

## History Preservation

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

The core group of Ruth Thayer, Pat Kosky, Janice Benda and Diane Lindsay work most Tuesday afternoons and Friday mornings in the Meeting House Archive Room. Ruth and Diane have been attending a series of conferences on "Getting Your Archives in Order." We applied to the Traveling Archivist Program for a visit and were accepted. We are looking forward to the Archivist visit in July.

One of the functions of the group has been to serve Society members, and the larger community, as a resource, finding and interpreting collection materials. Inquiries from Chester and beyond have been answered. We have had several visits this year from descendants of earlier Chester families, looking for information and bringing donations. Recently we have started scanning more photographs and documents, as donors wish to retain the originals, but would like the Society to have a copy. The group also works with the Exhibit Committee members preparing for exhibits by researching records and searching for relevant artifacts in our collection.

The transfer of objects and archives from the Meeting House storage areas to the vaults at the Mill has continued. Only after objects and archives have been added to our Past Perfect database and photographed, or scanned, are they moved to the vaults.

The work of cataloging the collection continues. We are organizing the paper files from the early days of the Society, as well as adding new donations to the database. Considerable work remains and new volunteers are always welcome.

Diane Lindsay, Curator



The cover of *Ferryboat*, a children's book originally published in 1986 by Betsy and Giulio Maestro, was republished by the Society with the authors' permission and proved to be very popular, selling at the museum as well as numerous other local historical sites.



Professional appraiser Tom Perry, assisted by Trustee Bill Vollers, was one of 11 appraisers at the November Antiques & Jewelry Appraisal Day at St. Joseph Parish Center. As in recent years, the event attracted high interest from near and far, with more than 270 items coming through the doors. The 11<sup>th</sup> Appraisal Day will be held on Saturday, November 8, 2014.

## Fundraising

While raising much-needed funds for the Historical Society, our fundraisers generally have a valuable historical component, whether it's providing information about the history and value of a person's "antiques" or repurposing items with a Chester background.

Our 10<sup>th</sup> Antiques & Jewelry Appraisal event, held Nov. 9 at St. Joseph's Parish Center, was a great success, raising \$2400. Our 11 appraisers (all of whom donate their time to us) saw 274 appraisal items from 110 attendees from towns as far away as Columbia, Farmington, Mystic and Branford. Our 11<sup>th</sup> Appraisal is already scheduled for Nov. 8, 2014.

Our spring fundraiser, "Unearthed in Chester," featured a Reception and Silent Auction at the Meeting House on March 22. Forty artists created unique works based on rusted metal pieces found buried in an early Chester Center property. The successful event, initiated and chaired by Sosse Baker, raised nearly \$4,900. Next spring, on Saturday, March 21, we're planning to host another creative challenge in the Meeting House.

Ideas for Society fundraisers and event volunteers are always welcome.

Cary Hull, Chair

## New Bank in Chester Celebrates History

The Essex Savings Bank may be new to Chester, but its branch location is now full of history. Working with the Society's Curator Diane Lindsay, the bank selected 13 photos from our archives to display on the walls of its lobby and office areas. The framed images, some not previously exhibited, are 20x30" and larger. They are a must-see, whether you're a bank customer or not.

# Chester Historical Society

## 2013 - 14 Membership

### LIFE

Randy & Chris Allinson  
 Frank W. Appleton, Jr.  
 Ray & Liz Archambault  
 Harry & Hazel Archambault  
 Thomas & Kathleen Archambault  
 Albert Armington  
 Phyllis Bevington  
 Thomas & Marianne Bladek  
 Robert & Mildred Blair  
 Lary Bloom  
 Bill Bonfani & Madeleine Winans  
 David Brooks  
 Gregory Cook  
 Michael & Felise Cressman  
 Alys S. Cuneo and Lynn Weymer  
 John W. Dalton  
 Keith Dauer & Sandy Senior-Dauer  
 Barbara Delaney  
 Deb Dembo  
 Elise Piquet-Doll  
 Gerry & Cynthia Dubey  
 Shirley Feldmann\*\*  
 Henry & Britt Flanagan  
 Peter & Jan Good  
 Robert Gorman  
 Alva G. Greenberg  
 Mark & Cheri Ferrari  
 Habersang  
 Leni Herschman  
 Skip & Karen Hubbard  
 Cary Schuler Hull & Al Malpa  
 Mrs. Edward C. Hull  
 Nathan & Geraldine Jacobson  
 Kathryn Watrous Jones  
 Jon & Doreen Joslow  
 Howard & Pauline Kaplan  
 Mrs. Jenny Kitsen  
 Steve & Ann Kitteredge  
 Robert P. Klomp  
 Pat Kotchen  
 Pam Larson\*\*  
 Robert & Stacey Lewis  
 Carol LeWitt  
 D. Leonard Lieberman  
 Lorraine Lieberman  
 Margaret Lieberman  
 Donald MacDermid  
 Jess Maghan & Peter Walker  
 Evelyn Mather\*\*  
 Lou Matz  
 Robert Miceli  
 Christopher Moore  
 David & Deborah Morrow  
 Joel Motley III

Martin & Lois Nadel  
 Jil Nelson  
 Charles G. Nessler, Jr.  
 Sandra Davis Owen  
 Jo-Ann & Michael Price  
 Robert Radicchi  
 Harvey Redak & Justine Tobis  
 Glenn & Peg Reyer  
 Jeff & Holly Ridgway  
 Arthur & Judith Schaller  
 Rick & Terry Schreiber  
 Dr. Kim Senay  
 Joel & Adrienne Severance  
 Bruce & Beverly Watrous  
 Whitelaw & Margaret Wilson\*\*  
 Virginia Winans  
 William & Victoria Winterer  
 James Zanardi  
 Richard & Joan Ziemann

### BENEFACTOR

John & Janice Benda\*  
 Dale Bernardoni & Robert Wolfe  
 Ms. Spencer Boyd & George Bradley  
 Edward & Debra Calamari  
 Gil & Anne Bartlett  
 Arthur & Mabyn Christianson  
 Cal & Jill Gladding  
 Donald & Monique Hanson  
 Helene & Ned Johnson  
 Jules & Kathleen Kranich\*\*  
 Virgil & Jean Lloyd  
 Phyllis M. McDowell\*\*  
 Jean Mulford  
 Charles & Joanne Park  
 Sandy & Deedee Prislou  
 Paul & Dawn Radicchi  
 Janice Carlisle & Joseph Roach  
 Hila & Saul Rosen  
 Michael & Sally Sanders\*\*  
 John & Kimberly Stack\*\*  
 Chuck Still\*\*  
 Laura Straub  
 William Swartzbaugh & Joan Sepessy\*\*  
 Ed Swift  
 Ron and Suzie Woodward

### FAMILY

Eric & Ginny Anderson  
 Peter Auster & Lisa Wahle  
 James & Marian Birstow  
 Jack & Sosse Baker  
 Robert Blair & Kris Pollock\*  
 Donald & Patricia Blake

Mark Borton & Francine Cornaglia  
 Geraldine Carini-Garcia  
 Donna & Rick Carlson, Jr.  
 Ernie & Pam Cartier  
 Edward & Gail Castelli  
 James & Diana Castelli  
 Dick Chaffee & Susan Chetwin  
 Ted & JoAnna Chapin  
 Herbert & Sharon Clark III  
 Lol & Charlene Fearon  
 Frank & Helene Ferrari, Jr.  
 David Fredericks  
 Mario & Dorothy Gioco  
 Roger & Elizabeth Goodnow\*  
 Allen & Pamela Graham  
 Edward Grzybowski  
 Marcus & Maryanne Hall  
 Richard & Mary Harrall  
 Skip & Jeanie Haskins  
 Louis & Marie Anne Heft  
 Susan D. Joslow & Thomas W. Holland  
 Richard & Patricia Holloway  
 John & Judi Ivimey  
 Joel & Susan Jacobson  
 Geoffrey & Carol Jacobson  
 Jill Jones & Frank Kucharski  
 Harold & Linda Jones, Jr.  
 Angeline Craney & Steve Joseph  
 Randy, Beth & Emily Judd  
 Joan Keating & James Durning\*  
 Gerald & Mary Kelly  
 John & Wendy King  
 Roger Koontz  
 David & Diane Kukta  
 Genevieve M. Laskowski  
 Jeff & Lori Lawrie\*  
 Sam & Nikki Lindberg  
 Conrad & Lillian Manville  
 Claude & Catrin Martin  
 Ed & Amy Martorelli  
 Kenneth Maxwell & Arlene Tunney  
 Ed & Peg Meehan  
 Allan Mehlberg & Spruce Roden  
 Michael & Mary Elizabeth Merlini  
 Steven & Kathryn Merola  
 John & Madaline Meyer  
 Samuel & Mary Mirabito  
 Thomas & Ann Monaghan  
 Richard & Lorraine Morrow  
 Charles & Susan Murphy  
 Arthur H. Napier III & Barbara-Jan Wilson

Jack Nelson\*  
 Donald C. Paulson\*  
 Michael & Susan Peck  
 Don & Kristen Perreault  
 Patricia Petrus  
 Kim & Kathy Price  
 John & Jennifer Rannestad  
 Bruce & Mary Rayner  
 Jim & Marie Ready  
 Cookie & Fred Robertson  
 Neal & Judith Robison  
 John & Lisa Schroeder  
 Mel & Kris Seifert  
 Richard & Elaine Sevigny  
 Linda Bosnak & Howard Smith  
 Bob & MaryJo Sortland  
 Jacqueline Stack & Mark Riggio  
 Van & Barbara Standke  
 Alex & Mary Ann Stein  
 Richard & Leslie Strauss  
 Eileen Sypher & John Yrchik  
 Melody & Philip Tierney\*  
 Peter & Sally Tiezzi, Jr.  
 George & Linda Trevisani, Jr.  
 Carol Hooper & Charles Vasilakis  
 Dave & Margo Viggiano  
 Wayne Wahala & Lisa Gauthier  
 Skip & Margaret Weisenburger  
 Ronald & Lois Wickson  
 George, Patty & Maggie Winter  
 Peter & Jane Zanardi  
 Burgi & Leo Zavatone  
 Bill & Agneta Ziegler


### INDIVIDUAL

Frances Bertelli  
 Sally Bibbiani  
 Joyce Birtcher  
 Margaret Breslin  
 Jane Deuse Cable\*  
 Samuel Chorches  
 Marta Daniels  
 Alma Carini Doak

Robert Dona  
 John H. Ford  
 Elizabeth Gourlay  
 Martin L. Heft  
 Anne Hesser  
 Charley Hnilicka  
 Carol Horvath  
 Sarah Jansen  
 Laurel Johnson  
 Christopher Kearns  
 Patricia Kosky\*  
 Dorothy Lavezzoli  
 Edward Leffingwell Jr.  
 Tedd Levy  
 Diane Lindsay  
 Philip W. Maas Jr.  
 Elizabeth Malloy  
 Sally Marvin  
 William Myers  
 Hazel Negrelli  
 Betsy Watrous Pasinella  
 Bettie Perreault  
 Charles Priest  
 David F. Puffer\*  
 Bette Radicchi  
 Lewis Clark Robison  
 Matthew Sanders  
 H. Peter Satagaj  
 Judith Lynde Schondorf  
 Ann Smith  
 Sharon Soja  
 Patricia Steger  
 Mardi Steinau  
 Elsie Straube  
 Ruth Thayer  
 Elizabeth Tremalgia  
 Louise R. VanHaverbeke  
 William Vollers  
 Nancy Watkins  
 Elizabeth Watrous  
 Daisy Watrous  
 Dorothy S. Whiting  
 Anne Winslow\*

\*New Member

\*\* New Membership Level Membership as of 6/1/14

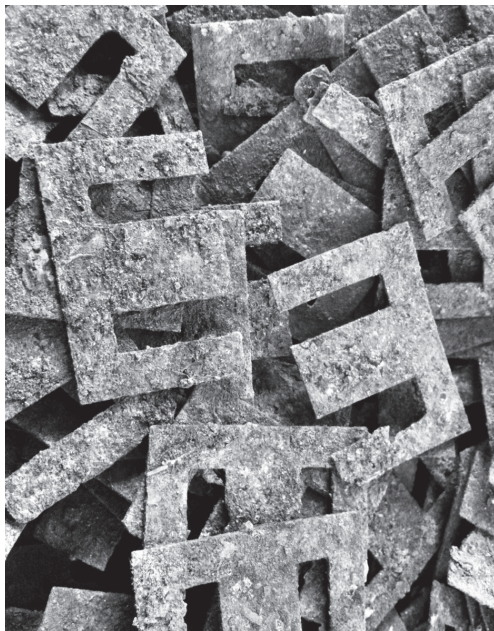


**Essex Savings Bank**  
 Service & Trust Since 1851

Funding for this Annual Report is provided by Essex Savings Bank as a part of their Community Investment Program



# Chester Historical Society



## Annual Report 2013-2014

## President's Message

I'm pleased to share the news of yet another successful and eventful year. With all the activity that goes on, it's also appropriate to reflect that this past April marked the 44<sup>th</sup> year since the Society was incorporated in 1970, the 14<sup>th</sup> since we purchased the Griswold Mill site building for renovation and the 4<sup>th</sup> since we opened Chester Museum at The Mill.

There is certainly no letup in the number of visitors and guests that we welcome to our museum, programs and events. In the 12 months since June 2013, nearly 2200 people came to Society-sponsored activities. Almost 900 visited our museum during the season and an additional 350 visited on a single day in February during Chester's Winter Carnivale!

Our non-museum event schedule was full, attractive and well-attended. Four free public offerings included programs on Steamboats on the River, Early Local Tools, Chester Food Memories and Connecticut Cycling Origins. Peter Walker led a Christmas program at the Mill. Two fundraisers, our annual Antiques Appraisal Day and Unearthed in Chester, a silent auction of art using discovered items, provided significant income to our annual operating budget.

The opening of a two-year museum exhibit, *Over the River & Through the Woods*, was the highlight on the exhibition front. Occupying the entire ground floor and focusing on early Chester transportation, the exhibit featured Train, Trolley, Steamboat and Ferryboat travel using artifacts, storyboards, audio, video, visitor pamphlets, plus a wall mural depicting the growth of Chester's road network.

In late spring we attained the rights to republish *Ferryboat*, a colorful and popular children's book originally published in 1986, but out-of-print for many years. The reception was extraordinary; copies were purchased in multiples; local museums and attractions were included in the distribution;

and, perhaps best of all, memories of childhood river crossings floated to the surface.

With so much to offer, we have undertaken low-cost initiatives to further market our museum and programs. The Society participation with a monthly booth at the Chester Sunday Market provided added visibility, pointing visitors to the museum as well as providing a venue to sell *Ferryboat* and other Society publications. Our exhibit in our Chester Fair building welcomed 600 visitors.

Our communications avenues now also include a monthly e-newsletter sent to our membership and beyond. The Society now has an active Facebook presence and is about to launch an enhanced website.

While not as visible or exciting, we have also been busy in administrative areas. In June, we were one of 25 organizations that completed a two-year program sponsored by Connecticut Humanities. The program, which leads to attaining Standards of Excellence certificates in specific areas, highlighted that we were doing well in certain areas (Mission, Interpretation, Audience, Stewardship of Collections), but were missing some criteria in others (Governance, Strategic Plan, Disaster Plan).

The Board of Trustees have since created and approved specific policies covering Governance, Conflict of Interest, Non-Discrimination, Collections & Exhibits. Our next steps are to formulate a Disaster Recovery Plan and to update a Strategic Plan for going forward.

Although based in history, "Going Forward" is always our focus: new exhibits, new programs, new ways to explore and share history, and many, many new friends along the way.

Skip Hubbard

June 2014



## Chester Historical Society

2013-14

### Officers

Skip Hubbard	<i>President</i>
Cary Hull	<i>Vice President</i>
Sandy Senior-Dauer	<i>Vice President</i>
Jill Jones	<i>Treasurer</i>
Pam Graham	<i>Secretary</i>
Diane Lindsay	<i>Curator</i>
Robert Miceli	<i>Historian</i>
Martin Nadel	<i>Robbie Collomore Music Series</i>

### Trustees

May 2014	May 2015	May 2016
Art Christianson	Donna Carlson	Ed Castelli
Paula Dutka	Keith Dauer	Pam Graham
Nate Jacobson	Cheri Ferrari Habersang	Jenny Kitsen
Pam Larson	Christopher Moore	Jim Ready
Bette Radicchi	Bettie Perreault	Joel Severance
Rick Schreiber	Matthew Sanders	Anne Winslow
Beverly Watrous	Bill Vollers	Peter Zanardi

Front cover (clockwise from top left) (1) Horn used to call Chester Ferry from our 2013-15 transportation exhibit *Over the River & Through the Woods*; (2) Tip of single-twist ship auger invented by Ezra l'Hommedieu in 1815; (3) *The Hartford* was one of numerous steamboats that were common sights along the Connecticut River in the late 1800s; (4) E-shaped metal pieces found at an old Chester property were the source material for artistic works at *Unearthed in Chester*, our 2014 art auction and reception fundraiser.

## Exhibits & Programs

The summer of 2013 saw record numbers visiting our museum. Beyond an attractive and appealing exhibit, the Society owes an enormous thanks to Diane Lindsay's coordination of volunteers, support of our board and CHS members, great publicity by Cary Hull and the tireless efforts of Skip Hubbard on many fronts.

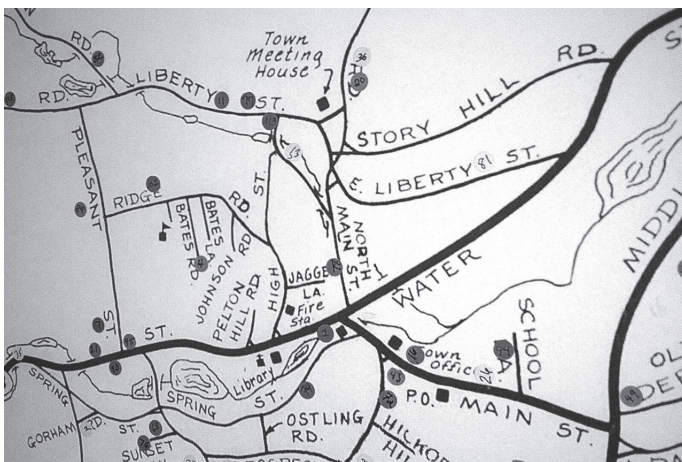
Several local groups received special tours this past year, including Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and the docents from Florence Griswold Museum. We are looking forward to getting more such requests. In August nearly 600 Chester Fair visitors stopped at the Society Building, which featured transportation and sale of the children's book *Ferryboat*.

In the fall Brenda Milkofsky, museum curator and consultant, provided entertaining stories of the steamboats that plied the Connecticut River and their history and connections to Chester. In December, the inimitable Peter Walker brought his delightful children's Christmas story to the Mill, along with his talented friends: Margie Warner's delightful sing-alongs, Karli Gilbertson's lovely soprano voice, and Nikki Lindberg as a beautiful Mrs. Claus.

In January, Thomas Elliot, architect and old tool expert from Westbrook, shared his remarkable collection of augers and planes, maps, and a wealth of information about early factories in Chester and Deep River.

A "crackerbarrel" event in early March brought together families and memorable cooking stories from Chester's past. The recipes and tales will contribute to the making of a Chester Cookbook that is in the works.

Leading up to our 2014 opening of an enhanced early transportation exhibit, Steven Holmes, Chester architect and bicycle history buff and enthusiast, brought some of his collection and presented an illustrated history of bikes and biking in Connecticut.



Have you posted your home yet? Come join the many residents who have already done so on this oversized road map of Chester. The map is a companion piece to resident maps of 1740 and 1790 and part of the Roads portion of *Over the River & Through the Woods*, the transportation exhibit at Chester Museum at The Mill.



The annual visit to Chester Museum at The Mill is sure-fire hit for the sixth-grade classes at Chester Elementary School. At the award-winning *Streams of Change: Life and Industry along the Patuxent* exhibit, the students use a history-based scavenger hunt handout to search and identify key aspects of the town's rich heritage.

For year two, the Connecticut Historical Society has lent us a fantastic "Ordinary" (hardly that!) or high-wheeler bicycle, and Bruce Edgerton has loaned us some terrific items from his train collection including the steam engine plate from the "Old 97" from the 1958 film, *It Happened to Jane*. We have also recorded some new train stories from Peter Zanardi and Harold Jones and a video of the Essex train featuring conductor Bruce Edgerton.

We again recognize and thank the Community Foundation of Middlesex County for the grant money to support this popular two-year exhibit.

We are always seeking community input. Please contact us with ideas for programming and exhibits, volunteers to help with refreshments and anything else that might occur to you. If you would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you.

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



Stephen Holmes, a bicycle enthusiast and collector from Chester, led a presentation on the "Origins of Cycling in Connecticut" at the Meetinghouse in May.

## 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 exhibit expenses.

In spite of successful fundraising events and exceeding our budget in membership and donations, a few expenses offset the positive news. A long, cold snowy winter, unexpected replacement of security system circuits and an increase in insurance rates had a negative impact on operating expenses, leading to less year-end funds to allocate to the retirement of debt and to contribution to a maintenance reserve account.

This year the Society was given permission by Betsy and Giulio Maestro to republish *Ferryboat*, their popular children's book. Proceeds from the sales will replenish and increase the Society's special fund dedicated to publications.

The Society applies for and receives grants to be used for specific purposes. This year we were awarded a \$4,655 Community Foundation of Middlesex County grant to be used for our transportation exhibit. We also received a \$1,500 grant from the Essex Savings Bank to help fund the Society newsletter and Annual Report.

Note: The Robbie Collomore Music Series, although legally a part of the Chester Historical Society, maintains its own accounts dedicated to its activities.

Jill Jones, Treasurer

### Operations Summary Fiscal YTD 6/1/13 - 5/25/14

The unaudited summary below reflects the annual operation of the Society, excluding the Robbie Collomore Music Series. At press time, the fiscal year had not yet been closed. Final financials will be made available when completed. Our sole liability is \$57,500 in interest-bearing notes. Two notes, totaling \$5,000 will be paid off in June 2014, reducing our balance to \$52,500.

**Working Balance 6/1/13** **\$7,843**

#### REVENUES

Dues and Donations	19,484
Fundraising	7,994
Grants	1,500
Museum Sales	494
Other	100
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$29,572</b>

#### EXPENSES

Building Utilities	9,012
Building Maintenance & Operations	1,639
General Operations	8,398
Fundraising	813
Communications	1,365
Programs & Exhibits	553
Staff Training & Education	27
Museum Store Purchases	237
Interest on Notes	2,699
Transfer to Notes Retirement	4,400
Transfer to Maintenance Reserve	500
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>29,643</b>
<b>Operating Profit/Loss</b>	<b>-71</b>
<b>Working Balance 5/25/14</b>	<b>\$7,772</b>

## Membership

The Society membership (see back page) continues to be strong, numbering 238 memberships representing approximately 410 members. We added eleven new memberships to our rolls and processed eight membership upgrades, four each to the Benefactor and Life Membership levels. By level, we currently have 72 Life Members, 25 Benefactors, 88 Family and 53 Individuals.

We encourage all members, as well as non-members, to stay current by signing up for our informative monthly e-newsletter. Other than the Society-associated Robbie Collomore Music Series, we do not share any email lists with other organizations. We also now have a Facebook presence and are about to launch an enhanced website (chesterhistoricalsociety.org)

## Robbie Collomore Music Series

The 40th season of the Robbie Collomore Music Series was both an artistic and financial success. The first concert of the season was our annual Barbara and Edmund Delaney Young Artist Concert featuring The Attaca String Quartet, who also represented our annual concert in conjunction with The Juilliard School. The second concert of the fall season presented the renowned Afro Jazz Fusion guitarist, singer and songwriter, Lionel Loueke. A sold-out house confirmed his stature as a giant in the world of folk/jazz guitar performer/composer.

In the spring we presented Kuok-Wai Lio in a classical piano recital of Mozart, Chopin and Schubert. The last concert of the season was an opportunity to hear TriBeCaStan, a Folk/Jazz synthesis of music ranging from India, the Middle East and American jazz. As usual, it is this kind of presentation that makes the Collomore Music Series unique among local concert series.

We have started a structural reorganization of the Collomore Committee so as to define and provide backup for critical functions. The purpose of this effort is to distribute the work more equitably, eliminate dependence on any one person for getting a job done, and ultimately provide assurance that the Collomore Music program will have continuance beyond the current committee membership. In an effort to broaden our committee base, two new members, Karin Badger and Francine Cornaglia, have joined the Collomore Committee.

The Cornwall Trust has shown steady continued growth and we maintain a somewhat more defensive posture due to unsure economic and political stability worldwide. The value of the account increased from \$126,925 on 1/1/2014 to \$134,619 on 4/30/2014.

Collomore Music Committee: Randy Allinson, Ray Archambault, Karin Badger, James Baker, Francine Cornaglia, Anne Easton, Andrea Ely, Karli Gilbertson, Donald Hanson, Rick Holloway, Doreen Joslow, Nikki Lindberg, Martin Nadel (chairperson), Bettie Perreault, Sue Saltus, and John Williams.