

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NEW BEDFORD WHALING MUSEUM

HARBINGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY WWW.WPTHISTORY.ORG
PO BOX N188, WESTPORT, MA 02790-1203, WESTPORTHISTORY@WESTPORTHISTORY.NET

Summer 2013, vol.46, no.2

Letter from the Director

Inside this issue you will find our annual report for 2012 which was an exciting and busy year for us. Also highlighted is our calendar of events for this summer. Our upcoming programs will cover a wide range of topics, from the prehistory of our coastal regions to rum running activities in the early 20th century. In August, Maureen Taylor, photo detective, provides some tips on how to research those unidentified pictures tucked away in shoeboxes.

This spring we welcomed a new member of staff, Kathleen McAreavey, as Manager of Education. Kathleen takes on the responsibility of engaging kids and families in the exploration of our local history. We look forward to seeing her ideas take shape, and I hope that many of you will be able to meet her at some of our summer events.

Jenny O'Neill



HEARTFELT THANKS TO ERIC WHIPPLE AND TOM MORRA OF T.F. MORRA TREE CARE for donating their knowledge, skills and time to the Westport Historical Society. We are grateful for their careful and thorough approach to removing some of the larger trees that were creating structural problems for the Handy House. Tom Morra has recently teamed up with Eric Whipple (Whippletree, LLC). Eric is an ISA Certified Arborist, as well as a CTSP (Certified Treecare Safety Professional).

Splice the Main Brace!*



* An order by ship captains to reward the crew with a drink. Yo ho ho!

Join the Westport Historical Society's celebration of the town's centuries-old whaling, fishing and shipbuilding history, on **Saturday, Sept. 7, 2013** at Westport Point. Only 300 tickets will be available, so don't miss out!

Please consider being a sponsor at one of these levels! We need your support.

BUSINESS SPONSORS:

AGENT: \$500 with two tickets (tax deduction \$440)
MASTER: \$250 with one ticket (tax deduction \$220). Second ticket \$100.

INDIVIDUAL SPONSORS:

MAINSAIL: \$500 with two tickets (tax deduction \$440)
TOPSAIL: \$250 with one ticket (tax deduction \$220). Second ticket \$100.

Individual tickets will be available for non-sponsors at \$100 to attend the VIP reception and \$55 for general admission at 7 pm. For further information, please contact Betty Slade, 508-636-6594 or visit our website.

We need special auction items!

We would appreciate donations for our silent auction especially items that complement our theme of Westport's working waterfront such as paintings, prints, artifacts, scrimshaw, and antiques. In addition you might consider special personal adventures you would like to offer such as fishing trips, boat rides, dinners, weekend getaways and moonlight cruises. Please contact June Roche at 508-636-6853.



THE WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Jenny O'Neill

MANAGER OF EDUCATION

Kathleen McAreavey

BOOK KEEPER

Nancy Andersen

The *Harbinger* is published by the Westport Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization. Founded in 1964, its mission is to collect, preserve and document the material culture of Westport; and to educate and connect the residents of the area to their heritage through public programs, exhibits, publications and research.

25 Drift Road, Westport, MA
 website www.wpthistory.org
 phone 508-636-6011
 email westporthistory@westporthistory.net

 Find us on Facebook!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

RIVER DAY

Saturday June 22 10am to 4pm
 Explore the Head of Westport with Tony Connors, visit the Bell School and our exhibition on One-Room Schoolhouses of Westport. Please call for details about Head of Westport history walk. FREE

**FROM PALEO TO WOODLAND:
 THE PREHISTORY OF THE SOUTH COAST**
 Sponsored by the Westport Historical Society, Mass Audubon, Old Dartmouth Historical Society, and the Lloyd Center for the Environment. FREE

An exciting exploration of the natural events that shaped the South Coast of Massachusetts over the preceding 15,000 years, the archaeological records of the people who lived here and how they lived in and impacted this environment.

Evening Talks: 7pm on Thursdays

July 18, July 25 and August 1

Location: Stone Barn Farm, Mass Audubon's Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary, 786 Horseneck Road, Dartmouth

July 18 Changes in geology, climate and vegetation. Paige Newby, senior research scientist, Brown University.

July 25 Changes in the resident population. Professor Curtiss Hoffman, Bridgewater State University and Massachusetts Archaeological Museum.

August 1 Evolving life styles and means of existence of native peoples. Alan Levellee, Senior Archaeologist, Public Archaeological Lab.

Daytime field explorations for younger people:

1pm on Saturdays July 20, 27 and August 3
 (Contact Mass Audubon for details 508-636-2437)

July 20 Field observations of climate and geological change. Led by Paige Newby



PAINTING COURTESY OF DORA ATWATER MILLIKIN

July 27 Field evidence of past resident population. Led by Robbins Museum.

August 3 Revisiting an archaeological dig at the Lloyd Center. Led by Lloyd Center staff.

This program is supported by the Westport Cultural Council through a grant from the Helen Ellis Charitable Trust administered by Bank of America.

PHOTO DETECTIVE

Thursday August 22, 7pm

Learn how to identify and date family photographs with Maureen Taylor, the Photo Detective! Maureen Taylor is an internationally recognized expert on the intersection of history, genealogy, and photography. As a photo curator, genealogist, and now as a writer and photo identification/preservation expert, she is dedicated to helping those who share her infatuation with discovering the stories behind images of the past. (Suggested donation \$5)

Individual consultations 5:30-6:30pm

Call or visit our website for details.
 Macomber Community House,
 938 Main Road, Westport

RUM RUNNING

Thursday September 19, 7pm
 Rum Running presented by Davison Paul and Tony Connors (Location TBA)

WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year 2012 was a time of great challenges and significant growth for the Historical Society. The complexities of stabilizing the Handy House reminded us that our unique mission will always tend to involve "discovery" more than "arrival." All of us together—the membership, the Board, our Director, the volunteers, and all of our supporters—are on a journey to understand Westport's local and regional history, to explore our personal stories, and to engage in the enjoyment of peeling away the layers of our shared past.

During the past year, the Board of Directors participated in three retreats focusing on the development of an in-depth conception of the Society's mission and on thinking strategically about our future. We strengthened the committees for finance and technology. We welcomed new Board members while bidding farewell to others. The Society is deeply grateful for the hard work and reliable wisdom of Helga Nichols and Elisabeth Mundel, and best wishes to Andrew Isidoro, who finished graduate school and got a job in Boston. We are delighted to greet our new Board members—Nicholas Christ and Ed Howe—who bring unique talents and insights to the Society.

We strengthened our financial procedures and made several additions to the administrative team. Most important, our talented Executive Director, Jenny O'Neill, became full-time thanks to a private grant. Jenny's job has become even more multi-faceted: guiding the Society's operations, overseeing the Handy House stabilization and evolution as a focus for the society, providing an educational program for all Westport third graders, curating exhibitions and events, overseeing the growth and preservation of our collection, and welcoming everyone who drops by the Bell School. The Society has also added additional staff. Nancy Andersen expertly handles our bookkeeping, and Bob Kugler has skillfully managed our investment portfolio. A grant from the National Preservation Trust Fund helped support Gaelen Canning's work on developing our fund-raising programs. And the Board has acknowledged the need for a part-time professional to oversee and extend our education programs.

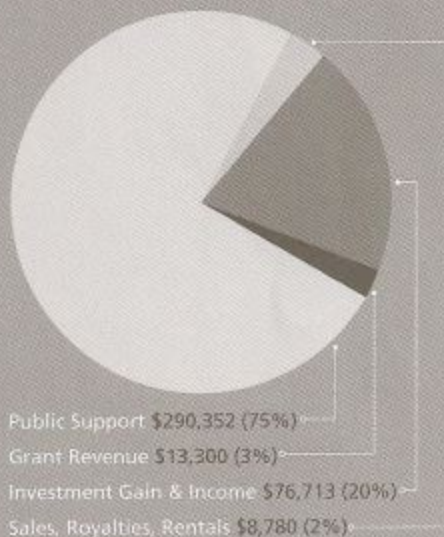
The progress of the Society would not have been possible without the enormous efforts of those who have been so integral to the Society in the past. As 2013 gets under way, we sadly acknowledge the departure of six people whose inspiration, knowledge, and efforts have fundamental to the growth of the Society. Bill Wyatt served as Chairman of the Board for eight years, during which time he did much of the daily work and also moved us through the strategic process of hiring an Executive Director and developing as a professional organization. Roger Griswold served as Treasurer for longer than anyone can remember, putting in endless hours, as he took full responsibility for all of the Society's financial management. Jim Panos, who served on our Programs committee, was a long-time educator and a true gentleman. Lincoln Tripp was one of the founders of the Society and Director for many years. Although never involved with the Society in a formal role, Pete Baker was a constant inspiration, unflinchingly sharing her historical knowledge and passion with us all.



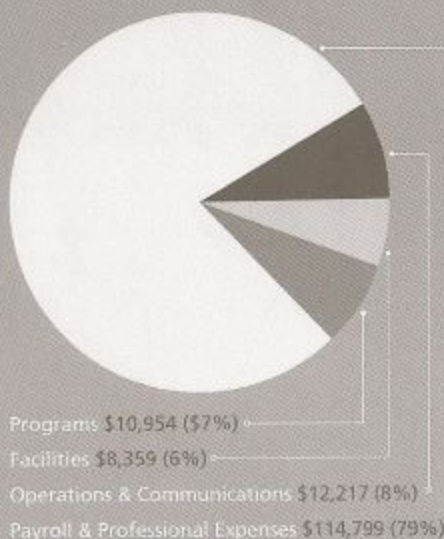
FINANCIAL REPORT

FY 2012 (OCT. 1 2011-SEP. 30, 2012)

INCOME TOTAL \$389,145



EXPENSES TOTAL \$146,329





And Anna Duphiney was the shining example of the dedicated volunteer; twice a week she brought sunshine into the Bell School. They all will be remembered with our deepest gratitude.

The Society is unmistakably on the move—increasingly clear about our purpose and role in Westport, and progressively more adept in carrying out our institutional responsibilities. With the Handy House and our on-going activities at the Bell School House, we are increasingly able to play a significant role in the historical understanding of the entire Southcoast region. And we are energized by all that lies ahead.

Tony Connors

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Our stewardship role for the Handy House brings great responsibility to care for the building, and to prepare for its future role. In 2012 we completed significant planning for the Handy House. Our achievements include:

- The completion of a comprehensive assessment of structural issues by Martha Werenfels, preservation architect of Durkee, Brown, Viveiros, Werenfels Architects, Providence, R.I. This report identified structural and code compliance issues, providing a multi-year prioritized plan for the stabilization and preservation of the building.
- The completion of an assessment of the architectural and cultural significance of the Handy House by Eric Gradoia, architectural historian. His report has established the Handy House as a "remarkable artifact" highlighting the quality of the interior, the presence of unique features and its significance on a local, regional and national level.

The stabilization of the Handy House has been overseen by the Facilities Committee. The members of this hard working committee are Tony Millham, Yvonne Barr, Betty Slade, Carol Coutinho, Charley Appleton, Ed Howe, and Phil Vance, with Kit Wise as an adviser.

A continuing goal for the Society even before the Handy House is open to the public has been to engage the community with our project. We welcomed many visitors to our Second Saturday events that took place over the summer. These events showcased traditional building techniques (many of the techniques that were used to build the Handy House), such as pit sawing and shingle making, as well as bringing a local blacksmith Tony Millham to the Handy House.

Archaeology has also been a major theme for this year. Archaeologist Tom Mailhot completed a survey of the area surrounding the house, uncovering a midden and



some interesting stone features. Our collection now includes over 3000 modern, historic and pre contact Native American artifacts. Two public archaeology days attracted an enthusiastic crowd of would-be archaeologists.

Our fundraising efforts for the Handy House are ongoing. In 2012 we were delighted to receive grants from Historic New England and from the National Trust for Historic preservation. It has been extremely encouraging to receive support from these two significant organizations in the preservation world.

Fundraising needs inspired some creative and special publications. The Handy House Cookbook not only celebrated the life of Eleanor Tripp and her love of cooking, its sale also raised significant funds for and awareness of the Handy House preservation project. With support from the Westport Cultural Council and the Helen Ellis Charitable Trust, the Society also marked the 225th anniversary of the incorporation of Westport, creating a perpetual calendar filled with images from our collection.

Although the Society's immediate focus is the Handy House project, we have been able to continue with other important activities:

Care of our collection

The Society holds a significant collection of materials relating to Westport's history. We have been fortunate to have the ongoing commitment of a number of volunteers to assist with the organization, cataloguing and care of the collection that now includes 4500 historical photographs, 1500 objects, 3000 documents and 400 books. Our collection of oral history interviews is a particularly valuable resource. As a whole, the collection is exceptionally well catalogued and easily accessible to everyone through our online database available at our website.

Programs and exhibitions

Our schedule of programs covered a diverse array of subjects including the Civil War, kit houses and the attempted secession of Westport Harbor. We opened a new exhibition at the Bell Schoolhouse, "Room to Learn: Westport's One-Room Schoolhouses."

The Society continued to play an important role in introducing the third grade to local history, and I am extremely pleased that the Board has made a commitment to expand K-12 education programs in the future.

The Westport Historical Society has always thrived on the depth and richness of our local history, and the strong ties that many of us in this community have to this special area. As we look to the future, I hope to see many new faces among our membership and encourage all our members to seek an active role in our organization.

Jenny O'Neill
Executive Director

FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2012 (OCT 1, 2011-SEP 30, 2012)

ASSETS	\$720,221 *
Cash & Prepaid	\$ 28,747
Pledges & Grants Receivable	\$170,016
Investments	\$521,458
<hr/>	
LIABILITIES	\$ 4,441
Accounts Payable	\$ 1,809
Other	\$ 2,632
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NET ASSETS	\$715,780
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* Unrestricted	
Unrestricted Operating	\$53,387
Board Designated Endowment	\$265, 825
Temporarily Restricted	\$357,568
Permanently Restricted	\$39,000

HANDY HOUSE CAMPAIGN

As of the end of FY 2012, the Handy House Campaign had raised \$868,000 including \$379,000 from Community Preservation Act funding for the purchase of the property and \$36,000 for the septic system. Pledges receivable at the end of FY 2012 were \$162,000.

PRO BONO CONTRIBUTIONS

The Society is extremely grateful for the considerable pro bono support which has been provided by area professionals. In FY 2012 over \$22,590 was contributed in architectural, landscaping, and fund raising services.



ANNUAL APPEAL AND OTHER DONATIONS

DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS

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 Even Keel Realty
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 Jack's Landscap'n
 Lees Market
 Partners Village Store
 Sisters of Solace
 Village Plumbing
 Sisters of Solace
 Tim's Lawncare

GRANTS

National Trust for Historic Preservation
 Historic New England
 Westport Cultural Council
 Helen E. Ellis Charitable Trust
 Massachusetts Cultural Council

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Donations in memory of
 Roger Griswold
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 Paige Gibbs
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 Clay and Clara Stites
 Steve and Maureen Tyson
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**Donations in memory of
 William Wyatt**
 Sally Wyatt
 Elizabeth Coxé
 Peter and Kay Lisle

**Donations in memory of
 Lois H. Simon**
 Richard and Joan Shirley

DONATIONS IN HONOR

**In honor of the marriage of
 Sharon Raposa and Steve Siebel**
 Steven Syre and Laura Raposa

BEQUESTS AND SPECIAL DONATIONS

Charlotte Fitch

Upon dissolution, the Head of Westport Fire Association made a generous gift to the Society for the purpose of support of the Bell School building.

DONATIONS TO HANDY HOUSE PROJECT

From Individuals

Joel and Lisa Alvord
 Peter and Rosanne Aresty
 Richard Armstrong
 Ruth and Hope Atkinson
 Yvonne Barr
 Jim and Hanna Bartlett
 Russell and Patricia Beede
 Elizabeth Brinkerhoff
 Leo and Barbara Brooks
 Gioia Browne
 Norman and Irene Buck
 Anne Burkholder
 Maureen Camara
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 Martha Werenfels



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 Kit and Marka Wise
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Foundations

Grimshaw-Gudewicz Charitable
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Pro bono support

Tim's Lawn care
 Gaelen Canning
 Dorothy Tongue
 Geraldine Millham Design
 David Hobart
 Robert Kugler
 Ken Simon Photography
 Bartlett Tree Service
 Kit Wise
 Kathleen Fair
 Steve Tyson

DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTION

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Sarah Baker
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 Anna Duphiney
 Anne Hopkins
 Edward and Carole Jackson
 Norma Judson
 Caroline Kipps
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 Kit Wise



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MANAGER OF EDUCATION!

For the past twenty years Kathleen McAreavey has worked in both corporate and non-profit management, specializing in museums and historic preservation education, most recently as the Director of Education at the Providence Preservation Society. As the Manager of Education at the Westport Historical Society, she looks forward to focusing on heritage education for schools and families.

Kathleen is excited to begin to facilitate programming at both the Bell School and the Handy House. "The Handy House opens up a wealth of opportunities for programming for all ages. As we are formulating programming we'd love to know which other local organizations could benefit from learning opportunities at the Handy House such as boy scouts, girl scouts, home school groups as well as local schools."

An avid crafter, she has been sewing and creating embroidery since she was a little girl. Over the past twenty-five years, she has developed a keen interest in quilts, as both material culture and as a means of creative expression. Her spare time is spent focusing on completing her own many unfinished quilt projects (known as "UFOs" in the quilt world) that have piled up, and periodically conserving a historic quilt.

Support LOCAL HISTORY!

The Westport Historical Society is supported by donations from individuals, foundations and businesses who care about preserving the special heritage of Westport. In addition to joining the Historical Society as a member, please consider these other ways you can support our mission:

CONTRIBUTIONS IN HONOR OR MEMORIAL GIFTS Honor a friend or relative, commemorate a special anniversary or mark the passing of a loved one with a contribution.

BEQUESTS Leave a lasting legacy for the future by naming the Historical Society as a beneficiary in your will.

CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS Please check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gift program.

BUSINESS SPONSORSHIPS The Historical Society offers local businesses many different levels of sponsorship and recognition.

Thank you

TO THE FOLLOWING LOCAL BUSINESSES
FOR THEIR SUPPORT!

Tim's Lawn Care
Country Woolens
Comfort of Touch
Sisters of Solace
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