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Painter, diarist, curator, collector, and globetrotter **Edith Cleaves Barry** developed her resume from her family mansion on Summer Street in Kennebunk. This completely restored home base can now be yours for \$1.425 million.

Who knew adding a man cave in Kennebunk's landmark Taylor-Barry House would earn rave reviews from [the preservation group] Historic New England?

Finished by master carpenter Thomas Eaton in 1804, the house at 22 Summer Street was originally designed for William Taylor before the Barry family, overlords from the China Trade, purchased it in 1841 and lived here 130 years.

Luminous among the Barry clan is **Edith Cleaves Barry** (1884-1969), the society portraitist and globetrotter who founded the Brick Store Museum. A sparkling show at the museum this year has highlighted Barry's Mediterranean sojourns of 1903 and 1922 with pictures, diary entries, and contemporaneous tweets in 2012 to match, day to day, the young woman's vivid impressions as she travels. Her ghost reaches out to us—friends us—from a parallel universe.

Today, her simultaneous 1903/2012 entry is: "Took steamer to Capri [with fellow painter John Singer Sargent on



FROM LEFT: BRICK STORE MUSEUM; KATIE J. JOHNSON



Edith Barry and her mother Ida traveled the world, including a visit to the Philippines.



board]. At landing place we got a luncheon and then took a carriage to the town of Capri (Hotel Blue Grotto)."

Buona notte, Signorina! Dazzled by orange groves and blue waves, young Edith has just been bewitched by Amalfi and Sorrento, "impatient to see the famous tarantella..."

Many houses whisper, but these are thoroughly modern tweeting walls! Before you visit this house, check out twitter.com/#!/edithbarry and see what the charming Yankee ingenue has gotten herself mixed up in.

Listed by Bill Gaynor of Legacy Properties, Sotheby's International for \$1.425 million, this 12-room, five-bedroom Federal landmark was sold to Theresa and Ronald Cain for \$500,000 in 2002 (down from \$619,000) with a catch—Historic New England, the preservation organization, is allowed a yearly stop-by to ensure its historic aspects are receiving proper stewardship.

Why would a hockey guy want to get involved in this?

"We've owned this house for eight years," says Ron Cain, co-owner of the Portland Pirates (which solves the mystery of who owns *Zamboni*, the 32-foot Boston Whaler sport

fishing boat in the Kennebunk River). Like clockwork, "Historic New England comes in once a year, and we have to adhere to their requirements." Try not to think of Frasier and Niles, with white gloves and clipboards.

As for how he was drawn into all this, Cain says, "We vacationed in Goose Rocks and toured the house. I fell in love with it on first sight.

"The opportunity to develop this house by focusing on its positives is no different from other businesses I build," he says, including "a third-party shipping" firm that makes Cain not unlike the original shipping merchants who first lived here. "General Electric is a client. If you need a part, say, for your refrigerator, we very likely run the distribution center that ships it to you," with headquarters in Atlanta. Cain also owns a professional management operation and the sports management firm Selects Hockey.

Here as elsewhere, "the bones were good."

Lovely bones. Thomas Eaton, the same designer-builder who built Wallingford Hall and Kennebunk's Unitarian Church, which has a Paul Revere bell, didn't hold back when he dreamed up this high Federal-style masterpiece.

FROM TOP: COURTESY BRICK STORE MUSEUM; LEGACY PROPERTIES; SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY; KATIE J. JOHNSON (3)



Entering below the sunburst transom, whose glass panes resemble a fan, visitors can't help but love the stairway with a graciously shallow inclination, accompanied by a Moses Eaton stenciling on lime-sand plaster (punctuated by echoing fan images inspired by the Chinoiserie) that guides the eye to the second floor. The stencils frame glowing expanses of Venetian red that suggest fading frescoes and afford the walls the richest of textures.

Also "high": details on the Samuel McIntire-like mantel on the salon fireplace, articulated with London putty.

"Yes, the old Rumfords. My son's room upstairs has the exact same fireplace."

A few steps away, Cain gently knocks on a wall. "We had the horsehair plaster reaffixed."

Then he guides us into the kitchen, transformed in a knowing, sensitive way: "Before there was a staircase here that went up to the maid's quarters, so we opened this all up and got rid of the staircase. All the floors were linoleum, so we've restored the Old King's pine floorboards underneath."

"King's pine?" A big guy, Cain shyly admits, "I like to read biographies of John Adams, Washington."

He raps out the cast who updated the kitchen: "Danny LaPointe was general contractor. Sylco Cabinetry out of East Waterboro" did the custom cabinetry in cream. Blue Rock Stone Center did the granite countertops.

He sees us looking enviously through the window at the garden and says, "K2 [Landscaping Co.] did most of the hardscape" for the dreamy outdoor kitchen.

Cain's significant achievement here is, without losing its architectural treasures, he's turned this landmark into a wonderful, dynamic place to raise a family as opposed to a museum.

Two horse stalls in the man cave (he scrupulously avoids the term) have been turned into a Golden Tee arcade and a shiny copper bar. Yet the horse stalls are still there.

"We flipped the original planking" in the same room for a more rustic, informal, family-room feel. But if a new buyer wants to change it back, "It's still there."

Nobody on earth is going to complain about the new furnace, plumbing, electrici-



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ty, and central air.

There's also an awareness that surpasses 'stewardship' of how the house has evolved from family to family across the years. For instance, the same brass registers that must have been added near the turn of the last century are still there, and gleam.

Two butler's pantries, a smoke chamber for game in the attic, and a corner cabinet Barry commissioned the John Calvin Stevens firm to create during the summer of 1951 to hold her blue and white Staffordshire china collection will help new owners host lavish dinner parties as Barry did in her zenith.

In the 1930s, Barry turned the woodshed into her studio, with a fireplace and millioned picture window looking out on the tall evergreens on her long, dark back yard.

This diminutive performance space is still remembered by locals as the venue where *Dear Sarah* was staged.

Considering the dimensions of Edith Barry's spirit, it's arrogant and unenlightened for social media vipers of today to dully suggest the media she enlivened



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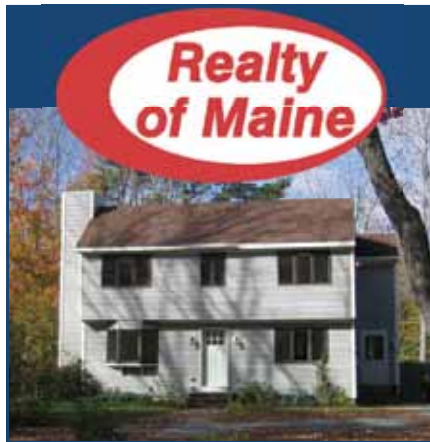
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NOTES

Tricks & Tweets



Tweets

- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/22/1903: Took steamer to Capri. At landing place we got a luncheon and then took a carriage to the town of Capri (Hotel Blue Grotto).

22 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/21/1903: ...Besides the dance there were several short operettas, supposed to be funny but were sung in Italian...point was lost for me.

21 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/11/1903: We took the boat back to Naples and it seemed like returning home when we alighted at the Hotel Bristol.

11 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/8/1903: Amalfi - In the gulf made by the jagged cliffs the surging sea was the most brilliant blue imaginable - a crystal peacock blue.

8 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/7/1903: From Pompeii we took train to La Cava and there we took a carriage and drove to Amalfi (Capaccini Convent Hotel - No. 8 & 10).

7 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/4/1903: We arrived in Naples early in the morning of June 4th. The streets were dirty, the people were dirty, and the houses were dirty, but we went to a hotel on the hill, beautiful view.

4 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

6/2/1903: At about quarter of eleven this morning we stepped into a tender and were taken over to the famous rock of Gibraltar.

2 Jun
- 

Edith Barry@Edith Barry

5/28/1903: Mr. John S. Sargent is onboard and likewise Mr. John C. van Dyke. Sargent is a great big, red-faced man with black whiskers.

28 May

As I was reading through Edith Barry's journals, I thought Twitter was the perfect platform for that to get the little short sentences she jotted down during her travels," says Brick Store Museum's curator of exhibitions Cynthia Walker.

So as part of her 2012 show, *Impressions of a World Traveler*, which closed in January, Walker has been tweeting comments from Barry's private journals every day, as though we're traveling with her during the same days this summer on the internet.

Walker admits there's a bit of a *Julie & Julia* aspect to her identification with Barry, who was young, shy, and sensitive during her 1903 trip through the Mediterranean.

"I was born 100 years after she was, so I immediately felt a connection," Walker begins. "She was really close to her sisters, and so was I. I visited Italy in 2003, she visited in 1903.

"When I opened her scrapbooks and journals from her 1922 voyage to Italy, France, and Austria, I found I could compare photographs she took matched up eerily with the same places I'd seen in my own travels. I wanted other people to see this."

She "came to the idea independently of tweeting [Barry's daily impressions] because I couldn't think of another way to get everyone to read it. Without the tweets, you'd have to figure where the diary is. It's kind of stuffed into our archives, and you need

to make an appointment to get to see them. There are 10 or 15 diaries, one per trip, and also scrapbooks





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HOUSE OF THE MONTH

that are leather bound, with the gold cursive writing that says *My Voyage* or *My Trip*.

"She's 19 in 1903. You wonder how she could seem so alive. Who was she, really?"

"Her classmates called her Wisp. The view I get of her from her diaries is she really seems like she's very concentrated on her craft and art but is also looking for beauty in the world, no matter what it is."

Surely there were racy encounters in Europe. In Naples, say. Didn't reality ever give her a pinch?

"She never put unmentionable things to pen, but in 1912, when she traveled to Algeria, in the middle of the night, they'd go to these houses with belly dances and then not mention them back in the Kennebunks."

What happens outside the Kennebunks stays outside the Kennebunks.

As for her brush with John Singer Sargent, "You'd think she'd have gone up and introduced herself [on the deck of the steamship in 1903], but there's no evidence she did. She certainly seemed outgoing with her friends, but she might not have been the type to take on a celebrity like that. She'd have appreciated his art from afar. That's most definitely like me."

Shy vs. shy.

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Barry's official portrait as a lieutenant in New York City's Women's Reserve Camouflage Corps during World War I.

weren't social. Twenty-two Summer Street vibrates with Edith Barry's performances, her travels, her dreams.

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Where will the Cains go now? What's the next challenge now that their children are growing up? Like Edith Barry, this voyager is tangled up in blue. "Sea Grass on the ocean-front, on Gooch's Beach."

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For more, visit portlandmonthly.com/portmag/2012/07/barry-extras.



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