

Grist from Chase's Mill

December 2020



Completed exterior of Chase's Mill, from the northwest

“Energy and persistence conquer all things.” — Benjamin Franklin

Dear Friends,

Even as the coronavirus has kept most of us homebound, plenty is happening at Chase's Mill.

Grants

In November, we were awarded a \$52,362 grant from the [Timken Foundation](#). Headquartered in Ohio, and with an office in Keene, The Timken Company is a great supporter of education and community enrichment. Timken's generous donation will help us to purchase tools, tables and chairs, and office equipment for the Mill. It will also be used to create a nature path along the brook, and to match funds for an existing grant.



Construction and Site Improvement

In October, we closed on Chris Madigan's donation of land along Pine Cliff Road that connects the Mill to the lake and hosts the small water body known as "Lake Edith."

Construction is now underway to install a wheelchair-accessible lift (see photo above), which should be completed in January 2021. Additional electrical outlets will also be installed during the winter, and items such as flooring and storage upstairs in the Community Room will be finished. Installation of a septic system will begin in late spring.

Programming

This year has also seen the launch of our virtual programming. The [A Sense of Place](#) series has enabled us to explore what makes Chase's Mill and the surrounding area so special. Through sharing stories and memories, panel discussions,



and interviews, plus filmed tours, we've learned about the history and culture of the area, and we've experienced a taste of its poetry and music.

We closed out the 2020 event series with profiles of notable community members, past and present. In **"Stories from the Holler: Suffragist, Reproductive Rights Activist, Artist, Writer Mary Ware Dennett"** on October 27, historian Dr. Helen Frink interviewed Sharon Spaulding live on camera about the remarkable activist/artist Mary Ware Dennett (1872-1947). Mary's former husband, Hartley Dennett, built Chase's Mill and

once owned the Levi Warren House (and is Sharon's great-grandmother by marriage).

In **"Breaking Bread: Noah Elbers and Orchard Hill Breadworks"** on December 1, we presented a short film interview with artisan baker Noah Elbers, spotlighting our beloved bakery's new grain mill, which uses a grindstone similar to those once used at Chase's Mill.



Originally intended as a temporary pivot, the online series has been so well received that we've decided to continue with these gatherings. Each month, between 80 to 100 people join in. Programming will resume on February 2 with a look at the types of activities and work that people used to engage in during the long winter months. If you miss an evening, recordings are available on our [website](#).

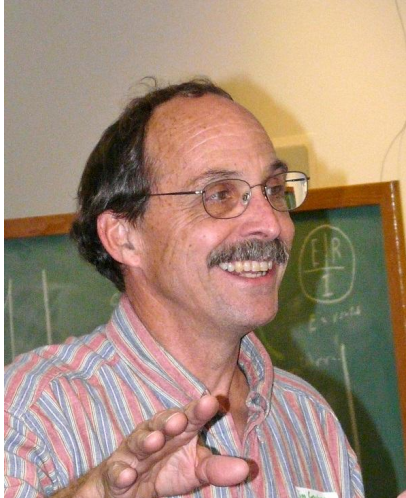
While health and safety remain our top priority, our In-Person Community Programming team is at work designing curricula for classes and activities that we hope to host next summer. These will include woodworking and other types of craftsmanship, plus the art of storytelling and other forms of wordcraft. Exhibits that bring history to life while also looking to the future are also being planned. No official date has been set for opening, but stay tuned!

Board Changes

In October, we welcomed Mark Danahy as our new Treasurer. At the end of December, **Bob Brown** and **Sharon Spaulding** will be stepping off the Board of Directors. Bob and Sharon joined the Mill's board in 2015 and each has worn many hats. If you've met Bob, you know that he is as big a treasure as the mill itself. He can read its timbers as a musician reads a score and, as the person responsible for overseeing renovation, he has brought the structure back to life. A former science teacher and high school administrator, he has also been instrumental in designing curricula. Bob assures us that you'll still see him at the Mill, but teaching classes, leading tours, and tinkering in the shop.

Sharon has served as the board's Vice President, Treasurer, head of Communications, head of Virtual Events, and of course, as President. During the summer, she will be literally a stone's throw from the Mill; during the winter, merely a phone call away.

Taking over as of January 1, 2021 will be **Jim Gruber** (below, left) as Chair and **Helen Frink** (below, right) as Co-Chair. Jim is the former chair of Antioch University's Environmental Studies program. A long-time resident of Alstead, Jim has served on the board for more than two years and he chairs our Community Programming team. Helen is a retired professor from Keene State College and author of the town history, *Alstead Through the Years*. She joined the board in 2015 and has been the powerhouse behind our continued success in earning prestigious grants. Our best intentions would have remained merely good ideas without her formidable energy and skill.



As we look to a new year, Chase's Mill is on sound financial footing. We are clear on our mission and purpose. We are ready to open our doors when it is safe to do so. And we are ever grateful to our growing community of friends, supporters, and volunteers.

If you would like to make a gift to Chase's Mill, you can do so online or by mailing a check to: MHHA / SquareTail, 39 Simon Street, Nashua NH 03060.

Best wishes,

Sharon Spaulding, Outgoing Chair/Communications/Virtual Programs

Helen Frink, Incoming Co-Chair/Grants

Jim Gruber, Incoming Co-Chair/Community Programming

Betsy Anderson, Secretary & Governance

Dan Bartlett, Architect, Building Team

Bob Brown, Construction Manager

Mark Danahy, Treasurer

Jim Howard, Collections Manager & Curating

Bryony Romer, Fundraising

Reminder: If you shop on Amazon, please consider signing up for Amazon Smile and designating the Mill Hollow Heritage Association as the nonprofit of your choice. Amazon will donate a percentage of your shopping dollars. To date, in 2020, we've received \$232.66 through this program.

Visit the [Mill Hollow Heritage Association website!](#)

Our promise is to provide a safe, welcoming environment in which people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to learn, to build, to tinker, and to create.

