



President's Message

I would like to thank Member Peter Lemonias for arranging the guest speakers for our recent Quarterly Meeting, and for doing so on short notice as our original plan to meet at the Ben Franklin Institute ran into a scheduling snag. We do think our members will appreciate a visit to Ben Franklin Institute, and we intend to reschedule it for a future meeting. Meanwhile, we have plans in the works for a July Quarterly at Forest Hills Cemetery and an October Quarterly at the cranberry farm of members Fred and Rob Arrowsmith. Both are visits I think we all will enjoy. We are in fact always looking for ideas to bring interest to our meetings, either through guest speakers or "field trips", and I urge you to pass along any thoughts you may have.

Bill Anderson

Recent Happenings

Our April Quarterly Meeting was held on a fine Spring day at the Phillips Old Colony House in Dorchester. After a nice lunch, the business portion of the meeting was conducted, Membership Committee Chairman Joseph Bellomo read a new application for membership (that of Mr. James Libby), and Member George Milley explained our plans for the July Quarterly to be held at, and



include a tour of, Forest Hills Cemetery. We then heard from our guest speakers Mr. J.K. Nicholas and Mr. Tony LaChapelle, owners of the Chelsea Clock Company. These gentlemen gave us a brief but very interesting overview of this 115-year old company and the well-known clocks they manufacture, and discussed frankly the challenges they face. [The company is perhaps

best known for its line of ship's bell clocks, and Chelsea clocks and barometers can be found aboard seafaring vessels of all kinds _ from luxury yachts to US Navy destroyers.] Their presentation was much appreciated by our members.



Helping Others

We have a good deal, and in some cases a great deal, of history and familiarity with most of the charitable organizations we support, but occasionally we run into someone new. Such was the case last year when we received a request from *The Bridge Center* in Bridgewater. Founded in 1963, this organization operates a year-round therapeutic recreational facility where children

with cognitive and physical disabilities can develop life skills through play and vocational programs. Children and young adults ages 4 through 22 are served, and their range of disabilities includes Autism Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Severe Emotional Disorders, Down Syndrome, Muscular Dystrophy and many others. From 30 children in its first year, *The Bridge Center* now provides Therapeutic Recreation and Hippotherapy to over 1000 children and young adults each year.

Therapeutic horseback riding has been a major component of *The Center's* programming since 1985, and equine assisted therapy has since grown to be recognized as an incredibly effective form of therapy. Riding students receive flexible levels of support based on their individual



needs, and the programs provide a variety of extended benefits, including social-emotional, cognitive, and physical improvement while teaching novice level horsemanship skills. The riding center is also well-equipped to provide ongoing Hippotherapy services (physical and occupational therapy on a horse), using the multidimensional movement of the horse to bring out adaptive responses from the client. Specially trained therapists use this medical treatment for clients who have movement dysfunction to build a foundation that improves neurological function and sensory processing.



The Bridge Center's request of MCMA was to provide a hydraulic Hoyer Lift to improve the safety and accessibility of their riding center. Hoyer Lifts are used to safely transfer a patient from one resting position (such as a wheelchair) to another (such as on horseback). They significantly increase access for many children confined to a wheelchair who often are directed to less effective forms of therapy because they cannot safely mount a horse even with extensive human support.

After our Planning Committee completed its due diligence and approved it, we were pleased to honor this request. *The Bridge Center* is a non-profit that receives no government funding and relies on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations to keep its programs affordable and accessible to the children and families they serve. We look forward to a continuing relationship with them.



MCMA History

Okay, we all know that MCMA's first president was **Paul Revere**, and we all know quite a bit about Revere's life and accomplishments. But few of us can name any of our other early presidents, even though the portrait of one of these men hangs prominently on our conference room wall across from that of Revere. So it's time we gave some attention to **Benjamin Russell**, who is in fact quite deserving of that attention.



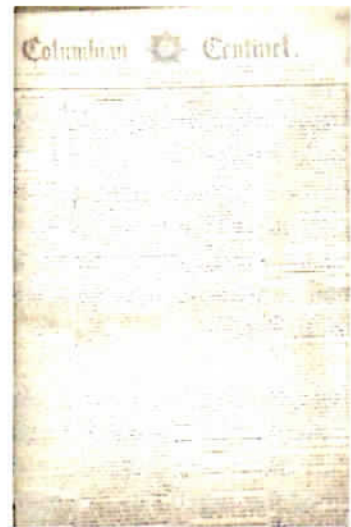
Russell was born in September 1761, the son of a stonemason, and was educated in the public school in Boston. On April 19, 1775 Benjamin and his classmates were dismissed early from school as word filtered in of the battles at Lexington and Concord. He and his friends followed the British relief column out of Boston. Though they followed only as far as Cambridge, at day's end they found it was not possible to return to Boston, as the British had closed off access to the city. Benjamin was to spend the next three months running errands for the militia forces, and serving as an unofficial clerk for a Connecticut unit stationed on Prospect Hill in Somerville. Soon after the battle at Bunker Hill, which Benjamin and friends witnessed by venturing into Charlestown, he ran into his father. Mr. Russell was not pleased to learn of his son's recent activities, and even more upset that the boy had failed to get word to his



family in that time. He met with the unit commander, and as a minor, Benjamin was "discharged" into his father's custody. The next day they travelled to Worcester, where Mr. Russell indentured Benjamin to printer Isaiah Thomas. [Thomas published *The Massachusetts Spy*, and had necessarily relocated his shop from Boston to Worcester to put some distance between himself and the British. Benjamin had been a frequent visitor to the shop in Boston, and was to develop a life-long friendship with Thomas.]


In 1780 Russell reached the age of eighteen, and enlisted in the Continental Army. He was stationed for a time at West Point, and was among the guard who escorted British Major John Andre to his place of execution. [*Andre, of course, was the spy who had collaborated with General Benedict Arnold to surrender the fort at West Point.*] Following his discharge he returned to Worcester, completed his apprenticeship, and stayed on with Thomas as a journeyman until 1783. [*During Russell's tenure, the Worcester shop was visited several times by Benjamin Franklin, who took pleasure in giving printing tips to the apprentices.*] Russell then moved to Boston with his new bride, Esther Rice, with whom he was to have two sons and a daughter. (Neither son would follow him into the printing business, but his daughter would marry printer **James Cutler**, who would also become a member of MCMA.)

In 1784 Russell began publishing the *Massachusetts Centinel*, and it soon became one of the most popular sources of news for other New England editors. He later changed the name to the *Columbian Centinel* as a result of its growing influence beyond the borders of Massachusetts. Russell wrote summaries of the news to bring the stories into focus for the community, and he was among the first to use an editorial column. He was also among the first to consider himself a journalist as well as a printer. The *Centinel* was aligned with the Federalist movement, and it was said to be "the most influential an enterprising paper in Massachusetts after the Revolution". Russell resigned as editor of the *Centinel* in 1828, though he continued until 1830 to edit the *Boston Gazette* which he had established in 1795. [In 1840 the *Columbian Centinel* merged with three other Boston publications to form the *Boston Semi-weekly Advertiser*, which eventually became the *Boston Herald*.]



Russell was very active politically, and served at various times as an Alderman of Boston, a Representative of the General Court, a state Senator, a member of the Governor's Council, and a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention. He filled the important position of president of the Board of Health for five years, and was an elected member of the school committee for five years. He also left us with a political term still very much alive in this State. In 1812, after Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry turned a North Shore legislative district into something resembling a salamander, Russell published a satirical editorial and cartoon about the shape, suggesting it should be called a "Gerrymander". Since the practice of reshaping voting districts to favor a certain party was not limited to Massachusetts, the term was adopted elsewhere, and is now a well-recognized and "official" word.

Benjamin Russell was an Original Member of MCMA, joining in 1795, and throughout his life was proud of his character as a mechanic. He served as one our first trustees, was elected Vice-President in 1799, and was our third (and longest-serving) President from 1808-1821. He was the person most responsible, in the eyes of his MCMA colleagues, for overcoming the "misconceived prejudice and unfounded jealousy" that attached to MCMA in its infancy, and was instrumental in obtaining our act of incorporation from the State legislature in 1805. He died in 1845 at the age of 83, and was interred in the Old Granary burial ground. In addition to the aforementioned painting, we are fortunate to count among our artifacts the December 31, 1794 issue of Russell's *Columbian Centinel* that actually announces the meeting at which the formation of MCMA would be discussed. So, while Benjamin Russell was no Paul Revere, it's pretty satisfying to realize that he was quite an interesting and accomplished individual in his own right, and arguably even more important to the history of our organization.



The Tradesmen, Mechanicks, and Manufacturers of this town, and vicinity, who keep Apprentices, are desired to meet at the Green-Dragon, on Tuesday evening next, at 6 o'clock, for the purpose of consulting on measures for Petitioning the General Court, to revise and amend the Law respecting Apprentices. Dec. 31, 1794.