Portersville Academy Freshened in Time for Schoolyear -
Or How to Paint a Third Story Cupola without Touching the Roof

Portersville Academy has a new sparkling coat of paint. The old paint was peeling and wearing away so we thought it best to do the work now and avoid wood damage in the future. Sherman William’s “Duration” Exterior Acrylic Coating was used; it was expensive but only one coat was required which saved on application costs. The work was done by Ferraro’s Painting and Restoration, Inc. of North Haven and paid for with individual contributions, a $350 donation from the Mystic Woman’s Club, income from our endowment funds and a generous gift of $3,000 from the Charles B. Allyn Foundation, Inc.

The shingles on the roof are old & fragile and can be slippery so the contract specified that the work be done without touching the roof.
Here’s how that was done....

Summer is winding down at the MRHS and everywhere else. It was a pretty busy time at the Downes Building and I’d like to thank fellow staff members Betsy Boucher and Louisa Watrous and volunteers Lou Allyn, Judy Hicks and Kit Werner for covering for me while I was on vacation.

If you’re a Facebook participant I hope that you have “liked” our MRHS Facebook page. We’re up to almost 950 “likes”! I’ve been posting a new picture just about every week so check out our page and add your comments to the discussion.
~ Dorrie Hanna
Since joining the Board of the Lower Mystic Cemetery, I gathered several inventories of the gravestones there and some plot plans. Then the logical next step was to combine them so that anyone could search a database for an individual or family name and then walk to that particular plot. The details of how this was done are explained below and the results are now available on the Lower Mystic Cemetery page on MRHS’s website. 

An additional benefit was the creation of a list of veterans with their locations to be used by Troop 2 Boy Scouts of America for placing flags by the graves.

Sources of information:
1. An old map of the Cemetery plots with their numbers.
2. The Charles R. Hale Collection of Connecticut Cemetery Inscriptions. It contains vital information from headstone inscriptions in over 2,000 Connecticut cemeteries that were recorded in a W.P.A. project directed by Charles R. Hale ca. 1932-5. Groton cemeteries are not online but there is a copy of Headstone Inscriptions Town of Groton Charles R. Hale Hartford CT 1932 at the Mystic Noank Library in the historic books section 974.65 H Hist. Coll. Volume 1 is #19 Lower Mystic or (Fishtown Cemetery). Page 213 in Vol 2 lists Army veterans of the Civil War, Spanish-American War and the War of 1812.
3. A graphic inventory done by Alan Brush in 1996. He drew a page for each plot with outlines of the stones and names, dates, etc. See the Mystic Noank Library LMC Inventory – 1996 under 974.65 L Hist. Coll.
4. Johanna Case and Judy Hicks did an inventory in 2014. A CD of their files is available at the Mystic Noank Library and the Mystic River Historical Society. They assigned a number to each stone which is the Case/Hicks Number in the database.
5. **Find A Grave** is another source of information with photographs of each stone. Go to findagrave.com and select Search for a Cemetery.

Creating the final database: To match plot numbers with the list of graves I added the Case/Hicks numbers to the Alan Brush pages for each plot number. I then walked the cemetery to verify the combined information before adding the plot numbers to the Case/Hicks inventory to create a master list.

**Online Tips....**

**BLUE & BOLD = CLICKABLE!**

Any word or phrase that is blue & bold is a “hot link” which will direct you to a live web page to further explore. Use the cursor to hover over the blue & bold phrase, and a friendly pointing hand should appear – then click to go!

**ZOOM - MAKE IT BIGGER!**

Any page or document can be made larger to get a better look, or make reading easier! (And you can zoom back out to standard size or smaller, too.)

To zoom IN:  Hold the “control” for PC/Windows or “command” for Mac, and then the + (plus) button!

To zoom OUT:  Hold “control” for PC/Windows or “command” for Mac, and then the - (minus) key!

**SEARCH a ’site:**

The MRHS, or any website, is easily searched for a keyword or phrase. Just go to the home page and look in the upper right corner. Start with just one or two key words to get the most possible results!
Calendar of Events

MRHS membership programming will begin full swing again, as always, in October. We hope to see you there!

June - September
Summer program hiatus.
The Portersville Academy & Downes building continue to be open to the public at 74 High Street, Mystic, Tuesdays 9-noon or Wednesday and Thursday 1-4p. Visit mystichistory.org online anytime!

Sunday, September 13th, 2015
2:00p Carriage House of the Babcock Smith House
124 Granite Street, Westerly
The Westerly Historical Society Sunday Lecture Series presents “Spies in Revolutionary Rhode Island” Lecture is free for members of the Westerly Historical Society and $5 for non-members.

Wednesday, October 28th, 2015
7:00p refreshments & socializing, 7:30p program
Mystic Congregational Church Hall
at Broadway and E. Main St., Mystic
Author & photographer Mark Starr will speak on local Native American stonework.
* See our website or the upcoming full September-October edition for more! *

Renew or become a Member of MRHS and receive updates about all our meetings & events. Contact us at: info@mystichistory.org or 860-536-4779.

Meeting Minutes & Back Issues

The meeting minutes for the Mystic River Historical Society board are available online at any time. The minutes are often included in back issues of the Portersville Press on the same page. All material is presented as downloadable PDFs.
~ Enjoy! ~

Newsletter/Print Patrons

Our printed edition will return in it’s full paper glory next month for a combined September-October super issue. We have these fine folks to thank for their continuing support:

CYNTHIA & LOUIS ALLYN
MR. & MRS. JOHN ASPINWALL
MS. LAURA BEACH
DANIEL & JANE BRANNEGAN
MR. & MRS. FRANKLIN DAVIS
DAVID AND JEAN EVANS
MR. & MRS. CRAIG HAINES
SALLY HALSEY
MR. & MRS. DOUG HANNA
JUDY HICKS
NANCY & TOM MCLOUGHLIN
MARJORIE MOORE
MR. & MRS. ROGER PANCIERA
CAPT. & MRS. JOHN PORTER
THE REAL McCoy® RUM
~

Membership Updates

We have one new member, Lynda McLaughlin, in the Individual category. The Program/Membership regrets the passing of John Porter, a long time supporter and member of the MRHS.
~ Cindy Allyn, Membership

See you next month!