State Street
By Michael Kenney

Think “State Street,” and it’s Boston’s noble boulevard from the Old State House to Long Wharf that springs to mind. And it doesn’t hurt the imagery to recall that it was originally “King Street.”

“State Streets” are a civic ornament in other old seaport towns like Newburyport and New Bedford and most notably Marblehead, where it leads, in an echo of Boston’s, from the Town House down to the docks and boatyards.

Then there’s that would-be seaport, Cambridgeport. It, too, has a State Street, but with none of the grand airs of its sisters. For one thing, you have to go looking for it. And for another, once you’ve found it, there’s not much there—and only the hint of its name to suggest it might have served a grand purpose.

(continued on page 6)
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Planning for the Second Century

As your Society looks to its future, the CHS Council has embarked on a strategic planning process. This effort asks such basic questions as: What are we trying to accomplish? What is our purpose? What is our niche in preserving Cambridge history? The goal is to agree on our objectives for the next five years and to establish a long-range plan.

We began with a retreat in March attended by councilors, advisors, and staff. Karen Davis first summarized the various challenges facing the Society in its four major areas of operation: collections (archives and objects), education (programs, interpretation, exhibitions), publications (books, pamphlets, newsletter, Web site), and preservation of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House. Because many of the challenges are financial, Paula Paris, chair of the development committee, presented some concepts and thinking required for successful fund raising, particularly “putting away the tin cup” in favor of encouraging “investment” in collecting, documenting, and communicating the history of Cambridge. Paula asked us to write down the answers to two questions: What does the CHS mission mean to you, and what is your vision for the future of the CHS? The retreat concluded with a discussion of the many views presented and a decision to focus on specific points in each council meeting for the remainder of the year.

Of particular note was the conversation around the historical value of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House to the community vs. the cost of its stewardship. Another important discussion concerned what niche the CHS should occupy in relation to other organizations in the city that are concerned with collecting and preserving Cambridge history, especially the Cambridge Historical Commission and the Cambridge Public Library. I invited Charles Sullivan, director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, to speak at the June Council meeting. He explained the operation of the Commission, including its archival collections, and suggested ways in which the Society and Commission can interact productively.

Susan Flannery, director of the Cambridge Public Library, attended the September Council meeting to discuss the library’s plans for the Cambridge History Room, which will be a state-of-the-art archives facility.

She indicated that the library would be pleased to work with the CHS to make our archival collections available to researchers in the new facility, which will be staffed by an archivist. It should be open in two to three years.

Over the coming months, we will consider the many other aspects of operating such a multifaceted organization as the CHS with the goal of creating a master plan that will establish our priorities and guide our decisions in the years to come. Please stay tuned for more results of this important process.

Ted Hansen
FROM THE DIRECTOR

Read All About It!

“The Dana Saga” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, “Gallows Hill, The Ancient Place of Execution” by Thomas Francis O’Malley, “The Streets of Cambridge, Their Origin and History” by Lewis Morey Hastings—these are among the intriguing articles to be found in the publications of the Cambridge Historical Society. Known collectively as *Proceedings*, these papers are arguably the most important contribution the Society has made to the documentation of Cambridge history. The carefully researched papers—often accompanied by photographs and maps— are drawn from diaries, letters, manuscripts, and the recollections of the authors themselves. Publication of the papers ensured that the information would be available in libraries for generations to come.

Now somewhat anachronistic, the term “Proceedings” was in common usage when the CHS was founded in 1905. It was a record of the Society’s meetings—proceedings—which consisted of one member reading a paper he or she had written on some aspect of Cambridge history to the other members. Each year, several meetings produced a number of papers that were bound into a softcover book that was available to members and others who wished to buy it. Each volume of *Proceedings* also served as an annual report, listing the council, members of the Society, and reports from the secretary, treasurer, and curator. Some volumes included obituaries.

Many local, state, and regional historical societies, including the Massachusetts Historical Society, published their proceedings. The MHS Web site states: “From 1859 to 1997, the *Proceedings* captured the dynamic intellectual achievements and contributions to historical scholarship of the Society’s members and friends.” The same could certainly be said for the CHS *Proceedings*, which consist of 44 volumes published between 1905 and 1979. The CHS published a 300-page index to these volumes in 1979. The most recent volume, *Essays on Cambridge History* (1998), is a selection of 10 papers presented to the Society from 1980 to 1985.

Since then, the Society’s programs have grown to include slide and PowerPoint lectures, walking tours, and visits to historic buildings—programs that don’t necessarily result in papers for publication. In order to maintain our commitment to studying and publishing Cambridge history, we have produced several booklets along with our newsletter and are now hard at work on *A City’s Life and Times: Cambridge in the 20th Century*. This volume contains 20 essays about Cambridge politics, art, literature, religions, clubs, music, neighborhoods, etc., written in the tradition of the *Proceedings* by people who are local experts.

Bound issues of CHS *Proceedings* are available in the reference section of the Cambridge Public Library. Back issues of most volumes can be purchased from the CHS. We will soon have a list of titles posted on our Web site, which now includes images of our most recent publications and information about ordering.

Karen L. Davis

It’s Bart!
This photo, which we suspected was of CHS benefactor Bart Brinkler as a young man *The (Newetowne Chronicle, Summer 2006)* has been confirmed as his Princeton University photo.
SOCIETY EVENTS

Ben Franklin Exhibition, June 27

Joyce Chapin (second from right), professor of history at Harvard and one of the curators of “Benjamin Franklin: A How-To Guide,” gave CHS members a peek into Franklin’s brilliant mind by guiding us through an exhibition at the Houghton Library. As she put it, “The exhibition explores the intellectual influences on him—what made Franklin Franklin—progressing to how he then influenced others.” The exhibition was one of two mounted at Harvard to commemorate Franklin’s 300th birthday. We are grateful to Dennis Marnon and Thomas Horrocks of Houghton Library for arranging the private gallery tour and reception.

Annual River Cruise, August 9

The weather was fabulous on the evening of our Charles River cruise. More than 50 people enjoyed the ride aboard the Henry Longfellow as past CHS president George Hanford talked about the various bridges that span the Charles and regaled passengers with historic and humorous factoids. Hanford then quizzed participants on his talk, and a few lucky winners received tickets for future cruises, compliments of the Charles Riverboat Company.

Cambridge Discovery Days, July 1 & 8

Sally Hild points out the evolution of Cambridge’s streetscape on this 1877 city map during the “Discovering History Through a Child’s Eyes” tour—one of four events held by the CHS during “Cambridge Discovery Days.” Fifth-graders had an opportunity to see how the architecture evolved at the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House and viewed featured items from our collections. The CHS thanks Artist & Craftsman Supply for donating materials for this event.

Mount Auburn Cemetery, Sept. 10

The CHS’s other Discovery Day events included a tour of the British Loyalists of Brattle Street, a guided tour of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House, and a slide lecture of architectural styles found in Cambridge.

Mount Auburn Cemetery, a National Historic Landmark open to the public year-round, celebrated its 175th anniversary in September. This program was one of several events commemorating the occasion.
COLLECTIONS UPDATE

A Notable Cambridge Family Donates Two Portraits to the Historical Society

By Lindsay Leard Coolidge, Curator

Henry and Peter Vandermark have generously donated two ancestral portraits of the Henderson family to the CHS. The portrait of John Johnston Henderson (see page 12)—one of the founders of the Henderson Brothers Carriage Company—dates from 1883 and includes an inscription on the stretcher: “Mrs. E. B. Gage had this painted in China for John J. Henderson from a photo.” The second portrait is a conté crayon drawing, also based on a photograph, of Henderson’s three eldest daughters—Cora, Mabel, and Grace. These Victorian parlor portraits are a significant addition to our collection of paintings, and they now hang on the second floor of the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House, allowing us to comment on the history of the Henderson Carriage Company during our tours.

The Henderson family moved to North Cambridge in 1840, and in 1863 John married Celia Isabel Gage. In 1869 John and his elder brother Robert Henderson founded the company, which by 1892 was hailed as the largest carriage manufacturer in the world. It was housed in the large brick building at 2067-2089 Massachusetts Avenue. Given John’s business success and stature in the community, it is fitting that he commissioned a portrait of his daughters and that his wife’s family commissioned a portrait of him. The two portraits descended through Mabel Henderson Vandermark to her daughter Celia Vandermark Scudder of Cambridge. Following the latter’s recent death, her heirs donated them to the historical society.

The portraits are unique in our collection because they are based on photographs, a popular practice during the late Victorian era. With the advent of daguerreotype portraits at mid-century, many painters competed by creating photographic likenesses of their sitters. In addition, paintings based on photographs were a less timely and costly alternative to sitting for a portrait. The drawing of the Henderson children is a remarkably detailed and precise rendering of the photograph it is based on (also donated by the Vandermarks). The artist was even faithful to the black-and-white tonality of the original. John Henderson’s portrait is also a highly realistic likeness, painted in a purely “American style” by a Chinese artist who presumably specialized in tourist portraits.

The CHS is greatly indebted to the Vandermarks for such a fitting donation documenting the lives of noteworthy Cantabrigians.

Calling all History Projects

If you know of a local history project in your neighborhood, street, or block, the CHS would love to hear about it.

E-mail us at info@cambridgehistory.org or call us at 617-547-4252.
State Street
(continued from page 1)

The street is listed in Christopher Hail’s “Cambridge Buildings and Architects” as having been laid out in 1800, some five years before Cambridgeport was designated a “United States port of delivery.”

Its timing was very bad, for President Jefferson’s 1807 Embargo on trade with Britain hit Cambridgeport hard. As the Cambridge Historical Commission’s Cambridgeport Survey put it, “Land values plummeted and commercial ventures faltered.” By the time the War of 1812 ended in 1815, “any hope for Cambridgeport as a great commercial city had been dashed.” And State Street was left hanging.

Hail’s street listings suggest that development of any consequence did not begin until close to midcentury, with the building of residences that doubled as workshops for a variety of artisans—carpenters, brush makers, a bacon curer.

The first—and only—major commercial development came with the arrival of the Davenport Car Works, a pioneer in the building of railroad cars—“Constantly on hand and made to Order,” as an advertisement put it in the early 1840s.

A ca. 1854 woodcut—a “visionary” view, in the opinion of the Survey’s authors—shows an extensive complex, with a main building on Main Street and extensions running along Osborn Street, where State Street comes to its two-block end. And in a reminder of the all-too-visionary plans for a seaport on the Charles River, in the background can be seen the river and several ships heading for a Davenport wharf.

Davenport went out of business in 1857, and its buildings were used by a variety of other enterprises. According to the Survey, it was there, in October 1876, that fame touched State Street: Thomas A. Watson, in one of those buildings, and Alexander Graham Bell, in Boston, engaged in what has been described as the first reciprocal conversation between two distant points.

The Davenport buildings on Osborn Street stand today and give the State Street explorer a welcome conclusion to a dusty trek along its cracked pavements and obstructed sidewalks. The buildings were purchased in 1998 by MIT and restored for biotech research. Shire, a pharmaceutical firm engaged in genetic therapy is their current occupant. The reconstruction project received a city Preservation Award in 2003.

The CHS applauds Steve Surette for collecting and publishing the memories of people who grew up in North Cambridge from the 1920s to the 1960s. As Steve wrote: “It is my hope that this nostalgic journey will please the readers and encourage them to relate a few of their own tales of going to school, playing in the parks, traveling the streets and avenues, and simply doing the things that kids did.” Liberally illustrated with drawings and photographs—many from private collections—the magazine is a multilevel historical treasure chest.

You can order the inaugural issue by sending a check for $7 to Surette Graphic Services, P.O. Box 750002, Arlington Heights, MA 02475.
In November 2005, Lewis Clark, a former CHS council member and retired president of the Cambridge Trust Company, donated several documents that he found among old family papers. One was a speech, “Cambridge Half a Century Ago: 1889–1939,” by Elizabeth L. Bond (Cousin Bessie to Mr. Clark). Miss Bond, a charter member of the Cambridge Plant Club, presented her paper in January 1939 at the club’s 50th anniversary celebration. Although a typed version of her talk is in the club’s archives at the Schlesinger Library, the handwritten draft is a treasure, reflecting Miss Bond’s spirit and intelligence.

Miss Bond’s paper is a weighing of what Cambridge had gained and lost during the 50 years from 1889 to 1939. To Bond, born in 1853, the Cambridge of 1889 was more “settled and stable” than the times before or after. The pre-automobile Cambridge of her memory was a quiet place. “Strolling through our streets I used to memorize poetry. Imagine that today!” (Imagine that in 2006!) Though rules of social etiquette were strict, “we knew almost everyone in town.” Electricity in homes was “undreamed of,” and therefore not missed. Telephones, “in occasional use,” were considered by some to be “a nuisance rather than a convenience,” and during a storm, “a very real fire hazard.” Though every “home except the poorest had running water and plumbing…a single bathroom was usually considered sufficient…. When one fine mansion was furnished with three, it caused some discussion…. There were no moving pictures to see every day or two,” but the best plays at the Boston theaters were well attended, as were concerts and theatricals. The “now popular cocktail parties” were unknown, but there were afternoon teas and occasional receptions and many dances for young people.

By 1939, certain pleasures were no longer part of Cambridge life. One example to wonder at: Thrilling sleigh rides, propelled by a “double span” of horses galloping over crisp snow at what seemed a terrifying rate of speed; “breathless, frosty, exciting drives ending with a hot supper at the house of a hospitable friend.” Other once popular pastimes—sewing circles, whist parties, picnics, and various excursions for wildflowers, mushrooms, bird study, or just the enjoyment of an invigorating walk through the fields—were not pursued so often or by so many.

Miss Bond did give credit to improvements made over the years. She recalled that the banks of the Charles had been “very unsightly” in 1889. “Redeeming the river banks has meant a great deal to Cambridge in beauty, public health and comfort.” The building of the subway line to Harvard Square, as well as the closing of the river to barge traffic, had greatly facilitated travel between Boston and Cambridge. In 1889, the trip by horsecar “was a long one at best and we had to allow for a possible delay at the drawbridge.”

(continued on page 8)
The delays in unheated horsecars in winter were often bitterly cold. Miss Bond spoke from experience, for she used the cars every day. Still, on the plus side of the earlier time, Miss Bond recalled that “some of the choicest bits of humor” were incidental to those long trips to and from Boston.

Elizabeth Lidstone Bond (1853–1943) lived a quiet Cambridge life. Her paternal grandfather, William Cranch Bond, established Harvard College’s first observatory in 1839 and served as its first director. Her maternal grandfather, Thaddeus William Harris, M.D., was librarian of Harvard College from 1831 to 1856. Her father, George Phillips Bond, who succeeded his father as director of the observatory, was a pioneer in astrophotography. Orphaned at the age of 11, Elizabeth left several reminiscences of her childhood and forebears. However, little is known of her adult life beyond that she taught botany and loved poetry. At a Plant Club meeting in 1916, she read a long and ingenious poem entitled “A Floral Wedding,” in which all the nouns and adjectives were names of flowers. She is buried in the Bond family plot at the Cambridge Cemetery with her father, George Phillips Bond (1825–1865), her mother, Harriet Gardner Bond (1829–1858), and her sisters, Catherine Harris Bond (1857–1923) and Harriet Denny Bond, who died in infancy in 1858. The next time you turn onto Bond Street, think of the family for whom the street was named.

**Centennial Book Update**

This book has been a long time in coming, but it is on track. The complexity of dealing with 18 different contributors and 20 different essays has prolonged the copy editing process. However, the book jacket and book interior have been designed. Most illustrations are captioned and ready to go. As soon as the final editing is complete, the book will go to the printer. It has been a much more challenging project than we first imagined, but when it is published in 2007, it will be a publication of which the CHS can be proud.

_Daphne Abeel_

We are grateful to the Cambridge Savings Bank for underwriting the book.

**Thank you, Chip**

Chip Allen—seen here working on the computer in our archives—answered our call for a volunteer to help upgrade and maintain our office hardware, software, and network.
FROM THE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

Mark Time
By Mark Vassar

The Gutheim Collection

You may recall reading in the summer issue of the Newetowne Chronicle that Marjorie Gutheim left a $10,000 bequest to the CHS. Subsequently, we received a call from the law firm settling her estate saying that they were preparing her house for sale, the family had removed what they wanted, and would we be interested in her papers? Indeed we were.

Ted Hansen, Sally Hild, and I arrived at her house on Huron Avenue with dozens of archival boxes, which we filled with letters, photographs, scrapbooks, and business papers to bring back to the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House for sorting. Much of what we found was expected: family photographs, correspondence between Marjorie and her friends and family, and course materials from Radcliffe and Columbia, as well as Mount Vernon Seminary, where she was dean—all important in documenting the life of this native Cantabrigian.

Then we began to uncover some special gems. Marjorie’s father, Herman Gutheim—who was chief of the Cambridge Fire Department, retiring in 1946—maintained many records documenting the fire department’s history. His diaries contain daily notations of fire alarms and weather conditions. Scrapbooks contain hundreds of photographs of both fire department members and the interiors and exteriors of buildings at which they had battled fires. His correspondence documents his effort as fire chief to receive a special dispensation to purchase an aluminum alloy ladder for the fire department engine during World War II, a time when the production of metal for domestic purposes was severely limited.

We are grateful to Helen Ewer, the office manager at Wade & Horowitz, for realizing that the Gutheim papers might contain valuable material for our archives. Without her diligence, these treasures may have disappeared forever. That Marjorie herself didn’t make these arrangements is puzzling because she had a Ph.D. in history, volunteered in the CHS archives, and had been employed by the Massachusetts Historical Society. Perhaps because she was a modest woman and had transcribed the papers of such historically significant people as John Winthrop, it may never have occurred to her that the record of her life and her family was important to preserve. Because collecting the papers and photographs of Cambridge people and places is our mission, we suspected that the Gutheim papers would be important. We were not disappointed.

This late 1930s photograph is typical of Herman Gutheim’s meticulous labeling. Cambridge Mayor John D. Lynch (far left) appears to be greeting members of the fire department. Chief Gutheim is second from left. Other firemen pictured are (l to r) McNally, Sheehan, Harrington, Watts, Molloy, Murphy, Magee, Sullivan, and O’Neill.
**Calendar of Events**

Saturday, October 14, 2006  
Time: 10:00 a.m.–noon  
Location: Hooper-Lee-Nichols House  
**Preserving Your Family History**

Join CHS archivist Mark Vassar to learn how to preserve family papers, scrapbooks, diaries, letters, photographs, and other materials.  
RSVP: info@cambridgehistory.org or call 617-547-4252 to reserve a seat.  
Fee: $5 for members, $10 for nonmembers.

Wednesday, December 6, 2006  
Time: 5:00–7:00 p.m.  
Location: Hooper-Lee-Nichols House  
**Holiday Open House**

Please come and enjoy the festive atmosphere, with food provided by friends and local catering businesses and seasonal music. Local authors will sign and sell their books, and you can purchase gift CHS memberships for friends and family.

**Special Request**

This year we would like to feature more one-of-a-kind holiday ornaments in the décor at the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House. If you would like to donate unique or antique ornaments, please call Sally Hild or send an e-mail message to sally@cambridgehistory.org.

Sunday, January 28, 2007  
Time: 2:00–4:00 p.m.  
Location: To be announced  
**Annual Meeting**

Our speaker will be Rosamond W. Dana, a great-granddaughter of Richard Henry Dana III, the first president of the CHS. Ms. Dana will speak about the Dana family, incorporating bits of mystery, scandal, and local color into the history of one of Cambridge’s most famous families.

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**CHS wish list...**

The Society needs the following items to upgrade our operations and programs:

- **LCD projector**, to accommodate Power-Point presentations (slides are so “last century!”).

- **Computer server hardware and software**, to enable us to effectively centralize, store, and back up critical CHS files.

For more information, please call 617-547-4252 Tues.-Fri., or e-mail lbushnell@cambridgehistory.org.
New members, 9/1/05–8/31/06

Mr. and Mrs. Marcus S. Alexander
Barbara S. Baker
Linda L. Barlow
Madeline Barott and Peter Schweich
Charles Batchelder, III
Trudy Bauer
Susanne Beck and William Parker
Carole K. Bellow
Stephanie Berk and Charles Welch
Jon M. Biotti
Mr. and Mrs. Stefan Botnowski
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Brooks, Jr.
Judy Carlson
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Carlson
Dayle A. Cohen
Nancy K. Cohn
Peter A. Cote
Ophelia Dahl and Lisa Frantzis
Mr. and Mrs. John Danahy
Henrietta Davis and Richard Bock
Micheline de Bievre
Ross W. Deckle
Tina Kolb Diaz
June Doliber
Lyn Duncan
Aurore and Scott Eaton
Farah Ebrahimi and Eric Griffith
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph V. Ferrara
Celeste Finn and Eric Fossel
Christine M. Fredericksen
Susan Freedman and Mark Zeidel
Joyce B. Friedman
Hull Fulweiler
John and Susan Gabrieli
Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Gagnebin
Mr. and Mrs. Tinsley Gallyean
Robin Gilbert and James McAuliffe
Dean and Mrs. William A. Graham
Catalina Guillermety and Jeremy Gauld
W. Easley Hamner
Virginia Hathaway
Robert F. Higgins
Mr. and Mrs. William E. Hilton
Hyewon Hyun
Mr. and Mrs. Eric Jacobsen
Sanjeev M. Kale
Robin K. Kelly
Joanne Kini
Karl H. Krauss
William Kremer
Mr. and Mrs. Michael R. Labadie
Bonny Lamb
Mildred P. Lawrence
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Legg
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Le Vaux
Karen Lewis
Kathleen C. McCabe
Mr. and Mrs. Barry G. Morse
Regina Mullen
Corinne Nagy and Richard Miner
Dr. and Mrs. David Nathan
Ann R. Oliver
Louise L. Olson
Mr. and Mrs. Scott B. Paton
Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Pogorzelski
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Purcell
Ruth M. Redington
Mr. and Mrs. Carle Sapers
Mary R. Schmidt
Barbara Sinclair
Barbara Smith and Terrence Burnham
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew M. Stauffer
Mr. and Mrs. David Stettler
Stephen Surette
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth E. Taylor
Frances Tenenbaum
Mr. and Mrs. Zeljko Toncic
Deborah Wang and Todd Rothenhaus
Mr. and Mrs. Bradford Wetherell
Sandra Wheeler and Alba Lopez
Mr. and Mrs. George Whitehouse
Caroline H. Whitney
Elizabeth Wylde and Lance Drane
Mr. and Mrs. Bracebridge H. Young

Thank you, MIT volunteers!

MIT students participating in the Institute’s City Days program—an annual one-day service event aimed at introducing freshmen to community service in the Boston and Cambridge areas—spent the morning of September 1 at the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House doing everything from laying ethernet cable to organizing books and cabinets. Pictured above are (l to r from rear) Andrew Lewine, Dan Beauboef, Chris Whitfield, Marty Fahey, Emily Onufer, Nivedhitha Subramanian, Jayanthi Jayakumar, and Rachel Price.
Recent acquisition

Portrait of J. J. Henderson (1863–1923); see page 5.

The Mission of the Cambridge Historical Society
The Cambridge Historical Society acts as a living repository for Cambridge’s traditions and history. It maintains property entrusted to it and collects, preserves, and interprets items of historical and antiquarian significance. The Society encourages research and involvement in these efforts by its members and the community at large. In so doing, it promotes a better understanding of history as an important factor in the everyday affairs of the city and its residents.

The Cambridge Historical Society
The Hooper-Lee-Nichols House
159 Brattle Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

“History is a kind of Unfinished Symphony with many interwoven themes and changing rhythms.”

Charles W. Eliot, II