

2009-10

ANNUAL REPORT



Greenwich
Historical
Society

Explore our colorful past

www.greenwichhistory.org

Greenwich Historical Society

Explore our colorful past

Letter from the Chairman and Executive Director



Dear Members, Patrons and Friends:
This has been a year of new ventures and unprecedented challenges. The Greenwich Historical Society has continued to serve the community with outstanding programs for all ages. We began the year by making two fundamental changes. First, we simplified our name from the cumbersome “Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich” to the one people have long called us: “Greenwich Historical Society.” Next, we changed our mission statement to emphasize those we serve and why we do it:

*The Greenwich Historical Society inspires people of all ages to make personal connections with the past.
We use stories and objects from Greenwich to illuminate the American experience.*

Our programs, exhibitions and collections individualize and enlarge such themes as slavery, community and art. With our new name comes a rebranding, evident in the pages of this Annual Report. The lively new logo invites everyone to join us as we explore Greenwich’s colorful past, while referencing the art colony that once gathered at Bush-Holley House.

Several new programs exemplify our determination to make a difference in our community. The Green Market on the lawn beside Bush-Holley House attracts new visitors to our site, enticed by organic, locally grown produce and inspired to linger in our exhibitions, house and historic vegetable and flower garden, beautifully tended by the volunteer Green Team, led by Joan Faust. Green Market Dinners, held on the lawn and in the Vanderbilt Education Center, draw old friends and win new ones to enjoy seasonal dinners and short presentations by leaders in the garden-to-table movement.

Story Barn is our contemporary approach to oral tradition. Organized by board member Bonnie Levison, Story Barn brings local residents from all walks of life to tell stories to an appreciative audience in the relaxed setting of the barn. And our new Community Artists series, chaired by Carol Dixon, provides excellent local artists the opportunity to show (and sell) their work in our museum shop. Each of these programs demonstrates our commitment to enrich the lives of those we serve.

Many of you participated in our member and community surveys. The results will guide our plans for future programs, as we aim to serve those who have long been loyal to us while we develop areas of potential growth. Throughout it all, we are immensely grateful to our dedicated board, Advisory Council, staff, volunteers, members and patrons. You make it all possible. Thank you!

Susan G. Larkin
Chairman

Debra Mecky
Executive Director

ON THE COVER
October 1910,
Elmer Livingston MacRae
Untitled Harbor Scene, ca.
1885, Henry Fitch Taylor
Photo: *Boats at Steamboat
Road*

All from the Greenwich
Historical Society
Collection

Financial Highlights

TREASURER’S NOTE We continued to face major challenges during the slow economic recovery. For the year ending June 30, 2010, revenues were down, and while the impact was somewhat mitigated by close control of expenses, we sustained an operating loss for the year. The Endowment, which provides about 8% of operating revenue, appreciated in value for the first time in two years. We were grateful to receive a bequest of \$395 thousand from the estate of Claire Vanderbilt, restricted for the preservation and expansion of Bush-Holley Historic Site. Notwithstanding the difficult economic environment, our balance sheet is strong, and with careful management of our resources and your support, it will remain so. —Bruce Dixon

	June 30, 2010	June 30, 2009
Unrestricted Funds		
Revenues		
Contributions & Grants	\$547,012	\$667,401
Tuition & Fees	49,550	81,095
Memberships	43,015	38,756
Rental Income	37,759	5,475
Special Events (net)	272,248	270,025
Other Income	36,496	28,995
Assets Released—Operating	151,300	196,216
Total Revenues & Assets Released	1,137,380	1,287,963
Expenses		
Programs & Services	628,649	735,955
Support	285,136	265,663
Fundraising	304,704	325,631
Total Expenses	1,218,489	1,327,249
Operating Gain (Loss)	(81,109)	(39,286)

All Funds		
Balance Sheet		
Cash & Equivalents	1,081,745	1,109,313
Other Current Assets	35,136	28,094
Long-Term Investments	2,570,162	2,198,292
Property, Equipment & Furnishings (net of depreciation)	5,425,364	5,449,028
Liabilities	(34,936)	(37,102)
Net Assets	9,077,471	8,747,625

Fund Balance		
Unrestricted	6,070,588	6,151,697
Temporarily Restricted	1,085,453	674,498
Permanently Restricted	1,921,430	1,921,430
Total Fund Balance	9,077,471	8,747,625

The audited financial statements are available for inspection at the office of the Historical Society.

2009–10 Highlights

EXHIBITIONS THAT HIGHLIGHT GREENWICH'S CULTURAL HERITAGE



The Greenwich Historical Society continued to enrich the people of this community.

If you have any doubt, ask the 4,000 children who walked wide-eyed through Bush-Holley House, the same “Old House” that inspired countless Cos Cob Art Colony works in prestigious collections across America. Ask curious researchers who were delighted to find answers on “all things Greenwich” from architecture to zoning in our treasure trove archives. Query the hundreds of visitors who were amazed by the scholarship and variety of our last three exhibitions— comprised of objects and documents drawn almost entirely from our incredibly rich collections. Witness the group of WWII veterans who donned uniforms, shared dog-eared photos and enthusiastically attended *Patchwork Memories*, a program that encompassed a history of WWII quilts, readings from period letters and live music that prompted laughter and tears in equal parts.

If the more recent past was to your liking, the newly inaugurated Story Barn, a unique oral history performance program featuring hilarious, poignant and sometimes mystifying stories about the lives of our friends and neighbors, was not to be missed. And finally, if your interest tended toward more earthly pursuits, you could enjoy a sumptuous and sustainable Green Market Dinner, confident in the knowledge that you pursued a long-standing Bush-Holley tradition of bountiful meals and stimulating conversation. In short, we were proud to offer some of the most fascinating, educational and relevant programs ever!



↑ Greenwich Community Artist Carol Dixon

*A Stitch in Time:
Quilts from the Collection*
March 3 to July 31, 2010

- 1 Bea Crumbine and Peggy Bousquette at the Member Preview Party for *A Stitch in Time*
- 2 Mary Crist and Anne Niemeth
- 3 *A Stitch in Time* exhibition space

PROGRAMS THAT CELEBRATE OUR COLORFUL PAST



Colonial Day



Crooks Distinguished Lecturer Series
November 2010

Russell Shorto, author of *Island at the Center of the World*, with Davide Strackbein and Board Chair Susan Larkin



Harry Sakamaki as Genjiro Yeto at Candlelight



Exhibition-Related Programs

A Stitch in Time co-curator Sue Reich with WWII veteran Al Hartig at *Patchwork Memories*



The Green Market and Green Market Dinners

Sustainable Chef and Author Michel Nischan



Day of Genjiro Yeto

**PROMOTING PRESERVATION ADVOCACY
AND AWARENESS**



National Register Nominations
Pastor Tynisha Drennon (second from right) of the Bethel AME Church with her congregation



Collection Preservation
Wedding dresses from our collection, preserved following a costume and textile inventory project funded by the Connecticut Humanities Council



Library and Archives
Curator Karen Frederick with young visitors

EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT AND ENRICH



School Visits and Programs
1 Students from New Canaan High School study Bush-Holley House
2 Hamilton Avenue School/Museum Partnership



History and Art Camp



Fundraising and Volunteer Activities

As a nonprofit institution, the Historical Society relies on the generosity of its friends and supporters to meet the costs of our educational, cultural and preservation services to the community. Members and friends have the opportunity to provide direct support through fundraisers, and we welcome individual and corporate donations. We are also grateful to the volunteers who contribute actively to our organization and who assist in all phases of operation.



Greenwich Historic Trust Event at Treetops
1 David Ogilvy presents a Greenwich Landmarks Registry plaque to Lisa and Don Brownstein
2 Anne Ogilvy, Ramsey and Suzanne Frank



A Luncheon with Bunny Williams
Designer and Author Bunny Williams and Event Chair Betsey Ruprecht



Antiquarius 2009 Patron Party
2 Robert Getz, Thomas Peterffy, Joseph Morrow



Food and Garden Committee
Green Team members Joan Faust and Ros Brady



Advisory Council Barn Event April 2010
Hosts Bette and Lee Kraus



2009–10 Board of Trustees

Officers	Barbara MacDonald
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David O. Brownwood, <i>Secretary</i>	Anne Ogilvy
Isabel Malkin, <i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	David G. Ormsby
	Amy Pennington
	Deborah G. Royce
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	Alease Fisher Tallman
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Margaret Bousquette	
Thomas P. Clephane	
Aris Crist, AIA	Executive Director
Patricia M. Dillon	Debra L. Mecky, Ph.D.
Bruce Dixon	
Suzanne C. Frank	
Ellen Funck	Elected to the Board
Robert H. Getz	September 2010
Christopher C. Holbrook	Regina Pitaro Gabelli
E. Pendleton James	Jennifer Moross
Bonnie Levison	Davidde Strackbein
	Lynne Wheat



Joan Lowe in Slave Quarter at Bush-Holley House

Staff

Debra L. Mecky, Ph.D. <i>Executive Director</i>	Nola Taylor <i>Researcher</i>
Anne Bradner <i>Development Director</i>	Jaime Villaneda <i>Director of Education</i>
Barbara Bishop <i>Manager of Marketing and Communications</i>	Anne Young <i>Curator of Archives</i>
Michele Couture <i>Administrative Services/ Site Manager</i>	Museum Docents
Karen L. Frederick <i>Curator of Museum Collections</i>	Mary Ann Balco-Berry
Jingwei Li <i>Finance and Database Manager</i>	Deborah Bonnell
Marilyn Myers <i>Membership Associate</i>	Wendy Dziurzynski
	Lorraine Hufnagel
	Lisa Massey
	Wendy Mawhinney
	Belinda Pitt
	Harry Sakamaki
	Nola Taylor
	Lucy Van Atta

“What a wonderful contribution the Historical Society makes to the Town of Greenwich: the programs, the outreach, the services and the desire of you and your staff to continually reach out to the community and to create new approaches and encourage new ideas. I tell everyone I meet that we have a true gem in Greenwich.”

JOAN LOWE

Advisory Council Members

2009–10

The Advisory Council is composed of distinguished community members who serve as ambassadors in support of the Historical Society’s mission.

Co-Chairs	Anne Harrison
Christopher C. Holbrook	Alicia Joslin
E. Pendleton James	Jay B. Kane
	Oliver T. Kane
	Sally Lawrence
	Susan E. Lynch
	John W. Moffly IV
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Members	
Norma Bartol	
John T. Becker	
Susan Bevan	
Edward H. Bragg, Jr.	
Carol Browne	
Carol Crapple	
Karin Crooks	
Roberta Denning	
Patricia Fast	
Regina Pitaro Gabelli	
Pamela Goergen	
Julie Graham	

Special thanks to Advisory Council event hosts Regina Pitaro and Mario Gabelli (History of Field Point Park program, Fall 2009) and Bette and Lee Kraus (Historic Barns of Connecticut, Spring 2010).



“I think the Historical Society is the lens through which we view, examine, appreciate, love and even abhor our past. But mostly we learn about our past and what has brought us to our present, and hopefully this learning experience will enhance us and broaden our views with each generation to come.”

BELINDA PITT, DOCENT



In memory of John Becker...

John Becker will be greatly missed. One need only read his memoir, *It’s Been a Great Ride*, to know what a rich and colorful life he led. As a trustee and Advisory Council Member for seven years, John offered an incisive perspective that was always on the mark. He was a gentleman, a wonderful storyteller and a loyal and generous supporter of the Greenwich Historical Society. —*Debra Mecky*

John Becker with Debra Mecky at Antiquarius 2008 Patron Party

Gifts to the Library and Archives Collections

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010

To preserve our past for future generations, the Greenwich Historical Society Archives depends on the assistance of people interested in preserving the unique culture of Greenwich. We acquire, preserve and make available to our members publications and original documents about any aspect of the history of the Town of Greenwich from its founding to the present. These can include original letters, diaries, scrapbooks, minutes, reports, and publications such as books, magazines, menus, brochures, flyers and campaign literature. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, the collection received numerous donations from many caring individuals that will be used by future students and scholars.

Gift of William Andruss:

Images of residences: *Treetops*, Merriebrook Lane; *Rockefeller Estate*, Zaccheus Mead Lane

Anonymous Donor:

A pamphlet for Frederick Keppel & Co. (most likely created in 1921 with assistance provided by Alden Twachtman)

Anonymous Donor:

The Invisible Playmate and *MV Her Book* by William Canton: Book cover and illustration by George Wharton Edwards

Anonymous Donor:

Twachtman: A Retrospective Exhibition. Cincinnati Art Museum, 1966; *Hamilton Avenue School Family Recipes*, 2006

Anonymous Donor:

The Keppel Booklets: Third Series. *Mr. Pennell's Etchings of London*, *Auguste Pepere*; *The Art & Etchings of John Henry Twachtman*; *Childe Hassam*

Anonymous Donor:

Places and Other Poems by Caroline Ruutz-Rees

Anonymous Donor:

Impressionism in America: An exhibition presented by the Junior League of Albuquerque in collaboration with the University of New Mexico Art Gallery, 1965 and *Masters of American Impressionism*: A Benefit for the Presbyterian Hospital in the City of New York, 1976

Gift of John Becker:

Scrapbooks and ephemera relating to radio station WGCH

Gift of Albert Brecken:

New York, Housatonic & Northern Railroad Company, Prospectus, 1864

Gift of Albert Brecken:

Two record albums—*A Christmas Concert* and *American Legion Drum Corps*

Gift of Peter L. Cross:

Edgewood Park Junior College booklet, n.d.

Gift of First Congregational Church:

Six books related to colonial Connecticut and State of Connecticut with subjects related to the Town of Greenwich

Gift of Sandra Morgan:

Autographed and signed letter to Oliver Mead, dated Aug. 22, 1868 from H.W.R. Hoyt

Gift of Carl Anton Muller:

Architectural drawings by Theodore Muller

Gift of Sam Pryor:

Ephemera, correspondence, articles, pamphlets, photos relating to Sam Pryor and his family

Gift of Anne P. Simpson:

Fan from Sterling E. Watts, Old Greenwich, CT; *A Taste of Goodness*, First Congregational Church cookbook; *Berry Patch* cookbook from the Presbyterian Church

Women's Voices of the '90s; *A Taste of Goodness*; *Table-Talk* (cookbooks)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald G. Strackbein:

Oversized portrait photographs of U.S. President Grover Cleveland and his wife Frances; signed by Grover Cleveland as U.S. President and his wife Frances, 1896

Gift of the Town of Greenwich

Olmstead Brothers firm: maps, landscape drawings and estimation sheets relating to Greenwich Park

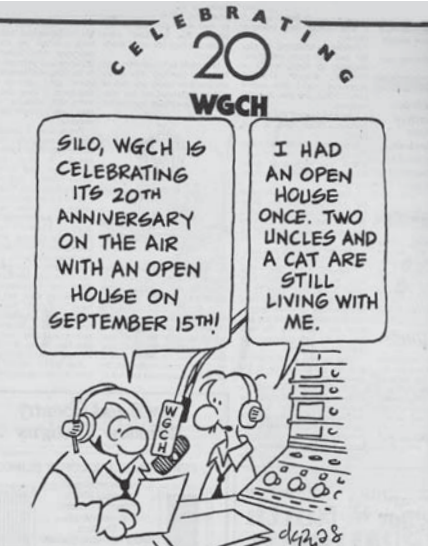
Gift of Ernie Wiegand:

Printed materials relating to Griswold property (built ca. 1937) on Mead's Point

Gift of Anne H. Young:

William H. Thomes, *On Land and Sea*; Ernest W. Shurtleff, *When I Was a Child*; Margaret Sidney, *Dilly and The Captain*—all three books illustrated by Childe F. Hassam

A special thank you to Davidde Strackbein for her donation of time and research that continue to build bridges into our town's exciting past.



“Celebrating WGCH 20th anniversary,” illustration by Jerry Dumas; image from materials related to WGCH donated by John Becker

Gifts to the Museum Collection

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010

The Museum Collection is comprised of objects that document the material culture of present and former inhabitants of Greenwich and its region. Particular emphasis is given to items connected to the history of Bush-Holley Historic Site or those useful to its interpretation. Objects include, but are not limited to, items associated with Greenwich people, places or events, fine and decorative arts, and maritime, agricultural, industrial and domestic artifacts that reflect the activities of members of the Cos Cob Art Colony.

Gift of the American Red Cross, Greenwich Chapter:

Red Cross Uniforms, 1915–1945
Cotton and wool

Gift of Derby Ferris Anderson:

Pier Glass, ca. 1750
Probably English, walnut-veneered, parcel-gilt, beveled glass

Boston Rocker, 1820–1850
American, maple and pine

Candlestand, ca. 1800
American, cherry

E. H. W. Tainton
Dresser Cloth, April 4, 1885
American, cotton

Paisley Winter Shawl, ca. 1865
Probably English, cotton or silk and wool

Mary E. Wilcox
Two quilts: Broken Star pattern and Lemoyne Star pattern, ca.1880
American, cotton

Mary E. Wilcox and Josephine Derby
Pair of quilts: Grandmother's Pride pattern, ca. 1875
American, cotton

Table Bell, ca. 1923
Made from church bell of the Stanwich Church

Eighteen spoons, late 18th–early 19th century
Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York companies
American silver

Four Napkin Rings, 1876–1906
Silver

Hunter's Watch with chain of 1837–1839 drilled half dimes
Silveroid case, key wound, brass works

Watch Chain, n.d.
Gold

Nine articles of clothing—pair of stockings, caplet, four dresses, two petticoats, one bodice, 1910–1920

Gift of Gayle H. Blakeslee:
Wedding Dress worn by Helen Binney Kitchel, 1909
White crepe meteor trimmed with Duchesse Point lace
Worn for five weddings—1909, 1933, 1957, 1970 and 1986

Gift of Suzanne W. Branch:
Archaeological material from Ephraim Lane House, Strickland Road, ca. 1850
Cement, ceramic and iron fragments

Gift of the Cooley Gallery:
Elmer Livingston MacRae *Speckie*, 1929–1930
Carved wood

Gift of the Family of Henry Johnson Fisher:
Skating Lantern, late 19th–early 20th century
Metal and glass

Garden Hose Reel from Sabine Farm, early 20th century
Galvanized metal



Speckie, Elmer Livingston MacRae 1929–1930
Carved wood

Gift of Margaret Gardner Larkin:
White dress, ca. 1900
Cotton

Bustle support, ca. 1880
Cotton and metal

Gift of Mrs. Chester H. Lasell:
Leon Gambetta Volkmar Vase, 1949
Clay

Leon Gambetta Volkmar Vase, 1937
Clay

Gift of Christine I. Oaklander, Ph.D.:
Henry Fitch Taylor
Untitled (Harbor Scene), ca. 1885
Watercolor

Gift of Jean Self Toates:
Dress worn by Mrs. Edgar A. Self, ca. 1934
Black satin and machine cotton lace

Darning Eggs, ca. 1934
Plastic, painted wood, gourd

Donors

July 1, 2009–June 30, 2010

The Greenwich Historical Society values our many contributors whose gifts, recognized below, make our work in the community possible. These donors supported the Historical Society’s programs and services with gifts to the annual fund, the Greenwich Historic Trust, membership and special events including Antiquarius.

\$25,000 and above
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin A. Bousquette
Connecticut Humanities Council
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph J. Morrow
Mr. and Mrs. Hugh B. Vanderbilt, Jr.
R. T. Vanderbilt Trust and
The Estate of Claire F. Vanderbilt

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Kenneth J. P. Wilkinson III
John and Sandra Wilson

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2009–10 was a period of change and self-examination. We developed a new mission statement, introduced new programs that appealed to an even broader audience, designed a new logo and tagline, and updated the ways in which we communicate with our members and friends.

With the help of our dedicated board, committees, volunteers, members and corporate sponsors, the Greenwich Historical Society now looks ahead to even more exciting developments as we embark on a new era of planning that will ensure our continued relevance and vitality. We hope you will join us as we continue to promote preservation, examine our rich past and keep a keen eye out for history in the making for future generations.

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