
HENNIKER HISTORIAN

SEPTEMBER 2017 NUMBER 69

NEWSLETTER OF THE HENNIKER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Officers 2017-18

President: Kristen McLean

Vice President: Diane Carpenter

Treasurer: Ron Taylor

Secretary: Ellen Reed

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hurricane season is here. It is interesting how such a gorgeous time of year in New England can be so ugly in other parts of the country. I recall a conversation I had with the Polygon crew about this being their busy season. At the time, I was amazed at how good natured everyone was while dealing with the mess in Academy Hall. I understand now that their positivity came from the prospect of spending two weeks in a beautiful historic building in a pretty town while relatively close to their home base in Rhode Island. I wonder what disaster zone they're in now? I am sure, regardless of their current location, the tight-knit group is making the best of it. They were amazing.

This summer, we have been busy unpacking, changing displays, and filing our backlog of new acquisitions. As a result, we realized that the research room, the hub of our operations, was in desperate need of a makeover. We are currently working on fresh paint, stain, and window treatments as well as reorganizing our files and furniture. All of this work will surely take us well into the fall and add to our already busy calendar.

Finally, on behalf of the Governing Board, I would like to thank everyone who supported us with their generous financial donations this past year. We surpassed our goal of \$7700 for 2016-17 with donations totaling \$8870. We depend on these donations to keep our doors open, so hope you will all consider donating to the 2017-18 Giving Campaign.

Come for a visit or tour the museum on Thursdays from 10am-2pm or the first and third Saturdays from 10am – 1 pm, Visits may also be arranged by appointment. Call 426-6762 or email society@mettel.

Kristen McLean, President

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMY CHENEY BEACH



Amy Cheney was born on September 5, 1867 in Henniker, NH. Her home still stands on Western Avenue. A gifted musician and composer, Amy wrote her first pieces for the piano when she was only four years old, composing them in her head while visiting her grandfather then playing them on the piano when she returned home. By the time she was six, she was giving public recitals, including some of her own compositions. At sixteen, she made her concert debut, performing at the Boston Music Hall to rave reviews.

At the age of eighteen, Amy married a 43-year-old surgeon by the name of Henry Harris Aubrey Beach. Dr. Beach insisted Amy not perform more than two concerts a year but did encourage her composing.

Amy Beach's first major success came in 1892 when the Handel and Hayden Society orchestra performed her Mass in e-minor, the first time the Society had ever performed a piece by a female composer.

Her biggest success and musical milestone came in 1896 when the Boston Orchestra performed her Gaelic Symphony, the first symphony ever composed and published by an American woman.

After the death of her husband and mother in 1910, Beach traveled to Europe where she eventually resumed both performing and composing. She remained an active force in music until her death in 1944, although she has been largely forgotten like so many other female composers. She will always be an important part of Henniker's history.

Acquisitions

In 2009, Henniker resident, Angela Robinson bequeathed a number of items to the Henniker Historical Society upon her death. Many of these items reflect her enthusiasm and love of music, her family, and the Book Farm. We will display many of these items during the upcoming Open House in October. Don and Ging Blanchard have given us a butter churn and other items from their farm to add to our collection of household utility items. Bertha McComish donated a complete nurse's uniform and other artifacts related to her early nursing career.

We are slowly catching up on our sorting through our new acquisitions that have been "waiting" in safe-keeping during the recovery from the furnace blow-back. We thank you for your patience.

We would like to request that any donations to the museum please include a written history and connection to Henniker. It makes it much easier for us to file things properly and adds invaluable information to our knowledge of Henniker's past.

Thank You!

Susan Adams and Susan Rainier
Acquisitions Committee

JOINING FORCES WITH NEC

In order to bring in much needed help, we made an effort to reconnect with New England College this summer by participating in their Activities Day. Through this, we have obtained the services of a history minded work-study student who will spend several hours each week helping out at the Society. We also spoke to a wrestling coach who offered to send over a few able-bodied wrestlers to help move any heavy or large items we might need help with. Hopefully, this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership with the college.

Giving Campaign Letters will soon arrive if you haven't already received one, so be on the lookout! This is our one big fundraiser of the year and your donations are vital to preserving Henniker's history!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The Historical Society is always in need of volunteers to help us in our mission to preserve Henniker history. No experience is needed! New board members are also needed. So, if you have some spare time you'd like to donate, please contact Deb Dow at 491-6686.

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.hennikerhistory.org

email: society@mettelecom.com

Facebook

VISIT US AT ACADEMY HALL

51 Maple St

Henniker, NH 03242

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Monthly board meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 9 am in Academy Hall. Members and prospective members are invited to attend.

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership expiration is noted on your mailing list, if yours is about to expire please renew to continue to receive the newsletter and support us as we preserve Henniker history.

To renew, send \$5.00 (checks can be made out to Henniker Historical Society) along with your name and address to:

Henniker Historical Society
PO Box 674
Henniker, NH 03242

The Great Clean-Up of 2017

In December of 2016, Academy Hall suffered a disastrous furnace blow-back which covered every exposed space with a black, oily film. Experts from Polygon Cleaning were called in to save the day.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE AND BANK AUCTION

It's been a long haul, but at last Academy Hall has been reopened to the public. It has taken months of cleaning, sorting and reorganizing to get the place cleaned up, but we are once again open for business. We invite you all to come by and take a look at are sparkling clean facility as well as participate in our special fundraiser:

SALE OF THE POST OFFICE BANKS!

The banks are handcrafted from the finest woods and fronted with a post box door from the old West Henniker Post Office. Only thirteen boxes are available and will be sold via a silent auction. You won't want to miss this opportunity to obtain one of these unique items!

DATE: Sunday, October 22, 2017

TIME: 2 – 4pm

Academy Hall at 51 Maple St., Henniker

Auction will begin at 2pm and end at 3:30 pm

Snacks and drinks will be served

Proceeds from the sale will be used to continue refurbishing the Martha C. Taylor Research Room