

The original sign of the Black Horse Tavern is on display in the Exhibit Gallery, courtesy of the Museum of Culture and History in Hartford.

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# President's Message

We are reaching the end of our fiscal year 2024-2025 on September 29, 2025 and, therefore, we are reflecting on the past year before the start of the new one. The exhibit of Marek Sarba's paintings ended last December with his presentation of his gift "The Night Boat" painting to the Society (page 4). Once the exhibit was over, he and his wife left for their new home in North Carolina with all our gratitude and best wishes.

Our Home Tour was outstanding. It was a perfect weather day and the showcase houses were decorated perfectly and the owners and docents brought holiday spirit to all who participated.

We will also remember the Brett Martin lecture at The Kate - a tribute to the Zanni family in World War II and extended to all the veterans buried a Normandy.



***Our wonderful members,  
 may they rest in peace:***

Margaret Buckridge "Bucky" Bock  
 1919 - 2025

Irmtraud "Irmy" Hermanson  
 1945 - 2025

Stephan Sakatos  
 1946 - 2025

The new side walk and air conditioning system at the Archives are huge improvements (page 7) and the gardens continue to amaze.

We will now turn our focus to the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of our country's birth.

We are saddened by the deaths of three exceptional members, volunteers, friends. Each one was a loyal member, who brought their talents and support in different ways and we are so grateful to have known them - may they rest in peace.

Marie

## Brett Martin Lecture at The Kate

On June 1st, audiences heard the inspiring story of young law student Brett Martin and his commitment to remembering and honoring the veterans of World War II. A class assignment in college began his study of Old Saybrook's Zanni family, a family Brett never knew. The main focus was Claude Zanni, who was killed and buried at the Normandy American Cemetery. This study became the basis for his book, *For Home and Country: An American Family and the Second World War*. After visiting Normandy twice, including last year for the 80th anniversary of D-Day, Brett shared their heroic story, his odyssey to the battlefields, and what we should remember about the war today. The audience gave him a standing ovation.



The lecture is available to view on our website: [www.saybrookhistory.org](http://www.saybrookhistory.org)

Lamar LeMonte

## Summer in the Garden

This update is coming to you from Carin Roaldset and Elizabeth Normen, the newly appointed co-garden keepers. We are honored to take the helm from long-time garden keeper Linda Kinsella who was celebrated for her service and dedication to the Hart House Heritage Garden at a surprise garden party in early June. We were blessed with perfect weather and the garden volunteers had worked hard to ensure the garden was looking its best. Linda continues her work in the garden — she has established a butterfly garden in the nook of the kitchen/gallery ell after this area was reconfigured by last year’s capital project.

Linda was honored with one of three new hawthorn trees added to the grounds. A pair flanking the Hart House replace the ones that had to be taken down last year. Two of the hawthorns were donated through Save our Shade, including one via the Town of Old Saybrook. We are grateful for these generous donations.

This year we engaged Mark Gutzmer, Director of Gardens and Grounds for the Elizabeth Park Conservancy, to evaluate and identify our modern and heritage roses, and provide advice and training for our volunteers in rose care and pruning. Mark has been more than generous with his time and has been very enthusiastic about our roses and the garden overall.

With the guidance Common Good Garden volunteer Dave King, we have established a composting program in an effort to reduce the amount of



*Linda with gardeners on her special day*

garden refuse taken to the town transfer station and instead turn it into earthy goodness that benefits the garden. Dave devised and set-up the six bins for collection of “greens,” “browns,” and for two rotating compost piles. While we have encountered a number of challenges, we have successfully created compost that is being put back into beds to improve the soil.

One of our champion persimmons in the woodland garden has a dangerous split in the trunk and must come down. We also lost two large stems of the smoke tree, but are confident that new growth will regenerate this garden favorite.

We continue to promote the garden with an updated brochure, weekly “What’s Blooming” e-blasts, and participation in the society’s booth at Celebrate Saybrook and Chamber of Commerce meetings.

Linda’s are large shoes to fill, but it’s gone smoothly due to the dedication of our garden volunteers Bonnie Penders, Susan Murphy, Jen Randak, Mary Walters, Nancy Dziama, Joanne Goduti, Jessica May, Jim Madden, Linda Kinsella, and our new volunteers Sharon Cantor and Julie Clarke. We thank Mary Woomer and Bonnie Penders for creating seasonal wreaths for the front door of the Hart House, and Bonnie for the educational tours she leads and her guidance of master gardening candidates. We also express our deep appreciation to Ed Armstrong for his support and partnership in stewarding the grounds.



*Carin Roaldset and Elizabeth Normen*

## Concert in the Garden

On August 10th, Bill and Kara Welch of Welch's Jam performance included songs from Beatles classics to Norah Jones favorites. With nearly 12 years of experience playing at shoreline venues, weddings and private events, their performances are a perfect blend of charm, professionalism and passion.

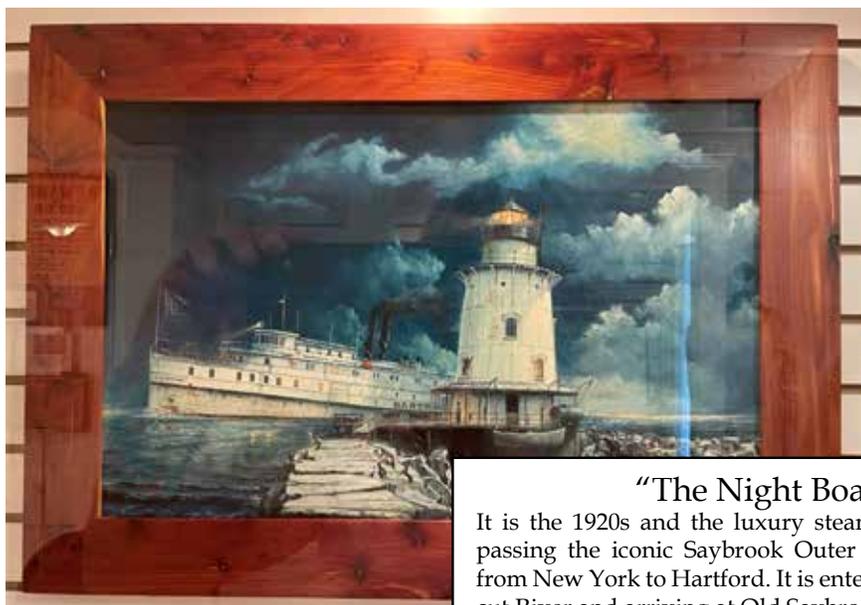


## From the Old Saybrook Pantry "Update"

Our next door neighbor, Old Saybrook Historical Society's Hart House Herb Garden donates the world's most lovely herb bouquets each week. The Hart House also provides the best commute path from the pantry to SSKP's offices at Grace Episcopal. You can literally stop and smell the roses or cop a squat on a bench when you need a breather. Sometimes you'll spy a turkey or a deer when you're there.



## The Night Boat Arrives



### "The Night Boat"

It is the 1920s and the luxury steamship Hartford is passing the iconic Saybrook Outer Light on its way from New York to Hartford. It is entering the Connecticut River and arriving at Old Saybrook at midnight, its first stop on the river. Twelve upriver stops later, the steamer arrived at Hartford at 7 am. The Hartford and her sister ship would provide Hartford to New York passenger and freight service until 1931.

The painting "The Night Boat" was donated to the Society on December 8, 2024 by Marek Sarba, renowned artist and devoted member of the Society.



# The Black Horse Tavern

175 North Cove Road

The land on which this house stands was given to Elizabeth Blague by her father in 1704 upon her marriage to Captain John Burrows, a sea captain. It was built as an Inn and became known as the Black Horse Tavern catering to a rough clientele of sailors, shipyard workers and the like. However, we know it had a lighter side for the ladies because of its ballroom that was located on the second floor.

From its site on the river, we can follow the history of Saybrook from the original Fort Saybrook, through the years of ship building and trading by sea, the coming of the railroad, to the present residential community. We also know of its use as a Custom House for new arrivals when Saybrook became a port of entry. A later owner, Henry Potter, built a dock and erected a general store at its northeast corner. In 1910, the business moved to Main Street.

Standing at a rear window of the house we can imagine that night in 1812 when under the cover of darkness, the British soldiers rowed past the tavern

continuing up the Connecticut River to Essex Harbor and burned our entire fleet in a surprise attack. Many tales have been told of the Black Horse Tavern and its famous visitors. Today, the Black Horse Tavern is a private home located on the north shore of Saybrook Point and is one of the few remaining 18th century houses in Connecticut.



**Thank you to all our supporters of the Annual Fund which is so crucial to the work of the society.**

## *Circles of Sound*

Please join us on Sunday, September 28 1-2 pm at The Kate for a celebration of the American innovation of jazz and the cultural creativity it generated throughout the nation and in Ann Petry's writings. Ann Petry grew up in Old Saybrook and was an award-winning author. She was the niece of local pharmacist Anna James.

The speaker will be Farah Jasmine Griffin, a professor of English and comparative literature and African America studies at Columbia



University. She received her BA from Harvard and her PhD from Yale.

The lecture is presented in partnership with the Old Saybrook Historical Society and the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

**Tickets: \$12 (\$10 + \$2 fee)**

Buy online at

[www.thekate.org/event/circles-of-sound/](http://www.thekate.org/event/circles-of-sound/)

or The Kate Box Office,  
300 Main St., Old Saybrook

## Crozier Collection

“Jim was a remarkable man whose brilliance was matched only by his tender heart. He truly loved people, and his kindness, generosity, and compassion touched the lives of everyone around him. Out of deep gratitude and a profound appreciation for his hometown of Old Saybrook, Jim began collecting pieces of its history to preserve them for future generations. In 2020, his collection grew significantly when he acquired additional items from the widow of a client who shared his passion for local heritage. (NOTE: This client believed to be Roy Lindgren, noted postcard collector and dealer.) The Crozier family gratefully thanks the Historical Society for agreeing to preserve Jim’s treasured collection, ensuring that his legacy and love for Old Saybrook will continue to inspire.”



### James R. Crozier, III - Obituary

Jim was born on December 13, 1956 to James R. and Patricia A. Crozier (O'Brien). He spent his entire childhood growing up in his beloved hometown of Old Saybrook. Jim earned undergraduate degrees in accounting (BS), Finance (AS) and Investments (AS) while attending Johnson and Wales University

in Providence, Rhode Island. He furthered his academic career, earning his master’s degree (MST) in 1982, from the University of New Haven. He earned his designation as an enrolled agent with the U.S. Treasury Department and embarked on a forty-year professional tax practice, where he specialized in municipal forensic auditing. Jim was a man of curiosity, who enjoyed European travel, wine collecting, genealogy, history and cooking. His

truest passion in life was the game of golf. He was a member of New Haven Country Club from 1993 until his passing. Jim was accepted as a lifetime overseas member of two Irish golf clubs: Lahinch (1999) and Tralee (2009). Along his lifetime, he collected a large group of friends from all walks of life. Jim loved all of his friends, having too many to mention - but most importantly amongst his friends, he leaves behind his best friend and sister, Cathy, as well as his best friend since childhood, Clifford Rhodes. Jim was predeceased by his beloved son, Brian, as well as his parents, James and Patricia, his brother Donald and many loving aunts, uncles and cousins. Jim is survived by his two sons, Timothy and Daniel, as well as his partner, Lynda Lounsbury.

## Student Volunteers Honored

At the June Trustee meeting, president Marie McFarlin recognized two outstanding high school seniors for their past volunteer work: “Caroline Ancona and Owen Cartright were instrumental in helping to revive our successful Student Guide program after the Covid years. They exhibited outstanding service and commitment to the program and exceeded our expectations. They guided many visitors from around the country and received compliments for their courtesy, presentation skills and knowledge of the Hart House and its collections. Caroline and Owen served as mentors to incoming students as well as provided many contributions to tasks related to our exhibits and programs. We are pleased to recognize their service during their high school years and wish them a successful future.”



Caroline Ancona



Owen Cartwright

Lamar LeMonte

## Annual 3rd Grade Garden Tour



The Goodwin Elementary School 3rd grade students visit the Hart House and Heritage Gardens every June. The students walk and skip down Pennywise Lane to the Historical Society, and their laughter and chatter can be heard as soon as they get to the South Green.

The tour group is divided into three sections of about 10 students with each group first visiting the house, and then visiting the gardens with a docent to guide them along with their teachers. During their visit to the gardens the students learn; the importance of growing fruit trees and using herbs in colonial times, which herbs and plants were used for eating, cleaning, dyeing and as medicine, the processes of turning herbs into healing medicines, who typically tended to the homestead gardens, about native and non-native herbs and plants, and their specific benefits to colonists, and the importance of pollination.

Toward the end of the tour, a student leader guides her/his classmates along the Woodland Garden pine-needle path slowly, in single file, at an arm's length apart, and in silence. The students' ears perk up as they are instructed to listen to the sweet sounds of the woodland, and as they walk along to quietly look up, look down, look left and right while taking in the serenity in our small forest. As they emerge from the Woodland Garden they are asked if they have any questions about what they heard or saw, and it's a joy to witness how much they enjoyed these moments of peace and nature which surrounded them for those few moments. Not surprisingly, when asked at the end of the garden tour what was your favorite part, the response is hands down "walking through the Woodland Garden!"

*Bonnie Penders*

## Facilities Report

The Hart House walkway path leading from our parking lot was transformed this summer. What was once a simple gravel walkway is now a much safer pathway constructed of paver-stone and reinforced concrete. This was a significant project requiring the installation of sixty-six linear feet of stone and concrete with a width of three to four feet, plus regrading of the surrounding lawn.

Thanks to an anonymous donor, our several-decades-old and weather-beaten Historical Society sign was replaced with a new sign of the same shape, size and color but with simpler wording.

The spring we had three Hawthorne trees planted to replace the two that were removed last year due to age-related distress and a boring beetle. One of the new Hawthorne trees was planted in honor of Linda Kinsella, and the other two were donated by the Old Saybrook Save-Our-Shade Committee/Chamber of Commerce partnership.

Pictured below is the new section of the Heritage Garden that was created last year with the restoration of the Hart House Gallery south wall and regrading of the surrounding soil and lawn. The resulting new garden was enhanced with organic soil selected by the volunteer gardening team, which has yielded a beautiful mix of flowers and herbs.

*Ed Armstrong*





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## Save the Dates

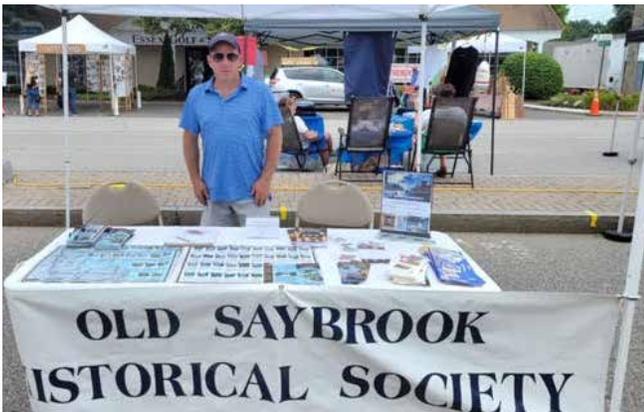
**Annual Meeting** Sunday, October 19, 3:30 to 5:00  
at the Hart House. Preservation  
Award given

**Cemetery Tour** Sunday, October 26, 4 pm at  
the Cypress Cemetery with JH Torrance Downes.  
Donations \$5

**Wassail Party** Sunday, December 14, 3 to 5 at  
the Hart House



WFSB Channel 3 news Anchor Mark Zinni interviewed Elizabeth Normen while visiting and touring the General William Hart House for a segment featuring historic places in advance of the 250th Anniversary of the birth of the Nation.



*Alan Cantor, Trustee, representing the Society at the town Main Street Festival this summer*

