



# The Colonial Society of Massachusetts

October 2001 Volume 6, Number 1

## *New England Indian Conference Achieves Over Fifty Percent Native Participation*

**S**URELY THE highlight of this past year at the Colonial Society was our conference “Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience,” held at Old Sturbridge Village on April 21-22. In arranging the conference, the Society was particularly fortunate to have the help of a talented and imaginative Program Committee comprised of Marge Bruchac, historical consultant and performer, Colin Calloway of Dartmouth College, Ed Hood of Old Sturbridge Village, Jean O’Brien of University of Minnesota, Barry O’Connell of Amherst College, Russell Peters of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, and Neal Salisbury of Smith College. In initial meetings, Russell Peters, in particular, stressed how much academics and Native historians had to learn from one another, an observation that events at the conference undoubtedly proved true.

Even the location of the conference demonstrated the relevance of history to contemporary public policy. In its late days, the Clinton administration granted provisional tribal recognition to just one of three contending bands of Nipmuc Indians whose homelands encompass Sturbridge. Marge Bruchac, whom other committee members rightly suggested should be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, secured the participation of all three groups in the opening ceremonies of the CSM conference, a remarkable feat since no one was quite sure until the event took place whether the various chiefs would even speak to one another! But all behaved with courtesy helping to set a prevailing tone of reconciliation, another theme of the conference.



*Participants in the opening session of the “Reinterpreting New England Indians” Conference (left to right): Maurice Foxx, Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs; Chief Wise Owl, Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuc Tribal Council; Carole J. Palavra, Red Sunset, Nipmuc Nation; Chief Walter Vickers, Nipmuc Nation; Marge Bruchac, Historical Consultant and Performer (Member of the Program Committee).*

Maurice Foxx of the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs opened the conference by speaking movingly of his personal sense of Native peoples’ continuing presence in New England and their deep commitment to the land. Foxx also made clear that the impact of colonialism extends far beyond the traditionally designated “colonial period” and still affects the health and economic well-being of Native peoples.

Foxx was followed by the various Nipmuc chiefs, and then Barry O’Connell led a panel of New England tribal historians, including representatives of the Abenaki, Pequot, Narragansett, Nipmuc, and Wampanoag tribes. Some tribal historians displayed treasured artifacts, another performed an “honor song” for his ancestors, while still others stressed the validity of oral tradition as an equal, if not superior,

source of authority, when compared with the written documents flawed by the bias of the surrounding dominant white culture. Indeed, if the conference has a lasting impact on the scholarly world, it will be to send young academics scurrying to consult tribal archives and their custodians before closing out their research on any Native American topic.

Conference participants heard over twenty-six academic papers during the next day and half, usually given in concurrent sessions. The Auditorium and Fuller Conference Center of our hosts, Old Sturbridge Village, provided a superb setting with ample comfortable seating, room for handouts and displays, and of course, abundant rounds of coffee, the fuel that keeps such conferences moving forward. All these needs and more had been carefully anticipated by Ed Hood and his staff. Nor should any report of the conference fail to include thanks to Elaine Paul, the Colonial Society's indefatigable secretary, who kept track of the speakers' changing demands for housing and of the conference registrations, which eventfully mounted to nearly 300.

About a week or two before the conference was to take place, Derek Whirlwind, Northeast Representative of the American Indian Movement (AIM) telephoned John Tyler, the Colonial Society's Editor of Publications, and made it clear that he expected to address the conference. The program was already full, and no one was quite sure what to expect from an AIM representative, given the organization's record of militancy during the 1970s. Whirlwind said he wanted merely to announce AIM's presence in the region and communicate how the organization had changed. On the day of the conference, Whirlwind, good as his word, spoke no more than two minutes (as previously agreed) and presented Tyler with a good will offering of sacred herbs. (The herbs are traditionally part of a "smudging" ceremony when the herbs are burned in order to bring "good mind" to any gathering where there might be a possible difference of opinion.) Tyler, in turn, presented the herbs to the Council of the Colonial Society at their next meeting, but the Council, meeting as they were in borrowed space at the St. Botolph Club, declined to be smudged for fear of setting off the fire alarm. The offering will be on display at the Annual Meeting.

The conference received warm praise from all participants, but perhaps most notably from Alice Nash of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Speaking from the podium, Nash hailed the event as a model for future scholarly endeavors, saying it was rare for Native peoples to be treated with such respect and courtesy at an academic gathering, but that such an event should be sponsored by an organization like the Colonial Society (with its patrician associations) was truly history-making.

Colin Calloway and Neal Salisbury, who will edit the volume of proceedings based on papers given at the conference, are already at work making an initial selection of essays.



## *2001-2002 Calendar*

### ANNUAL MEETING

November 15, 2001

87 Mount Vernon Street, 6:30 P.M.

followed by the Annual Dinner

Union Club

8 Park Street

### STATED MEETING

December 20, 2001

87 Mount Vernon Street, 3:00 P.M.

Patrick Malone, Brown University

"Furs, Firearms, and Forest Warfare"

### STATED MEETING

February 21, 2002

87 Mount Vernon Street, 4:30 P.M.

Rebecca Tannenbaum, Yale University

"Nantucket in the Revolution"

### STATED MEETING

April 18, 2002

87 Mount Vernon Street, 4:30 P.M.

Mary Beth Norton, Cornell University

"The Myth and Reality of the  
Salem Witchcraft Crisis"

## Publications Update

THE DISTRIBUTION this summer of Volume 70, *New England Silver and Silversmithing, 1620-1815*, edited by Fellow Members Jeannine Falino and Gerald W. R. Ward of the Museum of Fine Arts, broke a long hiatus in the previously steady stream of CSM publications. The volume comprised the proceedings of a conference cosponsored by the CSM and MFA in April 1996. The Stinehour Press, longtime partner with the Colonial Society in many of its publications during the 1960s and 1970s, returned both to design and print *New England Silver*.

The volume is lavishly illustrated with over 150 screened duotones in nearly 300 pages. In fact, the photographs were such an important part of the work that the Colonial Society departed from its standard trim size to an enlarged format which would better accommodate the illustrations. Editor of Publications John Tyler also made the pilgrimage to Lunenburg in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom in order to be on hand to correct the printing of the black and white photographs as the first sheets rolled off the presses.

Editors Falino and Ward not only provided intellectual oversight for the volume, but Falino was tireless and unfailingly tactful in her efforts to extract final drafts from the various essayists and move the project along. Ward, a fine prose stylist himself, also proved himself a first-rate editor by tracking down inconsistencies in citations from essay to essay. The completion of the volume entailed, as all books do, a heroic effort, and we hope members who are pleased with it will express their thanks directly to Ward and Falino.

Sharp-eyed members may have noticed that *New England Silver* is numbered Volume 70, whereas the *Harvard College Library Catalogues*, our last publication, bears the designation number 68. So where one might well ask is Volume 69? Volume 69 is the Eighteenth-Century Records of the Boston Overseers of the Poor, which had been assigned an ISBN number and appeared in the fall book list of our distributors, the University Press of Virginia, as a "forthcoming publication" four years ago. That, unfortunately, was before we spotted serious flaws in

the transcription and had to begin again. This past summer John Tyler and Assistant Editor of Publications Anne Decker Cecere have been carefully collating the new transcription with the original manuscript. The volume will be well worth waiting for. These are the most complete records of poor relief to survive from any major town in America, and the pages are full of references to people of color, as well as the mentally and physically disabled. Saddest of all are the stories of orphans, who could only hope that they would be bound out to a good master. Although life in the alms house was certainly preferable to the workhouse, the notation "jumpt fence" appears often enough in the margin to suggest that the almshouse was not any place one would want to linger. We hope that the Overseers volume should be able to go to press by a year from this fall.

Also going to press within the next year or two will be Ron Bosco's collection of New England elegies. Although the elegy remained a popular literary form through the mid-eighteenth century, the collection is a rich trove of biographical information for the first generations of New Englanders, especially women, about whom very little else appears in printed sources.

As Vice-President Dan Coquillette turned his attention increasingly to the legal career of Josiah Quincy, Jr., this past summer, his project has grown in size and complexity. The core of the project has always been a newly annotated edition of Quincy's *Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Superior Court of Judicature*. The 1865 edition of this earliest example of Massachusetts legal reporting numbers just over 600 pages. In order not to introduce a confusion of new page numbers, the Colonial Society will reproduce each page of the 1865 edition in facsimile with the new notes on a facing page. Dan has had two research assistants busy all summer long at the Commonwealth Archives at Columbia Point checking the files of each case reported by Quincy. Readers of the new edition will be able to compare for the first time what the young lawyer sitting in the back of the room thought the case was about with the actual documents of what transpired.

Quincy also kept two commonplace books, that have never been printed: one to aid him in his legal

studies, the other filled with quotations pertinent to the political events unfolding around him in Boston in the 1760s and 1770s. The legal commonplace book has been particularly thorny to unravel. Who but Dan would understand that the abbreviation “FNB” meant Fitzherbert’s *Natura Brevium* first published in France in 1543, but probably used by Quincy in the 1718 or 1730 editions? Dan notes that the commonplace book makes clear not only Quincy’s skill as a lawyer, but also the sophisticated resources he had at his disposal in mid-eighteenth century Boston, most likely the law library of Jeremiah Gridley. Fellow Member Neil York of Brigham Young University has completed his transcription of the the political commonplace book and written a biographical essay on Quincy which will accompany this multi-volume project.

Sheila McIntyre and Len Travers continue to work on the annotation of their compendium of the letters of John Cotton, Jr. Cotton wrote with the understanding that his letters would be shared with more readers than just the designated recipient. Thus, they are really newsletters containing all the information a well-placed clergyman could gather in the tumultuous times of King Philip’s War.

Work continues to go forward on the Society’s two largest publication projects: the Select Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson and the Letters of Sir Francis Bernard. Although both projects are a long way from publication, together they will give readers a comprehensive picture of the Loyalist view of political events in Boston during the 1760s and 1770s. Colin Nicolson, the editor of the Bernard Project, has been on sabbatical from the University of Stirling in Scotland this past year and used much of that time to complete his database of Bernard’s correspondence. John Tyler, the editor of the Hutchinson Papers, had been working on annotations for the years 1764 and 1765 (busy years in Hutchinson’s life) but was forced to suspend work this summer in order to give more attention to the Eighteenth-Century Records of the Boston Overseers of the Poor.

Even with this long list of projects underway, the Publications Committee still welcomes the suggestions of members for new documentary editions. Persons with ideas for new projects should contact either Pauline Maier, the chair of the Publications Committee (pmaier@mit.edu), or John Tyler, Editor of Publications (jtyler@groton.org).

---

*www.colonialsociety.org*

BY ROBERT J. ALLISON

**K**NOWING that in this age of the information superhighway, if you are not on the internet you might as well not exist, President Fred Ballou created a committee to develop a Colonial Society website. Members Emily Curran, director of the Old South Meeting House, Patrick Leehey of the Paul Revere House, Robert Anderson of the Great Migration Project at the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and the ubiquitous John Tyler sorted through what should be on a Colonial Society website (information about the House, about publications, about teacher and graduate student workshops and conferences) and what should not.

Bob Anderson had the foresight to register a domain name (www.colonialsociety.org) long before anything was ready to be posted on it. The committee engaged webdesigner James Woodman, who has created websites for the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Boston Athenaeum, and other cultural organizations (you may view his work on his own web-site, www.curiositycabinet.com). Member Jim Baker, who created and maintains the Plimoth Plantation site (www.plimoth.org), generously agreed to maintain the Colonial Society site, which, with the gracious cooperation of all the members of the committee, is now on-line this fall. Click on www.colonialsociety.org for further developments.

## CSM Members in the Public Prints

THIS WAS a summer when Gilbert Stuart's portrait of a wooly-headed John Adams seemed to be peering at you everywhere: in trains, on subways, and certainly in bookstore windows. Suddenly, "His Rotundity" was hip. In a scene repeated all over the East Coast this summer, the editor watched as a large SUV disgorged its contents at the beach: as the father staggered off under a load of boogie boards, beach chairs, and buckets and spades, his last words were, "Honey, will you be sure to get my John Adams book?" In his acknowledgements at the end of the 650-page biography, David McCullough pays handsome tribute to the Adams Papers staff: Richard Ryerson, Anne Decker Cecere, Gregg L. Lint, Jennifer A. Shea, and "especially to the gracious, dedicated" Celeste Walker, our Vice-President. As always, McCullough's words are apt.

CSM members may have been less likely to notice a long review essay by John Sweet of the Catholic University of America in the July issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly*. The essay purports to be a review of among others Fellow Member Alden Vaughan's book *New England Encounters: Indians and Euroamericans, ca. 1600-1850: Essays Drawn from the New England Quarterly*, but it is really about change at the Colonial Society and the *New England Quarterly* as perceived through the prism of scholarship about New England Indians. The *NEQ* has been an accurate barometer of scholarly attitudes from its early days when authors were primarily concerned to demonstrate that colonists were "good neighbors" of the Indians to the years after the publication of Francis Jennings' *Invasion of America* when the terms "genocide" and "cultural imperialism" began to appear. But Sweet singles out for special praise a 1990 editorial by Fellow Member Linda Smith Rhoads that welcomed a rising generation of "young scholars who challenge some of our assumptions" about the peoples of the colonial era, "both native and immigrant Americans." Thus, writes Sweet, the *New England Quarterly* "joined the mainstream just as the new wave of scholarship in Native American history was taking off in the 1990s." Sweet even concludes with flattering

remarks on the Sturbridge Indian Conference, hailing the CSM as an "active participant" in the trend to investigate how different peoples in early New England "coexisted and collaborated to shape each other's lives."



## New Members

December 2000

Resident:

*William J. Tramposch* is vice president for Museums and Collections at SPNEA, having previously served as Director of Visitor Programmes and Services at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa, President of the New York State Historical Association, Executive Director of the Oregon Historical Society, and Director of Interpretive Education and Special Program Officer for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. He is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, and received his Ph.D. from the College of William and Mary. He has a particular interest in public education. *Nominated by Jane Nylander.*

*William B. Tyler* of Weston, Mass., is the president of Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster, Attorneys and is a trustee of many charitable foundations and private trusts. He has served as President of the Bostonian Society and the Boston History Center and Museum, Inc. He is past director of the Freedom Trail Foundation. He graduated from Harvard College and received his law degree from Boston University. *Nominated by Frederick D. Ballou.*

Non-resident:

*Jack P. Greene* is Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at The Johns Hopkins University. A well-known historian of the colonial and revolutionary period in America, Professor Greene has been the recipient of numerous fellowships, awards, and grants. He has served on the boards and committees of almost all of the major historical associations and

is prolific author of monographs, edited works, articles, and book reviews. One of his most recent publications is *Interpreting Early America: Historical Essays*. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and received his Ph.D. degree from Duke University. Nominated by *Frederick D. Ballou*.

*Nominated for Election at the Next Meeting*

Resident:

*David Hackett Fischer* is the Warren Professor of History at Brandeis University. He graduated from Princeton University and received his Ph.D. from The Johns Hopkins University. Two of his best-known, award-winning books are *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* and *Paul Revere's Ride*. He is active in museum work, public history, and professional organizations. During his tenure at Brandeis, he has worked with his students to produce a series of remarkable social histories of New England towns. *Nominated by David F. Wood*.

Non-resident:

*Sheila McCall McIntyre* is a graduate of McGill University and received her Ph.D. from Boston University in 1996. The subject of her dissertation was "'This Loving Correspondency': New England Ministerial Communication and Association, 1670-1730." She has taught courses at Boston University, University of Ottawa, and Harvard University. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at Carleton University in Canada. She is collaborating with Fellow Member Len Travers on the Collected Letters of John Cotton of Plymouth (1640-1699) to be published by the Colonial Society. *Nominated by Edward W. Hanson*.

*Gerald W. R. Ward* is a historian in the field of American decorative arts. He received his Ph.D. from Boston University, and his dissertation on "Silver and Society in Salem, Mass., 1630-1820" has been a springboard for his many forays into the lives of colonial craftsmen and their patrons. He has contributed essays and served as content editor for many exhibition catalogs. He is also the co-editor for the

Colonial Society's most recent volume, *New England Silver and Silversmithing*. Nominated by Jeannine Falino.

## *Extending Our Reach*

by Linda Smith Rhoads

I WANT TO thank each and every one of you who responded to the questionnaire I sent out last spring. It has been both enlightening and useful to discover what you most value about the Society, to receive your ideas and cautionary comments, and to think about how we might move forward in light of your excellent counsel. I will be convening meetings of those who expressed an interest in helping to develop this new initiative. If you would like to participate but have not yet notified me, please do so using one of the forms of communication listed below.

Many of you have wisely noted that the Colonial Society's outreach efforts must necessarily be constrained by its character as a volunteer organization. I have taken that advice to heart. We can, however, extend our opportunities by thinking about outreach in broad terms. At the soul of our endeavors will always be those activities that we undertake ourselves. Still, given the extraordinary talent pooled within the membership of the Colonial Society, I believe that we can develop effective partnerships to create programs that will address the missions of a number of organizations as well as our own as together we reach out into the community. Moreover, although its resources in this regard will always remain quite limited, the Colonial Society stands ready to respond to worthy calls for support, especially in emergency situations, for activities directly related to the Society's interests. We have done more outreach of this third kind in the past year, as we paused to consider our range of alternatives in a responsible way, than we expect to do in the future.

The most significant outreach event of this past year had nothing to do with the incipient Outreach Committee. The conference "Reinterpreting New

England Indians and the Colonial Experience”—so expertly planned and carried out by John Tyler, with scholarly support from program committee members Marge Bruchac, Barry O’Connell, Neal Salisbury, and Colin Calloway and the logistical wizardry of the Society’s irreplaceable Elaine Paul—was a model of effective and imaginative outreach. Not only did the event examine a topic that long failed to receive appropriate notice in the scholarly community, but it also celebrated diverse cultures as it moved the Society west of its usual Boston stronghold.

As we look forward to the coming year, I am pleased to announce that in the spring of 2002, we will be holding our third Graduate Student Forum. The event, as you may recall, brings nine graduate students to the Society to speak about their work and to ask advice of the membership on how best to address a dilemma encountered in their writing or research. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a call for proposals. Please make copies of it and circulate them widely so that we can extend this opportunity to as many promising graduate students as possible.

Finally, drawing on the model of a highly successful program developed by the Whitehead Institute at MIT, we hope to launch a small, two-day program for 20 to 25 high school students with

a demonstrated interest in American history. We will plan activities that are both entertaining and instructive: talks by and chats with history professors, interactions with college and graduate students, behind-the-scenes tours of museums. For youth who generally think only in terms of studying history, we want to deliver a fun-filled opportunity to experience the myriad ways of “doing” history. In addition to drawing on the expertise of individuals, we will be approaching sister institutions—museums, libraries, and colleges—to make this the best possible program we can. If you are interested in participating in either of these endeavors—the Graduate Student Forum or the High School Program—please contact me.

LINDA S. RHOADS  
*Chair, CSM Outreach*

Mail to: *The New England Quarterly*  
Editorial Office  
Massachusetts Historical Society  
1154 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02215

E-mail: lrhoads@masshist.org  
Phone: 617-646-0519

---

*Participants at last year’s K-12 Teacher Workshop enjoy a quiet moment together.*





THE COLONIAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
87 Mount Vernon Street  
Boston, MA 02108

