

The Old Saybrook



Historical Society

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING, PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE HISTORY OF OLD SAYBROOK

Winter 2023



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President's Message

A year ago at this time we were slowly planning to add programs after the major pandemic disruption.

Little did we know what was to come.

1. Lamar LeMonte and his popular mini- histories of Old Saybrook
2. Brett Martin and the Zanni World War II project, including the State Recognized Claude J. Zanni Day
3. The finishing of the Air-conditioning of the General William Hart House
4. The exhibit on the lives of Miss James and Ann Petry, including the opening which featured the Con Brio Choral Society. The audience was standing room only. The exhibit brought visitors from 34 states and 50 towns, various organizations, and 200 students
5. Our first Forum at The Katharine Hepburn Cultural Center
6. The reestablishment of Student Volunteer Program
7. The placement of the Official Lafayette Trail sign making Old Saybrook a part of the initiative marking his triumphant visit to the United States in 1824-1835
8. The return of the United States Coast Guard Beacon Jazz Band Nonet
9. Preservation Award to Frank Sciamé for his preservation of the Outer Lighthouse
10. The use of Bushnell Farm for our major fundraising event
11. The splendid gardens despite many volunteer surgeries.
12. The increased volume of visitors and research requests.
13. The publication of Brett Martin's Award winning thesis, "For Home and Country: An American Family and the Second World War".

Our outstanding volunteers helped with so many major events. We are so appreciative of them and the community for its support. It was a year to be cherished.

With gratitude to all,
Marie

Volunteer Extraordinaire Retiring at Age 103

Margaret Buckridge "Bucky" Bock was born in 1919, the year before women got the right to vote and when prohibition became the law of the land. She grew up during the Great Depression, married during World War II, lived through the Atomic Age and Cold War and is now a centenarian using her mature years to improve life in the 21st century.

Her story begins in Essex where she

lived until ten when her family moved to the Montauk Lighthouse where her father became the keeper. The 1860 Lighthouse had no electricity, indoor plumbing or central heat. The kitchen sink brought up water with a hand pump. Privies were outside and the doors were locked to keep out inquisitive tourists.

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

In poor weather, the fog horn would blast every 13 seconds for days. Pictures on the wall would always be crooked from the vibrations. But, she recalls, "I enjoyed the storms and would spend hours watching the surf break against the rocks."

In the spring she picked blueberries in the meadows, made jam from the fruit of beach plums, and had a small garden with a few flowers and vegetables in the hollow outside the kitchen door.

These were years of the Great Depression and the family ate what Dad caught or got free from fishermen at the docks. Then the WPA built a concrete road to the Lighthouse, which remains today, and installed electricity, inside plumbing and a furnace.

After graduating high school, which was 22 miles away in East Hampton, she went to Hartford Hospital School of Nursing and began work as a visiting nurse in 1941.

In 1943, the same year her father retired from being keeper at the Outer Light in Old Saybrook, she married Robert Bock (1920-2006). They were engaged for three days before getting married, rather impulsively she admits. Her parents weren't happy, but the marriage lasted 64 years and included two children, Ellen and Jeff (1948-1997), and grandchildren, many friends, travel and enjoyable nights square dancing with the Rocky Hill Twirlers.

After a brief time at an Army base in El Paso, Bob was sent overseas and served with the Army Air Force in North Africa and Italy and Bucky returned to Hartford to work as a nurse at Pratt & Whitney's Hamilton division and remained there until the war was over and Bob returned home.

In 1945 they moved to Rocky Hill where Bob worked as a promotional manager for a food company and Bucky eventually took a position as a school nurse in Rocky Hill, having received a BS in Nursing from Central CT State College and later, after receiving a MS from Southern CT, became a language and speech pathologist there.

After Bucky and Bob both retired in 1982 they moved to Westbrook to a home that had once belonged to her lighthouse keeping grandfather, John Ninde



Buckridge. Many winters were spent in their Florida double-wide. As time and funds permitted, they traveled to China, many times to Europe, Hawaii, Alaska and three trips in a motor home across North America.

A strong believer in keeping active, and with a background and interest in history, Bucky volunteered at the Westbrook and Old Saybrook Historical Societies.

With an inclination toward research and organizing, plus experience with her Tandy computer, she convinced the Westbrook Historical Society to purchase a computer and the 'Past Perfect'

program to organize and maintain their holdings. With a colleague she assigned an accession number to every artifact and document so that it could be entered into a database.

She began volunteering at the Old Saybrook Historical Society around 1983 working with Elaine Staplins and Martha Soper in the basement of the Main Street School, now the Town Hall, saving historical records, and was part of the group who participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony to open the Frank Stevenson Archives Building in 1998. She contributed to "The Vital Records of Saybrook Colony 1635-1860," worked on two genealogy volumes on the descendants of Nathaniel Dickinson, and has written articles that have appeared in genealogy publications.

Recognized as an authority on lighthouses, Bucky wrote "Memories of a Lightkeeper's Daughter" for the Montauk Historical Society, and the popular "Lighthouses: A Nostalgic Era Recalled" and "Old Saybrook Lighthouses" published by the Old Saybrook Historical Society.

Her volunteer work has spanned more than 35 years and you could reliably find her on Wednesday at the Westbrook Historical Society and Thursday at the Old Saybrook Historical Society.

We have benefited from her friendship, dedication, knowledge, skills and experience. Margaret Buckridge "Bucky" Bock is an admired and valued colleague and an inspiring community treasure. We will miss her so much and wish her continued good health and many happy days.

Tedd Levy

Winter Garden Report

On December 1, 2022, you could find our garden crew, muffled up in winter clothing, busily creating evergreen wreaths and sprays to decorate the exterior of the Hart House and Archives Building for the Christmas - Holiday season.



Jim Madden, Susan Murphy, Carin Roaldset, Jen Rendak with white pine garland for the front fence.

Gardeners are really the best people. They make the best friends too. They care for the garden from April to November, yet, ask them to help out for special project and they are there. One text and they will be the extra hands needed to set up tables and chairs or tents for an event. They will be there to clean up fallen branches and debris after a windstorm. And they will endure the blustery wind and freezing temperature to hang fresh garlands and bows to make the campus festive for the holidays.

A thank you from the Shoreline Soup Kitchens and Pantries (SSKP): Every week during the summer, the Hart House Heritage Gardeners deliver individual “posies” of fresh herbs, to the food pantry next door, at the First Church of Christ. The delivery is always welcome and met with kind words. Kim Howley is the hard-working manager at the pantry. She recently sent the historical society a thank you note. It made me smile because we should be thanking her for the service she preforms to our community. Kim wrote: “The fresh herbs are so very appreciated by so many people. The posies brighten up a meal as well as a day. ...On a personal note, I love to walk through the gardens on my way to SSKP office in Grace Church. It gives me a moment or three - to literally stop and smell the roses. Those moments are priceless to me.”



Joanne Goduti, Ed Armstrong, Jim Madden, Carin Roaldset add sparkle to the garden shed.

food banks, etc. SSKP mission is: “an interfaith ministry that provides food and fellowship to people in need and educates our communities about hunger and poverty.”

It is alarming to realize that hunger is a fact of life for many in our town. And it is a humbling experience to see the good work done by the Shoreline Soup Kitchens and Pantries. Help SSKP by donating your extra foodstuff whenever you can.

A happy, healthy winter to you all, Linda



Bonnie Penders, garden volunteer, is in the garden shed making spectacular wreaths for our buildings

December 2022 Facilities Report

The Old Saybrook Historical Society's fourth quarter 2022 maintenance was successful with only one surprise, repair of the Hart House fence gate and fence gate-post finials which was completed in time for the Christmas decorations.

The normal maintenance included annual work on the Hart House and Archives Building HVAC, alarm systems, fire-suppression equipment, gutters, and garden equipment.

Through the continued assistance of the Old Saybrook Community, we are thankful for the installation of air conditioning in the Hart House this past summer. As for community events, we were fortunate to have received help



from Sal Osso of Majestic Electric Company for his donation of electrical services for the July 24, 2022 U.S. Coast Guard Beacon Jazz Band concert. Sal installed his 20-amp electrical-outlet-skid and provided electrical services to install the electrical power for the Coast Guard Band.

Our facilities watch-list for 2023 includes the Hart House south-gambrel roof and porch roof. We plan to apply for a matching grant for the replacement of these cedar roofs. In addition, the Archives building cedar roof is showing signs of deterioration and we plan to inspect the Archives roof in the Spring of 2023.

Ed Armstrong

James-Petry Community Forum

The Society was honored to bring attention to the lives and accomplishments of "*Miss James and Ann Petry in Saybrook and Beyond*" to a public forum at the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center. The all-star panel featured:

Farah Jasmine Griffin, Columbia University Educator, author and nationally acclaimed authority on the life and literature of Ann Petry.

Elisabeth Petry, author, former editor and reporter. Ms. Petry is the daughter of Ann Petry and the grand-niece of Miss James.

Jesse Nasta, Wesleyan Univ. Professor African-American Studies, Executive Director of the Middlesex County Historical Society.

Dave Williams, Host and Moderator, iCRV Radio



Photo: Lamar LeMonte

baum Fund of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County to support programs that empower Middlesex County women and girls to be self-reliant and reach their potential. The remarkable life and times of both Anna James and her niece Ann Petry are emblematic of this fund's mission.

Lamar LeMonte

This successful event was funded by the Sari A. Rosen-

Man with a Mission: A Mini-History

Tedd Levy, author, historian and member of the Old Saybrook Historical Society writes:

On an early October morning, a 73-year-old retired history teacher from Stillwater, Oklahoma loaded his 2010 Ford Ranger with an engraved marble marker and set out for Old Saybrook to fulfill a lifetime mission.

His name is Loyd Ingham and his mission was to write a family history and place markers at sites that were significant to the Ingham family. Turns out that Loyd is the last of his family that traces its beginnings to Joseph Ingham (1630-1710) who arrived in Saybrook in the 1640's or 1650's.



Loyd Ingham setting the inscribed marble marker with permission from the Old Saybrook Department of Parks & Recreation

site for him to install his marker.

He set about clearing a place, setting a form, mixing and pouring concrete and carefully positioning his



The Preserve parking lot on Ingham Hill Road

So, several weeks ago Loyd contacted town officials and the historical society to arrange for the placement of a marker at the end of Ingham Hill Road. He then made arrangements and drove 1,600 miles, stopping in East Haven to purchase several 60 pound bags of concrete with gravel, and headed for the new parking area at the top of Ingham Hill where the Department of Parks and Recreation identified a

marker. The entire task took the better part of the day.

In the past three years he placed 14 markers at Ingham sites, mostly cemeteries, in Connecticut, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and Oklahoma. The marker in Old Saybrook, and another in Durham, were the last on his list.

After teaching for 40 years, Loyd retired three years ago and said that he made a commitment long ago to have a plan and his plan was to work on Ingham family history. The Ingham family, he proudly notes, helped build this country and here I am, "I'm the last of the line."

So, he wrote an Ingham genealogy and, with his wife Mary Alice, traveled to several states to see and mark Ingham sites. While he has completed his marker project he still keeps busy maintaining a large home canning garden, volunteers at the Tulsa Historical Society, the Route 66 Museum, and the Sand Springs Museum, is active in his church and drives an antique Framall tractor in six parades a year.

He jokes that 65 to 75 is go, go, go, while later on may be time for go slow. For Loyd, it's "mission accomplished" and, given his interests and energy, there's likely more to go, go, go.



Loyd Ingham "Last of the Line" 1600 miles from Stillwater, Oklahoma

Annual Preservation Award

The 7th annual Achievement in Historical Preservation was presented by the chair of the Award Committee Wayne Harms to Frank Sciame, the owner of the OUTER LIGHTHOUSE, the most photographed and recognized in the State. As the owner, Frank has been diligent in doing all that was needed to preserve this important icon. Margaret "Bucky" Bock was a special guest as her father had been one of the light house keepers. Devin Carney, State Representative presented a certificate from the representative and Matthew Pugliese, town selection, spoke about the importance of preservation to our community.



*Margaret "Bucky" Bock, Frank Sciame, Devin Carney, Wayne Harms
Photo Lamar LeMonte*

Cypress Cemetery Annual Tour



We are grateful to JH Torrance Downes for giving a great tour. It was a beautiful fall day and the audience was the largest ever. It was exciting to see so many people interested in local history.

Photo Tedd Levy

Carolers are part of the vast collection of Cathy Logiudice, our hospitality chair, who shares her collection when she decorates the General William Hart House for our special Wassail Party.





The Old Saybrook Historical Society

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*May 2023 bring good health,
good friends, acts of kindness and
peace on earth and peace within.*

*May we all remember that life is fragile, that we
nothing for granted, and that we must never lose hope
for a better world.*

*With gratitude and best wishes,
Old Saybrook Historical Society*



www.saybrookhistory.org