**The Colonial Society of Massachusetts**

Minutes of the 128th Annual Meeting of the Membership

Held on Zoom

19 November 2020

President Donald R. Friary called the meeting to order at 6.00 P.M. His welcome to the members was preceded by brief remarks by Vice President Susan Lively on the protocols to be followed for the Zoom meeting environment.

The reading of the minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting was waived, as the minutes had been distributed to the membership prior to the meeting and posted on the Society’s website.

**1. Report of the Membership Committee.** Susan Lively, Chair, opened her report by requesting a moment of silence to remember the members we lost this year: Bernard Bailyn, Thomas Buffinton, Harley Holden, John Murrin, Raymond Robinson, and Joseph Peter Spang.

This was followed by a vote on nine new Resident Members whose nominations had been approved by the Council. Susan noted that if approved their election would bring our Resident Membership to 184 (out of 200 resident memberships available). Those to be voted upon were: Karilyn Crockett, Katherine Grandjean, Lauren B. Hewes, Patricia Johnston, Kathryn Lasdow, Kerima Lewis, Amory Loring Logan, Byron Rushing, and Adrian Weimer. Individual anonymous Zoom polls were conducted for each nominee.

**Voted:** All nine candidates were unanimously elected by the membership.

Finally, Susan reported that the Membership Committee and the Council have approved two members to be elevated to honorary membership: William Fowler and Donald Friary. Both men have served faithfully and well as presidents of the Society and are eminently qualified, through their erudition and dedicated service, to become honorary members.

**Voted:** To elect William Fowler and Donald Friary to Honorary Membership. Approved unanimously.

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

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

**4. Introduction of Meghan Holmes, Curator.** After expressing the Society’s thanks to Toby for his long and expert service to the Society in caring for the House and its collections, Don introduced Toby’s successor Meghan Holmes, and welcomed her to the Society.

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

**6. Report of the President.** Donald Friary’s report is appended.

**7. Report of the Nominating Committee.** Leslie Morris, Secretary, and Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked her fellow committee members, J. Ritchie Garrison and Alan Rogers, for their hard work in formulating the slate of candidates for this year. Collectively the committee spoke to former Presidents, and current and former Council members and chairs of committees for their input; as well as asking the members for nominations to the Council.

The Committee proposes the following slate of candidates for the coming year:

President: Robert Allison

Vice Presidents: Dan Coquillette, Robert Hall, Susan Lively, Celeste Walker

Secretary: Leslie A. Morris

Treasurer: Thomas R. Appleton

New Member of

Council, 3-year term: Rashaun Martin

And thanks to the Continuing members of Council: Nonie Gadsden and Martha McNamara. We also express our sincere appreciation to Robert Gross for his three years of service on the Council.

**Voted:** The slate of candidates was moved. Approved unanimously.

**9. Remarks by Robert Allison, President.** Bob thanked the members of the Society for their vote of confidence, remarking that he was humbled and excited to be leading the Society in the coming year. He announced that to honor outgoing President Don Friary, the Council had voted to establish the Donald R. Friary Annual Lecture. The first Friary Lecture, on May 13, 2021, will feature Mary Beth Norton, Ben Rae, and Tad Baker, who will discuss the Salem witchcraft episode of 1692.

**10. Reading of the Mayflower Compact.** D. Brenton Simons read the Mayflower Compact, traditionally read at the Society’s Annual Dinner following the Annual Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie A. Morris

Secretary

**Report of the Curator, Elton Hall**

Since this is my last report to the Society, I decided to indulge in a reminiscence. My introduction to the Colonial Society came quite early and in a somewhat unusual way. It was my interest in collecting prints that led me to the connections. Among several Connecticut artists I had come to know while in college was the wood engraver, Thomas W. Nason. When I met him, the print collecting public had turned away from the kind of print he made. He was feeling lonely and neglected, so when an enthusiastic twenty-year-old knocked on his door, he was cheered, and made it very easy for me to collect a lot of his work. On one visit I was looking at an engraving of a federal mansion on Beacon Hill, and he told me that he had been approached by a man named Walter Muir Whitehill, who wanted him to engrave a portrait of the house as a gift to the woman who had given it to the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. When I expressed an interest in it, he explained that as it was a commission, it would be improper for him to sell a copy to anyone else. However, it would be perfectly all right for him to give me an artist’s proof, which he was happy to do. Two years later, I met Walter, through our shared interest in prints, but another five years were to pass before my first real contact with the Society took place. During that interval, I completed the Winterthur Program and was in the midst of a tour of active duty in the Navy. It was in 1971 that the first in what would become a long series of Colonial Society conferences took place. After the very successful Winterthur Conference on Prints in and of America to 1840, organized by Jonathan Fairbanks in 1970, there was a ground swell of enthusiasm for another. Walter, who was a participant, obligingly offered to hold one at the Colonial Society the following year. When the invitation came out, I sent in my registration at once but was greatly disappointed to have a reply from Walter that the number was very limited due to the space available at the Colonial Society, and the registration was full. A few weeks later, another letter arrived from Walter informing me that he had received a cancellation, and the billet was available to me if I still wanted it. I did, and that was what first brought me to 87 Mount Vernon Street. I was much impressed, not only by the building but also by the very nice way in which everything was done, and the participants were provided for.

At the time of the conference, I had no idea what the future held for me following my separation from active duty in the Navy. As it turned out, I was appointed Assistant Curator and Director of Education at the Old Dartmouth Historical Society and New Bedford Whaling Museum, to begin in October 1972. In his characteristic way of helping youngsters entering the museum profession, Walter asked Steve Riley, then Director of the Massachusetts Historical Society, to invite me to the spring reception. He knew that there would be many people there with whom it would be helpful for me to be acquainted, and he wanted that opportunity to introduce me to them. Despite the fact that my raincoat was stolen, I remember the occasion with gratitude, as I met a number of people who did indeed become important to me as my career developed. The following spring, without any discussion or even mention of it, I received a letter from Corresponding Secretary David Little informing me that I had been elected a Resident Member of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. That was Walter’s way.

As I looked over the Society’s membership list, I confess to a boost I felt as I became aware of my being a fellow member with many of the great historians whose publications I had read in college and graduate school: Baylin, Brewington, Bridenbaugh, Commager, Cummings, Dodge, Garrett, Handlin, Hindle, Little, Morison, Sadik, Shipton, Chad Smith, Wright, and Wroth. Of course, many others were deceased by then, nor did I personally meet a great many who were still active, but I was happy to see their names on the list. For me, a newcomer to Massachusetts and the museum community, and tucked away in the southern provinces with no other museums nearby, the Colonial Society was a window on the larger world. I made it a point to attend all the stated meetings.

When I came aboard, Fritz Allis had just succeeded Ted Shipton as president, and Walter Whitehill was Editor of Publications, which position he held from 1946 until his death in 1978. During his tenure he saw sixteen volumes of publications through the press, with more in various stages of production. He also brought about the acquisition and original furnishing of the house. The success of the 1971 print conference inspired the series of annual conferences on special subjects of Massachusetts history: furniture, architecture, seafaring, music, and others. The series continues, but at irregular intervals. It was discussion of the 1976 conference that resulted in our most unusual adventure. It was the bicentennial year, and suggested topics included some form of participation in that event. Larry Geller, Director of the Pilgrim Society had recently been to Bermuda and spoke enthusiastically of the historical organizations he had visited. Walter, who detested hoopla of any kind, jumped at the idea of celebrating the bicentennial by getting out of town and visiting a crown colony that had remained loyal. And so, on a snowy March morning, a contingent of Colonial Society members assembled at Logan Airport and flew to Bermuda for a week’s stay, joined there by several non-resident members departing from other places. It happened that my grandmother lived in Bermuda at that time, so I had a wonderful opportunity to make myself useful to the Society. Upon hearing the plans, my grandmother threw herself into the event with her usual vigor. Like Walter, she always preferred the leadership position. She arranged all sorts of things that we wouldn’t otherwise have enjoyed, from the Whitehill’s calling on the Governor at Government House, to visits for all participants into several private homes and a cocktail party at her historic house for all Colonial Society members and Bermudian participants. It was a memorable event, long reminisced about. There were many good papers presented, but, alas, there was no volume of proceedings, due to the failure of the Bermudians to provide their contributions in writing. One paper, Andy Oliver’s on Joseph Blackburn, may be found in our Shipton volume.

At the time I became actively involved, the Society had had the house for about twenty years. It was pretty well refurbished at the time of acquisition, but since then, the maintenance program had been to take care of essential things like leaks, but no more than necessary. With my Winterthur background, I was interested in it, and offered to help. In 1980, I was elected to the council, and when my term expired, I was kept aboard by becoming chair of the house committee. Lacking the expertise required to take care of the house properly, I proposed my then Tabor Academy colleague, Don Wing for membership. In addition to being an historian of the mechanical arts, he was a licensed Massachusetts building construction superintendent. He joined the house committee and became really enthusiastic. Dan Coquillette, who knew of Don and what he had been accomplishing with the physical plant at Tabor, took an interest in what we were doing and talking about. In the finest Whitehillian manner, Dan organized a lunch at the Country Club for us to get together and explore the matter thoroughly. The result was a proposal to the council that we renovate the Carriage House, which was then in serious need of major work, into an attractive rental unit, and earn some income with it. If that were successful, we could do something similar with the ell, and the income from those units would provide a permanent stream of funding for the maintenance of the original Bulfinch part of the house. Thanks largely to the time, effort, and expertise Don Wing was willing to contribute, it all worked out as planned. At this point, 1990, the Council decided that our building and possessions needed more than volunteer attention, so they created the position of curator, and appointed me to fill it.

During the course of this work, Bill Fowler became president and continued support for the full renovation of the house as did his successor, Fred Ballou, with whose encouragement we also began work on the contents of the house, undertaking conservation of our most important paintings and furniture. When Don Friary became president, he brought into play his extensive experience running Historic Deerfield. He reactivated the house committee and got us to work in a much more organized fashion than we had been. I think that among Don’s most important contributions to our organization is the way he has reached out to the general membership, encouraged their interest in participating in the work of the Society, and got them to populate an increased number of committees. This has enabled us to increase our activity and productivity, thereby making a much greater contribution to the larger world of Massachusetts history than we had in decades past. It has also made my job a good deal more enjoyable. In my beginning years I would come to work in our house where the only other occupants were the Archives of American Art staff. Except for meeting days, I was almost always alone. In recent years, I have come to meet with house committee members and others, which added a most welcome camaraderie to the day.

The chief pleasure of my involvement with the Society over the last four decades has been the association with my fellow members, particularly the members of the Council, too numerous to name after such an interval, and many others with whom I became friends but saw only at our meetings. During my Whaling Museum years, they were my principal contacts with the museum world and allowed me to keep in touch with or at least get news of in those benighted years before email. I will single out John Tyler, Editor of Publications since 1990, who has produced 28 volumes (that’s 30% of our life’s work) to date with several more in various stages of production. In addition to his scholarship, John is interested in art and antiques and has had as much presence in the house as anyone. He has been an amiable, helpful, well-informed colleague with whom I could discuss all sorts of matters concerning the house and our operations.

As far as the Curator’s Report on this year’s projects is concerned, the details are pretty well covered in the Newsletter with one important accomplishment completed since publication, and that is conservation of the Channing/Morse sofa, attributed to Isaac Vose, and now installed in the library, all thanks to the efforts of our new Chair of the House Committee, Robert Mussey. I saw it a few days ago, and it is spectacular!

So with renewed thanks to all my colleagues and friends who have made my four decades here happy and productive, I hereby concede the Curatorship to the successful candidate, Meghan Holmes, with whom I have already been working to assure a smooth transition. Meghan, I wish you a happy and successful tenure!

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

Even amidst all the news of a disputed election and a pandemic virus, it can hardly have escaped the notice of this audience that we are drawing very near the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. On this night 400 years ago, I suspect the crew of *Mayflower* was shortening sail so they wouldn't go crashing into the North American land mass in the dark of night. With just an astrolabe onboard, they would have known they were far north of their intended landing spot in northern Virginia , but not exactly how far they were off the New England coast. Before the development of marine chronometers, such knowledge would depend on a series of guesstimates called dead reckoning. I suppose the phrase is intended to connote accuracy, but it has always amused me because, if you're "reckoning" was too far out, you might find yourself well and truly "dead."

Tomorrow will be the anniversary of the Pilgrims' abortive effort to head south down along the outer shore of the Cape Cod. I say "abortive" because once they encountered Pollock Rip off the tip of Monomoy they decided to turn back. I think of Pollock Rip as prime blue fishing grounds, but even I have to admit that if you were caught in the rip in a sluggish square-rigged sailing vessel it would be pretty frightening. Hence, that area's earlier names Point Care, Tucker's Terror, and, my favorite, Cape Malabar. And so they turned around headed north, and spent the night in Provincetown Harbor.

My summer hometown of Provincetown has been wondering for at least a century and a half how Plymouth managed to steal the mantle of the Pilgrims away from them, so it was not surprising that in the 400th anniversary year, not wanting the Plymouthians to get ahead of them they elected to celebrate on the inaccurate date of November 11, 2020. After all, the Mayflower Compact, which Brendan will soon read to you, is clearly dated the 11th of November. Right? But the Provincetown fathers (and mothers) forgot to make the ten-day adjustment for the change from the Gregorian to the Julian calendar: the real anniversary should be this coming Saturday, the 21st. That's the day the town of Plymouth has chosen for its celebration. But there's an irony there as well, since there wouldn't have been any Pilgrims in Plymouth until December 16, Old Style, or December 26, as we would have it!

And while we are on the subject of commemorative feasts, let me point out the November 26, the day on which Thanksgiving falls this year, is particularly suitable as a National Day of Mourning for Indigenous Peoples, since it is the 400th anniversary exactly of the day Miles Standish and his companions made off with winter stores of seed corn that local Payomet Indians had buried for safe-keeping, thus initiating a 400-year tradition of European Americans stealing from Native peoples.

Despite the moral lapses of the Pilgrims, there is still much in their story that speaks of courage, deep faith, and a tenacious desire to found an exemplary community in a strange new world. And I can't think of a better way to mark the occasion than to read you some of my favorite words from 400th Anniversary Edition of *William Bradford's Of Plimoth Plantation* edited by Jeremy Bangs, Frank Bremer, and Ken Minkema and published by the Colonial Society together with the New England Historic Genealogical this past May. I begin on p. 179 if you would like to follow along in your copy:

*Being thus arrived in a good harbor, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast, & furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils, & miseries thereof; again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper Element.*

*But here I cannot but stay, and make a pause, and stand half amazed at this poor people’s present condition; and so I think will the reader too, when he well Considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation . . . they had now no friends to welcome them, nor Inns to entertain, or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies, no houses, or much less towns to repair to, to seek for succour.*

*And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that country, know them to be sharp & violent, & subject to cruel & fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places, much more to search an unknown coast.*

*Besides what could they see, but a hideous & desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts, & wild men, and what multitudes there might ^be^ of them they knew not . . . ; for which way soever they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content, . . ., for summer being done, all things stand upon them with a weatherbeaten face; and the whole country (full of woods & thickets) represented a wild & savage hue. If they looked behind them, there was the mighty Ocean which they had passed, and was now as a main bar, & gulf, to separate them from all the Civil parts of the world.*

*What could now sustain them, but the spirit of God & his grace? May not,& ought ^not^ the children of these fathers rightly say, “Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness, but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard their voice, ‘and.looked on their adversity,’ &c. Let them therefore ‘praise the Lord, because he is good; & his mercies endure forever.’ Yea, ‘let them which have been redeemed of the Lord, shew how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressour, when they wandered in the desert wilderness out of the way, and found no city to dwell in; both hungry, & thirsty, their soul was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men.’”*

The other CSM publication that appeared this past spring was Volume 2 of *The Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson*, a work I'm deeply interested in for obvious reasons, but I won't read you any passages from that. (I hope you've already had a chance to dip into your own complimentary copy instead.) But I will tell you that Volume 3 is to go off to the printers in December and will probably arrive in your mailboxes in January or February 2021. Volume 3 covers only the first ten months of 1770; since it was the year of the Boston Massacre, it was a particularly busy time for letter-writing for the governor. (Hutchinson wrote more letters in 1770 than in any other two years combined.) The volume climaxes with the acquittal of Captain Thomas Preston, the 250th anniversary of which occurred just over three weeks ago on October 28th.

I'm already at work on Volume 4 (November 1770 through June 1772). To preview just one incident from that volume, let me explain that it was the governor's job, even then, to issue, sometime after the harvest, a proclamation of thanksgiving. He was probably relieved to turn his hand to such an uncontroversial task after a year of squabbling with Samuel Adams, the General Court, the Boston Town Meeting, and the committees of correspondence. Thus, he declared that November 21st would be a day of prayer, for people "to offer up their humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for all the instances of his goodness and loving-kindness to us in the course of the year past. . . ," especially for "the life and health of the King" who had succeeded in "his endeavors to preserve the blessings of peace to his dominions when threatened with the judgment of war." [War with Spain had just narrowly been avoided over---guess where?--- the Falkland Islands!] Hutchinson added they should also give thanks that God saw fit "to afford a good measure of health to the people of this province and to continue them in their civil and religious liberties." It was those words----the continuing of their civil and religious liberties ---that Samuel Adams (and other likeminded patriots) couldn't stomach. And so they mounted a campaign among the Boston clergy to refuse to read the governor's proclamation from their pulpits that year. Only Ebenezer Pemberton, Hutchinson's own minister, read the controversial document, and even there half the congregation walked out. So it appears that in 1771 it was hard for a royal governor in Massachusetts to get anything right. And I, for one, will carefully parse his words next week when President Trump pardons the turkey ---or is it vice versa?

Colin Nicolson has been finishing up work on the sixth and final volume of *The Papers of Sir Francis Bernard* this fall with the interesting result that he and I have both been looking at many of the same letters from different sides of the Atlantic.  As Colin reads the letters, he is struck by Hutchinson’s sense of political isolation—a lack of support both at home and in Great Britain---while Bernard appears to have an indirect, though very real, influence on British colonial policy, and together their correspondence constituted important “evidence” of American misbehavior that helped validate the North administration’s punitive policy in 1774. I anticipate that Bernard, volume 6, might appear in midsummer 2021.

I want to remind members that the Colonial Society publishes in a variety of formats. Every new book appears on the Publications page of our website at the same time that printed books are distributed to our members, and, thus, is available anywhere in the world at any time. But also in the past year there have also been important additions to the Documents page of the website. There you will find Richard Mather's draft of the 1648 Cambridge Platform, essentially an outline of how New England Congregationalism was supposed to work, as well as the Westborough Church Records from 1724 through 1787, kept by the remarkable Rev. Ebenezer Parkman, who managed to steer his parish through the vicissitudes of both the Great Awakening and the American Revolution with a minimum of controversy. Both publications were done in cooperation with New England's Hidden Histories and the Congregational Library. The Westborough church records also fit neatly within larger framework of the Ebenezer Parkman Project at the Westborough town library, an exceptional online compilation of local records that makes Westborough arguably the best documented town of eighteenth century Massachusetts. These two new additions to the Documents page do not yet have all the functionality we anticipate, but I hope you will look into them nonetheless.

The year 2022 should see the fifth and final volume of *The Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson* and, perhaps, the publication of the eighteenth century Men's and Women's Minutes of the Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Quaker Meeting. The remote coastal borderland between Massachusetts and Rhode Island provided a refuge not only for religious dissenters, but also Native Americans and free blacks who left behind a rich social history. Another collection we might look forward to in 2023 is David Hall and Adrian Weimer's compilations of the writings of Daniel Gookin, best known for his advocacy of the so-called Praying Indians, who were removed to the Boston Harbor Islands during King Phillip's War. Gookin was deeply interested in Native American customs and risked vigilante reprisals to come to their aid.

CSM projects further in the future include Josiah Cotton Jr.'s memoirs and sermons to the neighboring Native American community, as well the rich but lengthy diary of the Rev. William Bentley, polymath and book collector *extraordinaire* in turn-of-the-nineteenth century Salem. So you see we have much to keep us busy in the days ahead when we can look forward to gathering once again at 87 Mount Vernon Street without masks and social distancing.

**Report of the President, Donald Friary**

Thank you, Susan, Thomas, Toby, Meghan, and John for your reports and remarks. All testify to the vitality of the Society and our preparedness for the future. My thanks also to the Council and the committees with whom I have worked for the past 14 years. The support and the real work of this core group has strengthened the Society in so many respects.

This has been a most unusual year in the COVID-19 pandemic. We had all anticipated anniversary events and programs— Plymouth 400, the Boston Massacre’s 250th, the State of Maine at 200—throughout the year. All that stopped suddenly early in March. Our world changed overnight.

Before the pandemic arrested our attention and our mobility we had a book launch for the two volumes of the Kings Chapel records, edited by James B. Bell and James E. Mooney, that was hosted jointly by the Society and King’s Chapel, as well as very interesting Stated Meeting presentations by Jared Ross Hardesty in December and Neal Salisbury in February. Even in the pandemic we were able to issue two new books, volume 2 of[*The Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson, 1767–1769*](https://www.colonialsociety.org/publications/3656/volume-92-correspondence-thomas-hutchinson-volume-2-1767-1769), edited by John Tyler,and a new 400th anniversary edition of William Bradford’s *Of Plimoth Plantation*, published jointly with the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Looking to the future, we began to work with the Dartmouth (Massachusetts) Historical & Arts Society and the Dartmouth Friends Meeting on our first publication of Quaker records, a venture in religious diversity beyond the Standing Order of the Puritans and the incursion of the Church of England. Tom Knoles continued his major edition of the massive 1784-1819 diary of the Reverend William Bentley of Salem, a project that will be published digitally online and be entirely searchable. This will enable and encourage many scholars to interpret religious, intellectual, and social history in the early national period.

Revolution 250, which began in discussions by a small group of Boston historic sites personnel at 87 Mount Vernon Street, and now has more than 60 institutional members and a developing program to observe the anniversaries of key events leading to 1776, had a live reenactment of the Boston Massacre early in March, but will make its planned presentation of the trial of the British soldiers a virtual event. Although our new K-12 initiatives stalled, the committee made two awards. The first was to South Boston Community History Day, an annual event at Dorchester Heights. Because of the novel coronavirus pandemic, this engagement with history was put on hold for 2020. It is anticipated that history and schoolchildren will return to the Heights in 2021. The second provided funds to support educational programs offered by Historic New England at Pierce House in Dorchester. While our funding was designed to support hands-on instruction, it has facilitated the development of online lessons during the pandemic.

Our April Stated Meeting presentation by Professor Jean O’Brien of the University of Minnesota has been postponed indefinitely, but in December Carla Gardina Pestana will present online from Los Angeles to Colonial Society members and guests throughout North America. The Council has appointed a committee to plan and implement virtual programs that will fulfill the Society’s mission to promote knowledge and understanding of early New England history.

When at last year’s Annual Meeting we approved changes in the By-Laws, committees were given more structure and greater responsibility. All committees are now appointed annually by the Council. We anticipate greater proactivity, more effective governance, and stronger programs.

The Colonial Society’s longstanding generous subvention of the *New England Quarterly* continues. Evan Haefeli of Texas A & M University has succeeded Virginia DeJohn Anderson of the University of Colorado as the Society’s annual reviewer of the Quarterly. He has conveyed a very positive report.

The 2020 Graduate Student Forum had to be postponed to June 2021. The program already planned will be offered then, with Professor Linda Kerber of the University of Iowa as senior scholar and the group of students selected this year.

Richard Nylander, who has so ably chaired the House Committee for seven years, was succeeded this year by Robert Mussey, a conservator who has been a very active advocate and manager of our conservation treatments. A Boston Empire sofa from the shop of Isaac Vose that had long been in storage was treated and reupholstered in black horsehair and placed in our second floor library. A Boston looking glass of the same period that remained in the house when ownership was transferred to the Colonial Society has been restored and returned to its place between the windows in the lecture room. The French 19th-century boulle cabinet beneath it has also been conserved. A handsome and very important Massachusetts armorial needlework is now undergoing cleaning and conservation in the studio of Deirdre Windsor.

A year ago, we thought and hoped that we had caught up with all deferred maintenance on the buildings but discovered serious deterioration in the south façade of the carriage house. It has now been restored and the house awaits new rental occupancy. As you know, Curator Toby Hall, who has served the Society in many capacities for 40 years, will retire at the end of December. Toby has been a faithful steward of our buildings and furnishings and a significant institutional memory for the Colonial Society. We are grateful for his long service and real dedication.

A Search Committee, chaired by Thomas Michie and including Karina Corrigan and Vice President Robert Allison, created a new job description and job posting for the position and spread the word of this opportunity. Several strong applications were received and the Council in September appointed Meghan Holmes. We are impressed by Meghan’s experience and knowledge and look forward to her service as Curator.

The Society’s ability to respond to this year’s challenges is certainly attributable to the commitment and generosity of our members. It is heartening to observe how many members, near and far, request complimentary copies of each new publication, a benefit of membership. It is encouraging also to know how many members subscribe to the *New England Quarterly*, in print or online or both, another perquisite of membership in the Colonial Society.

The loyalty of our members is evident in your response to our Annual Appeal. More than 30% give to the Annual Fund, above and beyond their membership dues. In the fiscal year ending September 30 we received $35,462 in annual gifts, a 25 percent increase over the previous year.

Just a few weeks ago we received from the John Winthrop Charitable Trust a gift of $25,000 to establish an endowment to support the John Winthrop Prize to be awarded biennially for the best book published in the preceding two years on early New England history. Our member John Winthrop expressed the wish to promote the study of the earliest years of English settlement in New England, in which his family played such a significant role. We are very grateful for his generosity.

When I was elected President of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts in 2006, I had no idea that I would continue for 14 years. For me it has been a good run. I have enjoyed my tenure enormously and will certainly miss my role here. I have been especially pleased to see the expansion of our programs beyond our Stated Meetings to include book launches, events honoring distinguished members, and tours of our very fine collection of fine and decorative arts. The house has served increasingly as a very appropriate meeting place for kindred spirits committed to the study and pursuit of New England history. These have included receptions when major historical organizations are meeting in Boston, year-end events for honors undergraduates and graduate students in history at nearby universities, history department retreats, and university library donor groups. The house and the Society have become better known among target audiences.

I am pleased to turn the presidency over to Bob Allison, who has been a very active vice president during my entire tenure. Bob has managed the Graduate Student Forum, convened the meetings that have led to Revolution 250, and kept the Council in touch with historical organizations and activities in the Boston area. I am pleased also to pass on to Bob and the Council and our entire membership a strong organization that is a faithful steward of our exemplary publications program, our historic Charles Bulfinch-designed house, and the remarkable works of art and craft within. I see a bright future for the Colonial Society and look forward to observing it from the sidelines.