

# America's Credit Union MUSEUM

Summer 2003

## Chairman's Message



When I became a director and Chairman of the New England Credit Union Heritage Foundation (NECUHF) Board in 2001, I advised executive director Peggy Powell that I had very limited time to devote to the Foundation and the project to establish America's Credit Union Museum. I just completed serving my first two-year term, what I thought would be my

only two-year term, only to find myself volunteering to serve again.

I have been involved in the credit union movement for thirty-three years. During that time I have dedicated myself to the excellence, professionalism, and support of the credit union movement and furthering the initiative of all credit unions. My involvement with the NECUHF board and the project to establish America's Credit Union Museum provides me with an opportunity to support the credit union movement by establishing a Museum where history is preserved and the difference credit unions continue to make in the lives of so many is promoted.

The project to restore the site of the first credit union in the United States as a tribute to the beginning, past, and future of the credit union movement and its pioneers is an important one. **It symbolizes the "roots" of every credit union in America** and provides a venue for all credit unions from across our great nation, not just New England, to tell their story through exhibits and artifacts that portray their role in the credit union movement.

America's Credit Union Museum celebrated its grand opening in October 2002. On behalf of the NECUHF Board of Directors, I wish to thank all of you who contributed to this noble cause for your generous financial support and efforts in helping us to make the restoration of America's first credit union - your credit union - a reality.

Gordon Simmons

## New England Credit Union Heritage Foundation Elects New Directors

The New England Credit Union Heritage Foundation (NECUHF) held its annual meeting on April 8, 2003 at America's Credit Union Museum. Individuals re-elected to the board of directors are: Ted Desveaux, Maine CU League (Retired); Normand Dubreuil, President/CEO, Maine State Employees CU; Karen Duffy, President/CEO, Worcester CU, Mass.; Joe Finnigan, CEO, Vermont FCU; Ron Hance, CEO, Heritage Family CU, Vermont; Peter Kavalauskas, President/CEO, Northeast CU, N.H.; Gene Lemieux, Director, St. Mary's Bank, N.H.; Armand Lemire, Director, St. Mary's Bank, N.H.; Jane Melchionda, President/CEO, Eastern Corporate FCU, Mass.; Bill Sinibaldi, President, University CU, Mass.; and Gordon Simmons, President, Service CU, N.H.

New directors elected to the board are Kathy Chartier, President, Members Credit Union, Riverside, Connecticut, and Mike L'Ecuyer, President/CEO, Telephone Credit Union of N.H.

The directors elected Gordon Simmons as Chairman and Ron Rioux as Vice Chairman of the board for the coming year.

Additionally, appointed to a one-year term are Paul Mayer, Sr. Vice President, Financial Affairs for the Mass., N.H., and R.I. Leagues, as Treasurer and Lori Waser, Executive Assistant to the President, Service CU, as Secretary.

Chairman Gordon Simmons presented outgoing Secretary Anne Canty with a board resolution and certificate of appreciation. Anne is a Founding Member of the NECUHF and has served as Secretary to the Board of Directors for nine years. Her commitment and leadership to the Foundation contributed immeasurably to its success.

# America's Credit Union Museum

## Museum Hosts Events

Since its grand opening last October, America's Credit Union Museum has been the site of numerous events. League board meetings, credit union board meetings and planning sessions, annual meetings, dinners, cocktail receptions, seminars, and a meeting of city officials are just a few of the various events held at the Museum.

In April, those attending the National Federation of Community Development Credit Union's (NFCDCU) CDCU Institute had an opportunity to visit America's Credit Union Museum. The training session on the history and development of credit unions included a tour of the Museum and its exhibits. Attendees also were able to view the video *The Credit Union Movement, A Historical Portrait*.

CDCU Institute is a three-year development program for CDCU staff and board members from across the country. The training classes are held on the campus of Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

## Campaign Update

When the project to establish America's Credit Union Museum began several years ago, the New England Credit Union Heritage Foundation (NECUHF) realized that support from the national credit union organizations, state credit union leagues, and credit unions from across the country, was critical to the success of the campaign.

As a result, the Foundation board of directors made a decision to establish a Museum Advisory Board to help them achieve their goals. The Museum Advisory Board, established a year ago, is comprised of 40 League Presidents, several credit union CEOs, Dan Kampen of US Central, Dan Mica, CUNA, and Mike Kitchen, CUNA Mutual Group.

The efforts of the Museum Advisory Board have resulted in pledges and gifts to the Museum totaling more than \$500,000. The NECUHF has raised more than \$1.7 million towards its \$3 million campaign goal. The remaining \$1.3 million will be used to complete the restoration and establish an endowment for operations and educational programs.

For a complete listing of the Museum Advisory Board and more information about America's Credit Union Museum go to the Museum's Web site at [www.acumuseum.org](http://www.acumuseum.org)



Instructor Bruce Croteau, COO St. Mary's Bank, poses with CDCU Institute attendees on the porch of America's Credit Union Museum.

## America's Credit Union Museum Wins Historic Preservation Award

The Manchester, New Hampshire, Historic Association selected America's Credit Union Museum to receive one of its 2003 Historic Preservation Awards. The annual Preservation Awards program honors individuals, organizations, or projects that have made important contributions toward preserving the city's heritage.

The Awards committee felt that the Museum preserves a beautiful historic property in the city and the cultural history of the community. Preserving the building that housed the first credit union in the United States and installing exhibits on credit union history tells an important story for all to see. For these reasons, the committee voted to recognize America's Credit Union Museum in the category of Stewardship of a Cultural Resource.

The award was presented at the Preservation Awards dinner held in April.



## **CO-OP Network and COCC Give Generously to America's Credit Union Museum**

America's Credit Union Museum recently received two very generous gifts in support of its mission to preserve and promote the history and philosophy of the credit union movement in the United States.

CO-OP Network's gift of \$25,000 is the first corporate gift America's Credit Union Museum has received. It joins the ranks of the national credit union organizations, state leagues, and credit unions from across the country as a leadership donor to the Museum. CO-OP Network President Robert Rose stated, "We are pleased to support this worthwhile endeavor." CO-OP Network is the largest credit union ATM/EFT network in the nation.

A stained glass panel recognizing CO-OP Network's generosity has been installed on the entrance porch.

Visitors to America's Credit Union Museum can now access the Internet through their laptop computers thanks to the generosity of COCC, a financial technology service to community financial institutions throughout the Northeastern US. A laptop computer for presentations shown at the Museum is also part of the gift. "We are impressed by the quality and value of America's Credit Union Museum" said Richard A. Leone, COCC's President and CEO.

On July 22, COCC and the Museum have scheduled a formal presentation of the wireless Internet connectivity donation which credit unions will be invited to attend.

Other corporate gifts to America's Credit Union Museum include Pelmac Industries for the Museum security system and PHD Communications for their donation of the wiring and data drops.

## **America's Credit Union Museum Launches New Web Site**

Following the successful opening of America's Credit Union Museum during International Credit Union week in October, 2002, the New England CU Heritage Foundation Board realized the importance of making the Museum and its exhibits available to all credit unions and their members, regardless of where they are located. As a result, the decision was made to redesign the Museum's web pages to include a tour of the rooms and the exhibits.

Richard Powell volunteered to design the new web site for America's Credit Union Museum and present it to the Foundation board at their annual meeting in April. Dick's presentation included a demonstration of the new web pages and a discussion of the changes he made in order to

meet the Foundation Board's goal of providing a tour of the Museum while keeping the features simple and easy to maintain.

The Foundation Board enthusiastically accepted the new Web site and expressed its appreciation to Dick for his continued support of America's Credit Union Museum.

For more information and a tour of America's Credit Union Museum please visit the Museum's Web site at [www.acumuseum.org](http://www.acumuseum.org).

### **In Memory**

It is with great sadness that The New England Credit Union Heritage Foundation announces the death of Armand J. Lemire, 68, of Manchester, New Hampshire.

In 1994 Armand and his wife, Joanne, gifted the building that housed the first credit union in the United States to the Foundation, which, at that time, was called the SMB Charitable Foundation.. Armand was a founding member of the Foundation and served on its board of directors until his recent death.

Armand and Joanne's dream to restore the building and establish a museum and educational center was realized when America's Credit Union Museum celebrated its grand opening in October 2002. It was with great pride and joy that they dedicated the gift of the building in memory of their parents.

Without Armand's generosity and vision, America's Credit Union Museum would not exist to preserve the history of the credit union movement and educate future generations on the importance of savings and the wise use of credit. He will be missed, but his legacy will continue.

We know that you join us in expressing your sympathies to the Lemire family.

## **Museum Video Wins Awards**

As part of its generous gift to America's Credit Union Museum, CUNA Mutual Group's audio visual department developed an introductory video titled *The Credit Union Movement, A Historical Portrait*. The video provides a brief synopsis of the credit union movement from its earliest roots in Germany to present day. Since its release in July of 2002, the video has been viewed by leagues and credit union across the country.

The Museum extends its congratulations to Bruce Bennett, CUNA Mutual Group, who wrote, produced, and directed the video, for his recent awards: Madison's Addy Silver Award, a 2003 International Videographers Award, and a 2003 International Aurora Award. For more information visit the Museum's Web site at [www.acumuseum.org](http://www.acumuseum.org)