



June, 2020

GATHERINGS FROM THE GREEN

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President's Report

We are now three months into this virus upheaval, and it has all of us here at the museum turned upside-down. Our summer newsletter, which would normally be distributed in July, is now in your hands, the first week of June. This newsletter would normally focus on the Pig Roast, our annual fundraiser, but the Pig Roast had to be cancelled this year due to the virus. This makes all of us sad except the pigs.

In the envelope you may find membership letters and renewal forms. These would have been delivered to you in our mailed spring newsletter, but we had only an online version due to the virus.

In the summer newsletter I also like to highlight some of the Program Committee's presentations through the end of the year. This year they were going to be really interesting. Unfortunately, they have all been cancelled due to the virus.

I also like to point out one or two of the new exhibits the Collection Committee has prepared for the museum's visitors, and I can tell you, they are spectacular this year! But you will be unable to view them due to the virus. If you like, you might try peering through the windows, but don't forget to disinfect the glass.



Your Board of Trustees has also had to make changes due to the virus. Our monthly meetings, normally held at Tuck Hall, are now done via Zoom; and for a historical society, one might consider this historic. I think our first Zoom meeting went very well, although my grandchildren Janey and Owen (and probably all of yours) would be laughing hard at our skill level.

This brings me to our October annual meeting. We have decided to hold this meeting via Zoom, as well, due to the virus. The meeting will be hosted by Board member Reverend Deborah Knowlton and will be limited to fifty people. More details will be posted on the website or through an e-blast.

Lastly, I would like to address a more serious matter. With this virus, many non-profits such as museums, food pantries, churches, and soup kitchens have had to suspend their fundraising activities. Although our treasurer informed us at the last Board meeting that we're financially solid, our Society income may decrease as much as \$25,000 this year. In the recent COVID-19 stimulus package, Congress is allowing up to a \$300

charitable contribution tax deduction for 2020 even if the standard deduction is used. I ask those who can to consider making a donation to the non-profit of their choice at this time of increased need.

To all of our membership, be well,

Linda Metcalf
President

Tuck Museum to Remain Closed Due to COVID-19

Per the virtual Trustee Meeting held May 5, 2020, we unanimously decided to close our doors to the public, effective now until the tentative date of October 1, 2020, pending more information and future votes of the HHS Board.

Our thoughts are with all of you as we move through these unprecedented and historic times. The decision to close was made in the interest of the safety of all of our volunteers, especially those at risk, and to protect our visitors from any public spread of the virus. We give tours to a variety of people, from across the United States, and it would be very hard to limit access and follow through with cleaning protocols across all of our buildings and museum displays after every visit.

Our Visitor Services and volunteers will try our best to continue with online access to information, answering questions, shopping at our museum store, and promoting virtual tours through our website photos during this closure.

Please continue to reach out to us via email if you have any questions that we can help you with. Though the physical buildings are closed, our hearts are open and ready to share with you the Tuck Museum. We hope to see a renewed spirit of connecting with you face to face when the pandemic has lifted. Stay safe, and stay well, and we look forward to seeing you sometime in the fall!

Lori Cotter
Visitor Services Committee



From the Collection Corner

Strange times...How life has changed in the past few months!

Even with the museum closed to visitors, collection work continues. Diane Riley has done data entry from home, and Rich Hureau was able to photograph Dow documents for an upcoming exhibit and program before sheltering in place started, so those projects can move forward.

Our most recent Charles Henry Turner oil painting of the Tuck Grist Mill has gone for conservation work. It was weird handing the painting over to the conservator in a parking lot with both of us wearing gloves and masks.



With my designated job as collection manager and this large chunk of time, I have been able to start a long overdue project - reviewing and standardizing the collection data base. To date we have over 6800 records, many covering multiple objects. Over fifty people have worked on the collection and its records up to today. I have been able to reorganize and fill in some of the disparities in the records, the most important being the location of items. With our purchase of the Collection and Research Center and turning former storage space at the Tuck Museum into offices, almost everything has been reorganized and placed in a new location - if you call five years "new."

It is handy to have a husband in isolation who is looking for a project and is a stickler for details. Ben is doing an inventory of our manuscript and photo files. We fill in any missing information, track down "lost" items, and update the data base.

With extra time comes the luxury of slowing down to do more research, read documents with more scrutiny, and spend more time writing up descriptions in the collection records - all things that will help future volunteers and researchers when we are once again open to the public.

Betty Moore, Collection Manager

Gathering Seaweed



In a few weeks we will be planting our gardens, so it is time to make sure they are ready for the seedlings that we have tended in our windows these past months.

I am the keeper of a small herb and flower "kitchen garden" at the Tuck Museum - "Mrs. Batchelder's 18th Century historical garden." As I was weeding the garden the other day, I realized that the soil needed some help, and was reminded that in the past, farmers in Hampton used seaweed to fertilize their gardens. So with bucket in hand to get some kelp, I headed to the closed beaches of Hampton to obtain the free fertilizer for Mrs. B's garden, using a friend's access from his beach cottage.

Hampton in the 1800's was called "Little Egypt," named in reference to when Jacob of the Bible sent his sons to buy

corn in Egypt. Corn was an abundant crop in Hampton, fertilized by seaweed gathered at the beach. The corn was later ground into meal at John Garland's grist mill on the Taylor River for the farmers to sell and use in their homes.

On September 24th, 1880, the Hampton Union reports: "Fifteen hundred loads of seaweed are estimated to be on North Beach and most farmers are availing themselves of the opportunity to get rich." Also reported: "On the North side of Great Boar's Head it is estimated there are nearly a thousand loads of seaweed thrown up on the beach after a great storm at sea: it is a beautiful sight for the farmer, but an annoyance to beach bathers."

Seaweed harvesting on a large scale ended in Hampton around 1945. During the North Beach fish house case in the 1950's, the prosecution's argument used testimony from farmers, who stated that "we would freely pass through the land by the fish houses to haul up to 20 or 30 loads of seaweed from the sand and deposit behind the houses, reloading the 'seaweed wagon' for hauling home to the farm as much as we could, coming back another day to load the rest." The fish houses were owned by fishermen, the land was owned by the town. Only two fish houses at North Beach remain today.

January to May is the best time to harvest seaweed for your garden, but anytime of the year will do. The farmers had a saying: "When the tide is out, the table is set; time to collect."

Seaweed is good for our gardens - it improves seed germination, stimulates root and vegetable growth, and increases the yield of a crop like potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, grapes, corn, and our flowers and herbs. It also improves soil structure and water holding capacity. Slugs do not like seaweed in a garden because of the salt content and the sharp edges when it dries.

Some seaweed is also edible, but you need to do some research to find the right ones. Seaweed is full of vitamins, minerals and enzymes that are good for us in our diets. Blancmange is a sweet pudding made with milk and sugar, thickened with Red Irish Moss, and flavored with almond extract. Delicious! No need to add extra salt!

Oh, and while you are in your garden, already traumatized by the coronavirus, please watch out for ticks and poison ivy and, yes, the newly arrived "murder hornet"!

Really just enjoy being at peace in your garden - a place that will bring you much joy after you have taken care to fertilize and prepare for planting.

Karen Raynes



Photo Charles Taber & Co. 1892

Donations to the Annual Appeal

Clara Arnold
Douglas and Elizabeth Aykroyd
Edward L. Bachelder
Leland Brennan & Sharon Rafferty
Steve Brigandi
Frank & Mary Broderick
Debra Brodhead
William and Mary Buddenhagen
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Priscilla Ann Thoen
Donald & Patricia Trefethen
Len & Carol Walker
Marilyn Wallingford
Paula Wanzer
Art & Mickey Wardle
Rodney & Susan Watterson
Chuck & Karen Weinhold

Mission

The mission of the Hampton Historical Society is to increase public knowledge and understanding of the history and cultural heritage of the town of Hampton, New Hampshire, from its earliest inhabitants to the present generation. We will communicate that history through an active museum, educational programs, and a resource library.



Business members

We thank the following business members for their support of the Society:

234 Lafayette Road Realty LLC
Bison Nuclear, Inc.
Casassa Law Office
Robert Dennett PLLC
Eccentric Hair
Edward Jones
Galley Hatch Restaurant, Inc.
Hampton Beach Casino, Inc.
Krieger and Company CPA's
Preston Real Estate
QA Technology Company, Inc.
Remick & Gendron Funeral Home Crematory
Tobey & Merrill Insurance



Tobey & Merrill Insurance celebrates 100 years in business in Hampton!!



Original Building 1920



Dean Merrill - owner 1920



Owners 1950, Dean & Ruth Merrill, Russell & Norman Merrill, Margaret and Lester Tobey

The Merrill's purchased the agency in 1987 from the Tobey's keeping the current name of Tobey & Merrill, Inc. Past owners are: Herbert Tobey, Lester Tobey, Jack Tobey, Dean Merrill and Russell Merrill. The agency continues to thrive with owners, Dean Merrill and Geoffrey Merrill. The tradition continues through its FOURTH generation of the Merrill name with Kimberly Merrill Wood joining the agency in 2017. We contribute our success to our longstanding employees who are part of "The Tobey & Merrill Family."

Long time Hampton residents know that Tobey & Merrill has been a community landmark for many years in 4 different locations in downtown Hampton and for the last 33 years at 20 High Street. It was Tobey & Merrill's mission to make it a commitment to be active in the community and that commitment has carried on throughout the generations that have run the agency. The owners and the employees are involved in the Hampton Historical Society, The Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce, The Hampton Rotary Club, local school boards, Children's Weekend, the Hampton Chamber's Seafood Festival and the annual holiday parades. Tobey & Merrill's sign is regularly used by local organizations to promote nonprofit events, auctions, theatre plays, fundraisers, community events and even Happy Birthdays.



Dean Merrill, Kimberly Merrill Wood, Geoffrey Merrill

Our journey starts out in the year 1908 at a time when the world was experiencing exciting new changes. Automobiles and telephones were gaining in popularity. Henry Ford's Model T was debuting that year. Americans flocked to see nickelodeon picture shows. Unrest was brewing in Europe, but the United States was still at peace. Amidst this backdrop, a little insurance agency took hold and become a solid part of the Hampton business community in 1908, when Reverend Edgar Warren started the business.



The Tobey & Merrill Team

Seven years later Reverend Warren sold the business to Herbert Tobey. Mr. Tobey had a successful dye selling business, however, there became a shortage of supplies of dye due to the advent of World War I. Insurance seemed like a sound venture but just for good measure he diversified and opened a real estate office. In 1916, Mr. Tobey hired Carolyn Ruth Noyes as his assistant. In 1917, Miss Noyes married Mr. Dean Merrill who had just returned from the war. In 1918, Mr. Merrill joined the agency and then in 1920 they became partners and the agency formally became "Tobey & Merrill Insurance."