

Haverhill Historical Society Collection, 1840, 1868-2008

Collection Summary

Reference Code:	MRQ, US.
Repository:	Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Call Number:	MSS 22
Creator:	Haverhill Public Library
Title:	Haverhill Historical Society Collection, 1840, 1868-2008
Dates:	1840, 1868-2008
Size:	2.46 linear feet (4 boxes)
Language(s):	Collection materials are in English.
Abstract:	This collection provides information about the history and development of the Haverhill [Massachusetts] Historical Society, also known as Buttonwoods.

Organizational History

The Haverhill [Massachusetts] Historical Society began as the Merrimack Valley Historical Society in July 1897. The meeting took place at Winnekenni Castle. The goal of the society was to collect Haverhill history and inform the people of Haverhill about its history. In 1898, the Society was incorporated. The annual meetings were held in a variety of locations until 1903, when the Society was given Buttonwoods, an historic home, from Mrs. Mary Duncan Harris. The gift was in memory of her father Hon. James H. Duncan. The house opened as a museum in 1904. The first-floor rooms were converted into a fireproof vault to store the society's collections. In 1918, the society added a hall that was to be used for additional displays and be a place to hold meetings in. The hall was a memorial to Samuel Elliott, one of Haverhill's prominent shoe manufacturers. At the time the society had about 1,500 artifacts.

In 1925, the Society purchased the "John Ward Chapel" and the building would be renamed Tenney Hall. The new building housed archaeological materials from when the Haverhill Archaeological Society merged with the Historical Society. Among the archaeology collections were Native American materials.

In 1983, the Society raised \$170,000 to add an addition. The society wanted to also renovate Tenney Hall, including a basement room, new parking area, and redecoration and repair of the main house and Elliott Hall. The goal was to create additional display space and provide better

working areas for staff and researchers, along with better facilities for the society. Work began in the summer of 1983 and was completed.

In 1987, the Haverhill Historical Society had a change in its governance. Carolyn Singer became the new director/curator and wanted to move from being a small society to something more progressive. Another goal was to achieve full accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums, a professional organization. In addition, she planned to conduct research on the objects in the collection and document their provenance. Singer made progress in reinventing and modernizing the society.

During the 1990s, Buttonwoods continued see growth and opportunities to reach the local community of Haverhill and the region with various grants and programs that helped to transform Buttonwoods to what it is today.

In 2004, the Haverhill Historical Society celebrated its centennial. Although the society held events and programs to celebrate, the big issue for them was that they had little space to display more unique materials, such as the original 1642 deed to the city. They did offer more programs for toddlers, schoolchildren, teachers, and alike that year as a way to make Buttonwoods more accessible and generate more excitement to the public to visit. There was a World War II exhibit at Buttonwoods and they had a Past Finder Summer Camp, during which Buttonwoods worked with children from grades 2 through 7.

Scope and Content Note

This collection provides information about the history and development of the Haverhill Historical Society, otherwise known as Buttonwoods. The collection is divided into 16 series. Series one contains records about the Society's history. Series two relates to the Society's governance and has two subseries. The first subseries contains information about its by-laws, minutes, and governing documents. The second subseries contains president reports and notes. Series three contains information about members, including member lists and communications. Series four has newsletters about events, collections, and other articles that would be of interest to members of Buttonwoods. Series five includes public programs, and events that have happened over the years. Series six includes inventories that Buttonwoods has created in the early 20th century. Series seven has newspaper clippings that provides information about the history of Buttonwoods, events, speakers, and other news. Additional materials were discovered in August of 2020. In order to avoid renumbering and shifting of folders additional series were added. Series nine includes additional governing materials. Series ten includes policies that relate to the society and includes collections, ethics, and other policies that were needed at the time. Series 11 includes additional programs. Series 12 has unsorted materials. Series 13 contains wills and bequests. Series 14 contains correspondence. Series 15 consists of a document about Native American relics and other papers. Series 16 contains a lecture given on Thanksgiving in 1940.

Arrangement

- Series 1: History and Information about the Buttonwoods, 1840-1970s
- Series 2: Buttonwoods Governance, 1898-1998
 - Subseries 2.1: By-Laws, Minutes and Governing Documents, 1903, 1960-1998
 - Subseries 2.2: President's Reports and Notes, 1956-1986, undated
- Series 3: Member Information, 1975-1976, 1981, 1994, undated
- Series 4: Newsletters, 1985-1994
- Series 5: Public Programs, 1905, 1965, 1985, 1986, undated
- Series 6: Inventory of Collections, 1937, 1948, 1957, undated
- Series 7: Ephemera and Unsorted Materials, undated
- Series 8: Newspaper Clippings, 1868-2006
- Series 9: Additional Governing Materials, 1907-1991
 - Subseries 9.1: Nominations for Officers, 1907-1920
 - Subseries 9.2: Annual Meeting Notices, 1907, 1991
 - Subseries 9.3: Director/Curator Job Description, 1987
 - Subseries 9.4: Carolyn Singer Resume, undated
 - Subseries 9.5: Additional Papers, 1987
- Series 10: Policies for the Museum, undated
- Series 11: Additional Programs, 1911, 1989, 1998, 2003, 2004
- Series 12: Unsorted Papers, 1904, 1948, 1985, undated
- Series 13: Bequests and Wills, 1922-1951, undated
- Series 14: Additional Correspondence, 1922-1926
- Series 15: Native American Relics, undated
- Series 16: Thanksgiving Lecture, 1940

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation:	[Item Identification], Haverhill Historical Society Collection, 1868-2006, <i>Reference Code</i> , Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Custodial History:	Found in collection.
Acquisition Information:	On loan from the Haverhill Historical Society.
Processing Information:	Processed by Erik R. Bauer, 2019-2020. Updated by Tamara Gaydos, 2020. Revised by Elizabeth Smith, 2025.
Access Rights:	Collection is open for research.
Phys. Access Restrictions:	The collection contains a folder of financial records along with some board minutes. Because Buttonwoods is a private non-profit organization, these materials have been restricted for 50 years.
Tech. Access Restrictions:	None.

Copyright:	Copyright has not been assigned to the Haverhill Public Library. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Haverhill Public Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the researcher.
Related Material:	None
Separated Material:	None.
Conservation Notes:	Many of the documents have gone through deacidification to better preserve them. Staples and paper clips have been removed. Newspaper clippings were photocopied onto archival quality paper.
Subjects:	Buttonwoods Museum Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.) Haverhill (Mass.)--History Haverhill Historical Society Langenau, Brenna E Sullivan, Joanne M.

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Information and Governance, 1840-1970s, undated

Subseries 1.1: History, 1840-1847, 1886, 1898-1921, 1930, 1970s, undated

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Historical Society of Ipswich Letter, 1898	1	1
Leonard Woodman Smith Articles, 1914	1	2
Richard Hazen House Info, 1922	1	3
Historical Sketch of Haverhill, undated [circa 1970s]	1	4
Brochures about the History of the Haverhill Historical Society and Descriptions of the Rooms in Buttonwoods, 1949, undated	1	5
HHS Scrapbook, 1840-1847, 1886, 1898-1921, 1930, undated	3 OS	

Series 2: Buttonwoods Governance, 1898-1998**Subseries 2.1: Governance, 1898-1998**

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
HHS By-Laws, undated	1	6
HHS Annual Meeting Minutes	1	7
HHS Incorporation Documents, 1898, 1903, circa 1930s	1	8
HHS officers and Councilors, 1983-1984, 1990-1991	1	9
HHS Trustee Minutes and By-Laws, 1987-1993	1	10
HHS Change of By-Laws, 1988	1	11
Notice of Meeting, 1960, 1962, undated	1	12
Statement of Income and Expense, 1982	1	13
HHS Financial Information, 1992-1993 (RESTRICTED)	1	14
Memorial Opportunities, undated	1	15
Space Requirements for Proper Museum Management, 1989	1	16
HHS Permanent Loan Document, 1998	1	17
HHS Correspondence, 1923-1989	1	18
Missing Artifacts Letter, 1980	1	19
HHS Letter to Haverhill Public Library, 1976	1	20

Subseries 2.2: President's Reports and Notes, 1956-1986, undated

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President's Report, 1958	1	22
President's Report, 1960	1	23
HHS Notes, 1976	1	24
HHS Notes, 1982	1	25
HHS Notes, 1986	1	26
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Series 3: Membership Information, 1966, 1975-1981, 1994, undated

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Member List, 1976, 1981	1	31
Request to Members, 1994	1	32

Series 4: Newsletters, 1991-1994

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HHS Newsletter, 1993-1994	1	34

Subseries 5: Programming, 1905-2003, undated

Field Meeting Information [13 copies], 1905	1	35
Whittier Trail Booklet, 1965	1	36
Quilt Show, 1985	1	37
New Galleries Invite, 1986	1	38
HHS Programs, 1986, undated	1	39
HHS Summer Program, 2003	1	40
HHS Programs, undated	1	41

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Inventory of Manuscript Collection, 1937	1	42
Descriptive Catalogue from 11.001-11.003, circa 1948	1	43
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<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Book Lists, undated	1	46
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Exhibit List, undated	1	51

Series 7: Ephemera and Unsorted Materials, undated

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Subseries 9.3: Director/Curator Job Description, 1987

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Subseries 9.4: Carolyn Singer Resume, undated [1987]

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