

The Newetowne Chronicle

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Cambridge: A City with Seven Siblings

By Daphne Abeel

It's no surprise that Cambridge has sister city relationships with municipalities in other countries. What is remarkable is how many there are, and there's current interest in forming two more.

According to the Cambridge Peace Commission, Cambridge currently boasts seven official sister city relationships: Coimbra, Portugal; Gaeta, Italy; Tsukuba, Japan; San Jose las Flores, El Salvador; Galway, Ireland; Yerevan, Armenia; and Cienfuegos, Cuba

Two of them stand out for their current activity: those with Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, and San Jose las Flores, in a mountainous region of El Salvador. Both originated when American relationships with the countries were unsettled.



3









A collection of pins, gifts from the first delegation from Cambridge's sister city Yerevan. (Gavin Kleespies)

The Cambridge-Yerevan relationship, maintained by the Cambridge/Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA), was established in the last years of the Cold War with the approval and financial support of the U.S. State Department.

In the late 80s, there was a strong interest in forming a bond with a city behind the Iron Curtain. In 1986, a delegation of Cambridge residents headed by City Councillor Frank Duehay, traveled first to Moscow and then on to Yerevan.

"At the time," said Duehay, "there was not much we could do as individuals to show the Russians that there was another side to this country, not being represented by President Reagan, who called the Soviet Union 'the evil empire."

Duehay said that the initiative was stimulated by Jeb Brugman, then the head of the Cambridge Peace Commission. "There was definitely a political agenda behind this effort."

Like the Armenian tie, the relationship with Las Flores was formed in 1987 in the political context of a war funded by the United States. Chalatenango, the mountainous district in which it is located, was then the stronghold of the Popular Forces of Liberation (FPL) in their war against the government.

In 1988, Mayor Alice Wolf made the first official trip to Yerevan to work on developing an exchange program. Since the late 80s, there have been exchange trips by different groups of Armenian professionals; most recently, a group of social workers and students have also traveled to Yerevan.

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Looking Forward to an Exciting Year - by Gavin W. Kleespies



This past year was exciting and challenging. We reinterpreted our museum and are in the final stages of completing an updated publication on the history of our house. We held 18 events in 12 locations and partnered

with many other organizations in the city. We expanded our presence online with a blog, two tours, and a digital childhood project and joined media sites such as Facebook and flickr. Our collections also had an impressive year, with a number of large donations of material about Cambridge's social history. All of this happened in a economy that saw falls in both our donations and our endowment.

I hope 2010 will also be exciting; I know it will be challenging. The increased profile of the Society has brought donations of some fantastic collections, but we have

finite space and staff hours to provide access to them. In a short time, we will need to address this subject. The answer may be in digitizing collection materials and storing the originals offsite, or it may be in a physical expansion of our facilities, but both options are expensive. We also need to expand our membership and diversify our income. The current economic situation has demonstrated that the security of the organization depends on a larger membership and more sources of income.

I would like to invite our members to work with me to address these concerns. How do you think we should handle our issues of space and access? How do you think we should expand our membership? Do you know anyone who might enjoy being a member? If so, let me know. What other types of fundraisers do you think would be successful? I would love to hear what you think as we all address the challenges of the coming year.

Digital Frontiers - by Cynthia Brennan

With increasing speed, libraries and archives are digitizing their collections, both to preserve their material and allow increased public access to these digital facsimiles.

With the help of volunteer Richard Lingner, we have begun our first large digitization project. We are planning to digitize the CHS *Proceedings* to make them available online. These 44 volumes contain thousands of pages of text that include images, minutes of CHS meetings, poetry, and essays.

The text wll be scanned into a text-only file, then be coded into a format that can be presented on a website. Building an online framework to house the virtual vo- Richard Lingner



lumes is the next step in the process. This type of digitizing project is new to the CHS; happily, a vast network of libraries, museums, and historical societies have determined the most efficient workflow.

> the standards of data that should be used in describing the files, and how to display the text on a navigable and searchable website. We still have hours of scanning, coding, and website-building ahead of us.

> This undertaking will allow 100 years of impressive scholarship by the members of the CHS to be accessible online. This project, and others like it, will deliver the CHS and its collections to a world of researchers, sparking further interest in our organization and city.

Revisiting the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House - by Jinny Nathans

Now that 2009 is in the books, looking back at the activities and accomplishments of the Cambridge Historical Society is in order. It was truly a transitional year, with a new executive director, new assistant director, and a new president, all learning the ropes together. In addition, the project of refurbishing the interior of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House emerged from the proposal and planning phase and became a physical and logistical reality.

The successful reorganization of the objects in the HLN House is a result of the collaborative efforts of Gavin Kleespies, Cindy Brennan, and Mark Vassar, resident archivist. We are now able to show the entire interior as both a residence and a repository of Cambridge history from the American Revolution through the 20th century.

Our committed and conscientious staff worked with CHS officers and councilors throughout 2009, making decisions as the project moved along and unforeseen situations arose. As a result, we were able to create viewing windows for some of the oldest beams of the house. In addition, a very special opportunity arose, to perform dendrochronology tests on samples of wood from three areas of the house against a database on the ages of trees at Oxford University. While none of the information we learned definitively established the house's date of construction much was added to the already intricate and eventful narrative of its history. The creator of Murphy's Law, Arthur Bloch, has said that "every clarification brings new questions." He might well have been thinking of the HLN House of Tory Row.

Please come and see the new look at 159 Brattle.

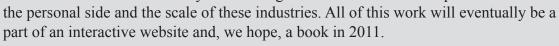
Cambridge's Industrial Past



William Burns

Cambridge was one of the first cities in America. By the 1830s, it was the home of several major industrial facilities, and by the middle of the 19th century, some of these

factories took up entire city blocks. Candy, nuts, soap, bricks, fire hoses, books, furniture, cameras, carriages, and cars were all made in Cambridge. A team of researchers is documenting this history. William Burns is conducting extensive research on these businesses; Laura Benedict is combing photo collections and documenting the current sites of these factories; Michael Kenney is searching for oral histories and maps that describe





Laura Benedict

Art in Cambridge



Annie Cheung

Annie Cheung has a project to document the history of art in Cambridge. The finished product will be an online interactive map featuring a sampling of the people and places that have helped establish Cambridge in the world of art. This map will touch on famous 19th-century painters, such as Washington Allston; the university art museums; the institutions that promote art in the city, like the

Cambridge Arts Council; and a sample of the galleries open today.

Cambridge's Culinary History

A love of fine dining and a fascination with local history is a perfect mixture for Jane Robertson, who is developing a website on the culinary history of Cambridge. It will feature restaurants, stores, and chefs from three periods in Cambridge. We hope the site will

also include your memories, photos, and ephemera from some of Cambridge's most loved restaurants. The site will be launched with a culinary event in the fall. If you have pictures or memories of restaurants in Cambridge, please let us know



Jane Robertson

The Cambridge Historical Society's Annual Report

Development Committee Rebekah Kaufman, Chair

As the new chair, I would like to thank Paula Paris for her help and mentorship over the years and through this transition. I also want to thank the committee members, Bob Crocker, Ellen Moot, Jinny Nathans, Karen Falb, Kathy Born, Eliot Klein, Larry Nathanson, Paula Paris, Roger Stacey, and Sue Poverman for their great work and humor at our early morning meetings.

Our 2009 spring fundraiser In 2009, we had 95 donors, for a total of \$16,405.

To compare: In 2008, we had 93 donors, for a total of \$18,600. We have maintained our base and your support during a very tough year. Thank you. Although the 2009 fundraiser raised less than the one in 2008, we are confident that 2010's fundraiser will turn our development efforts back in the right direction.

Our 2009 annual appeal In 2009, we had 95 respondents for a total of \$15,865.

To compare: The 2008 annual appeal brought in 118 respondents for a total of \$23,860.

In 2009, on average, each gift was smaller than 2008's efforts. We understand this was a challenging financial year and there were many places competing for your gifts, so we are especially grateful for your support. Please keep the Society a priority for 2010.

2009 membership In 2009, we had 320 members, whose dues totaled \$30,677. To compare: In 2008, we had 367

members, whose dues totaled \$35,260.

Our membership has decreased about 13% in the past year. The drop is consistent in all our membership levels. Although the total membership revenue has dropped year after year, the dollars raised per member has remained consistent from 2008 to 2009. Enlarging our membership is a key strategic initiative for CHS in 2010.

Please encourage your friends and neighbors to become involved in our organization.

Let's look to an exciting 2010. We are now pulling together our spring fundraiser. If all goes well, you'll stop the presses and book the date for this spell-"binding" event. I guarantee you are just the type for this gathering!

Facilities Committee

Charlie Allen, Chair

This past year has been my fifth and most exciting year as your Facilities chair. Each year at the Annual Meeting, I have said that, thanks to a Community Preservation Grant administered by Charles Sullivan and the Cambridge Historical Commission, we have been able to make great progress at the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House. And we have, thanks to two of those grants.

Over the last five years the roofs have been replaced or repaired. The rear chimney has been rebuilt and the balustrade across the front of the building has been carefully restored. Water now stays on the outside of the building, where it belongs.

Last year the house was completely rewired and is no longer so threatened by the danger of an electrical fire. This year we repaired the collateral damage from the rewiring project, stopping along the way to do an extensive paint analysis, which in turn led to some interesting openings and uncoverings before applying the finish coat of paint. The house is now painted in the colors of the Chandler era.

The whole process of redecorating the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House led us to a reinterpretation. We moved from being a house museum to a Cambridge museum, with its rooms depicting different aspects and times of Cambridge history.

We hope you like what we've done and where we're going. I certainly have been energized by the work.

If you went out to the garage now, you'd see two rows of 2-inch-thick slabs of honev locust wood from the tree that had to be taken down from our neighbor's yard. It may well have been planted by Joseph Lee shortly after the Revolutionary War and was over 200 years old. The center was hollow. A wonderful collaboration of the owners, the Loughlins, S & H Construction, the general contractor, and timely work by our seemingly tireless new executive director, Gavin Kleespies, led to major portions of the tree being milled into lumber that the owners will use in their house and we'll use for furniture at our house.

There's been a lot of good news. But you may have noticed that the shutters are off the front of the house. We didn't think they'd last another winter. By next year, I hope they'll be repaired and in place. The house is showing signs of needing some exterior painting. And then there's the Chandler-era plumbing. I'm not sure what my annual report will have to say next year. Clearly our work isn't done, but the grant money is.

I hope that with the energy and support of the staff, the council, and the membership, there will be plenty of good news next year too.

Publications Committee Michael Kenney, Editor

The Publications Committee, under its 2009 chair, Roger F. Stacey, produced three issues of the *Newetowne Chronicle*. Sales of *A City's Life and Times* have tapered off, but several local bookstores continue to stock it.

While the committee was not directly involved, a major undertaking in 2009 was the preparation of a publication on the rediscovery of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House, edited by Michael Kenney and Gavin Kleespies with the editorial assistance of Karen Davis and Luise Erdmann. It will be published in the spring of 2010.

The Cambridge Historical Society's Annual Report

The Treasurer and the Finance Committee

Andrew Leighton, Treasurer

In this economic environment, it is hard for this treasurer to maintain his balance between financial doom and gloom and optimism. The Cambridge Historical Society's investments had a year-end value of \$467,613, or up slightly for the year, but well below its high of \$637,585 two years ago. This is a small reserve for an organization with an expensive house to preserve and an ambitious program promoting the preservation and dissemination of Cambridge history.

Electrical upgrade

Over the last couple of years, the Society has taken advantage of Cambridge Community Preservation Act funds to upgrade the electrical system of the house. This grant supported two-thirds of the \$150,000 cost, leaving a \$50,000 match to be paid from Society funds. Fundraisers provided part of this match, but much was taken from the investment portfolio.

Year 2009 operations

Operations for 2009 showed a deficit of about \$35,000. Final payments on the electrical project match, unexpected maintenance needs, and lower annual giving are reflected in this result. On the other hand, investments increased by about \$40,000, thanks to an improving securities market. The net effect was a small surplus for the year of about \$5,000.

The size of our reserve funds is a real restraint on the budget and thus the activities we wish to undertake. The economy is an unknown as to how it will influence our investments, but perhaps more important, how it will affect the support from our membership. Enough on the doom and gloom!

Most of the deferred maintenance on the house has been accomplished. The Society has no debt obligations, has a new president and executive director, and has a dedicated membership. How could anyone not be optimistic!

Collections Committee

Heli Meltsner, Curator

This past year was tremendous for the Society's collections. The Hooper-Lee-Nichols House, the first and largest object in our collection, was the locus of an intensive restoration project and a major reinterpretation that has converted the building from a house museum to a museum of Cambridge history.

This involved an extensive electrical upgrade and a paint analysis of the public rooms. We examined hidden posts and beams to determine the materials used, the joining techniques, and the amount and type of their early decoration and uncovered historic wallpapers.

We also undertook a dendrochronology study to determine the age of the house's oldest structural members. Then we painted the public rooms, rearranged the furniture and objects, and mounted and labeled new exhibits.

The Society has been fortunate in receiving several large collections of the highest quality. Highlights include two that document rent control in Cambridge, the papers of the Small Property Owners Association (SPOA), donated by Denise Jillson, and the papers of the Eviction Free Zone and Simplex Steering Committee, donated by Bill Cavellini

Four photographic collections include 67 aerial pictures of 1947 Cambridge, donated by the Cambridge DPW; a picture of every building in East Cambridge, taken by MIT students, and 170 photographs, the result of our first scan drive, where we invited residents to share with us their old photos of the city and its people. Fifty-four photographs and memos from the Polaroid Corporation were donated by the heir of an early employee.

The New England Folk Music Archives deposited an important collection of historic materials. In addition, we received numerous other gifts, such as collections of employee newsletters, old newspapers, photographs, books,

posters, materials on city neighborhoods and families, and a baking bin from a local bakery.

The staff has worked hard to make the Society and archive more accessible via the Web, collaborating with the Cambridge Historical Commission and the Cambridge Public Library to design a website, cambridgearchives. org, and improving our own website, cambridgehistory.org, with 30 finding aids for our archives representing almost 1,000 pages. We are now linked to flickr, where one can view almost 200 historic photos.

Program Committee

Jinny Nathans, Acting Chair

Because of the refurbishment of the interior of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House through most of 2009, it was necessary to be creative in finding other sites for Historical Society programs.

We are most grateful to our friends and neighbors at the Longfellow House, Harvard University, the Cambridge Skating Club, Cambridge Masonic Hall, and Harvard Book Store for providing wonderful venues for programs. And I would also like to thank Denise Jillson and George Pereira for graciously opening up their home, the Stephen Stiles House, for the Dana Fellows event.

Despite our being unable to use the house for programs, the committee resolved to hold to a schedule of one program per month.

By collaborating with other cultural heritage organizations in Cambridge, such as the Cambridge African American Heritage Alliance, the Longfellow House, and Mount Auburn Cemetery, as well as city departments, we actually surpassed that goal and held 18 events in 2009—an amazing number. In addition, the range and variety of events drew new audiences, as well as our stalwart members, whose attendance made every program a success.

New Councilors



Maggie Smart Booz

Maggie Smart Booz is an architect and principal and founder of SmartArchitecture in Cambridge. SmartArchitecture focuses primarily on residential architecture, new and old. Maggie is an avid gardener and participant on the city's Public Planting Committee, and she was active recently in planning and overseeing the restoration of the landscape at Craigie Street Park. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and Harvard's Graduate School of Design, she resides in Cambridge with her husband, Rustam, and three children, all of whom know how to use a hammer.



Karen Marryat

Karen Marryat is senior vice president/chief marketing officer at Cambridge Savings Bank, where she oversees Marketing, eCommerce, and the Customer Service Center. She is a former trustee of Pilgrim Hall Museum, where she chaired the Capital Campaign Planning Committee and cochaired the Capital Campaign, which raised over \$4 million to renovate the museum. Karen is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and earned a master's degree in business administration from the Simmons Graduate School of Management. Originally from Connecticut, she lives in Marshfield with her husband and sons.

Seven Siblings (continued)

Duehay credited Suzanne Pearce, the CYSCA board president from 1994 until 2008, with much of the success of the Cambridge-Yerevan relationship. CYSCA is now headed by Cheryl Shushan, but Pearce remains active on the board. The programs have included youth exchanges and professional training exchanges through the Community Connections Program. Board members Jack and Eva Medzorian have traveled twice a year to Armenia to bring financial assistance to over 100 elementary schools. Pearce hopes CYSCA will bring over a group of Armenian students to compete in the Cambridge Science Festival in April.

The bond with El Salvador also remains vibrant. To celebrate its 20th anniversary, seven community leaders from Las Flores visited Cambridge to meet with officials, schools, community groups, and long-time supporters.

The relationship with Gaeta, Italy, is the oldest, dating from 1926. Each year, citizens of Gaeta come to Cambridge to celebrate the



Festival of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, 2007 Photo courtesy of Sal Domenico

festival of Saints Cosmas and Damian. Sal Domenico, the owner of Sal's Flowers in East Cambridge, has been to Gaeta 28 times.

Some attempts to establish sister city relationships have failed due to political opposition. Rena Leib and Margaret Lynch, both nurses, led an effort to establish a sister city relationship with Cienfuegos, Cuba. On their first trip, in 2001, they took medical supplies. Subsequently, the Bush administration revoked the group's license to travel.

An attempt to establish a relationship with Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, also met political opposition. There has been another effort, to establish a sister city relationship with Bethlehem in the West Bank, but the project failed to gain the unanimous support of the City Council.

As Cathy Hoffman, director of the Cambridge Peace Commission from 1987 to 2008, explained, "A group of people, usually composed primarily of residents, presents a request to connect with another community, which is then passed by the Cambridge City Council."

The Peace Commission has been involved, but it has neither the infrastructure nor funding to support even a half-time person to administer the sister city relationships. City Councilor Marjorie Decker chaired one meeting of the Civic Unity Committee, which made recommendations, but, she said, "the budget crisis hit."

Interest in establishing new relationships remains high. Recently, former Mayor Denise Simmons received a request from a city in Portugal, Oeires, to be a sister city of Cambridge.

And on January 11, the City Council passed a resolution asking the city manager to pursue the establishment of a sister city relationship in Haiti, a timely suggestion.

Support Your City's History

If you're not a member of CHS, consider joining.

If you are a member, you can present a gift membership to a friend or neighbor. If you have enjoyed years of membership, consider leaving a legacy by including the Society in your will.

Membership Levels

Single	\$35	Family Dana Fellows	\$150
Family	\$60	Sponsor	\$250
Dana Fellow	\$100	Benefactor	\$500

Make checks payable to the Cambridge Historical Society and mail, with name, addresss, phone, and email for you and the recipient of your gift membership (if applicable), to 159 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

From House Museum to History Museum - By Michael Kenney

When the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House reopened in December, there was the pleasure of the familiar, meeting with old friends at a traditional gathering.

But there was also the surprise of discovery at the house's transformation into an exciting new museum — a Cambridge history museum.

The Bosphorus Room still sports its 19th-century scenic wallpaper, but now, ranged around the room, are five sleek, free-standing display panels that present a concise history of the house and its owners.

And on future visits there will be an opportunity to see a glimpse of the 17th-century structure of the house

through openings in the paneling behind the shutters.

The East Parlor now explores the history of Cambridge during the Revolution, with paintings, models, and furniture.

A computer terminal offers a digital presentation of "Cambridge in the American Revolution," an interactive map with links to documents in the Society's collection prepared last year by one of our interns.

The Chandler Room, once dark and gloomy, is now brightened by long-needed lighting and holds exhibits dealing with various aspects of Cambridge's history. Currently, the exhibit includes books, photographs, and other items connected with Cambridge's role in the folk music revival of the 1960s, including photos of Joan Baez and Bob Dylan, deposited at CHS by the New England Folk Music Archives.

Upstairs, the Naples Room echoes the Bosphorus Room with its 19th-century scenic wallpaper. But there is now an exhibit with toys, dolls, and games that were the playthings of Cambridge children during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Across the hall is the new Industry Room, once a catchall space, now the area which best displays the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House's transformation from "house museum" to a museum of the City of Cambridge.

It is also, if members' reactions at the Christmas Party are any clue, the must-see room.

Among the objects currently on display are a case of bricks from the New England Brick Company, an icehook from the ice-cutting industry at Fresh Pond, Elias Howe's early sewing machine, and two of Edwin Land's Polaroid cameras.

There are also photographs of workers at the Woven Hose Company and the Squirrel Nut Company.

On the walls, two aerial photographs from 1947 show

industrial areas — the clay pits in North Cambridge and the factories in East Cambridge.

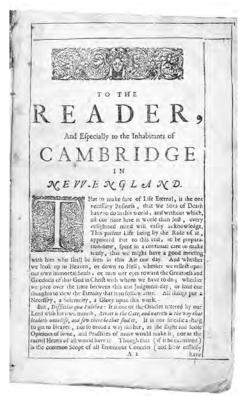
As Gavin W. Kleespies put it, "The biggest limitation to a house museum is that once people have come, they don't return."

Now, every display can be changed and new exhibits created to bring visitors back again and again.



Display on industry in the East Chamber

Stop the Presses! Save the Date, May 16, for our Spring Benefit



Page 3 of *The Parable of the Ten Virgins* by Thomas Shepard. Printed in Cambridge in 1695. CHS Collection

Printed in Cambridge

The history of publishing in Cambridge, from the Daye Press to digital libraries

Our annual fundraiser will be held at the Athenaeum Press Building on First Street. (There is plenty of free, offstreet parking next to the building.)

The event includes talks by Jon Orwant of Google, Charles Sullivan of the Cambridge Historical Commission, Peter Reed of Ambit Press, and John Kristensen of Firefly Press and the Club of Odd Volumes.

For more information, visit www.cambridgehistory.org

or call 671.547.4252

Upcoming Events

For more information on any of these events, visit www.cambridgehistory.org

Film Screening: Perkins 28



A film on the secret trials of suspected gay students at Harvard, followed by a Q&A with the film's director. Wednesday, March 24, 2010, 6-8 PM

March 28, 2010, 1-2:30 Walking Tour of Tory Row

April 2010, Tour of 75 Henry Street in Cambridgeport with its owner, Frank Shirley, author of *New Rooms for Old Houses: Beautiful Additions for the Traditional Home* (National Trust for Historic Preservation). Event for Dana Fellows members and invited guests.

CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Hooper-Lee-Nichols House 159 Brattle Street Cambridge, MA 02138

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