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 MacDonald
Executive Director
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
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Dean Larabee III
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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
...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.”
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.
...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
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.
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

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!

IN MEMORIAM

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

**CELIA ASSIRAN**  
Member since 1975

**WILLIAM S. BRADLEY**  
Member since 2001

**GEORGE N. CARAS**  
Member since 2007

**EDWARD L. CORR**  
Member since 2008

**DENNIS EVE**  
Member since 2010

**RICHARD W. HILL**  
Member since 1957

**JANET MCCONVILLE**  
Member since 2007

**VIRGINIA (LOPES) MCKENNA**  
Member since 2017

**EDWARD A. PADELFORD**  
Member since 1982

**CAROL A. PERRY**  
Member since 2016

**CLAIRED J. PERRY**  
Member since 1975

**LOUIS L. PETERS**  
Member since 1977

**GRETA SMITH**  
Member since 1989

**JOANNE M. UVA**  
Member since 1977
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

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<th>FY2020</th>
<th>FY2019</th>
<th>FY2018</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$420,081</td>
<td>502,917</td>
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<td>Inventory</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>8,505</td>
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<td>Property and Equipment</td>
<td>1,058,995</td>
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<td>Less accumulated depreciation</td>
<td>(732,187)</td>
<td>(735,220)</td>
<td>(697,567)</td>
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<td>Invested Funds</td>
<td>$4,199,035</td>
<td>4,018,862</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,955,424</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,839,059</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,321,349</strong></td>
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Fiscal year 2020

Revenue
$316,295
Endowment draw 60.3%

Expenses
$306,938
Staff 68%
Operations 13.7%
Building Maintenance 3.2%
Building Projects 12.1%
Printing 1.6%
Programs 1.4%
Gift Shop 1.8%
Research 1.4%
Donations 11.2%
Grants 16.5%
Membership 5.3%
Admissions 3.4%

Annual Report 2020
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
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

**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
Philip 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
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

@OCHM1853

@oldcolonyhistory

@OCHM

HOURS

Tuesday- Saturday

10 AM to 4 PM

Events year-round