



# Annual Report 2025

(July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025)

**Our mission  
is to save and share  
Westminster's past.**

110 Main Street, P.O. Box 177  
Westminster, MA 01473  
978-874-5569

[Www.WestminsterHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.WestminsterHistoricalSociety.org)  
[WestminsterHistoricalSociety@gmail.com](mailto:WestminsterHistoricalSociety@gmail.com)  
Like us on Facebook!

## OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

July 2024– June 2025

President.....Bob Feeley  
Treasurer.....Mike Meyer  
Secretary.....Betsy Hannula  
At Large .....Amber Cardwell  
At Large.....Jeanne Keena  
At Large.....Phil Marysz  
At Large.....Melissa Wintturi

## STAFF

Administrative Assistant	Nadine Leger
Building & Grounds	Mikey Hernandez
Curator	Betsy Hannula
Newsletter Editor	Betsy Hannula



*Westminster Historical Society  
110 Main Street*

## HOUSE & GIFT SHOP HOURS

Wednesdays 9-12 Noon  
Fridays 9-12 Noon  
and other times by appointment

Program meetings will be held on the  
third Sunday of the months  
January through June.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall 2025

Dear Members,

With the coming of fall, my 3 years as president are ending. I became president at the Annual Meeting in 2022 and here it is, already November 2025. These three years have flown by!

I have learned that the activities at the Westminster Historical Society never stop. We have a meeting of the Board of Directors once a month to oversee and coordinate events, but programs keep going all year long.

Participating in Westminster events is not only fun, but leaves a lasting impression with the people we meet, whether it's the children from the 3rd grades at Westminster Elementary School on Colonial Day or the people in town for the annual Cracker Festival and then come into the WHS house to get a bowl of soup cooked over an open fire. Gardeners look forward to the Plant Swap and Sale and people from nearby towns look forward to our fundraising events—the Town Wide Yard Sale, the Attic Treasures Sale and the Christmas Flea Market.

I invite you to come to our monthly programs on the 3rd Sunday of the month, January through June, at 2 pm. Our speakers and presenters are educational and interesting. You will always learn something about our town that you never knew before. If you have an idea for something you'd like to know about, tell us and we'll find a way to present it!

In 2026 we will have a series of new workshops where you can really dive into something that interests you. Be sure to sign up on our web site!

Don't miss the article about our new membership drive in this report. It is focused on raising the money to get the 20,000 items in our collections that have been cataloged onto the internet. You will then be able to research our collections from your home!

Please join us! I've ended my term as president, but I'm not going anywhere. I want to be here for the exciting events coming up next for the Historical Society. I'll be looking for you!

Bob Feeley

# WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

November 9, 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Westminster Historical Society for the fiscal year 2023-2024 was held on Saturday November 9, 2024 at 5:30 pm at the Westminster Senior Center on West Main Street, with 16 members attending.

The meeting was preceded by a Pot Luck dinner, with a lovely variety of dishes which were donated and enjoyed by attendees. Board members Bob Feeley, Mike Meyer, Betsy Hannula and Pat Feeley prepared the dining area and cleaned up afterwards.

The business meeting was opened by President Bob Feeley. Copies of the Annual Report of the Historical Society for the past fiscal year were distributed to everyone. The minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting were read and approved. The list of members of the Board of Directors and officers for the year 2024-2025 were read and their appointments were approved.

The program which followed was presented by Barbara Friedman, former director of the Forbush Library. She used a power point program to illustrate her talk on



*The original of Peckham's only landscape painting hangs in the Forbush Library.*

Deacon Robert Peckham, an artist of primitive paintings in the mid 1800s. He lived at 12 Academy Hill Road and was a strong advocate of the abolitionist movement as well as an important figure in the establishment of the Westminster Academy, which stood across the street from his house and burned down in 1887.

The audience was treated to several images of Peckham's paintings which are hanging in many significant museums across the country. The Historical Society had on display a recent donation to the WHS collections - a copy of the famous Rosa Heywood Painting, donated by former WHS president Linda Phelps.

The evening concluded at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

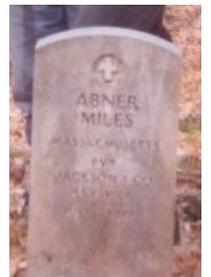
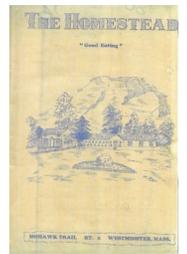
Betsy Hannula  
Secretary

## CURATOR OF COLLECTIONS

We are honored to be trusted with the preservation of thousands of items that tell the story of life in Westminster in the past. We know that seeing, and touching items helps people understand the past better than just reading about it. We are grateful that these donors understand the importance of our mission to save and share the history of our town.

This past fiscal year we received 139 gifts from 15 people. They cover an amazing period of time—from the Revolutionary War period to the present. They include:

- ◇ the banner for the 4H Horse Club,
- ◇ copies of the Oakmont Reflections yearbook,
- ◇ books about Finland, long time immigrants here
- ◇ the account book for Asa Brooks who was owner of the sawmill and country store in Whitmanville,
- ◇ Johnson's Farm egg cartons and egg basket,
- ◇ The gavel used by the first and second women to serve on the Town's Selectboard, Mary Vedoe and Jessica Leger,
- ◇ Information & photos of the grave of Abner Miles, who died of smallpox after the Revolutionary war and is buried on a solitary plot on his former farm land.
- ◇ U.S. Army first aid box used by Chester Sargent in World War II



## ATTIC TREASURES SALE

The Historical Society decided many years ago that we would not throw anything that was usable into the landfill. We searched for and found many outlets to donate our unsold items, and we've done very well!



At the end of the sale, our final destination for items is to put up our "FLEA MARKET OVER. ALL IS FREE." sign. Items always go and we consider it a success!

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## COLONIAL COOKING WITH 3RD GRADERS

We enjoyed working with all the third graders from Westminster Elementary School again this year during Colonial Day. We take part as one of five stations during the day. At the Historical Society house volunteers explained how the fireplace was used for cooking in the early days of Westminster.

The final event with each class was to make waffles with an iron waffle maker over the open fire. The children were then given a part of a waffle to eat.



## WESTMINSTER CRACKER FESTIVAL

The day was gorgeous for the annual Cracker Festival in October 2024. We cooked soup from scratch over the fire in the fireplace. It's always interesting to see how amazed people are to see such a simple thing being done! Once people find out we're giving free hot soup they come back the next year for more.



*Board member Amber Cardwell made our soup over the open fire for all our visitors.*

In addition, the front room was set up with a quiz on antique tools used in early Westminster, and we had our annual Raffle outdoors. A fun day for all!



## UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING

We are grateful every year in September to have volunteers from the United Way Day of Caring come to the Historical Society. This is an opportunity for employees of local businesses to volunteer with local nonprofit organizations during a workday.

Four volunteers helped input data into our computerized database about a large collection of forms with information about houses in Westminster. This is important for all the people who come here and ask about their old house, who lived it in the past, and what changes have been made to it.

Six people helped our Attic Treasures Sale Chairperson, Jeanne Keena, empty the barn of all the donations we had received during the past year and set up for the September sale. Two other volunteer helped prepared our flower garden for the winter. Thanks to all!

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## MEMBERS CHRISTMAS GATHERING



*Bob Feeley, Mike Meyer, Jeanne Keena & Nick Langhart*

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## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

We thank everyone who has supported the Historical Society with his or her membership dues. They are a key portion of our income each year. In addition, it makes us mindful of our responsibility to fulfill our mission to the best of our abilities since our members are counting on us!

Families	13
Individuals	7
Complimentary	6
Contributing	6
Life	21
Seniors	25
Honorary Seniors	27
Business Sponsor	1

## CHRISTMAS 2024

We receive lots of interesting and beautiful things for our Christmas Flea Market. It's an important fundraiser and we're grateful for everyone's support.



Angel greeted folks out doors and vintage carolers were on sale indoors!



*Ann Williams and Betsy Hannula worked with other volunteers on this event.*

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## PLANT SWAP AND SALE

The rain did not stop the gardeners in Westminster and area towns from coming to our annual Plant Swap and Sale. Many exchanges were made with people looking for new plants to add to their property.



*The Crocker Pond Committee has shared the day with us for many years. They registered Westminster families for their free use of the Crocker Pond with stickers for their cars. We also welcomed a new florist in Westminster, Nikki Forrest, who purchased the Legion Hall. She donated plants she is growing there for sale.*

## UPTON SCHOOL UPDATE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The decision to sell the Upton School was a tough one to make. Our hope was to acquire a larger building to fulfill the goals of our mission: to exhibit our collections and make them more accessible to everyone and to store them in environmentally safe conditions. Our efforts came to a halt with the Covid epidemic, and we were no longer able to meet with our members or funders in person.



As of June 30, 2025, our realtor and staff at the Historical Society have shown the Upton School to more than a dozen prospective buyers. Many were housing developers interested in providing a wide variety of apartments. Even though the building is in a residential district, the School Committee was not in favor of having housing located there, so that option has been sidelined.

The other viable option is to use the building as a school again. Several developers have investigated that option, and we are currently pursuing organizations interested in providing a preschool.

The Historical Society Board of Directors considers this a serious responsibility to our members—to find the most appropriate use of the building that will fit the character of our community and provide the services that the people in our town need.

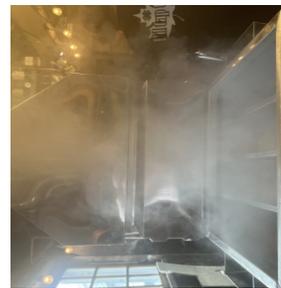
The Board is also very conscious of the fact that we are accountable to the donors of our campaign who believed, as we did, that the renovation of the Upton School would provide the expanded space we need. Those donated funds will be invested in the building which will eventually be our headquarters.

We will keep our members informed as we draw near to the sale of the Upton building, and after that, as we find a new solution to acquire the space we need.

## MAPLE SUGARING

It was a brisk March day when we went to Adam and Sherri Bean's sugar shack to watch maple syrup being made from maple sap. Everyone got to sample fresh maple syrup on vanilla ice cream dished out by Historical Society volunteers.

*This family enjoyed ice cream with fresh maple syrup. Yum!*



*It's a weird fog we see when we watch the water evaporating from the maple sap boiling in the fancy evaporator.*

*Eventually the sap becomes maple syrup. The color changes according to when the sap is collected, changing from lighter color the beginning of the season to a darker color as the season progresses.*



## STUDENT HISTORY AWARDS

This year we were pleased to honor the following students: who demonstrated excellence in history in their schools.

Alice Walsh, a fifth grader at Westminster Elementary School, who was leaving the Elementary School for the Middle School, and Aiden Cleaves, who was a Senior at Oakmont Regional High School. Congratulations to them both!

Each student was awarded a copy of the 2008 History of Westminster for his achievement.

## SCOUTS

We had quite an adventure with Boy Scout Troop 33 of Westminster this spring. The boys wanted to learn how to cook over an open fire in the fireplace and in the bake oven. We agreed to do it at the Historical Society!



Betsy Hanula, Amber Cardwell, and Diane Buker worked with the Scouts and Troop leaders to make an entire meal from

scratch, sausages, corn bread, vegetable soup, and apple pies with whipped cream. It was all delicious, and most all they loved the experience!



## PROGRAMS

A very interesting program this past year was about the Hessian soldiers who were quartered in homes in Westminster after they were captured at the Battle of Bennington in the Revolutionary War. The Hessians were Germans who were hired to fight for the British and found themselves at a loss.



One home they lived in was the Whitney Homestead. While there the captives helped plant an apple orchard for the family!



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## NEW “SHARE OUR HISTORY” MEMBERSHIP PLAN

The Membership committee and Board of Directors worked together to plan and launch a new membership program this year. It will provide critical funds to bring ON-LINE ACCESS to our collections. Volunteers have already entered data for more 20,000 items in our collections, and we are anxious to share them with you and the world. But we need your help. Will you be one of our supporters who says, “Yes, I can help.”?

We’re introducing a sustaining membership platform which uses a subscription membership plan used by the public TV station PBS or radio station GBH or private TV subscriptions such as Netflix or Britbox.

**OPTION 1:** Set up monthly donation of \$10 a month for one year with our free app available on our web site. You may also call the Historical Society to make the arrangements: 978-874-5569. It’ll only take 5 minutes of your time! (You may choose to stop your donations at any time.)

**OPTION 2:** Pay \$100 one-time membership for the first year on our website or by check—the old fashioned way.

**OPTION 3:** Donations of any size for a WHS membership, of course, are always gratefully received.

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS: *(Some of these are new too!)*

- ◆ For this first membership year, you will receive a copy of our 2008 anniversary edition of History of Westminster.
- ◆ Reduced fees at the monthly workshops offered by the Historical Society, January through August.
- ◆ 10% discount on items purchased in our own WHS Gift Shop.
- ◆ Free membership in **NARM (North American Reciprocal Museum Association)** which gives each WHS member who has paid our \$100 membership FREE visits to over 1000 cultural organizations in the country; 89 are in Massachusetts! Please visit their website [www.narmassociation.org](http://www.narmassociation.org) to find out more.
- ◆ Discounts on the Gift Shops and concert/lecture tickets at each of the NARM cultural organizations.

**Westminster Historical Society**  
**Statement of Activities - all classes**  
**July 2024 through June 2025**

	Jul '24 - Jun 25		
Ordinary Income/Expense		Expense	
Income		5000 - Paid Positions	
3008 - Rent		5001 - Administrative Assistant	2,995.00
3009 - Apartment	7,800.00	5003 - Building & Grounds Manager	1,445.00
Total 3008 - Rent	7,800.00	Total 5000 - Paid Positions	4,440.00
3100 - Fundraising Sales		5020 - Insurance	2,853.00
3101 - Sales of Donated Items		5030 - Real estate taxes	979.08
3101.2 - Consignment	1,391.12	5040 - Utilities	
3101.3 - Online	278.24	5041 - Electric Bill	2,444.49
3101 - Sales of Donated Items - Other	95.00	5042 - Gas	4,498.83
Total 3101 - Sales of Donated Items	1,764.36	5043 - Water/Sewer	466.55
3102 - Attic Treasures	1,927.40	Total 5040 - Utilities	7,409.87
3103 - Christmas Flea Market	1,001.46	5050 - Maintenance	
3104 - Perennial Swap & Sale	150.75	5052 - Building	110.48
3105 - Townwide Yard Sale	2,088.09	Total 5050 - Maintenance	110.48
Total 3100 - Fundraising Sales	6,932.06	5070 - Alarm system	479.88
3120 - Special Fundraising Events		5100 - Office Expenses	
3125 - Raffle	280.00	5101 - Office supplies	180.90
3126 - Other	62.91	5109 - Telephone	2,128.70
Total 3120 - Special Fundraising Events	342.91	Total 5100 - Office Expenses	2,309.60
3220 - Annual appeal Income	299.95	5120 - Postage	265.00
3300 - Membership dues	1,680.97	5130 - Bank fees	38.49
3400 - Gift Shop Income		5210 - Fundraising Expenses	
3401 - Product Sales		5212 - Attic Treasures	200.00
3401.1 - 2008 History Book sale Income	115.00	5215 - Townwide Yard Sale	175.14
3401 - Product Sales - Other	330.92	Total 5210 - Fundraising Expenses	375.14
Total 3401 - Product Sales	445.92	5270 - Annual meeting expense	59.00
Total 3400 - Gift Shop Income	445.92	6100 - Newsletters	125.00
3500 - Donations		6300 - Filing fees	970.18
3501 - Miscellaneous	1,136.70	6400 - Membership fees	123.00
Total 3500 - Donations	1,136.70	6700 - Software / computer	540.00
3700 - Memorial gifts income	1,000.00	6800 - Legal & Audit	700.00
Total Income	19,638.51	6830 - Website	2,067.48
		Total Expense	23,845.20
		Net Ordinary Income	-4,206.69
		Other Income/Expense	
		Other Income	
		3970 - Money market interest	0.44
		Total Other Income	0.44
		Other Expense	
		9010 - Income tax	1,648.05
		Total Other Expense	1,648.05
		Net Other Income	-1,647.61
		Net Income	-5,854.30

## Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2025

	Jun 30, 25
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
1020 · Checking - IC Federal C.U.	963.08
1050 · Money Market - ICFCU	
1051 · Upton School	9,814.40
1052 · Summer House sale proceeds	7,597.91
1050 · Money Market - ICFCU - Other	-17,406.47
<b>Total 1050 · Money Market - ICFCU</b>	<b>5.84</b>
1070 · Rent Escrow account	603.98
1080 · Community Foundation of N.C. MA	
1082 · Capital Campaign Endowment	15,399.91
1083 · Upton Center Renovations	15,093.41
<b>Total 1080 · Community Foundation of ...</b>	<b>30,493.32</b>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>32,066.22</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
1200 · Inventory - gifts	15,697.24
1210 · Inventory - books	32,588.70
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>48,285.94</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>80,352.16</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
1420 · Building - 110 Main	45,917.00
1430 · Improvements	21,697.91
1440 · Building - Upton School	120,960.77
1480 · Equipment	6,908.94
1510 · Accumulated depreciation	-78,574.60
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>116,910.02</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>197,262.18</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
2010 · Sales tax payable	0.31
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.31</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.31</b>
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	
1680 · Security deposit	603.98
2205 · Loan Payable	2,824.95
2210 · Def. Income-Finn History Book	81.25
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>3,510.18</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>3,510.49</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
3000 · Opening Bal Equity	125,783.53
3901 · Retained Earnings	73,822.46
Net Income	-5,854.30
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>193,751.69</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>197,262.18</b>

Unaudited—prepared by the Westminster Historical Society