

Annual Report 2017-2018 NICHOLS HOUSE MUSEUM





1961.355 Cherry and maple sideboard, American, 1830-1845. Featured in the December 2017 Object Spotlight blog post, "A Tale of Two Sideboards," by Laura Cunningham, Programs and Collections Coordinator.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Nichols House Museum is a private, nonprofit 501(C)3 corporation with the following mission:

The Nichols House Museum preserves and interprets the 1804 Federal townhouse that was home to landscape gardener, suffragist and pacifist Rose Standish Nichols and her family. Their home and its original art and furnishings provide a glimpse into life on historic Beacon Hill from the mid-19th to mid-20th century. The museum educates and inspires the public through innovative programs, and it continues the conversation on the social concerns the Nichols family embraced that are still relevant today.

Front cover image: Detail of oak chest carved by Rose Standish Nichols.



1961.79 Mahogany wall clock, American, 19th century. Featured in the January 2018 Object Spotlight blog post, "A Matter of Time," by Kara Wasilauski, Collections Intern.

All images in this report are from the Nichols House Museum Permanent Collection unless otherwise stated.

LEADERSHIP REPORT



The Nichols House Museum welcomed its new Executive Director, Linda Marshall, who began work at the museum in August 2017. Linda has an extensive background in historic house museum management coming from Historic New England and The Trustees. Our two-hundred -year-old museum with its vintage walls, ceilings, and various physical quirks is therefore familiar to Linda in it its preservation management needs.

The museum's recent accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums in February 2017 continues to inspire Nichols House Museum staff in their management of the collection and planned programs and exhibitions. The museum acquired several new objects with important connections to the Nichols family. Additionally, our partnerships with other organizations continue with the recent selection to be part of summer 2018 Free Fun Friday programming funded by the Highland Street Foundation and involving up to 100 museums and arts organizations; public programs coordinated with the Society of Arts and Crafts, Prescott House and Wendall Tea Company; and the recent use of the museum as a film site location for NOVA, the PBS television program.

Our museum members and donors remain key supporters of the museum, and we welcomed them at our various lectures, programs, and festive events and parties throughout the year. Thank you as well to all who generously volunteer their time by serving on museum committees. The museum continues to welcome academic interns and

researchers throughout the year and the docent program remains a new and growing initiative that we enthusiastically support.

We look forward to the Nichols House Museum's continued growth in the coming year. It has been my honor to serve as president of the board for the last three years. I thank my fellow governors for their dedication to the museum and its mission to educate and inspire the public through its preservation and interpretation of the museum's collection and beautiful townhouse at 55 Mount Vernon Street.

Kate Enroth

President, Board of Governors.

Kate Emoth



Both images: 1961.505 Detail of the crewelwork bed hangings made by Rose Standish Nichols, ca. 1890.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

William Simmons and Julie A. Solz, Co-Chairs

In 2017, the Building and Grounds Committee worked with the Executive Director to advance investigations for replacement of the museum's climate control systems. A request for proposal (RFP) was developed for a comprehensive assessment and plan for upgrading and replacing the climate control systems in the house which would include the boiler and humidification and air conditioning units and controls. Two preservation firms submitted proposals and Landmark Facilities Group (LFG) of Norwalk, Connecticut was selected to develop the initial specifications for the project. The project plan will be phased to facilitate fundraising, and to that end a planning grant was submitted to the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund (MCC-CFF) to support half the costs of phase one. Review of three possible project plans will be undertaken in the Spring of 2018 with one plan being selected and presented to the full board for approval.



Margaret Homer Nichols at Mastlands, Cornish, NH, ca. 1900.

The Lecture Committee provided another successful lecture series this year. In the Fall of 2017, William Martin gave a talk on The Back Bay, from Mudflat to Landfill to Modern Metropolis. Mr. Martin is a popular novelist, and his lecture drew a record crowd of over eighty people. In the Spring of 2018, the museum sponsored two lectures on furniture, old and new. In March, Brock Jobe gave a lecture on Chippendale: The Man and the Myth. Mr. Jobe is the retired professor of American decorative arts in the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. Mr. Jobe is a well-known authority on antique furniture, and the lecture hall was full and included a number of his colleagues. On April 26th, Kory Rogers was scheduled to talk on Man vs. Machine: Furniture Making Today, though the lecture was ultimately postponed. The museum will look at rescheduling the talk later in 2018 or early 2019. Mr. Rogers is the head curator at the Shelburne Museum in Vermont.

Lectures were held at the New England Historic Genealogical Society with plans to hold the third lecture at Grogan and Company.



1961.474 Cherry Blossoms on the Bank of the Sumida River, 1840-1858, Andō Hiroshige. Featured in the August 2017 Object Spotlight blog post, "Three Japanese Woodblock Prints," by Olivia Reed, Administrative Intern.

In FY2018, the Collections Committee continued to execute best practices in collections care. Highlights of the year included:

- Advised on the plan to reproduce the curtains that hung in the bedrooms of Rose Nichols and her parents. The committee has approved samples of the chintz as well as samples of the curtain prints.
- Consulted with the Buildings and Grounds Committee during the planning stages for the project to replace the HVAC System. The safety of the collection will be front and center as the museum moves forward with the project.
- Recommended the acquisition of an oak chest thought to have been carved by Rose Nichols and is referenced in the Nichols family oral history. The chest is the gift of Rose Nichols' greatnephew, Charles Lowell.
- Recommended the acquisition of four bronze medals that portray
 members of the Nichols family: Arthur and Elizabeth Nichols and
 Margaret and Arthur Shurcliff. The medals are the work of Johan
 Selmer-Larsen, a well-known Boston sculptor at the turn of the
 19th century. The medals were acquired through the generosity of
 an anonymous donor.
- Recommended for acquisition four account books belonging to Arthur Nichols chronicling daily purchases as well as a notebook belonging to Margaret Nichols. These archival documents are donations from members of the Nichols-Shurcliff family.
- Prioritized objects requiring expert conservation review.
- Endorsed the Nichols House Museum 2018 Exhibition, Their Objects, Their Stories: The Nichols Women as Collectors, 1870-1960 which will open in June of 2018. The exhibition spotlights an array of collection objects that showcase the varying interests of Elizabeth and Rose Nichols while also exploring the cultural environment in which they were operating.

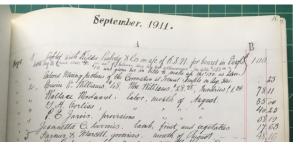


Oak chest with carvings attributed to Rose Standish Nichols after Thomas Dennis of Ipswich, MA (1638–1706), ca. 1910-20.



Bronze medals depicting Arthur and Elizabeth Nichols (top) and Arthur and Margaret Shurcliff (bottom), by Johan Selmer-Larsen, ca. 1925.

Four account books ranging in dates from 1902 to 1921 belonging to Arthur Nichols and one notebook belonging to Margaret Homer Shurcliff dated 1956.



DEVELOPMENT

Kimberlea Jeffries and Beth Campanella, Co-Chairs

ANNUAL APPEAL

The Annual Appeal supports the museum's on-going operations and programming. Since this fund is unrestricted it also helps with the preservation work needed to maintain the 1804 townhouse. In FY2018 we raised \$38,760, which was a 5% increase over last year. Seventy-six households donated. We wish to thank our friends and the community of Beacon Hill who so loyally support the museum.

EVENTS

Spring Fete

The Spring Fete continues to be the museum's largest fundraising endeavor. In 2017 the museum raised \$47,000. This reflects a ten percent decrease over the previous year. Due to this drop in revenue and attendance, the development committee conducted an analysis of event performance over recent years. Special consideration was given to event scheduling given competing fundraisers. It was agreed that in FY19, a new, refreshed approach was needed with the Fete. We are grateful to the Spring Fete Committee for their ongoing efforts and enthusiasm. A special thanks to our Sponsors and Auction Donors. Their support is integral to the Fete's success.

Holiday House Tour

We would like to thank Co-Chairs Keeta Gilmore and Andrea Marquit Clagett and the entire Holiday House Tour Committee for organizing a wonderful Tour. In 2017, five magnificent homes decorated for the holidays were showcased. The Nichols House Museum was also decorated and featured a performance by the Back Bay Ringers as well as the exhibition Peace and Prosperity: Rose Standish Nichols and Tea. Guests of the Tour also joined us for a lively reception at the King's Chapel Parish House. The Tour netted approximately \$36,000 for the museum which is in line with revenue achievements over the last couple of years. We are tremendously grateful to the gracious homeowners who opened their homes for the Tour.

MEMBERSHIP

The museum updated its member benefits program early in 2018. The month of March was Membership Month at the museum during which discounted memberships were offered to new members. The museum's general membership program which includes individual, family, friend, and sponsor levels, currently has 65 households. General membership renewals continue on a monthly rolling basis. Members enjoy reduced rates on admission to Nichols House lectures and special events, as well as discounts on gift shop items. The museum will begin offering member-only programs next fiscal year.

PATRONS MEMBERSHIP

Through the generous support of our Patron members, the museum is able to continue its work preserving both the building and collection to the highest standard. We would like to thank Barbara Lewis, Chair of the Patrons' Committee, for her efforts to support our Patrons' Program and increase the households who donate to this fund.

During the fall of 2017, our Patrons enjoyed the opportunity to visit the Eustis Estate in Milton for a tour with Julie Solz, NHM governor and team leader for Collection Services at Historic New England. The group heard about the transformation of a private estate into a museum, and also had the opportunity to visit the exhibition, *Mementos: Jewelry of Life and Love.*

Thanks to the generosity of Kate O'Kelly and Rich Doyle, Patrons enjoyed a cocktail party at their home in early March. In April, Patrons travelled to the Currier Museum in Manchester, NH to view the exhibition, The Sculpture of Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The guided tour was followed by lunch in the Winter Garden Café located in the atrium, and additional time to view the Currier's permanent collection.

Patron membership is now on a rolling basis as with general membership. Patron membership revenue was up by 17% over the previous year and the development committee continues to increase the special opportunities offered to the Patron members and to promote cultivation of new members in this critical museum membership program.



Postcard of Florence, Italy, from the Rose Standish Nichols Postcard Collection. Featured in the September 2017 Reading with Rose blog post, "The Poet Laureate of Hope End" by Victoria Johnson, Visitor Experience and Research Associate.



Inscription from Rose Standish Nichols' 1891 copy of *Auld Licht Idylls* by the Scottish novelist J.M. Barrie and the subject of the November 2017 Reading with Rose blog post, "Second Star to the Right," by Victoria Johnson, Visitor Experience and Research Associate.

The Governance Committee worked conscientiously to confirm the Nichols House Museum's slate of officers for 2018-2019 and identify promising candidates to fill open positions on the Museum's Board of Governors. With the help of the Executive Director, the Governance Committee identified the needs of the museum and developed a list of potential Governors to cultivate over the coming year. The Committee also extended invitations to join the Board of Governors. The Nichols House Museum is fortunate to have the commitment of talented and experienced individuals who were presented for the Board's consideration. The Board of Governors will vote on the slate at its annual meeting in May.



1961.143 Embroidered linen table runner possibly made by Rose Standish Nichols, late 19th to early 20th century.

INVESTMENT

Mark Rickabaugh, Chair

The Nichols House Museum again exceeded performance objectives for 2017, however the funds' balanced investment approach moderated the very strong returns of equity indexes. Volatility has jumped significantly in the 1st quarter of 2018 and the more balanced approach should limit potential negative equity returns in 2018.

The Investment Committee meets quarterly to discuss endowment performance and strategy.

The Nichols House Museum's Endowment is held at Fidelity Investments.

The Nichols House Museum continued to enjoy a financially strong year in FY 2018 (April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018). The museum's net assets totaled slightly more than \$2.817 million as of the year-end March 31, 2018, up slightly from \$2.798 million as of March 31, 2017. This modest increase is largely attributable to higher cash positions offset against diminished receivables from the winding down of pledges to the Director's Fund, increased accumulated depreciation and the impact of volatility in the equity markets in early 2018 that reduced the value of the museum's endowment following strong performance in calendar year 2017. The museum's total revenue and support, inclusive of all investment activities and contributions, equaled just over \$262,000 versus \$508,000 in FY 2017, largely reflecting the relatively stronger performance of the endowment in FY 2017, lower net revenues from key fundraising events, a reduction in admissions revenues, the receipt in FY 2017 of more significant donations to the Director's Fund and the expected slowing down of new donations and completed pledges in FY 2018 to the Director's Fund. The Director's Fund increases the endowment and fosters sustainability by increasing the museum's unrestricted operating income. Through FY 2018, the Director's Fund has raised more than \$500,000 in gifts and pledges.

Members and friends of the museum continue actively to support its fundraising events, pay dues as members or as Patrons, fulfill pledges to the Director's Fund and contribute to the annual appeal.

Revenues during the year fell short of our initial budget, largely due to shortfalls in fundraising goals that were aggressively set in the FY 2017 budget and to a decision not to hold a periodic symposium. However, total expenses were reduced and managed against lower revenue and came in at \$268,000 in FY 2018 versus \$297,000 in FY 2017. Expenses during the year were significantly below the FY2017 budget, the result of careful financial stewardship and lower than expected program expenses, especially the avoidance of the expenses relating to the symposium that was not held during the year. Net operating income of approximately \$33,000 exceeded the budget by almost \$14,000.

The market value of the museum's investments remained relatively flat at \$2.2 million at March 31, 2018 compared to the value of these investments at March 31, 2017. Of course, while the value of the endowment may be flat year-over-year, its performance has permitted the museum to draw down, in accordance with a board-approved formula, approximately \$94,000 during the recent fiscal year to support its operations while still remaining flat. Investment income from the endowment, budgeted at 4.65% of the average endowment balance over the prior three years, finances a portion of annual operating and capital expenses. The museum expects its endowment over the long term to grow at an average of one percent annually above the current spending policy. This is consistent with the objective to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment assets held in perpetuity or for a specified term as well as to provide additional growth through new gifts and investment return.

We would like to thank Mark Rickabaugh, our very talented and devoted Chair of the Investment Committee, for his continuing service as the Chair of this committee and for continuing to steer our endowment through changing market conditions and producing consistently outstanding returns based on our risk tolerance and profile.

The museum's endowment is held at Fidelity Investments and its operating account is held at the Cambridge Trust Company. The museum's accountants for the last three fiscal years have been Bacall and Conniff, which completed a review of the financials for this past fiscal year.

As we look ahead to FY19, the Finance Committee has a full agenda. We will continue to work closely with the Development Committee to help meet our shared objective of fundraising events meeting (or exceeding) our budget projections and with the Development, Collections and Building and Grounds Committees to ensure we have the resources to meet the needs of repairs and improvements to the physical plant of the museum, including planning for a potential modernization and more energy efficient HVAC system.

Nichols House Museum, Inc. Statements of Financial Position March 31, 2018 and 2017

Ass	sets	Assets						
	2018	2017						
Current Assets								
Cash and cash equivalents	134,583	80,903						
Grants and pledges receivable	68,250	88,785						
Inventory	21,111	22,083						
Total current assets	223,944	191,771						
Investments	2,216,728	2,209,631						
Property and Equipment	160,000	160,000						
Land	160,000	160,000						
Buildings	587,195	587,195 557,327						
Building improvements	557,327 18,000	18,000						
Furniture & fixtures	14,036	14,036						
Office equipment Subtotal	1,336,558	1,336,558						
Accumulated depreciation	(959,757)	(939,379)						
Total property and equipment	376,801	397,179						
Total property and equipment	370,001	397,179						
Total Assets	2,817,473	2,798,581						
<u>Liabilities a</u>	nd Net Assets							
Current Liabilities								
Deferred revenue	22,000	_						
Accounts payable	2,825	-						
Total current liabilities	24,825	-						
	-							
Net Assets								
Unrestricted net assets	2,732,550	2,750,483						
Temporarily restricted net assets	40,098	28,098						
Permanently restricted net assets	20,000	20,000						
Total net assets	2,792,648	2,798,581						
								
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,817,473	2,798,581						

Nichols House Museum, Inc. Statements of Activities For the Year Ended March 31, 2018 with Comparative Information for the Year Ended March 31, 2017

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total 2018	Total 2017
Revenues and Support:					
Contributions	42,584	16,500		59,084	84,966
Director's Fund	1,715			1,715	12,541
Special events revenue, net of expenses	63,491			63,491	97,015
Membership dues	35,614			35,614	32,270
Admissions	17,724			17,724	22,466
Other income	5,316			5,316	4,796
Investment income	87,002			87,002	88,996
Realized/unrealized gains/(losses) on investments	(7,914)			(7,914)	164,743
Net assets released from restrictions	4,500	(4,500)			
Total Revenues and Support	250,032	12,000	·	262,032	507,793
Expenses:					
Program	110,490			110,490	163,982
Management and general	112,852			112,852	102,325
Fundraising and development	44,623			44,623	31,100
Total Expenses	267,965			267,965	297,407
Change in Net Assets	(17,933)	12,000	-	(5,933)	210,386
Net Assets, Beginning	2,750,483	28,098	20,000	2,798,581	2,588,195
Net Assets, Ending	2,732,550	40,098	20,000	2,792,648	2,798,581

The Nichols House Museum adopted the financial reporting standards of its peers in fiscal year 2012. The Museum will no longer capitalize its permanent collection in its financial statements.

These represent draft statements submitted by Bacall and Conniff, P.C. Final financial statements will be available at the Nichols House Museum after June 15, 2018.

MUSEUM PATRONS 2017-2018

The Nichols House Museum would like to thank the following generous donors

DIANA LEVEL

Mr. David Beck and Mr. Gregory Van Boven

Ms. Elizabeth Campanella

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Mr. and Mrs. Stephen B. Jeffries

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Ms. Sandra Steele and Dr. Paul Greenfield

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The Nichols House Museum would like to thank the following generous donors

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stevenson Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Winthrop

Ms. Sara G. Withington

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ANNUAL FUND
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Barbara Lewis, Chair, Patron Program
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Linda Marshall, ex officio

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Spring Fête Subcommittee Beth Campanella, Co-chair Meghan Awe, Co-chair

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Julie Solz
Meghan Weeks

IN MEMORIAM Dr. B. Thomas Hutchinson Nancy Macmillan

Georgina Winthrop

We appreciate the work of all the docents and volunteers who are indispensable to the effective running of the museum. Here we would like to give special recognition to the wonderful people who help us make our visitors' experience at the museum the best possible.

DOCENTS Kathryn Fields Ellen Mooradian Emily Tessier

GARDEN VOLUNTEER
Susan Bomba

With special thanks to Jim Borden.

2017 INTERNS Olivia Reed Kara Wasilauski

2017 JULIE LINSDELL AND GEORGIA LINSDELL ENDERS RESEARCH FELLOW Rachel Kirby STAFF Linda Marshall Executive Director

Laura Cunningham
Programs and Collections
Coordinator

Charlotte Wittmann Communication and Administration Associate

Stephanie Hall Visitor Services Representative

Kara Wasilauski Visitor Services Representative

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Michela Davola Communication and Administration Associate

Victoria Johnson Visitor Experience & Research Associate

Emma Welty
Head of Collections and
Education

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT Nichols House Museum 55 Mount Vernon Street Boston, MA 02108

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SPRING FÊTE



Beth Campanella, Meghan Awe, Keeta Gilmore.



Sarah Mars and David Dali.



Mona Sadler and Jane Worcester.



Darci O'Brien, Alec Holliday, and Kat Holliday.



Virginia Mills, Therese Minton, Oliver Bouchier, Valerie Gordon-Walker, and Amy Russo.



Caitlin Crowe and Tess Atkinson.

PATRONS' PROGRAM



Patrons take a tour of Historic New England's Eustis Estate, led by Julie Solz. October 18, 2017.





Kate Enroth (NHM Board President) and Christine Root.



Patrons take a tour of *The Sculpture of Augustus Saint-Gaudens* at the Currier Museum. Biddy Owens, Charlotte Wittmann (NHM Staff), Jean Lawrence, Christine Root, Linda Marshall (NHM Executive Director), and Sonja Yates. April 18, 2018.





PROGRAMS



Makers' Marks: Discussion Panel Presented in partnership with the Society of Arts and Crafts. Dina Deitsch, Emily Zilber, Maggie Dimock, and Luiza deCamargo, with moderator Laura Cunningham (NHM Staff). August 24, 2017.



Linsdell Fellow Rachel C. Kirby lectures on "From Maids to Mary King: Stories and Spaces of the Nichols House Employees." September 21, 2017.



Laura Cunningham, Victoria Johnson, and Charlotte Wittmann present "Nichols after Dark: Witches and Wives Tales." October 26, 2017.





William Martin giving a lecture, "The Back Bay: from Mudflat to Landfill to Modern Metropolis." November 16, 2017.

PROGRAMS





The Nichols House Museum hosts "A New Leaf for the New Year: Discover the World of Teas with the Mark T. Wendell Tea Company," led by Hartley E. Johnson, owner of Mark T. Wendell. January 20, 2018.





Laura Cunningham speaks about the courtship between Margaret Nichols and Arthur Shurcliff. "Nichols after Dark: Corsets and Courtships." February 15, 2018.



Charlotte Wittmann speaks about the undergarments worn by women in the 1860s and 1870s. Period clothing pieces on loan from the Colonial Dames of America and Prescott House.



Brock Jobe lectures on "Chippendale: The Man and the Myth." March 29, 2018.

Makers' Marks





Embroidery by Chelsea Revelle, 2017, featured in the summer exhibition *Makers' Marks*.



Soap bar by Betse Frail, 2017, featured in the summer exhibition *Makers' Marks*.



Chinese Export porcelain from the Nichols House Museum Collection featured in the winter exhibition *Peace and Prosperity: Rose Standish Nichols and Tea.*



German porcelain, including pieces from the Meissen Factory, from the Nichols House Museum Collection featured in the winter exhibition *Peace and Prosperity: Rose Standish Nichols and Tea.*

FILMING AT THE MUSEUM



Filming a scene for *Prediction by the Numbers* for NOVA on PBS.



Film crew for *Prediction by the Numbers* for NOVA on PBS. Aired February 28, 2018.

GROUP VISITS



Commonwealth Children's Center Field Trip. Visits in November and December 2017.



New England Museum Association Young/Emerging Professionals Group Visit. January 25, 2018.

HOLIDAYS AT THE MUSEUM







HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR



Andrea Marquit Clagett (HHT Co-Chair) and Maureen Mellowes at the Holiday House Tour Reception.



Keeta Gilmore (HHT Co-Chair) and Suzanne Besser at the Holiday House Tour Reception.



The Back Bay Ringers perform outside the Museum for the Holiday House Tour.

