

President's Report 2020

Summary of 2019-20

1. Curator: When Jane Sciacca left the curator's job last fall, the board opted to retain an independent contractor for a three month period, extended through this May by the board this winter. We were lucky to hire Kay Gardner-Westcott, chair of the Wayland Historical Commission and longtime librarian/local history research maven in Watertown. She kept the Grout Heard House open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, answering queries, and learning about the collection from Jane—who served first as president and then as curator and who knows the collection better than many.
2. Programs:
 - a. We developed a photographic exhibit, available for viewing on our website, for the Library's Raytheon Room, depicting the history of the Mass Central railroad from its beginning in 1881 to its demise in 1980, and the more recent development of a rail trail.
 - b. The Tour of "Two Sudburys", coordinated with the Sudbury Historical Society and cut short by a bus mishap in Spring 2018, was successfully reprised in the Fall 2019 . The program for the Bus Tour is also available on our website for you to print.
 - c. Our annual Wayland Center Holiday Open House competed with new events at the shopping center but was enlivened by three music groups and a "scavenger hunt" for children and families. This year we opened our beautifully decorated house museum on the Saturday before for two hours, attracting people who could not come on Sunday. The Garden Club's contribution to this event is always magnificent and much admired by visitors of all ages.
 - d. Our well-regarded "Revolution" program last May, headed up by Karen Lowery, drew in every third grade class in town for a full morning at the Grout Heard House and North Cemetery. Time at the house is evenly divided between the Campbell Room where the focus is on colonial life and the Stone Room where the focus is more on the political and military. The highlight is always holding the very heavy muzzle-loading gun. Veteran teacher Robbin

Rossi asked us to share our scripts and visuals so that she could do some on-line teaching this month.

3. Monthly newsletter stories this year included: A list of the year's programs planned by us and others to celebrate the 19th amendment; a column in tribute to longtime curator and house manager Joanne Davis; a one-page graphic depicting just how the Grouts and Heards related to the GHH. (I needed that as much as anyone!); an article on the pandemic of 1918 -- kudos to Kay for her ideas as to how we could make our organization relevant to the pandemic of 2020; and Brad is working on an article about Wayland's bridges across the Sudbury. Our website now contains links to all of the recorded programs we've done. Simply click and you can view these on youtube or vimeo.

4. Collection Management/House Issues/Volunteers
 - a. Thanks to Jane Sciacca, Gretchen Schuler, Ev Wolfson, John Schlafer and Fran Pollitt who have worked hard to analyze and organize our collections stored in the Collections Room and Costume/Textiles Room.
 - b. Structural engineer Richard Testa made suggestions about redistributing the heavy weight of bookcases on our second floor, away from interior walls; lighting was greatly improved in Stone Room in time for our Open House with professional help from Paul Zaferiou; a parking sign has been fixed outside to discourage non-Grout Heard House parking.
 - c. Kay has brought in at least three new volunteers for us, including Jo Martell with us here; Kay has been keeping tallies of volunteer hours, essential for grant applications.

Plans for 2020-2021

1. Programs: Anette Lewis and Gretchen Schuler are putting together a program schedule for the 2020-2021 year which will go out to our active membership in August, along with dues notices.
2. We will develop a 3-5 year plan during this coming year. In order to learn what we can sustain paying a person into the future, we've agreed that there should be a 3 to 5 year financial plan in place. Our treasurer notes that up to 3.5-4% of the endowment is available for ALL expenses over a year, including a part-time position.
3. Outreach:

1. COVID presented a special problem for us - no longer can we meet in groups to evaluate the collection, nor can we invite visitors into the house during open hours or by appt. Although preoccupied with the large and complicated Women in Wayland project, Kay quickly saw what we had to do next. And so our April newsletter asked for personal stories and photos from readers about the epidemic in Wayland. Send YOUR stories to stories@waylandmuseum.org. In addition, we included two articles about the 1918 in Framingham and flu epidemics then and later in Wayland.
As Kay wrote, these personal stories "need not be heroic events for as we know, the basis of our world is the everyday activity that supports the spectacular."
2. While COVID has closed down our house, it has brought many folks to w/in easy distance of the GHM as they walk, ride, skate, etc. along the new Rail Trail. Once things have returned to normal, I'd like the Board to consider taking advantage of this traffic by keeping some Saturday hours open during the warm weather months; an "Open" flag for raising during open hours; and a couple of donated benches somewhere near the lion and parking sign. I'm certain we can attract casual visitors who have no specific purpose for visiting or special expertise - that is, most people.
3. We also need to finish planning for banners on 4 town signboards to draw attention to the GHM and website. Jean Milburn and other Garden Club members have helped to plant tulips and daffodils as well as some shrubs and perennials.

4. Finally, a special thanks to:

Aida Gennis - handling the scheduling of volunteers (all 70 of them for the Open House)

Kay Gardner Westcott - for volunteering significant additional time in research and for her leadership on the Women of Wayland project

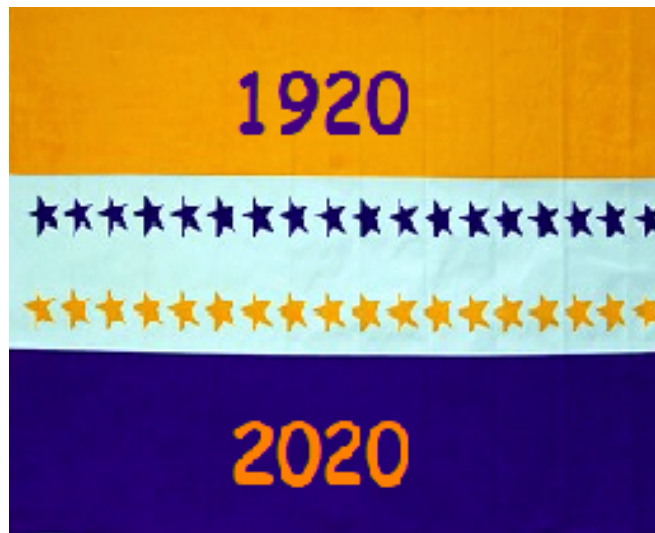
John Schlafer - entering 2,000+ items in the Collections electronic database, PastPerfect

Duane Galbi for two donated HP laptops with Windows and Home Office for collections work

And to Alice Boelter gets lots of credit for so graciously editing the newsletters and other public documents

It's people like these that will, to quote from last year's report "make this lovely house museum an even better place to visit, where a 21st century visitor can better understand everyday life in a 18th or 19th century household -- the HOME piece of our House Museum --as well as the community context outside its walls. That might mean making the walking wheel walk again; or the small organ in the Heard Room playable. We might try to attract adult learners as well as Girl Scouts and after-school students. Please feel free to write or call or text me with ideas for our house museum and our society."

Thank you.
Molly Faulkner



19th Amendment