



ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Where we are
TODAY

Last March

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

Everything that the OCHM strives to be was changed due to the coronavirus pandemic. We are a community gathering place but were closed to the public for 112 days. We foster growth, learning, and exploration but could not welcome volunteers, researchers, or student field trips. We are a museum of objects and documents but could not accept donations. Events were canceled. Museums were deemed non-essential. We waited to open. And we re-imagined.

Because, in fact, everything that the OCHM strives to be, remained exactly the same. The OCHM is committed to the principle that our region's future depends upon the shared knowledge of its past. Our vision is to fully utilize our collection in order to become a thriving regional center where visitors of all ages and origins develop a lifelong love of learning and an enduring connection to those who came before us. Closing the doors does not affect this vision.

We knew that the museum that closed in March was not the museum that we would re-open. It would be better.

You will see in the pages of this report that the entire OCHM team met the challenges of 2020 head-on. We took the opportunities presented to us to complete projects that would be hard to do with the museum open. We learned new skills and became fluent in new technologies. We tried new things... and kept the ones that worked. We grew our audience with every tool available to us: social media, Zoom presentations, virtual tours and programs. We sent research reports and image requests around the country. We sold items from our Gift Shop around the world.

There will be challenges in the days ahead, and the museum field faces a fair number of them. I can assure you that the OCHM is a stronger, more agile organization than when it closed in March 2020. I am confident that we are able to meet the challenges that lie ahead. As we gain a handle on the pandemic and come together again to meet, gather and heal, the OCHM will be here. We will remain a community gathering place, we will continue to foster growth, learning, and exploration, and we will be the stewards of our region's objects and documents. And we will welcome you, our members and supporters, and very much look forward to doing so. Thank you for your support in 2020, and I look forward to all that 2021 and beyond has in store.



Katie MacDonal
Executive Director



Our
MISSION

The mission of the Old Colony History Museum is twofold: First, to collect, preserve and exhibit the history of the region of southeastern Massachusetts once known as the Old Colony. Second, through a vigorous program of outreach and education, we aspire to interpret the area's history in ways that are accessible, inclusive, and meaningful to local residents and visitors.



LEADERSHIP

STAFF

Elizabeth Bernier, Assistant to the Director

Michael Curran, Caretaker

Katie MacDonald, Executive Director

Bronson Michaud, Ruby Winslow Linn Curator of Collections

Saria Sweeney, Community Programming Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William F. Hanna, President

Paul T. Allison, Vice President of Building & Grounds

Kathleen M. Mulhern, Vice President of Personnel

Charles A. Thayer, Vice President of Development

Colleen C. Karsner, Secretary

Ann Trucchi Condon, Treasurer

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Warren Biss

Eileen Crochiere

Dean Larabee III

Kenny Loubeau

Peter G. Mozzone

William Napolitano

Cynthia Booth Ricciardi

Christopher Scully

Richard L. Shafer

HONORARY DIRECTORS

Joseph C. Betz

David F. Gouveia

BY THE NUMBERS



NEW MEMBERS
70



RESEARCH REQUESTS
27



VISITS
In person: 1,453
Virtual: 981



PROGRAMS
83



ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Page Views

29,623

Social Media Followers

4,605

Blog Views

5,486



OUTREACH

SARIA SWEENEY

LOOKING BACK ON 2020

...I think back to the normalcy of January and February when we hosted our usual programs- Photo Scanning Days, M is for Museum storytime, Wednesday Workshops, February Flicks on Saturday afternoons, and everyone's favorite, our Member +1 Brunch at the end of January. I spent the month of January visiting Taunton's fourth graders with the perennial favorite *Let's Map! Taunton* field trip. New outreach partnerships were forming and the year was off to a great start!

In early March, I had been visiting Taunton's elementary schools bringing our *Immigration Nation* in-school field trip to second-grade classrooms. Then, it all came to a screeching halt, along with the rest of the world. The Invention Convention, a favorite day of community outreach for OCHM staff, was canceled. We made plans for work to do while we were closed to the public. Then, we went home for three months.

While the museum's doors were closed we created new ways to connect with people, through Kids Make History activities and more social media engagement. We began to reschedule and re-imagine what our next six months could safely look like from June through December.

As we waited for word that we could reopen, our processes had to change. Hand sanitizing stations were added to the museum, and our set-ups all shifted to have six feet of distance between attendees. We signed up for Eventbrite to track event registrations and contact traced all the people who entered our building after our July reopening. Our goals were not just to engage in local history but to do so in ways that ensured we kept attendance small, socially distanced, and most importantly, safe.

We introduced new programs and did as much as we could outside so that people could have some casual, safe fun out of the house under our open-air tent. Crafternoons, Liberty and Union Walking Tours, Haunted History, and Cemetery Tours in the fall were popular ways to safely gather for some outdoor history. We hosted a drive-in and tried our very first virtual game night playing *Crack the Case*. A member from Arizona was able to join, and we knew this would be another silver lining of "the new normal."



OUTREACH

Virtual programming on Zoom became our normal and allowed us to reach audiences much further than ever before. Our Fall Lecture Series welcomed members from not only around the United States but even Canada! In November, we hosted a virtual Arts & Humanity poetry event with a number of international poets thanks to Zoom. We connected with local libraries and senior centers to bring a slate of fresh virtual and behind-the-scenes tours and programs to new audiences, in the safety and comfort of their homes. As much as we are all probably “over it,” I personally love what virtual programs have allowed us to do, as we connect with our members and offer programs to those who would never have been able to attend in person.

We learned a lot from the successes and failures of our events, programs, and outreach initiatives throughout 2020 and will continue to offer fun, safe, educational programming, both in-person and virtually, for our members and friends to enjoy. You can check details of our current programs on our [website](#) and we'd love to welcome you, safely, to an event in 2021.

EVENTS IN 2020

OCHM PROGRAMS- **83**

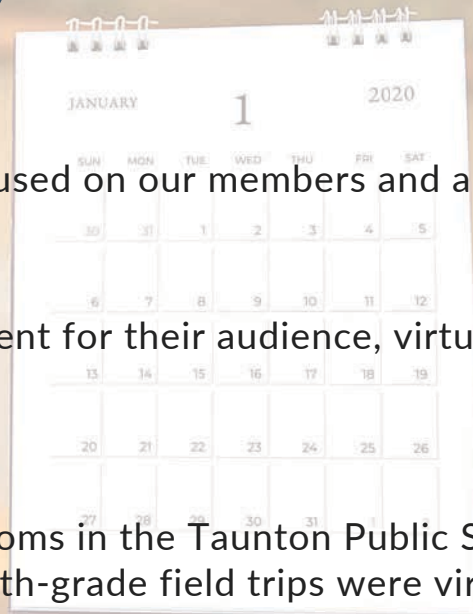
OCHM sponsored events primarily focused on our members and audience.

OUTREACH VISITS- **20**

Outside organizations hiring us to present for their audience, virtually or in person.

FIELD TRIPS- **64**

A total of the 2nd, 4th, and 7th classrooms in the Taunton Public School system we worked with. In 2020, the 7th-grade field trips were virtual.





FASHION

Text on the wall describing the fashion era.

Her
Some program items...
Crested Dress
1910-1915

Girl's Dress
1910-1915

The fall of a New England summer...
large changes in wardrobe and...
style, but the fall, again, brings...
a sense of transition for the wear...
of formal, feminine, "ladylike"...
and lastingly, we were doing...
the early '20s through the mid-20s...

Her
Some program items...
Crested Dress
1910-1915

COLLECTIONS

BRONSON MICHAUD

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES OF 2020

...I can look back with pride at the number of successful projects that were accomplished. Far and away, the largest project was the new Society Room in our second floor Exhibits. The Society Room, formerly the Silver Room, takes you through three centuries of life in the Old Colony: the 1750s, 1850s, and 1950s from the point of view of the gathering place in the home. In this new space, we are able to showcase many of our exemplary pieces of furniture from the collection and even teach a little bit of museum history. Also in 2020, we introduced a new Object of the Month display, rotated the fashion section, and installed a *Made in Taunton* display at the newly-renovated City Hall. As Plymouth Colony celebrated turning 400 we opened the latest temporary exhibit in the first floor Gallery, *A View of Plymouth Colony: Then & Now*. Finally, a personal favorite of mine, we launched a new program, *Beer with Bronson*, where we enjoy a beer together, safely-distanced, and take a closer look and learn some history of objects not currently on display.

In the Archives and Library, we continued to work towards our goal of digitization and increasing access for the public. We created a searchable catalog of our library collection's family histories and vital records, which is live on the website. We began digitizing our periodicals which will allow us to create more space in the future and continued cataloging the entire collection, which will remain a multi-year effort well into the future.

ACQUISITIONS

Though we were unable to accept donations for most of the year due to COVID-19 guidelines, in the first part of the year we had several notable additions to the collection for 2020:

- An original set of political cartoon proofs poking fun at former Taunton Mayors Friedman and Cleary
- A custom sommelier's key made at Reed & Barton ca. 1880
- Nine 18th-century documents concerning the Middleboro-Taunton border and the resulting legal dispute
- A set of four athletic jackets from Martin and Parker Schools ca. 1980s

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A silver lining to a period of closure for the museum in 2020 was the ability to take on certain projects that are challenging to do when we are open to the public. Many of these projects completed the "to-do" lists for the building and collections storage areas from the reports by Image Permanence Institute in 2017 and Conservation Specialist Lisa Goldberg in 2018.

First, we completed an attic access project. This access allowed for work to then take place on our cupola. Without attic access, the only way to do this would be with the rental of equipment to reach the roof from the outside--something too expensive for our budget. With the ability to get up to the roof from the inside, and support from *Preservation Massachusetts* and *The 1772 Foundation*, the cupola was repaired and repainted.

Also this year, we widened our range of fire detection, going from seven areas of coverage for the entire building to a much more safe and thorough thirty-four. The second-floor back landing got an overhaul with a new ceiling, LED light fixtures, and is now part of the public exhibit area.

Lastly, just in time for winter, we replaced our oil boiler, converting the building's heat to 100% natural gas, making for a far cleaner and safer environment in our basement storage.



MEMBERSHIP

ELIZABETH BERNIER

WE WELCOMED 70 NEW OR RETURNED MEMBERS

Gilbert Amaral, Jr.	Danielle Gray	Wilma Pirozzi
Linda Ashcraft	Jonathan Gray	Joan Pringle
Sharon Beskid	Kathryn Hanford	Patrick Pringle
Karen S. Brun	Timothy Hanford	Perrilyn Pringle
Catherine A. Bryant	Andrew Howland	Avis W. Prior
Kevin Butler	Sonya Howland	Doug Rankin
Christine Clymens	Donald E. Isaacsen	Laura Rankin
David Clymens	Ellen H. Isaacsen	Robert Rezendes
Colonial Maintenance Contractors, Inc.	Claudette Jordan	F. Robert Roche
Anne Marie Cornaglia	Pamela Kasanowsky	Dane Rogers
Brian Cornaglia	Bette-Ann Kile	Eric B. Schultz*
Pamela Costa	Steve Leonard	Diana Shearstone
Connor Danahey	Caitlin Lincoln	David Snook
John Danahey	Jonathan Marvel	Paul D. Sullivan
Kathryn Danahey	Priscilla Merrey	Peter Terenzi
Vickie Danahey	Rebecca W. S. More, Ph.D.	Jennifer Turnbull
Jeannette Dantona	David Moreau	Candyce Walters
Claire Downing	Rosemary Moreau	Lee Anne Whalen
Nancy Griswold Flynn	Barry Moss	Peter Wiggins
Stephen Fraga	Janet Murray	Audrey Wilkins
Lawrence Freed	Melinda Paine-Dupont	Burnley Wilkins
Carolyn George	Kimberly J. Paull	Joyce Wilkins
Gordon W. Goodfellow	Lincoln Pero	Kerrin Willis
		Teresa Zurawel

*Life Member

VOLUNTEERS

Prior to our volunteer program being put on hold, we welcomed a wonderful team of dedicated volunteers. We thank them, and can't wait to welcome them back in the future!

Mary Barrett, Cynthia Brown Bernard, Nathan Buchanan, James Carey, Jennifer Dutra, Steven Furtado, Diane Hammond, Marina Laboutina, Marlon Loubeau, Rowan Lowell, Lois MacDonald, Samantha Miller, Kristine Moore, Griffin Roberts, Louise Rose, Olivia Shelgren, Robert Scaramuccia, and Richard Teixeira

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering those we lost in 2020. We are grateful for their contributions and they will be missed.

CELIA ASSIRAN

Member since 1975

**VIRGINIA (LOPES)
MCKENNA**

Member since 2017

WILLIAM S. BRADLEY

Member since 2001

EDWARD A. PADELFORD

Member since 1982

GEORGE N. CARAS

Member since 2007

CAROL A. PERRY

Member since 2016

EDWARD L. CORR

Member since 2008

CLAIRE J. PERRY

Member since 1975

DENNIS EVE

Member since 2010

LOUIS L. PETERS

Member since 1977

RICHARD W. HILL

Member since 1957

GRETA SMITH

Member since 1989

JANET MCCONVILLE

Member since 2007

JOANNE M. UVA

Member since 1977

Financial OVERVIEW

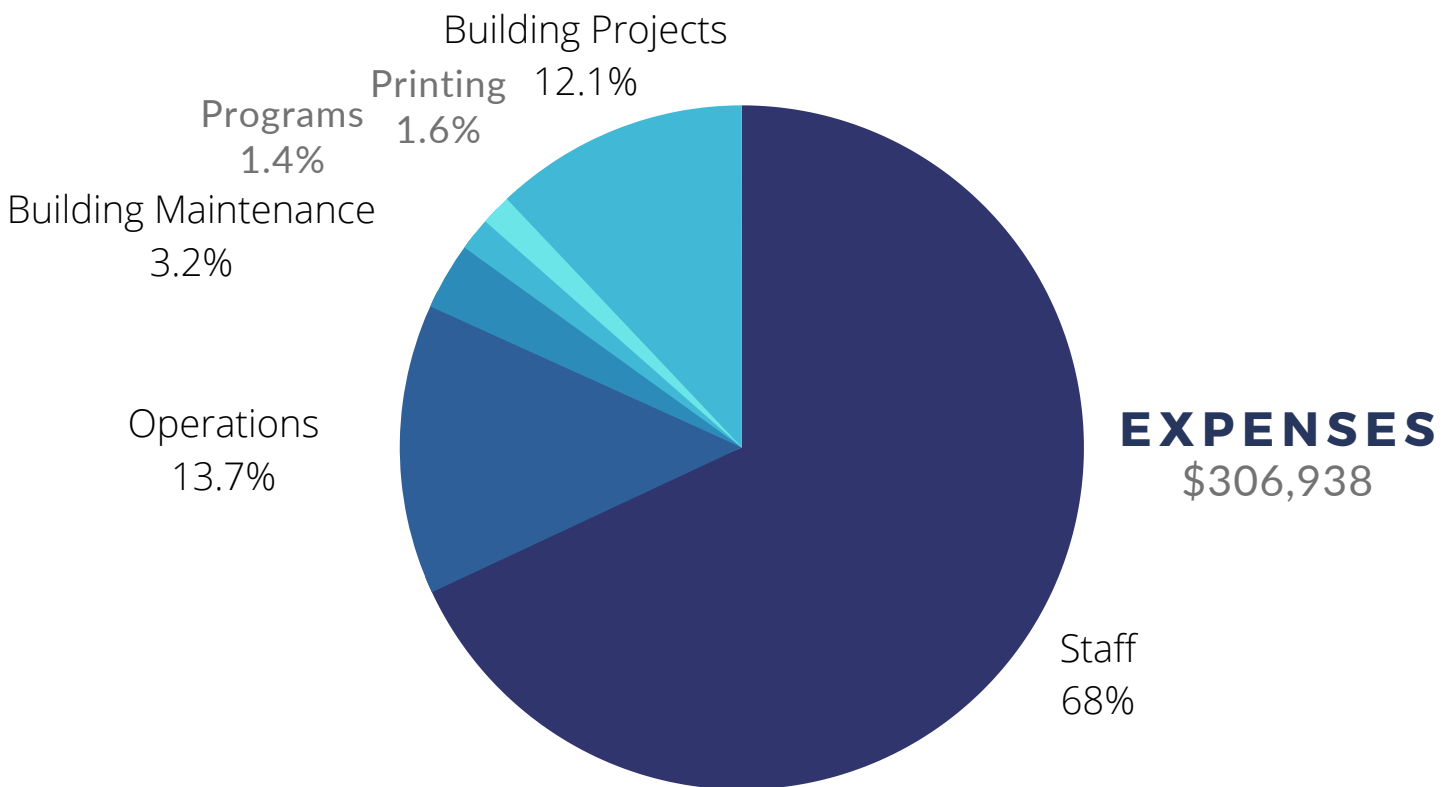
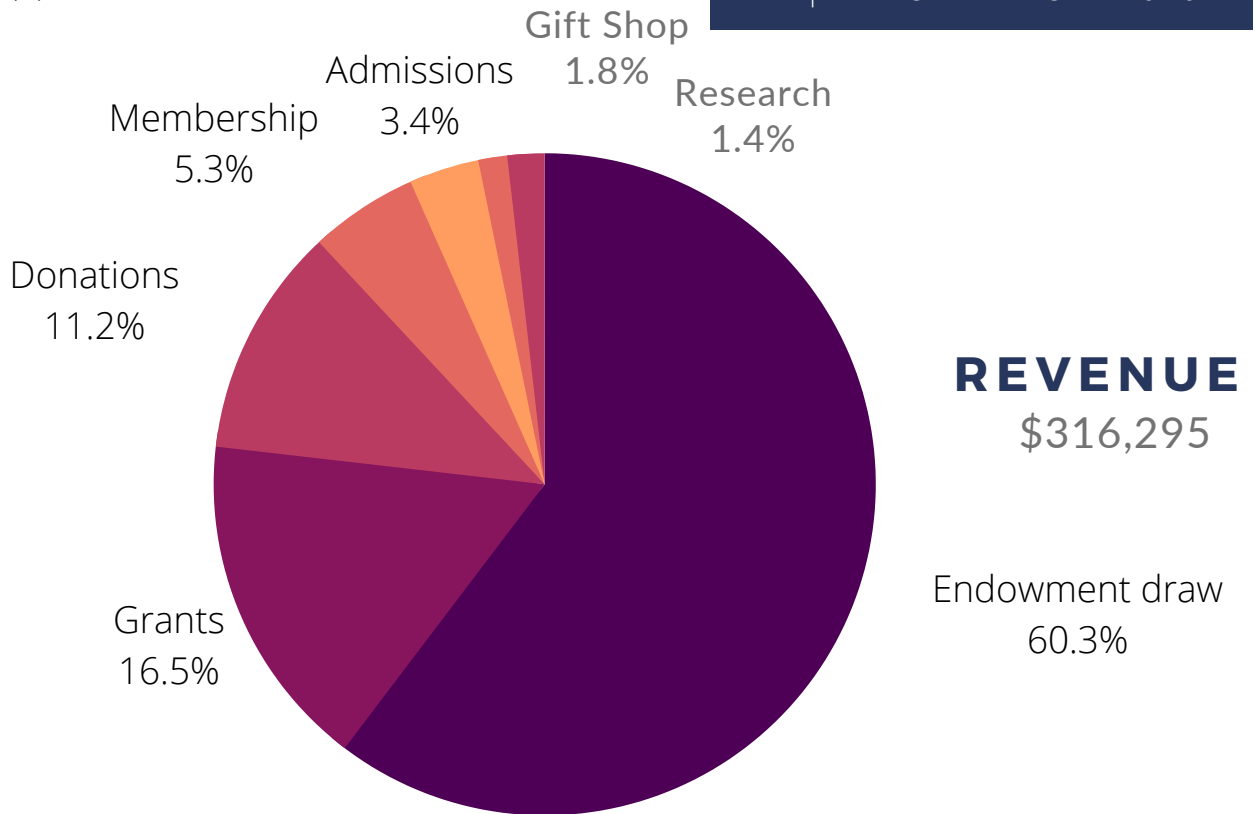
We are fortunate to be able to report that the financial position of the OCHM at the end of 2020 remains strong. At the height of the uncertainty of 2020, we applied for and received a Payroll Protection Program loan to ensure that we would not need to make changes to our staffing. We expect this loan to be forgiven in full in 2021.

We took on some large infrastructure projects while we were closed, which increases the overall value of the property and also is now resulting in reduced energy costs. We spent cash received in years prior for many of these projects.

Upon reopening, the support from our membership, granting organizations, and the community has been overwhelming. We are strengthened by that support and it keeps the OCHM strong into the future. Beyond the priceless collection for which we are responsible, the majority of our assets are restricted in the endowment. The long-term health of the OCHM is strongly tied to the strength of these invested funds and continues to be well-managed by the Finance Committee.

Details of the fiscal year 2020 can be seen on the following pages. Please know that figures from prior years are from our accountants' reporting, but figures from 2020 are, as of yet, unaudited.

ASSETS	FY2020	FY2019	FY2018
Cash	\$420,081	502,917	529,215
Inventory	9,500	8,505	8,295
Property and Equipment	1,058,995	1,043,995	962,600
Less accumulated depreciation	(732,187)	(735,220)	(697,567)
Invested Funds	\$4,199,035	4,018,862	3,518,806
TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,955,424	4,839,059	4,321,349



Fiscal year
2020

OUR THANKS



The OCHM depends on the generosity of the people and organizations that support our mission. There are many other types of donations we receive throughout the year, and we appreciate every single one.

GRANTS

Attleboro Cultural Council
Berkley Cultural Council
Dighton Cultural Council
Duxbury Cultural Council
Easton Cultural Council
Fall River Cultural Council
Freetown Cultural Council
Hull Cultural Council
Mid-Cape Cultural Council
Middleborough Cultural Council

Rehoboth Cultural Council
Rochester Cultural Council
Wareham Cultural Council
SEMVB Mini-Grant
The 1772 Foundation
Highland Street Foundation
Mass Humanities CARES
Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation
SEMVB Holiday Grant
BCSB Charitable Foundation

CORPORATE MEMBERS

B & D Construction
Biss Lumber Company
Bristol County Savings Bank
Bristol Wealth Group
Colonial Maintenance Contractors, Inc.

Friends of the Taunton Public Library
Morton Hospital
Silvia & Quinn, PC
Taunton Development Corporation
Taunton-South Shore Foundation

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of Elizabeth (Ayers)
Compton Bellocchio

In Memory of The Hon. Gordon M.
Owen and Carolyn Owen Leary

In Memory of Edward S. Sikorski

In Memory of Ruth Wilde Smith

DONORS TO THE COLLECTION

Stephen Desroches
Dr. William F. Hanna
Karen Ives
Anthony W. Lopes
James G. MacDonald III
Rebecca Moore
Robert Nelson

Patricia O'Boy
Sandra J. Pineault
Irene P. Slack, Medford
Historical Society
The City of Taunton
Elisabeth Vodola
George A. Warish

OUR THANKS



As each year draws to a close, we collect donations in support of the coming year in a fundraising campaign known as our Annual Fund. The names listed below reflect those who donated to our 2020 Annual Fund, beginning in December 2019 and throughout the year. Most donated not knowing how challenging 2020 would be, and we send our sincere thanks for their support.

DONORS OF \$2,000+

Taunton-South Shore Foundation, Inc.
Wendell B. Presbrey, Jr.

DONORS OF \$1000-1,999

William & Carol Hanna
Colleen & Mark Karsner
Cynthia Booth Ricciardi, Ph.D.
Paula & Charles Thayer

DONORS OF \$250-999

Anonymous
Facebook Donors

Diane S. Ducey
Kathleen Mulhern

Bruce & Mary MacDonald
The Scully Family

DONORS OF \$100-249

Anonymous
Lucille Higgins Atkinson
Matthew M. Bellocchio
Steve Perry & Check Berthelette
Joseph & Barbara Betz
Peter M. Blackford
Elaine Briggs
Robert Bury

David R. & Jean E. Dean
Ruth Burt Ekstrom
Marc S. Emond
Jean F. Farrell
Ethel Fraga
Marlene S. Francis
Mr. & Mrs. David L. Fuller
Elizabeth Gregg

Professor James Griffith
Barbara LaFrance
Nerds To Go
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Nystrom
Carol L. Palmer
Mr. & Mrs. Wallace Skilling

DONORS OF \$50-99

Anonymous
Malcolm & Beverly Anslow
Ronald Arruda, Jr.
Dr. Gerald A. Croteau & Virginia Plasse
Paul & Janet Dooley
Jack Gibney

Bert Harlow
Fred Hutchings
Douglas Jung
John F. Laughlin, Jr.
Ben & Jessie Macomber
Ronald G. McLean

Alexandra & Robert McNamee
Barbara A. Casey Medas
Mr. & Mrs. John Pereira
Louis L. Peters
Eric J. Ruby, M.D.
Mr. & Mrs. Waddy R. Thomson III

DONORS OF \$1-49

Anonymous (11)
Paula Alegi
Phillip G. Audette
Cherry Fletcher Bamberg
Gladys M. Bauman
Elizabeth Cabana
Philip F. Carey & Ellen Chiocca Carey
Anne B. Chace
Gail and Manuel Coelho

Claire M. Downing
Frederick Eayrs
Elaine Gravel
Frances Guay
Beverly Hodges
Jeffrey Illsley
Susan King
Robert Lambert
Mrs. Phyllis Lane

Elizabeth MacLean
James R. Maxwell
Ken Peirce
Valerie Pimenta
Mary Powers
Daniel M. Rodrigues
Marilyn Sikorski
Philip Silberberg
Gil & Carol Simmons
Lois D. Simpson
Richard A. Smith
Kristen Von Malder
World Gravity Year

FROM THE PRESIDENT

William F. Hanna

Each year since 2015, it has been my pleasure to deliver the President's message as part of our organization's Annual Report. Over that time, I have often commented upon the astonishing transformation of a conservative, under-appreciated, local historical society into a vibrant, inclusive, high caliber regional museum. Throughout that period its success was measured by traditional metrics including visitation, programming, grants and donations, as well as by the genuine enthusiasm of the staff and the generosity of our members.

But that changed in 2020. The reporting period that just ended required us to define "success" according to an entirely different set of criteria. Fortunately, even under the new model, the previous seven years had brought us to a place where the OCHM could both engage and prevail over an insidious adversary, and that is the context in which I joyfully send you this year's report.

In 2020, the museum field was faced with challenges that even a few weeks earlier could never have been imagined. As the global pandemic worsened, museums--from the largest to the smallest--closed their doors to the public. Many did so with the certain knowledge that in addition to vital revenue, other essential resources, including valued staff members, would be lost to their institutions. This situation continues to this day in many places, and only when the COVID-19 emergency has finally passed will the lasting damage it inflicted upon the world's museums be fully reckoned.

Given the fact that the past year has been played against this backdrop of worldwide anxiety and loss, I am happy to say that the OCHM will emerge from the pandemic as an even stronger institution. In an earlier section of this report, Executive Director Katie MacDonald explained the steps taken at her behest during the three months that our museum was closed, as well as over a longer period when its activities were limited. From the outset, she recognized that nothing lasts forever and we must always prepare to capitalize on what lies ahead. Accordingly, from the very first moments of the crisis she and her staff set their sights on the future, as they asked how they could use these extraordinarily difficult months to make the Museum better.

Working from home during much of that time, they maintained close contact and resolutely refused to be disheartened by the events unfolding in the world around them. They adapted cheerfully, working above and beyond what was asked of them; they searched, questioned, experimented, failed sometimes and then tried something else--and they learned. That became the new measure of success, and Katie's report will show that many of their best ideas, especially those associated with using cutting edge technology in growing a much wider and more diverse audience, will long outlive the stressful days that made them necessary. As a result of these efforts, and as always fueled by the continuing generosity of our loyal members and supporters, we have not only weathered the crisis but have actually emerged from it in a stronger and better place. We face the future having gained a deeper understanding of the Museum's potential and a wider array of tools with which to realize it.

Katie's excellent report speaks for itself, but I speak for the Board of Directors and on behalf of the membership when I express my deep pride and gratitude to her, Elizabeth Bernier, Bronson Michaud, Saria Sweeney and Mike Curran for their remarkable efforts during these hard times.

Let's Connect in 2021

oldcolonyhistorymuseum.org



@oldcolonyhistory

HOURS



@OCHM1853

Tuesday- Saturday



@oldcolonyhistory

10 AM to 4 PM



@OCHM

Events year-round