

Charitably



Speaking

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A PUBLICATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHARITABLE MECHANIC ASSOCIATION

President's Message

The summer season is coming to an end but we have good things to look forward to this fall. Tom Crowdis and his committee have planned a great October meeting, to which members will be invited to bring a guest. It will be held at Old Sturbridge Village with a tour and lunch provided, and walking will not be difficult. Sturbridge has been a frequent recipient of MCMA support. You will be notified in the future about time and date.

Needless to say our Triennial will be in December. Past President Rich Adams and his committee have put together a fine program but only you can make it a success. Chuck Sulkala is looking for items for our auction to help defray the cost of the Triennial. Let's help him along. What you might not want or need has value to someone, a movie house pass, tickets to a sporting event, play, antiques, a cruise down the Nile, etc. Let's be creative and make this a great auction. See you all in Sturbridge. – **Arthur**



Recent Happenings

Our Summer Quarterly Meeting was held once again at the Gloucester home of trustee Paul Lohnes and his wife Jessica, and absolutely perfect weather allowed members and guests to fully appreciate this exceptionally scenic location. At the abbreviated business meeting Vice President Lemonias thanked Paul and Jessica for their hospitality, plans for our October Quarterly and the upcoming Triennial were discussed, and copies of our 2017 Annual Report were distributed. Members were then at leisure to enjoy the meal, the weather, the scenery and each other's company.

Also this past quarter, our Planning Committee undertook its responsibilities to review and assess the many requests received from very deserving organizations for MCMA support, and met in June to finalize their decisions for our 2018 grants. We will be distributing over \$250,000 this year, and the work of disbursing those funds is currently underway. And in June our Finance Committee and Board of Government met with our financial advisers, SSGA, to review portfolio performance, asset allocations, and outlook for the year ahead.

Helping Others

The Cultural Center of Cape Cod first opened its doors in 2007 in the building that had formerly housed the Bass River Savings Bank in South Yarmouth. That followed six years of fund-raising to enable needed renovations to a decaying building that had sat abandoned since 1983. The Center's overall mission is to serve the entire Cape community (and visitors to the area) by offering instruction, entertainment, and exhibition in the visual, literary, and performing arts. It supports both emerging and established artists, and its calendar of events, exhibits, and educational opportunities engages people of all ages, abilities and incomes. Since opening in 2007, the Center has served over 200,000 people and has received multiple awards, including a Community Leadership in the Arts Award selected by



other non-profits across the region. It is involved in regional and state-wide arts advocacy efforts and is widely recognized as a leader in both the arts and community development. And it strives to serve underserved populations, partnering with many other organizations to provide creative activities for clients with special needs and challenges, from intellectual and physical disabilities, to homelessness, to substance abuse.

Our interest in the Center is more narrowly defined, however. Its **Rise and Shine Program** is designed to give young people opportunities to learn new skills that will help them find work *on Cape Cod* and to avoid the serious problems that exist there. For, despite its often idyllic reputation, opioid and heroin addiction have reached epidemic proportions on the Cape, the teen suicide rate is the highest in the Commonwealth, and many of its youth are leaving the Cape rather than staying and working to strengthen their communities. Rise and Shine works hard to offer programs of interest to these young people that will teach them essential skills, build confidence, and encourage healthy choices in their lives. In developing this program, the Center conducted surveys to gauge interest among high school students as well as area artists and artisans, and has prioritized introduction of its offerings accordingly. The Center's Education Wing already features a ceramic arts studio, a photography/digital arts studio, a recording studio, and a culinary arts center, with other ideas still in the planning stage. Additionally, Rise and Shine has conducted workshops at schools in nearly every town on Cape Cod, and it provides mentoring and/or opportunities for community service to students referred through partners such as the Cape & Islands District Attorney's Diversion Program for young offenders.

The Cultural Center is especially proud of the success the Rise and Shine program has achieved and the hundreds of students it has helped. One example is a student who was introduced to the recording studio and given the chance to learn how to operate the equipment and record young musicians. Mentored by a professional recording engineer until he was proficient, he has invited students from his high school to record their music at the studio, and he is well on his way to being qualified to work as a sound technician. He also utilized his experience and studio resources to create a portfolio for applying to school, and was recently accepted to the Media Arts Program at Emerson College. Another example involves a girl who originally came into the Rise and Shine program struggling with severe depression and anxiety. Four years later, after participating in workshops, one-on-one mentoring, and scholarships for Cultural Center classes, she has honed her skills and strengthened her interest in the arts, gained confidence in herself, moved from being home-schooled to enrolling in her public high school, and will be studying fine



arts at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design this Fall. And a third example involves a 14-year old who has been with the program for two years. She is within the autism spectrum, is verbal but does not communicate well, and had worked exclusively in one-on-one mentorships. This summer she wanted to explore pottery in the Center's studio, and that experience led to significant growth as she now makes eye contact, smiles, and answers questions for the first time since she came to the program.

In one of the accompanying images, students receive instruction in a hands-on ceramics class. In another, a group from the Monomoy Regional High School's Alternative Learning Program use the Recording Studio to record a song, after which they learned how to edit and master the recording using software in the studio. And the



third shows a photography exhibit created by Monomoy students working with a photography instructor. The kids used the Photography Studio and its computers, software and printers to prepare for the show, which was very well received by the public and gave the students a sense of pride and accomplishment. MCMA has been able to contribute over \$33,000 to purchase equipment for all three of these studios over the past few years, helping the Rise and Shine program to expand and to offer additional learning opportunities for the young people they serve. We believe it is money well spent.



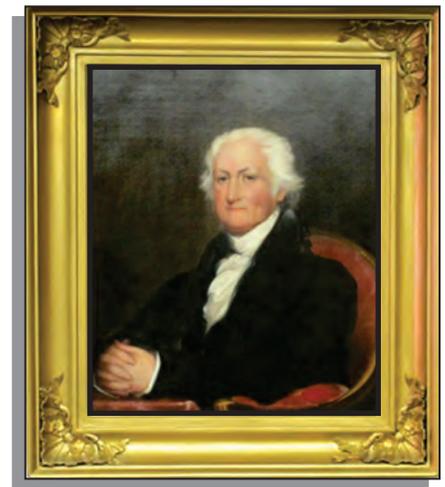
MCMA History

On a wall in our office is a portrait of one of MCMA's charter members, **Zechariah Hicks**, painted by Jane Stuart (daughter of Gilbert Stuart). Both Zechariah and his father (John) answered the call to arms when British troops marched to Lexington and Concord in April of 1775, and his father unfortunately suffered a fatal wound in that battle. The painting was presented to our Association by the Trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts.

Zechariah was born in Cambridge in 1755, and he served a regular apprenticeship to the trade of saddler with the firm of the Thomas Patten Co. in Watertown. Upon completing his apprenticeship he moved to Boston and opened a shop on Cornhill (now Washington Street). He was quite successful, and remained at that location for over 30 years until street modifications caused him to relocate. He moved his shop to Court Street, where he actively continued his business until he reached his 80th birthday. He died in 1842 at the age of 87.

Hicks was married for 47 years, and was father to 14 children, seven of whom pre-deceased him. He was active in the military affairs of the times and served as an officer in the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. He was selected to be one of the marshals of the grand parade that welcomed General George Washington to Boston in 1789. He also was twice elected to the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth.

Zechariah Hicks was an original member of MCMA, served on our Board of Government from 1798 through 1800, and was very active in formulating our petition for incorporation from its inception in 1795 until its acceptance by the Great and General Court in 1806. His portrait remains in great condition, and it hangs with honor in our office.



Zechariah Hicks
(1755-1842)

... and a little more MCMA History

There are still a few members who remember the R. H. White Department Store on Washington Street in Boston, but even they are probably unaware that its founder was also a member of MCMA. **Ralph Huntington White** was born into a farming family in Hinsdale, Massachusetts on January 11, 1841. By the age of 10 he was trading on his own account. He trapped foxes, muskrats, and other fur-bearing animals, treated them himself, and sold the pelts to Boston commission merchants. He turned his earnings into merchandise that he then re-sold door-to-door in his neighborhood, at a savings in time to the purchaser and at a small profit to himself. He saved sufficient funds to enable him to move to Boston in 1863 and open a

partnership under the firm name of Power & White at 52 Hanover Street. Within months the store proved too small. New premises were obtained on Winter Street, and the firm became Wilcox, White, & Roraback, and later Wilcox, White, & Co. But on the first day of 1865 White bought out the interests of his partners and organized the firm as R. H. White & Co. The business prospered from the start, the Winter Street premises were enlarged, and the business was carried on at a large scale for the times. But by 1875 the company had outgrown the location. In 1876 it moved into its new quarters, an ornate, six-story building on Washington Street in the downtown shopping district. Within five years it expanded to encompass the entire block, and employed a force of 2000 to 3000 clerks to attend to the needs of customers, depending on the season of the year.



Ralph Huntington White (1841-1917)

The company was bought by Filene's in 1928, and ownership passed to City Stores in 1944, but both Filene's and City Stores continued the R. H. White name until the doors of the department store were closed for good in 1957. The building was eventually demolished to make way for the Lafayette Place Mall. (City Stores did continue to use the R. H. White brand at some suburban branch stores until 1980.)

Ralph H. White was characterized in one of his obituaries as a man of "indomitable will, tireless energy, great perseverance, shrewdness, and farsightedness." He was of old Mayflower stock (a descendant of Peregrine White), and he possessed one of the finest private art collections in New England. Aside from his art collection, his other great hobby was yachting. He died suddenly of a heart attack at his home on The Fenway in Boston just days before reaching his 76th birthday, and he is buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery. His impressive mausoleum there was designed by **Willard T. Sears**, also a member of MCMA. Ralph H. White joined our Association in 1885 and was a life member.



Above is the R. H. White Department Store on Washington Street in Boston sometime after its closing in 1957. Below is a 1902-1907 postcard view. Below left is the R. H. White mausoleum at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

[The main source for this article was the *MCMA Annual Report for 1917*, which included a reprint of an obituary that appeared in the *Boston Transcript*.]

