Great 18th Century Houses and Towns of Connecticut

Join us for our December Program, Wednesday, December 4, 7:30 p.m. at the Mystic River Congregational Church. Damien Cregeau will present architecture throughout Connecticut from the 18th century, including both specific houses and several significant historic districts. His address will include examples of rare 18th century buildings still standing and protected in towns such as Litchfield and Woodbury, as well as historic districts that have thrived via their historic preservation and/or historic tourism efforts, including Wethersfield, Fairfield, Norwich, Essex, Lebanon and Guilford.

Mr. Cregeau earned his B.A. in history from Hillsdale College and his M.A. in history from Colorado State. A native of Fairfield, CT, he worked many years for his father's architectural firm. An independent historian since 2007, he is a nationally-recognized scholar of the American Revolution. He has published numerous articles in national magazines, including several on the architectural history of 18th-century Connecticut. He most recently spoke in October on the two historic homes of General Jedediah Huntington in Norwich and New London at the Thames Club in downtown New London.


Helen May Clarke Walk

By Marilyn Comrie

More than 50 people enjoyed “A Walk Through Helen Clarke’s Mystic” on Saturday, Oct. 5, presented by the Mystic River Historical Society. Society Board members Margaret Austin, John Parry and Marilyn Comrie guided groups along a route past houses and buildings that Helen wrote about in her diary, which was published by the historical society in 1997. They also shared stories about people who lived in Mystic 100 years ago, as described by Helen in the diary.

The historical society, for the second time this year, sponsored the walk along with the Mystic and Noank Library. The walk was based on an event first presented by the historical society in 2001 as a fundraiser.

Participants on Oct. 5 ended their walk at Portersville Academy, where they could view photos of Helen’s family, tour Portersville and purchase copies of the diary. Nine diaries were sold.

Oct.5 could not have been a more perfect day for the walk, sunny with a bit of an autumn chill. And Mystic was bustling downtown that day because it was Pirate Invasion weekend.

The society’s board is pleased with the popularity of the two walks we sponsored this year. It gave us a chance to promote Mystic’s history to the public, to have Portersville Academy open and to sell some of the diaries. We hope to do more of these kinds of activities in the future.

Photo by Chris Johnson
This year, 2019, marks the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, stating that the right of citizens of the US to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex. Next year, 2020, marks the ratification of this amendment, making it part of the US Constitution. One hundred years have passed since that historic driver of social change became part and parcel of American lives. It seems appropriate to review the history of the 70-year-plus movement that produced this result.

Historically, women were effectively domestic servants, except that they didn’t get paid. They grew up belonging to their fathers, and on marriage, ownership was transferred to their husbands. Any property or money they had when they were single became their husbands’ when they married. They didn’t own their homes, their furnishings, their clothing, their children, even their own bodies. If their husbands were drunks, gamblers, abusers, or criminals, they had no recourse; even under such conditions, if they carried through a divorce, their children were given into their husbands’ custody. They had seriously limited means of supporting themselves; very few options for employment were available to them. Also, at that time, husbands could commit their wives to mental institutions simply for questioning their authority. And, if a woman worked for wages, her wages belonged to her husband.

Women were expected to stay home, keep the house, raise the children, and be silent in public. Public visibility, including speaking, organizing efforts, and political activity, was considered scandalous and too ‘manly’ for women to participate in.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her comrades (among them, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Angelina and Sarah Grimke, and Lucy Stone) spent their entire adult lives trying to change that, with the goal of making it legal for women to vote. Their reasoning was that if women could vote, all else would follow.

More than 70 years passed between Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convening the first women’s convention on record, in Seneca Falls, NY, in July 1848, and the actual passing of the 19th Amendment. Hundreds of women attended that first convention, some coming from as far away as 50 miles, which in that day was a full day’s journey by horse and wagon.

During the same period of time, the nation experienced a civil war and wrestled with slavery and its aftermath. There was a time at which Stanton and her comrades had to choose between supporting the Reconstruction Amendments (13, 14, and 15), which outlawed slavery and guaranteed adult black males the vote, and not supporting those amendments, because they effectively placed uneducated black males in positions superior to educated (frequently highly educated) white women. It was a horrible choice to make. Congress and the President (all white males) passed those amendments, despite the women’s arguments.

The gist of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments is this: The Thirteenth Amendment officially abolished and continues to prohibit slavery to this day. The Fourteenth Amendment declared that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are American citizens, including African Americans. The Fifteenth Amendment prohibits each government in the United States from denying a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen’s race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Throughout the extended effort to achieve suffrage for women, most of the states that fought against such changes were extremely conservative (primarily the South). The campaign to achieve and ratify the 19th Amendment was led primarily by middle-class and reasonably well-educated white women. Upper class white women were by and large staunchly opposed to women’s suffrage. Lower-class white women were by and large in no economic or educational position to participate.

Connecticut was not one of the first 36 states to ratify the amendment. This was because the Connecticut vote was scheduled for September of 1920, and by that time, 36 other states had voted to ratify. So our state was the 37th to ratify, on September 14, 1920. We don’t know that this delay was deliberate.
Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born in 1815 in New York State. She was the 8th of 11 children. During her childhood, 6 of her siblings died, including all her brothers. Her father was disconsolate over losing all his sons. Elizabeth was deeply affected by the preference her father showed for her brothers and spent much of her life demonstrating that she was worthy of his love and consideration. Her efforts were largely ineffective. It’s not hard to understand how her father’s attitude forged her determination to gain equality for women. I have come to believe that this disappointment drove her all her life.

Stanton started her political life engaging in abolitionist activity. She married in 1840 and she and her husband, Henry Stanton, boarded ship for England, where they intended to attend the World Anti-Slavery Convention. However, the delegates to that convention immediately began to debate whether women should be allowed to participate, or even to attend. Their argument was that women, by their very presence, would distract the proceedings from the key issue, which was of course abolition.

Also attending the convention was a Quaker delegate from the US, Lucretia Mott. She was already a legend as a preacher and radical activist who had spent decades campaigning for abolition, for temperance, for Native American rights, for prison reform, and for women’s rights. To quote Winifred Conkling in her book, *Votes for Women: American Suffragists and the Battle for the Ballot*, “Many of the men who objected to including women argued that the presence of women would violate God’s will and bring ridicule to the convention...one of the male delegates confronted Mott and urged her not to attend...explaining that women were ‘constitutionally unfit for public meetings with men.’”

Lucretia’s response was that their argument was the same used to explain that “colored men are constitutionally unfit to mingle with whites”...and this at an abolitionist convention. Elizabeth sat through the convention with wives of other delegates, wondering at how remarkable it was that men who “felt so keenly the wrongs of the slave, should be so oblivious to the equal wrongs of their own mothers, wives, and sisters.” She was extremely impressed with Lucretia, who managed to preach, travel, and still raise six children. Lucretia in turn encouraged Elizabeth to trust her own opinions.

This was the beginning. Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Stanton agreed to hold a convention, and resolved to form a society to advocate the rights of women. “That decision would change their lives and eventually the life of every woman across the United States,” says Winifred Conkling.

The Stantons moved from Boston, MA, to Seneca Falls, NY, in a few years. This is significant because Seneca Falls became the original home of the suffragist movement. The city is now home to the National Women’s Hall of Fame and also the Women’s Rights National Historical Park, part of the National Park System.

Henry Stanton’s life did not go smoothly, and although Elizabeth was a loyal wife, and loved her husband, they did not always see eye to eye. He found a great deal of trouble settling to a career that suited him. The move to Seneca Falls was for Henry’s benefit, but Elizabeth soon discovered that she hated small-town life. She was bored, in spite of being kept extremely busy by her seven children.

In 1848, Elizabeth was joined by her friend Lucretia Mott, along with several others, in Waterloo, NY. They were an “unlikely group”, according to Conkling, all married mothers or grandmothers, from early to late middle age. What happened that afternoon was a “pivotal event in the movement to secure women’s voting rights in the United States.” The women complained to each other about the injustices of their daily lives, and by the end of the meeting, they had agreed to organize a women’s rights convention. They arranged for a notice to be published in the Seneca County Courier, of where and when the convention would take place; that it would be open to all; and promising that Lucretia Mott and others would address attendees. They themselves had no idea of the significance of the event.

Elizabeth and the rest of her committee had put together a Declaration of Sentiments, based on the Declaration of Independence, that addressed both men and women, and called for a dozen resolutions intended to promote female equality. These included reforms in education, employment, property rights, religion, and suffrage. The other women balked at including the suffrage resolution, but Elizabeth stood firm, and suffrage stayed. Elizabeth shared the Declaration with her husband, who told her that demanding the vote would make the entire convention a farce. He also worried about his political career; he actually left town during the convention to avoid being associated with it. Elizabeth was disappointed, to say the least, but she accepted that he was entitled to his own opinion.
The convention was a tremendous success.

One of the attendees was a young woman named Charlotte Woodward, 19, a farmer’s daughter and a Quaker, who wanted to work as a typesetter in a print shop. Charlotte supported women’s rights because she wanted to keep her own wages. As it happened, Charlotte was the only one of the early supporters who actually survived to see the 19th Amendment ratified.

The next 70 years saw many ups and downs in the women’s suffrage movement. Multiple women’s organizations were formed that differed primarily in their approaches to achieving their end. Some were more conservative and believed that they should work at the states’ level, and get the individual states to allow women to vote as well as provide better economic and social protection for women’s rights. Others were much more militant and believed that being extremely vocal and what we would call ‘in your face’ would win the day.

The women’s suffrage movement stood down during the Civil War because the government was focused on winning the war as opposed to listening to their arguments in favor of women getting the vote. When the war was over, and the suffrage movement started up again, the leaders had to decide whether they should table their efforts so as not to interfere with the government’s decision to give blacks the vote. Many of the leaders of the movement questioned whether uneducated and illiterate black men should get the vote when educated white women were denied it. Those leaders were overridden, and the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were passed. But there was a price to be paid by the women’s suffrage movement for choosing the course they did, and many years of anger, resentment and conflict between white and black suffragettes.

Later on, as Elizabeth Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony aged and retired, other younger women stepped forward, notably Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul. Carrie Chapman Catt headed an organization, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), that worked at the states’ level, and Alice Paul headed a different organization, the National Woman’s Party, smaller but still substantial, that worked in Washington, DC, with an extremely militant approach, to keep the issue of women’s voting rights in front of the President and Congress and the press.

Alice Paul’s ladies, and Alice herself, marched, stood in (as opposed to sat in), and otherwise made themselves very visible to the residents of the White House, particularly President Woodrow Wilson, and the entire Washington citizenry. Alice Paul and Lucy Burns organized the Congressional Union. Alice and her cohorts spent a lot of time in jail. They weren’t actually breaking any laws (remember the First Amendment, guaranteeing free speech and free right of assembly). So the police arrested them because they were blocking the sidewalk. Alice for one refused to pay bail for any arrest; she preferred to stay in jail as a way of making a statement. Alice and others at one point went on a hunger strike. President Wilson, horrified at the prospect that some of these (delicate) women might die, ordered them force fed. The police were quite happy to comply, and the women enjoyed having hoses forced down their throats with fairly distasteful food products included. It was a pretty horrible experience for all of them.

After several years of this (1918), the 19th Amendment passed the House but failed in the Senate. And finally, just one year later (1919), the 19th Amendment passed both the House and the Senate.

Now it was time to recruit states to ratify the amendment. Of the 48 states then in the Union, 36 of them ratified immediately. The 36th state to ratify, thus ensuring that the 19th Amendment would become part of the Constitution, was Tennessee, on August 18, 1920, just short of the deadline for doing so.

The holdout states were Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Vermont, and Connecticut. Connecticut’s voting session was scheduled for September of 1920, after the deadline for ratification; she voted to ratify at that point. Vermont and Delaware ratified within 3 years after its passage. Florida and Virginia ratified in the 1950’s. The remainder of the states mostly ratified between 1969 and 1971. Mississippi was the last holdout, ratifying in 1984.

Many of the names of women who were instrumental in carrying forward the campaign to get women the vote are familiar to us: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, and Carrie Chapman Catt. Alice Paul was the last of these to pass away, in 1977. She lived to see 47 of the 48 states ratify the amendment.

Passing and ratifying the 19th Amendment wasn’t the end of the story. The amendment itself merely says: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

There were a number of arguments stemming from various interpretations of this wording. For example, there was a significant and long-term disagreement over whether women were citizens, and those who believed that women were NOT citizens were naturally dead-set again allowing women to vote, in spite of the amendment.
Another argument had to do with whether blacks were citizens, this in spite of the 13th and 14th amendments that stated otherwise. Yet another was whether black women were allowed to vote because they were black or because they were women.

Meanwhile, a number of states, all in the Far West, had given women the vote at the state level. The first of these was Wyoming in 1869, which promptly send Jeannette Rankin to Washington as a Congressional Representative. Other states followed suit by giving women full or partial suffrage prior to the 19th Amendment: Utah in 1870, Colorado in 1893, Idaho in 1896, Washington in 1910, California in 1911, Oregon in 1912, and Arizona in 1912.

The general interpretation of this action on the part of so many western states is that women had played such an enormous role in moving west and surviving extreme hardships alongside their men (no delicate flowers among them) that they deserved better treatment than the men back east were willing to provide. Also, the western states were very interested in convincing women to move to what then constituted the western frontier.

The 19th Amendment didn’t solve all of women’s problems. The Equal Rights Amendment, initiated in 1923, eventually fell by the wayside, just 3 states short of ratification, and hasn’t been resurrected since then. Women continue to struggle today. But as Medgar Evers said not so many years ago, “You can kill a man, but you can’t kill an idea.” Women aren’t giving up any time soon.

---

**MRHS Calendar of Events, 2019-2020:**

- **December 4, 2019:** Damien Cregeau, "Great 18th Century Houses and Towns of Connecticut"
- **February 26, 2020:** Lou Allyn, "The Phoenix of Mystic - The Central Hall Block"
- **March 25, 2020:** Leslie Evans, "Votes for Women - Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage"
- **April 29, 2020:** Gail MacDonald, "Hidden History of Mystic and Stonington"
- **May 27, 2020:** Steve Slosberg, "Stonington Cemetery's Poet's Corner: A Stroll Along This Storied Lane"

**Holiday Updates**

As is our custom, the MRHS will be closed Thanksgiving week, November 25 – 29; Christmas week, December 23 – 27; and New Year’s week, December 30 – January 3. We will re-open on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 9 a.m. We will be monitoring our email and our Facebook page. Happy Holidays to all.

Please consider the gift of local history with a MRHS membership or donation to honor the special people in your life. Support opportunities begin at just $25 annually. Donations are also welcome in any amount. MRHS produced publications and films are available at the Downes Building, with many books also sold at Bank Square Books or the Seaport Museum Store. **Shop local for twice the support—thank you & happy holidays!**

---

**Mystic River Historical Society Mission Statement**

The Society exists to collect, arrange, exhibit and preserve records, papers, photographs, artifacts, relics and related archival materials that document the history of the people who lived in the area around the Mystic River from the first settlement in 1654 to the present.

---

Officers: President - Stephen Menno • Vice President - Margaret Austin • Treasurer - Lou Allyn • Corresponding & Recording Secretary - Elizabeth Holland

---

The Newsletter of the Mystic River Historical Society is published five times annually: September-October, November-December, January-February, March-April and May-June

Copy deadline is the 3rd Friday of the month prior to issue publication. Please submit to jenniferspryor@gmail.com

Past issues of the newsletter are available for viewing at [www.mystichistory.org](http://www.mystichistory.org)

P.O. Box 245 Mystic, CT 06355
We are pleased to list all of our members for the year 2019. If your name is here, we sincerely thank you for your continuing support of the Mystic River Historical Society. Your dues provide the funding to offer a unique local history resource to the Mystic community as well as staff, services and physical facilities to grow, catalogue, maintain and share our collection. If you don’t find your name on this list and would like to continue your membership and newsletter subscription, and/or gift a subscription to friends or family, please, send $25 Individual, $50 Family, $75 Contributing, $150 Benefactor or $350 Sustaining to PO Box 245, Mystic. Thank you!

Cindy Allyn, Membership and Stephen Menno, President

~ Individual ~
Sharon S. Carlee
Mrs. Melissa
Mr. Frederic Allard
Ms. Norma Aronson
Jeanne Baker
Mrs. Deborah Bates
Ms. Mara Beckwith
Mr. Charles S. Beebe
Ms. Jennifer M. Billeci
Benedict Boylan
Dr. Glenn Brady
Donna Brandelli
Sharon Brown
Linda Burrows
Mrs. Richard Butler
Ms. Judith Cady
Ms. Laurie Nelson Capener
Laura Cerino
Gail Cleere
Mrs. Joan Cohn
Mr. Trad Dart
Mrs. Rosemary Dayton
Connie Desilver
Kate Dimascimento
Mrs. C. Philip Donnel
Ms. Hermine Dudda
Mr. Rudy Favretti
Ms. Mary Ferrier
Ms. Alice Foley
Ms. Barbara Lee Francisio
Mr. Charles A. Glaza
James Good
Ms. Rose C. Gordon
Mr. Colburn Graves
Mrs. Alan Greener
Dean Hantzopoulos
Rhona Heyl
Mrs. James Hicks
Mrs. Marion Hoboica
Kimberly Main Hunt
Sarah Ingle
Ms. Kay Print Janney
Ms. Joy Jastremski
Ms. Janet Kellock
Kathleen A. Kennedy
Jennifer Kettleman
Ms. Chandler Kissell
Ms. Katrina M. Korpi
Doris Lamb
Mrs. Calvin W. Lane
Ms. Sara H. Lathrop
Mrs. Elaine Lee
Brian Lombard
Marcus Mason Maron
Jane Martley
Suzanne Matteson
Brian McDermott
Janice McDermott
Donald McLeish
Denise Mitchell-St-Dignam
Lee W. Morris
Mr. & Mrs. George Moseley
Judy Munro
Clifford K. Neal
Ms. Barbara B. Nelson
Judith Nickerson
Ms. Barbara Nielsen
Mrs. William Noyes
Mrs. Roger Panciera
Mrs. Jean B. Pearson

~ Family ~
Mrs. Richard Perkins
Diana L. Planeau
Ms. Susan Phillips
Mr. Anthony Pippo
Connie Pressman
Mary Katherine Porter
Mr. Laszlo Pozsonyi
Mr. Edward Purscell
Ms. Juliana Ratliff
Mrs. Kenneth Reid
Doris Rich
Ms. Jean E. Rowley
Lisa Saunders
Ms. Sharon E. Schnare
Shirley Sebastian
Mrs. Newell Syl
Elaine Smith
Marshall H. Smith
Michael Spellmann
Ms. Julia S. Stone
Mr. Carl A. Strand
Ms. Amy Swan
Ms. Gail Swanson
Mr. George Sylvestre
Stephen Telsey
Mary Pat Thayer
F. Paula Thompson
Mrs. Richard Trimble
Karen Walker
Mr. Robert Welt
Mrs. Simon Wohlan
Susan Wyatt
Ms. Catherine Casey Zahn
Debra Ziegler
Marlene Terry Ziegler

~ Family ~
Aimee Allaire & Family
Dr. & Mrs. James B. Anderson
John & Deborah Aspinwall
Margaret Fee Austin
Mr. & Mrs. Peter M. Barnes
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Barry
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Barton
Mrs. Alan Bentz
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Billing
Neil & Jane Lassen Boffruff
Roger Bowers
Dan and Jane Brannegan
Marcie & Howard Bensilver
Donald & Robin Brown
Alan & MJ Brush
Ken & Judey Buckbee
Ann & Russ Burgess
Laurel Butler
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Carpenter
Jim & Betty Collins
Robert & Elace Comrie
Mr. Edward Coogan
Wayne F. Dailey
Densmore Oil Co.
Rudi Favretti
Harry & Susie Ferguson
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Fittin
Mr. & Mrs. Gabriel Ford
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Fulcherio
Mr. & Mrs. Eric J. Garofano
Sharon Barrett & Gary LaChance
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Gehring
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert A. Holmstedt
Nancy and Gary Johnson
Robert & Catherine Kaylor
Jack & Beth Komorowski
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Krukowski
Fred & Betsy Lebel
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Leonard
Bob & Cindy Martin
Margaret Masson
Mrs. Lois McDonald
Mrs. John & Marcia McGowan
John McHugh
Mrs. Douglas McKay
Stephen Menno
Nel and Mike Messick
Michael Meyer
Mystic Garden Club
Robert & Joan Ness
Paul & Debra Neuman
John & Julia Pacy
Louise & Clark Pippen
Laurence & Nancy Potter
Bill Pryor
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Purinton
Lynsey Pyke-Fairchild
Mr. & Mrs. Bruc Rafferty
Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence A. Reiter
Mr. & Mrs. Peter G. Repsor
Bill and Karen Rutherford
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard M. Sawyer
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Scheer
Anne Schmidt
Mr. & Mrs. David Scott
Seehaus Family
George & Anna Shaw
Stephen Simonicini
Mrs. Paul Simonicini
Mr. Hugh Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Carl M. Sommer
Mrs. Sproul
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Streeter
Col & Mrs. James Turse
Abigail Van Slyck
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Van Winkle
Sandy & Sidney Van Zandt
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Walker
Dennis & Barbara Walsh
Walter and Louisa Watrous
Mr. & Mrs. John K. Watson
Charles and Eleanor Wenderoth
Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Whitford
Mr. & Mrs. Edward S. Williams
Carol & James Wollschlager

~ Contributing ~
Atty & Mrs. Robert P. Anderson
Mr. Randall Brooks
Ms. Joanna Case
Ms. Marilyn Comrie
Rod Cook
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Deichmann
Ms. Gloria Fowler
Mr. Craig Haines
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Law
Mr. & Mrs. John Lee
Elizabeth M. Lockyer
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Marco
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin North
Tom & Marie Olson
Cindy Palmer
Mr. & Mrs. Roland Pampel
Mr. & Mrs. O. Pomeroy Robinson
Dr. & Mrs. David Rose
Ms. Ellen Smith
Elizabeth & Peter Sorensen
Tora Sterregaard
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Washburn
Mr. & Mrs. Freda Williams
Mr. Steve White
Mr. William Blunt White
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wolfe
Ms. Delight Wolfe
Dennis & Barbara Walsh

~ Benefactor ~
Dr. & Mrs. Sultan Ahamed
Mr. & Mrs. George Allen
Laura Beach
Mrs. Joan Butler
Mr. & Mrs. Franklin G. Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Frank M. Durrstrom
Mr. & Mrs. William Glazier
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Hanna
Hon. & Mrs. Robert Leuba
David & Keli Levine
Ms. Barbara A. Pearson
Mr. & Mrs. Tod Schaefer
Dana and Richard Semenaro
Jack & Peggy Sinks
Mr. & Mrs. Harold P. Smith
Mr. J. Niel Spillane
Atty & Mrs. Peter Stuart
Cmndr. & Mrs. Thomas W. Watkins
Mrs. Royal C. Werner

~ Sustaining ~
Mrs. Theodore T. Tylaska
Elizabeth & Harry White

~ Life ~
Mr. & Mrs. Louis P. Allyn
James Allyn Family
Kate April
Ms. Judi Caracausa
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony C. Dinoto
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Ettinger
David Evans
Mr. & Mrs. John Fiore
Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Hamm
Mrs. Muriel Hinkle
Elizabeth & Lynn Holland
M. Joseph T. Imghill
Mr. Stephen J. Jones
Mr. & Mrs. James Kimenker
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Langlois
Mr. William E. Lewis
Tom & Nancy McLaughlin
Ms. Frank O’Beirne
Mrs. Brenda O’Donnell
Mrs. Marion Palm
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Patton
Mr. William Peterson
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Pryor
Dr. Trent J. Repko
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sinnett
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan C. Sproul
Mr. & Mrs. John Stott
Mr. & Mrs. C. William Stamm
Mr. & Mrs. Barry L. Thorp
Mrs. Brian A. Thorp
Mr. Robert Walker
Whitney Allyn Family

~ Honorary Life ~
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Kodama
Stuart Lamson
Bailey & Jennifer Pryor Family
September 2019 Meeting Minutes - - -

The Board of Trustees of the Mystic River Historical Society met on Monday, September 16, 2019. Attendees were: Cindy Allyn, Lou Allyn, Marilyn Comrie, Stephen Menno, John Parry, Lyndsey Pyrke-Fairchild, and Richard Semeraro.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by President Menno.

President (S. Menno): The President welcomed the Trustees to the meeting and the start of a new season. He asked everyone to think about someone they might recommend as a new board member to replace Jennifer Pryor and talked about the need for a Recording Secretary. He also announced that Elizabeth Boucher has agreed to be the new editor and publisher of the Portersville Press. Also, Steve is now doing website updates and MailChimp emails.

Recording Secretary (L. Allyn): A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the minutes of the June 17, 2019 meeting.

Treasurer (L. Allyn): As of August 31 cash in the bank was $2,626.86. • $4,634.91 of the Charles B. Allyn Foundation grant was used to purchase two new desktop computers and a laptop; unspent $335 was returned. The annual $350 check from the Akeley Trust was received in June. The Board agreed to discontinue an old idle Amazon sellers account. • A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the Treasurer’s Report.

Corresponding Secretary (L. Holland): No letters were written.

Curatorial (L. Allyn): By Dorrie Hanna: The Curatorial Committee met in March. On September 4 there was a minor back up in the drain for the HVAC system inside the Downes Building. About a dozen of our books for sale had to be discarded.

Activities by month: April (estimated) 12 visitors, 8 queries, 1 image request • May (estimated) 6 visitors, 6 queries, 1 image request • June - 12 visitors, + Visitors on Open House Day, 14 queries • July—11 visitors, 20 queries, 1 image request • August - 13 visitors, 25 queries, 1 image request pending. • We donated a tub of craft materials [leftover from PVA activities many years ago] to the Library for their Craft Swap. • The Chamber of Commerce contacted us for information about the 100th anniversary of the bascule bridge. This won’t be until 2022. They wondered if MRHS would like to be involved. Marilyn Comrie has joined the Committee.

Finance (L. Allyn): A committee meeting will be held in October to prepare the 2020 budget. Richard Semeraro has joined the committee.

Information Technology (S. Menno for S. Thorp): The new computers and software were received and installed. The system administrator did backups on 1 September and installed all program backups. There were no problems with any of the equipment and all appeared to be in good working order.

Membership (C. Allyn): We have gained five new members during the past few months. They are George Sylvestre, Judy Munro, Connie Plessman, Glenn Brady and Jennifer Kettledon, plus a returning member, Bernie Boylan. • There were three deaths over the summer; they were Sally Halsey, Bill Everett and Bev Dobbins. • We will send out 32 dues renewal reminder letters before the end of September.

Mystic Noank Library (R. Semeraro):
These Truths: A History of the United States by Jill Lepore is currently being discussed in two sessions. Next September the Friends of Fort Griswold will hold their 239th Remembrance of the Battle of Groton Heights; perhaps MRHS would be interested in participating.

Newsletter (S. Menno): Elizabeth is working on the next issue.

Programs (J. Parry for M. Austin):
Our upcoming meetings and the associated speakers are as follows: October 23, 2019: Roy Manstan, “TURTLE: David Bushnell’s ‘Revolutionary Vessel’ and Connecticut’s Role in Submarine History” on October 23. He reviewed the history of the Turtle, its replica construction and testing, and Fort Trumbull’s role in the development of sonar during WWI.

October 2019 Program

Pictured here are program committee member John Parry, president Steve Menno, speaker Roy Manstan, and program committee chair Margaret Austin. Mr. Roy Manstan presented “TURTLE: David Bushnell's ‘Revolutionary Vessel’ and Connecticut's Role in Submarine History” on October 23. He reviewed the history of the Turtle, its replica construction and testing, and Fort Trumbull's role in the development of sonar during WWI.

Social Media (L. Pyrke-Fairchild): Postings continued throughout the summer.

Lower Mystic Cemetery (L. Allyn): Two packets of bylaws and other documents have been received from Association President Judey Buckbee and will be process into our collections. A missing marker photograph was taken by Joanna Case and posted on FindAGrave.com.

On September 30th several Rotarians will cut back the yucca.

Helen Clarke Walking Tour (M. Comrie): The October 5th tour is sold out.

Mystic River Park (M. Comrie): The 25th anniversary of the Park will be in 2020. Marilyn has met with the Park Commissioners to establish a Celebration Committee. She is also thinking of working on a history of the Cottrell Lumber Company and is doing a history of the 60th anniversary of the 1960 Main Street Mystic fire.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2019 at 7:00 pm Mystic-Noank Library

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.
Respectfully submitted, Lou Allyn
Events Calendar

7pm Wednesday, December 4th, 2019
“Great 18th Century Houses and Towns of Connecticut.”
7:00 refreshments & socializing, 7:30 program
Mystic Congregational Church Hall,
Broadway & E. Main, Mystic

7pm Tuesday, December 10, 2019
History Book Club—MRHS & MNL Partnership
Activities Room, Mystic Noank Library
The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and
Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain
by Maria Rosa Menocal

Always Open to New Readers!

Bring a friend! All meetings are free and open to the public!
Donations are always welcome. Renew or become a Member of MRHS
for updates about our events.
Contact us at info@mystichistory.org

Membership Updates

We welcome Jim & Betty Collins as new members.
We are saddened to report the loss of Mrs. Robert Irons—she and her husband were Charter members of MRHS.

-Cindy Allyn, Membership

Newsletter/Print Patrons

CYNTHIA AND LOUIS ALLYN
LAURA BEACH AND JOSHUA KALKSTEIN
DANIEL & JANE BRANNEGAN
MR. & MRS. FRANKLIN DAVIS
MR & MRS. FRED DEICHMANN
DENSMORE OIL
KATE DIMANCESCU
HERMINE DUNDA
DAVID EVANS
ALICE FOLEY
MR. CRAIG HAINES
MR. & MRS. DOUG HANNA
JUDY HICKS
MURIEL HINKLE
LYNN AND LIZ HOLLAND
NANCY & TOM MCLOUGHLIN
MRS. ROGER PANCIERA
MR. & MRS. JOHN PARRY
JACK & PEGGY SINKS
THE REAL McCOY® RUM