

ANNUAL REPORT FY2018-2019



frhs

Year Ending
April 30, 2019

FALL RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY | FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS

On the cover. Compote of Cherries by Abbie Luella Zuill (1856-1921), oil on canvas, 1890.
Gift of Bernard A.G. and Martha Mullen Taradash.

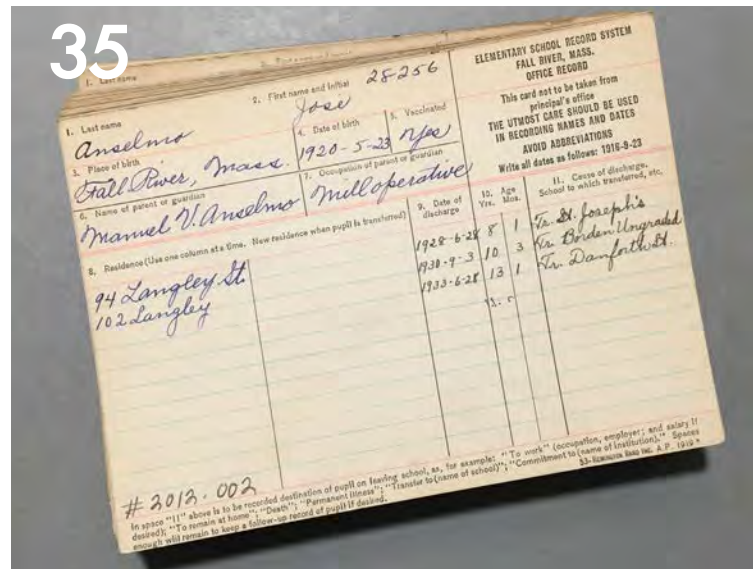
Sincere thanks to the following for donating professional services that made it possible to produce this report. Design: Stefani Koorey. Photography: Bachrach; Dennis A. Binette; Bill & Sue Crombie; Dean Diogo Photography; Robert B. Neville; Temple D. Parsons; Betty Prescott; Striving Artists Theatre Company; Swan Imaging; Peter Williams Museum Services; University Archives; Williamstown Art Conservation Center, Inc.



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REPORTS

This Annual Report highlights many exciting and successful programs and illustrates how the FRHS remains focused on its primary goal of preserving the history of the city, while continuing to serve the community as a center for historical, educational, and cultural events.

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PROGRAMS & EVENTS

The FRHS strives to maintain its position as an important cultural resource in the greater Fall River area by offering a wide range of public events for adults and children, among them: lectures on history, on-site and Online exhibits, concerts, theatrical performances, book signings, and holiday-themed events. Indeed, the FRHS has emerged as a leading provider of cultural events for the community.

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OUR TEAM

Due to the efforts of many people – volunteers, directors, and staff – the museum remains increasingly visible in the community, and is an important historical and cultural resource. This serves to make new audiences aware of the organization and its work.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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ear Friends:

I am pleased to report that our membership numbers confirm another successful year. As of October, 2019, we now have more than 1,000 members – an all-time high. It attests to the fact that the Fall River Historical Society is achieving its mission of preserving the city's history, and continues to serve the community with a full schedule of historical, educational, and cultural events. Just this summer, we had to move to a larger facility at Bristol Community College for our annual *Grimshaw-Gudewicz Charitable Foundation Summer Lecture Series* due to stellar attendance.

We will continue to provide a wide range of events and programming, including lectures, concerts, book signings, performances, fund raisers, and holiday displays that, altogether, will attract thousands. Also, as our museum and archival collections grow, great progress is being made in cataloging, so that material is more readily available to our members and the public.

With this Annual Report, I hope that our members and loyal supporters will be proud of the accomplishments that we have achieved together, but also will understand our challenges.

The FRHS has achieved much with little fixed and stable financing,

but as we approach our 100th anniversary in 2021, we must be realistic. We must provide financial stability for the museum.

In the coming year, our members will be kept informed about the plan being developed to address our challenge. In the meantime, your support of the Annual Appeal is more important than ever. It provides the funds for our current operating expenses and meeting short-term demands.

However, as our Curator indicates, "good things are on the horizon!"



Jay J. Lambert
President

FROM THE CURATOR

A

s detailed in this report, the last fiscal year was a very productive one with a great deal accomplished relating to various aspects of museum operations; difficult issues confronting the FRHS were identified and potential solutions were formulated.

Due to the efforts of many people – volunteers, board, and staff – the museum remains increasingly visible in the community. Not only are we Fall River’s leading historical resource but also a major provider of cultural events for the community. This all serves to make new audiences aware of the historical society and its work, and creates new stakeholders.

Increased public awareness targets and engages our ever-expanding audience, resulting in new visitors to the museum. This is a vital resource, generating better attendance, new membership, support, contributions – either financial or objects to the collections – and additional museum shop sales; all are necessary for a more sustainable future. On those fronts, the FRHS is making a marked improvement.

During the last fiscal year, various internal issues were addressed, with some areas of FRHS operations and staff duties adjusted to meet the changing needs of the organization. This will increase efficiency and productivity, and these endeavors will be ongoing.

It would be impossible for the museum to maintain its current level of operation without its corps of volunteers, and the society is extremely indebted to them for their many efforts on behalf of the organization. The FRHS currently has a roster of one hundred active volunteers who perform myriad tasks in all areas of operations;



97TH ANNUAL MEETING

this is an impressive number for any organization. In order to establish consistent standards to help support the volunteers, work began on a handbook to clearly define what the FRHS does as an organization, establish guidelines, and explain various volunteer roles and the duties concurrent with each position. This valuable resource will empower people to do their best work, at the same time ensuring a shared general knowledge of expectations.

The volunteers are thanked at an annual brunch, traditionally held in June, and the event is regularly well attended.

The museum’s officers, directors, committee chairpersons, and all committee members are also volunteers. During the last fiscal year, there were eleven scheduled monthly board meetings, in addition to a considerable number of meetings of various committees – By-law mandated and others – far too numerous to count. A great deal of important work takes place “behind the scenes” on a daily basis, and these individuals are hereby recognized for their steadfast determination to see this organization succeed, and for the exhaustive man-hours expended on behalf of the museum.

The FRHS continues to maintain its position as an important cultural resource in greater Fall River and is a leading provider of innovative programming, annually offering a diverse range of events for adults and children. Among these: lectures on various historical topics; on-site and Online exhibits; concerts; theatrical performances; book signings; holiday-themed events; fund raisers; and a community recognition event. The intent is to present high-quality programming, on a level seen



954
MEMBERS AS OF
THIS REPORT



132
LIFE
MEMBERS



822
ANNUAL DUES-
PAYING MEMBERS

in larger cities, to our local audience. Read about these events in PROGRAMS AND EVENTS on page 18.

The FRHS is a membership-based organization and participation is at an all-time high; as of fiscal year-end, the museum had 954 members, of which 132 maintain life memberships, and 822 are annual dues-paying members. This figure represents a very positive increase in membership of 12.9% since April 30, 2018.

The museum derives its operating revenue from the small income generated from the existing endowment – which is drastically underfunded – coupled with financial contributions and pledges, Annual Appeal support, membership dues, admissions, fund-raising events, publications, grants, museum shop sales, and seasonal tea room sales.

The Annual Appeal, which is enclosed with this report, is an important financial resource, with the income generated vital to ensure that the organization continues to conduct business at its current level; all funds contributed provide unrestricted operating support.

During the FY2018-19 Annual Appeal, a total of \$45,750 in unrestricted funds was contributed by 225 members, representing a 24% return. An excellent return based on current industry standards, the sum represents a positive increase of \$7,490 over the previous year.

Nonetheless, endowment income, general income, and donor support have not kept pace with annual operating costs that continue to rise despite stringent economies in all areas and multiple initiatives to reduce expenses. It is imperative that Annual Appeal revenue – in fact, all revenue – be increased.

Museum Shop sales are a very important source of income, with the shop particularly busy during the holiday season when it is expanded into two additional rooms. It is the proceeds from holiday sales that sustain the organization through winter months. The shop did particularly well during the FY2018-2019 season, partially due to the introduction of several new and/or expanded lines of merchandise, and an increase in marketing via social media.

It is impossible to resolve deferred maintenance issues or undertake any other projects outside general day-to-day operations – of necessity presently conducted at a bare minimum – without specifically designated contributions. Therefore, it is essential that the museum secure grants and donations; considerable time is spent identifying potential funding sources and undertaking appli-

cation procedures. Learn about several recently awarded grants in GRANT & GIFT FUNDING on page 11.

The Fall River Historical Society Press, established during FY2017-2018, is another method of generating increased income; the venture is attaining a position at the forefront by publishing important works on Fall River history. This is exactly the type of academic work the museum should be engaging in, and feedback has been positive. Discover more about this exciting venture in FALL RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESS on page 16.

In our endeavors to continuously engage the Online community (see page 12-13), new additions to the FRHS website were designed and implemented, with others currently in development.

A new Online exhibit: *MUGS: 1911-1948*, features an extensive collection of Fall River related mug shots that were donated to the museum in 2002; an introductory narrative documents the history of police photography. The images are compelling records of place, time, and circumstance, and are gritty depictions of human drama in a pure, unadulterated form. Significantly, they provide important primary source material for genealogical and other research.

The exhibit is an ongoing one, with additional images added on a weekly basis; response thus far has been positive.

Black History Month 2019 was commemorated with an Online exhibit:

Charles Judson Becker: Master Penman, Educator, and Inventor, celebrates the life and career of a remarkably talented Fall River resident and member of a trailblazing family of African-descent.

Charles J. Becker (1858-1935) was regarded as one of the few Master Penmen in the United States and his work, of which the FRHS possesses a superb example, is brilliant.

In addition, two new feature sections were designed for the website: *Conservation & Restoration*; and *Current Exhibits*, with each section containing material pertinent to the category.

Conservation & Restoration is designed to explain why the museum is duty-bound to preserve the objects entrusted to its care, and will highlight various conservation projects, using before, during, and after images, together with pertinent information about the conservation treatment methods employed.

Current Exhibits is designed to offer a brief introduction to exhibits currently on view, with a selection of images pertaining to each.

These sections will be launched on the FRHS website during FY2019-2020.

The museum also maintains an active presence on social media, which is an important marketing resource for the organization; it creates positive dialogue and has been a surprisingly useful tool in acquiring material for library holdings.

The FRHS maintains extensive collections of material in a wide range of categories that are indicative of the multicultural heritage of all the people of Fall River; the collection is inclusive, not exclusive. It is imperative that these objects be properly interpreted and made available to the public via exhibition, publication, research, and loan to other institutions. As such, the museum is continuously working to document various aspects of the city's history in all its forms.

Preserving oral history has become an important part of the FRHS's work, and considerable progress has been made on the project documenting the story of the R. A. McWhirr Company, Fall River's iconic department store.

To date, forty-eight recorded interviews with descendants of the store owners, senior management, and individuals who were employed at the store in various capacities have been conducted; there are written interviews as well. These, along with historical narrative, photographs, and ephemera from the FRHS's extensive collection and material held in private collections, will be developed into Online and on-site exhibits, and a companion book.

The diverse collections of the FRHS continue to grow in all categories, thanks to the generosity of various donors, and several items were added during the year. Read about several recently donated items in COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS on page 14.

In addition to donated items, the FRHS utilizes other avenues for making acquisitions by securing funds through various donors to purchase objects for the collection, and has established a small acquisitions fund. As a result, the organization was able to acquire, among several other items:

A mahogany cased *Tall Clock*, unidentified American manufacturer, 1890-1900, presented to Adams House by Edward Stowe Adams (1856-1948) in memory of his parents, Robert Adams (1816-1900) and Lydia Ann Adams née Stowe (1823-1904), for whom the residential care facility was named.

This important piece of Adams House history was very generously acquired at auction for donation to the FRHS by **BayCoast Bank**.

In the Garden is a lovely watercolor-on-paper, painted by Louise Mumford Angell (1858-1949) in the 1920s; the artist maintained studios in Fall River and Providence, Rhode Island. She worked in watercolor and oil, and was a noted miniature and china painter. A member of the Providence Art Club, she exhibited widely throughout her long career. The painting is one of a group of garden watercolors she created while residing in Fall River. It was offered for sale privately in 2019, and was purchased by the museum with funds provided by **Donors to the Acquisition Fund**.

Baldwin Apples, a 1903 still life by the Fall River School artist Bryant Chapin (1859-1927), has long been referred to as the “Rotten Apples” because the artist – who grew tired of painting the perfect specimens of Baldwin Apples demanded by his clients – painted these as they appeared in nature, complete with blemishes.

The picture descended in the family of Caroline Matilda Dunning née Orswell (1828-1911), the sister-in-law of the brilliant artist Robert S. Dunning, noted for establishing the Fall River School; it is thought that Caroline was gifted the painting by Chapin.

Documenting the provenance of this work was aided by direct family descent and rare photographic evidence; in an early twentieth-century

photograph, the picture is depicted hanging in its original location in the parlor of the Dunning residence.

The painting was offered for sale privately in 2018, and was purchased by the museum with funds provided by FRHS members and benefactors **Bernard A.G. and Martha Mullen Taradash**.

Documenting the provenance of objects in the museum collections is time-consuming work, but it is imperative that this information be researched for the historical record, allowing for more comprehensive interpretation.

The FRHS endeavors to fulfill a fundamental role to expand and care for the objects in its collections and preserve them for future generations, while trying to engage in the best practices and ethics for museum management. As such, the conservation needs of several paintings in the FRHS collection were addressed using funds specifically donated for that purpose. Among the works that underwent cleaning and conservation were two paintings by Robert S. Dunning: *Autumn at Medway*, a beautiful 1885 oil-on-panel, and *Still Life with Fruit*, a lush 1891 oil-on-canvas. *Taunton River at Slade’s Ferry*, an 1876 oil-on-canvas by J. W. Murray, a thus-far unidentified artist about whom research is ongoing, also underwent treatment.

A major project was the extensive conservation of an important oil-on-canvas *Portrait of Caroline Phebe Brady* née Cobb (1854-1920), painted by Dunning in 1883. For insight about this project, read CONSERVATORS’ CIRCLE – 2019 on page 21.

The FRHS maintains the *Charlton Library of Fall River History*, housing extensive archival holdings of material dating from the 17th to the 21st century. It is recognized as a central repository for material pertaining to Fall River history, is a major resource for historical and genealogical research, and holds the distinction of being the first non-circulating library of its type admitted as a member of the SAILS Library Network.

Significant progress has been made in library and archival cataloguing and collections management. Over one-thousand volumes of 18th to early-20th century business, club, church, and organization records were assigned updated accession numbers, in keeping with accepted museum practice. The accessions were entered in the Past-Perfect Museum Software system, and added to the SAILS Library Network Online catalogue, making them more

“ Serious issues are being confronted in a direct manner. Without doubt, a strategic endowment campaign highlighting the FRHS’s compelling story will be a key ingredient in securing long-term sustainability. ”

readily available to researchers and scholars.

In addition, several thousand 19th-century business records have been cleaned, arranged chronologically, carefully marked with acquisition numbers, and stored in acid-free materials. This important work is ongoing and can only be undertaken when funds are available for the purchase of archival quality storage materials.

A major undertaking was the creation of an extensive database for biographical information that is being compiled via the museum software program, with thousands of names of individuals generated from previously uncatalogued material held in the FRHS collections. For more information about this fascinating project, see BUILDING A BIOGRAPHICAL DATABASE on page 35.

The museum is housed in the finest preserved 19th-century mansion in the city and operates as both an historic house museum and a local history museum. Therefore, the FRHS must strike a balance between period room settings and exhibits pertaining to the history of Fall River and its multicultural people. In addition, objects from the extensive collections must be exhibited to the public.

In order to help facilitate this, a second floor gallery was repainted and another – the small, west room, also on the second floor – was redesigned and repainted to provide more efficient exhibition space

and address the changing needs of the collection. These efforts to improve the quality and diversity of exhibits will be ongoing.

The holiday season remains the busiest time of the year at the FRHS and, during a seven-week period in 2018, several thousand people visited the museum, shop, and tearoom. Without a doubt, *Deck the Halls!* has emerged as one of the premier historic house Christmas displays in Southeastern Massachusetts, attracting visitors from the greater Fall River area and well beyond.

Press coverage and feedback were excellent, including an accolade from the director of a well-known historical organization in a nearby community, noted for their holiday displays, who stated: “Your decorations are stunning ... superior in design and execution. We can’t compete.”

Visiting the museum during the holidays has become a time-honored tradition, garnering a loyal following of repeat visitors, and attracting new ones.

I think everyone can agree that the last fiscal year was a productive one, with encouraging progress on many levels.

For the FRHS there is unlimited potential and opportunity for future growth. Indeed, the museum is the central repository for Fall River history, a place where the past is preserved for today, and the present is preserved for tomorrow.

But what of that future?

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TOMORROW.

”

Serious issues are being confronted in a direct manner. Without doubt, a strategic endowment campaign highlighting the FRHS's compelling story will be a key ingredient in securing long-term sustainability.

An integral part of any robust organization is a strong financial foundation – something that the FRHS currently does not possess. While visitors continue to enjoy the museum experience and all the organization has to offer, finances remain strained.

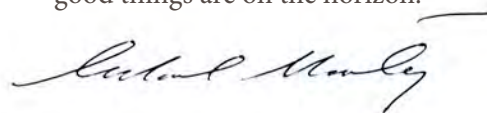
Last year, a small working committee was formed to begin to address the serious lack of an endowment of invested funds necessary to maintain the organization in perpetuity.

Significant progress has been made to rectify the situation: Difficult questions were asked; potential funding sources were identified; and a grant application was submitted to a Private Foundation requesting funds to engage a professional consultant to assist in developing and implementing a major endowment campaign.

In the near future, the FRHS membership will be informed about the strategy that is being formulated to address these challenges, and a path will be proposed.

It is my belief that the actions over the next few years will be the most critical in the FRHS's long history, ensuring that the organization will thrive as a viable museum and research center, preserve the many artifacts entrusted to its care, and continue to provide multigenerational families with wonderful cultural experiences.

I am optimistic that, as the museum approaches the centennial of its 1921 founding in 2021, good things are on the horizon.



Michael Martins
Curator

grant & gift funding

FY2018-2019

A grant of \$52,700 from the **City of Fall River Community Preservation Committee**, awarded during FY2017-2018 for the exterior restoration of the entire east wing of the museum building, was augmented by an additional grant in the sum of \$2,000; the supplemental monies were requested due to an increase in costs associated with the project. The funds allowed for the restoration of all original wood architectural elements, the re-fabrication of missing or unstable components using a material impervious to the elements, and conservation of the slate roofing material. The project will be brought to fruition with painting in a period appropriate color scheme.

A grant of \$15,000 from the **Earle P. Charlton Jr. Charity Fund**, awarded during FY2017-2018 for researching and writing a history of entrepreneur and philanthropist Earle Perry Charlton Sr. (1863-1930) and his business empire, was utilized for expenses related to that project; undertaken by the FRHS at the request of Stacey Charlton and the Trustees of the Charlton Charitable Trusts, the project is on-going.

The Grimshaw-Gudewicz Charitable Foundation awarded \$2,000 to assist in underwriting FRHS events, including the presentation of the annual Summer Lecture Series, held at Bristol Community College.

A gift of \$5,000 from **Jay J. and Barbara Lambert** provided funds to underwrite the entire cost of publishing Jay's upcoming book, *Spindle City: A Story of Fall River, Massachusetts, its Cotton Textile Industry, and its People*; the author also generously donated his entire rights to the work to benefit the FRHS. For additional information about this important publication, see FALL RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESS on page 16.

A gift of \$2,000 from **Marilyn Lynch-Cornell** provided funds to underwrite a specially commissioned

series of masks depicting a diverse group of characters from Fall River history, sculpted by local artist David Mello. This on-going project has been three years in the making and has been made possible due to Marilyn's generous annual support. The collection is being created in memory of her son, Mark Lynch PhD.

A generous grant of \$25,000 was awarded by **The Manton Foundation** and provided essential unrestricted support; the funds, utilized for day-to-day expenses, were instrumental in assisting FRHS operations during this fiscal year.

A grant of \$10,000 was awarded by the **Thomas A. Rodgers Jr. Family Foundation** for interior and exterior repairs to the museum building. Among the projects completed: painting of the second-floor gallery in a color ideally suited for exhibition purposes; and installing slat-wall panels in the north-east room on the second floor of the shop, providing expanded and efficient retail space. In addition, the small west room on the second floor of the museum building was painted and redesigned for use as a gallery for rotating exhibits.

A grant of \$10,000 was awarded by the **Twenty-Seven Foundation** and provided much-needed unrestricted operating support.

A contribution of \$2,000 from **Betty M. Welch** provided funds to assist in badly needed upgrades to the FRHS's IT equipment; this was augmented by additional generous contributions from two **Anonymous Donors**.

In addition, several grant requests were submitted to **various philanthropic foundations** for consideration for funding during FY2019-2020.

Grants or pledges received after April 30, 2019, are not included in this narrative.

FRHS ONLINE

12

2,072,373

VISITS TO FALLRIVERHISTORICAL.ORG SINCE REDESIGN

368,420

VISITS IN THE PAST 365 DAYS

7,085

VISITS AVERAGE PER WEEK

1,012

VISITS AVERAGE PER DAY

As of May 2019, **FACEBOOK** had a combined 243 million monthly active users in the United States and Canada, according to Statista.com. This social media platform has proven to be our most successful avenue for patron engagement and information sharing.

FRHS FACEBOOK STATISTICS

8,502 followers

Number of new people who have followed our page.

8,347 likes

Number of new people who have liked our page.

2,598 post reach average per week

Number of people who have had any posts from our page on their screen.

90% response rate

Percentage of messages responded to in messenger.

3 hour response rate

Time it took to respond to a message, on average.

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS

A collection of Sagamore Manufacturing Company records, 1879-1920, including account books, payroll, and a *Summary of Machinery Mill #1*, recording detailed financial and statistical data pertaining to constructing and equipping a textile mill in late-19th-century Fall River.

An Anonymous Donor. [1]

An 1885 oil-on-canvas painting *Basket of Strawberries* by the Fall River artist Cara Dillingham Cooper (1851-1919); this highly-important painting is the only example of her work to have so-far surfaced. The painting descended through four generations of the Durfee family, and has a well-documented exhibition history. The gift of **Ursula Seuss Brown.** [2]

A 1920s *robes-de-style* made by Alphonsine Boutin née Hardy (1894-1969), a talented, little-known French-Canadian dressmaker who worked in Fall River, beginning circa 1918. The garment was made for her personal wardrobe; included is the original ostrich feather boa and feather aigrette worn with the ensemble that have survived in remarkable preservation. The gift of her daughter, **Pauline Stella (Hardy) Mangol.** [3]

An 1890 oil-on-canvas painting *Compote of Cherries* by Abbie Luella Zuill née Manchester (1856-1921); a student of Robert Spear Dunning (1829-1905), the artist was the only woman recognized as a member of the Fall River School. This exceptional work was executed at the peak of her career. The painting was acquired at auction by the FRHS with funds provided by **Bernard A.G. and Martha Mullen Taradash.** [4]

A group of photographs, circa 1930, depicting the Fall River City Home that operated on Bay Street from 1917 to 1960. Constructed by Bristol County as a jail, it was never used for that purpose, being rendered obsolete by the introduction of the probation program. It was sold to the city in 1915. Wilfred Ainsworth (1867-1936), the grandfather of the donor, was the first Superintendent of the facility. These are the first images that have surfaced depicting the interior of the structure. The gift of **Lois (Murphy) McMullin.** [5]

A BOOK FROM LIZZIE BORDEN'S LIBRARY

The FRHS houses the most important collection extant of artifacts pertaining to the Borden case and the life of Lizzie A. Borden (1860-1927), and is the central repository for material on this sensitive subject, which is presented in an academic manner; the museum strives to increase its holdings by acquiring the most significant material extant.

Among the FRHS's collection are several volumes from Lizzie's extensive private library, which included titles in a surprisingly diverse range of genres – from inspirational texts to classics, romance, and science fiction. She habitually hand signed or initialed her books. During the last fiscal year, an additional volume was acquired.

Lizzie's copy of *Wayside Poems* by the American author Wallace Bruce (1844-1914) was published to wide acclaim in 1895 by Harper & Brothers of New York, and features a blind-stamped decorative binding with a decorative vignette. It is signed "*L.A. Borden*" on the blank page following the front free-endpaper.

The book was purchased at auction for donation to the museum by **Cara Warschaw Robertson**, and joins other important Borden-related material gifted by this donor. [6]



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2



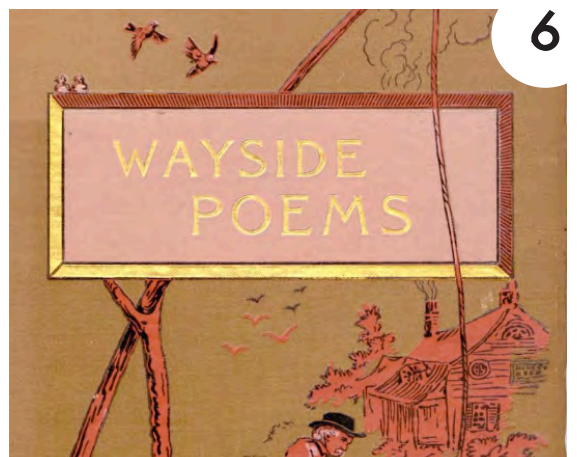
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5



6



FALL RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESS

“Providing the reader with
compelling, informative works
... and great reads!”

The Fall River Historical Society Press, established during the last fiscal year, has fulfilled its intent to advance the knowledge of the history of Fall River, its multicultural people, and its environs through the publication of original works and previously unpublished manuscripts – an additional volume is on the shelves, one is forthcoming, and another is in the works.

Main Street in the 1870s and 1880s and A Businessman’s Reminiscences of Fifty Years, by Thomas Richmond Burrell (1861-1953), were originally presented as historical addresses to members of the FRHS in 1936 and 1933, respectively. Burrell’s presentations were based on his vivid recollections “of those persons who carried on business on Main Street and the central section of the city”; written in a chatty style, his reminiscences come to life in these captivating, often witty, narratives.

The book features expanded versions of Burrell’s previously unpublished manuscripts, which are housed in the *Charlton Library of Fall River History* at the FRHS. The format has been slightly edited for punctuation and readability, with italicized information in square brackets added for the purposes of clarification and context; it is profusely illustrated with eighty-three images from both the FRHS and Burrell family collections. In order to preserve the integrity of the original manuscripts, and to retain the voice of the author, the phraseology and opinions conveyed in the text

remain that of the writer. It was released as Volume II in the *Discourses on History* series.

Spindle City: A Story of Fall River, Massachusetts, its Cotton Textile Industry, and its People, by Jay J. Lambert, FRHS president. He devoted over a decade painstakingly researching and writing *Spindle City*. A major contribution to the local history genre, this is a definitive work on the subject.

Spindle City is a sweeping saga of Fall River’s old cotton textile industry – the mills, the managerial hierarchy, the workforce, and the events and issues that shaped their lives. Documenting the cotton textile industry from the local perspective of Fall River, it is an unpretentious effort to understand the city’s role in the industrialization of America.

The cotton textile industry is as much a part of the author as it is of Fall River: Jay grew up in the shadow of the former Wampanoag and Flint Mills and is the direct descendant of English and French-Canadian ancestors who immigrated to Fall River to find employment in the city’s textile mills.

Jay and his wife, Barbara, have generously funded the complete design and publication costs associated with the book, and the author donated 100% of his rights to the work to benefit the FRHS.

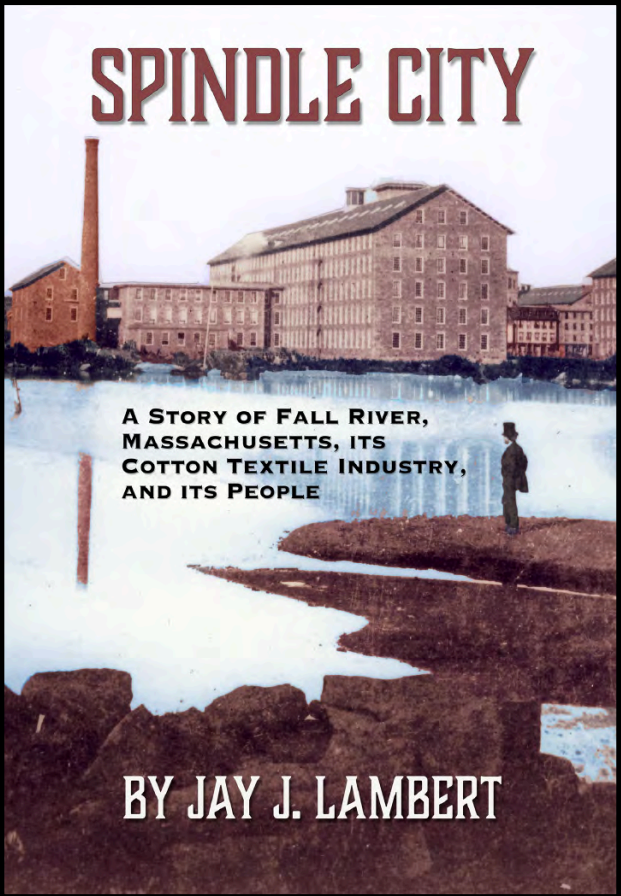
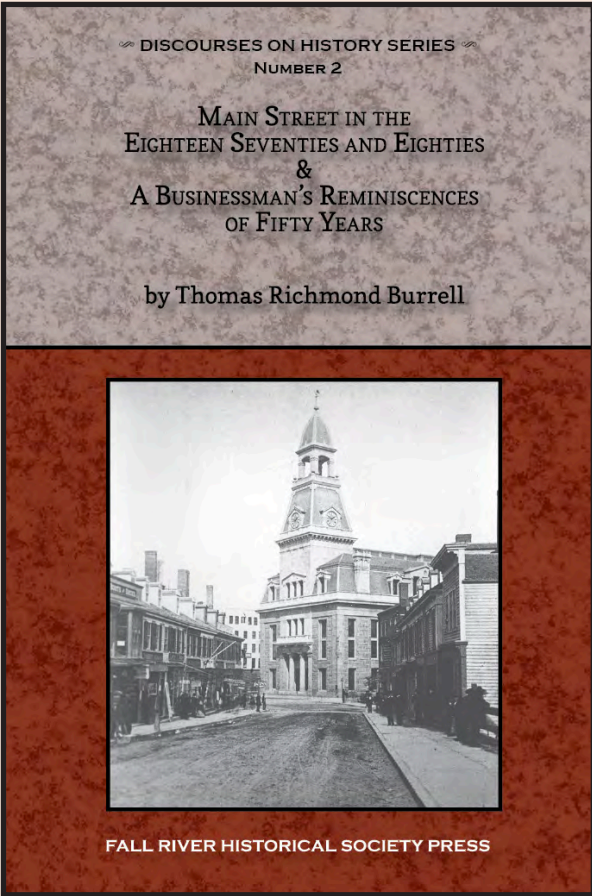
A must-read for anyone interested in Fall River history or the rise – and inevitable fall – of the city’s premier industry, *Spindle City* will be released in December 2019.

A major project in the works: A yet-to-be-titled publication documenting the life and business career of entrepreneur and self-made multimillionaire philanthropist Earle Perry Charlton Sr. (1863-1930) and his family is currently underway; the project is being undertaken at the request of his great-granddaughter, Stacey Charlton, and the Trustees of the Charlton Charitable Trusts.

Drawing heavily from important Charlton family personal and business archival material in the FRHS collections – appropriately housed in the *Charlton Library of Fall River History* – and primary source material gathered nation-wide, the book will explore Charlton’s metamorphic rise from retail store clerk to Five-and-Ten-Cent-Store magnate as well as the family legacy of philanthropy.

Research for the publication is being conducted by FRHS curators Dennis A. Binette and Michael Martins, and FRHS director and author Bill Moniz, who is serving as the lead writer on the project. Bill’s writing style, business acumen, and impressive knowledge of Fall River/regional history renders him ideally suited to this project and positions him as the key member of the team, attested to by his compelling – and widely popular – *Granite, Grit, and Grace: An Exploration of the Fascinating Side Streets of Fall River’s History*, published by the FRHS Press in 2017.

Research and writing is ongoing.





PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



THE ARTS

Shakespeare in the Park:

Hamlet

Striving Artists Theatre Company

Saturday Evening Serenades Concert Series, presented
in partnership with Greater Fall River RE-CREATION:

The Nightlife Orchestra

Monica Ambroziak

Louie Leeman and Cheap Sneakers

Pickled Beats

BOOK SIGNINGS

*Murder, Manslaughter, and Mayhem on the SouthCoast
Volume Two: 1970-1999*

John B. Cummings Jr. with Stefani Koorey, PhD

*Murder, Manslaughter, and Mayhem on the SouthCoast
Volume Three: 2000-2016*

John B. Cummings Jr. with Stefani Koorey, PhD

The Trial of Lizzie Borden

Cara Robertson

EXHIBITS

Black History Month — *Charles Judson Becker: Master
Penman, Educator, and Inventor*

Lizzie Borden: An Enduring Legacy

Mugs: 1911-1948

**GRIMSHAW-GUDEWICZ CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION SUMMER LECTURE SERIES**

Let's Go to the Movies

Robert Kitchen

The Cook-Durfee Ice House at Interlachen

Bill Goncalo

Spencer Borden and Interlachen

Stefani Koorey, PhD

*Fall River Professional Baseball in the Year of Pearl
Harbor and During the Korean War*

Philip T. Silvia Jr., PhD

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Deck the Halls! Annual Open House

*Palette Pictures X: An Exhibition and Sale of
Donated Works by Regional Artists*

Tea with Mrs. Claus

Members' Open House

Meet and Greet Santa and Mrs. Claus

OTHER EVENTS

Bi-Annual Clamboil

Members' Annual Meeting

FRHS Annual Volunteer Luncheon

*The Third Annual Florence Cook Brigham Annual
Fundraising Dinner*

OPTIONS FOR GIVING

All donations to the Fall River Historical Society, a 501c3 non-profit public charity, are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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ACQUISITION FUND

Gifts to the Acquisition Fund provide the means for the FRHS to broaden the scope of its collections through the purchase of historically significant material.

ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund provides unrestricted funds for operating costs and programs. Gifts may be designated as either honorary or memorial contributions.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS FUND

This fund provides for the maintenance and restoration of our two buildings, both of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and their grounds.

CONSERVATION FUND

Contributions to this fund ensure the physical and aesthetic integrity of objects in the FRHS collections, and greatly enhance public access to the museum's holdings.

ENDOWMENT FUND

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to secure the long-term future of the FRHS by providing reliable annual investment income to support the organization in perpetuity. While all gifts to the FRHS are welcome, our current priority is to increase the size of the Endowment, which is underfunded.

GIFTS OF OBJECTS AND ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

Gifts of material that either has a connection to the history of the city of Fall River, belonged to a city resident, upgrades existing collections, or fills a particular need.

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Memberships range from \$40 for individuals to \$1,500 for lifetime memberships. Please visit our website for further details and application forms.

CONSERVATORS' CIRCLE — 2019

“CONSERVATION IS A FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MUSEUM.”

The FRHS is responsible for holding the objects in its collections in public trust for future generations, therefore conservation is a fundamental responsibility of the museum. The primary goal: Stabilize an object to prevent further deterioration, ensuring its survival for research, education, and exhibition purposes.

Addressing collections care and conservation poses a vexing dilemma for the FRHS; specialized treatment of an object is expensive but, due to a lack of specifically designated conservation funds, is impossible to consider – yet it must be addressed.

In order to begin to resolve this issue, the *Conservators' Circle* was developed, utilizing a creative – and surprisingly simple – “outside the box” methodology: Identify a critical conservation need; secure an estimate for treatment; divide the entire cost of conservation by the total number of FRHS members – making it surprisingly affordable; and issue a plea for financial assistance. Utilizing this group-effort strategy, expensive and seemingly cost prohibitive, conservation projects can be more easily accomplished.

The plan was conceived to fund the conservation of a portrait by the Fall River artist Robert Spear Dunning (1829-1905) that was acquired at auction by the FRHS in 2015, catalogued as: "Portrait of a Woman ... unframed, tears, punctures, losses." The painting was recognized by the FRHS curator as a very important work, and the most highly developed example of Dunning's portraiture to have yet surfaced. The sitter was not named in the auction catalogue, but was later identified as Fall River native Caroline Phebe Brady née Cobb (1854-1920); provenance via family descent was established by the consignor.

Dunning is renowned for his still life works, but executed many landscapes and portraits during his career; the FRHS houses the largest collection of his work extant. This portrait, however, appears unique in Dunning's *oeuvre*.

The subject was the wife of James C. Brady, a successful Fall River businessman and city official; Caroline craved social acceptance, and dressed and played the part, evidenced by the rich clothing and jewels worn for her sittings. When commissioning the city's leading portraitist to capture her likeness in 1883, she demanded – and received – a veritable tour de force.

The painting as received was severely unstable, exhibiting deterioration to the canvas support and paint surfaces, and had losses and tears throughout. The extensive conservation work was undertaken at the prestigious Williamstown Art Conservation Center, in Massachusetts; their multidisciplinary team of highly-skilled professionals specialize in conservation and preservation of cultural historical objects. The cost was \$11,540. This figure included digital photography documenting the entire process, and the creation of a giclée reproduction of the painting in its pre-conservation state, for exhibition alongside the portrait as a lesson in conservation.

A generous contribution from **Lynne Foster Warren** initiated the conservation fund and established a challenge; this was augmented by a major gift from **Anne and Travis Engen**.

The balance of funds was raised by the contributions of **FRHS members**, who quickly – and generously – responded to a plea for the sum of \$11.65 each.

In fact, the total contributions received were sufficient to allow for the conservation of a late-19th-century Eastlake-style gilt frame from the FRHS collection that is an ideal aesthetic match for the painting. This work was also undertaken at Williamstown, at a cost of \$3,246. Treatment included cleaning the gilded surfaces, remediation of an old repair, casting and replacing a missing bead molding section, consolidation/repairs to cracked or missing gesso, and refitting the rebate to receive the painting.

The FRHS is indebted to the donors in the *Conservators' Circle—2019*; their support of conservation made the preservation of this important work possible.

Participation makes a statement. It says that you are committed to preserving culturally important artifacts in the FRHS collections for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you!

CONSERVATORS' CIRCLE — 2019

CAROLINE RESTORATION FUND DONORS

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“The painting as received presented a monumental challenge in cosmetics and structure to return this engaging image to an exhibitable state. The treatment was slow and painstaking but upon completion it was so satisfying. A major rabbit was just pulled out of the hat!!!”

**Thomas J. Branchick
Director
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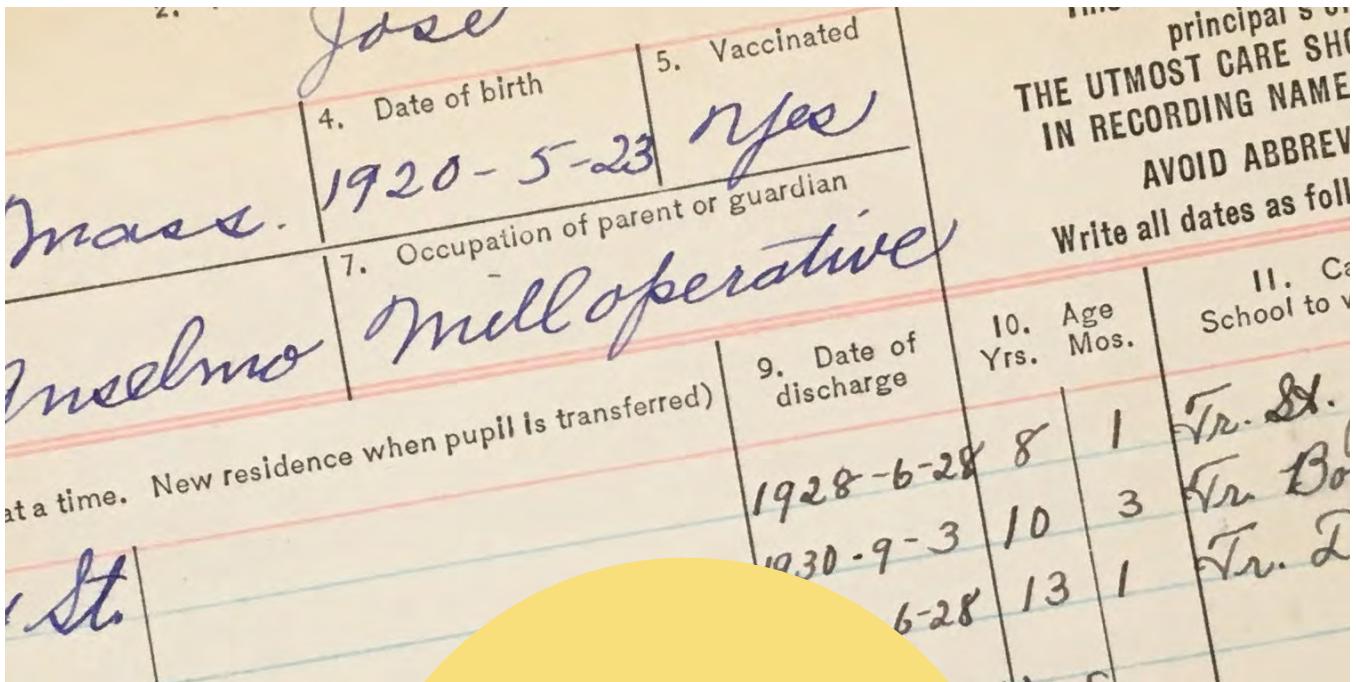
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BUILDING A BIOGRAPHICAL DATABASE

The FRHS archive houses thousands of bound volumes and several hundred thousand manuscripts, either individual examples or fonds – that is, a group of documents of the same origin pertaining to the same subject – all relating to various aspects of Fall River history. Dating from the 17th to the mid-20th century, this collection represents the most significant assemblage of primary source material concerning Fall River and its multicultural people.

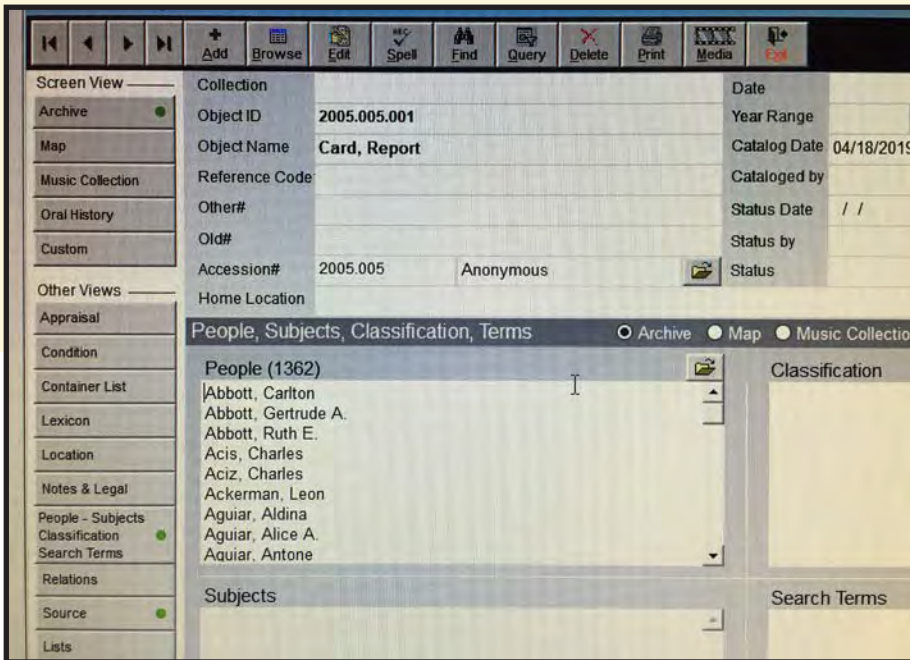
The subjects are diverse: *Business*, of which there are ledgers, accounts, and manuscripts; *Civic*, with records of nearly every city department; *Church*, documenting many faiths; and *Clubs and Societies*, organized or private, and of every description. In addition, there are myriad diaries, journals, and personal papers pertaining to individuals or families.

Each of these records contains given names – single or extensive lists – handwritten in flowing script

that in many cases may be the only extant evidence of that individual's life in Fall River, the only record of the part they once played in the day-to-day life of the city. As such, it is imperative that the FRHS preserve, catalogue, and transcribe this material, and make it fully available to the public.

But these names on paper are very difficult to utilize for research purposes – the vast majority of the records were not indexed when originally compiled, and sorting through them in search of a particular person is a by-chance affair, and extremely labor intensive.

But it can be done: During FY2018-2019, the BBC visited the FRHS to film an episode of the genealogy-based television series *Who Do You Think You Are?* A researcher spent days combing through Troy Mills account books searching for any record of two generations of the O'Donnell ancestors of the multi-faceted British television personality, businesswoman, and music promoter, Sharon Osborne;



the family had immigrated to Fall River in the 1870s seeking a better life. Sadly, the O'Donnell family did not experience the American Dream.

The researcher found considerable documentation in the museum collections, prompting the BBC's visit to the FRHS to film Sharon Osbourne as she was shown material relating to her Fall River roots. Significantly, if not for the records in the FRHS collections, which provide the only tangible evidence of the O'Donnell's difficulties in The Spindle City, the poignant saga of Ms. Osbourne's ancestry would remain untold.

The information contained in these voluminous records – important primary source material – is, in fact, of limited use until it is made fully accessible. To accomplish this, it must be catalogued, with the individual names pertaining to each item entered into a searchable biographical database. Once complete, the information is transformed into a valuable historical record, of ready use to researchers, scholars, and genealogists.

For decades, material has been collected by the museum and archived, awaiting the day when the

tools were in place to begin the extensive process of fully cataloguing. Fortunately, during the past fiscal year, the FRHS began the process of building a biographical database, utilizing state-of-the-art software.

The museum software system used by the FRHS for collections management contains a *People Biography* field that allows for linking individual biographical records and contextual information for specific

items – artifacts, archival materials, photographs, publications, and the like.

For example: When cataloguing a Durfee Mills rent receipt book, the names of each tenant listed in the document is entered in a "People" field built into the object record, thus creating an associated *People Biography* record. The linked *People Biography* record contains preset fields that allow the cataloguer to record pertinent biographical information, add digitized photographs, and/or create customized fields when necessary. The benefits are transformative.

A HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO:

William H. O'Malley worked as a weaver in the Durfee Mills and rented housing from the company; when cataloguing that particular volume, his name was entered into the "People" field in the object record, automatically creating an associated *People Biography* record. Should an O'Malley descendant visit the FRHS conducting genealogical research and ask: "Does the FRHS have any material pertaining to William H. O'Malley, who worked in the Durfee Mills?" we would enter the name into the *People Biography* search bar and our answer would be: "Yes, we do."

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If not for the collections management system – and the time spent entering the associated names – the answer would have been: “No, there is nothing in the catalogued collection.”

Clearly, this is an extremely valuable tool, opening up a wealth of possibilities for the FRHS in archival collections management, thus allowing the museum to fulfill a fundamental role in making obscure records fully accessible to patrons.

Over the past months, several collections were fully catalogued, and associated *People Biography* records created, including: Durfee Mills employee insurance cards, 1919-1925; Troy Mills payroll receipts, 1870s; and Fall River public school Report/Enrollment Cards, early- to mid-20th century. As of this writing, 12,648 individual associated biographical records have been created.

The collection currently in the process of cataloguing – a second, vast file of Fall River public school Report/Enrollment Cards, early- to mid-20th century – contains information pertaining to approximately 48,000 individuals.

This represents a microscopic fraction of the millions of individuals that are in some manner represented in the FRHS holdings. A room full of clerical workers – if such a thing existed at the FRHS – would have many years of work ahead of them.

Encouragingly, the process has begun.



Florence Cook Brigham in the 1920s.

Established in honor of the FRHS's beloved third curator and noted Fall River historian Florence Cook Brigham (1899-2000), this award is presented annually to individuals who are members of the FRHS. Nominees are selected based on significant contributions to the museum or the greater Fall River community through, or in areas of, historic preservation, the arts, published works, and/or volunteerism.

Candidates are selected by a committee comprised of FRHS directors and members, and are recognized at an awards ceremony held during the Florence Cook Brigham Annual Fundraising Dinner.

The affair is the FRHS's premier fundraising event.

2018 FLORENCE COOK BRIGHAM

Catherine M. Kitchen

A long-time member of the FRHS, Catherine M. Kitchen is recognized for having given countless volunteer hours to the organization and provided outstanding service in various capacities for several decades.

Born, raised, and educated in Fall River, Cathy attended Bridgewater State College, where she majored in English literature, earning teaching certificates in secondary English and history. She later did graduate work in early childhood education.

After graduating from Bridgewater, Cathy married Robert Kitchen. Two years later, she took a ten-year hiatus from teaching to work on her three greatest achievements – Vicki, Rob, and Jonathan.

Cathy was drawn out of retirement by a need for preschool education for the deaf and hard of hearing in Southeastern Massachusetts. Teaming up with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Cathy established and taught in a preschool for hearing impaired children in Southeastern Massachusetts. Cathy then resumed her career in the curriculum department of the Fall River schools. After three years, she returned to her initial training as an English teacher at B.M.C. Durfee High School, where she remained for twenty-five years.

In her retirement, Cathy enjoys spending time with her four grandchildren, traveling the world, volunteering at a church soup kitchen, and her work at the FRHS.



Alfred J. Lima

Alfred J. Lima, a longtime FRHS member, is recognized for his work with numerous community organizations and his tireless efforts in historical research and publications, preservation, and conservation of the natural environment.

A Fall River native, Al's professional work includes forty-three years as a city planner and consultant for towns such as Concord, Massachusetts, and cities such as New Bedford.



Educated at UMASS Amherst earning a degree in Landscape Architecture, Al also holds graduate degrees from the University of Pennsylvania in City Planning and from Harvard University in Education.

Al was the leader of the city-wide campaign to pass the Community Preservation Act in Fall River; as a result, more than \$1 million in annual income is now available for the restoration of historic properties, and the preservation of recreational and open space in the city.

Among his environmental accomplishments was a leadership role in the creation of the Southeastern Massachusetts Bio-reserve, a 15,000-acre preserve within the City of Fall River. He played a key role in the Quequechan River Rail Trail and was involved in the creation of Highland Park and the renovation of Fr. Travassos Park.

A noted historian, he has written three books: *A River and Its City: The Influence of the Quequechan River on the Development of Fall River, Massachusetts*; *America's Voices: An Oral History of Fall River, Massachusetts from 1900 to 1950*; and *Preserving Community Character: A Citizen's Guide to Saving Place and Halting Urban Sprawl*.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Robert Kitchen

Robert Kitchen, a long-time member of the FRHS, is being recognized for his exceptional work in promoting the history of Fall River and its multicultural people through organizing and presenting educational lectures and Online exhibits, as well as for the countless hours Bob had volunteered to the FRHS over many years.

Bob was born and educated in Fall River. While in his junior year at B.M.C. Durfee High School, Bob joined the Coast Guard Reserve and, upon graduating in 1956, reported for two years active duty. He attained the rank of Quartermaster 3rd Class and was discharged in 1958, but remained in the Coast Guard Reserve, retiring in 1979 with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Bob holds a bachelor's degree in Earth Science and a master's degree in Education with a concentration in Science.

Bob spent all thirty-seven years of his professional career in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, School Department, teaching Earth Science and Oceanography. He served as Science Department chairman for twenty-eight years. Bob was inducted into the Rhode Island Science Teacher's Hall of Fame in 2000. Following his retirement, he worked for a tour operator in Newport, conducting bus tours for the cruise ships passengers, holding that job for sixteen years.

Bob's volunteer career at the FRHS started around 1990 and he currently serves on the board of directors.



BALANCE SHEET

FYE APRIL 30, 2019

ASSETS

Cash	\$42,662
Receivables	1,737
Inventory	113,461
Prepaid Expenses	0
Investments	368,590
Property and Equipment, Net	381,845
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust*	<u>281,976</u>

Total Assets **\$1,190,271**

*Restricted to 1/3 of income

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$2,567
Accrued Payroll	0
Line of Credit	249,653
Tenant Security Deposit	<u>750</u>

Total Liabilities **\$252,970**

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$334,195
Permanently Restricted	<u>603,106</u>

Total Net Assets **\$937,301**

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$1,190,271**

OPERATING STATEMENT

FYE APRIL 30, 2019

OPERATING INCOME

Contributions (restricted, temporarily restricted, and unrestricted)	\$203,631
Dues	24,923
Admissions	9,835
Sales to Public (less cost of goods sold)	47,134
Investment Income	12,559
Investment Return	23,822
Other Income	<u>1,136</u>

Total Support/Revenue **\$323,040**

OPERATING EXPENSES

Gross Payroll	\$159,621
Payroll Taxes	11,046
Advertising	15,120
Office Expenses	31,777
Occupancy	61,058
Interest Expense	12,120
Professional Fees	8,978
Depreciation/Amortization	25,367
Collection Items Purchased	18,824
All Other Expenses	<u>21,862</u>

Total Expenses **\$365,773**

Revenue Less Expenses	-\$42,733
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	967,470
Net Unrealized Gains on Investments	2,466
Change in Fair Value of Perpetual Trust	<u>10,098</u>

Net Assets, End of Year **\$937,301**

the fall river historical society

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The FRHS is the central repository for material pertaining to the history of the city and is an important historical and cultural resource for scholars, museums, and the local community. Founded in 1921, the museum has been actively acquiring objects and archival material and has amassed a vast collection in diverse categories, indicative of the multicultural heritage of the people of Fall River. The institution is dedicated to preserving these artifacts and sharing them with the public via exhibition, publication, and research. In addition, the FRHS is a leading provider of innovative cultural programming for the community.

The museum is housed in the finest preserved French Second Empire mansion in the city; the structure is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building features magnificent period interiors and beautiful grounds with Victorian gardens that provide a memorable venue for outdoor functions. Our award-winning exhibits include the world's largest collection of artifacts pertaining to the life and trial of Lizzie A. Borden, and the FRHS curators are recognized as leading Borden case authorities. Other distinctions include: *The Charlton Library of Fall River History*, which houses an extensive library and archival collection dating from the 17th to the 20th century; a first-rate Museum Shop; and our signature event, *Deck the Halls!* an annual Holiday Open House.

451 Rock Street
Fall River, Massachusetts 02720
508-679-1071
www.fallriverhistorical.org



"Wonderful tour today. Had been meaning to visit for years and am so pleased we finally took the time. Gorgeous building, immaculately maintained, and the tour was incredibly interesting. Hidden gem in the city of Fall River."

Robert Brunelle
Fairhaven, Massachusetts



"Thank you for your hospitality on my recent visit to the Fall River Historical Society filming with the BBC for *Who Do You Think You Are?* ... the museum is lovely. The Troy Mill records were an integral part of Sharon Osborne's story, and are a gem for historians. They have a fabulous home with your historical society."

Maura Doherty, Ph.D.
Zurich, Switzerland



"The museum is magnificent and beautifully preserved – just as good, if not better, than many of the houses in the National Trust. Absolutely lovely!"

Margaret
A Visitor from England



"Never expected what we got upon entering this place. The history of this town is simply amazing. The preserved items dated eons ago were a joy to look at. Our tour guide knew everything, she was so knowledgeable. Go if you have a chance."

Walter Phillips
Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania