

## The Nashua Historical Society

Preserving the Past for the Future

Issue No. 3 Dec 2025 www.nashuahistoricalsociety.org



It's been a lively year at the Nashua Historical Society, filled with programs that brought history to life in creative and meaningful ways. A dozen members enjoyed an exclusive tour of the Spalding House in Lowell, while reenactors helped guests step back in time during our Old Souls of the Old South Cemetery Tour. Creative crafters took part in a hands-on Mystery Quilt class led by Gail Pinet, pictured assisting Sue Smith. Young visitors explored our new Jr. History Detectives Discovery Boxes, and the Little Red Tea Party even featured a friendly wolf, played by Mary Kirkwood. Presenter Mary Bingham captivated the audience -along with a young admirer-during her program My Ancestor, the Accused.

## **Collection Committee Annual Report 2024 - 2025**

A special thank you goes out to The Nashua Historical Society staff and volunteers for the significant progress on collection projects that were accomplished during this past year. We were fortunate to have achieved all that has occurred.

| Total # Records in Past Perfect 51,069 |        | Additional |
|--|--------|------------|
| Objects                                | 51,069 | 285        |
| Photographs                            | 27,405 | 997        |
| Archives                               | 8,748  | 372        |
| Library                                | 1,000  | 19         |
| Accession                              | 4,854  | 65         |
| Contacts                               | 2,930  | 75         |

Items in Container List 7,633 138

Individual Contributions to the Collection:

**Chris Allan** has learned how to catalogue using the Past Perfect Software. She has catalogued photographs on various Nashua Company's and Nashua residents.

Barbara Bankeroff fulfilled the management of the Nashua Historical Society's software, Past Perfect. Barbara has trained new Past Perfect users and she has been the computer support person to all of the Past Perfect staff. Barbara has worked on many photograph Research Requests. Barbara completed 133 catalog records of which mostly were photographs and did include other eclectic items and documents.

Mathew Bull, an intern, has learned how to accession and catalogue using Past Perfect Software. He has cataloged 597 catalog records and has catalog 181 container list catalog records. Matt's dedication is truly impressive!

**Madeline Fluckinger** a Bennington College intern learned Past Perfect Software, and cataloged over eighty images within a multi-type photograph collection.

**Jeremy Frazier** has continued to interview World War II veterans and their family members for documentation and the creation of a documentary. Nineteen veterans were interviewed in the 2023-2024 year and two interviews occurred in the 2024-2025 year.

Janice Fronko, a textile conservator, continued to apply her expertise while providing guidance and hands-on-helpfulnesswith the Nashua Historical Society's extensive Textile Collection. She has assumed all of the accessioning, cataloging, storage and care needs for all of the incoming textile donations. Janice has completed 199 catalog records.

Matt, a client and Laura Welper, an employee of The Plus Company, organized and prepared for cataloging numerous business receipts from Frank Mooney's business receipts collection. Matt and Laura have completed 57 catalog records.

**Sarah Jauris**, a former Collection Technician, has participated in different collection projects. She has cataloged 56 collection items. She has been the primary creator, researcher and installer of World War II Exhibit, titled "World War II in Nashua, The Home Front and Beyond".

Paula Lochhead is a textile expert who has continued to provide her expertise, guidance and assistance to the Historical Society's textile collection. She researched specific textiles within the Historical Society collection, created a textile lecture and presented this lecture, in coordination with an exhibit that included some of the Nashua Historical Society textiles.

Beth McCarthy, Curator, provided support and guidance to all of the individuals who worked/volunteered on the following Committees: Collection, Exhibit, and Research and Records Committees. Current accessioning practices and past accessioning maintenance along with furthering the preservation of numerous aspects of the Historical Society's eclectic collections were the Curators area of focus along with the maintenance of all of the collection support files.

Marie Smith learned how to catalogue using Past Perfect Software. She cataloged Nashua Centennial Parade photographs which included parade floats on Main Street.

**Julie Sullivan** learned how to catalogue using Past Perfect Software. She catalogued images for include Nashua people, reunions, parades, the 1936 flood and a visit by President Carter.

#### **Donations and Acceptance**

**Archives:** Document/Stamp, New Hampshire Liquore Control Commission Store Stamp, personal papers and documents relating to Nashua Civil War soldier Joseph Lavoy, He served in the Civil War during November 18, 1861 through July 5, 1865.

**Books:** Forty-nine Bishop Guertin High School Yearbooks and Yearbook Supplements spanning 1968-2024.

**Paintings/Photographs:** 3 Greeley Park paintings by Nashua artist Ormonde Chester Clisham, former Abbot St. resident. Portrait of Nashua child Levy Custer Eaton c. 1910. Photo Fire at Nashua's Park Theatre. **Artifacts:** original exterior Nashua Union Station, 6 sterling butter knives by E.E. Cheney, Nashua.

Respectfully Submitted, Beth McCarthy, Curator, staff and collection volunteers

## Research Report 2024 - 2025

Research Requests (1584 – 1617) Total Requests: 34 Number of Requests 34 NH Requests 25 Nashua Requests 18 Genealogy Requests 8 Photograph Requests 15

Respectfully submitted, Ralph Sommese, Chair

## Visitors Report 2024 - 2025

Out of State Requests 9

Florence H. Speare Visitor Total: 788 up from last year's 644 The Abbot-Spalding House Visitor Total: 87 down from last year's total of 142

Off-site Event Visitor Total: 365 not including uncounted Volunteer and Sustainability Fairs

Total: 1,240

## **Annual Exhibit Report 2024 - 2025**

The Nashua Historical Society has had a successful and gratifying year with the Exhibit progress it has accomplished. Thank you to all of the staff and volunteers who diligently worked on these exhibit goals.

#### Florence Hyde Speare Memorial Museum:

Curated by Sarah Jauris, last spring a World War II in Nashua exhibit "The Home Front and Beyond" Exhibit opened on June 15, 2024. At the exhibit opening Sarah Jauris presented "Letters to Nashua Stories of World War II. This presentations research focused on letters beginning with in 1942, Clarence Whitney of Nashua, wrote to his friend, Margaret Beasom Swart.

#### The Frank B. Clancy Library Changing Exhibits:

Writing and Reading: an exhibit featuring historic writing artifacts, local authors and old books
A Representation of Animals Through History
Winter Time In Nashua
Little Red Riding Hood And Tea Time

#### **World War II Documentary:**

A documentary titled "At Home and Abroad" was created by Jeremy Frazier. Numerous World War II Veterans and their family members were interviewed which provided the local content for this documentary. It was shown numerous times at the Historical Society and at different places within the community.

#### **Abbot-Spalding House Museum:**

In support of this exhibit the Abbot-Spalding House reopened for its spring season with an exhibit that featured 1940s era artifacts, including gowns and uniforms, from the Nashua Historical Society's collection.

#### Nashua City Hall Exhibit Case Changes:

Nashua Mall History & Nashua's Humane Society

#### **Community Exhibit Booths:**

Nashua's Sustainability Fair & Volunteer Fair

Respectfully Submitted, Beth McCarthy, Curator, Sarah Jauris, former Collection Technician, Alice Fisher, Paula Lochhead, Janice Fronko, Barbara Bankeroff

## **Membership Report 2024-2025**

Adult 86

Family 40 (x2 for membership #)

Student 7

Life 57

Museums, Lib. & Comp 78

Total # Memberships 258 with 298 members Respectfully submitted,

Mary Foran, Administrative Asst. and Trish Klee and Beth McCarthy

## **Technology Annual Report 2024 - 2025**

The Society was awarded a grant of \$ 2,655.98 from the Saul O. Sidore Memorial Foundation for the purchase of 2 new computers and monitors. This equipment has been purchased and was installed by Barbara Bankeroff.

A business server was purchased so our network would run more efficiently. It was installed on our network by our network consultant. In addition, a backup drive and a Universal Power Supply (UPS) were added to the server.

Because four of the Society's existing computers were running slowly, they were upgraded with solid state drives and the RAM was increased from 8 gigabytes to 16 gigabytes. This work was done by our network consultant and these computers now run much faster. One of these upgraded computers has been added to the Library.

A water leak in the basement of the Abbott-Spalding House is directly over the electrical box and underneath that box are the internet and telephone equipment. As this leak most likely accounts for the sporadic internet outages the Society has been experiencing these past several months, this equipment will be replaced and moved to another location.

The museum software PastPerfect is used for processing artifacts and for membership. This database resides on the Server and is backed up several ways: online backup by IDrive, backup to a portable hard drive, and periodic backup to a flash drive. At this point, 12.0 gigabytes of PastPerfect data are backed up – an increase of 1.2 gigabytes since May 2024.

All files in the shared area on the Server are backed up online by IDrive and to a portable hard drive. At this point, 92.1 gigabytes of data in the shared area are backed up. The computer in the office is also on the backup schedule and has 24.6 gigabytes of data backed up.

PastPerfect records continue to be added to our online site. There are 159 records online including photographs from the Frank Ingalls Collection, Nashua Fires Collection, Wedding Attire Collection, Baby Clothes Collection, and photos of schools and bridges. These records can be accessed at nashuahistorical.pastperfectonline.com, and by using the link on both our Facebook page and our Web page. More records will be added over time.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Bankeroff, Technology Committee Chairperson (and quilter shown below)



## **Office Report 2024 - 2025**

With 43 events, over 5,000 volunteer hours, and close to 300 memberships, the Nashua Historical Society is busy.

Thank you to everyone who stops by the office area to lend a hand, ask a question, and check the schedule. Special thanks to Beth who is the guiding hand, to Dean who makes us smile, and Barbara who helps us weed through details. Also, special thanks to everyone who graciously stops by the office to say hello and to offer assistance in a variety of ways including: guiding the finances, designing activities and programs, making the gardens spiffy, suggesting a trivia question, decorating for the seasons, baking cookies, serving on a committee, volunteering to be a guide, folding t-shirts, overseeing a project on the property, creating QR codes, shredding old documents, running through a reenactment speech, looking up a research request, or helping repeatedly to put up and take down heavy tables and shuffle chairs. As office staff, and as fellow volunteers, are here to assist you, but your generous spirits and can-do attitudes make it a rewarding team effort.

Two newsletters and a variety of program cards were sent out this year. Thank you to the efficient mailing committee for preparing these items and the annual election materials according to US postal bulk mailing criteria.

Our Gift store sales took off this year, especially just before the holidays. BAE donated a glass case for the front hall which looks great filled with Nashua Historical Society items.

#### **Documents Retention and Shredding**

As a new committee, we met in August 2024 to review guidelines per those policies adopted at the Board of Directors meeting of The Nashua Historical Society in April 2024 and of the NH Nonprofit Center regarding oversight and retention time periods by category. Through FY 2025, the committee will have met nine times, and thank you to Mary Foran for providing support and appreciation for this new committee.

Always mindful of "permanent" categories, we were able to relegate to shredding a lot of older material prior to FY 2014. To aid us further, Jeannine Levesque compiled a working chart of FY dates, as well as documenting what has been shredded. Labelling and "Destroy After...." dates will be incorporated. Happily, space in file cabinets has already been filled with more recent material.

Work continues with meetings and free shredding opportunities in 2025. In addition to Jeannine, thanks go out to Mary Kirkwood for her help, as well as to some other occasional members.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Perez, Acting Chair, Documents Retention and Shredding

## Programs May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

The Nashua Historical Society's goal is to encourage the community to value the history of Nashua through a variety of experiences and, by example, to demonstrate our commitment to community outreach and education. Over 43 programs were offered to the public this year between May 1, 2024 and April 30, 2025, including the following:

May 1 - May 10, 2024 The Lucky Moose Casino selected the Nashua Historical Society to be their charitable recipient.

May 4, 2024 Notable Nashuans: Voices from the Past Cemetery Tour at Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, eighteen reenactors adorned in period attire told the stories of eighteen individuals interred in selected cemetery plots.

May 18, 2024 Nashua Garden Club Plant Sale, 8am - noon.

May 21, 2024 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was attended by Nashua Historical Society members, directors, and officers. The 2024 Edmond M. Keefe Scholarship was awarded to Caitlyn Mamos. Beth McCarthy's 30+ year tenure as NHS Curator, was recognized with a special cake presented by the Refreshments Committee on behalf of all Society members.

May 22, 2024 Volunteer Fair at the Nashua Public Library.

June 1, 2024 Celebration of Merrimack Schoolhouse

June 9, 2024 Sneak peek of At Home and Abroad: Nashua and WWII

June 11, 2024 The Strange Case of the Laconia: A WWII Story of Disaster, speaker Michael Tougias, supported by a grant from the NH Humanities Speakers to Go!,

June 14, 2024 Exhibit Opening World War II in Nashua: The Homefront and Beyond

June 15, 2024 Letters to Nashua: Stories of World War II by Sarah Jauris, 10 - 11am.- the letters of five Nashuans who served in WWII Abbot-Spalding Season Reopening – special display of WWII era uniforms and textiles display. 11am – 2pm.

June 22, 2024 Documentary Premiere of At Home and Abroad: Nashua and WWII with two showings at the Speare Museum.

June 29, 2024 Children of the Holocaust presentation by Ralph Sommese, 1 -2:30pm. Thank you for a moving program.

July 13, 2024 At Home and Abroad: Nashua and WWII 1pm. Special Exhibit continued at Abbot-Spalding House, 2:30 – 4:00pm

August 1, 2024 The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America Bus Tour with Paula Lochhead, 8am – noon; followed by tour at the Abbot-Spalding House. A great success!

August 17, 2024 Abbot-Spalding Open House and Florence Speare.

September 7, 2024 Notable Nashuans: Voices from the Past with a TWIST, 1-3pm. This second run of the UU Cemetery Tour was an open format with a half-dozen QR codes. 103 guests and t-shirt sales net: \$2,142. Thank you, Paula, for your leadership.

# We are continually reminded that our greatest strength is our community of volunteers and members. Thank you for helping us share, protect, and celebrate Nashua's history.



## **Volunteers Report 2024 - 2025**

The Nashua Historical Society has been a hive of activity this past year. Our sixty-six (66) volunteers ranging in age from fourteen (14) to eighty (80) + years have worked on our board of Officers and Directors, used many talents on our grounds and buildings, worked diligently within our collections, docents for our Abbot House openings, keeping our finances sound, helping with refreshments and play acting at local cemeteries to bring the past alive again.

Total volunteer hours: five thousand, thirty-nine and one-half hours (5039.50)

Thank you all for your devotion. Respectfully submitted: Margaret Garneau, Volunteer Coordinator

## Refreshments Report 2024-2025

Hats off to all our chefs for providing several delicious goodies for our many program nights this past year.

Big thank you to volunteers Judy, Susanne, Marie, Barbara, Beth and Jean for once again helping Mary Coe Foran with many mailings to members.

Respectfully submitted: Margaret Garneau, Chair Members: Patti Graf, Judy Hemenway, Sarah Jauris, Mary Kirkwood, Susanne Smith, Lorna Stickney and Jean Wells



Organized by Mary Kirkwood and Ruth Parker, the Hudson Historical Society graciously welcomed Nashua Historical Society members to the Hills House for a special tour in July, 2025

Programs May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025 (Continued from page 4)

September 14, 2024 Tree Planting with Regenerative Roots with Andrew Morin, 8-10am.

September 20, 2024 Tree Planting with Kevin Fredette

September 24, 2024 Heroes and Homecomings: Norman Rockwell by Jane Oneail, supported by NH Humanities Speakers to Go!

October 2, 2024 Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Greater Nashua Class of 2024-25 visit to the Nashua Historical Society. October 12, 2024 Abbot-Spalding Open House

October 23, 2024 What are You Wearing? Dressing from the skin to the skirt in 1830 by Paula Lochhead at The Huntington.

October 26, 2024 Historical Societies Roundtable (2nd annual event), 8:45am – 3pm. This year 18 historical societies/libraries/humanities organizations were represented by 41 attendees.

October 29, 2024 What are you Wearing? Dressing from the skin to the skirt in 1830, presented by Paula Lochhead,

November 2, 2024 Write at the Museum included a display.

November 15, 2024 Nashua Public Library Fieldtrip to NHS

November 19, 2024 At Home and Abroad: Nashua and WWII







The chimney repairs (2025) on the Abbot-Spalding House required the use of a crane.

## Property and Grounds 2024 - 2025

#### The Florence Hyde Speare Memorial Museum

The Speare Museum was built in the 1970's and as we all know as everything ages and maintenance becomes increasingly important.

This past year's area of focus was on planning for the installation of an exterior sprinkler system underneath the newly built roofs over the handicap roof and shed roof over all of the HVAC units. Plans for additional building improvements as always were discussed which included the possibility of some brick re-pointing or waterproofing as protection from the elements.

John L. Carter Sprinkler Company replaced a large section of corroded pipe which was located inside textile collection storage room of the Speare Museum.

As needed repairs were completed which included a new electrical element for one of the hot water heater was diagnosed and completed. Repairs to the humidity system for the Museum's furnace occurred, which prevented flooding. We added additional security camera coverage to the Speare Museum.

Seasonal flowers were added to many of the surrounding trees on the property and a new flower garden was planted in the back portion of the Historical Society's parking lot. Thank you to volunteer Susan Lavoice. Four apple trees were planted on the side lawn of Crescent Street through the guidance and the generosity of Nashua's Regenerative Roots. We anticipate that these tree's will soon be providing us with many apples. City of Nashua's Streets Department representatives dug the holes and provided mulch for these new apple trees.

Gate City Tree Services trimmed all of the trees on the Florence Museum's grounds and also donated mulch.

#### The Abbot-Spalding House Museum

The Historical Society's two hundred year plus Museum, experienced the replacement of numerous portions of rotten wood, this included many widow sills, the wooden areas surrounding the apartments Abbot Street side entrance and significant portions of wood around the front door entrance of the Museum located on Nashville Street.

Much needed fence repairs and wood replacement was completed by Roland Fisher. Roland Fisher installed a new garage keypad.

Emphasis was placed on understanding the rotten wood needs of the Abbot-Spalding House. Estimates were obtained as keeping the house museum in good condition is an ongoing effort.

Estimates were acquired to determine the water leaks source surrounding one of the chimneys of the Abbot-Spalding House. Admiralty Chimney was the company chosen to do the repair work needed on all of the Museum's chimneys. This chimney work has been scheduled for this upcoming summer. The ceilings of the two bedrooms which received water damage from this chimney leak will be replastered.

A home inspection of the Abbot-Spalding House was completed in late March by Tri-State Home Inspections from Bedford/Goffstown. This inspection was undertaken to assist with providing a guiding path as to what and how to prioritize the maintenance and repairs of the Museum. Work on a portion of the plumbing needs highlighted in this report has been undertaken and completed.

The Board of Directors formed a Historic Preservation Committee for the House Museum. This committee's goal is to understand, plan and oversee the preservation work of the Abbot-Spalding House.

The Nashua Garden Club provided the support and maintenance of a backside garden and the front garden of the Abbot-Spalding House.

Gate City Tree trimmed all of the trees on the grounds of the Abbot-Spalding House. This company donated a birch tree and delivered both the birch tree and a Historical Society purchased sugar maple tree. Both were planted in the backyard of the Abbot-Spalding House. City of Nashua Streets department representatives dug holes, supported the completion of the planting of both the new trees

Thank you to Bob and Margaret Garneau for the holiday decorations. The Abbot-Spalding holiday lights remained up longer this year in memory of Bob Garneau, Thank You Jeremy Frazier for assisting with packing up the holiday lights.

The Society's lawncare services were continued with St. Laurent for three-season lawn care. They coordinate with the company providing fertilization, Southern NH Lawn Care.

#### **Education Committee 2024 - 2025**

The Education Committee, although small in numbers has been mighty this year in efforts particularly in developing museum appeal for children.

Let's start with the new Scavenger Hunt for the Abbot-Spalding House. This latest version highlights the many eagle motifs that you may find throughout the home. It's a simple nod to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary that fits our museum so well. Progress was made on our Walking Tour of the Nashua Historical Society's Neighborhood download. We have the pictures ready to go thanks to Pam Anderson. We will be continuing this project this year.

The Committee was interested in the possibility of a Story Stroll (Walk) featuring children's books on our property. We looked into the project done at Beaver Brook and the cost. Paula Lochhead is working on a collaborative path forward.

On March 2, 2025, the Education Committee hosted The Little Red Tea. We welcomed 42 guests this year to our deep, dark woods for tea and merriment! Even a visiting wolf enjoyed the afternoon! Our presentations included a talk on the significance of the storybook "Little Red Riding Hood "to southern NH, guest questions on the history of the color red and a STEM experiment for the color of tea. This event's final total was over \$700 and 5 new memberships!

We are pleased to share with you that items are being selected for our New Discovery Boxes. These boxes for our young NHS History Detectives were donated as an Eagle Scout Project by Zachary Campbell of Troup 272 this spring. We have a few of the seven boxes made, here for your inspection tonight! We are still working on the right combinations of activities, but the goal is to have the History Detectives visiting us soon for hands-on adventure!

Programs May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025 (Cont. from page 5) December 3 & 6, 2024 At Home and Abroad: Nashua and WWII Documentary presented by Jeremy Frazier and Beth McCarthy to Charlie Ziniti's NHSN history classes.

February 11, 2025 Redcoats and Rebels, guest speaker Mary Adams, supported by a grant from the NH Humanities Speakers to Go!, 7:00 – 8:30pm. This timely program focused on New Hampshire's role in the American Revolution.

March 2, 2025, The Little Red Tea Party: The Timeless Tale Comes to Life. 43 ticketed guests were presented delicious tea options, scones, petite tea sandwiches, and sweet treats.

March 13, 20, 27, 2025 English Paper Piecing Class taught by Gail Pinet. She's a talented quilter and longtime member.

April 2, 2025 Beginner's Guide to Cemetery Sleuthing, guest speaker Erin Moulton, supported by a grant from the NH Humanities Speakers to Go!, 7:00 – 8:30pm. Refreshments.

The Committee was asked to support with ideas, people and organizing the Society's presents at two Nashua Fairs. The first, was the 2025 Nashua Sustainability Fair that took place on Saturday, April 26th. We presented a quilting project to show how fabric can be reused to support waste reduction and recycling.

The second event is coming up this week, the Greater Nashua Volunteer Fair on Thursday, May 22. This helps us to stir volunteer help and even membership at the Society.

Please watch for more information on this history adventures. The Keefe Scholarship application was put on line in the beginning of February. This form was revised this year. All high school seniors who reside in Nashua and have an interest in history were encourage to apply before April 28th. Tonight, I have the pleasure of announcing the winner of the Nashua Historical Society's Edmund M. Keefe Memorial Scholarship made possible by the bequest of Pat Thurber in honor of our Society's President, Dean Shalhoup specifically to the scholarship fund. Her thoughtfulness to the Society is most appreciated.

Zachary Campbell contacted the Society in hopes of finding a connection that would lead to his Eagle Project last year. In Zach's words, "I contacted the Nashua Historical Society with the hope of helping my community in a way that mattered to me personally. I have been deeply invested in learning about history. We worked together to develop the Society's vision of multiple hands-on areas for children that met the integrity of our museums. He knew it was a project that necessitated quality and attention to detail. Zach brought in building experts, lead a young labor force, and approached the greater Nashua community to achieve his goal. At final count, seven Discovery Boxes for the combined use in the Florence Speare Museum and the Abbot Spalding House were completed successfully. Zach's energy and commitment will allow the Society to excite our youngest visitors. Zachary, I'm pleased to formally announce that you are the winner of this year's Edmond M. Keefe Memorial Scholarship. Submitted by the NHS Education Committee / Mary Kirkwood



Front: President Dean Shalhoup, Curator Beth McCarthy and Education Chair Mary Kirkwood award the 2025 Edmund M. Keefe Memorial Scholarship to winner Eagle Scout Zachary Campbell shown with his family.

## **Nashua Historical Society**

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#### Officers 2025- 2026

President: Dean Shalhoup

1st Vice President: Mark Kirkwood

Secretary: Matthew Bull

Assistant Secretary: Paula Lochhead

Treasurer: Gregory Hackney
Acting Treasurer: Suzanne Smith

#### **Directors 2025 - 2026**

Pam Anderson Hailee Attorri
Barbara Bamlerpff Stephen Boilard
Jeremy Frazier Alicia Gregg
Matty Gregg Roger Lochhead

Peter Vincent

#### **Staff**

Beth McCarthy, Curator

Mary Foran, Administrative Assistant

## Upcoming Program: December 9, 2025 7 pm, Doors Open 6:30 p.m.

