



The Juneberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) colloquially known as Shadblow, or Serviceberry is in full blossom in the Hart House Garden the end of April. The edible berries ripen in June.

### Officers

Marie McFarlin, *President*  
Wayne Harms, *Vice President*  
Stephan Brodeur, *Treasurer*  
Theodora Kopcha,  
*Recording Secretary*

### Trustees

Edward Armstrong  
Alan Cantor  
David Carswell  
Mark Delmonico  
Donna DiBella  
Leslie Mastrianna  
Carol Rzasa  
Arlene Sakatos  
Katie Toolan

### Chairpersons

*Administrative Assistants*  
Diane Hoyt  
Theodora Kopcha

*Archivist*  
Greg Thompson

*Facilities Manager*  
Ed Armstrong

*Gardens and Grounds*  
Linda Kinsella, *Keeper*

*Hart House*  
Donna DiBella  
Marie McFarlin

*Hospitality*  
Catherine Logiudice, *Chair*

*Investments*  
Wayne Harms, *Chair*

*Membership*  
Dorothy Shaley

*Nominating*  
Donna DiBella  
Wayne Harms  
Thomas Stevenson

*Public Relations/Outreach*  
*Special Projects*  
Tedd Levy

*Publicity*  
Lamar LeMonte

*Registrar*  
Diane Lyons

*Assistant Registrar*  
Marie Vasile

*Student Volunteers*  
Marie McFarlin  
Wendy Mill, *Youth & Family*

*Ways & Means*  
Donna DiBella

*Layout and Printing*  
Essex Printing

## President's Message

Last October we held our Annual Meeting in one of the garden areas close to the House. The weather was perfect and, yet, there was apprehension in the air. We did not know what was going to happen in the months ahead. Our buildings were closed to the public and all events, including our beloved Wassail Party, cancelled. The home tour, our major fundraiser, moved from September to June and then again to August. It is incredible and wonderful to state that, slowly but optimistically, we are planning programs and opening the doors this month.

We are grateful for the tremendous support that we received these past 15 months and are grateful to EVERYONE who helped keep us going.

We received financial support and all volunteers were engaged in planning for the future. The new kitchen work was finished; we began a series of virtual tours; started plans for a new exhibit next year; worked to update files; reorganized and reviewed our vast collection and enhanced our gardens. Let us hope that each day is a better day than we have known these challenging and frightful months.



**The House and Garden Tour August 28**

Since the time we started planning the Tour, we decided to add some of the magnificent and meaningful gardens in town. We have appreciated more than ever the beauty and sustenance they bring to us.

The homes on the tour are great examples of our mission. They represent preservation and protection from the early settlements to different periods in our history and how the past and present work together. As you tour, you will visit and reflect upon a world that you will not forget. **Tickets go on sale July 16th.** At the end of June check our website or call for locations to buy them which will include using the website.

# Hart House Heritage Garden: Spring 2021

EARTH DAY When 17 little girls from Old Saybrook Daisy & Brownie Girl Scout Troop came to the Hart House Heritage Garden, in April, they brought more than the pent-up energy of 7 year olds, they brought happiness.

Behind their masks, everyone was smiling as the girls joyful met each other, ran-about, dancing and squealing with laughter.

They came with their mothers and Troop Leader, Marie Lavatone to celebrate Earth Day.

The visit was organized by Old Saybrook Garden Club members Ann Shea and Bonnie Penders.

Hands-on Earth Day activities included how to grow seed in small pots and how established plants should be planted and cared for in the garden. They attentively listened to a talk about how important trees are to the environment. They heard how a scourge called Dutch Elm disease, destroyed thousands of elm trees in Connecticut 80 years ago. The Brownies shared their knowledge of how trees give us oxygen, purify the air by storing carbon and provide shelter for wildlife. Then, they had a scavenger hunt, and snacks and danced merrily about twirling colorful scarfs to classical music. It was a warm, sunny, blissful hour, that transported both children and adults back to the days before the community was isolated by the Covid pandemic.

The children seemed to grasp the value of trees. Trees give stature to any garden, yet often go unnoticed by the casual visitor. We like to talk about the trees when giving a garden tour, such as:

The Williams Pear (*Pyrus communis*) also named Bartlett pear, is espaliered against the south wall of the Hart house. It is particularly noticed in April, by it's beautiful white flowers and in October by its abundance of pears.



Across the lawn is a handsome Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*) it's white bark peels in long, horizontal strips. If these strips are peeled off it causes injury to the tree's growth.

At the front of the house are two Hawthorn trees. On the left is a notable One-seeded Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), that flowers in June. On the right is a shorter

variety, the Scarlet Hawthorn (*C. coccinea*). An important pollinator for insects, it has sharp spike-like thorns about two inches long and produces red berries that turn a brilliant scarlet color when ripe in September and are devoured by small birds. In earlier times the fruit was used medicinally for heart ailments.

On the northside of the campus is a handsome Black walnut tree (*Juglans Nigra*). It's large limbs provides welcome shade from summer heat and an unwelcomed nut crop in early fall. The nuts fall all over the parking lot making it treacherous to walk. The outer husk of the nut is woody, hard and difficult to crack. Early settlers used the husks to dye cloth and make ink. The nut meat was used for baking cakes and cookies. Black walnuts energy-rich kernels are sought after by squirrels, chipmunks and mice. They gnaw on the nutshell leaving small piles of black shavings. The hard wood is prized for fine furniture, veneer and gunstocks. Good quality logs are worth large sums of money. A chemical called juglone derived from the leaves, fruit and roots of the black walnut can inhibit other plants growing nearby.

The stately American Elm (*Ulmus americana*) in the Dingle is thought to have been planted for the nation's centennial birthday in 1876, following the town's example of planting elms for the occasion.

*continued on page 4*

It is a majestic tree with the distinctive vase-shaped form. In earlier times the elm wood was used for building heavy wagons, barrel hoops staves, canoes, ship parts, caskets, crates and the inner fibers were braided to make a strong rope.

The elm was a popular tree for shading streets of cities and towns.

Arborist say the old elms in cities and towns were planted too close together and were easily susceptible to Dutch Elm disease fungus (*Ceratocystis ulmi*). The fungus, carried by bark beetles, caused a tree epidemic, killing many elms between 1930 and 1960.



We have several other trees in the garden, all useful and important to country life in years past.

The garden is always changing. In 2020 we removed two old white pines, from the shade garden which left a big patch of sunlight. Then in August one of the four persimmons had to be removed after storm Isaiah destroyed its canopy. The shade plants began suffering from so much sunlight. A request for donations to buy memorial trees received a quick response from members. Last fall we planted a red maple, a river birch and a serviceberry in the garden. We hope they will grow fast for the sake of the ferns and wildflowers that need shade. Tree plaques will be placed with the names of the families who donated the trees.

**INVASIVE JUMPING WORMS:** - We have covered the former teaching garden bed with a black tarp in an effort to stop the spread of the Asian jumping worms (*Amyntas agrestis*) that were found in this bed. At present, there is no safe method to eradicate the worms. There is some evidence from the University of Minnesota that hot dry soil will limit their spread. The tarp is an effort to destroy the worms by the heat from the sun. Scientists at several universities are trying to develop a plant based pesticide for use against the jumping worms. It can't happen too soon. They rapidly consume leaf litter and ground cover keeping nutrients from reaching roots deep in the soil. They produce eggs, tiny cocoons in late summer that overwinter, hatch in early spring and become adults in summer. The cocoons are easily spread by tracking or by sharing plants with con-

taminated soil. The castings from the worms are coffee-granule size that leave the soil inert. If you see them in your garden they can be hand picked and dropped in zip-lock plastic bags and placed in the sun or drowned in vinegar and put in garbage containers but never in compost.



Come take a walk in the garden, see the emerging spring perennials, especially in the woodland garden. Chat with our knowledgeable gardeners, Nancy Dziamma, Joanne Goduti, Bonnie Penders, Carin Roaldset and Susan Murphy, who knows, you might like to volunteer here too.

Keep Smiling,

*Linda Kinsella, Keeper*

We were all greatly saddened in March by the untimely death of Mark Vesligaj.

Markus loved the garden and regularly came with his wife Jenny to help. He was just 50 years old, so bright, kind, funny and interested in botany. He was a Fulbright scholar and a professor of Engineering Science and Technology at Three Rivers Community College. It was a joy to share summer days gardening with him.. Our deepest condolences to Jenny for her loss.

**Are you getting eblasts?  
If not, let us know.**

## From the Archives



*Bucky, age 101, on her first day of volunteering after her COVID shots.*

**Gift from Tedd Levy** His collection of albums/ scrapbooks containing all the articles published by the Society from 2011 to 2021. Most of this collection contain articles written by Tedd pertaining to the history of Old Saybrook including hundreds of topics from biographies to events. These were published in a local paper and are an excellent resource for learning about our history. This collection is priceless.

Given to us is a very large white trapunto quilt (80-X90), made by Eunice Clark Barnard, perhaps with the help of her mother and various friends. It look like it was meant to be a wedding quilt as the center medallion is a large urn of fruits and flowers, and some of the flowers look very much like the hoped-for babies' little foot.



The lines of the quilting are ¼ inch apart, 10-12 stitches to the inch. The hand work is on both sides of the quilt. The fruits and flowers are pineapples, sunflowers, marigolds, daisies, black-eyed Susan, ropes of vines, with and without flowers and/ or leaves. From the Ellsworth Grant and Marion Hepburn Grant collection.

## First History Bike Tour



Sunday morning, June 6th, twenty cycling enthusiasts and history buffs arrived at the Historical Society's Hart house to begin the first annual bike tour of Saybrook's historical Pequot War sites. It was a combined bike tour, history lecture and video production. The video will be available on the OSHS website to encourage the many independent bikers who visit Old Saybrook to stop and learn more about town history. A free, self-guided tour map is available at the Society's Archives Building.

The cyclists toured six historic Pequot War sites, including Saybrook Fort. Commentary was given by Dr. David Naumec, an independent historian who was instrumental in the archaeological investigation conducted at Saybrook Point by OSHS and the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. Support for the tour was provided by the Old Saybrook Economic Development Commission, and Saybrook Point Resort & Marina. The tour was organized by Tedd Levy, writer, historian and Old Saybrook Historical Society member.

*Lamar LeMonte*



Covid 19 and its ramifications have reinforced the importance of finding a “ place” for reflection, comfort, and renewal to help us especially in difficult times.

It can range from bike rides, walks, a space with our homes, gardens, a special book, etc. In Old Saybrook one of the timeless treasures and spot for many residents is the walk at the beach at low tide especially around sunset. Patricia O’Brien, the town poet laureate, has walked almost every day since she moved here and never tires of doing it. During these walks she has taken hundreds of pictures and shares of few of her moments with us. Centuries of people have found this treasure and we hope, that wherever you are, you have found your place,

---





# Facilities Spring 2021 Report

## Electrical Upgrades

Majestic Electric (Sal Osso) performed electrical work during March and April 2021 in the Hart House and Archives Building.

To bring both the Hart House and Archives to code compliance, all electric outlets were upgraded. In addition, photo-electric switches were added for the Archives front coach-lights & soffit lights. Photo-electric switches were also added to the Hart House Gallery South door and rear porch light.

The upgrades included the addition of two surge suppressors in the Hart House to help protect the new kitchen appliances and all other Hart House electrical components including the oil boiler, dehumidifier, water heater and sump pump.



Old Saybrook Building Inspector (Tom Makowicki) and Ed Armstrong during the official electrical surge protection inspection.



Majestic Electric employee (Josh) installing photo electric circuit

## Replacement of six Archives Windows

North Cove Construction replaced six awning windows in the Archives Building second floor on both the North & South side. The old windows required replacement due to advanced moisture-related deterioration. The new windows are Marvin Elevate, Fiberglass clad wood framed windows with Simulated divided lites.

The windows were installed with Spanish Cedar trim surrounds assembled in-shop with Kreg fasteners and new copper drip-edge with copper flashing pans under each window. The work included replacement of the 5-inch-wide vertical tongue & groove pine siding above & below each window.

## Late-Spring Facilities Tasks

Tasks scheduled for this Spring include resetting the Archives bluestone entryway and refreshing the new kitchen flat roof, replacing the old kitchen North-facing gambrel roof and sealing the roofs of the Hart House, Archives and Garden Shed.



Archives second-floor window installation

*Ed Armstrong*



# Grandfather Clock

The longcase or grandfather clock beside the fireplace in the Hart House once again keeps perfect time. The clock was donated to the Old Saybrook Historical Society by Sallie Boody. It was her mother, Martha Soper, who owned the clock, but little is known about its history.

The intricate brass workings of the clock have been in the hands of antique clock restorer Kirkland H. Crump, of Wallingford, CT. He's been restoring clocks for 47 years. This particular clock was made in London by John Meredith around 1750. We know this because Meredith's name is on the face of the clock. Mr. Crump has guessed about its manufacture date based on his expertise. The clock has an hour, minute, and second hand. It chimes on the hour.

It also numbers the day of the month. It is powered by gravity, using heavy weights that are wound high and take about a week to drop before rewinding is needed. We do not know when it made it to the American colonies. It was made approximately 100 years after English clockmaker William Clement introduced the Royal Pendulum longcase clock, the most advanced and accurate clock made at that date. English clocks were the preeminent early clocks. It was not until about 1685 that the first "immigrant" longcase clocks, based on

Clement's Royal Pendulum, crossed the Atlantic. By around 1700 the production of American-made grandfather clocks had begun. The Oxford English



Dictionary states that the popular 1876 song My Grandfather's Clock is responsible for the name "grandfather clock" being applied to the English longcase clock. The song was composed by an American songwriter by the name of Henry Clay.

*Lamar LeMonte*

Thank you for your  
generous support of  
our Annual Appeal





Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Old Saybrook, CT  
Permit No. 52

## The Old Saybrook Historical Society

350 Main Street  
Post Office Box 4  
Old Saybrook, CT 06475  
860.395.1635  
[www.saybrookhistory.org](http://www.saybrookhistory.org)  
[contact@saybrookhistory.org](mailto:contact@saybrookhistory.org)

*Address Service Requested*

This newsletter is generously  
sponsored by



# Mark your calendar

---



**August 28**  
**10 - 3**

**US Coast Guard  
Dixieland/Jazz Band Concert  
September 19  
2 - 3:30**



[www.saybrookhistory.org](http://www.saybrookhistory.org)