostalgic memories as well as despair at the endless drudgery of kitchen work. Although kitchen chores have changed from the multi-tasking of colonial and early 19th-century households—cooking, laundering, making soap and candles, spinning, and minding children—to common activities taking place in kitchen

today—paying bills, doing homework, entertaining, and microwaving popcorn—the kitchen remains the “heart of the home.”

Organized by Historic New England, the national tour of *America’s Kitchens* is made possible by the Gilbert H. Hood Family Fund, the Mars Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Presentation of the exhibition at the New Hampshire Historical Society is funded by Associated Grocers of New England, Inc., and Vintage Kitchens.

America’s Kitchens will be on view at the New Hampshire Historical Society’s museum through January 17, 2010. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. The museum is also open Mondays, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., from July 1 through October 15 and in the month of December. Admission is \$5.50 for adults; \$4.50 for seniors; \$3 for children 6-18, with a family maximum of \$17. Children under 6 and members of the New Hampshire Historical Society are admitted free.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition is the new book *America’s Kitchens* by Nancy Carlisle and Melinda Nasardinov, with Jennifer Pustz. Lavishly illustrated with drawings, photographs, and ephemera from Historic New England’s collections, among others, the publication chronicles what it was like to live and work in kitchens that had none of the conveniences we now take for granted. The book retails for \$34.95, and is available at the Society’s museum or online at nhhistory.org.

The *America’s Kitchens* exhibition and publication are part of Historic New England’s *Year of the Kitchen*, a celebration of the role of the kitchen in times past and present. For a complete list of special programs, house tours, and exhibitions, visit AmericasKitchens.org.

Founded in 1823, the New Hampshire Historical Society is the independent nonprofit that saves, preserves, and shares New Hampshire history. The Society serves thousands of children and adults each year through its museum, library, educational programs, publications, and outreach programs. For more information visit nhhistory.org or call 603/228-6688.

Historic New England is the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive regional heritage organization in the nation. It offers unique opportunities to experience the stories of New Englanders through their homes and possessions. For more information visit HistoricNewEngland.org.

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Calendar listing

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