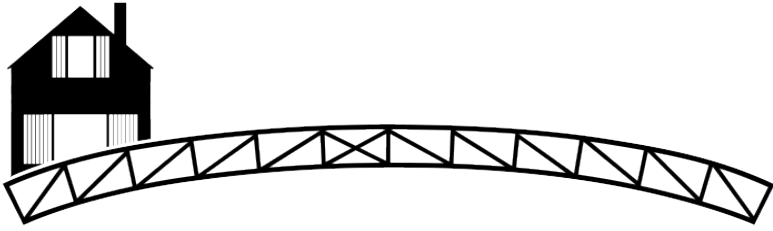




**MOUNT
DESERT
ISLAND
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Access



“Materials cannot tell their own stories,”

writes Tova Mellen in the foreword to “Beholding the Past,” *Chebacco* vol. 19. “Collection and preservation of historical materials are the means but not the end to our work.” An integral part of our mission is to provide opportunities for the public to plumb the depths of our shared archives and to discover connections between places, people, and events in local and national history. In this year’s magazine, we invited authors around the island to tell the stories of fourteen unique objects of island history, accompanied by stunning full-color photographs by Jennifer Steen Booher.

Engagement

One of our most beloved events for young historians, the Vintage Classroom is a living history play set in the Sound Schoolhouse in the year 1895. Actors play characters based on real historical figures and discuss events in the village's past, providing participants with an immersive introduction to 19th century schooling and life on Mount Desert Island.

Our Development Coordinator, Eloise Schultz, shares that “Not only students gain a sense of the differences between then and now, but they observe cultural values which are still very important for our communities today.” With support from the Maine Humanities Council and Maine Arts Commission, this year’s Vintage Classroom was offered for free to the public and reached a total audience of 141 students, teachers, and community members. Keep an ear tuned for more voices of local history in future iterations of this dynamic program!

Brittany, Brendan, and Andrew lead students in a round of Graces, a popular 19th century hoop-tossing game.

Visitors can see many of the objects in this year’s *Chebacco* at the Somesville Museum this summer. Our new exhibit, *Beholdings*, considers the power of artifacts of all types to expand our understanding of this place and its people. Objects, photographs, and a web portal tell the stories behind an early twentieth-century community cookbook, bird specimens collected by Henry Spelman in the 1880s, and fragments of 200-year-old shoes concealed in the parsonage house of Great Cranberry Island, and much more.



Capacity

Financial Report

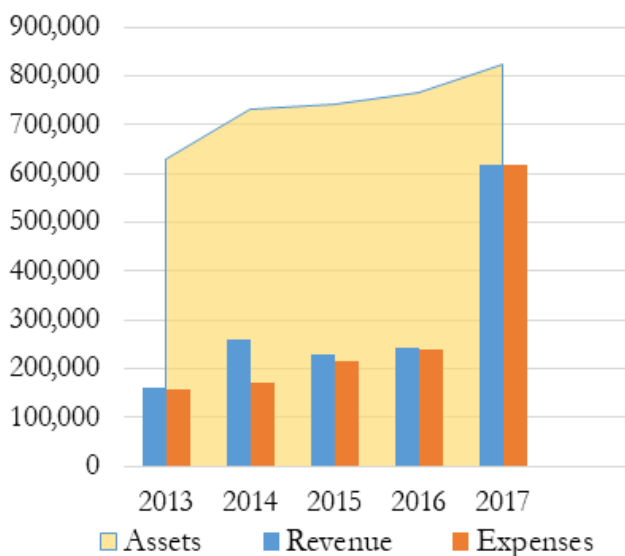
In 2017, the society generated a net profit from operations with revenues of \$657,320 and expenses of \$589,000. The significant incremental revenue and expenses in 2017 from prior years represent a very generous but non-recurring grant from the Charles Butt Foundation to underwrite the initial planning phases of the History Trust. This grant also enabled in part the salaries for two new employees, our Development Coordinator and Curator of Collections. In addition, last year's membership levels rose to an unprecedented 638 active members and families. Seventy-five percent of our members reside here in Maine, and the remaining quarter are spread across 28 other states in the US.

Statement from the Treasurer:

In the fall of 2017, we engaged the Accounting firm Horton, McFarland, & Vesey, LLC to conduct an audit of the Society's financial reporting and processes. The auditors gave the Society a satisfactory overall rating, which included a summary financial report and specific recommendations to management on actions to be taken in the future to assure financial controls remain in place.

- Ham Clark

Revenue and Expenses 2013 - 2017



Thanks to your support, we can:

Offer free access to our archives, research materials, and educational programs.

Establish opportunities for meaningful research and service projects for students and scholars through the Visiting History Scholars and Champlain Society Fellowship.

Provide every third grader in the region an opportunity to participate in Vintage Classroom, a recreation of an 1895 school day.

Collaborate with neighboring museums and community members on public events such as the winter Bean Supper and the mid-summer Strawberry Festival.

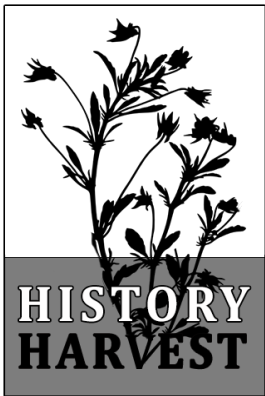
Publish contemporary historical research and essays in our annual magazine, *Chebacco*.

Develop seasonal exhibits and maintain two historic buildings: the Sound Schoolhouse (1892) and the Somesville Selectmen's Building (1780).

The History Trust

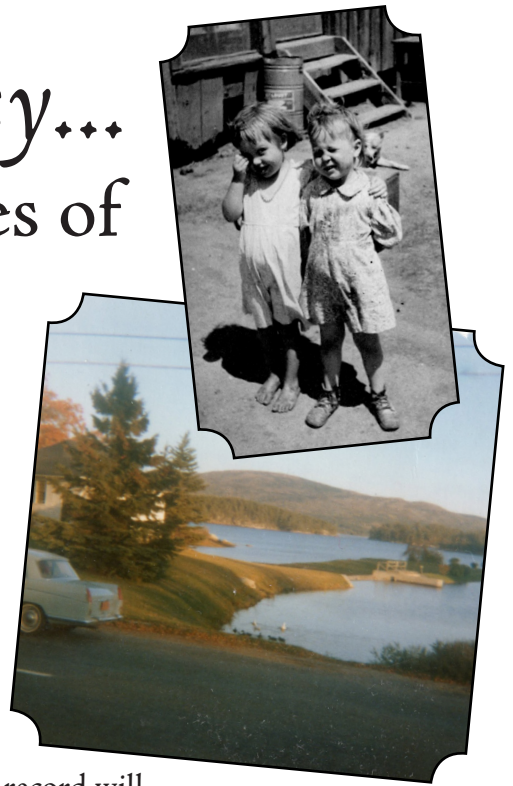
From 2017 - 2018, we engaged consultants from HistoryIT to assess the status of island collections and to provide recommendations for their protection. This resulted in the formation of the **History Trust**, a collaborative effort to preserve the histories of Mount Desert Island for future generations to discover and explore. We are proud to announce our partnership with the following organizations:

Bar Harbor Village Improvement Association
College of the Atlantic
Great Cranberry Island Historical Society
Great Harbor Maritime Museum
Isleford Historical Society
Jesup Memorial Library
Maine Seacoast Mission
Seal Cove Auto Museum
Southwest Harbor Historical Society
Tremont Historical Society



The living is easy... an open call for stories of summer on Mount Desert Island.

This summer, we invite you to participate in the **History Harvest**, our new initiative to record artifacts of public history. For our first theme, we encourage participants to tell us about how they and their families have spent summers on MDI. Community members will have the opportunity to share materials such as diaries, photographs, maps, and other family heirlooms for documentation. Our volunteers will create a high-resolution digital image of your artifact and collect a short oral history about the object and its background, which will be stored in our digital archive. This record will be shared with students, teachers, and scholars, but your precious photographs will return home with you! The first History Harvests will take place throughout the summer of 2018. For more information, contact Rachel Snell, our Curator of Collections, at rachel.snell@mdihistory.org, or call 276-9323.



New faces at the Historical Society:



Leah Lucey, an experienced business professional who has worked in the private yacht and real estate industries, has been named **Administrative Coordinator**. In this role, Leah will provide support for the essential operational, financial, and administrative functions of the society.



Jenna Beaulieu is our new **Outreach and Collections Coordinator**. In this role, Jenna will engage the public with the historical resources of the society and care for the collection. Jenna is also the Store and Events Manager for Seal Cove Auto Museum and the two organizations will share her services.



Brittany Goetting has been named our 2018 **Visiting History Scholar**. She will contribute an article to the 2019 issue of *Chebacco* on the topic of the religious history of MDI.



Dan Soucier is our **Eliot Fellow** for 2018. He will write articles for the 2020 Maine Bicentennial issue of *Chebacco* on the topic of Maine prior to its statehood in 1820.

*Interested in volunteering?
Email leah.lucey@mdihistory.org
or call our office at 276-9323.*