**The Colonial Society of Massachusetts**

Minutes of the 126th Annual Meeting of the Membership

Held at

87 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston

15 November 2018

President Donald R. Friary called the meeting to order at 6.00 P.M.

The reading of the minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting was waived.

**1 . Report of the Membership Committee.** Celeste Walker, chair of the committee, said the membership of the Society stands at 332 members: 185 resident members, 133 non-resident members, and 15 honorary members. She reported the deaths of the following members:

John Douglas Forbes, a member since 1953 died in January

Ken Hills, a member since 1994, died in May.

Sinclair Hitchings, a member since 1963, died in January.

F. Washington “Tony” Jarvis died in October.

Members stood for a moment of silence.

Member William LaMoy has resigned his membership. The following new members were welcomed over the course of the past year:

***Resident Members***:

Catherine Allgor, of Marblehead

Ryan Woods, of Boston

***Non-Resident members:***

Eliga Gould, of Durham, New Hampshire

Margaret Newell, of Columbus, Ohio

John Winthrop, of Charleston, South Carolina

**2. Report of the Treasurer.** [Redacted]

President Friary then yielded the chair to Mary Sarah Bilder for the election of officers. Mary invited Barbara Lambert, chair of the Nominating Committee, to take the podium.

**3. Report of the Nominating Committee.** Barbara Lambert, chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked the other members of the committee, Ted Andrews and Jeff Cooper. She said she was increasingly appreciative of this Society, as an oasis of civility, camaraderie and collaboration.

The committee is pleased to report that all current officers have agreed to continue serving in their present capacities. They are:

President Donald R. Friary

Vice Presidents Robert Allison, Dan Coquillette, Susan Lively, Celeste Walker

Recording Secretary Leslie A. Morris

Corresponding Secretary Martha J. McNamara

Treasurer Thomas R. Appleton

Member of Council,

3-year term Nonie Gadsden (2021)

Continuing members of

Council Nathaniel Shiedley (2019), Robert A. Gross (2020)

Barbara remarked the committee wanted to retain the same balance on the council of men to women (6 to 5), we specifically looked among the membership for a woman to replace retiring Council member Beth Bower. Nonie's expertise in museums and specifically in decorative arts complements Nathaniel Sheidley's expertise in historical societies and Robert Gross' work as a distinguished historian and academician.

There were no nominations from the floor. Barbara moved the slate of officers and councilor.

**VOTED:** To approve the slate as read. Approved unanimously.

President Friary resumed the chair, and thanked the membership. He also thanked Beth Bower for her service, particularly for taking the lead on organizing the various celebrations for the Society’s 125th anniversary.

**4. Report of the Curator.**  Elton Hall’s report is appended.

**5. Report of the Editor of Publications.** John Tyler’s report is appended.

**6. A word from the *New England Quarterly*.** Jonathan Chu, Editor, thanked the Society, and especially Don Friary and the Council, for the generous support it provides to the *New England Quarterly*. He encouraged the members to think of *NEQ* when working on the history and literary culture of New England.

**7. Report of the President.** Don Friary’s report is appended.

The meeting adjourned at 7.05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie A. Morris

Recording Secretary

**Report of the Curator, Elton W. Hall**

Over the years my annual curatorial report had been a summary of the year’s accomplishments and thanks to all the people who have contributed to our collective effort to take care of the house and its contents. It came to mind that I have been coming here for forty-five years and for the last thirty-eight have been actively involved in the care of the house. The Colonial Society changes very slowly, but in the course of four and a half decades that modest pace can cover a lot of ground. I thought I would reminisce for a few minutes.

I was elected in 1973, within a year after I arrived in New Bedford to be Curator of the Whaling Museum. While still a graduate student, I had the good fortune to become friends with Walter Whitehill, whose name I always find a way gratefully to include in my reports. He was then Editor of Publications and Poo-Bah of the Colonial Society, and one of his amiable traits was to notice youngsters who shared his interests and find ways of helping them along in their careers in various ways, often by finding them a job, introducing them to well-established kindred spirits, or bringing them into one of the many organizations with which he was involved. I think it probable that when I came aboard here I was the youngest member at the time.

In the 1970s we had two tenants on the first floor and on the second at the back of the ell. They were the New England Office of the Archives of American Art and the American Society of Interior Decorators. On the third floor of the ell lived Norman Tucker, who worked with Walter at the Athenaeum, and generally looked after the house. Having the Archives here was a good, symbiotic relationship. The Director, Robert Brown, was a graduate of the Winterthur Program and had been elected a member of the Society. The purpose of the Archives was sympathetic with ours, and the staff of three provided a presence in the house during the normal business hours. It was similar to the relation we now have with Boston By Foot. The Interior Designers had their office in the old servants’ hall on the ground floor, but they were not a regular presence in the house. Their principal contribution was in applying their professional service to the house. They ordered and paid for the carpet in the front hall, stairs, and second floor stair hall and had some painting done as well. Their next offer was to redecorate the dining room. Jonathan Fairbanks likes to tell the story of Walter’s informing the Council of the offer, but saying that the room really didn’t really need anything. Housekeeping was never one of Walter’s priorities. Jonathan pointed out that the room was quite shabby looking. Paint was peeling, and there were holes in the rug, worn though over the years or burned by the cigars that the Council used to enjoy after their luncheon meetings. So Walter put it to a vote, and it passed unanimously. After the meeting, Walter turned to Jonathan and said that it had just occurred to him that Jonathan’s term on the Council had expired.

The membership was smaller in those days, so that we were able to have both the Annual Meeting and Dinner right here in the house, for which we also had more space through use of the Paine’s billiard room, which subsequently became the living room in the duplex apartment in the ell, and thus lost to our use. After the business meeting, we had cocktails in the dining room and the Channing room on the third floor while caterers set up round tables in the meeting, drawing, and billiard rooms for our dinner. It was very nice to be able to spend the entire evening right here, but as both the membership and interest in attending the Annual Meeting grew, the house was no longer able to accommodate us. We moved the whole program to the Tavern Club for a couple of years, but members regretted not having the chance to come to the house. So we returned to the house for the meeting and have since had the dinner in a series of other establishments until we reached the Somerset Club, which seems very satisfactory indeed.

The business meetings were much simpler then than now. The president—a more or less honorary position in the Whitehill era—called the meeting to order. The treasurer made his report, which generally consisted of three numbers at the most. The Chair of the Audit Committee launched into his report, which generally consisted of one or more very entertaining anecdotes with no reference whatever to the finances of the Society, but always earning much laughter and a hearty applause from those in attendance. Walter then took over and did all the rest of the reporting himself. At that time our investment portfolio amounted to $748,000, less than a 10th of what it is today, but it covered our expenses, largely because we didn’t spend as much money in those days. We did only what was necessary for keeping the house in sound condition, fed ourselves once a year, and published a volume every now and then. We had only two vice-presidents and three committees: Nominating, Auditing, and Publications. You will readily see by the reports already given and those still to come, that we are a very different and much more active organization than we were four decades ago.

In 1980 I was elected to the Council, being particularly interested in the house and its contents. As I began to poke around and familiarize myself with it, I noticed that whenever I ventured beyond the rooms we regularly used for meetings, I had to wash my hands before touching anything. When we acquired the house in 1955, the boiler was fired by coal, and it seemed to me that there was a layer of coal dust just about everywhere, even though we had long since converted to oil. The house had been put into good condition immediately after we acquired it, but a quarter of a century had passed. The more I looked around, the more obvious it became that the house was in need of substantial attention. At some point in the early ‘80s a house committee was appointed.

In 1986 the chair of the house committed suddenly resigned, and I was asked to take over. “Yikes,” thought I. I didn’t know how to take care of a house like this, especially if we began to do the things that needed to be done. By that time I had changed jobs and worked at Tabor Academy. One of my colleagues was Donald Wing. He was head of Plant Operations, a scholar of 18th century technology, a licensed Massachusetts building superintendent, and well versed in all the building trades. I immediately brought him to a meeting, showed him around the house, and proposed him for membership. He was promptly elected and put on the house committee, with Dan Coquillette as the third member. Getting Don Wing involved was undoubtedly the single most important and beneficial thing I have ever done for the Society, and the rest of this report is pretty much a tribute to him. He immediately went all over the property, making copious notes on the condition of the house, carriage house, and grounds. Among his findings was that the carriage house was badly deteriorated and in need of substantial repair. In good Whitehillian tradition, Dan hosted a lunch at the Country Club where we three gathered for a thorough discussion of all that our physical plant required.

The carriage house was a high priority. A major issue was spending a substantial sum of money on a building for which we had little or no use. Simultaneously, we had been discussing the matter of all the unused space in the house and the possibilities for turning some of it to the generation of income. The carriage house, as a discrete unit, seemed a logical place to start. Dan knew an architect, Jim Block, who had accomplished some sensitive renovation of historic properties. We arranged a meeting, liked him, and with the Council’s approval, engaged him to work up a scheme for renovating the carriage house into a dwelling. We went ahead with that. At the same time, a new heating system consisting of three small, gas-fired boilers was installed in the main house, which greatly decreased our annual heating costs, and the kitchen was rewired and renovated. Throughout these projects, Don was the point of contact between the Society and the architect and contractor. He was very attentive to details and often saw ways in which things could be done better and or less expensively. When necessary, his personality would become very forceful, and the contractor soon learned to respect him and his vigilance. In due course the job was completed, tenants moved in, and a new source of revenue began to flow.

After a few years had passed, we felt that the project had been a success, and were emboldened to embark on the next phase, which was the renovation of the ell. The best scheme was to have a flat on the ground floor and a duplex apartment on the second and third. While substantial changes were necessary, we preserved as much of the original fabric and detail as was reasonably possible, with the renovation including the exterior of the ell as well. Simultaneously we had considerable structural work done in the basement of the main house along with a new electrical service, telephone service, and wiring.

With the ell finished and occupied, we moved to the front of the house and spent the better part of two years carrying out complete structural repairs from the first floor to the attic, including rewiring and re-plumbing. All exterior trim was repaired and painted. All window lintels, sills, and sash were replaced, the latter requiring considerable negotiation with the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission to reconcile our need for high R-value and ultra-violate light filtering glass with their ideas on appearance. The final result produced substantial reduction in heat loss. All this required poking many large holes in the walls and ceilings, so a complete interior refinishing was also required. Finally, we felt that the increased use of the house with more to come justified the addition of a modern restroom on the ground floor so a closet was converted to that use while preserving the relic once used by General Paine. The bathrooms on the third and fourth floors were also completely modernized. With that, the work was done (for the time being, that is), bringing the house to the condition in which you see it today.

Don Wing gave this marathon project careful attention, traveling regularly here from Marion over the course of several years for meetings with the architect, contractor and subs to see that everything was carried out to his exacting standards. With the project complete and construction at Tabor Academy in full swing, his attendance here became increasingly rare, although he was always ready to answer questions or give advice when needed. Unfortunately, his passion for preventive maintenance of the buildings in his charge did not extend to his own person. A few years ago, it became obvious that he was not well, and about two years ago he died.

With the house in good repair, we turned our attention to its contents, which has been the principal work of the House Committee for several years. I have reported about that over the last few years both at the Annual Meetings and in the newsletter. The highlights of this past year’s work are described in the current issue, which you have recently received.

**Report of the Editor of Publications, John W. Tyler**

In October, 1795, the duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, despite his reputation as a social and agricultural reformer, was making the best of an enforced absence from Revolutionary France by seeing the sights in the new United States. On October 5, his carriage set him down in the improbable location of Biddeford, Maine on the falls of the Saco River.

Actually, it would have been interesting to hear how the Duc would pronounce Saco! ("Quel est le nomme de cette riviere? Saco, Monsieur le duc. Quoi?!")He was in Biddeford to meet George Thatcher, who was the representative from the District of Maine to the US Congress, but more importantly for the duc, had a reputation as the a "rustic sage," a sort of Yankee combination of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. "He lives at the distance of two miles from the town," wrote the duc, "in a small and mean house, which would be disdained by the pettiest avocat in all France. Opposite to his house, on the other side of the highway, is another hut, not more than twelve feet square, very slightly constructed of boards, carelessly fixed at the foundation, and hanging over a declivity of the road, which is his consultation-room, his chamber for business, and his library. He has about two thousand volumes, books of law, history, morality, and general literature. He adds to it all new American publications, and procures from England every other new work, which he understands to be valuable, and cannot find in America. He reads a great deal, and is a man of extensive knowledge. There is a pleasing cast of originality in his conversation and in his whole behavior: But his notions are eccentric, and often false. He is singular in his exterior appearance, stiff and fantastic in his principles, but liberal-minded, hospitable, courteous, and kind. He cultivates a small piece of land, and lives with his numerous family in a hut in which they all have scarce room to breathe. His doors are never shut; even his study is always open; yet nothing is ever stolen from him. These simple, unsuspicious manners, have procured him the esteem of his neighbors, as being an honest lawyer. He is, in political principles, a federalist, but unconnected with the intrigues of that party; and, in the Congress, he endeavors always to give his vote to rectitude, not to party. He is not rich: yet has more than would be sufficient to make him live more elegantly than he does at present, if his humor would permit." Thatcher perplexed many of his contemporaries, but to the duc, he represented "the new American man.'

Thus begins our next publication Volume 89, Fellow Member Chuck di Giacomantonio's: The Insurgent Delegate: Selected Letters and other Writings of George Thatcher. Thatcher served through the Revolution of 1800 and then accepted appointment as justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Thatcher breaks many of the preconceptions we have of the aristocratic hauteur of Massachusetts Federalists. He was initially enthusiastic about the revolution in France, but later turned away in revulsion. A free thinker, he corresponded with Joseph Priestly and other founders of Unitarianism, for which he paid a penalty at the polls with his Calvinist neighbors. He was a tireless opponent of slavery and the built-in advantages the Constitution gave to slaveholding states. He was also an advocate of independent statehood for Maine, though he regretted that Maine's admission to the Union necessitated the expansion of slave power as part of the Missouri Compromise.

On a personal level, Thatcher emerges from his letters as a devoted family man, always wishing to be home with his wife and family in Biddeford, while he was away for long periods of time in Philadelphia, New York, or Washington, DC. Reading for Thatcher was not a purely intellectual pursuit; he often sought to apply the ideas he encountered in books, for even, raising his own children according to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theories on education. (Don't try this at home!)

Handsomely designed by Paul Hoffman, formerly of the Stinehour Press but now working free-lance, Volume 89 will be rich with illustrations in full color showing the various seats of the Federal government in its early years. It is now being indexed by its author and should soon be ready for the printer.

Following very close on the heels of Volume 89 will be Volumes 90 and 91, The Colonial Records of Kings Chapel, 1686 - 1776. The tireless work of Fellow Members James Bell and James Mooney, The Colonial Records of Kings Chapel is a digest of several, sometimes overlapping, manuscript record books now on deposit at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Bell and Mooney have sorted out the originals from the copies and eliminated repetition for the modern reader. Genealogists will rejoice in the complete records of marriages, baptisms, and funerals for Boston's first Anglican parish.

Kings had a hard time with its Calvinist neighbors. There is a note of panic that pervades the vestry minutes at the time of the Glorious Revolution and the expulsion of Sir Edmund Andros, governor of the Dominion of New England ,one of the Chapel's chief patrons. When the vestry appointed a building committee to replace the first wooden building with the much larger present stone structure on the same site, they needed to acquire land from the adjacent town burying ground and the town school (no longer standing but for which School Street was named). The board of selectmen, dominated by Congregationalists, demanded so many refinements and improvements in the new school building that the vestry expended nearly all the money they had raised for the new church before construction began. Although The Colonial Records of Kings Chapel contain only a list of drawings supplied by Peter Harrison, the new chapel's architect, and not the drawings themselves, it does contain a complete record of expenses from the builder.

Volume 91 also contains a complete list of books to the Chapel given in 1698 by the Bishop of London for the use of the Anglican clergy in New England that they might defend themselves in debate with their better educated Congregationalist peers. About seventy per cent of these books, still survive in the Kings Chapel Collection at the Boston Athenaeum, and they will be, by unplanned coincidence, the subject of a special exhibition at the Athenaeum this coming March, about the time when our books should be ready.

The second volume of The Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson should appear during the early spring. It covers the years 1767 through 1769. 1766 had been a bit of a respite for Hutchinson, but by early 1767 he soon found himself once again at the center of controversy. The subject of continuing abuse in newspapers, Hutchinson appeared to suffer some sort of nervous collapse in April and May, 1767, and readers may be surprised to learn he consulted Patriot Doctor Joseph Warren, who prescribed a regime of moderate horseback riding. It worked!. But imperial relations worsened when news of Charles Townshend's new revenue program, together with the appointment of an American Board of Customs Commissioners, arrived in midsummer. The Boston town meeting adopted a comprehensive nonimportation agreement on 5 March 1768, to be enforced by the merchants themselves whose methods became increasingly coercive as the boycott wore on.

For over a year in his letters to the ministry, Governor Francis Bernard had been subtly portraying conditions in Boston as so unsettled that only troops sent from England could maintain civil order. The riot on June 10, 1768, following the seizure of John Hancock's sloop Liberty, sealed Boston's fate. The first of four regiments of redcoats disembarked on 1 October (The 250th anniversary of this event was celebrated by Revolution 250 earlier this fall with the landing of over 100 reenactors on Long Wharf and an "insolent parade" to the Boston Common.) When the patriots published a number of letters written by Bernard to England, the game was up and Bernard lost all credibility in Massachusetts. He was recalled to London but awarded a face-saving baronetcy.

After Bernard left Massachusetts on 2 August 1768, Hutchinson became acting governor, a position he had long hoped for with the opportunity to attempt to reconcile conflicting political parties in his native province, using the friendships and political acumen he had built up during a long career of public service. It was not as easy as he anticipated The arrival of news of the promised partial repeal of the Townshend duties ought to have eased tensions, but the Boston merchants voted to continue nonimportation until all duties on trade, not just those of the Townshend Act, were repealed. When a number of merchants balked at going along with the extended nonimportation agreement, the merchants committee turned to harsher means of enforcement, and despite the presence of British troops, Hutchinson felt powerless to protect the remaining importers without stronger Parliamentary legislation backing him up. Street violence continued to escalate throughout the winter, until tragedy marred the scene with the Boston Massacre on 5 March 1770.

One of the overriding themes of Volume 2 of The Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson is the continued anxiety and suspense experienced by Hutchinson and other royal officials as they waited for a response from Parliament to the ever more provocative actions and resolves of the Massachusetts assembly, the Boston town meeting, and the confederacy of merchants. But no reaction was forthcoming. Parliament itself was deadlocked, preventing any systematic response by the British government.

Fellow Member Tom Knoles, recently retired from the American Antiquarian Society, continues to work on the new edition of The Diary of the Reverend William Bentley, pastor of the East Church in Salem from 1783 to 1819. The first attempt to publish Bentley's diary by the Essex Institute from 1905 to 1914 resulted in four volumes, but nearly fifty per cent of the manuscript was left unprinted; what the Essex Institute chose to reproduce seemed to focus on local, antiquarian concerns leaving behind the political and religious controversy that engaged Bentley. The Bentley Diary is one of the largest projects the Colonial Society has ever undertaken, and we hope Knoles will have his own first volume ready soon.

Douglas Winiarski, having won the Bancroft Prize, the Peter Gomes Memorial Prize, and the George Washington Prize for Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England (a form of historical Trifecta) is now free to finish up his work on The Memoirs of Josiah Cotton & Allied Documents, which should be ready to start the publication process sometime in 2019.

Colin Nicolson is at work on a sixth volume of The Bernard Papers. Although Bernard departed Massachusetts on 2 August 1769, he remained governor (with Thomas Hutchinson as acting governor) until the Hutchinson’s proclamation as governor-in-chief on 14 March 1771. Thus, the two men maintained a rather full correspondence as Hutchinson dutifully reported on happenings in Massachusetts, while Bernard's advice would arrive 2-4 months later. Bernard and Lord Hillsborough also, during this period, worked closely on plans to reform the constitution of Massachusetts, proposing a royally appointed Council, the ability of the governor to remove uncooperative justices of the peace at will, and a different mode of selecting juries, who had been increasingly reluctant to convict anyone accused of the libel or assault of royal officials. Bernard suffered a stroke in 1771 that put a stop to his letters, although he did not die until 1779.

Members of the steering committee for a newly annotated edition of William Bradford's Of Plimoth Plantation, a joint Colonial Society and New England Historic Genealogical Society project, met in Boston this fall to check on progress and assign responsibilities to the various editors (Francis Bremmer, Ken Minkema, Jeremy Bangs, Paula Peters, and Eric Raymond ). The editors anticipate publication in various formats. The online edition will attempt to replicate as much as possible, in transcription, the actual appearance of the original manuscript, while the print edition will be more reader-friendly, but also carry on the new annotations. The editors have their work cut out for them to complete the project in time for the 400th anniversary celebrations in fall 2020 of the Pilgrims' landing in Massachusetts, but the transcription itself is already two-thirds complete. For the seventeenth century, Bradford writes in a remarkably clear hand.

There are exciting plans afoot for further improvements to the Documents section of the Society's website. For over a year, the Society has been collaborating with New England's Hidden Histories, a program of the Congregational Library intended to preserve and publish the records of early New England churches. The CSM has subsidized and will eventually publish on its website the records of the First Church in Rowley, an early manuscript version of the Cambridge Platform of 1648, and records of the Westborough Congregational Church (Westborough seemed to be at the heart of a "burned-over district" in central Massachusetts with its pastor Ebenezer Parkman trying to keep Westborough's "godly walkers" on the traditional path despite incursions by Jonathan Edwards, James Davenport, the fiery itinerant preacher, and even Mother Ann Lee, the founder of the Shaker movement.. The appearance of these documents on the website will follow the format developed by Hidden Histories displaying side-by-side a fully searchable transcription and the corresponding page of the manuscript in facsimile. The three transcriptions mentioned above are already complete and are awaiting improvements to the website that will enable their publication.

Finally, I thought you might enjoy a brief report on how the website is doing. Since the new website went online 10 June 10, we have had 177, 233 page views, and we now average about 1,400 hits a day. Eighty-five per cent of those are what is called an organic search, meaning someone was searching for a particular name, or combination of words, and a search engine referred them to us. Only about 10 per cent of the hits come from people who go first to colonialsociety.org and then begin to search. Twenty-three per cent are using their mobile phones, whereas most use a laptop or desktop. Our demographic, as you might expect, is concentrated in the United States, particularly Boston and New York, but we do have readers as far away as Sri Lanka, Benin, and the Philippines. Twelve per cent of our readship is aged 15-24, but 43 percent is age 50 or above, which says something, I fear, about the greying of the history-loving public. Google analytics even tells me about the affinities of our visitors, and I can report that 4634 of you regularly listen to hip-hop music, while only 1200 of you could be described as metalheads. And with that important bit of information. I leave you until next year.

**Report of the President, Donald F. Friary**

Thank you, John, Toby, and Thomas for your thorough and encouraging reports. It has been a very interesting and productive year for the Colonial Society, as we have continued long established activities and looked in new directions.

Our annual Graduate Student Forum held on June 8th brought eight Ph. D. candidates from universities nearby—Harvard and Boston College—and across the country. There are now 144 alumni of this program, many of whom have been elected to the Colonial Society. Our practice is to nominate Forum participants upon the publication of their first book, bringing a fresh and younger perspective to our membership. As you know, nominations may be made by any of you with a second from another member and a current cv. I encourage you to think of colleagues and students who would be valued members of the Society and submit their names to Celeste Walker, Chair of our Membership Committee.

The Walter Muir Whitehill Prize was awarded to Neal T. Dugre, Assistant Professor of History, University of Houston-Clear Lake for “Repairing the Breach: Puritan Expansion, Commonwealth Formation, and the Origins of the United Colonies of New England, 1630-1643.” It has been published in the September issue of the New England Quarterly, a reminder to all of us that the deadline for submissions for the 2019 prize is December 31. I encourage you to contact colleagues and students who may have an article to submit to send it to Jonathan Chu at the New England Quarterly.

The New England Regional Fellowship Consortium selected Andrew Rutledge, a March 2018 Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, as this year’s Colonial Society Fellow. During the summer he researched "’We Have No Need of Virginia Trade’: New England Tobacco in the Atlantic World” at Harvard's Baker Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Rhode Island Historical Society.

As you heard from Jonathan Chu, the Colonial Society continues its longstanding support of the New England Quarterly. You will recall that all Colonial Society members are eligible to receive a continuing subscription to the NEQ, without charge, in print or online or both.

We forged a new professional affiliation this year with the American Historical Association that will make the Colonial Society and our publications, in print and online, better known among historians and will enable the Society to arrange sessions at AHA meetings. The AHA can direct members and their students to our annual Graduate Student Forum, the Walter Muir Whitehill Prize in Early American History, and our annual New England Regional Fellowship Consortium award.

We welcomed several groups for special events here at 87 Mount Vernon Street. On April 9 we co-sponsored with the New England Quarterly and the University of Southern California-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute a reception to honor Professor Bernard Bailyn on the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution that drew Bailyn students from across the nation and abroad. In August we hosted the Hannah Mather Crocker Society and the Mary Wollstonecraft Society during their joint meeting that brought feminist scholars from North America, Europe, and Asia to Boston. Our member Nym Cooke led his a capella group, American Harmony, in a delightful performance of fuguing tunes from his splendid new book, American Harmony.

On December 9th the Society’s house will be included in the Nichols House Museum’s annual Christmas tour of Beacon Hill. In the late spring we will host a publication event saluting our member Mark Peterson’s long-awaited book, The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865.

Our new website, now eighteen months in operation, is running smoothly, perhaps an appropriate time to plan to reach its full potential. With that in mind we have organized a new Website Committee, chaired by Bob Mack, that will work with Editor of Publications John Tyler to monitor the website and explore its role not only in making our publications available to an international audience, but also to make the Society and its programs better known outside our membership.

The Colonial Society has been stepping outside 87 Mount Vernon Street and our own membership to reach and make us relevant to new audiences. In June we sponsored a segment of the Friends of the Public Garden’s Making History on the Common program in which 500 school children learned about the fish weir that Native Americans had built nearby on the Charles River’s back bay to harvest the creatures that were so necessary to their seasonal diet. In October Revolution 250, the consortium of historical organizations that the Colonial Society initiated several years ago and is now chaired by our Vice President Bob Allison, staged a reenactment of the 1768 landing of British troops in Boston. They arrived in nine long boats and a two-masted schooner at the end of Long Wharf and marched to the Old State House and then to set up camp on the Common. It was a colorful and dramatic event that brought history to life for several hundred spectators.

All these programs and our publications are financed by income from our rental units, book sales, the Annual Fund, and endowment. The careful stewardship of Loring, Wolcott & Coolidge has increased our endowment principal to over $12,000,000. It is important to recall that our endowment has grown from bequests by Colonial Society members received over more than 100 years. Most of these bequests have been small, but collectively they have grown to an endowment that enables the Society to support our publications and programs. We trust that it will continue to grow, because we know that our needs and expenses will grow.

In the spring each of us received a letter from Susan Lindsey Lively, Vice President of the Society and Chair of our Development Committee, that stated the case for increasing endowment by continuing bequests and other planned giving vehicles from our membership. Susan wrote that a new organization, the 1892 Associates, has been formed to recognize the intent of members to provide for the Colonial Society in their estate planning. To date we have six members. Bequests need not be large. Over many years legacies of $5,000 to $10,000 have grown remarkably.

The Annual Fund is also an essential source of income for the Society. In 2007 we raised $7,500 from our Annual Appeal; in 2018 we realized $28,490. We also benefit significantly from special purpose gifts—from Robert Severy for conservation of paintings, from Harvey Steinberg for the education of younger children in American history, and from Bill Fowler for the Walter Muir Whitehill Prize. I thank all of you for your steady and generous commitment.

A significant part of our responsibility and of our budget lies in the preservation of our 1806 Charles Bulfinch-designed house and its furnishings. The Society’s House Committee, chaired by Richard Nylander, has had a very busy and productive year. Outside we have collaborated with our neighbors at 89 Mount Vernon Street to redesign and reinstall the garden between the driveway and the street. The scaffolding that you may have noticed on your arrival is for the restoration of the east chimney and roof slope. Inside the house conservation of furniture, paintings, and prints has proceeded steadily with sound advice and case management by committee members Robert Mussey and Richard Nylander working with Curator Toby Hall. In this room you can see a seascape beautifully cleaned thanks to the generosity of Robert Severy. When we adjourn to the next room, you will find real changes in individual objects and in the room arrangement. The splendid pier glass between the windows has been in storage for decades, but has now been restored to fine condition and appearance. Beneath it is a pier table by the Boston firm of Archbald & Emmons that has also been in storage until its recent stabilization and conservation. Nearby, to the right of the fireplace, another large looking glass, made for a Salem house in the mid-19th century, has had extensive conservation treatment. Placing the pier glass between the windows bumped the Robert Feke painting of Mary Chaloner Channing, but gave it even greater prominence over the fireplace. Our other two Channing family portraits—Walter and Edward, by Gilbert Stuart and Chester Harding--have been placed over the doors to the library and stair hall. A recently restored European Neoclassical garden painting, long in storage, has been placed between the doors over the Isaac Vose sofa. Finally, a portrait print of Lafayette in its original 1824 frame that bears the label of Xenophon H. Shaw, “Looking Glass & Picture Frame Manufacturer” of Salem, Massachusetts has been rescued from storage to remind us of the important role that he played in the early years of the nation.

The Lafayette portrait is discussed and illustrated in a most interesting article in the print magazine Antiques & Fine Art and the online version www.incollect.com, “Classical Elegance for Lafayette’s Visit to Boston, 1824” by Robert Mussey and Richard Nylander. Lafayette’s visits to Boston on his triumphal tour were central features of last spring’s Massachusetts Historical Society exhibition, Entrepreneurship and Classical Design in Boston’s South End: The Furniture of Isaac Vose and Thomas Seymour, 1815 to 1825, that featured two pieces from the Colonial Society, and the accompanying catalogue, Rather Elegant Than Showy: The Classical Furniture of Isaac Vose, all by Robert Mussey and Clark Pearce.

Please join me in the drawing room to salute the Marquis de Lafayette and to see some of the accomplishments of the House Committee and Curator Toby Hall. And have a drink while you are there.