Dedham Historical Society & Museum
March-April 2019 Newsletter

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HOURS
Museum
Tuesday – Friday
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Archives/Library
Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Schedule an appointment
Library@DedhamHistorical.org

New Saturday Hours
Museum & Archives
2nd & 4th Saturday
11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Contact
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781.326.1385
Society@DedhamHistorical.org

We ve made donating to DSHM easier with Paypal. Please visit our website to contribute. Thank You!
www.DedhamHistorical.org

DHSMPurchases Rare 17th-Century Carved Chest

Executive director Johanna McBrien traveled to New York in January with a goal of acquiring a locally-made chest, circa 1639-1670, at auction. Her bid was successful and the chest now resides at the Society.

The chest is attributed to John Thurston (1607-1685), a carpenter/joiner from Suffolk, England. It is now shown with a carved chest by Thurston’s apprentice, John Houghton (1624-1684), that the Society shares with The Fairbanks House, as well as with two Great Chairs associated with both craftsmen. One of these, the Metcalf Chair, is the oldest dated piece of furniture in the country. McBrien said of the acquisition, “The Society now has the extraordinary opportunity to showcase related forms made by a master and apprentice working in both Dedham and Medfield; it’s an educator’s dream.”

Visit the Society to see this important group of furniture and learn about Thurston’s and Houghton’s connections with Dedham’s first school building, first teacher, and the Fairbanks family.

The DHSMPurchase has drawn national coverage in arts publications. Please see the following page for a list of contributors who made the chest’s purchase possible. We are most appreciative of their support.
Final List of 2018 Annual Appeal Gifts

Thank You!

Our sincere appreciation to all who contributed to DHSM’s 2018 Annual Appeal and helped us in our efforts to meet our 2018 financial obligations.

**SUPPORTER ($250-$499)**
- Ann & Bob Hunnewell
- Bruce & Laurie Rabe
- Mark & Carlota Taylor

**DONOR ($100-$249)**
- H. Dwight Damon
- Mr. & Mrs. Arthur W. Gregory III
- Darcy Lane
- Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Moorhead

**Friend ($10-$99)**
- Mary Louise Bell
- Isa Schaff
- Rev. Elizabeth B. Stevens

*During the past year, additional generous contributions were made by individuals and organizations, for which we are most grateful. We rely on you.*

Thank you also to David G. Newsom for his generous annual contribution to support DHSM’s lecture series in memory of his late wife, Carol L. Newsom.

**We Are Most Appreciative to The Following Generous Supporters Who Made the Purchase of The John Thurston Chest Possible**

Thank you to the Joan Pearson Watkins Revocable Trust for the seed funds for this acquisition. Additionally, we thank the following donors for their generosity:

- Anonymous
- Patricia and Samuel McCullough
- Bob & Becky Alexander
- Cheryl O’Malley
- Daniel P. Brown
- Elizabeth & Robert Owens
- Lawrence C. Caldwell
- Nancy Kollish & Jeffrey Pressman
- Ann Chahbandour & Jay Robert Stiefel
- Dennis Radulski
- Lucy and Mike Danziger
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- and Eileen M. Smiles
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- Dennis Radulski
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- David A. Schorsch
- Raymond C. Egan
- and Eileen M. Smiles

Thank you to Jonathan Leo Fairbanks for providing the impetus to acquire the chest. We would also like to recognize Scott Cousins Art Handling for the chest’s safe delivery.
Upcoming Events

March Lecture
*The Fashion and History of Shoes*
Thursday, March 21, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Dedham Historical Society & Museum
Shoes are storytellers—through their materials, style, function, use, and owners. Join Dr. Kimberly Alexander as she explores history through footwear. DHSM will concurrently open a mini exhibit showcasing shoes from the Society’s collection, ranging from red brocade wedding slippers from 1747 to high-heel pumps with silver bead trim from the 1920s, children’s shoes and work shoes.

April Annual Meeting
The Society invites you to attend our Annual Meeting, followed by:
**The Ben Fisher Memorial Lecture**
*The First Settlers of Dedham: The Region’s Indigenous Peoples*
Thursday, April 18, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Before English settlers arrived, the land that became Dedham was home to several Native American tribes. Scholar Gail Coughlin will discuss who stewarded and lived on the land in the 17th century and earlier. Coughlin is writing a book on the Indigenous histories of Dedham and surrounding communities.

Guests enjoyed the Winter Wine Event held at DHSM in January

Save the date for next year’s Wine Event on Friday, February 7, 2020!

**Save the Date for our Annual Soirée!**
Saturday, May 18th, 2019
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Private residence: 194 Village Avenue
Invitations for members to be mailed in April

**Membership Update:** We are in the process of updating our membership database. We will no longer renew all memberships in January. Your membership will be renewed based on the month you joined. Thank you for your patience.
Exhibit Celebrating American Presidents — Through March 2019

Norfolk County, known as the “County of Presidents,” is the birthplace of four U.S. Presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John F. Kennedy, and George H. W. Bush. Signatures or birth certificates of these presidents, as well as other presidential signatures, including George Washington’s, are currently on display at DHSM. This exhibit is in collaboration with the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds and is on view during regular museum hours. Call 781.326.1385 for details or visit www.DedhamHistorical.org.

Signature of George Washington on a document nominating Albion Cox to the U.S. Mint, April 4, 1794.

From Archivist Rebecca Carpenter: A New Finding Aid Initiative

The DHSM holds a large collection of family papers, ranging from personal diaries, wills, and land deeds, to letters, business ledgers, and school notebooks, with material extending back to the 1630s. Much of the archival holdings are unknown to genealogists, and researchers — which is why we’re creating finding aids. The aids will be prepared for each family collection in the archives and will be posted on the Society’s website.

What is a finding aid? A finding aid provides a detailed description of materials explaining the scope of a collection, where to find the collection within the archives, a general narrative of the family that is covered, a listing of people mentioned in the materials, as well as a list of the archival boxes and the types of materials that can be found within. The finding aids will also cross-reference with other collections and family names.

We will be posting the first finding aid this month, with more to follow. These finding aids will initially focus on the largest of our family holdings. As this project will be ongoing, anyone who wishes to volunteer and assist in this endeavor is encouraged to contact me at library@dedhamhistorical.org.