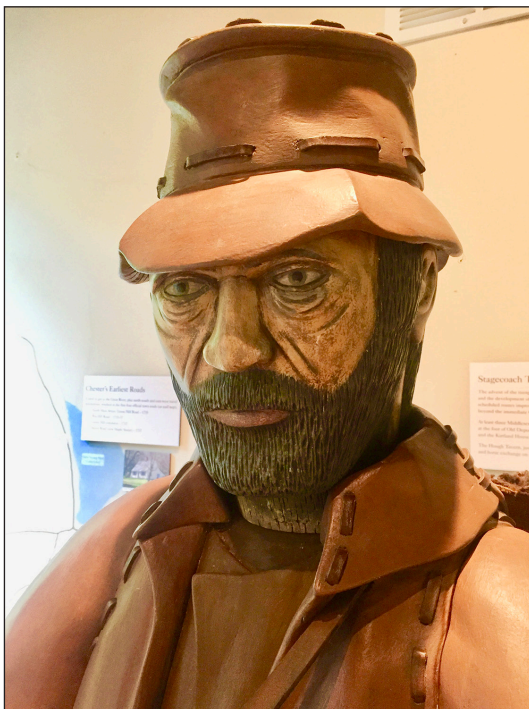
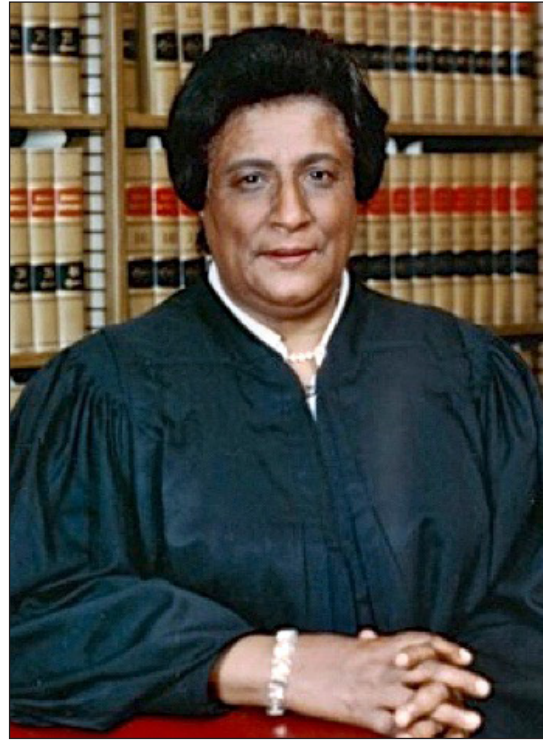




Chester Historical Society



Annual Report 2017 - 2018

President's Message



Another eventful and successful year for the Chester Historical Society concluded on May 31, 2018. Finishing its 48th year, the organization eagerly opens the 2018 museum season and is forming plans for its 50th anniversary in April 2020.

Our excitement this past year, however, was tempered by the March passing of our founding president and longtime cheerleader, Barbara Delaney. Along with a few other enthusiastic Chester residents, Barbara and husband Edmund (pictured) were at the forefront when the Chester Historical Society rapidly ascended from concept to reality. The launch occurred in less than two months as more than 100 founding members attended the Society's first meeting on April 24, 1970. Barbara Delaney served as the organization's president for its initial six years.

Barbara's spirit and influence were ever present. Perhaps her most visible legacies are two historical Chester buildings. One of the Society's first projects was restoration of the Old Town Hall, which was re-opened as the Meetinghouse on Memorial Day 1973. As the Society neared its 30th anniversary, Barbara was once more in the front row, encouraging the purchase of the 1860 Griswold Mill building that became the Society's first home. In June 2010, Barbara and Bob Blair, a fellow Society founder, opened the doors when Chester Museum at The Mill welcomed visitors for the first time.

Barbara often used the phrase "Onward and Upward" at the close of meetings or events, words that have become an inspiration for us to research and then identify imaginative opportunities to share Chester's rich history with others. We are so driven...Onward and Upward. Thank you, Barbara!



Chester Historical Society

2017 - 2018

Officers

Skip Hubbard	<i>President</i>
Sandy Senior-Dauer	<i>Vice President</i>
Cary Hull	<i>Vice President</i>
Jenny Kitsen	<i>Vice President</i>
Jo Anne Park	<i>Treasurer</i>
Tammy Eustis	<i>Secretary</i>
Diane Lindsay	<i>Curator</i>
Robert Miceli	<i>Historian</i>
Martin Nadel	<i>Robbie Collomore Music Series</i>

Trustees

<u>May 2018</u>	<u>May 2019</u>	<u>May 2020</u>
Christopher Moore	Keith Dauer	Marta Daniels
Bettie Perreault	Ed Meehan	Tom Marshall
Nancy Watkins	Joel Severance	Jackie Stack
	Bruce Watrous	Anna Sweeney
	Peter Zanardi	

Our front cover contains images from our twin 2017 seasonal exhibits, *Postcards of Chester and 3 Chester Notables*.

Clockwise from top left:(1) Hugh Spencer's iconic photographs of Chester are some of our most valued artifacts of the town in the early years of the 20th century. The image is of Chester Cove from Laurel Hill Cemetery; (2) Constance Baker Motley, noted 1960s Civil Rights lawyer and Chief Justice of the 2nd Federal District (NY), treasured retreating to her Cedar Lake Road home for 40 years; (3) a young Hugh Spencer; (4) a man of mystery, the Leatherman's 34-day, 365-mile walking route included Chester stops in the 1880s.

Programs and Exhibits

There have been several noteworthy programs and events this past year. Our participation in the Chester Fair, where we highlighted several recent acquisitions to our collection, as well as promoting future events and programs, attracted 620 visitors. In September we promoted and participated in what has now become an annual event—The Old-Time Baseball Game. Although Chester did not prevail on the field this time, the event was very successful, attended by more than 275 tri-town fans.

During the winter months CHS held two very successful lectures and book signings, the first by Nate Jacobson, *The Waterhouse Grist Mill Saga*, on Nov. 12. Max Miller discussed his book, *Along the Valley Line*, on Jan. 21. Each attracted a crowd of more than eighty people who were intensely interested in the presentations.

Several programs were done for students of the Chester Elementary School. The Exhibits Co-chairs, Jackie Stack and Nancy Watkins made great presentations last June and even on Halloween this past October. Second graders will be coming to the museum later this month.

More than 950 people visited our museum this past year, enjoying the freshening of the *Streams of Change* upstairs exhibit and praising the Chester-oriented postcard exhibit in our seasonal exhibit area downstairs.

Along with the postcards were exhibits of *Three Chester Notables*—noted illustrator and artist, Hugh Spencer; The Leatherman, featuring a full-sized sculpture of him by our own Weymouth Eustis; and a stunning presentation of the life and career of noted Civil Rights lawyer and activist, Constance Baker Motley, presented in the main by Marta Daniels.

This year's seasonal exhibit, *Two Streams & Many Industries*, opened on June 1 to wide acclaim. As with past exhibits, the committee co-chairs are indebted to our curator, Diane Lindsay, for providing the vast majority of artifacts and materials used in the exhibit. The exhibit was also made possible by the research and efforts by Skip Hubbard, Cary Hull, Nate Jacobson and Rob Miceli.

The exhibit focuses on the development of Chester industry along the two branches of the Pattaconk Stream that run through town. It promises to promote and develop the history of the town and attract more townspeople to our museum.

*Sandy Senior-Dauer and Keith Dauer,
Exhibits and Programs Co-chairs*



Joel Motley III (left) reviews the Chester Notables exhibit of his mother, Judge Constance Baker Motley, with Trustee Marta Daniels, who curated the exhibit featuring period news panels, including many during the Civil Rights era. Also, Marta actively shared the judge's career with numerous on-the-road presentations throughout the state. She also hosted a presentation at the museum by Dr. Gary Ford about his new book on Judge Motley.



School visits to Chester Museum at The Mill usually involve time for a snack on the deck overlooking the Griswold Pond Dam.



The 1857-style baseball game with Deep River and Essex rivals is an annual event for the Miceli siblings, longtime fans of history and baseball. Above are Chester team manager Tom, together with Trustees Nancy and Rob.

History Preservation

The History Preservation Committee is responsible for the Society's collections, for accessioning new items, as well as cataloging and preserving the collection.

We accepted many donations this year, most notably a box of Silliman ledgers, journals and time books from the Berkshire Historical Society in Pittsfield, MA.

Pat Kosky, Ruth Thayer, Janice Benda and I continued to work most Tuesday afternoons and Friday mornings in the Meeting House Archive Room. We thank Ruth Thayer for her many years of work and, especially, her organizational skills, as she has retired from active participation in our group.

We work with the Exhibit Committee, researching records, photographs and artifacts in our collection to put on display. We have researched questions from Society members and other people. We have also scanned photographs for our collection, so the originals can be retained by families.

Through the year, the Society has continued to record oral histories from longtime residents for our archives. We hope to incorporate this personalized history into our future exhibits.

In the fall, the Society published Nathan Jacobson's book, *The Waterhouse Grist Mill Saga*, about the Waterhouse brothers whose grist mill on Goose Hill Road was the earliest industry in Chester. The book is another essential element of the Society's history preservation.

Diane Lindsay, Curator



This year's Creative Challenge fundraiser asked artists to create work using some wooden pegs found at M.S. Brooks & Sons. Foods, refreshments and social time, accompanied by a silent auction of the finished works are all part of the Meetinghouse gathering.



Our long-run second-floor exhibit was revised with a new focus on the impact of the Silliman inkwells. Special emphasis was placed on the pocket inkwell used to write letters home during the Civil War.

Development/Fundraising

A high priority for the Development Committee this past year was the continued retirement of member interest-bearing notes, totaling \$35,000. The notes replaced a mortgage on the Mill eight years ago and are valued at \$2,500 each.

This winter, the Society received an unrestricted donation of \$10,000 from Richard Spencer, which the Trustees approved to pay off four notes. Two additional notes were retired with success in managing the annual operating budget. Therefore, the debt on the Mill building at the start of FY 2018-19 is \$20,000.

Ongoing maintenance and improvements of the building and grounds at the Mill have required additional financial planning.

Fortunately, this was a good year for the Annual Appeal. The year-end drive reached a new high of more than \$12,300, covering nearly 44% of our initial operating budget.

Our Creative Challenge in April netted \$3950, thanks to the craftsmanship of 30 artists creating "pegs" artworks for our silent auction, and nearly 100 people attending the event at the Meeting House.

With the success of the Annual Appeal and the Creative Challenge, monetary donations and the continued growth of the investment fund, the Society had a balance of \$82,952 at year-end.

Additionally, the Society received from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County a grant for \$2486, which it is sharing with Deep River Historical Society. The two societies are in the two-year-long process of digitizing historical films of the towns to share through programs, classrooms and our museums.

Jenny Kitsen, Development Chair; Cary Hull, Fundraising Chair; Jo Anne Park, Sandy Prisloe and Bruce Watrous

Finances

Revenues for the annual operations of the Society are generated from three primary sources: membership dues, donations (Annual Appeal, museum visitor box, other) and fundraising events. Principal expenses for general operations include servicing our loan obligation, utilities, insurance and accounting, general maintenance, preservation and cataloging of archives, and exhibits.

Our Annual Appeal response continues to set new highs, this year topping \$12,000 with a 50% participation rate from membership. A one-time unrestricted gift, plus success in our operations, enabled us to retire \$15,000 of notes, reducing the open balance to \$20,000 at fiscal year end.

Following a reprint of the popular *Ferryboat* book, our funds allocated for Society publications remains strong with a balance in excess of \$10,000.

Essex Savings Bank customers voting for the Chester Historical Society as a favorite charity resulted in \$417 for the Society, the 6th consecutive year we have been the society with the most votes. We also received a \$500 corporate grant from Essex Savings Bank to offset the postage of mailing newsletters and annual reports.

Jo Anne Park, Treasurer

Operations Summary Fiscal YTD 6/1/17 - 5/30/18

The unaudited summary below reflects the YTD Operations Budget of the Society, which is apart from the Robbie Collomore Music Series. At press time, the fiscal year had not yet been closed. Final financials will be available when completed. By the end of June, our sole liability will be \$20,000 in interest-bearing notes.

Working Balance 6/1/17	\$5,711
	Revenues
Membership Dues	8,070
Annual Appeal / Donations	23,564
Museum Visitor Donations	954
Fundraising Events	4,888
Grants	3,286
Museum Sales	360
Other	1,010
Total Operating Revenues	43,132
Expenses	
Building Utilities	7,804
Maintenance & Operations	9,649
Fundraising Costs	685
Communications	769
Programs & Exhibits/Grants	1,769
Training	45
Museum Store Purchases	0
Interest on Notes	1,855
Transfer to Notes Retirement	15,000
Transfer to Maintenance Reserve	1,500
Total Operating Expenses	39,076
Net Operating Balance	3,056
Working Balance 5/31/17	8,767

Membership

As of May 2018 the Society has 227 current memberships, a net increase of 15 from the prior year (see back page). We added 19 new memberships to our rolls and processed seven membership upgrades, including five to Life. By level, we currently have 41 Individual memberships, 78 Family, 26 Benefactors and 82 at the Life level.

A vital membership is the foundation of any successful non-profit organization. A goal set in our Strategic Plan is to identify ways to bring more people into our annual membership program as well as increase interest in volunteer opportunities. Members can help by setting a goal to interest a friend in membership this year.

We encourage all members as well as non-members to stay current by signing up for our informative e-newsletter. Other than the Society-associated Robbie Collomore Music Series, we do not share any email lists with other organizations. We are on Facebook (Facebook.com/chesterchistoricalociety). Please visit our website chesterhistoricalociety.org.

Robbie Collomore Music Series

The 44th season of the Robbie Collomore Music Series was both an artistic and financial success. The All in the Fall grouping of concerts again proved to be popular with a record attendance.

The first concert of the season was our annual Barbara and Edmund Delaney Young Artist Concert featuring the Claremont Trio. This concert was a repeat appearance for cellist Julia Bruskin, who performed in 2015 with her husband Aaron Wunch on piano. The second concert was also a repeat appearance for classical guitarist Jason Vieux and bandoneon artist Julien Labro, who previously was the accordion player with the Hot Club of Detroit.

The November concert featured Hartford natives, the Curtis Brothers, with Ray Vega on trumpet. Their Latin Jazz brought down the house. The final concert was Ranky Tanky, American Roots Gospel Singers. Their performance of music from America's southeastern sea islands was a unique musical experience.

The Cornwall Trust has shown steady continued growth and we maintain a somewhat more defensive posture due to unsure economic and political stability worldwide. Because of the increasing complexity in organizing the concert season, the Collomore Committee decided to hire a part-time manager, Ann Drinan.

Collomore Music Committee: *Randy Allinson, Ray Archambault, Karin Badger, James Baker, Anne Easton, Andrea Ely, Karli Gilbertson, Donald Hanson, Rick Holloway, Martin Nadel (chairperson), James Paisley, Bettie Perreault, Sue Saltus and John Williams*

Chester Historical Society

Membership as of June 2018

Individual

Sosse Baker
Robert Bandzes
Frances Bertelli
Tom Brelsford
Margaret Breslin
Karen Carr
Samuel Chorches
Elizabeth M. D'Amato
Marta Daniels
Alma Carini Doak
Robert Dona
Helene Ferrari
Marilyn Ford *
Gary Ford *
John H. Ford
Jane Gordon
MarieAnne Heft
Martin L. Heft
Charley Hnilicka
Carol Horvath
Patricia Kosky
Dorothy Lavezzoli
Edward Leffingwell Jr.
Tedd Levy
Diane Lindsay
Lillian Manville
Tom Marshall
Carl Nilsson *
Betsy Watrous Pasinella
Bettie Perreault
Charles Priest
H. Peter Satagaj
Judith Lynde Schondorf
Sharon Soja
Elizabeth Watrous Stopa
Ruth Thayer
Elizabeth Tremalgia
Louise R. VanHaverbeke
Nancy Watkins
Daisy Watrous
Anne Winslow

Family

Eric & Ginny Anderson
James & Marian Bairstow
Dale Bernardoni
Rob Bibbiani & Mary Walsh
Robert Blair III & Kris Pollock
Mark Borton & Francine Cornaglia
Geraldine Carini-Garcia
Donna & Rick Carlson, Jr.
Ernie & Pam Cartier
Edward & Gail Castelli
James & Diana Castelli
Ted & JoAnna Chapin
Sherry & Herb Clark
Emelia DeMusis
& Stephen DeBenedet
Kristen DiErrico & Hans Lohse *

Lol & Charlene Fearon
Richard Fensky & Elaine LaFlair
Christopher & Sarah Fryxell
Ivey Gianetti & John Williams *
Mario & Dorothy Gioco
Roger & Elizabeth Goodnow
Pamela & Allen Graham
Edward Grzybowski
Coe & Carol Hawkins
Hayes Family
Richard & Patricia Holloway
Robert & Mary Humpage
Ted Hyneck & Claire Burns
Geoffrey & Carol Jacobson
Joel & Susan Jacobson
Harold & Linda Jones, Jr.
Randy, Beth & Emily Judd
Gerald & Mary Kelly
John & Wendy King
David & Diane Kukta
Kenneth Maxwell & Arlene Tunney
Pam & Doug McAvay *
Allan Mehlberg & Spruce Roden
Steven & Kathryn Merola
Madaline Meyer
Ann Monaghan & Family
Gil & Susan Morong
Richard & Lorraine Morrow
Russ & Deb Munson *
Charles & Susan Murphy
Arthur H. Napier III
& Barbara-Jan Wilson
Charles & Jo Anne Park
Brandon & Elizabeth Pearce
Don & Kristen Perreault
Kim & Kathy Price
John & Jennifer Rannestad
Jim & Marie Ready
Cookie & Fred Robertson
Ray & Jeanne Roussel *
John & Lisa Schroeder
Richard & Carol Anne Seaman *
Mel & Kris Seifert
Richard & Elaine Sevigny
Kyle & Chris Siegel
James B. Silliman *
Laird & Toni Smith *
Tom & Renee Smith
Suzanne Spire
Jacqueline Stack & Mark Riggio
Van & Barbara Standke
Alex & MaryAnn Stein
Richard & Leslie Strauss
William Swartzbaugh
& Joan Sepessy
Melody & Philip Tierney
Peter & Sally Tiezzi, Jr.
Gordon & Claudia Van Nes
Dave & Margo Viggiano
Skip & Margaret Weisenburger

Ronald & Lois Wickson
George & Patty Winter
Peter & Jane Zanardi
Burgi & Leo Zavatone
Bill & Agneta Ziegler

Benefactor

John & Janice Benda
Joyce Christy Birther **
Edward & Debra Calamari
Arthur Christianson
Jewel Christy **
Audrey Conrad
Andrew Drabkin & Brian Hodges *
Tammy & Weymouth Eustis
Mary & Bryant Frank
Barbara & Bob Fraser
Sonya Gill *
Helene & Ned Johnson
Mary Lewis *
Phyllis M. McDowell
Ed & Peg Meehan
Jean Mulford
Christine Palm & James Baker *
Sandy & Deedee Prisloe
Paul & Dawn Radicchi
Joseph Roach & Janice Carlisle
Mark Rohlfs *
Hila & Saul Rosen
Laura Straub
Gilbert & Patricia Veconi
Yenowich Sisters
Theresa Zwart-Ludeman

Life

Randy & Chris Allinson
Ray & Liz Archambault
Thomas & Kathleen Archambault
Albert Armington
Gil & Anne Bartlett
Phyllis Bevington
Thomas & Marianne Bladek
Robert Blair
Lary Bloom
Bill Bonfanti & Madeleine Winans
David Brooks
Gregory Cook
Michael & Felise Cressman
John W. Dalton
Keith Dauer & Sandy Senior-Dauer
Barbara Delaney
Deb Dembo
Elise Piquet-Doll
Gerry & Cynthia Dubey
Shirley Feldmann
Henry & Britt Flanagan
Jill Gladding
Peter & Jan Good
Robert & Lynda Gorman
Alva G. Greenberg

Mark & Cheri Ferrari Habersang
Donald & Monique Hanson
Karen & Jamie Hart
Kurt & Marion Watrous
Henstorf **
Leni Herschman
Skip & Karen Hubbard
Cary Hull & Al Malpa
Mrs. Edward C. Hull
Nathan & Geraldine Jacobson
Kathryn Watrous Jones
Jon & Doreen Joslow
Pauline Kaplan
Mrs. Jenny Kitsen
Steve & Ann Kitteredige
Pat Kotchen
Jules & Kathleen Kranich **
Pam Larson
Robert & Stacey Lewis
Carol LeWitt
D. Leonard Lieberman
Lorraine Lieberman
Margaret Lieberman
Donald MacDermid
Jess Maghan & Peter Walker
Robert Miceli
Christopher Moore
Deborah Morrow
Joel Motley III
William Myers **
Martin & Lois Nadel
Jil Nelson
Charles G. Nessler, Jr
Sandra Davis Owen
Donald & Katherine Paulson
Jo-Ann & Michael Price
Robert Radicchi
Glenn & Peg Reyer
Jeff & Holly Ridgway
Michael & Sally Sanders
Arthur & Judith Schaller
Rick & Terry Schreiber
Dr. Kim Senay
Joel & Adrienne Severance
John & Kimberly Stack **
Justine Tobis
William Vollers
BJ & Cory Watrous *
Christopher & Kelly Watrous *
Bruce & Beverly Watrous
Lynn Weymer
Whitelaw & Margaret Wilson
Virginia Winans
Victoria Winterer
Ron & Suzie Woodward **
James Zanardi
Richard & Joan Ziemann

***New Members**

****New Membership Level**