A New Chapter Begins: Downtown at 121 Main Street

An annual report is a great time to reflect upon the past year. It is a way to evaluate our progress as an institution and to chart the course for the new year. For the Rufus Porter Museum, 2016 was quite a year! Members and friends of RPM and the community of Bridgton made it possible for our relocation to 121 Main Street. With your help the museum raised over $50,000 to match the challenge grant we received from the Kendal C. and Anna Ham Charitable Foundation for $38,000. On November 2, the Nathan Church house was moved to 121 Main Street. In the early spring of 2016, rehabilitation of the interior of the Webb House began. On the first floor exhibit rooms were created in addition to a museum store space and ADA bathroom. Facilities Committee volunteers worked over the late summer months to rehabilitate the second floor into the museum office space. The rest of the second floor will be finished this spring, 2017, and we are putting together the plan for the HVAC system - an absolute must - for this year as well. Exterior and interior repairs of the Church House will commence as soon as the snow melts.

In the summer of 2016 a preview exhibit was created highlighting the talents of Rufus Porter for our enjoyment and inspiration. The exhibits will continue to evolve and grow as we explore Porter's original inventions, patents, publishing and writing. This summer our younger visitors will have an opportunity to think about the steps involved in invention and will create their own. In July and August there will be dedicated Children’s Hours at the museum that will have fun activities for kids inspired by Porter's art and innovation. For adults our Curious Arts Series of classes are back this July 31 through August 5.

In 2016 we acquired a working model of Porter's Rotary Pump for the museum’s collection. This year through generous donations, RPM will be adding to the collection two miniature portraits attributed to Porter and a model of Porter’s Aerial Steamship. We look forward to sharing these wonderful acquisitions with you this summer. Thank you for making it possible for RPM to be a part of the greater Bridgton Community.
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Volunteer at RPM. Fun and rewarding work in our growing museum. Come to the museum on June 6th from 1pm - 4pm for volunteer open house. For more information visit: rufusporter museum.org

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Meet our Museum Director-Curator

The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce our new director, Martha Cummings. Martha took over the reins as director in February 2016 and quickly made a difference in the running of the Museum.

In January 2014, Martha moved to western Maine from the Boston area where she had managed historic house museum sites at Longyear Museum. At Longyear, she collaborated on award winning restorations while completing her Masters in Historic Preservation from Plymouth State University.

Martha was instrumental in cataloging the contents of Bridgton Academy’s Spratt-Mead Museum in the fall of 2014. She had joined the RPM Facilities Committee earlier that year and was particularly helpful on the Webb House project. Her knowledge of preservation added expertise needed as the team worked to restore this historic structure in the village proper of Bridgton. A year later, in 2015, she was asked to join the Board of Trustees of the Museum and has been an invaluable asset.

In February 2016, the unanimous choice of the Board was to ask Martha to assume the directorship of the Museum. Since becoming director, Martha has implemented many new and innovative policies, working closely with Board members. She updated the Strategic Plan for the Rufus Porter Museum as well as curated a preview exhibit for the opening of the Webb house.

Martha worked closely with the Facilities Committee and M&S Construction in the renovation of the space in the Webb house in preparation for the relocation of the Museum from High Street. She was instrumental in managing the move of the Church House to its new Main/Church Streets location. The Trustees of the Rufus Porter Museum are thrilled to have Martha’s steady hand and forward thinking direction as we move toward the future of the museum.

One more fun tidbit about Martha is that she is a distant cousin of Rufus Porter! John Porter, one of the original Porters to come over from England in the 17th century, settled near the Ipswich River on the North Shore of Massachusetts. The Rufus Porter branch of John Porter’s family moved to nearby Boxford, Massachusetts before moving to the Bridgton, Maine area.

A Message from the Board of Trustees Co-Chairs

What a remarkable winter this has been in Bridgton. Not only has there been skiing on Pleasant Mountain from January to April, but every day we have driven into town we could admire the Nathan Church House sitting proudly on its new foundation beside the Webb House.

And whenever we paused in awe of our new Rufus Porter “campus,” we had a moment of gratitude for the intrepid souls who began this journey of building a museum in Bridgton, Maine. The list of those far-sighted founders includes Julie Lindberg, Bob Dunning, Nancy Smoak, and Beth Cossey. Beth still remembers the day in 2004 when they first explored the dusty 1790-era cape on North High Street that we now proudly call The Church House. They had hopes right from the start of creating a one-of-a-kind museum dedicated to the local itinerant painter, Rufus Porter.

Now, in 2017, just thirteen years later, The Rufus Porter Museum at 121 Main Street, Bridgton, Maine has become a reality. Furthermore, Rufus Porter has been nationally recognized as an influential nineteenth-century mural and portrait painter, musician, inventor, and publisher who, along with his family and friends, lived for many years right here in Bridgton. Accomplishing this is what it means to “make history.” Every one of you reading this newsletter helped accomplish that over that past thirteen years; just think where we will be in thirteen more years, thanks to you, our members, friends, and supporters!

~Beth Cossey and Margaret Lindsey Sanborn
The Rufus Porter Museum (RPM) has recently acquired, and has on display, a model of what appears at first glance to be a simple, hand-operated pump. Appearance, though, can be deceiving.

By definition, an invention is a unique or novel device, method, composition, or process. It may be something totally new, or an improvement in a device or process. Some inventions, or later evolutions or applications of that invention, may serve purposes never envisioned by the inventor. Such is the case with the Elastic-Tube Pump (or Rotary Pump as it was alternatively called) that was invented and patented by Rufus Porter and J.D. Bradley in 1855, and the immense and lasting influence it would have, and continues to have, on medical science many years after its invention. For that reason, RPM commissioned professional model maker Spencer Duncan to memorialize the Porter/Bradley pump by building an accurate working model of this deceptively simple pumping device. It is based on the plans that accompanied the patent application in 1855. An earlier example of Spencer’s work, also on display at RPM, is his model of Porter’s proposed Broadway Elevated Railroad.

In his long and active life of 92 years, and through several parallel careers, each leaving its own lasting legacy, Rufus Porter has come to be known as a jack-of-all-trades. As a painter of wall murals, which he did in private homes throughout New England between approximately 1816 and 1845, he became the inspiration for a style and “school” of mural art. Examples of his murals are still discovered occasionally as old homes are renovated. In 1845 he founded "Scientific American" magazine, but sold it after only 10 months. It remains the longest continuously published magazine in the United States. His passion, though, was inventing and among his careers it was the one he pursued the longest. The period between 1820 and 1879 was his most productive. During those 59 years he documented and proposed at least 30 invention ideas and designs, and he produced and marketed several of them. Between 1832 and 1871 he is known to have been awarded patents for 25 of his inventions. His ideas focused almost exclusively on practical time and labor saving devices. Though his formal education ended when he was 12 years old, the science supporting the concepts of his inventions was remarkably sound. The Elastic-Tube Pump is an example of his knowledge of physics and mechanics.

The Porter/Bradley pump consists of a length of flexible tube fitted inside a circular casing which contains the tube through a 360-degree coil. The intake end of the tube is placed in the fluid source, and the discharge end of the tube at the fluid’s destination. A rotor with a single roller is fitted inside the inner circumference of the tube and in contact with the tube. The roller compresses the flexible tube against the pump casing which tightly seals the tube closed at the point of contact. To begin the pumping cycle, the rotor turns and the point of the tube under compression by the roller is pinched closed. As the tube opens to its natural state after the passing of the roller, an area of reduced pressure is created inside the tube between the roller and the source fluid. The fluid from the source will then be drawn into that area of lower pressure, filling it. As the roller continues its travel to the point of the tube coil where the intake and discharge are parallel, the roller will simultaneously close both tubes.
As the rotation continues, the roller moves the entrapped fluid along the tube and it is expelled at the discharge end. At the same time, the roller’s movement will again create a reduced pressure in the area behind it which again fills with the source fluid, and the cycle repeats. They also proposed in their patent application a two-roller version of the pump which would provide for an even smoother flow of fluid. In their application for a patent for the pump Porter and Bradley suggested it could be used to pump water from ships, as a fire engine pump, an air pump, a pump for moving highly viscous fluids such as molasses, or as a pump for cleaning privies. Finally, they contemplated its use as a stomach pump and for giving injections. Curiously, its application for medical purposes was mentioned almost as an afterthought.

Little could they have envisioned at the time that their pump would evolve into a device for pumping blood and would become the most important mechanical component of devices such as the heart-lung machine, which would enable open heart surgery, and the dialysis machine which would allow a near-normal lifestyle for people suffering from kidney failure. This type of pump is ideal for use as a blood pump because it produces a smooth, continuous, non-pulsating flow of fluid. There is no direct contact between the fluid and the mechanical components of the pump, and valves are unnecessary because the roller acts as a valve at all times. These characteristics contribute to the low amount of blood trauma, or hemolysis, which may result from the mechanical movement of blood.

Dr. Denton A. Cooley who performed the first successful heart transplant in the U.S. and was the first heart surgeon to implant an artificial heart in a human, stated in the medical journal article *Development of the Roller Pump for Use in the Cardiopulmonary Bypass Circuit*, “Today, the pump used most often is a positive displacement twin roller pump, originally patented by Porter and Bradley in 1855.” He stated further, “Cardiovascular surgeons owe much to Porter and Bradley for an invention that has proved both efficient and effective for cardiopulmonary bypass and has allowed operations on an open heart in a relatively dry, bloodless field.” (Texas Heart Institute Journal 1987; 14:113-118).

After more than 160 years since Rufus Porter and J.D. Bradley patented their Elastic-Tube Pump, all subsequent patents issued for roller pumps used in the cardiopulmonary bypass circuit are for minor modifications only. The roller pump that evolved from Porter and Bradley remains the most practical, most cost effective, and most often used blood pump type today.

Royd Nuckols, an engineer with FEMA, has researched and lectured on Rufus Porter and Porter’s inventions. Mr. Nuckols is a member of RPM and the brother-in-law of former RPM director Nancy Smoak. Royd and his wife Karen live in Pennsylvania.

**Invent like Porter**

Explore invention through hands-on activities for all ages. Inspired by the Smithsonian’s Spark!Lab, the Rufus Porter Museum will have our own Porter Invention Station for the exploration of ideas this year.
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A big Thank You to all of our volunteers for your time and dedication!
2016 was a year of financial growth and stability for Rufus Porter Museum. The Annual Appeal, combined with the Circle of Friends (COF) (a sustaining pledge program in its second year) made a tremendous impact on the stability of the museum’s financial situation.

The museum’s former property was sold in August thus consolidating expenses to a single property on Main Street.

Many individuals made contributions to the On the Move capital campaign to relocate the Nathan Church house to the Main Street property. Over $54,000 was raised in order to match a $38,000 grant received from The Kendal C. and Anna Ham Charitable Foundation.

Another essential source of funding is the museum store. Moving to the heart of Bridgton had a positive impact on sales. Sales were up significantly, over fifty percent higher in 2016 than 2015. Though RPM opened in July, a month later than normal, the growth in both visitation and museum store sales is very encouraging. We expect to increase sales and foot traffic in 2017.

Amazon Smile (smile.amazon.com) was a new funding source for RPM in 2016. This is a no cost, ongoing fundraising opportunity that is available for non-profits. The museum is included in the list of charitable organizations customers can choose at Amazon Smile. A small percentage of qualifying sales is donated to RPM.

The Clynk bottle redemption program at Hannaford, as well as Hannaford Helps: Bags 4my Cause, and a month of bottle redemption at the Bridgton transfer station were other sources of funding in 2016.

Three fundraising events that contributed to a great year were: the Harvest Supper with Bridgton Historical Society, Annual 4th of July Plant Sale, and the Mystery History Tour.

A major goal of RPM’s 2016 Strategic Plan over the next three years is to work on finding and creating more sustainable funding avenues. The museum will be working to develop its planned giving opportunities in particular as well as continuing pledge programs, cultivating the museum store, and seek sponsorships and grants.

815 Visitors from 23 states across the US and from Germany and Australia came to Rufus Porter Museum. The museum was open 44 Days in 2016 and had 28 Volunteers and Dendists working during the season.
**2017 Calendar of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June</th>
<th>September</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Opening Day</td>
<td>16 Harvest Supper at Narramissic</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Volunteering Open House</td>
<td>23 Museum Day Live</td>
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<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>October</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Annual Plant Sale</td>
<td>7 Last day of the regular season</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Bridgton Day</td>
<td>8 Bridgton Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Children’s Hour</td>
<td>13 Children’s Hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Art in the Park booth</td>
<td>20 Children’s Hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 Rufus &amp; His Clock talk and informal clock appraisal by Bob Frishman</td>
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<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>November</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 Nathan Church House talk by Caroline Grimm</td>
<td>18 Museum Shoppers’ Day - Maine Audubon, Falmouth</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Ice Cream Social</td>
<td>18 &amp; 19 Ladies Weekend Bridgton Shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 Children’s Hour</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Mystery History Tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Children’s Hour</td>
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**Curious Arts Series July 31—August 5**

Join RPM for a week of fun, creative classes and talks. Paint like Rufus Porter, create a penny rug, silhouette cutting, English paper piecing, and more. For a full list of classes and registration information please visit: [rufusportermuseum.org](http://rufusportermuseum.org)

*Please visit rufusportermuseum.org/events for ticket and schedule information.*
If you have already made a gift to the 2017 annual fund, thank you. Any size contribution is welcome and appreciated - to make a gift now use the form below or visit our website at rufusportermuseum.org.

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- Other $__________

Enclosed is a check in the amount of $__________

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- I have included Rufus Porter Museum in my will.
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