Celebrate!
2014-2015 Season
Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center is one of only three National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers in New England.
Dear friends of Hubbard Hall:

It is my great pleasure, on behalf of the Hubbard Hall Board of Trustees, to welcome you to the opening of our 2014 - 2015 season.

This year, we begin with a special celebration of the past 37 years of making art and building community. The weekend will be a taste of some of the highlight of the programs that sprang to life as Hubbard Hall became a beacon for the arts in the community. A fiddle weekend performance, a Music from Salem concert and a cabaret of theater, opera, music and dance will spotlight some of the most memorable and successful programs in our recent history.

This special event is also an opportunity for all of us to thank Benjie White and the other trustees and visionaries who in 1978 initiated the purchase of Hubbard Hall and undertook to build a home for all manner of creative and artistic expression. Under Benjie’s leadership thousands of theater goers have been entertained with plays, opera, music and dance …and even pigs. Hundreds of students have been mentored in acting, music and dance; inspired to create, draw, paint and learn crafts; and encouraged to dream of living a creative life. Many have gone on to professional careers in the arts. And hundreds of actors, performers and musicians have thrilled to performing in the century plus old Victorian hall, inspired by its history and great acoustics.

This weekend also marks the final stage of transitioning to our new Executive Director, David Snider. Please join me in welcoming David, who promises to lead Hubbard Hall into a new and exciting era. In collaboration with the Board of Trustees and with an open door to the community, David will insure Hubbard Hall is even more successful at “making art and community happen” in the future.

And finally my heartfelt thanks to all the dedicated staff, artists, and volunteers who have given so generously and selflessly to the Hubbard Hall community over the years. Without exception, every performance, production, class and project receives the dedicated attention of our staff and depends on a core of volunteers and a level of community spirit that we have all come to appreciate and love as the Hubbard Hall experience.

Thank you and let the season begin!

Catherine Pate
Welcome to Hubbard Hall.
I am so excited to begin this adventure with you.

This year we honor the past and look toward our future. We celebrate the 37th anniversary of the Hubbard Hall Center for the Arts. Yet Hubbard Hall has served our community for much longer. Martin Hubbard, the entrepreneur who designed much of downtown Cambridge, knew that a community needed the arts at its center. He built Hubbard Hall into his plans for downtown Cambridge, and we can celebrate the arts and Hubbard Hall being at the heart of our community since 1878.

I grew up in a family focused on living a mission-driven life. My father was a minister, and my mother served as a teacher and as a social worker with children and youth. I was raised with a deep sense of living life with a purpose, with a sense of service. As my career in theater and the arts developed, I found myself drawn toward this kind of mission-driven work, work that served others and sought to better the world around us.

When the opportunity to lead Hubbard Hall into its next great era presented itself, I jumped at it.

As I’m beginning this year, I have more questions than answers. How can an arts center better serve, entertain, and engage its community? How can the arts and agriculture come together for a deeper conversation about legacy, sustainability, and beauty? How can great art deepen our sense of self and our sense of community? And how can we find new ways to support what we do here?

Over the coming years we’ll be asking these questions and many more. We’ll be finding new ways to connect, serve, engage and entertain. We’ll be building a resident company of community members, local and visiting artists and doing work that says something about us, while challenging us to dig deeper – work that lives and thrives here but also potentially goes out into the world to connect and share with others.

The future of Hubbard Hall will depend on all of us. I have a lot to learn from you, and I look forward to working shoulder to shoulder with all of you in the years to come. To start, I have something I’d like to ask of you, right now: I want you to think about and share your vision for Hubbard Hall. What do you love? What do you want more of? What are things we’ve never done that you think we should?

My email is easy – david@hubbardhall.org, and my door is always open.

It’s an honor to join you. We’re in for a fun ride.

David Andrew Snider
Executive Director
Dear Hubbard Hallers,

A celebration for me requires looking back, being present, and imagining the future.

I have done a lot of looking back recently and am overwhelmed by how lucky we have been to have so many people inspired and motivated by an old building and an old institution. There are way too many friends, family members, artists, community members, staff members, curious visitors, businesses, other art organizations, government agencies and their employees, schools, students and audience members to begin thanking them here individually but I and the whole Hubbard Hall community are so grateful for their interest and support. We can celebrate all the fun, the joy, the inspiration, the growth, the cooperation, the generosity and even some of the calamities that have filled the past 37 years.

I hope, however, that this celebration is the spring board for many more years of the Hubbard Hall magic making art and community happen. I hope that in 2028, when we celebrate Hubbard Hall’s 150th anniversary and Hubbard Hall Projects’ 50th anniversary, that people who took classes at Hubbard Hall will be dropping their grandchildren off for classes, that people will be celebrating a whole new set of precious memories of their involvement with Hubbard Hall.

So, remember the fun we’ve had, have fun now and join us for many more years of fun to come.

With so much gratitude to you all,

Benjie
Recollections of Hubbard Hall

A conversation with Benjie White, Founding Executive Director, Hubbard Hall

Q - Hubbard Hall was built 136 years ago. How did this happen?

B - Each year when the Cambridge Central School 6th grade tours here as part of their local history study, I show them Martin Hubbard's house across the street on the corner of Grove Street, the Cambridge Valley National Bank where he was President and the building to our west, which housed his lumber business. I tell them that there was a deep recession in 1878 so no one could afford to borrow money or do building projects. To keep his employees working, he built this opera house and named it Hubbard Hall.

Q - You said "opera house" - was it built for just opera?

B - Before the Civil War, most theater was performed in saloons and had a bawdy reputation. If you called a theater an "opera house" the high-class connotation made it okay to let your daughter attend and you attracted bigger audiences. They were really venues for a whole range of activities: graduations, oratorical contests, traveling theater, concerts, political assemblies and lectures.

Q - Could a small town like Cambridge support an opera house?

B - Cambridge actually had two: Ackley Hall at Union and Main, which burned down in 1905, and Hubbard Hall. The audience was determined by how far one could walk or go by horse carriage in an hour: 5 or 10 miles. Shushan, Eagle Bridge and Salem each had an opera house; Greenwich had three. By the way, how far you can travel in an hour still is a workable marker of your audience market today. In the early 1900s seven trains a day passed through Cambridge going from Troy to Rutland, so many Troy department stores took ads in the Hall's printed programs. By the 1920s, though, Hubbard Hall fell into disuse.

Q - And some fifty years later, you and others became involved in its restoration.

B - In 1976, Andy and Dorothy Bell, owners of the general store, let it be known they would sell the building for $20,000. Cynthia Wands, Ida Failla and I, co-workers on a production of Ida's L'Ensemble chamber opera in New York City, went to look and realized that it would take a lot more to resurrect the Hall; it would have to be a community effort. Michael Price of the Goodspeed opera house in Connecticut came and told the business leaders that Main Street would have to be the base of
support. I moved back to Cambridge to help form a business plan and a nonprofit to purchase the building. The Village submitted an application to the NEA for a feasibility study.

Q - So you had to find sources for ongoing funds as well as the purchase price?

B - First, we obtained renters for the ground-floor space. The food co-op moved from Pasco’s garage to part of the east store, sharing it with a scaled-down general store run by Helen White, my mother, who bought out the Bells. Shirley Anthony opened a fabric shop, The Calico Trunk, in the western storefront. With base operating costs covered, we launched a drive for the building purchase, holding a “Hubbard Hall Day” on October 1, 1977. Ed Green, Cambridge Central School’s music teacher, organized a band; The Racing City Chorus performed; arts and crafts folk held demonstrations, along with puppet shows and jugglers. There were also performances in First Presbyterian Church, Town Hall and a Jean Redpath concert in the school gym. Two large contributions totaling $13,000 came in, but the rest was raised in small contributions. Thanks to George Moss, the attorney next door, we incorporated as Hubbard Hall Projects, a not-for-profit organization in October 1977. In January 1978 we closed on the purchase of the building.

Q - That began a long series of projects to restore the building. Where did you begin?

B - The building had three cellars, one under each shop and the bell tower. The tower foundation had been pushed in by frost. David Owen, Hubbard Hall’s first Board chair, and I dug down to the base of the wall by hand to put in a concrete wall. The east shop cellar also was dug down a foot and 30 volunteers carried 5-gallon buckets of clay up the back stairs to a dump truck. After floors and walls were done we called this “The Under the Bell Tower Café” and that is where the first of our “Fiddling Nights” was held, the start of our reputation for folk music.

Q - When did Fiddle Weekends begin?

B - They started as a mini-festival in July 1982. Each year we gave one musician the job of booking artists for the three days of concerts, workshops, dancing and a picnic (one year involving a rail excursion). That event ran for 25 years. At its start, there were only three venues around for folk music, including Hubbard Hall. Old Songs and Lena’s, but toward the end many more had sprouted up dividing up the audiences.
Q - The Hall could only be used in summer back then?

B - It was unheated, but in 1978 we did schedule a formal-dress Centennial Ball, using a rigged up kerosene heater system. As the evening wore on, the temperature dropped and so did the pitch of the old square piano that was in the Hall. The amazing pianist that L'Ensemble had brought to the event simply transcribed in his head to accommodate the pitch drop and the violinist wore a glove on his bow hand.

Q - And the place needed a paint job?

B - Hubbard Hall received a 1978 matching grant of $31,000 for exterior restoration. This was matched by a combination of contractor cooperation, donations, local sub-contracting and three years of volunteers’ time painting the building the original colors, as determined by electron microscope inspection of paint chips. There is a picture showing Hubbard Hall Board members Grahame (Tink) Parrish, Art (Butch) Eastman and his partner at A&M Printers, Mike Mahoney, working hard on the painting project.

Q - This was just the beginning of a continuing series of renovation projects. Tell us about the gaslights.

B - Both Hubbard Hall and Martin Hubbard’s bank next door were lit by a Tyrel gas light system. It consisted of a large water tank buried between the Hall and the bank. We dug this up when we dug the cellar hole for the elevator addition in 1999. The water tank was fitted out with a canister filled with carbide that would be lowered. Carbide, when mixed with water, produces acetylene gas, which was piped into both buildings. There was a 24-burner chandelier in the center of the Hall, crudely electrified, which had to come down when we added modern theater lighting.

Q - In doing renovations it seems that great efforts have been taken to preserve the original look of the Hall.

B - How the Hall was ventilated was unique. The attic had two windows for cross ventilation and the four wooden scrolled round openings in the Hall ceiling each had doors attached to pulleys and ropes to open them. These came down at the proscenium wall and when pulled allowed the heated air to rise into the ventilated attic. When we added a HVAC system in 1994, we decided to use these spaces and ceiling vents to push through heated or cooled air, allowing us to hide the ductwork and preserve the 19th century appearance of the room.
Q - The woodwork is marvelously done.

B - All the woodwork in the Hall is made of chestnut. As a local lumberman, Martin Hubbard probably sold a lot of chestnut to the railroad for cross-ties, as chestnut is naturally resistant to rot. When we dug the required archeological test trench for the Freight Yard project we dug up old railroad ties that had been buried for 100 years but were still quite sound.

Q - What many of us don’t realize is that getting a venue like the Hall ready for public occupancy is a long-term, multi-stage process. Through the 1980s and 1990s was this the major task?

B - There was no licensing of the second story of wood structure buildings for public occupancy in NYS without variances. In the mid-1980s we hired Architecture+ of Troy to develop a Master Plan of proposed variances to be reviewed by the NYS Board of Code. The Board grandfathered the Hall relative to the code provided that a number of safety measures were taken, such as free-standing fire escapes, sprinklers where the pressure supported them and fire detection systems. Variances in hand, we developed plans for a rear addition that provided mechanical rooms, the HVAC system, a backstage exit, office space and structural support for an earlier addition done in 1894. The estimated cost was $180,000 but we accomplished it for $80,000.

Q - How was that done?

B - First, through generous local financial support by the Lawson-Valentine Foundation, Helen and Lyman White’s donation of two Grandma Moses paintings to be sold, a bequest from Katherine Brash and many smaller donations. Then Hubbard Hall self-contracted the work, using many volunteers and their one staff person to complete the work.

Q - You, of course, were that staff person as Executive Coordinator, but wasn’t that an evolutionary process also?

B - For the first four years, I was a volunteer and made my living as a builder. In 1982, our operating budget appeared to have room in it to hire a quarter-time administrator. Two years later, my salary was increased to half-time pay. We had grant support from The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and after I had served on various grant review panels for a number of years, NYSCA designated Hubbard Hall as a Primary Institution. Those are defined as arts organizations, the loss of which would constitute irreparable damage to the cultural fabric of the State. When we were asked by NYSCA to administer their Decentralization Program for Washington County, I finally became a full-time employee.
Q - When we think of Hubbard Hall, we think initially of performing arts: theater, music, dance, and opera. There are special pages in this Journal describing each of our current major companies and cooperating programs. Building such a varied arts coalition must have taken time as well: theater, for example.

B - For the first 18 years there were several attempts to start a theater program at Hubbard Hall. Then in 1996 Kevin McGuire was spending the summer with his family in Hoosick Falls and proposed directing A Midsummer Night's Dream as an outdoor traveling production. An enthusiastic cast drawn from the area performed in venues in Bennington, Troy, Saratoga, Fort Edward, Hoosick Falls and Cambridge. In 1999, I contacted Kevin in Toronto where he was doing Phantom and discussed his doing Into the Woods that summer, which he did. He was persuaded to come home, enjoy his son's senior year in high school and start what became the Theater Company at Hubbard Hall. Ten years and 50 plays later Kevin had put Hubbard Hall on the map earning regional acclaim from critics and audiences alike. The summer conservatory courses have led several students into theatrical careers. John Hadden, who acted in several productions, then served as Artistic Director for three great seasons and brought a whole new set of contacts to the Company. Now with David Snider at the helm we're entering another new era with Theater at Hubbard Hall.

Q - And then there is dance...

B - In the early 1980s Margaret Wagner started a dance company at Cambridge in a rented barn near the firehouse. When she moved away several of her teachers and students formed a non-profit Dance Center of Cambridge, directed by Laura Gates. This eventually merged with Hubbard Hall Projects and moved to the Hall, which was also used by the Theater Company at Hubbard Hall and scheduling was a nightmare. After 2000, when the Cambridge Valley Community Preservation and Development Partnership (CP) started the Freight Yard project, the first space to be done was the north end of the Beacon Feed building, which was made into a dance studio, still the busiest place on the Campus. After Laura left, Bliss McIntosh worked to expand the movement classes to include Yoga, Tai Ji, Fencing and Irish Step dancing. Gina Diebel joined the staff and added Indian dance and Karate. Dance performances have become so large that we have begun moving them to different school auditoriums.

Q - And chamber music...

B - In 1986 a chance encounter with Judy Eissenberg led to a discussion of a dream that she and Lila Brown had of starting a chamber music festival at Lila's family farm in Salem. They would invite musicians they had met to spend time working on nuances in chamber music that seldom worked in larger venues...
but might work in the acoustics of Hubbard Hall. Their first concert, which they called Music from Salem, just blew away the audience of experienced listeners and music novices like me and a wonderful 27 year relationship was begun.

Q - How did opera begin at Hubbard Hall?

B – Hubbard Hall Opera Theater came to Hubbard Hall like most of our programming – someone with a passion and a vision walks in and suggests it. That person was Alix Jones. Alix knew the Hall because she married Jason Dolmetsch who had been in numerous children’s theater productions while growing up and was a founding member of the Theater Company. Alix’s vision included mounting productions with an orchestra to give regional opera singers such an experience. The cost of hiring an orchestra makes such opportunities quite rare. Alix’s plans were ambitious but sound. We knew from Music from Salem and musical theater productions that the Hall’s acoustics were great so we said, “Why not?” Our community pitched in with thousands of dollars’ worth of donated housing and we were all treated to a very unique experience – opera up close and intimate.

Q - What impresses you the most from your 37 years of working at Hubbard Hall?

B – How this old 19th century building attracts and inspires 20th and 21st century programs and the support they need from our community. Aren’t we lucky?
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Theater at Hubbard Hall

The stage at the Hubbard Hall Opera House was built for Theater.

In the early days, Hubbard Hall hosted some of the best speakers and most noted performers of the late 19th and early 20th century. Wild Bill Cody, Susan B. Anthony, and Mark Twain are but a few of those who have stood upon this stage. Then the curtain came down and did not rise again for nearly 50 years.

For eighteen years after the reopening of Hubbard Hall in 1978, there were many attempts to start an on-going theater program. Founder Benjie White and former Board Chair Sam Norwell both directed several productions. Allison Caldwell launched the Children's Theater Company, which was an immediate success. All of these were fun…but they were just not enough.

And then Kevin McGuire came to town!

He did not dabble in theater; his passion dove in. And everyone was invited along for the journey. He started with Shakespeare – introducing Benjie’s first local appearance as Bottom in A Midsummer Night’s Dream – and followed with Sondheim. And by the fall of 1999 the founding of The Theater Company at Hubbard Hall was a done deed.

Kevin was committed to the classics. He loved them personally and knew them to be great teaching tools. He was also determined that Hubbard Hall would build its reputation on producing plays less often seen outside an academic setting or at major theater festivals. The long list of performances over the past 15 years include not only recognizable works by Shakespeare, Shaw, Chekhov, and Moliere…but equally remarkable plays by Giradoux, Synge, Ibsen, Andreyev, Brecht, Goldoni, Beckett, and Albee.

“People’s hearts are on their sleeves here. There’s a tremendous amount of passion and commitment.” ~ Kevin McGuire
The Theater at Hubbard Hall has always been a place where actors of all ages and levels of experience work together. It is a mentoring company where everyone learns from one another. Many members of the cast and crew live within a 50 mile radius of Cambridge. Others, often active professionals, travel quite a distance to participate in the production. All bring seriousness and commitment, a generosity of spirit and a gift of imagination that results in an experience that is magical.

“The region’s most exciting new theater. THE THEATER COMPANY at HUBBARD HALL, continues to dazzle critics and patrons alike with beautifully realized productions.”
~Backstage Magazine, 2001

The backbone of The Theater Company has always been the community that has supported, nurtured, and transformed it. Indeed, it is the community that is the principle player in each production. The company counts on the actors to do far more than simply appear on the stage; counts on local teenagers to run the sound and the lights; counts on generous neighbors and local antique stores to provide props; counts on local artists to design and construct environments and sets. In 2004, Metroland named Hubbard Hall the region’s “Best Theatre on a Shoestring”, remarking that “…whether it’s a Victorian drawing room, a Monet landscape or the mayhem of a circus tent, Hubbard Hall has got the knack of shabby chic down to a science.”

And here’s one last secret about this venerable old stage: there are hundreds of performers’ signatures on the back of the Hubbard Hall curtain. The earliest is dated 1904. The most recent…well, that will always be tomorrow.

“Every one of us…actor, crew, audience member…is responsible for the Theater Company’s success. We come to Cambridge to polish one of these treasures and for a few weeks at least we become (like the Irish, once, according to legend) the preservers of civilization.” ~ John Hadden
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Hubbard Hall Opera Theater

From the unlikeliest of beginnings—an opera company located hundreds of miles from any major city, featuring up and coming singers in classic repertory and beyond, and treating theatrical and musical values as equally important in its productions—Hubbard Hall Opera Theater is putting down roots.

“Hubbard Hall Opera Theater is perhaps the best kept secret in Upstate NY! It’s a place where the emerging professionals get to nourish their art working with some of the most talented people in the industry.” Vedrana Kalas, (Norina) ’11, (Mimi) ’12, (Violetta cover) ’13

From Cosi to Nozze - A Wild Six-Year Ride...

Since it’s founding in 2009 by Alexina Jones, the Hubbard Hall Opera Theater has always looked in new directions. As a truly innovative American company they present both modern and classic works in a fresh light with a welcoming attitude and persevering, can-do spirit.

Benjie White and Kevin McGuire were initially skeptical about Hubbard Hall launching an opera company. According to Alix, Kevin’s first reaction was: “So what do we call it? Opera Company at Hubbard Hall? Alix’s replay: O-C-H-H? Ouch. No, it’s going to be HHOT.” But how could a small theatre company finance such an enterprise? Alix convinced them to take the plunge into producing opera on a shoestring budget.

It was important to break down opera’s image as exclusive and remote and instead convey the essence of the story; to reveal the emotions that can’t be spoken. Cosi fan tutte (opera in the round!) showed everyone that the desire to explore this art form was there:

“And then, the opera started and the beauty of the music, the costumes, the acting, all enhanced immeasurably by HHOT’s unique brand of intimacy, was simply transformational. I got it”.

Kathy Roome - first timer
And they ran with that.

A single summer orchestra production sprouted a conservatory and the year after that they added a piano performance block for those young singers. Meanwhile they began a series of touring productions and formed partnerships with other touring companies who could bring in contemporary works as a counterpoint to their classics. Hubbard Hall Opera has won the American Prize, has become a member of Opera America, has hosted singers from the Met and Carnegie Hall circuits, and has even made the pages of the New York Times:

"It was an exhilarating event. You couldn't monetize it; you couldn't commodify it; you couldn't load it up on your bandwagon of goods. You could only experience it." James Atlas, New York Times 2012

This is a banner year, in terms of donors, the number of auditionees who came out (over 300), and ambition. The opera is excited to put up its first double orchestra bill as part of a blossoming summer festival: Gianni Schicchi and Nozze di Figaro, but there is so much more to come…

So what do we call it? Opera Company at Hubbard Hall?” “OCHH? Ouch. No, it’s going to be HHOT.”
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Ever wonder...where did they get their start?

Hubbard Hall has always been a “starting” place.

Learning can begin at any age, and everyone deserves a great beginning: Work that inspires. Teachers who nurture. A safe place to take chances. And a community of like-minded peers encouraging you to discover your own unique voice. Passionate artists sharing their knowledge and skills. Creative people from all walks of life coming together to make something amazing. Young people growing up in the arts, going out into the world, and then teaching the next generation.

The Hubbard Hall campus--which today comprises the original 1878 theater plus a rail yard park, Studio building and multipurpose theater/gallery space--hums with classes from daybreak to well into the night, seven days a week. In 2013, more than 330 individuals took classes, with many attending multiple events each week. In an average week, 37 individual classes met (ranging from 45 minutes to 3 hours in duration) in addition to 25+ hours of uninstructed study groups, practice sessions and rehearsals. A strong scholarship program ensures that programs are accessible to all.
“My child loved the performance, she said it was the best day of her life! As a parent, I’m grateful that we didn’t have to buy expensive costumes. The teachers made it magical and affordable.” - parent of a young dance student

Hubbard Hall’s 18 regular faculty, most of whom have been teaching with us for 5 years or more, are joined by a variety of guest instructors who lead specialized workshops throughout the year. These teaching artists are working professionals who appreciate Hubbard Hall’s support for their growth as artists and educators. They are inspired by opportunities for cross-disciplinary work with colleagues, and encouraged to share their enthusiasm for their particular artistic disciplines onstage, in the studio, and in the community.

Hubbard Hall education has something for everyone! Infants, toddlers and preschoolers experience the joys of making music and creating dances for the first time, together with adults who love them. Grade schoolers on vacation break make new friends as they spend a week cooking, playing, creating, singing, dancing and telling stories together. Teens develop new vocal skills while they discover pop songs that speak powerful messages for courage, justice, and peace. Seniors who may have not been in a “classroom” for many years discover new strength, balance, and ease of movement with expert guidance and instruction in Yoga or Tai Ji. And so much more – drumming, fencing, karate, chess, dance, music, art.....
Dance, in its various forms, has always been a part of Hubbard Hall. From community contra dances to ballet, modern and tap, to contemporary and Irish step to everything in between…. Whether it is a class, a performance, a festival, or a flash mob – dance will always be a part of Hubbard Hall.

The very beginning of dance at Hubbard Hall was contra dancing, both attached to the Fiddle Weekends which began in 1981, and as a monthly series, usually called and taught by Jerry Jenkins with music by the Pumpkin Hook Orchestra. Monthly contra dances have continued throughout the years, now usually called by Fern Bradley. They are successful in their mission to introduce beginners and families to the pleasures of folk dance to live music.

Composer Jody Kruskal brought the first dance performances to the Hall along with his “public works orchestra” (photo). These whimsical performances included professional and amateur dancers, artists, story tellers, musicians and were enjoyed by sold-out audiences. Alison Cauldwell brought her dance school from the Red Barn to the Hall. Laura Gates nurtured a Junior Company which performed at area schools, nursing homes, festivals and at Hubbard Hall events.

The “Dog Days Dance Festival” brought professional dancers and teachers from far and wide for an August weekend of classes and performances.

In 1998, the New York State Council of the Arts (NYSCA) funded a multi-generational Community Dance Ensemble which Laura Gates, Joanna Brotman, and Barbara Roan created with an assortment of community members. NYSCA also funded a residency for Yoshiko Chuma and the School of Hard Knocks. Yoshiko returned with her dancers and musicians for several years, including the year of “The Living Room Project” when they brought dance into unusual settings like an apple orchard, a bass shop and doctor’s waiting rooms. Could this have been the forerunner for the flash mobs that students perform today?

An interest in Irish step dance took hold around 2002. In 2004, Darcy May began teaching and the program has grown every year to our present size of about 60 students participating in 6 levels of Irish dance, with many students beginning at the age of 6 and staying with it until they graduate from high school. Some have even gone on to form Irish dance clubs and competitions at their colleges. The Hubbard Hall Irish Dancers often perform throughout the community, in nursing homes and at various gatherings.
Other classes offered have been Belly Dance, Hip Hop and Jazz, Tai Ji, Foil, Dances of India and Bollywood dance, Ballet, Tap, Karate, and creative movement for preschoolers.

The move into the beautiful Beacon Feed Studio and onto a spectacular new dance floor in 2007 gave all of the classes a boost in morale. The studio has also made it possible to host professional performers such as the Martha Graham Company, the Vanguard Dance Series and The Ellen Sinapoli Dance Company to give young professionals a place to develop and perform new work.

National Dance Week has been celebrated for the past couple of years with a flash mob performing in surprising places around the village.

The dance program has done more than any other program to bring everyone from seniors to young families into the “art and community” happening at Hubbard Hall.
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At the turn of the 21st Century, Hubbard Hall was bursting at its seams. A group of people dedicated to Hubbard Hall decided to purchase, preserve, revitalize and celebrate the historic (and decaying) Delaware & Hudson (D&H) Freight Yard for the benefit of the community. The parcel included two acres and five buildings. The Freight Yard was purported to be one of the most important intact 19th Century rural freight facilities in New York State. A new nonprofit organization, the Cambridge Valley Community Development and Preservation Partnership, Inc. (fondly known as the Community Partnership), was formed to lead the Cambridge Freight Yard Revitalization Project.

Hubbard Hall Projects bought three of the historic freight buildings in 2004. The 3,800 square foot historic Beacon Feed building, once a transfer point for the Rice Seed Company and later a feed company, was transformed into a vibrant arts education facility complete with a music room, visual arts classroom, dance studio, and offices. The Freight Depot was transformed into a ‘black box theatre’, allowing Hubbard Hall to expand artistic programming year-round.

The Community Partnership then took on a key infrastructure problem inhibiting growth in Cambridge Village by installing an innovative decentralized wastewater treatment system and a thirty-car municipal parking lot. The Lovejoy Foundry Freight building was converted into a home for the winter farmers’ market and interpretive exhibits. The elegant D & H Passenger Depot across the tracks was renovated for civic use and the Blacksmith Shop (5 Washington Street) was converted into commercial space. A quaint park, complete with a “yellow brick” walkway, was established to unite the Freight Yard once again with the community. Inspired by these efforts, local businesses owners rehabilitated and brought back to life four other structures along Main Street. Funding for the revitalization came from a myriad of individuals, businesses and state and federal agencies including the Federal Highway Administration/New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Council on the Arts, NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation, Empire State Development Corporation, NYS Department of Agriculture and New York Energy, Research and Development Corporation. Local businesses and the village government were also key partners. But perhaps most important was the donation of considerable talent, time and enthusiasm by so many of the town’s residents and their determination to realize the vision. With the buildings in place, Hubbard Hall is ready to further activate its campus as a resource for residents and visitors alike.

The Cambridge Freight Yard Revitalization Project was born as a community initiative to purchase, preserve, revitalize and celebrate the unique railroad complex located in the historic commercial heart of the Village. The initiative has generated business activity; attracted visitors; expanded cultural and recreational opportunities; and supported local agriculture.
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Music from Salem

“The Emotion is in the Music at Hubbard Hall” John Waller, Bennington Banner

Judy Eissenberg, violinist and founding member of the Lydian String Quartet and Lila Brown, a renowned violist and faculty member at the Boston Conservatory walked into Benjie White's office at Hubbard Hall one day in 1985 with the hope of finding a performance home for chamber music. They envisioned a performance and teaching center at Lilà's family beautiful farm in Salem New York. However, they also needed a professional venue, with great acoustics, that could support a larger listening audience from time to time. Having nothing more than an idea in their heads, and looking for nothing more than the chance to play some chamber music now and then at Hubbard Hall, Benjie considered Judy's and Lilà's request for a few seconds and said “sure.” Thus began a wonderful collaboration between Music from Salem and Hubbard Hall that has endured and thrived for 28 years.

As it happens, Hubbard Hall is the perfect size for chamber music with absolutely spectacular acoustics: clear and honest, but also warm with an enhancing resonance. Indeed the Hall has helped to shape Music from Salem's unique sound. Since then, Music from Salem (MfS) has grown to be a regionally famous performance and educational institution that presents a broad chamber music repertoire, including commissioned works from contemporary composers.

A brief summer concert schedule at Hubbard Hall gradually expanded into the fall, winter and spring, followed by repeat performances at other venues around New York and Vermont. Week long summer cello and viola seminars became a major part of the program. Headed by Lila (viola) and Rhonda Rider (cello), assisted by Judith Gordon (piano), these classes bring budding professional musicians to Washington County, affording an opportunity for in-depth learning and culminating with performances at Hubbard Hall.

A series of music appreciation classes held throughout the year, called “The Listening Club,” followed. Open rehearsals have developed into a unique opportunity for music lovers to learn about the music-making process in a close-up and personal way. Children's workshops reach out into the neighboring communities, encouraging young people's learning and appreciation of classical music.

To give you some idea of how a modest request for a performance space turned into a prominent chamber music program, the 2014 season included nine professional concerts, three student concerts, three Listening Clubs, four children's workshops, four open rehearsals, plus several fundraising extravaganzas.

None of this might have happened if Benjie had not said simply “yes” so many years ago.
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Geraldine Freedman, Post-Star

Janet McGhee arrived in Cambridge in 1990 having left behind a brilliant musical career in Boston that included positions as the Associate Conductor in the Choral Department of the New England Conservatory of Music, Director of Choral Activities at both Clark University and Simmons College, instructor of choral technique at the Berkley College of Music, to name a few. She had decided that her musical life was over. Motherhood, marriage, and the quiet country life would define her middle age. In any case, how could she top what she had accomplished in Boston?

Five years later, ready for a new adventure, she walked into Benjie’s office and told him that she wanted to start a community chorus at Hubbard Hall. Unable to resist the burning determination in her face, Benjie immediately gave her the green light. She hung out her shingle, hoping for at least fifteen brave souls who might want to sing a few madrigals now and then.

The response to announcing the first rehearsal in the Hall was overwhelming. One by one they ascended the stairs, the hall growing more electric with each entrance. They kept coming. There was not enough sheet music. Forty-five people later, the first rehearsal began. And for 19 years The Battenkill Chorale has not looked back.

Upwards of 100 singers ascend those same stairs to sing their hearts out every Thursday evening during performance season. While the Chorale has outgrown Hubbard Hall as a performance space (the singers alone fill the hall), it has become a treasured sanctuary for the Chorale, a place of resonant beauty held dear to each singer’s heart and soul.

This musical journey has taken the Chorale far and wide, from local churches to European concert halls, majestic cathedrals, Terezin concentration camp, and Russia. They have performed with professional orchestras and soloists, commissioned works from American composers, and sung complex, sophisticated music beyond the reach of many a professional choir.

“But of all these experiences, none means as much to the Battenkill Chorale as singing in Hubbard Hall. It is our home, the place where the magic begins. Like a beloved quilt hand crafted by your great grandmother, Hubbard Hall is a thing of beauty that becomes more cherished with every generation.” Janet McGhee

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Valley Artisans Market

The Calico Trunk, a fabric store owned and operated by Shirley Anthony, was a good tenant for Hubbard Hall Projects from 1977 through 1980. So when Shirley retired and the store closed, there was an opening for a compatible business to fill the space.

Cambridge was full of fine craftspeople, including several potters who had been involved in a commune at the Rexleigh Mill on the Battenkill. They were joined by painters, weavers, woodworkers and basket makers. Together they launched the Valley Artisans’ Market which opened its doors to the public in March of 1981.

The founding members were simply invited to join. Over time new artists and artisans came from Cambridge and beyond to become members. To accept new artists, a careful jurying process was developed to maintain a very high level of art and that continues to this day.

The “small gallery” was developed in the back room to feature individual artists’ work. The community and patrons from near and far love to come in for opening receptions and see regularly changing shows which have kept the look of the store fresh and often surprising.

There is hardly an artist in this part of New York and Vermont who hasn’t had his or her work featured in Valley Artisans’ Market in one way or another. The working membership has hovered between 25 and 30 people, with a few consignors and seasonal members. Staffing, cleaning and, yes, even renovation and facelift duties are shared by the membership.

For 33 years Valley Artisans’ Market members have cooperated, argued, laughed, played and inspired each other’s creativity. It has been a long and fruitful relationship for those who have been involved since the early days. The Market continues to attract new members who are amazed at the rich community of artists/artisans that is housed in the beautiful vintage environment of Hubbard Hall. The shelving, hardware and wainscoting are all made of an extinct local chestnut milled on-site during the original 1878 construction.

The Valley Artisans’ Market remains the place to see the creative spirits of the community – to purchase a special gift, to meet an artist, to be inspired by what the members of this unique artists’ cooperative have made.

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When Martin Hubbard built his Opera House in 1878, he designed the first floor to be used as a storefront. This space became the “Dry Goods and Grocery Store,” owned and operated by Andrew B. McNish. John Henry came to Cambridge to work at the store and in 1912 became a partner in the business. In 1929, he became sole owner of “John S. Henry Dry Goods & Groceries.” In 1964, Dorothy Bell became proprietress. The Bell Family sold the business and Hubbard Hall itself to the group that gave rise to Hubbard Hall Projects.

When Hubbard Hall Projects formed in 1978, the former dry goods store was divided into two spaces: The Village Store Co-Op (now the Cambridge Food Co-Op) and The Village Store, managed by Mrs. Helen White, mother of Benjie and Bliss (McIntosh). Helen offered locally made crafts and art works, Woolrich clothing, men’s work shoes and boots, housewares, canoes and paddles (by special order), socks, slippers, and gloves. She used local contacts to import clothing from Ecuador, as well as scarves and rugs from India. She also established connections with local clothing designers. In 1995, Helen sold her interest in The Village Store to Hubbard Hall. Bliss continued to oversee the store’s management. Bliss enlisted a group of volunteers to serve as a board of advisors for the store and to make merchandise selections.

The Store’s board members who had assisted Helen in ordering, display and the volunteers hired the Store’s first manager. For many years the Co-op and The Village Store coordinated closely, sharing opening and staffing responsibilities. When the Co-op departed in 2009, The Village Store expanded into the space you see today.

In 2014, the store continues to occupy the same retail space as the original dry goods and general store – still utilizing the original fixtures! Store Manager, Roberta Bosack, is assisted by her Board of Advisors and a dedicated group of volunteers to present a delightful retail experience. The store offers toys and games, housewares, candles and cards, jewelry, soap, accessories, and candy. Something for everyone.

A unique synergy exists between Hubbard Hall Projects and The Village Store. Both are committed to maintaining the architectural and historic integrity of the original structure and to reinforce its art center mission through the use of this space. The Village Store is a proud sponsor of Hubbard Hall - profits from the store support dance, music, opera, and theatre productions, classes & workshops, and the scholarship program. The store is open before most performances, especially to serve Hubbard Hall patrons.

You are warmly invited to visit the store - step back in time and imagine yourself in a general sundries store. And then look around, and know you are part of something special - you are part of the vibrant and thriving Hubbard Hall community.
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six - Let’s say nine families trying to feed themselves well
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able feast found a home within the warm arms of what was
to become Hubbard Hall Projects. The Village Store Co-
Op opened its doors to the public on Election Day, 1976
sharing space with Mrs. White’s Village Store.

Hubbard Hall Projects, The Village Store Co-Op – we grew
up together; we supported each other. We attended dance
class, then scooted downstairs to work our shifts at the
Co-op. Our members scooped flour and measured spices
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ment grew. So too, grew the demand for our products.

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Bursting at the seams in 2009, we moved to One West
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longer tenants of Hubbard Hall, but we remain true
friends and avid fans - 38 years and counting.

Come see us, enjoy the food, and celebrate a good, healthy community!
Benjie, thanks for the wonderful memories!

David, here’s to the wonderful memories to come!

The Battenkill Chorale
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The Curiosity Forum

The first time a Curiosity Forum audience came together in 2007 was because they were interested in learning more about the French Impressionist, Claude Monet and his home in Giverny, France. Leslie Parke, an internationally known artist was speaking about her 2007 residency at Monet’s garden in Giverny, France. And they loved it!

Benjie White asked Leslie if she could help the Hubbard Hall Programming Director, Gina Diebel, organize other talks to bring people to the newly renovated Freight Depot. The vision for The Curiosity Forum came together when the partnership was created between Hubbard Hall, Battenkill Books and Leslie Parke Studio in 2010.

The Forum seeks broad and eclectic topics to attract new audiences to Hubbard Hall, and presenters who are both experts in their field and passionate about their subjects. Programs as diverse as a talk by the real-life rescue pilot of The Perfect Storm to a presentation on historic boat restoration on Lake George have attracted truly diverse audiences. The Curiosity Forum is also used to enhance Hubbard Hall’s programming in theater, opera, music, yoga and children’s workshops.

In 2011 a blog and website were added: www.curiosityforum.org, along with a Facebook page. In the last seven years The Curiosity Forum has presented over 100 programs to approximately 4000 attendees.

The 2014-2015 season will bring more presentations peaking audience curiosity on a wide range of subject from experts far and near. Make plans to join them!

Open Studios of Washington County, NY

Brenda McMahon and Serena Kovalosky, both exceptional artists, had a vision of adventurers traveling the roads of Washington County to visit fine artists in their studios. It would be a self-guided, two-day tour held every other year. The goal was for each visitor to see inspiring places in the Battenkill Valley and to meet talented artists in their studios to see their beautiful work. In order to present the highest level of visitor experience, the artists - some locally known, others of international acclaim - would go through a juried process to join the tour.

And Hubbard Hall came along to help. The Open Studios of Washington County was part of Hubbard Hall from the very first tour in 2007 and the relationship continues.

For each of the past four tours, almost 400 folks have filled their car gas tanks and grabbed a tour map, packed a lunch or planned a meal at a charming local restaurant, and set off to visit 12 -15 artists. Each stop is a peek behind the creative curtain to see where art is made. Most visitors select several works to take home with them and then return again for the next tour.

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Hubbard Hall strives to enrich the lives of individuals and communities, and offer valuable pathways to learning through the arts. To that end, with the 2014-2015 season, Hubbard Hall launches our new Hubbard Hall for All program. In collaboration with individual donors and funders, Hubbard Hall for All will guarantee that all of our main stage productions are available and accessible for all community members. Hubbard Hall for All provides free tickets to those who serve our community each day, including: Military personnel and their families, Veterans, EMS workers, Farmers, Fire and Rescue, Police and the Special Needs Community. Through the generous sponsorships of local individuals and businesses, we are able to offer these tickets at no charge to qualifying individuals and their families.

Offer is subject to availability and limited to our main stage productions, so please plan ahead! Contact our box office to order tickets at 518-677-2494, ext.373.

As part of Hubbard Hall for All, we are also able to offer New York teachers two tickets for the price of one. This offer is dependent upon availability; call the box office to order tickets.

Hubbard Hall Giving Levels
By being here, by caring for this place, by bringing people together to create, listen, learn and laugh, we are saying “this is important” – it's important for us as a community to gather, it's important for us as human beings to tell stories, to express ourselves clearly and creatively, to see one another taking risks and to take our own risks together. We value this forum, this home for artists and audiences – this is the way we choose to live – together whole and connected. We want to dive deep, get our hands dirty, dance, sing, act, paint, perform ourselves – and here we can do it. We want to see each other, breathe the same air, and recognize each other with curiosity and compassion. Here we can do it. We want to make art and community happen. Here we can do it.

What kind of gift will you give to our students, audiences and artists?
We encourage you to make a gift that is personally significant to you. Please know that each and every dollar you give will make a big difference in the lives of our students, audiences, and artists and help Hubbard Hall deliver on its missions to enrich the lives of individuals and communities, and offer valuable pathways to learning through the arts. You are certainly not limited to these levels, but hopefully they can give you some ideas on how your gift helps:

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NOW RUNNING THROUGH SEPTEMBER!

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By John Logan
STARRING TIM DALY
JUNE 18–JULY 6

Out of the City
by Leslie Ayvazian
JULY 10–19

ALL IN THE TIMING
by David Ives
JULY 24–AUGUST 9

The Mousetrap
by Agatha Christie
AUGUST 14–30

Travels with Mark Twain
created by & starring Ron Crawford
SEPT 18–20
Thank You, Volunteers

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.
~Elizabeth Andrew

Volunteer vol·un·teer [vol-uh n-teer] noun
1. A person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking
2. A person who performs a service willingly and without pay
Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity and is intended to promote goodness or improve human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce a feeling of self-worth and respect.

Hubbard Hall Center for the Arts would not exist without the thousands of volunteers putting their time, heart, passion, love, sweat, smiles, and yes, sometimes tears into it for over 37 years. Benjie started as a volunteer, as did all of the over 100 board members who have served, the folks who dug out the basement, sold the tickets, cooked and baked for our events, helped with classes, painted sets, helped with lighting, acted and sang in plays and operas alongside the professionals, housed performers, repaired the building, and on, and on. What an amazing community! A great thank you to all!

There are exciting volunteer opportunities today and in the future for everyone – single day projects and longer term initiatives. Please consider being a part of the force that is Hubbard Hall by volunteering!

I can no other answer make, but, thanks, and thanks. ~William Shakespeare

Thank you, thank you, thank you. We could not do what we do without you.
~David Andrew Snider, Executive Director

Thank you to all who helped write, edit, compile this Journal: Sue Sanderson, Benjie White, David Snider, Andrew Pate, Jim Reid, Janet Scurria, John Hadden, Alix Jones, Gina Deibel, Bliss McIntosh, Sarah Ashton, Lila Brown, Rob Bauer, Janet McGhee, Hannah Stevens, Susan Sullivan, Leslie Parke, Kathy Roome, Nan Fitzpatrick, Maryann McGeorge and Alex Dery Snider.

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The Board of Directors of Hubbard Hall welcomes you to the 2014-2015 Season and to the Celebration of Hubbard Hall. In this time of reflection, this time of excitement and change, this time of expectations, we are grateful for the engaged, involved and committed community that is Hubbard Hall.

We thank Benjie for his devotion over the past 37 years to all things Hubbard Hall. We are proud to have worked with him and all former Board Members to support the vision of “Making Art and Community Happen”

We thank our Chair, Andrew Pate, for his dedicated leadership though the transitional period and for all of his care and work that has strengthened us each individually and together as a Board.

We thank the staff for their hard work and dedication that they bring to all tasks that we asked of you. Each class, each performance, each meeting, each project is made better by your efforts.

We thank the donors, both big and small, for believing in the magic that is Hubbard Hall. Your support is an important part of the potion that makes it all happen and keeps it going.

We thank the actors, the dancers, the singers, the readers, the instrumentalists – both professional and amateur - who pour their hearts into each performance. You brought us to our feet!

We thank the volunteers who generously give of their time and their talent making Hubbard Hall a very special place for all.

Now on to the Celebration, the New Season, and the future!

Andrew Pate, Chair
David Cuite
Bliss McIntosh
Christine Congalosi-Lulla
Jim Reid
Carol Throop

Connie Brooks
Alexis Lorenz
John Mooney
Judy Pate
Hannah Stevens
Mariah Sanford-White
2014-2015 Hubbard Hall Center for the Arts Calendar

Special Events

July 4, 5, 6: Cambridge Community Celebration and Hubbard Hall Reunion
October 25: Whispering Bones (scholarship fundraiser)
December 6: Holiday Breakfast
March 28: Blues & Brews Fundraiser
May 22: Rites of Spring Gala & Silent Auction

Classes

Fall Session: September through January
Spring Session: February through June
Summer Session: July & August

Dance

June 13, 2015: Dance Performances

Visual Arts

Valley Artisans Market
June 28, 3-5 p.m. Opening Reception and Talk with Leslie Fuller: Drawings: Ink on Paper.
July 26, 3-5 p.m. Opening Reception and Talk with Irene Berken: Metal Sculpture.
August 23-24: Annual Sale of Overstocks, experimental work and pottery seconds.
August 30, 3-5 p.m. Opening Reception and Talk with Gjula Varosy: Wood Sculpture.
September 27, 3-5 p.m. Opening Reception and Talk with Paul Chapman: Industrial Paintings.
October 25, 1-5 p.m. Opening Reception and Talk with Guild of Adirondack Artists.

Music

July 5: Music from Salem: Over There: A Remembrance of World War I
July 13: Music from Salem: Dynamic and Noble: featuring the French Horn
August 2: Music from Salem: Brahms as Protege and Master
August 9: Music from Salem: Celebrating Quarts and Quints

Opera

August 13, 15, 16, 21, 23, 24: HHOT Marriage of Figaro
August 14, 16, 17, 22: HHOT Gianni Schicchi
February 12-14: HHOT “Purely Puccini” Valentine's Tour

Theater

July 17-26: Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
August 29: The Freight Project
August 30: Kevin McGuire Cabaret
November 6-30: Good People by David Lindsay-Abaire
February 19-March 15: Tartuffe by Molière
April 23-May 17: The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

*Titles and dates subject to change.
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