

## Community Service of Hamilton and Wenham, Inc. (CSHW)

### History

*Much of this information was gathered from the text of a speech given by former CSHW President and Mandell family grandson, C.G. Rice. The speech was given April 25, 1985 to the Hamilton Historical Association. Marie Saunders, Executive Director, and her staff gathered other material from the Community Service (CS) records in 1983-85. Finally, Ann Chivakos, Administrative Assistant and Margo Druschel, Executive Director, made a cursory search of the files, and have interviewed board members and residents as well.*

**Early 1920, Post-WWI**—Community Service of Hamilton and Wenham, Inc. began as part of a larger National Civic Organization, a private non-profit, headquartered in NYC, titled Community Service. National grew out of a desire to promote communities to sponsor programs to benefit citizens and encourage community after the war. Supported by President Wilson and Herbert Hoover. National produced many written materials and haired staff that traveled and consulted with local groups, but there was no funding was available from the National Organization. By the end of 1922, over 800 cities and town had active Community Service organizations with local sites in Hamilton-Wenham and Ipswich. Today, few remain and the Hamilton-Wenham organization is the only one on the North Shore of Massachusetts.

1. Civic-minded women and men in Hamilton and Wenham heard of the National Community Service (CS) organization and requested a visit. A Mr. F.S. Mathewson came and consulted with the group. Among those who met with Mathewson were George and Emily Mandell. The small group polled residents of HW and there was interest and support for a CS org here.
2. The Mandells had the financial means to provide for a building. Mr. Mandell's family owned a Boston newspaper, the *Boston Evening Transcript*. It was a fine paper, which won many awards. George was the editor, then President and Chairman. The family lived on an estate that stretched from Miles River Road to Essex Street and down Woodbury Street to Bridge Street. Their property was eventually sold to the Catholic Church and became the Carmelite Seminary, then was sold to Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, which remains there today. Another factoid is that the beautiful oak tables in the Community House office and the President's Library, are gifts from the Mandells. Legend has it that the paper was assembled on those tables.

**October 9, 1920**—Mandells purchase land at the corner of Asbury Street and Bay Road in Hamilton. They hire Guy Lowell as the architect and a local Hamilton man, Frank R. Trussell, as the contractor. There is predictably some grumbling from people about the property being located in Hamilton. Mandells hold their ground, and after a time, an agreement is made for a Community House building to be constructed on the site.

**December 14, 1920**—Hamilton House, Inc. is formed. The Mandells paid for the construction of Hamilton House, which was incorporated separately from CS at the recommendation of lawyers to honor the Mandell's desire that in the future, no matter what might happen to the Community Service organization, the building, as a separate entity, would continue to be used only to serve the needs of the people of H-W.

**October 9, 1921**—The Community House building was built in memory of the 8 young men from HW who died in WWI. Among them was Samuel Mandell. As a tribute to Sam, 165 of Sam's friends and HW citizens came together to commission a statue of an aviator for the portico of the Community House. Anna Coleman Watts Ladd, a noted sculptor who summered nearby in Beverly Farms, was selected. Thomas, Sam's brother, posed for the sculpture. All was kept secret from the Mandell's and the sculptor and the architect worked together to accommodate the sculpture within the design of the portico. On this date, the completed statue was presented to the Mandells, along with a leather book containing the names of the 165 who contributed. \*\*\*Not sure if this was the day that the building was dedicated, as that is not officially mentioned in the records. But it seems likely, given that regular meetings of the Board began in December of 1921.

**December 10, 1921**—After a year of work to define their vision, an Agreement of Association to form CSHW, Inc. was signed by 17 citizens at a meeting at 8pm. Community Service of Hamilton-Wenham was incorporated under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws. The First Board elected included the 17, and Anna Agassiz, Neil W. Rice, Frederick Ayer, and H. A. Thomas (Houston). Elbridge Anderson elected President. The 17 were: George and Emily Mandell, Lester E. Libby, Frank R. Trussell, Edward J. Ready, Elbridge R. Anderson, Robert H. Chittick, Avon D. Bradeen, Dorothy D. Libby, Mary Curtis, Adline P. Cole, Fanny B. Trussell, A.B. Lord (Arthur), Gardner Blount, Fred Ashworth, Helen C. Burnham, Percival D. Whipple. CSHW, Inc. is the organization with the mission, but holds no property or building.

**December 19, 1921**--19 Committees were formed, and it seemed that most every adult in H and W belonged to 1 or more of the committees. The Standing Committees were: Finance, Moving Pictures, Social Activities, Girl's Activities, Athletics, Music/Dramatic, Library, Publicity, Children's Activities, House Committee, University Extension Course, Health Clinics, Educational Lectures, Committee On Hostesses.

**1937 George Mandell passes away**—On August 11, 1937, while out exercising his fox-hound puppies, Mr. Mandell died.

**1922-1938**--We can assume that things went on as planned, and we do know that the Executive Director from 1938-1972 was Lawrence Stone. Sadly, no records of meetings from those years have been located, even though a number of serious searches were conducted.

**1938-1943**—After her husband's death, Mrs. Mandell continues as the Honorary President of the Board and continues to support CSHW with her energy and ideas, and the CH building with her own personal money.

**1943—Emily Mandell passes away**—After a series of illnesses that diminished her great energy, Mrs. Mandell died. She was sorely missed and the Board passed the following resolution, presented by President Oliver Wolcott, and adopted by unanimous vote: **“Emily Proctor Mandell, with her husband, George S. Mandell, gave the Community House as a home for Hamilton and Wenham Community Service and for the use and benefit of the citizens of the two towns. The breadth of their interests, affections, and generalities (sic), her humor, and her shrewd wisdom made her a pillar of strength to the whole neighborhood and particularly to Hamilton and Wenham Community Service of which she was the honorary president and devoted friend. The members wish to express to Mrs. Mandell’s family their sincere sympathy and to place on record their own deep sense of loss and their abiding memory of her gallant character.”**

Mrs. Mandell’s grandson, C.G. Rice, was elected that same year to serve as President of the CSHW Board.

Mrs. Bessie Preston Cutler encouraged the Board to establish a maintenance fund in memory of Emily P. Mandell. Sadly, this appears never to have happened. It has always been difficult that although the CH building was an amazing gift to the towns and people of HW, there was never formed a Maintenance Endowment, and caring for the building, especially since the passing of the Mandell’s has been a struggle.

**1930s, 1940s, 50s, 60s and beyond—Activities and the Building**—From the early days, CSHW sponsored a big to-do on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Notes remind us of the Gymkhana (fun equestrian events) that was organized for many years by C.G. Rice, Ham Dinners organized by the Hostesses, Hurdy Gurdy music and of course, the Raffle, with a top prize of \$25 in 1940.

- 1. Bowling**—The first Bowling alley was located under the portico, where we now store skis. **In 1933 with the financial support of the Mandells and the sale of bonds in the towns, bowling was moved to the basement where the current conference room is located,** the old bowling alley became a **pistol shooting range.** Local law enforcement officials and others practiced in the basement. Go down there sometime and you can see what remains of the pistol range. The new lanes opened on **September 6, 1934 and were dedicated to George Mandell.** The new lanes were initially not automated; in fact, many who live in HW and are in their 70s and 80s will recall setting up the pins as children for a nickel an afternoon! Bowling was a very popular activity and the main source of CH revenue for many years. Again, in the late 1950s there was a hue and cry for more and better bowling and the building behind the CH was constructed. The Hamilton House, Inc. board agreed to mortgage the CH property to finance the construction of a building to accommodate 8 lanes of bowling. Some fund-raising was done, donations were given and bonds were sold to citizens of the towns to finance the pin-setting machines and interior of the building. Over the next 18 years, a portion of the proceeds from bowling were used to pay off the mortgage, but the irony was that by the late 70s, bowling was all but dead and the condition of the building was deteriorating. **In 1978 the bowling lanes were closed and**

- the equipment was sold off. The CSHW Board advised Hamilton House, “that it no longer desired that building for any purpose.” (from C.G, Rice speech 1985)**
2. **Movies**—The CH has hosted movies throughout its history. *Movies*, was indeed one of the first committees. The large screen on the back of the stage, and for many years the projection room on the balcony, were the hallmarks of the Movie Nights. Movie Nights were personified by Mrs. Bessie Preston Cutler, a long-time Board member and active volunteer, and Mr. Scott Libby, who was the projectionist. Mrs. Cutler would oversee the crowd, and you knew better than to misbehave under her watchful eye! Mr. Libby quietly gave of his time for decades, and when he passed away in 1994 at the age of 98, he generously left CSHW a bequest. A marvelous gift from a quiet man who taught piano, played the organ, showed movies at the CH, and lived simply in a bungalow on Rust Street.
  3. **Weddings, Parties and Family Events**—It seems that in the 30s, 40s and 50s, most local couples were married in the CH! Emily Nickerson Cook, (Kathryn Nickerson’s daughter) was married here and we still have a picture of her posing in front of the fireplace in the library. The 70s, 80s and 90s were a time when styles changed and weddings grew larger and more formal. Our lack of AC also hurt us. In the fall of 2000 an AC system was installed to serve the Main Hall and the Library, and we began to market our building more aggressively as a site for a small intimate wedding reception. With the arrival of Debbie Trainor as our Marketing Coordinator in the fall of 2002, our function business grew. Deb got the word out, made connections with caterers and we hosted many weddings, anniversary celebrations, showers and parties.
  4. **Building Use**—Many local groups have used the CH as their meeting place for decades. In the early years, ladies took caning lessons in the kitchen, while the men smoked cigars and talked politics in the Library! Children met with scouts of all types, and University Extension Courses were taught here as well. The Main Hall was host to Mistrel Shows, Dances, Teas, potluck suppers and many a luncheon for the elderly. Ladies exercised through every fad of the last 40 years, from calisthenics to yoga. Over time, some groups began to pay a fee for their use, as they were charging their participants a fee. At present, we continue to host many local non-profit groups for free, from scouts to youth sports, but we also have a robust rental business, hosting after school language classes, dog training, fencing, the Swedish fraternal organization, Birka, the Rod and Gun Club and more.
  - **Maintenance and Up-Keep**—The Mandells, mostly Emily, sustained the CH building from its construction in 1920/21 through her death in 1943. Unfortunately, no endowment for Maintenance was ever established. In 1944, Mr. Phippen made this report: “Reporting for the House Committee who had met previously to consider items of maintenance and upkeep of the CH made necessary by the passing of Mrs. Mandell, Treasurer Phippen had compiled a budget to cover such expenses. For years Mrs. Mandell had carried on the major items of repairs and upkeep which now Community Service must face.” This written note, from Mrs. Bessie Preston Cutler in 1947 reflects the financial issues

as well, “May I ask that you attach this note to your records of the 11<sup>th</sup> February meeting? In accepting the office of a director of Community Service, I feel there is a great responsibility toward the work of Community Service and our members whose money makes the work possible and our Community House available to all. Therefore I wish to go on record as not being in accord with the vote passed on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February to insure the Community House for \$30,000, less than one-half of its value—which would not be enough to permit us to rebuild in case of destruction by fires or any other cause. Even assuming the building to be fire proof, many building so rated have been completely destroyed. I feel strongly we have fallen down on the faith entrusted to us.” At this point in time, the CH building is in quite good shape with projects over the past few years which maintenance of pumps and air systems is included.

**Late 1970s and early to mid 1980s--**This was a period of great struggle for CSHW and the CH Building. Times were changing and the malls, movies and bowling alleys in other places had claim on our youth. Years of deferred maintenance caught up with the building, along with the pressures caused by the now empty Bowling Alleys behind the CH. **At the CSHW Board meeting on 28 February, 1983, the following was reported by Janice Merry, Clerk: “A lengthy discussion took place on whether it was wise for CS to continue on at the CH. Leonard Broughton felt that the basic yearly maintenance costs as well as the extensive major repair work needed, seems futile. John Mahaney suggested that the Board give it one more year, hoping that the efforts of the Study Committee and the possible awareness of the townspeople might improve the situation. The Board, realizing both sides had merit, decided to give CS and the CH one more year.”**

- 1. Old Bowling Alley Building behind CH—**With the closure of the Bowling Alleys came the problem of an empty building that was attached to the CH. Many issues were prominent, including the desire to keep whatever function took over the building in line with the HH and CSHW missions to serve the communities and people of HW. C.G Rice, the most active and local HH board member interacted with Marjorie Davis, Russell Copeland and Joanne Patton, the CSHW Presidents during that time period to try to find a sustainable use for the building. A local Cable TV studio and a shooting range for the local Rod and Gun Club were among the ideas proposed along the way, but the one that worked was a long-term lease entered into between Beverly Hospital and HH. In his speech in 1985, C.G Rice stated, “it (BH) has spent more than \$371,000 in renovations and in support of providing medical and health related services to our community.” Again, according to C.G’s speech, a lease with an option to buy was entered into in 1980, and was exercised in August of 1987, with the sale of the building out back to the Beverly Hospital Corporation. Due to HH’s status as a non-profit corporation whose sole purpose was to hold the CH building and have it used to benefit the citizens of HW, the Attorney General’s Office had to approve the sale. Additionally, the local Hamilton Zoning Board of Appeals, restricted the use to Medical/Dental use only. The lot carved out for BH

included ownership of the parking lot, but CSHW was given non-exclusive right to the use of the parking lot and the strip of land between the 2 buildings. After much discussion (you should read some of those memos!), the proceeds from the sale were given to CSHW by HH and were invested as the first part of the CSHW endowment, which still exists today, and allows us to maintain our beautiful building and to continue in our mission to the people of HW.

2. **School's Out**—It strikes me as a great irony that School's Out was quietly begun in 1984, during a time when the very survival of CS and the CH were at stake. What was started by Donna Whipple and Marie Saunders as a small program to support working families, has a presence of over 200 children and families in the CH 49 out of 52 weeks of the year.
3. **Professional Executive Directors 1983-present**—This was also the time when the first of the “professional” executive directors, Marie Saunders, was hired. The CSHW Board realized that they needed to have someone with a background in non-profit management to help the CS organization move into the future and thrive.
4. **Capital Campaign**—Begun by Joanne H. Patton when she became President in 1983, this was truly the first comprehensive Capital Campaign that CS had done. Previous reliance on Mrs. Mandell and then on informal appeals to local wealthy individuals, carried the CH for years. Bonds which the general public could afford had been offered in the 30s and again in the late 50s for bowling alley construction, but this was the first coordinated Capital Campaign. Behind the scenes research was done and board members approached the leadership donors. HH holders C.G Rice and family members were also approached. By the time the Campaign was announced in April of 1984, large donations were already in place toward the goal of \$100,000.
5. **Scott Libby Bequest**—When he passed away at the age of 98. The funds were added to the BH purchase funds to create a CS Reserve Fund.

**Late 1980s to the present**—This has been a period of growth and relative stability for CS and our programs and services. The gracious old CH has also been improved immensely!

1. **Capital Campaign leads to Building Addition**—After Marie Saunders, there was a period of brief ED tenure and 2 Interim Directors (our own Donna Whipple for a time in 1986). During this time a strong Board led the organization and put the plans into place for a wonderful addition that would get the office a real location, renovate the old bowling alleys into a Conference Room and add accessible restrooms and an elevator. When Betty Sweet came on in 1988, architectural plans from Catalano and Associates were in the early stages, by 1990, contractors were placing bids and the funding was secured, partly from the capital campaign and also from a mortgage on the building. Martins Construction Company was awarded the construction project, with Linsky doing the septic work. The total came in just under \$210,000 combined. After the kind of angst

- that every construction project ever attempted creates, the addition was completed in early 1993.
2. **Hamilton House gives the CH to CS**—In September of 1999, Hamilton House, Inc. deeded the CH building to CSHW, Inc. This was a huge accomplishment for Betty Sweet and Tom Barrett, who worked tirelessly to convince C.G. Rice that it was in the best interests of HH and CS. It took some real convincing to get C.G. to trust that the building would be safe in the hands of CS!
  3. **School's Out Grows**—School's Out grows each year and becomes a critical resource for working families and the school district here in HW. From 1984 to 1995 the program grew steadily and in 1995 they were licensed for 39 children. In 1996 Kindergarten Enrichment was formed as the public schools adopted a 21/2 day schedule and working families needed the other days covered. What started upstairs in the Mandell Room with 2 very small classes, has grown to serve over 60 families with 4 classes upstairs and down. In 1999, Scott Richardson arrived as the SO Director. Scott added the Adventure School and Young Scientists programs to our summer offerings, and improved school year programming and staffing. We were licensed up to 58 children from 1999-2001, and in 2001, due to community demand, we went up to 84 children. We consider this to be the limit of our building and staffing! Joe Madera followed Scott Richardson as School's Out Program Director from May of 2003 to August of 2005, when Joe Perry took over as the SO Program Director.
  4. **School's Out becomes a separate corporation**—In November of 1998, papers were filed by with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts establishing SO as a separate corporation. However, no other action was taken to complete that work, e.g. establishing a 2<sup>nd</sup> board, creating separate financials and all the other things that needed to be done. So it sat in the state records until September of 2001, when the Division of Industrial Accidents noticed that SO, Inc. had no Worker's Comp Coverage. After a rough couple of days of frantic paperwork, the coverage that CS had on the SO employees was put into SO's name, paperwork was filed with the DET and the Federal Government and a SO Board was established. For the final quarter of 2001, SO kept separate financial records and in 2002 operated fully on its own. This separation has allowed us important insight into the SO and CS operations. It is definitely more work, with 2 board, 2 organizations to budget for and keep separate books for, but a very important action. Currently, School's Out, Inc. is licensed to have 84 children in the building after school each weekday afternoon. Those children are from about 100 families. There is also a brand new program at the Miles River Middle School, which serves the needs of older youth, who still need care. Additionally, 24 kindergarten children are here daily and given the 21/2 day K schedule, we serve almost 60 families in that program. Although the kids cause wear and tear to the building, they are our bread and butter. Revenues from the School's Out monthly lease and Management Payment for Margo and Ann's time, contributed almost \$80K to CSHW in 2002
  5. **Building Out Back, Revisited—2002/2003**—In the fall of 2002, one of the owners of the 5 medical/dental condominiums approached the CS Board with the information that in the fall of 2003, 4 of those 5 condos were likely to become available. Over the next several months, CS formed an ad hoc committee to

investigate and consider the options. At that point in time, although we all agreed that CS would like very much to have that space available to us and to be the sole owners of all the buildings once part of the CH, the owners did not seem to be genuinely interested in selling to us. In October of 2003, Lahey Clinic vacated the property for space at Willowdale. Two of the 3 available units were purchased in 2004 by the local CURVES Exercise Salon, but were never renovated. In the summer of 2005, the property was sold to Dr. Bruce Smith, who renovated that space. In February of 2006, Dr. Smith and his partner, Dr. Michael Edwards opened Patton Park Medical. One of the things that both SO and CS realized through the process of looking at the possible use of the buildings for SO space, is that SO and CS are very inter-dependent, with the Community House location for SO being very important and the income being equally important to CS.

Written September 2003 for Board of Directors Retreat, 14<sup>th</sup> September  
---Margo W. Druschel, Executive Director

Revised 1/10/2007