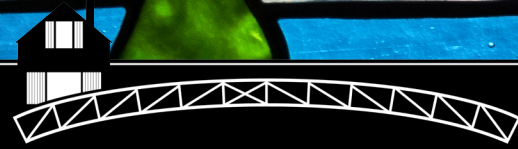


ANNUAL REPORT 2018



MOUNT
DESERT
ISLAND
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Engagement

*Make your family's story
part of the island's history*



The first year of the History Harvest, an initiative to collect and digitize new histories of Mount Desert Island, has resulted in 20 new collections available on our website. With every contribution, we develop a dynamic and personal account of life on Mount Desert Island: a history generated for and by the people of the island. We inaugurated this year's History Harvests in the winter with the help of 5th and 6th grade students at Conners Emerson School in Bar Harbor. Students interviewed each other and family members about objects related to their family's past, including a gold-plated pocket watch, a military ammunition box, and a poison ring. Since then, we've added stories of old maps, steamboat tickets, and even a medieval-style trebuchet to our collections. Visit www.mdihistory.org/historyharvest to explore or set up an appointment to add your own story to the archives.

Access

Highlights from the year:

- A new exhibit in the Selectmen's Building, designed by Jennifer Steen Booher, is entitled Stained Glass of Mount Desert Island.
- At our seasonal History Happy Hours, we hosted dynamic editions of MDI Trivia and Jeopardy.
- Team MDI History at the MDI Marathon raised \$6,051 to support our programs.
- Over one hundred community members gathered at the Bean Supper to share a traditional potluck meal and to hear Nat Fenton speak on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s last speech.
- Our authors and board members presented at conferences by the New England Historical Association and Maine Archives & Museums.
- Working with our volunteers and researchers this year are students from MDI High School, College of the Atlantic, and UMaine.
- The Sound Schoolhouse has been nominated for the National Historic Register.
- Volume XIX of *Chebacco*, *Beholdings*, received a prestigious Leadership in History Award. See "Research" on the last page for the full story.

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

Celebrating 20 Years of The Vintage Classroom

Anyone who's participated in our "Vintage Classroom" living history program has had the privilege of being taught by Maude March in her role as Mrs. Abbot, Sound's most famous schoolteacher since 1895. This year, students from five local island schools visited the Vintage Classroom for an unforgettable visit to the past. Mrs. Abbot was joined by performers from the Barn Arts Collective, who helped to complete a cast of historical characters. Maude will receive this year's Ann Benson Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service in recognition of her extraordinary tenure. We welcome all of Mrs. Abbot's former "students" to celebrate with us at the Annual Meeting.



The Vintage Classroom assembles for a song and story.

Capacity

Financial Report

The historical society's community extends beyond our island to our 633 members in 33 states, linked through a shared commitment to historical research and discovery. From slinging shortcakes at our annual Strawberry Festival to seeking out new stories of island history, we count on our members and volunteers to help us to build community while fulfilling our mission of preserving and engaging the public in the histories of Mount Desert Island.

Message from the Treasurer:

In 2018, the society generated a net income of \$2,000 on revenue of \$252,000. For 2019, the society is outlooking to achieve the full year profit plan of \$4,000 on slightly lower revenue of \$226,000.

In 2019, the society is also acting as the fiscal agent for the History Trust, and all private fundraising, grant income and expenses for the History Trust are being managed separately from the base Historical Society operating budget. As of June's end, assets for the History Trust totaled \$60,000.

- Ham Clark

The History Trust

Mount Desert Island's archival collections are kept in over two dozen different repositories. They are vulnerable to fire, flood, mold, insects, and light. If the current generation passes before the collection is cataloged, our knowledge of the collection's context will be lost. In collaboration with ten other historical nonprofits, in 2018 we founded the History Trust to protect the island's historical collections and make them accessible to the whole community, especially young people and future generations. The participating organizations of the History Trust have formed a Governing Council that has agreed to mission, vision, and values statements and begun to create a strategic plan. The organization's priority is to adopt a common digital platform so that anyone can search the contents of all History Trust collections from a single website. In the fall, the History Trust will host a community-wide conference on collections management and care.

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 the Eliot 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).



Alan deCheubell loads a pumpkin into a trebuchet on Bar Island, 2001. To learn more, visit the History Harvest webpage. *Photo courtesy of Richard P. Sassaman*



Research

Have you received your copy of the latest *Chebacco*, vol. XX? Our new issue, "Harboring Religion: Missionaries, Converts, and Sojourners," traces various religious histories of the island, from the early European settlements to present day. "Harboring Religion" was guest-edited by two professors at Washington University, Marie Griffith and Leigh Schmidt, both summer residents of Southwest Harbor with deep connections to the island. Their volume speaks to the centrality of religion within the arc of our region's history. With lush, full-color images of stained glass by artist-in-residence Jennifer Steen Booher highlighting the visual culture and artistry of the island's spiritual landscape, this issue is sure to dazzle readers with its scope and content.



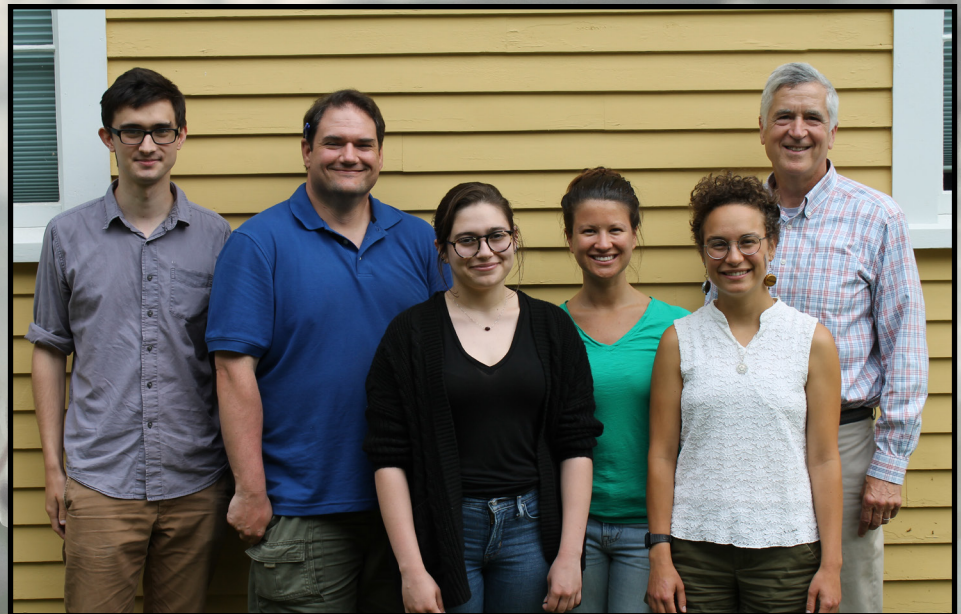
Gerry Vasisko and Lily McNally install a panel at the Selectman's Building.

The 2018 issue of *Chebacco*, "Beholdings," has been awarded a Leadership in History Award from the American Association for State and Local History. Now in its 74th year, the LHA is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

Summer 2019 Staff & Interns:

left to right: Will Miller (intern), Patrick Callaway, Lily McNally (intern), Leah Lucey, Eloise Schultz (Eliot Fellow), Tim Garrity.

At the Somesville Museum & Gardens (not pictured): Sarah Domareki (docent), Andrew Benson (docent).



New faces at the Historical Society:

Our new Collections Coordinator is Patrick Callaway, a Ph.D. Candidate in history at the University of Maine. This is a shared position with Seal Cove Auto Museum, where he serves as Museum Manager. Patrick's research focuses on the economic connections between the United States and British North America in the late 1700s and early 1800s. He is currently finishing his dissertation at the University of Maine. At the Sound Schoolhouse, Patrick manages our collections and acquisitions in addition to supporting our research and grantwriting.

We also welcome Darcy Stevens, doctoral student at U Maine, as one of our Visiting History Scholars. She joins Brittany Goetting in the same role to help the Society prepare for the bicentennial of Maine's statehood by researching and writing articles for the 2020 issue of *Chebacco*.