



WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**IN MEMORIAM: WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PRESIDENT TONY CONNORS 1946-2019**

Our entire community mourns the loss of Historical Society President Tony Connors who died on September 20, 2019.

Tony Connors was President of the Westport Historical Society for over a decade. During his tenure, he steered the WHS through the purchase, restoration and opening of the historic Handy House. His gentle leadership style enabled the Historical Society to flourish and grow.

Of equal note, Tony became the unofficial town historian for Westport—author, educator, lecturer, and spokesman—who created accessible and meaningful perspectives on local history. His public programs, whether lectures, walking tours, or articles, were notable for being entertaining, scholarly, and insightful. He made our local history relevant and significant beyond the boundaries of our town. He will be greatly missed.





### THANK YOU!

It was a busy year for our many committees and volunteers. A special thank you to the following:

- Artisan Fair Committee: Megan Thomas (Chair), Howie Gifford, Emily Hoeffel, Lucy Tabit, David West, Katrina Strozik
- Executive Committee: Yvonne Barr, Buzzy Baron, Emily Hoeffel, and Poo White
- Facilities Committee: Yvonne Barr (Chair), Charley Appleton, Simon Newby, Norm Anderson, Sean Leach, Paul Taveira
- House Tour Committee: Elizabeth Wade (Chair), Buzzy Baron, Laura Raposa, Barbara Slaight
- Our team of Handy House docents: Peggy Aulisio, Denise Bolduc, Ruth Bourns, Dawn Houlker, Nancy Mailhot, Mary Ries, Lenora Robinson, Sue Shaw, Terry Somerson
- Leadership Committee: Breck Arnzen (Chair), Yvonne Barr, Buzzy Baron, Emily Hoeffel, Lyn Keith, Sean Leach, Al Lees, Marcia Liggin, Sam Manley
- Terry Somerson, Halloween organizer
- Geraldine Millham and Ray Shaw for graphic design
- Tim's Lawn Care for keeping the Handy house property looking beautiful!
- Mark Allen, high school intern
- The 60 house tour volunteers

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES 2019

Our organization continues to be guided by the strategic plan created in 2018 that consists of four overall goals, each with a set of milestones and a three-year time-frame.

- To define the best use of the Bell School
- To improve collections storage and preservation
- To ensure ongoing relevance to our community
- To build organizational capacity

### BELL SCHOOL

One of our most enduring challenges is to improve storage conditions for our collection. This year, with the assistance of architect Damon May (Dewing Schmid Kearns Architects), we explored the possibilities offered by the Bell School, such as better use of presently occupied space and potential use of an additional 1000 square feet in the currently unused basement. We are encouraged by the possibilities which will be evaluated by the Board of Directors in the coming months.

Closely tied to the question of storage is the need to revisit the overall vision for the Bell School, a building which has had many lives as a school, a community hall, a library, a museum, and headquarters of a historical society. What is the best use of the building given the current needs of the historical society and the revitalization of the Head of Westport? The Board will craft its vision over the coming months. (Your ideas are most welcome!).

This year we have begun to tackle the significant issue of deferred maintenance which has taken its toll on the Bell School. Thanks to an incredibly generous anonymous donor, we were able to complete repairs to the Bell School's foundation and sill, stabilizing the building for years to come. In addition, we have secured Community Preservation Act funding to restore the bell tower and replace the roof, a project which is scheduled for summer of 2020.

### COLLECTIONS

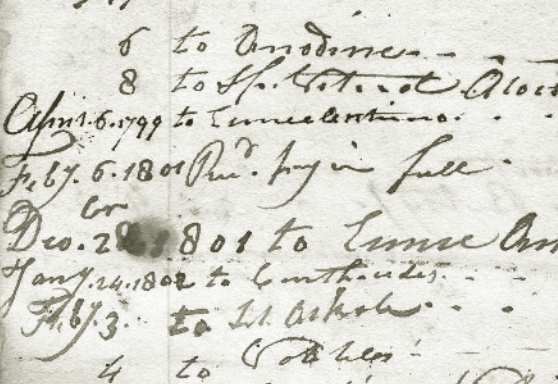
We have continued to increase intellectual accessibility to underutilized collections by digitizing the recordings of interviews conducted in 1976 with Community Preservation Act funding.

Highlights of donations to the collection included:

- The Penny and Al Hadfield Collection
- The photo archives of Poor Bill's Almanac, a local newspaper from the 1970s, donated by Dorothy Stovall.
- Portrait of Ann Potter by Ruby Devol Finch
- Lawton/Waite/Collins family papers
- Sanford family collection







STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

October 1, 2018 – Sep 30, 2019

(Operating expenses only, excludes special projects at the Handy House)

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Direct Public Support	\$349,606*
Grant Revenue	\$10,000
Special Events	\$34,805
Investment income	\$7,800
Sales of merchandise	\$2,884

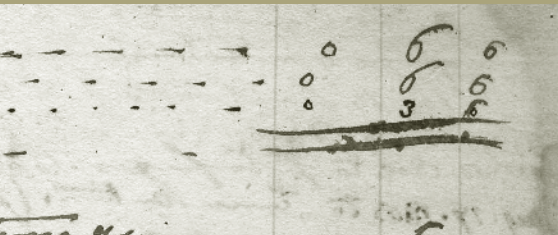
Total Revenue and Support \$405,095

EXPENSES

Fundraising	\$2,142
Contract Services	\$24,987
Facilities	\$968
Utilities	\$8,800
Operations	\$17,034
Program	\$4,070
Other	\$11,101
Payroll	\$71,960

Total Expenses \$141,062

\* This amount includes two bequests.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Westport Historical Society maintains a robust schedule of annual events, each reaching out to a different sector of our community, and each sustaining the vitality, relevance, and finances of the Society in different ways.

In an effort to broaden our relevance to the community, the historical society introduced several new initiatives. The community scanning day held in April, provided an opportunity to augment our collection digitally. A total of 200 images were scanned during the event

As part of an effort to encourage the Baby Boomer generation to document the 1950s and 1960s, we held a “Then and Now Pop-Up Museum” at the Handy House, featuring an eclectic panoply of objects, from the rotary phone to the record player, that have now become collectors’ items.

We were delighted by the response to our first gravestone cleaning training workshop in August, which formed the beginnings of a team of volunteers who will care for Westport’s cemeteries.

Throughout the summer and fall, we focused on the Native American heritage of Westport with a series of demonstrations by Elizabeth James-Perry, member of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, and an exhibition at Handy House. Master gardener and board member, Libby Baylies, created a garden of plants used by Native Americans for food, medicine, dyeing and weaving.



Our monthly winter history forum programs regularly attracted audiences of 100 plus people. Topics included:

- Old Horseneck Beach presented by David Jones
- Land surveying and stone walls presented by Sean Leach
- Gifford Family of Westport presented by Richard Gifford

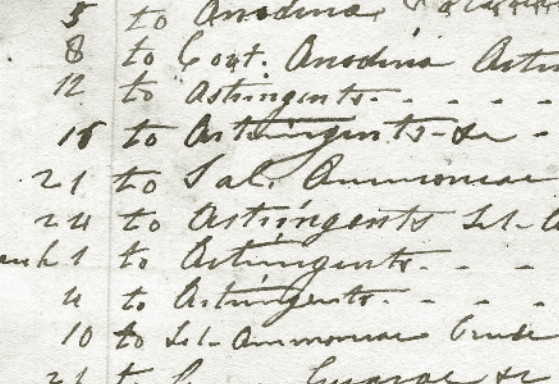
The Handy House Artisan Fair and Vintage Market drew 800 plus people and our October Halloween event attracted 220 kids and parents.

Our two websites, wpthistory.org and PaulCuffe.org and our Facebook page continue to provide a lively forum for engagement and education.

EDUCATION

During fiscal year 2019, the Children’s Heritage Education Program interacted with grades K – 3 and grades 7- 8, from Westport Community Schools. We reached a total of 501 students through 24 points of contact. We continued our long term collaboration with the Westport River Watershed Alliance and the Westport Public Library. Our K-2 programming about the Macomber Turnip, Sarah Turner, and Paul Cuffe continued. Steadfast volunteer Sarah Gifford’s creative storybook reading continued to inspire a captive Kindergarten audience and very special thanks go to John “JD” Squires, Produce Manager at Lees Market, for his tenacity in procuring fresh Macomber Turnips with greens intact for that program. Thanks also to Robin Winters for her help in teaching the Jr. High School Art Club how to hand sew and to Mary Ries, Sarah Gifford, Colleen Kearney, Marilyn Packard Luther, Nancy Mailhot, and Harbourmasters Chris Leonard and Jonathan Paull for all of their dedicated assistance with school tours. A pilot program to deepen the local history learning experience for 3rd grade was launched over four months, using objects from the collection, maps, and hands-on lessons.

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BALANCE SHEET

September 30, 2019

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash	\$60,248*
Sylvan Endowment	\$ 87,857
Board designated endowment	\$565,343
Handy House restricted funds	\$235,639

Total Assets \$949,087

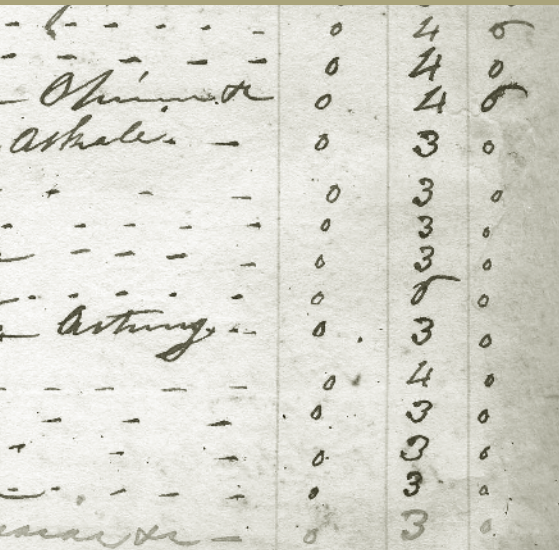
LIABILITIES

Total current liabilities	\$4114
Total equity	\$944,974

Total liabilities and assets \$949,087

(Please note that our fiscal year is Oct 1 to Sept 30)

\* Includes operating reserve fund







**\$100-\$249**

Milton and Marilyn Adams  
Carol Aguiar  
Richard Anderson  
Henry and Susan Ashworth  
Gretchen and Buddy Baker-Smith  
Yvonne Barr  
Judy Beavan  
David Bechhofer and Kate Neave  
Robert and Pam Beck  
Lin Beck and William Pardee  
Gertraude Bergland  
Stefanie Blomquist  
Carol Bonnar  
Chris Bosso  
Ruth and David Bourns  
Stephen and Maura Bracken  
Kaye Briggs  
Elizabeth Brinkerhoff  
Laurie Broderick  
Edward Brown and Judith Wolin  
Gioia Browne  
Jeff Bull and Marilyn Packard-Luther  
Edward and Peggy Campion  
Peter and Gaelen Canning  
Sarah Carrelas  
Barbara Chadwick  
David Chase  
Nicholas and Meg Christ  
Michael and Jennifer Coye  
Allison Cywin  
Marcia Damon  
Robert and Sue Daylor  
Richard De Neufville  
John Dean and Nancy Weinstein  
Charles Deknatel  
James and Wendy Dorsey  
Jerome and Constance Dyer  
James and Barbara Faria  
Elizabeth Farley  
Eileen and Bradford Faxon  
Robert Fischer  
Thomas Flynn

Shannon Foley  
David Forney and Elizabeth Cox  
Steven and Lyn Fors  
Constance Gee  
Peter and Tracy Greenwood  
Stephanie Anne Griswold  
Eleanor Hall  
Barbara Hanley  
Amy Harrington  
Barbara Hart  
Valerie Hawes  
June Hebert  
Anne Higgins  
Emily Hoeffel  
Dawn Houlker  
Jamen Howe  
Joel Howe  
Cynthia Jeffrey  
Barbara Kaplan  
Priscilla Keffer  
Henry and Cathy Lanier  
Patricia Lawrence  
Florence Lees  
Lucy Ann Lepreau  
Vicki Levalley and Donna Lubell  
Marcia Ligin  
Peter MacDougall  
Roger and Nancy MacKay  
Carlton and Alice Macomber  
Nancy Mailhot  
September McCarthy  
Paul McDonough  
Stephen and Nancy McGuiness  
Judy Menard  
Charlotte Metcalf  
John Miller  
Trip and Dora Millikin  
Christine Milloff  
William and Leslia Morrison  
Julie Morse  
Russell and Claire Nauta  
Joanne Oneill  
John Pacella

Suzanne Palmer  
Richard and Patricia Paul  
Martha Paull  
Celeste Penney  
Sharon Raposa  
Heather Reed  
Nathan Rego  
Ellie Rink  
Robert and Carol Russell  
Tanja Ryden  
Ricardo and Susan Sanchez  
Marie Savettiere  
Molly Sherden  
Martha Slaight  
Garrett Stuck and Pamela Coravos  
Quentin and Sacha Sullivan  
Jacqueline Vaughn  
Antone and Shirley Vieira  
Michael and Blair Walker  
Bob and Joyce Weiss  
Constance White

**\$250-\$499**

Kristi and Lucien Agniel  
Norm and Irene Buck  
John and Laurie Bullard  
Charles and Pamela Carey  
Michael and Carol Corbett  
Bess Coughlin  
Nancy Crosby  
John and Paula Cummings, Jr.  
Ross and Suzanne Forbes  
Sally Harty  
Anne Hopkins  
Janet Jones  
Thomas and Suzanne Kendig  
Maury May  
Tony and Geraldine Millham  
Richard and Nancy Mobley  
Hugh and Diana Morton  
Elisabeth Mundel  
Paul Pannoni  
Rosemary Pereira

Barry and Janice Perry  
Robert Pozzo  
Mary Ries  
James and Sharon Rosenfeld  
Martha and Gary Sears/Baker  
Ray and Susan Shaw  
Kenneth and Marilyn Simon  
Paul and Elizabeth Sittenfeld  
Terry Somerson  
Louisa Spottswood Coughlin  
Pamela Stenberg  
Greg and Brenda Stone  
Michael and Martha Sullivan  
Steven and Dawn Tripp  
Pamela Trippe  
Henry and Janet Vaillant  
Eileen Wheeler Sheehan  
Bob and Mary Ellen White

**\$500-\$999**

Breck Arnzen and Lani Peterson  
Nils Bruzelius and Lynne Weil  
Buzzy and Dianne Baron  
Anne Burkholder  
James and Genae Collins Jr.  
Robert and Pamela Faulkner  
Peter and Alison Fenn  
Janet Hadley  
Hope Hickok  
Martin and Judith Kelly  
Mary Ellen Kennedy  
Ronald Knapp  
Jane Loos  
Tom and Kate Schmitt  
Norma Sears  
Bernard Taradash  
David Tobias and Liz Micheels  
Keith and Susan Watson  
Kit Wise

**\$1000-\$4,999**

Peter and Rosanne Aresty  
Nick Burns and Libby Baylies

David Cole and Betty Slade  
Sharon Connors  
Charles and Linda Findlay  
Steve Fletcher and Michael Walden  
Nancy Janelle  
David Jones  
Albert and Cindy Lees  
John and Carol Moriarty  
Joop and Ria Nagtegaal  
Ernest Patrikis  
Dick and Eleanor Phillips  
Tom and Barbara Slaight  
Steven Syre and Laura Raposa  
Benjamin and Elizabeth White

**\$5,000 AND ABOVE**

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Neil Van Sloun

**FOUNDATIONS**

The Charlene and David Howe  
Foundation in honor of Ed Howe  
IBM International Foundation  
Howard Bayne Fund  
Stearns Charitable Trust  
Philip Snyder Foundation  
Rathmann Family Foundation  
Westport Cultural Council  
Helen E. Ellis Charitable Trust  
Westport Community Preservation Act

**BUSINESSES**

**\$100-\$249**

Acoaxet Veterinary Clinic  
Beauregard, Burke and Franco  
Bradshaw Insurance  
Branded Realty Group  
Dedee Shattuck Gallery  
Douglas G. Vrona DMD TMJ  
Orthopedics  
Golf Car Solutions  
N.A.C. Security and Stereo

New England Chapter, Society of  
Architectural Historians  
New England Clam Jams  
Potter Funeral Home  
Southcoast Payroll and Bookkeeping  
Steel Dog  
The Pilgrim William White Society  
Westport Chiropractic Inc  
Westport Federal Credit Union  
Westport River Gardeners  
Westport Point Neighborhood Assoc.

**\$250-\$499**

Blackstone Valley Hearing  
Buzzards Bay Brewing  
Dennis Talbot Inc.  
IBM International Foundation  
Kozy Nook Restaurant  
Lapointe Insurance  
Manchester Interiors  
Partners Village Store  
South Coast Artists  
South Coastal Realty LLC  
Sylvan Nursery, Inc.  
Westport Sea Farms  
Kathy Santos/William Raveis  
Zambezi Grace

**\$500-\$999**

Bayside Restaurant  
Country Woolens  
Fine Art and Americana  
Jack's Landscape'n Inc.  
Kit Wise Architect  
On Point Property Realty Group  
Westport Art Group

**\$1000-\$4999**

BayCoast Bank  
D2 Biological Solution inc  
Skinner Auction House  
William Raveis Westport





### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

At our October annual meeting, we welcomed Al Lees back to the Board of Directors and, with gratitude, passed the responsibility of leadership into his hands.

A freshly invigorated Leadership Committee, chaired by Breck Arnzen, has begun the long-term task of identifying potential committee members and board members. This year, our small core of employees was boosted by the addition of a part-time administrative assistant, Joanne Demarco. She arrived fully trained in all tasks, thanks to her years as a volunteer.

### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Historical Society received two significant and unexpected bequests this year: The Elvira Smith bequest of \$197,000 and the Esther Cabral bequest of \$62,000. These gifts have been designated by the Board as long-term assets, providing a sustaining fund for the historical society's future.

Our annual operating budget of \$130,000 continues to be fully funded by a combination of the enormously popular House Tour which raised \$35,000, our annual appeal fund, memberships, grants, and judicious withdrawal of funds from our board designated endowment and the Sylvan Endowment.

