





*Board Members (from left): Constance Fenton, Margo McEachern, Cheryl Crowl, Jenn Hansen, Joel Third, Rhonda Hill, Sara Champion, Elise Haas, Phyllis Robertson, Christine Boris, John Wong, Hilary Micalizzi. Missing are Karen McChesney and Patty Linnon.*

### Vision

To be the region's preferred historic site for interpreting three centuries of lived experience and its larger meaning in the history of New England and the nation.

### Mission

The Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center:

- 1 Explores the site's lives and events and the insights they provide into three centuries of our national experience, and
- 2 Interprets their contemporary relevance for our shared citizenship and civic culture.

We pursue this mission by preserving and protecting the museum's physical and intellectual assets and sharing them with the widest possible audience, whether on our campus or through programs of outreach.

**Front and back covers:** This festive ribbon-cutting celebrated more than the Grand Opening of KTM&HC's new Visitor Center; it also represented another important step in our transformation from treasured house museum to regional history center.

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*Curator of Collections*  
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*Development & Grants*  
*Caretaker*

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

This has truly been a year of transformation.

Physical changes are the most apparent: visitors are now greeted in a warm and welcoming reception center; the staff is more productive in new offices; and construction is underway for a state-of-the-art archival storage and research facility for our collections.

Visible improvements are just the beginning. Behind the scenes, we are working toward the transformation from a historical house museum to a regional history center. Time, money, and thought have been dedicated to coping with these new realities by evaluating



and enhancing the visitor experience; by developing sustainable strategies to build continued success as a museum; by exploring how different media might enhance mu-

seum visits; and by creating a sustainable plan to support our museum docents, one of KTM&HC's most critical assets.

As we undertook construction of our new Visitor Center, it became evident that our campus would benefit from a rigorous polishing all around. We will work tirelessly to bring our entire campus up to the level deserving of a regional history center.

Far from operating under the

assumption, "If you build it, they will come," our team of staff and volunteers is committed to attracting new visitors to fully appreciate our rich 300-plus years of history by offering programming that engages and challenges us to understand history and its relevance to contemporary society.

It is with a grateful heart that I thank our members, donors, and the community at large for their continued support of that vision and mission.

Respectfully,

Hilary Micalizzi  
President, Board of Directors

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Last year's signature moment is pictured on the cover: the ribbon-cutting to open our new Visitor Center—a watershed moment in our institutional history made possible by the steadfast support and unstinting generosity of our members, donors and the community.



Our next milestone on the path to becoming a regional history center is reinterpreting this site for a 21st century audience. New entrance and exit surveys capture visitor demographics, their reasons for coming, and feedback about the quality of their visit, helping us to understand which themes we can speak

to with clarity and authority, and how to deliver information to create the best possible visitor experience.

The first step: the map on pages 2 and 3, with its overview of the five architecturally significant buildings, walled garden, access roads, parking and walkways. A second, and related, step shapes visitors' expectations: scheduled Museum tours, encouraging exploration of other points of interest. Our wonderful docents have been remarkably patient and resilient in adapting to these necessary changes.

Educational offerings have grown to 44 programs offered to some 2,000 students from seven towns. Connecting young people to our history helps them to understand the ways in which our

present is shaped by our past, engaging them in something larger than themselves. With K-12 grade educators, we continue to develop unique lesson plans that enhance and complement their curriculum. And, we don't shy away from addressing controversial topics around race, gender, privilege and opportunity.

I would like to thank Hilary for a great partnership and for her dedication and leadership as board president. Luckily, Hilary has agreed to continue her tenure as head of programming, a role she will continue to fill with flair, competence and creativity.

Hildegard M. Grob  
Executive Director

## The NEW Visitor Experience



Guests are encountering a new visitor experience at KTM&HC, one that spans the years from 1713 to the 20th century. Museum tours are now scheduled and predictable, while visitors may also engage in self-guided walks to multiple points of interest throughout (and within view of) the landmark campus. New entrance and exit surveys help us understand how to improve the visitor experience.



### Points of Interest

**Visitor Center** Here, you'll be welcomed into three centuries of history, and introduced to the people who lived it.

**Keeler Tavern Museum**  
A settler's home, target of British cannon fire, host to celebrities, Gilded Age estate: the Keeler Tavern has been all of those and more, with lives that open a unique window on our national experience. Tours Weds. Sat. and Sun. from 1-4.

**Museum Shop** You'll find a thoughtfully curated selection of Ridgefield, Keeler Tavern, and history-related items and publications.

**Walled Garden and Rose Arbor**  
Designed circa 1915 by renowned architect Cass Gilbert for his wife Julia, its lush plantings and brick walls create a secluded oasis of tranquil beauty.

**Garden House** The garden is complemented by a picturesque European-style pavilion where the Gilberts entertained notables from business and the arts.

**Carriage Barn** Originally home to horses and carriages, and later a chauffeur-driven Pierce-Arrow, you may find it open for an art exhibit, display of historical artifacts, or another attraction.

**Fountain** Steps from the Museum door, Ridgefield's most recognizable—and beloved—landmark was donated to the town by Gilbert and is maintained by local citizens.



### "Gilberts in the Gardens" Self-Guided Campus Walking Tour (audio tour coming soon)

A self-guided walking tour of the campus as viewed by photographers, circa 1912-1920, including the Wurts Brothers Architectural Photographers. Numbers correspond to where the photo was taken.

Tour can be taken in any order.

- 1 Cannon Ball House
- 2 Stone Patio and Pergola
- 3 Gilbert Wing
- 4 Cottage and Carriage Barn
- 5 Croquet Lawn
- 6 Walled Garden and Rose Arbor
- 7 Ridgefield Garden Club
- 8 Garden House
- 9 Formal Gardens (driveway)
- 10 Memorial Library (Visitor Center)
- 11 Cass Gilbert Fountain

## Capital Campaign

**W**hen we undertook a Capital Campaign to advance our transformation into a regional history center, we asked: Would our community support a preliminary campaign goal of \$1.5 million? The answer? An emphatic “Yes!” from the many contributors you see here. Thanks to them, in January 2019 we achieved our initial

goal. And, thanks to them, we completed major renovations to our new Visitor Center, substantially paid down our loan, and will soon install a state-of-the-art archival storage and research facility. As we work toward the \$2 million mark, we aim to complete a site-wide reinterpretation that attracts today’s 21st-century audiences.

*The individuals and organizations named here made commitments to the Capital Campaign through August 31, 2019. If an employer matched an individual’s donation, the individual donor’s name appears in the category that captures the combined total. As the campaign continues through 2020, new pledges/gifts will be added to this list and recognized. We apologize for omissions or errors. Please direct corrections to the office.*

### Capital Campaign Pledges

- \$150,000 and Up**  
Anne S. Richardson Fund
- \$100,000 to \$149,999**  
Anita and Nick Donofrio  
Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation
- \$50,000 to \$99,999**  
Larry and Nancy Bossidy  
Connecticut State Department of Economic & Community Development  
Cheryl and Christopher Crawl  
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Fairfield County Bank  
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Joan A. Payden  
Stephen Reynolds and Susan Wolf
- \$25,000 to \$49,999**  
Rhonda Hill  
The Kettering Family Foundation  
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Sue W. Manning  
Frank and Hilary Micalizzi  
Dan and Annette O’Brien

- Joel Third  
Carol and Richard Vazzana
- \$10,000 to \$24,999**  
Barker Welfare Foundation  
Kimberly and Christopher Bishop  
BMW of Ridgefield  
Andrew and Nina Bodner  
Sara Champion  
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation/1772 Foundation  
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The Freidenrich Family  
Sheila and Michael Gray  
Greg and Valerie Jensen  
Patricia E. Linnon  
Charlie and Judi Pankenier  
Ridgefield Thrift Shop, Inc.  
John and Phyllis Robertson  
Allison and Jon Stockel  
Don and Tina Sturges  
Terry McManus and Brian Truskowski
- \$2,500 to \$9,999**  
Patricia and Robertson Bennett  
Jeff and Christine Boris  
Ellen Burns and Darwin Ellis  
Martha and David Campbell  
Colonial Cleaners  
Connecticut Humanities

- Kathleen and Don Daughters  
Beth and Chuck Hancock  
Lisa and Larry Harder  
Cindy and Tom Johnstone  
Angela and Jim Liptack  
Denis and Mary Ellen Loncto  
M&T Charitable Foundation  
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- Constance and John Fenton  
Mary Garrett and Darren Marshall  
Jeff and Jennifer Hansen  
Norvel and Fay Hermanovski/  
Silver Hill Atelier  
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Anne and Frank Kromer  
Dave and Sue Liederbach  
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Douglas and Jacqueline Millan  
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Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Connecticut  
Maureen Tucker  
Ridgefield Woman’s Club  
Andrea and Robert Whitton

- Up to \$999**  
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Barbara and Michael Anderson  
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Diane and Rich De Serio  
J. Gavin Donnelly  
Tricia and Jim Duggan  
Theresa and Buell Duncan  
Joe Ellis  
Ralph Ellis  
Jocelyn Fainer  
Teri and Kevin Fischer



*At the Victory Cocktail Party celebrating achievement of the campaign’s \$1.5 million preliminary goal: Lew Wallace from CT Humanities, Christine and Philip Lodewick, and KTM&HC’s Joel Third.*

## Keeler Tavern declares victory

\$1.5 million raised over last three years for capital campaign

By Stephen Coulter

Winning feels good. That’s why anyone traversing Ridgefield’s historic Main Street recently has noticed exuberance all around the Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center. The museum’s capital campaign team started its preparation for a campus expansion in November 2016 by acquiring the property at 152 Main Street and, over the last three years, executed that plan by receiving pledges, grants, and individuals gifts that transformed the brick building into a new visiting center — the first stop for its several thousand annual visitors.



Now it’s time to celebrate the payoff — \$1.5 million, to be exact — of all that hard work. “Reaching our initial fundrais-

*Front Cover, The Ridgefield Press, Thursday, April 25, 2019*

- Shelly and Ira Joe Fisher  
David, Sue, Stephen and Alex Frankiewicz  
Dorothy Franks  
Margaret N. Frankston  
Brad Fries  
Julie Gallagher  
Kelly and Robert Galvin  
Kathy Graham  
Ralph and Joan Green  
Janet and Mark Groves  
Elise and Jay Haas  
Martin Handshy  
Sally and Thom Healy  
Janet and Thomas Himmelright  
Robert Ingraham  
Mary Kaletta  
Jocelyn and Sidney Kelley, Jr.  
Deborah and Rob Kinnaird  
Ann and Ted Kopp  
Marilyn and Joseph Kreitz  
Cheryn and John Kwasnik  
Karen Lambert  
Nancy Libby  
Patricia Ligos  
Andrea and Anthony Loscalzo  
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Nancy and Thomas Riedy  
The Rosenblum Family, in Memory of Kenneth Reed  
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Nancy and Dave Selander  
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Patricia Stephens  
Judy, Rob, Tammy and Jessica Strom  
Peggy Thomas  
Bob Tulipani  
Susan and Alan Winsor  
Julie and David Yaun  
Cheryl Patterson-Zaic and Gregory Zaic

### Matching Gift Companies

- Chevron Corporation  
ExxonMobil Foundation  
GE Foundation  
The Harvey Hubbell Foundation  
Morgan Stanley

### In-Kind Donors

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Bellagamba Electric Inc.  
Bernard’s and Sarah Bouissou Catering  
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### Thank You to our Visitor Reception Area Donors!

- Bellagamba Electric  
Eagle Scout Michael Ferrandino  
Home Media Designs  
IBM Corporation/Community Grants  
Josh Fischer Design  
Ridgefield Thrift Shop  
Ridgefield Woman’s Club  
Southwestern Connecticut Security  
Sturges Brothers Inc.  
Westchester Carpentry & Millwork, Inc.

*“I am so very happy for and proud of all the amazing support that was shown as we took our turn to step forward and make history! To all the KTM&HC patrons, to all my colleagues on the campaign team, to the leadership team, what an amazing group of patriots! It was truly my privilege and honor to serve in this campaign with you all. My sincere and heartfelt thanks to all for a job well done.”*

Nick Donofrio,  
Honorary Chair



1. Museum docents gathered for the July 4th Watermelon Fest.  
 2. Planning for the inaugural Fall Party to benefit education: Jenn Hansen, Christine Boris, Josh Fischer, and Kit Keidel.  
 3. Ed and Gaetana McGill were honored at the spring Cannonball Gala.  
 4. The annual Polar Express family program delights children during the holidays.

5. Historical interpreter Cheyney McKnight leads a discussion of complex race relations at Scotts Ridge Middle School.  
 6. The award-winning HandsOnHistory exhibit was partially funded by the Ridgefield Thrift Shop.  
 7. Keeler Kids engaged in 19th century scientific explorations.  
 8. The 2018 recipients of the Anna Keeler Award for Excellence in History & Civics Education: Christine Parsons, Emily Casolo, Elizabeth Zawatski from Farmingville Elementary School.  
 9. KTM&HC was a performance venue for Ridgefield's first-ever Make Music Day celebrating the summer solstice.  
 10. Jason Mancini and Scott Wands from CT Humanities touching history.

## Sources of Support

In line with KTM&HC's ongoing transformation, this financial report reflects a transition to a more transparent view of the sources and uses of funds.

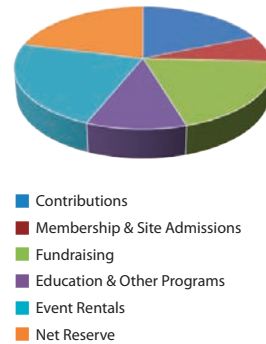
Total resources and expenses, or those within individual categories, may reflect actual increases or reductions. Or, they may be the result of consolidation in how we now account for support and assign costs compared to prior years. As a result, side-by-side comparisons with past reporting lines may not be representative.

One objective is to sharpen understanding as we allocate resources and make expense tradeoffs; for example, taken together, Education & Other Programs can now be seen more clearly as an important element of support and activity.

A second purpose is to better identify the significant effect

### SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Contributions	\$ 107,074
Membership & Site Admissions	\$ 38,997
Fundraising	\$111,365
Education & Other Programs	\$ 61,622
Event Rentals	\$129,120
Net Reserve	\$120,000
	<hr/>
	\$568,178



on operating expenses exerted by expansion of our campus and physical assets—staff time, for another example.

Overall, a stable financial footing and continuing support from our members, friends, and the community has led to tangible progress in creating programs and facilities commensurate with a major regional history center. The importance of those contributions cannot be overstated: while public sector grants may occasionally be available for selected capital or other projects, KTM&HC's continuing operations are self-funded, and receive no local, state or federal operating support.

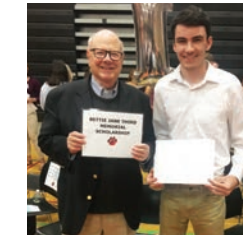


We are grateful for the generous grant from the Ridgefield Thrift Shop (RTS) for the design and construction of the reception area in the new main lobby of the Visitor Center. Seated, right, Mary Ellen Lonco, RTS president; standing, right, Sandra Capriotti and Marilyn Manieri, RTS volunteers.

## Expenses

Simply maintaining and restoring a 300-year-old landmark accounts for nearly 14 percent of outlays, and is a prerequisite before any new initiatives can be considered. Compensation shows a decline from prior years because a percentage of that expense has been apportioned to the Capital Campaign, a

temporary adjustment reflecting a substantial investment of staff time; we expect it will decline through the next fiscal year. Costs for the new Visitor Center and related improvements to the visitor experience may be fully integrated into a single financial statement within the next fiscal year or two.



Uses of funds include, for example, programming with town partners, upper left; scholarship, upper right; and historic preservation, left.

### EXPENSES

Compensation	\$139,143
Marketing	\$ 38,912
Maintenance & Repairs	\$ 52,306
Property Tax & Insurance	\$ 44,271
Programs, Events & Site Operations	\$206,300
G&A/Equipment and Supplies	\$ 62,598
Preservation & Restoration	\$ 24,648
	<hr/>
	\$568,178

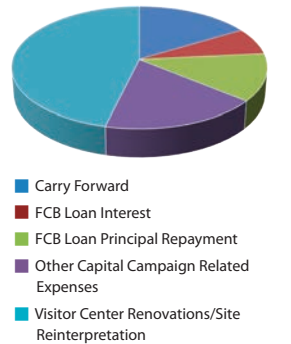


## Capital Campaign

We are grateful to the many donors whose contributions and pledges have taken KTM&HC's campaign for transformation well beyond its preliminary goal of \$1.5 million. To date, nearly \$1 million has underwritten the now-completed renovation of the new Visitor Center; work proceeds on a state of the art storage facility at ground level, while principal owed on the mortgage for the property has been substantially reduced. As remaining pledges are fulfilled, and campaign-related expenses decline, additional resources will be directed to reinterpretation of the entire site.

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN USES OF FUNDS

Carry Forward	\$178,480
FCB Loan Interest	\$ 77,196
FCB Loan Principal Repayment	\$136,306
Other Capital Campaign Related Expenses	\$193,890
Visitor Center Renovations/ Site Reinterpretation	\$503,793
	<hr/>
	\$1,089,665



This list recognizes the many people whose contributions are the heartbeat of KTM&HC, and which might take the form of finances, in-kind donations, volunteer energy—or all three. All gifts acknowledged here were received between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019. If your employer matched your donation, and/or you paid for membership, your name appears in the category that captures the combined total. Please direct corrections to the Museum office. Pledges and payments to the capital campaign are not included in these totals. Acknowledgements of our capital campaign donors through August 31, 2019 are on pages 6 and 7.

**\$20,000 and Up**

Kimberly and Christopher Bishop  
Joan A. Payden

**\$10,000 to \$19,999**

Gaetana and Edmund McGill

**\$5,000 to \$9,999**

BMW of Ridgefield  
Christine and Jeff Boris  
Jennifer and Jeffrey Hansen  
Montanari Fuel Service, Inc.

**\$1,000 to \$4,999**

Abbey Tent & Party Rentals  
Georgia Carrington and Rebecca Strominger  
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Mary Ann and John Connors  
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Hildegard and Reinhold Grob  
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Miriam Martinez and Roger Restaino  
Hilary and Frank Micalizzi  
Nutmeg Livery  
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Sean O'Kane, AIA  
Judi and Charlie Pankenier  
Missy and David Partridge  
Jill and Rob Rae  
Ridgefield Rotary Club  
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Lori and Walter Seibert Jr.  
Marie Shimchick  
Lisa and Jason Terry  
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Meredith and Michael Ward

**\$500 to \$999**

Kathleen and Douglas Coombs  
Anthony Dalessio  
Anita and Nick Donofrio  
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Fairfield County Bank  
Kelly and Robert Galvin  
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Jackie and Doug Millan Jr.  
Dick Morris

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**\$100 to \$499**

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Deeny and Christopher Bennett  
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Ruth Drab  
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Constance and John Fenton



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Jennifer and Ray Garson  
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Jaime and Karam Haddad  
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Barbara and Steve Hartman  
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Susan and David Horner  
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Daris and Robert W. Keeler  
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Karen Lutz  
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Jeremy Main  
Sue Manning  
Lauren Mariani  
Karen McChesney  
Margo McEachern  
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Martha and Geoffrey Morris  
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Alison Villanueva  
Edna Weber  
Courtney Welton  
Noana and David Whitehead  
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Mary Lee and Tom Wolf  
D. Wolfson  
Wendy and Stephen Wooters  
Marylou Worrall  
Karen and James Wylie  
Barbara and Bill Wyman  
Vicki and David Yolen  
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Christine and John Zidik

**Up to \$100**

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Laura Agisim  
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Anonymous Donors  
Catherine Baker  
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We note with sadness the passing of the following friends: Daris and Robert W. Keeler, and Bessie Krysiwich.

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