2017 ANNUAL REPORT

The Avery-Copp House’s very own Girl Scout troop members tending to the vegetable gardens during the warmer months of 2017.

Museum Assistant Natalie Livingston and guests at the 2017 Halloween Fairy Tea in October. Photo by Dana Jensen/THE DAY

Guests enjoy sweet and savory nibbles at this year’s annual Avery-Copp House Christmas Open House.

Historic River Tour along the Thames River on the Thames River Heritage Park’s Water Taxi, September 8, 2017.

Museum Director Leslie Evans being filmed in the ACH kitchen for Florence Griswold Museum’s SEE/change project.

Avery-Copp House guests enjoying tea and conversation after the Victorian Fashion Lecture.
2017 ANNUAL REPORT

President’s Message

The Avery-Copp House is growing up! The museum was designated a non-profit organization in January of 2007. The staff and board of trustees accomplished much in the first ten years, including continued care of the house and grounds, the development of educational programs, and the establishment of relationships with other community groups. Museum Director Leslie Evans participated in StEPS (Standards and Excellence Program for History Programs), which helped refine the museum’s policies and procedures.

All those efforts provided the solid footing for museum staff and trustees to expand in new directions, many of which are described in this Annual Report. ACH again participated in Connecticut Open House Day, which this year will be held on June 9, 2018. Chelsea Groton Bank provided funds in support of our summer docent, Molly McElroy. The 1772 Foundation awarded funds to support painting the exterior. A Community Foundation grant supported outreach programs to local elementary schools.

These goals could not have been met without the hard work of the staff and volunteers of the Avery-Copp House.

Natalie Livingston, Museum Assistant, develops and supervises numerous activities for the local Girl Scout Troop. She also puts her mind and talents to the very successful Fairy Teas offered throughout the season at the house. And she brings with her Brett, her husband, one of our volunteers always willing to help out in any way that’s needed.

The Archives holds a treasure-trove of information on 19th and 20th century life in Groton. Under the direction of Archivist Kathy Leuze, students from Connecticut College and UConn have continued the process of organizing the collection. Because our own Leslie Evans is a graduate of Smith College, the museum received a grant from that institution supporting the work of an archival studies student. Tricia Tolles spent 220 hours working in the archives and helping to design a temporary exhibit during the Summer of 2017.

In 2017 the board added a new position. Development Director Jacquie Copp (a distant family relation) came on board in June, bringing a great deal of experience and practical knowledge. Already, her accomplishments include a robust annual appeal, establishing a membership program, adding credit card capability and establishing a database for contact and donation tracking. For a smaller historic house museum, such improvements allow us to connect in efficient ways with our supporters. Jacquie is doing much to help us keep up with the ever-changing times.

Under Museum Director Leslie Evans’ guidance (we call her our Secret Weapon) the museum doubled attendance in 2017. She works with other organizations to encourage interest in all our local museums. Leslie appears on the Groton Public Access program Around the Town, talking about social and cultural history while promoting the museum locally. Her approach is knowledgeable and thoughtful, and she is well-respected throughout the non-profit community and by our board and staff.

The ACH is privileged to have a solid core of volunteers who help in many different ways. Gretchen Gauthier has put in countless hours inside the house scraping, painting and plastering alongside her husband, board member George Gauthier. Gerry Keeler has been painting and scraping the museum’s new historic storm windows and doing a myriad of other jobs. Gerry, and his wife Hali who is also a member of the board, own a home overlooking the museum. Tim Wells, husband of our longest serving board member Priscilla Wells, is always on hand for setting up tents for our annual Garden Party. These are just a few of the people who give generously of their time and abilities on our behalf.

2017 was my first year as president of the board. And although I have worked in the museum world for more than thirty years in social history, textiles and clothing history, I continue to be inspired by the abilities of staff and board members who willingly give their diverse talents, and time, to the Avery-Copp House. Thanks to them all.

A special thanks goes to the Copp family for their continued support of the Avery-Copp House as we work to ensure the future of the museum.

A historic house museum has a special place in the community. By preserving the past, we guarantee that future generations can learn about, and from, the past. Certainly, without history there would be no future.

Susan J. Jerome
President, Board of Trustees

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President’s Message</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Happenings</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for the Future</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources &amp; Investments</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you!</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 Supporters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
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</table>

Without History there would be No Future

Page 2

154 Thames Street  |  Groton, CT 06340  | www.averycopthouse.org
Recent Happenings

Education/Outreach
Immigration Program  
Public school students  
Adult Ed  
Group Tours  
CT College Museum Studies  
Eagle Scout projects  
Girls Scouts  
Riverfront Children’s Center  
UConn PhD student resource  
Smith College Intern

Current Collaborations
Thames River Heritage Park  
Water Taxi Tours  
Collaboration Planning Sessions  
Florence Griswold Museum  
SEE/change educational project  
History Through Food  
World War I Posters from ACH  
Midsummer Festival  
Wee Fairie Village  
The Magic of Christmas  
Groton Bank Day  
Multi-location, multi-partner event

Museum Interior
Third floor re-plastered and repainted  
Parlor paint restoration  
Kitchen stove restoration

2017 Milestones
Hired a Development Director  
ACH Membership launched 7/2017  
Now have credit card processing capability  
More than 1300 visitors to ACH  
Created contact/donor/event database to track visitor experience(s) and outcome  
$1.25 million Endowment balance  
ACH Blueprint for Success implementation  
1,240 Volunteer Hours on behalf of ACH

Events & Programs
Fairy Teas  
Herbs for Health  
Ghosts of Groton Bank  
Suffragette Tea  
Dickens Parlor Christmas  
CT Open House Day  
Sea Song & Artisanal Beer  
World War I Poster Archives

Facilities & Grounds
Museum exterior paint  
Carriage House exterior paint  
Historic reproduction storm windows installed  
Fence restoration  
Fence installation

Community Outreach

Our civic efforts have widened over the years to include people from the age of 2 to 102. We regularly provide programming for the Riverfront Children’s Center, a neighboring organization that provides childcare for the underserved. Our Girl Scout Troop, made up primarily of military families, holds their weekly meetings at the museum earning badges and hopefully finding a sense of community during their time in Groton. We have provided numerous archival and living history lessons for UConn & Connecticut College students who continue to return for deeper studies of our plentiful family and local collection. Our summer intern this year was an archival major from Smith College. Adult/family programming includes lectures and hands-on workshops covering topics like historic foods, gardening, fashion, holidays, and the wildly popular annual Haunted Walking Tours. Our recent Victorian Fashion Lecture & Tea proved so popular that we have added a second date (see below) to accommodate the high demand.

Blueprint for Success is what we have named our current approach to short- and long-term strategic planning to continually “Increase the Relevance of the Avery-Copp House”. Led and facilitated by Jacqui Copp, and attended by Leslie Evans and the majority of the board of trustees, the first session was held on November 10, 2017 and focused on identifying specific benchmarks for measuring success. The resulting list of 20 potential measurements was grouped into the following four major categories: Community, Endowment, Marketing & Relationships. During the second session held on November 29th the group began the process of creating an achievable list of specific strategies and tactics organized into categories, timing and responsibility (who, what and when). On February 10th a third session was held to complete the process of creating achievable tactical steps toward each short-term strategy.
Planning for the Future

Thames River Heritage Park is a new kind of state park made up of a collection of almost 20 national and historic sites along the shores of the Thames River — linked by a water taxi — that tell the stories that shaped our nation over the past 400 years. The park draws together historical and contemporary sites, communities and institutions on both sides of the river.

The Avery-Copp House Museum, together with the Panoram Foundation, was instrumental in the hiring of and the planning with the Yale Urban Design Workshop to create the Thames River Heritage Park Plan in 2015, and in establishing the Park as a non-profit organization in 2016.

Financial Sustainability continues to be the primary focus of the board of trustees and the museum staff. With the addition of our new development director Jacqui Copp seven months ago, there has been measurable progress, and the groundwork has been and continues to be laid for long-term relationships and donor base expansion. Some specific efforts include a robust annual appeal, launching our membership campaign, adding credit card capability, and establishing a database for contact and donation tracking.

The museum was established and has been maintained largely through a multi-year pledge by the Copp family foundation, and we continue to be generously supported by them and many others. However, our long-term goal is to become financially independent as we continue to build our endowment, grow our base of individual donors, and further enhance the use of our property for programs, events and community needs.

Preserving our Future

When speaking of old houses, it is certainly true that the work is never done. The wear and tear of centuries, as well as the impact of New England’s weather, guarantees that we will always have a maintenance project under way, and a few more waiting in the wings.

A maintenance plan is essential for a historic house museum, both for short-term and long-term projects. Over the past year, our undertakings have included exterior and interior painting, plaster repair, and installation of historic reproduction storm windows.

| Without History there would be No Future | 2017 Annual Report |

![Facility & Grounds Master Plan](image)

With the completion of a matching grant from the CT Trust for Historic Preservation, the Avery-Copp House now has a facility-based 73-page Master Plan created by Kent + Frost Landscape Architecture to help guide short- and long-term planning decisions.

The Master Plan is intended as a user-friendly guide for strategic and sustainable improvements to the museum. These include recommendations and strategies for both new development and historic preservation. The plan’s guiding principles include:

1. Assess, preserve and incorporate historic features
2. Improve the visitor experience
3. Improve site accessibility
4. Enable expansion of educational programs and events
5. Facilitate efficient operations and maintenance
6. Devise a sustainable strategy for vegetation management
7. Adhere to US Secretary of the Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties
8. Improve the riverfront property to make it a real working part of the museum facility for daily use and special events
9. Gain sufficient access to the Ramsgill Street property

![Historic River Tour along the Thames River on the Thames River Heritage Park’s Water Taxi 2017](image)

Most recently the Thames River Heritage Park board and staff have been reaching out to its partners for input and feedback, and recently held a collaborative planning session. Along with representatives from other partner sites, museum director Leslie Evans and development director Jacqui Copp represented ACH at a day-long session designed to bring about deeper collaboration and structure to the Park’s ongoing initiatives.

We are enthusiastic about the many possibilities for the Thames River Heritage Park, and look forward to continued team efforts to build programs and solidify the Park’s place in Connecticut.

![CCAPA (CT Chapter of the American Planning Association) 2017 Implementation Award presented to Avery-Copp House, City of Groton and Thames River Heritage Park, specifically recognizing efforts to launch Connecticut’s first heritage park](image)

CCAPA (CT Chapter of the American Planning Association) 2017 Implementation Award presented to Avery-Copp House, City of Groton and Thames River Heritage Park, specifically recognizing efforts to launch Connecticut’s first heritage park. 1-12-18
## Resources & Investments

### INCOME

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### MUSEUM EXPENSES

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### CARRIAGE HOUSE EXPENSES

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### TOTAL EXPENSES

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kiítos
Donors & Members

FOUNDATIONS & GRANTING AGENCIES
1772 Foundation
Chelsea Groton Foundation
Chester Kitticheski Family Foundation
CT Humanities/StefPs Program
CT Trust for Historic Preservation
Katherine Forest Crafts Foundation
Panoram Foundation
Pfizer Foundation
Robert McLean Foundation

BENEFACTORS ($2,000+)
Luther King Capital Management

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Toni Halsey
Shawn Hour
Hall & Gerry Keele
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Brian Dumas & Taylor Plankett
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Margie & Jeff Geiger
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Brian Kent
Michelle Little
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Nancy Steinberg
Inez Watson in honor of Ella Watson
Priscilla & Tim Wells

CONTRIBUTORS ($100 to $199)
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Eugenie Capp
Avery & Spencer Dickinson
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Mary Fitzgerald
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Julie & John Leonard
Phyllis & Fred Meyer

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Sandra Sinkowski
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Gail Smith
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Anita Telkowski
Philip Turtill
Annie van Dyke
Jean Vosburgh
Gay & Steve Weber
Sarah Welchel
Minda Wetzell
Charmaine Whitney
Kelley Winocur
Kelly Wood
Greg Zabel

IN-KIND DONATIONS
Berk’s Fine Painting
Brapiarch Enterprises
CBYD Trito
Chuck Plo Carpenter
City of Groton/Groton Utilities
Karen Neild Accounting
Luther Fence Company
Sierranza Electric
Streamlined Development

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Harry Apicelli
Martin Artale
Bruce Avery
Charlotte Barnum
Deborah Bird
Donna Brandelli
Emily Casey & Kane Borden
Joan Cohn
Patricia Copp
Joan Delaney
Margaret Dempsey
Janet Downs
Lynne Ensign
Brent Eugenides & Robyn Hoffman
Leslie Evans
Suanne Furr
George & Gretchen Gauthier
Margie & Jeff Geiger
Day & Chuck Halsey
Teresa Hamilton
Robert & Donna Hellmers
Veronica Hoard
Susan Jerome
Anita Kaiser
Hall & Gerry Keeler
Kent & Frost Landscape Architecture
Betsy Copp Lebel
Kathy Leune
Natalie & Brett Livingston
Jane & Kenneth Moriarty
Jeanne Munnally
Barbara Nagy
Catherin O’Crowley
Leslie Olding & Laurin Killian
Penny Parsekian & Geoff Kaufman
Diane M. Shields
David Rae & Dan Hansen
Leslie Smith & Philip Wellman
Jim & Irma Streeter
Louisa Watus
Priscilla & Tim Wells

Without History there would be No Future
Board Committees

Executive Committee
Susan J. Jerome, Chair  
Bruce Avery  
Brent Eugenides  
Priscilla Wells

Collections & Acquisitions
Emily Casey  
Sarah Clement  
Leslie Evans, ex officio  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio  
Jim Streeter

Community Outreach & Education
Deb Dickey  
Leslie Evans, ex officio  
Andy Halsey  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio  
Jim Streeter

Development & Fundraising
Sarah Clement  
Andy Halsey  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio  
Priscilla Wells

Finance
Bruce Avery  
Brent Eugenides  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio  
Priscilla Wells

Governance
Emily Casey  
Janet Downs  
Hali Keeler  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio

Personnel
Janet Downs  
Hali Keeler  
Susan J. Jerome

Property
Bruce Avery  
George Gauthier  
Susan J. Jerome, ex officio

Vision
The vision of the Avery-Copp House is to be an integral part of the historic fabric of the region through the preservation, documentation and curation of the Avery-Copp family collection, the development and operation of a living history museum, and by serving as a community resource for education, events and research. The Avery-Copp House seeks to be recognized as a prominent historic destination and a contributing resource within the Thames River Heritage Park. It also endeavors to facilitate and catalyze Groton Bank's revitalization to improve the visitor experience.

Mission
The Avery-Copp House celebrates, preserves, and documents the historic home, its collection, and the grounds belonging to the Avery and Copp families in Groton, CT. Our purpose is to engage the public in learning about the history of Groton through the study of domestic life as it was experienced in this house and the surrounding community.