

OUR TOWN BROOKLINE

A Monthly Magazine

Affable and Irascible

Congressman
Barney Frank

ALSO INSIDE

Brookline Couple
Owns Castle Hotel

Cruising Down
the Danube

Keeping Your
Nest Empty

Hidden Traumas
Among the Wealthy

OUR TOWN
BROOKLINE

June 2007

Table of Contents

Features

One of Their Homes Really *Is* a Castle6
by Michael Siegel

Learn how an MIT professor became the Lord of Wollaston and the Baron of Langley; and, with the help of his wife, transformed a 14th century English castle into an award-winning hotel.

Letter from the Publisher

Whether speaking out for affordable housing, corporate accountability, environmental protection, or gay rights, Congressman Barney Frank is well respected by colleagues and constituents alike. Mark Angney recently sat down with the Congressman at his local office and shares all the details in this month's cover story.

As summer vacations beckon, we invite you on a couple of escapes to Europe. Have you ever fantasized about owning your own castle in England? Brookline residents Stuart and Yvonne Madnick have not only made this fantasy a reality, but they've turned their medieval castle into an award-winning hotel.

JUNE 2007

One of Their Homes Really Is a Castle

By Michael Siegel

Brookline resident Dr. Stuart Madnick purchased Langley Castle in 1985.

Working with his wife, Yvonne, they have established it as one of the foremost hotels in England, winning the title of "Best Small Hotel in North East England" in 2002, 2004, and 2006, and, most recently, the Silver award for "Best Small Hotel in England" on April 18, 2007.

Dr. Madnick's everyday identity is as the John Norris Maguire Professor of Information Technologies in the Sloan School of Management and School of Engineering at MIT. But to the English, he is the Lord of Wollaston, a manorial title that he acquired from the Earl of Litchfield in 1986. Recently he also became the Baron of Langley.

Stuart and Yvonne are constantly making improvements to Langley Castle which add greatly to the pleasure of visitors – such as the new gazebo, topiary garden, and refitted restaurant. They are committed to maintaining the castle for posterity, preserving the structure and all of its historic grandeur.

The Barony of Langley

The Barony of Langley stretches back to 1165, more than 800 years ago, when it was held by Adam of Tindale. The title has been linked to famous English rulers and knights of the past. Langley Castle, the Barony's ancient seat in Northumberland, the northernmost county of England, was constructed around 1350, during the reign of Edward III. In the 14th century, the Barony passed to the 2nd Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, son of "Hotspur," before being sold to Henry VIII. Eventually it was purchased by the Radcliffe family around 1641.

Both the Barony and the castle were seized by the Crown from James Radcliffe, 2nd Earl of Derwentwater, upon his execution at the Tower of London in 1716 because of his support of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. King George I assigned this, and other properties, to the governors of Greenwich Hospital, a Crown charity.

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In 1882, Cadwallader Bates, a local historian and Sheriff of Northumberland, purchased Langley Castle – but not the Barony – from the Crown. Thus, they were separated for the first time in more than 500 years. Cadwallader devoted much of his life up to his death in 1902 to the restoration of the castle.

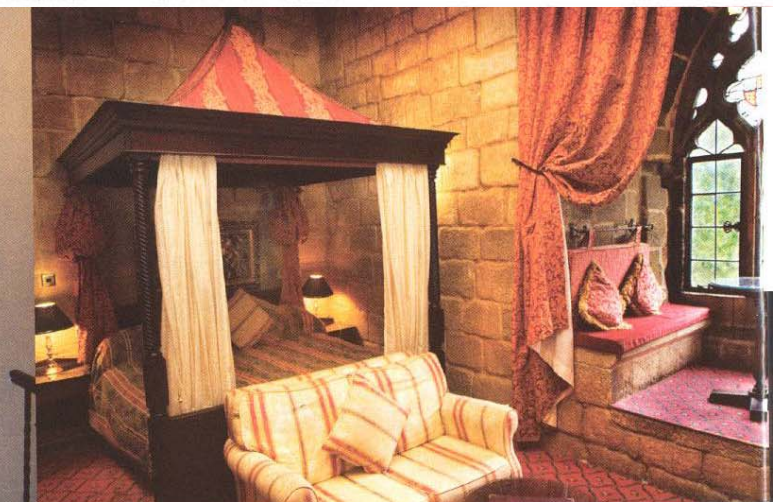
After 125 years of separation, Langley Castle and the Barony of Langley have finally been reunited. Dr. Madnick – now the Baron of Langley – recently acquired the title from the Crown. Dr. Madnick commented: "Langley Castle has been our 'labor of love.' We have tried to continue the work of Cadwallader Bates to restore Langley to all its past glory. Now by reuniting it with the Barony of Langley, the restoration is truly complete."

A Family Affair

"We spend quite a lot of our time traveling," Yvonne purrs in a French accent totally unspoiled by

LEFT: Stuart and Yvonne Madnick in the foyer of their Brookline home, dressed for the Boston Lyric Opera's Venetian Ball.

RIGHT: The Greenwich guest room at Langley Castle.



the 30 years she has spent in the United States. (Before retiring, she ran a successful sales and marketing company.) "A lot of my friends say they would love to have my life. We're very fortunate."

Yvonne Madnick is glamorous quite unlike anyone else you're likely to meet. Her blonde hair rises from the very top of her head in a spiraling cone, tapering to a point. Her clothes are all in the Chanel bracket, but at the same time she can be seen combing the auction sites of Europe for historic pieces to fit the castle's décor or rummaging through local material stores to coordinate colors and fabrics for updates to the glorious hotel rooms.

Her purse is full of photographs of the couple's Shih Tzu, Bijoux - one or two in his birthday suit, but the majority in far more elaborate attire, such as a Santa Claus costume, a Hanukkah outfit, and a tuxedo. "He is the joy of my life," she says. "His brother appeared in *Sex and the City* on TV, but we are convinced that Bijoux is the real pick of the litter."

Yvonne and Stuart's home in Brookline is a French Tudor design, furnished in Louis XIV and XV style with antiques from all over the world. On their Bösendorfer grand piano is a photo of Yvonne with Bill Gates. "He's a charming guy," she says, intriguingly. Does she know him then? "Yes, Stuart has been an expert witness for Microsoft. We met him at a party at MIT and he agreed to do this picture with me."

Stuart and Yvonne Madnick in front of Langley Castle.



Two of Stuart's three grown-up children, Lynne and Howard - and Howard's wife, Heather, have worked at Langley. Stuart commented, "Our castle is truly a family affair."

Exceptionally Well-Preserved

"Most of England's castles are in one of two conditions," Stuart explains. "Either they've been lived in for centuries and modernized throughout that time by the architects of the day, or they've been abandoned and are in ruins. Ruins do not usually get into that deteriorated shape due to weather, but the fact that people steal the stone."

In this sense, and in several others, Langley is unique. "The walls are stone, seven feet thick, but the floors were made of wood. So when there was a great fire in 1425, the floors were burned away, leaving just the shell. The castle was left this way for almost 500 years. Because the famous Hadrian's Roman Wall - 60 miles of high-quality stone, 8 feet wide and 10 feet high - was only a few miles away, there was no need for Langley's stonework. Furthermore, since that region of England was quite rural, there were not many people around to steal stone. This is why the section of Hadrian's Wall nearest to Langley is one of the best preserved."

Because of these facts, Langley is viewed as one of the most architecturally pure castles in the country. After being vacant for so long, it was bought in 1882 by Cadwallader Bates who, curiously, was also married to a French woman, named Josephine. He restored it, and Josephine, though she spoke no English, completed the 30-year project after his death. The chapel they built on the roof, which still has the stained glass windows depicting saints Cadwallader and Josephat, was recently restored after almost 100 years of disuse.

These distinctions have been appreciated by many. For example, Langley Castle is listed in the New York Times # 1 bestselling book, *1000 Places to See Before You Die*, and was featured on the premier episode of *Hot Hotels* on English television.

Breaking Some Rules

As with Cadwallader and so many since, Stuart fell in love with Langley Castle the moment it caught his eye, though this was unexpected.

"It's amazing he did really," Yvonne reflects. "My husband is very conservative. I'm very glad, because it is so beautiful, but I am still amazed that he did."

"In 1985 I had just sold my interest in a business that I had co-founded," he explains. "Then a friend came across a little piece in a magazine about this castle for sale in England and how to write away for a brochure. I did, out of pure curiosity, and the pictures were beautiful. I had to go on business to Europe soon thereafter and decided to take a look at it while I was over."

The subsequent purchase of a castle and its conversion into a hotel violates four and a half of Stuart's five rules of business, he likes to joke. "Number one: Don't go into a retail business, too risky. Number two: Don't go into any business you know nothing about. Number three: Don't go into a business that's thousands of miles away from you. Number four: Don't go into a business that's in a foreign country. And number five: Make sure you at least speak the local language - which is only half violated by the differences between British English and American English."

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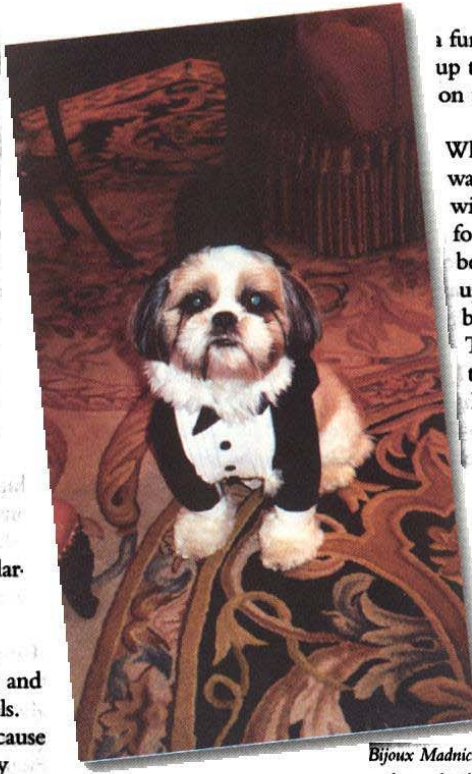
A Lucky Break

Stuart admits, "Sometimes success comes from brilliance, and sometimes from luck – or maybe both. But not long after I turned it into a hotel, the law changed regarding marriages. Previously, marriages could only be performed in a church or the town hall. Now, other venues could be used – if they were approved by the registrar of marriages. Langley Castle was one of the first venues in North East England to get such a wedding license." Now there are 160 weddings booked for 2007, making it one of the region's most popular places to get married.

"Type 'medieval castle hotel' into a search engine and Langley Castle is one of the first things that comes up," Stuart says. "The Internet has worked very well for us, particularly as we got in right at the beginning of it."

A Tour of the Castle

The castle consists of four floors with towers and turrets extending upward two additional levels. Stuart often describes it as a "cozy castle" because it is not huge in size and definitely has a cozy feel. It contains a restaurant for about 50 people on the ground floor. The top floor is mostly



*Bijoux Madnick
on hat and tails.*

a function hall – for all those weddings – that can hold up to 120 people. There is a magnificent drawing room on the second floor with huge Gothic windows.

When first opened as a hotel, the rest of the castle was devoted to eight luxury bedrooms, many boasting window seats that cut into the seven-foot castle walls, four-poster beds, saunas, and Jacuzzis. Last year a ninth bedroom was added by extending the main staircase up an additional level to reach one of the towers built at roof level – creating the new Tower Room. The planning, approval, and construction process took almost three years – since Langley was a Grade I Listed Building and any such modification requires extensive review and approval from multiple conservation and historical protection agencies.

In addition, ten years ago, the nearby stone building that original served as the stable was converted into eight comfortable bedrooms and junior suites. The Madnicks chose to call this annex "CastleView," since every room has a wonderful view of the castle. Both the castle and CastleView have been so popular that the Madnicks frequently have trouble booking in when they visit. In those cases, they must resort to staying at other nearby hotels. Stuart turns this into a positive by noting, "This gives us a chance to see the competition firsthand."



Yvonne and Stuart Madnick, with their puppy Bijoux, in the backyard of their Brookline home, overlooking the Brookline Reservoir.

A Silver Award

Langley Castle Hotel recently received the Silver Award in the category of “Best Small Hotel of the Year,” in the national finals of “Enjoy England for Excellence 2007” – the “Academy Awards” of the English hospitality industry.

Langley Castle won Gold in the regional award ceremony for North East England in October last year. This was the third time Langley Castle won the regional award for Best Small Hotel (the previous years being 2002 and 2004.) Langley then went on to represent the North East against the nine other regional tourism bodies. The entrants from

these regional heats were whittled down to the top three hotels in England. The national award ceremony was held on April 18, 2007, just prior to St George’s day, in London.



Upon hearing of this, Stuart and Yvonne comment that “Langley has been described as “modern luxury dressed in medieval clothes.”

This modern luxury is the result of 20 years of dedicated efforts by many people, who are now being recognized by this honor.”

“We have shown photos of the castle to our friends,” Stuart says, “but when they actually visit it, they all just stop in their tracks and say the same thing – “It’s a real castle!” The photos are great, but nothing matches the experience of actually being there.

Dr. Michael Siegel is a Principal Research Scientist at the MIT Sloan School of Management where he actively researches issues related to world stability, hospital operations and risk management, and information integration. He lives in Brookline with his wife Judi, and children Olivia and Max, both attending Devotion Public School. They all share his love of fruit, cooking, and travel.