

Land Management Committee

The OSC partners with the Conservation Commission on the Land Management Work Group to coordinate and do maintenance on Town conservation properties. In addition to trail maintenance, the members built and replaced a bog bridge, and erected signs for Wylde Woods and Valley Farm. The working group is working on a land management plan for Springdale Meadows (the conserved field across the street from Channing Pond) and held its first trail workday for volunteers. If you would like to help with trail projects, please email us at trails@doverma.gov.

Conservation Support

The OSC provides ongoing support for and communication about various projects involving local conservation groups. For example, in 2024 the OSC:

- partnered with the Conservation Commission in the Land Management working group to help coordinate trail maintenance and improve stewardship of the Conservation Commission-owned properties; and
- organized an OSC booth at Dover Days that provided information and maps showing the open spaces and trails throughout Dover.

The OSC will continue working with the Conservation Commission, The Trustees, the DLCT, Hale, and other groups to improve access and walking experiences at properties throughout Dover.

Appreciation

The OSC would like to thank past Committee member Connie Sullivan for her valuable service. We are grateful that relatively new Dover resident Jeff Behrens will be finishing out her 2025 term. We thank all our members for continuing their generous service. We look forward to working with you in 2025!

DOVER

Other Town Reports

2024



Report of the
Town Library

Board of Trustees

Robert Andrews, Chair
Amy Collins
Peter Hoffmann
Carolyn B. Ringel
Judith Schulz
Amees Tejani

Bethany Klem, Library Director

The Dover Town Library has a question we repeat often: “How might we?” How might we share news and services with the community more effectively? How might we hear directly from patrons on topics that matter to them? How might we solicit input from residents without a barrage of surveys? How might we ensure our facility meets and exceeds community needs? How might we make this remarkable library a magical, inspiring place for even more people? If you’re on the receiving end of any of these questions, we hope you take a moment to share your thoughts—we want to hear them!

Strategic Plan

At the root of all these questions is our new Strategic Plan, which launched in May. Specific themes we will be exploring include:

- inspiring lifelong discovery;
- celebrating reading and learning;
- connecting to culture; and
- encouraging civic belonging and engagement.

Our focus areas for deeper engagement include:

- celebrating books and reading, even as we surprise patrons with offerings beyond books;
- becoming experts on unmet and underserved local needs;
- grappling with time as an access barrier;
- maximizing the community of active library users; and
- ensuring that our building is safe, accessible, and fit for purpose.

Community Engagement

The community is at the heart of everything the Library offers. Over the past year, we've deepened and formalized our collaboration with the Council on Aging, cohosting literary and educational events for seniors. Our Young Adult Librarian worked with his counterpart in Sherborn to add library programming at the Dover-Sherborn Middle School (DSMS). We brought a bigger tent to Dover Days and asked fun questions about reading, programming, and dreams for the Library. The team is also delighted with the invitations we receive, including to the annual Chickering Spelling Bee and to civic engagement assignments at DSMS.

Technology and Outreach

The biggest tech highlight of the past year has emphatically been the Library's new website, which launched in January 2024. It has worked smoothly and reliably, and it's a significant update from our former site. Our Library of Things has never been so easy to browse! In addition to our own website, the Minuteman Library Network has also introduced new services to create and renew library cards online.

Collections

The work of developing our collections never ends. With finite space and infinite interests, our collection selectors carefully choose new materials and even more carefully determine which materials to withdraw from the shelves. We've increased efficiency by working with our primary book vendor to have them apply more labeling to materials. We've also struggled with vendors who have fallen behind on order fulfillment. Ever chafed at the slow arrival of a new title in the past year? We agree and are pushing these vendors to improve their turnaround time.



Photo courtesy of the Council on Aging.

In May, the Library received another donated Amelia Peabody sculpture—a small bronze statue entitled *Me at the Hunt*, which was gifted by the Amelia Peabody Foundation.

As participants in the Minuteman Consortium, we also offer our patrons a wide selection of online digital content covering many disciplines, including arts and music, business, culinary arts, economics, entrepreneurship, environment, health, gardening, psychology, religion, science, and more. Library-funded databases are free and accessible through our website 24/7 from home and work. Highlights of the digital collection include news sources like *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*; research support via Ancestry.com or ConsumerReports.org; learning opportunities on Great Courses or Mango Languages; music lessons on ArtistWorks; and a wide array of reading, music, and movies on Overdrive/ Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy, and Qello.

Governance, Policies, and Local Support

Policy updates continued this year, and the Trustees approved new rules governing patron behavior. At the Town level, we're working with the Board of Selectmen to discuss financial investment strategies to ensure our ex-municipal funds can grow and meet our myriad needs. We also remain cognizant of the tensions inherent in providing resources to a diverse community. In 2024, the Library received an informal materials challenge this year in response to a Pride display in June.

The Trustees honored former chair, Erin Rodat-Savla, with their annual recognition award in December. Ms. Rodat-Savla has been a revitalizing force for the Library, reforming the Friends of the Library, re-educating the Trustees about state laws relevant to their work, and volunteering her considerable talents toward designing, drafting, and publishing the new Strategic Plan.

No discussion of local support would be complete without acknowledging the hard work and dedication of the Friends of the Library, who consistently provide robust fundraising to pay for all the programming we offer. No tax dollars go toward the fun, free events taking place every week, and the Friends' efforts allow us to go above and beyond to support community members' cultural, civic, entertainment, and educational interests.

Facilities

Although the Library is so much more than a building, our physical structure is critical to our ability to fulfill our mission. Most of the building, constructed in 1968 with a major addition in 1995, is aging as well as it can. We've been fortunate to have a succession of directors who ensured that the space was open, welcoming, and usable. This work is also never finished. In March 2024, we installed an automatic door opener at the lower entrance to improve ADA accessibility. Other accessibility work included installing acoustic tiles on the Community Room ceiling in October to make speech and music more intelligible in what used to be a ferociously echoey room.

Our HVAC system and roof are limping along as best they can until the Building Maintenance Department finalizes replacement bids. We've had a few chilly mornings without heat, a few tropical days without AC, and a few ponds on the floor beneath leaking blowers and ceilings. Everyone involved is looking forward to a fully electric HVAC system that reduces the Town's reliance on fossil fuels.

As always, Library staff members are pleased to assist with reader's advisory, help pick a great book, place a hold, or answer questions. We're a team of professionals dedicated to the community, and every day we strive to build a meaningful collection of materials, offer engaging programs, and make the library a worthwhile experience and destination. Visit us at www.dovertownlibrary.org or call us at 508-785-8113.

Library Statistics for Fiscal Year 2024

(July 2023–June 2024)

State aid awards	\$15,492	Items borrowed from other libraries	12,611
Gifts and donations	\$72,166	Holdings	180,985
Trust fund balances	\$632,004	Registered borrowers	3,020
Total collection use	109,362	Programs offered	395
Library visits	59,921	Program attendance	20,963
Items loaned to other libraries	25,245		



Photo courtesy of the Town Library.

Report of the **Cemetery Commission**

Mariah Riess, Chairman
Carol Jackman, Secretary
Fred Sears

During 2024, 12 families bought grave lots at Highland Cemetery; eight two-grave lots, two four-grave lots, and two eight-grave lots. The income from the sale of these lots was \$16,000 and perpetual care income was \$58,400, for a total income of \$74,400.

Thirty-six funerals were held in 2024, 22 of which were cremations and 14 were full burials. Nine of the funeral services were for veterans who had served in the U.S. Armed Forces. A total of \$25,200 was collected for these funerals, representing \$5,250 collected for regular full burials, \$4,800 for cremations, and \$15,150 for the surcharge revenue for holiday and weekend burials. Income from setting foundations and markers was \$6,200.

The Town of Dover is very fortunate to have Lawrence (Rusty) Dauphinee as Cemetery Supervisor. His caring way with families who are undergoing difficult times is truly appreciated. The Department of Public Works assists us on an as-needed basis and is another invaluable asset.

Memorial Day is the day that Highland Cemetery seems to have the greatest number of visitors, and as a town we are very thankful for everyone's support. We thank the George B. Preston Unit 209 of the American Legion Auxiliary who, with the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 1, planted the geraniums at all the veterans' graves and ensured that the flags were in place for the Town ceremony. We also want to thank the Memorial Day Committee for its work each year on the beautiful ceremony conducted at our Memorial Star by the front flagpole. Additional thanks go to the Town for budgeting the funds needed to buy the plants and flags.

This year, many trees were pruned, but unfortunately we had to cut down some of our aging trees. The Meditation Garden received additional plantings, and we hope to add more.

Citizens are reminded that they may contribute to our gift fund, which goes toward the beautification of the cemetery. All donations are greatly appreciated and tax deductible.

Report of the **Historical Commission**

Anne Reitmayer, Chair
Sierra Bright
Gene Hornsby
Jane Moore
Geoffrey Sauter
Ellen Weinberg

The Historical Commission was established under Chapter 40, Section 8D of the Massachusetts General Laws for the purposes of preserving, protecting, and developing the historical and archaeological assets of the Town of Dover. Composed of up to seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the Commission administers Chapter 96 (Demolition Review) of the Town of Dover General Bylaws. The Bylaw's aim is to encourage owners of "preferably preserved historically significant buildings" to seek ways to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore such buildings rather than demolish them, with the intent of preserving the cultural heritage of Dover.

In 2024, Thomas Johnson stepped down as a member serving on the Historical Commission after many years of service and hard work in carrying out the purposes for which the Commission exists. We are deeply appreciative of his work.

In 2024, the Commission reviewed 17 permit applications for the demolition of existing houses and other structures. Five of these demo permit applications were not subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission as the structures involved were constructed after 1929. Of the remaining 12 applications, 11 were determined by the Commission to not reflect historical significance. A few of the applications presented difficult issues in the eyes of the Commission, which saw the structures as being part of the historical and cultural heritage of Dover. Commission members carefully weighed the issues involved to arrive at their votes. They were also able to work with the owners and owners' representatives of several of the demo applications to salvage historic items from structures prior to their demolition. All 11 structures to be demolished were documented with photographs and some with existing condition plans as well.

The one property for which a demo application was filed, but which has been preserved, is the house at 1 Pegan Lane, located at what was Dover's original Town center, known as Bliss' Corners. This is a great outcome and preserves a very historic house dating back to the 1700s. The Commission is appreciative of all the parties who worked with both the then-owner and the present owners (having closed on the purchase of the property on New

Year's Eve, 2024) to navigate through the protracted and oftentimes difficult steps that led to sale of the house to the present owners who are enthusiastic stewards of this historic property. We recognize the past and present owners for their efforts.



Fisher Barn. Photo courtesy of Town Report Committee.

Report of the **Council on Aging**

Robert G. Cocks Jr., Chair

Maureen Dilg, Secretary

Reverend Peter DiSanto

Betty Hagan

Cindy Holmes

Gilbert Thisse

Geraldine Wise

Carol Pilch, Associate Member

Annemarie Thompson, Associate Member

Janet Claypoole, Director

Nan Vaida, Outreach Coordinator

Amee Tejani, Program Coordinator

Jennifer James, Administrative Assistant

The Dover Council on Aging (COA) was established by the Town in 1976, pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 8B of the Massachusetts General Laws. COA programs and services are designed to meet the educational, social, and health and wellness needs of Dover's seniors and the families who care for them, in coordination with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (MEOEA). As of 2024, there were 1,567 residents aged 60 years and older in Dover, representing one quarter of the Town's population. The COA supports seniors and their families through information, support, outreach, advocacy, transportation, and health and social programs. In 2024, more than 780 people were served.

Caryl Community Center

Due to the ongoing renovation project at Caryl Community Center (CCC), the COA offices remained in their temporary location in the Town House Fireside Room. Programs were held at the Town House, the Dover Legion, the Most Precious Blood Church, the Dover Church, St. Dunstan's Church, the Town Library, Powisset Farm, and Chickering Elementary School. Thank you to our partners for sharing space with the COA.

Senior Transportation

In 2024, the COA provided 236 rides to seniors and residents with disabilities who qualified for the MetroWest Ride and discounted JFK Transportation Services rides to COA programs, medical appointments, and other MetroWest destinations, as well as to Boston for medical appointments.

Programs and Classes

In 2024, COA programs were held in person, virtually, and in hybrid mode at multiple locations in the Town. Fitness classes were offered in hybrid mode and included Strength & Stability, Stretch & Flow, Chair Yoga, Mat Yoga, and Mindful Movement with two new classes added—Core & Balance and Sculpt & Stretch. The Kingsbury Club in Medfield extended senior swim classes to COA members, while outdoor fitness included local guided walks and kayaking on Farm Pond. The COA hosted Nature Talks and Travel Talks on a wide range of topics. In March, Judicial Outreach month, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Land Court spoke on the trial courts and the types of cases heard. Local speakers spoke on the Physics of Food and Ancient Ships in the Field of Nautical Archaeology.

Other COA programs in 2024 included Mah Jongg, Pottery, Card Making, Knitting, Chit Chat Tea, and Coffee & Conversation. Classes under the Lifetime Learning series, sponsored by the Friends of the COA (FoCOA; www.coafriends.org), included Life Transition Binder; One Family: Human Origins and Heredity; Science of New England Weather; and History Talks: Churchill, Cuban Missile Crisis; and Boston Versus NYC: A Race to Build the Subway. Technology programs included Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT, as well as Tech Classes for iPhone users on transportation apps and managing photos. An Intergenerational Tea was held with Dover Mothers Association and seniors.



Photo courtesy of the Council of Aging.

The COA co-hosted the Pageturners Book Club with the Town Library. It also co-sponsored, with the Westwood COA, monthly cooking classes at Powisset Farm, a Lake Winnipesaukee cruise, a trip to Canterbury Shaker Village, a Gloucester Harbor Cruise, and a tour of the Simon Pearce glass-blowing workshop in Vermont.

Coordinated trips included the Fuller Craft Museum, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Providence Performing Arts Center, Trinity Repertory Theatre, Blithewold Mansion and Gardens, North Shore Music Theatre, Huntington Theatre, Unity Farm Sanctuary and Southwick's Zoo. Musical programs featured Dover-Sherborn High School (DSHS) Brass, DSHS Barbershop Quartet, and Pilgrim Bluegrass Gospel Band.

The COA's 2024 historical programs featured The History of Jordan Marsh; Plimoth Patuxet Museums' Wampanoag People Past and Present; Martha Washington; Queen Elizabeth II; and Before Brooklyn: The Unsung Heroes Who Helped Break Baseball's Color Barrier, with journalist Ted Reinstein.

Intergenerational programs included Chickering School fifth-graders creating table decorations for monthly luncheons and Chickering students and the Girl Scouts decorating meal delivery bags. The Girl Scouts also created cards and visited with seniors at home deliveries. Dover-Sherborn Middle School students assisted at the Police Department's Holiday Brunch and went caroling to seniors' homes with elementary students. DSHS students interviewed veterans for a media project and did community service by providing tech support, creating Halloween decorations, baking cookies, raking leaves, shoveling snow, and managing summer pick-ups and distribution of veggies from Powisset Farm. The Dover Church Men's Group delivered buckets of sand and salt for icy steps and walkways to 28 seniors.

Other Senior Services

Outreach Coordinator Nan Vaida, RN, provided support and resources to seniors and their families. She and COA Director Janet Claypoole coordinated with the Police and Fire Departments to check on isolated or at-risk seniors. The COA facilitated the medical equipment loan program and, in partnership with Springwell Elder Services, offered home and community services. The SHINE program (Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone) provided free consultations on Medicare for seniors and info sessions on Medicare plan options to new beneficiaries.

The COA staff devotes tremendous time to helping seniors cope with changing health conditions, assisting family caregivers, locating resources, facilitating the transition from hospital or rehab settings to home, and helping elders maintain their dignity and independence as they age in place. It works with seniors and families in crisis and the Police Department on elder abuse and elder-at-risk situations, and it distributes free visibility vests for seniors out walking.

The COA acts as the Town's Financial and Energy Assistance Coordinator to provide support to residents. Ms. Vaida offers state and federal resources and advocates for residents coping with energy/utility emergencies and food insecurity. The COA also coordinates the Senior Property Tax Work Off Program, recruiting workers for Town departments in return for up to \$2,000 applied toward property tax bills.

Luncheons and Meals

Monthly senior luncheons offer opportunities to enjoy a meal, socialize, and celebrate holidays. In 2024, the Norfolk County Sheriff's Association shared information on senior services. Meteorologist Harvey Leonard presented Climate Change: Simple, Serious, and Solvable. The Thanksgiving luncheon served 95 seniors, for those both in person and homebound. Grab & Go Meals curbside service provided an extra monthly meal given rising food cost. The Dover Church and the COA held the Holiday Ballet & Cookies, distributing more than 1,000 wrapped treats baked by 35 volunteers and featuring Needham's Arrais Ballet dancers performing excerpts from The Nutcracker. About 60 seniors regularly participated in the popular Grab & Go Meals as well as biweekly pick-ups of bread donated by Blue Moon Bagel Cafe and a June-to-October farm stand with fresh Powisset Farm vegetables. The Dover Police Association's Holiday Brunch was held at Chickering School, where officers cooked breakfast for more than 80 seniors and delivered to the homebound.



*Senior luncheon with fifth-grade Chickering Elementary School students.
Photo courtesy of the Council on Aging.*

Grants and Gifts

In 2024, an MEOEA grant partially funded the COA's fitness programs and supported its Administrative Assistant position. FoCOA underwrote programs (such as Nature Talks, Travel Talks, Lifetime Learning) trip transportation, cooking classes, and offerings of farm-fresh produce. A Dover Cultural Council grant funded Dancing Through the Decades, featuring ballroom dancing and the art of dance.

Other Activities

The COA continued its Talk with the Town series to allow Town departments to update the community. Speakers included the Police Chief, Town Administrator, Town Planner, Board of Health Director, Dover-Sherborn Schools Superintendent, Town Clerk, Assistant Town Administrator, Town Selectmen, and Director of Public Works. The weekly COA e-newsletter promoted events and facilitated online program registration. The COA also attended Community Center Building Committee meetings on the center's renovation and served on the Community Benefits Advisory Committee at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Needham.

Volunteer Assistance

In 2024, 231 volunteers spent 1,400 hours assisting the COA by delivering meals, helping at luncheons, teaching classes, providing office support, baking cookies, delivering salt/sand, providing technology assistance, and distributing meals, breads, fresh produce, and more under all weather conditions. We could not provide our programs and services without the time, energy, and enthusiasm of these volunteers—our most important asset. Their generosity and kindness are greatly appreciated.



Photo courtesy of the Council on Aging.

Report of the Cultural Council

Judith Schulz, Chair

Antonio Saenz, Secretary

Deni Auclair, Treasurer

Shashi Chawla

Stefanie Leahy

The Dover Cultural Council (DCC) administers funds that it receives each year from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), the state agency whose mission is to "promote excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents, and to contribute to the economic vitality of our communities." These funds, which originate as annual appropriations of the Massachusetts Legislature, are awarded in the form of grants to individuals and organizations that support the MCC's mission and provide cultural benefit to the Dover community.

Under the MCC's Local Cultural Council Program, the most extensive grassroots cultural support network in the nation, the DCC awarded \$5,500 in grants for Fiscal Year 2024. Grants awarded include, but are not limited to:

- *Council on Aging: Dancing Through the Decades with Dance Caliente* (\$950)
- *Parks & Recreation: Dover Days Celebration* (\$1,733)
- *Motoko Dworkin: Tales of Now & Zen: An Evening of Stories for Adults*, at the Town Library (\$650)
- *Erin Clarke Gorden: Community Voices Initiative* (\$2,000)
- *Rehearsal for Life Freelance Players: Support for fall and spring programs* (\$350)
- *Marcos Valles: Music Education with Rockabye Beats*, at the Town Library (\$400)

Information, local guidelines, and applications for Dover Cultural Council grants are available at www.mass-culture.org/Dover.

Report of the **Memorial Day Committee**

Chris Jackman, Chair
Carol Jackman

The Town of Dover has always been proud to conduct Memorial Day exercises on May 30, and 2024 was no different. This is when we honor our many Dover veterans who lost their lives in battle or who passed after returning home.

The program, which began at 6 p.m., was attended by many townspeople, as well as members of the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Dover Boy Scouts Troop 1. The George B. Preston American Legion Post 209 conducted the Posting of Colors, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all, and invited guests were introduced. Our guest speaker, Ford Spalding, U.S. Navy veteran, reflected on the meaning of Memorial Day. Ford has been a supporter of the Town of Dover for years, having volunteered in various programs.

Dan Davis conducted the performance of "American Fantasy," arranged by Mike Story and played by students from Chickering Elementary School, Dover-Sherborn Middle School, and Dover-Sherborn High School. Veterans in attendance were recognized by having them stand, state their name, branch of service, and dates of service. Committee member Chris Jackman read the names of those veterans who were buried this year in Highland Cemetery.

The parade to Highland Cemetery took place under the supervision of Grand Marshal William "Bill" Herd, U.S. Army veteran. Before entering the cemetery, the parade stopped at Soldiers Monument to place flowers in memory of all Dover's deceased veterans.

Graveside services were conducted near the U.S. Flag and Memorial Star, followed by a gun salute and the playing of "Taps" by our buglers Will Goldman and Yasi Nee. The Reverend Peter DiSanto of Grace Church offered a prayer. Ford Spalding and Chris Jackman carried out the traditional reading of names of Dover's own who died in battle. The parade returned to the Town House for the Raising of the Colors and the closing ceremony.

Special thanks go to everyone who made this event possible, including the Town House staff, the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girls Scouts, and Brownies. The Committee also wishes to thank the Dover American Legion Auxiliary, assisted by the Boy Scouts, for decorating the graves of all veterans with geraniums and flags, and the Legion for hosting its annual cookout for all parade participants and townspeople in attendance.

It should be noted that the plantings in the urn by the front Flag in the cemetery are in memory of Private Robert O'Connell, U.S. Army veteran, and the plantings by the Flag at the rear of the cemetery are in memory of the Theodos family by their daughters.



Memorial Day remembrance. Photo courtesy of the Dover Firefighters Association.

Report of the **Department of Veterans' Services**

Paul Carew, District Director

The Department of Veterans' Services performs the functions assigned to it by Chapter 115 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Chief among them is the administration of a benefits program provided to veterans and their families in need.

The Department maintains a depository of discharges and records of service for matters to be brought before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, including claims for pension, compensation for service-connected disabilities, educational benefits, burial benefits, and headstones and markers. The office also processes applications for hospitalization and medical care.

Veterans Administration benefit forms are available in our office at 117 East Central Street, Natick, MA. The director is there to serve our veterans and is glad to provide assistance, including help with filing the appropriate paperwork for applicable benefits. Please call us at 508-647-6545.



George B. Preston American Legion, Post 209. Photo courtesy of the Town Report Committee

Report of the **Community Center Building Committee**

Dick Malcom, Chair
David Billings
Luciana Burdi
Barry Goldman
Ruth Townsend

David M. Haviland, Board of Selectmen Liaison
Woodrow Weiss, Warrant Committee Liaison
Michael Blanchard, Ex Officio

Project Professionals

Colliers International, Owner's Project Manager
Fennick McCredie Architecture, Architect
M. O'Connor Contractors, General Contractor

The year 2024 saw the fruition of the hard work put into the Community Center Building Project by the project teams, with a substantial amount of construction on the new and renovated structures of the center taking place.

The approval phase of the project culminated at the May 2021 Annual Town Meeting, when Town citizens approved the project with a construction cost of \$18.9 million. However, after contractor bids were received at an amount greater than the approved budget, the project was value engineered, rebid, and re-approved at the June 2023 Special Town Meeting at a budget of 25.6 million. Project plans were to renovate the original 1910 schoolhouse portion of the building by removing all additions made to it throughout the years and then adding a new entrance lobby, community room, and recreation court. Construction began in fall 2023.

By the end of 2023 the 1910 building section was gutted to its frame, and foundations for the additions were constructed. Throughout the winter, the new entrance lobby, community room, and recreation court additions took shape with steel and concrete block. A topping-off ceremony was held in spring 2024 after the last structural member was installed. With the 1910 schoolhouse foundation underpinning completed, reinforcing structural work could then begin in that section. During the summer, the additions were closed in with roofing, brickwork, and glass, and the interiors took shape with spaces defined by the erection of the interior walls. Rough mechanical work was done, followed by installation of

insulation. The interior finish work begun in fall 2024 was mostly complete by the end of the year. The fall also saw groundwork construction with the addition of a drainage system, fire suppression water holding tanks, a groundwater infiltration system, a septic system, driveways, parking areas, and sidewalks. Landscaping was put off until the spring 2025, as temperatures at the time were not conducive for the work.

The construction of the project by M. O'Connor Contractors has occurred under the watchful eye of Fennick McCredie Architecture, Colliers Project Leaders (owner's project manager), and the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC). In addition, the Community Center Club—composed of Dover-Sherborn Middle School and Dover-Sherborn High School students interested in design, management, and construction—is monitoring the project with site visits and educational sessions presented by the project team.

The year 2025 will bring construction of the center to a conclusion, with finishes of both its interior and exterior expected to be completed. The opening of the new Caryl Community Center is projected to take place in late spring. Although the construction schedule slipped from fall 2024, the project has remained on budget.



Photo by Ford Spalding.

Historical Focus

Remembering Kathy Winslow Weld (1948–2024)

In 1968, newlyweds Walter and Kathleen Weld took up residence in the Bagg family's rental home on Farm Street in Dover. At the time, the bucolic town had no inkling that the young bride, with no connections with its residents, would almost immediately begin making a strong and lasting impression on her new community.

Born in 1948, not far from San Francisco Bay, California girl Kathleen Winslow had musical talent and ambition that was evident early on, when as a child she would wake up early to practice piano before school. Dreaming of a career as a concert pianist, she left her large family to study music at Wellesley College. But her life took a major turn when, while working as a cook for the Weld family one Cape Cod summer, Kathy met and fell in love with its youngest son, Wally, whom she married shortly after graduation. Although her life would now take a different path, her love of music and playing was destined to touch countless people.

Kathy immediately dove into community involvement, joining the program committee of The Dover Foundation, which recognized her prodigious musical skills and made her an integral part of their theatrical productions. Beginning in 1972 with the musical *Carousel*, she served as the rehearsal and performance pianist for every musical subsequently held, except for the two coinciding with the births of her sons.

Besides her involvement with the Foundation, Kathy shared her musical gifts by teaching at the Dana Hall School of Music in Wellesley, as well as giving private lessons to countless students in her home. A strong patron of the arts, she along with Wally also actively supported Boston's Handel and Haydn Society throughout her life, including through her tenure as Vice Chair of its Board of Governors.

In 2015, the woman who eventually became known as the "Queen of the Keys" was honored for her devoted service by the Foundation, whose board member Sheridan Miller recounts:



Kathy was not only an exceptionally talented pianist but also that of coach and mentor. Kathy often worked with individual vocalists and groups to help them prepare for auditions, shows, and many cabaret events. It was always understood that if you needed help learning a song Kathy would invite you to her home and around her beautiful piano to spend hours drilling and practicing to help you achieve your best.... Kathy set the bar very high for all of us at The Dover Foundation and inspired us to do more. Her legacy will always be that of a talented and generous friend who gave of her time and talents to help others achieve success.

In addition to Kathy's cultural contributions, a glance at this *Dover Town Report*'s In Memoriam page shows the impressive extent of her civic volunteerism. Despite being a busy mother of four sons, she tirelessly gave much of her energy, enthusiasm, and belief in striving for excellence to everything from the Dover Arts Council and Warrant Committee to the Fence Viewers and Board of Selectmen. She held strong opinions but willingly listened to others and did her part to keep Dover running in a forthright, lawful, and practical manner. She served on the Town Report Committee from 2008 until her death, painstakingly devoted to ensuring that her fellow citizens received accurate information in a timely fashion. As Chair, she led with grace, wit, and wisdom.

According to Wally, one of Kathy's greatest and most satisfying projects was bringing a community center to Dover. Ford Spalding, also involved in the effort, attributed the vision of transforming the former Caryl Elementary School to Kathy, who began working toward that end in 2001. If there was a committee related to the process, Kathy was on it, ultimately serving on seven committees during the complicated, drawn-out project. For her, however, it was a labor of love. Sadly, Kathy would not live to see the completion of the Caryl Community Center, although the recognition she deserves will come at its grand opening in 2025.

Kathy's final act of service to the Town of Dover was to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission to prepare for the relocation of the Parks and Rec Department into the new building. Director Mark Ghiloni recalls how Kathy "brought the same passion and thoughtful leadership that defined her decades of involvement in town government."

On October 24, 2024, after a short bout with cancer, Kathy died peacefully, surrounded by her loving family. The California girl, with dreams and determination, has left an indelible mark on her New England hometown with an inspiring legacy and a powerful example of what it means to love and serve one's community.

-Zaiga Alksnitis and Mary Kalamaras, Dover Town Report Committee