

# Dublin Historical Society

DUBLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03444 •

FOUNDED 1920

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## *A Tribute to John W. Harris*

“HISTORY IS THE SHIP CARRYING LIVING MEMORY INTO THE FUTURE.”

—Stephen Spender

*Those of you who attended our annual meeting in August know what a special occasion and great pleasure it was to pay tribute to John W. Harris for his extensive contributions in reviving our Society in 1985, in serving as President, Secretary, and Archivist during the past 28 years, and in building a very impressive Dublin Archives.*

Nicholas and Regina Silitch graciously hosted about sixty members who joined the Board of Trustees in presenting John with a commemorative chair from Princeton University, his alma mater, and a handsome framed plaque. He immediately took a seat in his chair with a wide grin on his face, knowing that the Archives will now have a complete set of four university chairs and finally one *not* from Harvard! Dick Hammond honored John by saying a few words and presenting him with a hand-carved sign he made for the Archives building featuring John's name in large type and the year it was built in 1996. Other speakers included past Presidents Paul Tuller and Russell Bastedo, and architectural historian and friend William Morgan,

who graciously pays tribute to John in this newsletter as does our new President and Archivist, Lisa Foote. Diana Burnham, who worked with

John as an intern for the Society, was unable to attend the meeting but wrote to thank him for his “amazing legacy and inspiration.”

It was a true pleasure for me to serve on the Board of Trustees with John for six years and an honor to serve as President with the good fortune of his guidance. As I described at our annual meeting, John's an experienced sailor who guided the Historical Society and Archives as he would have his own ship, hauling close to the wind, all ropes and gear in perfect order and always on course. For this reason, we chose the quote above by Stephen Spender to inscribe on his commemorative chair and framed plaque. No one has done more to carry Dublin's history into the future than John W. Harris.

—Henry James



John in his “Princeton” chair



Henry presenting the chair

John at work in the  
Dublin Archives



Will speaking at  
the Annual Meeting



## *Tribute to John Harris*

*William Morgan*

The first time I heard John Harris' magnificent basso voice was at a Monadnock Music concert at the Jaffrey Center Meetinghouse forty-some years ago. No, John was not singing. Rather, he was introduced to me by his Class of 1951 Princeton classmate Bill Bauhan. At the time, there was no way I could know what an important part of my professional life John would become—or that he would contribute so much to Dublin.

The Harrises were still farming in Litchfield County, Connecticut, then, but they were beginning to move this way. They did, of course, settle in Dublin and became a real force for conservation and preservation in the region. Like so many of us here who love Dublin, and like so many people who have truly effected change in New Hampshire's highest village, John Harris was from someplace else. (With the exception of Nancy Campbell, who I believe is the only person here who is a descendant of Dublin's original settlers—and we all know how much she has done!)

John and Betsey set about becoming Dubliners in a quiet and deliberate manner. Unlike outlanders who make a fuss at their first town meeting, the Harrises worked quietly and diligently to become members of the community, whether through the church, as poll watchers, or as blood drive workers. And the two of them have done a lot for Dublin, for the Monadnock region, and for New Hampshire.

John's special passion was the Dublin Historical Society. He and Bill Bauhan revived the society, and John then devoted decades to keeping it alive, expanding it, and securing its archives. When Dublin was embroiled in the Route 101 Bypass battle, history became the preservationists' most potent weapon. It was remarked by some state or federal official (John will remember who exactly) that Dublin was the most documented town in New Hampshire.

So if knowledge is power, then Dublin is well armed to face the future—thanks to John Harris. Setting about to preserve the record of this special place and for future generations is no mean achievement. We are in your debt.

## *From the President*

*Lisa Foote*

It is with great pleasure that I assume the role of President of the Dublin Historical Society. Our thanks go to Henry James for his leadership over the past five years, conducted with his signature dry wit.

I would like to add my voice to the fitting tribute to John Harris. He and Bill Bauhan were instrumental in revitalizing the DHS in 1985. In my view, John's efforts as an archivist will be his legacy.

By 1985 he had identified the need to organize town records, some of which he found spilling out of the open safe in the Dublin Town Hall. Others were mixed in with Dublin Community Church records. He offered to do the work, working in the cramped quarters over the Post Office bringing order to chaos—sorting and indexing and storing what he had found. Nancy Campbell soon joined him in his efforts and worked with him for 23 years as Assistant DHS Archivist.

John then tackled the Historical Society records, which he rescued from the attic of the old schoolhouse, now the DHS Museum. The papers were in deplorable condition after years of being damp, nibbled on, and faded by sunlight. He salvaged what he could, including more town records.

By 1988 he recognized the necessity of more storage space, and John began agitating for dedicated space that would be fireproof and climate controlled in which to store both the town's and DHS records. After eight years



John at the official opening of the Archives, 1996

of maneuvering choppy, political seas and several false starts, he and Dick Hammond shepherded the design and construction of the current archives building into a reality. The building was dedicated and opened to the public in September 1996. With the move into the space, John and Nancy began transferring the catalog and indexing information to the computer database we use to this day.

Being John's successor as DHS Archivist, I have first hand knowledge of what he and Nancy Campbell have accomplished. By my estimation when John started cataloging, the town records outnumbered the DHS records by a factor of 4 to 1. Both collections have grown over the last two decades. However, the DHS archives have quadrupled in size, primarily due to the donations of Dublin residents and Dublin organizations.

The collection of material related to current Dublin events and residents is ongoing as well, so that fifty years from now our present times will already be documented.

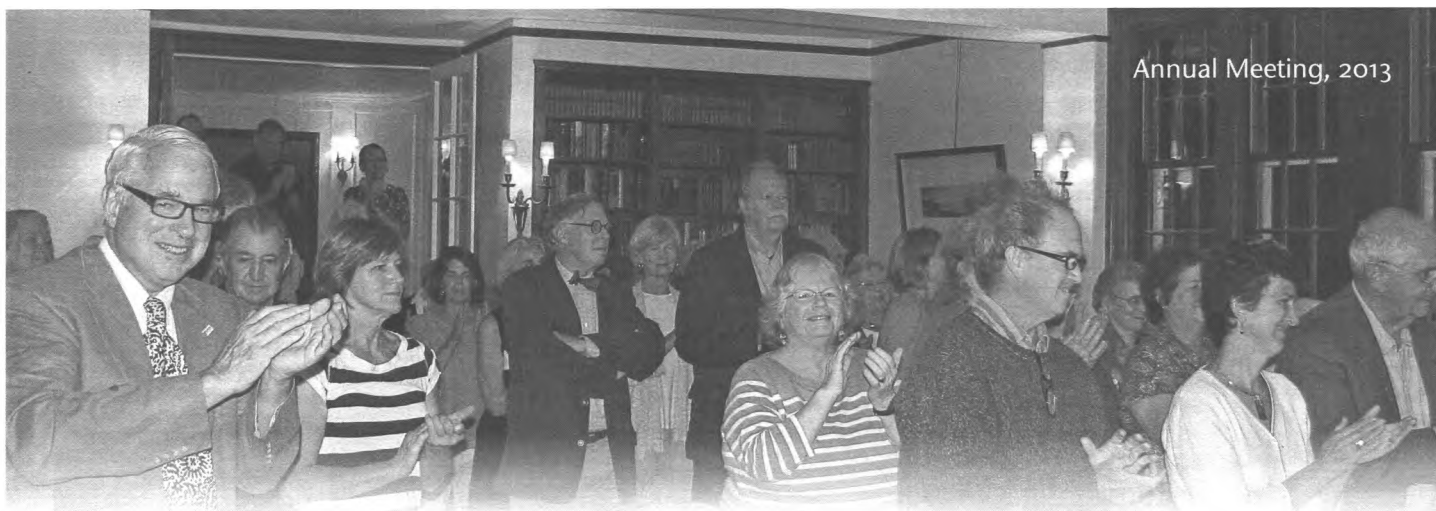


Nancy Campbell and John and above the Post Office



Archives adorned for the big day!





Annual Meeting, 2013

### ACCESSIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Our collections have been further enriched by material generously contributed by a myriad of individuals whom we would like to thank publicly for their gifts.

For the museum we received donations of souvenir china from Tom and Story Wright and Deborah Jewell Stewart, a horse's bog shoe constructed of wood and leather from John Harris, and two apothecary bottles filled with glycerin bottled by Foley, once of Dublin, from Alice and John McKenna.

For the archives Sharron Monaghan, Sally Shonk, and Hal Close have shared their photos of current events and places in town. Photographs have also been given by Will Morgan, Dick Meryman, Nancy Aldrich Reimer, Robert Weis, Zaiga Greenhalgh, Liz Meryman, Holly Alderman, Cathy Lamontagne, Margaret Gurney, Margot Close, Linda Van Wyk, Judy Knapp, Anne Clarkeson, and Augusta Petrone. Historic Harrisville Inc. gave us photos of the Dublin Electric Company and materials pertaining to the Chesham Grange. James Hadley and Ed Opphile gave us a collection of photos and extensive genealogies for the Perry, Frost, and Moore families. Lucy Shonk gave a collection of memorabilia, including photos and a collection of cards designed by Rebecca Malicheff.

Additions from local organizations included garden designs for the "Morelands" garden rooms from the Dublin Garden Club and more business records and photographs from the Dublin Community Preschool. Mary Anne Egan sent material from her time as innkeeper at French's Tavern. Beech Hill/ Dublin Lake Watershed Association donated their general institutional papers, and Thomas Atmer gave us papers related to the Monadnock Traffic Calming Foundation.

Peter Clement has been extremely generous in sharing the fruits of his research of the social history relating to the house Stonelea, as has Jason Halliwell in sharing info about his research into cellar holes in town. General John O. B. Sewall allowed us to scan family photos and memorabilia, and Rusty Bastedo donated Sewall family memorabilia as well as a copy of his book, *The Portrait Gallery: Governors and Early Leaders of NH*. Francis de Marneffe donated a DVD recording of the talk he gave at the Dublin Lake Club about his book *Last Boat from Bordeaux*. Iran Muhajir sent a copy of her book *The Mystery of God*. Two poems by Peter Tuttle were also added.

Edward Goodrich and Harry Lee contributed surveys and maps. Documents were given by Marcia McKenna, Dennis Monaghan, Bobbie de Marneffe, the Historical Society of Cheshire County, Dick Meryman, Will Morgan, Charles Pillsbury, E. Deane Turner, and Leisa Weld, who also shared photos with us. Henry James, Loring Catlin Jr., and Peter Clement gave DHS architectural drawings of Dublin houses.

Last but not least, John Harris contributed the cost of the conservation of the Thaddeus Mason account book pages.

If anyone has Dublin-related materials, please consider sharing it with DHS. If you are unsure, bring it to the archives to show us. We can scan photos, if they are mounted in scrapbooks or albums or if you wish to keep the originals.

***Please save the date!***  
Our Winter Potluck will be held on  
**February 7, 2014.**