

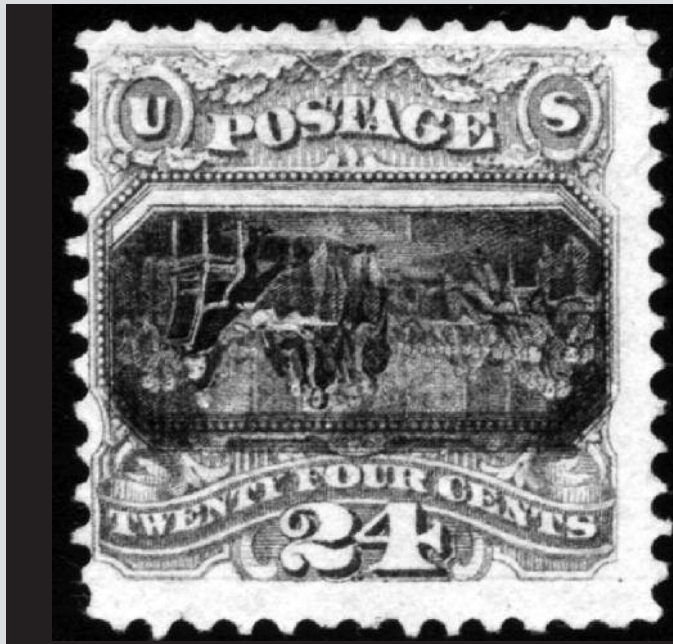
the

PORTERSVILLE PRESS

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Treasures? MRHS 2010 Appraisal Day is March 20th

- Joyce Everett



The "inverted" stamp - featuring a printing error of an image reproduced upside-down - is considered quite valuable in the philatelic world. In February 2008, Philip Weiss Auctions of New York sold a single 1869 stamp with inverted reproduction of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence (above left) for a record \$1.2 million to an anonymous buyer. Another collectors' favorite is the "Inverted Jenny" (right) - displaying a Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" biplane - which, as the first mass produced plane, trained an entire generation of pilots, including the majority of those who flew in World War I. Although often flown upside down in its next iteration as a barnstormer, the Jenny was meant to be featured on the stamp in the original wheels-toward-the-ground state.

www.coinlink.com, www.centennialofflight.gov

Don't forget to pull out of hiding all the items you have always wondered about and bring them down to the Mystic Congregational Church Parish Hall! Appraisers will be waiting to help you with all of your treasures! Among those returning to Appraisal Day are Tim Bell of Stonington, Tom Gray of North Stonington, and Adam Tamsky of Providence. New to us is Dr. Richard Fawcett, an expert on stamps. Other appraisers will be on hand as well. The cost is \$6 per item or small collection, \$15 for three.

Many thanks to all of you who have offered to help during the day checking people in and directing them to the correct spot as well as our cookie bakers.

The Mystic River Historical Society's Appraisal Day will be held on Saturday, March 20th from 10am - 4pm at the Mystic Congregational Church Parish Hall at East Main Street and Broadway in downtown Mystic.

Rummage through your attic for Great Aunt Matilda's knick-knacks and those old loveletters - just for curiosity's sake - and find out if their value is beyond the sentimental...



& facebook

Join your community and over 100 fans of MRHS on Facebook! Follow along with feeds & updates, find fun links, suggest it to your friends! Just search for the Mystic River Historical Society from your free account at www.facebook.com We'll see you there!



Thank you!

Last month we asked, "Is clearing out those boxes of papers and photographs in your attic or closets one of your New Year's Resolutions? If so, please remember the Mystic River Historical Society." Well, I'm pleased to report that several of you have done just that. We recently received donations from, Jim Burbank, Lou Allyn, Judy Hicks, and the Estate of Eileen Ames. Thank you, everyone! Spring cleaning? Please consider calling us at 860-536-4779.



from the PRESIDENT'S DESK

Jim Kimenker

Don't you just have to stop in wonder when you hear that somebody paid \$140 million for, say, a sculpture (and a reasonably ratty looking sculpture at that)? I mean, really, how can that be? How can an object, with an intrinsic value of about \$23 (maybe), be worth such a sum to anybody? Sure, I know, "beauty is in the eyes of the beholder", but are there no limits?

On the other hand, we've all come across an object, whether artistic or otherwise, which we view with a peculiar sense of awe or desire and agree that it's worth some price far in excess of its intrinsic value, like the baseball on my desk autographed by Bill "Spaceman" Lee and Jimmy Piersall (that should take some of you back, I'm sure!)—obviously, the ball itself isn't worth more than about \$5 as a ball, but with those two original signatures? well

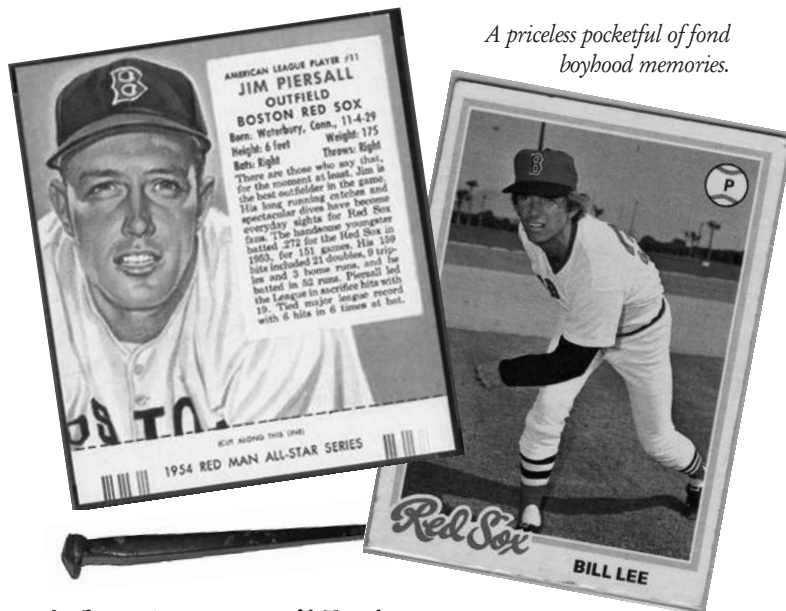
For those of us interested in things historical, objects may take on an additional mystical appeal (no pun intended). This appeal can, obviously, also affect our view of their value. But it's the mystical nature of the things that always causes me to take a step back and speculate on their provenance. Questions flood in: Who used them? When were they used? What did they mean to their long-ago owners? And, we don't have to talking about things prosaic, but merely everyday items.

I'm reminded about the rehabilitation of our old house (which I've mentioned in an earlier column). I was struck by the things which caused me to pause and consider—sometimes something as simple as a hand-made nail (one of which graces my desk at work)—simple perhaps, but it provides a real-world connection to a time over 100 years ago. Or, almost revelatory in its significance to our house, upon demolishing the existing plaster wall (there was a dusty, dirty job, if ever there was one), we found a board in the structural wall with the name of the original owner painted on it.

It seems, as best we could determine, that the board must have been the top of a stack of boards delivered for use in the rebuilding of the house after that fire in the 1870s. I had the contractor remove the board and it's now displayed in our kitchen—a direct connection to an ancestor-owner. Mystical indeed!

Ok, so, in fairness, mystical or not, I wouldn't have paid \$140 million for the board if I'd discovered it at an antique dealer instead. Actually, it's hard to say what it's worth to me. Unlike that nail, which provides an anonymous connection to a worker long ago—the board provides a connection to a real person. Just how do you put a value on that?

*A priceless pocketful of fond
boyhood memories.*



Membership Updates - Cindy Allyn, Membership Chair

We had two renewals this past month: J. MacGregor as a Contributing membership and Wilfred Thompson as an Individual membership.

We also welcome new members Norm and Sharon Boulanger as Contributing members.

And we will miss three members who have died. They are Thayer Kingsley, Robert Lord and Alma Trench.

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 - Jim Kimenker • Vice President - John Porter
Treasurer - Bill Everett • Corresponding Secretary - Kay Janney • Recording Secretary - Cathy Marco*

The Newsletter of the Mystic River Historical Society is published monthly September through May with a combined issue for November and December by the Mystic River Historical Society • Box 245 Mystic, CT 06355

Issues of the newsletter are available for online viewing at www.mystichistory.org



Mother Hubbard Needs Help

- Jane Preston

Several of the past issues of The Portersville Press have presented portions* of the fascinating story of the Mother Hubbard Parade that was held in Mystic on October 28th, 1884 to honor(?) the Presidential candidacy of Belva Lockwood. The parade was led by the Mystic Coronet Band dressed in Mother Hubbard outfits with the drum major using a broom for a baton.

We further discovered that the parade converged for ceremonies at Williams and Dudleys Square. A program for this affair was found in the archives of the Mystic River Historical Society and was reproduced in the newsletter in full*, citing many events and names that applied to the event with speculation as to how they related to Mystic's involvement with Lockwood's candidacy. But this research as left us with many unanswered questions. Where was Williams and Dudleys Square? No one seems to know even in the town offices. Who was "the Sweet Singer of Lyme" the author of the puzzling poem contained in the program. Was Marabus Oglethorpe a real person or just one created for this occasion?

Then there are innumerable persons mentioned in the poem who need to be identified as to how they relate to this parade. Jim Mitchell, John K, Julius Dudley, (does he have some relation to Dudley's Square?) and Long John to mention just a few.

It is probably a fact that there is no one living today who was present at this event. However, is it possible that family stories shared of this event could help to fill in the blanks? If you know even the smallest details that might help, please call the Historical Society Office (860-536-4779) and let us know what you can remember.

* The full poem is reprinted on page 5. Previous articles may be read in their entirety online at: www.mystichistory.org Click on Portersville Press "Back Issues" to see the January, November-December, and October newsletters which contain "Hubbard" articles. The art below was also previously run.

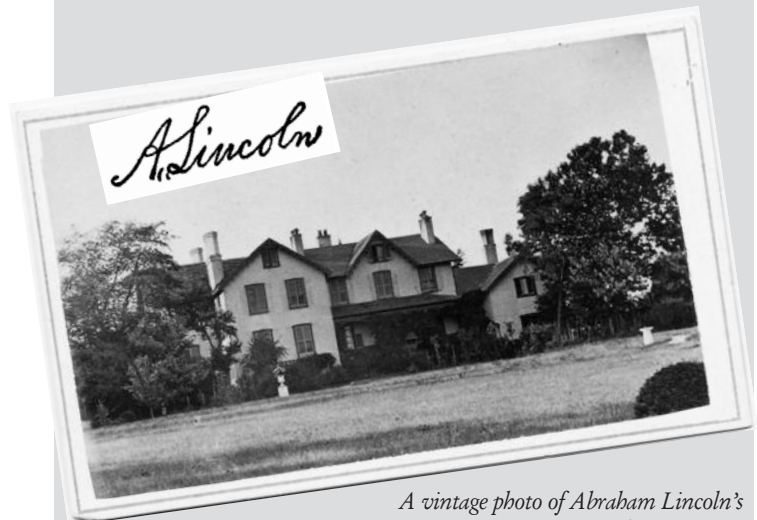
A vintage cartoon sketch of a Hubbard Parade in New Jersey featuring men in "Mother Hubbard" costume. There continues to be dis-sention as to whether the parades mocked or supported Belva Lockwood's 1884 campaign for president on the Equal Rights Party ticket.

A pioneer far ahead of her time, Lockwood was denied entry to law school on the grounds of her gender. She studied privately and earned a law degree, going on to fight for the right to be the first woman to argue in front of the Supreme court. She supported equal rights, education and pay for women, minority rights for Native Americans & immigrants and peace efforts.



Still Spare Seats on Spring Trip

- Joyce Everett



A vintage photo of Abraham Lincoln's summer cottage in Washington D.C.

The MRHS Spring Trip is 18-22 April 2010 - Sunday through Thursday. We are off on the road and excited about all the new sites we have to see. We still can accommodate a handful more so please call if you are interested - we would love to have you with us visiting the new museum at Gettysburg, the summer homes of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, James Madison's "Montpelier", a bit of Virginia Garden Tour, Marjorie Merriweather Post's "Hillwood" in Washington, finishing up at Longwood Gardens in all its spring glory. Don't let creakiness hold you back - we can help and we are all a little creaky at times!

Call Joyce Everett at 860-536-6339 or email at jeverett38@aol.com.

January Meeting Minutes

- Cathy Marco

The Board of Trustees of the Mystic River Historical Society met on Monday, January 11, 2010. Board Members and Committee Chairmen present were David Evans, Joyce Everett, Bill Everett, Tim Evers, Lois Glazier, Alan Greener, Sally Halsey, Kay Janney, Jim Kimenker, Cathy Marco, Bettye Noyes, John Porter, Jane Preston, Stephanie Thorp and Kit Werner.

President's Report (Jim Kimenker): Received information concerning STEPS (Standards and Excellence Program for Historical Organizations) workshops. It was passed around at the meeting for anyone's interest. We also received information about a Primer Workshop for Small Museums and Historical Societies (in two parts: February 1 and 8) in New Haven at the Knights of Columbus sponsored by the CT Humanities Council. Price is \$40 per person and sign up deadline is January 22nd.

The Mystic Woman's Club grant deadline is March 1st. We have received money from them in the past and it was the board's consensus to see if we needed grant monies for educational supplies as well as have all committee chairs consider their needs as well.

This year's Local History Expo is scheduled for March 20 (which conflicts with our Appraisal Day). We will ask some of our members who were previously involved with this if they would like to attend. Also, we received a solicitation letter from the Noank Historical Society for donations.

Treasurers Report (Bill Everett): A revised balance sheet (as of December 31, 2009) was distributed. Outstanding issues and concerns regarding display of numbers now have been resolved. A motion was made to accept the Treasurers report as submitted, seconded and passed unanimously.

Corresponding Secretary (Kay Janney): Two thank you notes were sent: one for benefactor membership and one for a large donation.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Buildings and Grounds (Alan Greener): The Schoolhouse will be renovated in 2010. The Contract for the necessary repairs, preparation work and painting of the Schoolhouse building has been awarded to Paul Enterprises at a total cost of \$3,725. before taxes. Paul Enterprises submitted the lowest bid of the three firms contacted, including Simonds & Co. and The Rainbow Painting Co. Alan Greener met with Paul Enterprises' foreman after receiving all three bids to review the final specifications to confirm that the Paul bid addressed all aspects of the final job specifications. Every item was confirmed by Paul Enterprises. The contract was signed by Treasurer, Bill Everett and mailed to Paul Enterprises by Alan Greener.

There was a request from the board to have the work delayed until after the school groups are no longer visiting. Alan will request they start any interior painting on or after June 15th.

Dorrie requested that a member of the Building and grounds Committee visit the Downs Building to replace several neon light bulbs. Alan Greener, alias "Mr. Distructo" performed this task by successfully changing two light bulbs, unsuccessfully attempting to replace several other bulbs and by dropping and breaking one light cover/cap. This task remains a work in progress and will be completed by Alan.

Curatorial (Jane Preston): Both Louisa and Dorrie worked limited hours during the holidays. We were closed the week before Christmas and on New Year's Eve afternoon. The committee hopes to meet in February. We have no new details about the Archival Assessment visit from the CT State Library but we expect to hear soon.

Education (No chairman, Tim Evers reporting): There will be a meeting next week to discuss plans for the spring and emailed invitations to teachers. We will work with Stephanie for the web site and with Sally on publicity.

Finance (David Evans): Things are going well with our endowment funds.

IT Committee (Stephanie Thorp): On 4 December 2009, and again on 9 January 2010, the IT Committee performed monthly system updates and file backup tasks and updated the website to reflect current events planning and schedule as well as include the latest edition of Portersville Press. All systems are deemed to be in working order.

Marketing (Sally Halsey): Sent press releases for upcoming programs. The project "Windows on Main Street" works well where there are vacant storefronts on Main Street. Fortunately, Mystic doesn't have any vacant storefronts so this won't work for us in our town (at present).

The suggestion of MRHS doing monthly articles in a local newspaper was discussed. It requires a commitment by someone and no one is volunteering to do this on a regular basis. Carol Kimball already offers a regular column in The Day. Sally also said that if we have something of interest to share, ZIP06 is The Day's electronic place to write articles, blogs and announce events and works well. More promotion of the Mystic River Historical Society is the issue. Stephanie mentioned that years ago she and Judy Hicks did articles in the newsletter which could be resurrected and used again in the newspaper. Sally offered to serve as facilitator in getting these into the newspaper but needs to know frequency and the person who will give her these. More will be worked out concerning this.

MRHS's Facebook page continues to draw fans (we have 72 fans* so far and many are not members). Sally believes this supports our mission very well and Aimee has volunteered to work on our Facebook page as well.

Membership (Cynthia Allyn): Since the last board meeting we have three renewals: Mrs. Kathryn Hill at the Contributing level, M/M Leonard Sawyer II at the Family level and Peter Briggs at the Benefactor level.

Newsletter (Jennifer Pryor): The newsletter copy deadline is always the Friday after the Monday Board meeting - January 15 for the February newsletter.

* As of mid-February, the Facebook fanbase is up to 130.

Poem Delivered at the Organization of the Belva Lockwood Guards by Marabus Oglethorpe, "The Sweet Singer of Lyme" - Monday, Oct. 27, 1884

Nominating (*Tim Evers*): Nothing

Outreach: Nothing

Program (*Bettye Noyes*): All is in place for speakers for the next few months. Paul Ingle reports all is well with our speaker for the membership meeting on January 27, 2010. Our speaker is Cmdr. John P. McGrath. Subject: "The Research Submarine NR-1 and the 'Bonhomme Richard'".

Special Events (*Joyce Everett*): Appraisal Day will be held on Saturday, March 20, at the Mystic Congregational Church Parish Hall from 10am to 4pm. Laura Kezer has agreed to be co-chairman and Tim Bell will once again be the lead appraiser. Dr. Richard Fawcett, a well-recommended stamp appraiser, has also agreed to come. We need other generalists so others are being contacted. There will be a meeting at Joyce's house on Thursday, Jan 14, at 10:15am. We'll need a lot of help for Appraisal Day so anyone interested should contact Joyce.

The announcement of the spring trip, April 18 - 22, has been mailed to all previous MRHS travelers. Please spread the word and plan to come yourselves! We are also promoting the trip in the Hartford Courant's iTowns (Sunday print tabloid) and other publications.

House Tours (*S. Halsey, J. Everett*): Nothing

Walking Tour (*David Evans*): Nothing

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Outstanding Committee Chairs: The Curatorial and Education committees are working fine without designated Chairs. It was agreed to continue without someone officially in that position.

Ashley Halsey Project (*Tim Evers*): Six watercolors have been completed and they are wonderful. There is a meeting on Wednesday to discuss who will write the text for the book and who will publish the book. The committee is happy with the progress so far.

NEW BUSINESS

Mapping Main Street - This was presented to the board for informational purposes only. This may be more of a Chamber of Commerce-type project. As stated on the web site "The goal is to document all of the more than 10,000 streets named Main in the United States." There will be no further discussion on this.

The next scheduled Board meeting is February 8. The January membership meeting is on January 27.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Marco, Recording Secretary

The country is wide and the country is fair
And there's many a candidate to run,
And someone coming from Heaven knows where,
And what is it all when all is done?
Only some office to win or lose.
Only some longing for other folks' shoes.

The Greenbacker drops his net in the stream,
And a hundred nets are the same as one.
St. John and Daniel dream their dream,
And what is it all, when all is done?
Scattering votes that are thrown to the wind,
Leaving no track or trace behind.

Republicans rave and Democrats swear,
And each in his turn has fired a gun,
And the small boys still a torch will bear,
And what is it all, when all is done?
Only the hearing of lots of trash,
Only the spending of lots of cash.

But we who are gathered here to night,
Have a newer purpose under the sun.
The stars on our banner are wondrous bright,
And there lies before us worlds of fun,
For we, to our manly instincts true,
Will see our feminine candidate through.

For her glorious cause and the nation's sake,
We'll tramp in the mud, or we'll roast in the sun,
We will carry a torch at the funeral wake,
Of all the parties except this one,
We'll bury our feuds and become one clan,
And vote our ticket straight through to a man.

The aged chemists shall pause awhile
From his arduous task so well begun,
And over his counter blandly smile,
As he thinks the very best thing to be done,
To have the fruit of his daily (toils)
And give Dr. Puck his share of the spoils.

For equal rights on this mundane sphere,
And no monopolies is our cry,
We'll give them all a chance to cheer,
And none shall have a cause to sigh,
For good friend Brady will have a care,
And Long John, too, shall have his share.

The Hooks and Steamers shall cease to fight,
Henceforth together their supper eat,
Acknowledge one lender, a Jacksonite,
And peacefully under one canopy meet,
No more throwing of ugly rocks,
When they cast one vote in the ballot box.

And all shall eat and all shall live,
And all by Uncle Sam be fed
A postmastership to "Roll" we'll give,
And Brewer the custom house shall wed,
To guard our river while others sleep,
Jim Mitchell shall a lighthouse keep.

The nation's surplus we'll dispense,
With lavish hands among our friends,
Around this town we'll build a fence,
And use the rest as serves our ends;
Free speech demands a place to spout,
We'll build a hall without a doubt.

And there a platform we will raise,
Where Uncle Tom can have full away.
And Bugbee shall be there to praise,
And Dr. Wolf to have his say;
If Stephen D. be in the crowd,
No "horseshoe" talk shall be allowed.

No political riots as in the past
Shall mar the peace of our quiet town,
Of drug-store quarrels we've heard the last,
On such our voters surely frown,
But lest a foreign foe invade,
Bucklyn a General shall be made.

And Luther's face a smile shall wear,
That in past days was never known,
Ben Morgan he shall cease to swear,
His voice shall have a sweeter tone,
And (Boo Poop) sheet we will enlarge
Don't fear, there'll be no extra charge.

When a woman's rights our strength demand,
No woman shall with cause complain;
We have it fresh from Beecher's hand,
What's once been done can be again,
And John K.'s voice is all too faint
To cheer the heart of the shady Saint.

Our breeziest Gals, whose sounding horn
Is daily echoed from the hills,
Shall pass the Bridge both night and morn,
And Uncle Sam pay all the bills;
George Burrows' growl be heard no more
By visitors at "Rand" Brown's store.

And one thing more - speak low, 'tis meet -
The ground is sacred here we tread,
Our Eben Couch is far too sweet
To live alone and not be wed;
As his reward we'll not forget
The fairest face in our Cabinet.

Another offer we make with pride;
To Colonel Packer, he is so rank,
If he'll come over to our side
We'll give him the Ferry at Groton Bank;
And Julius Dudley, bless his eyes,
Shall sail with Government Supplies.

And those we fail to mention here
May rest assured shall see fair play
This motto still our hearts will cheer,
"Duty or Pride," we must obey,
Three cheers for Belva Lockwood, wise and fair
When she takes the Presidential Chair.



Belva Lockwood

CALENDAR Notables

Appraisal Day
Sat., March 20, 10a - 4p
Mystic Congregational Parish Hall

Membership Meeting
Wed., March 24, 7:30p

Membership Meeting
Wed., April 28, 7:30p

Membership Meeting
Wed., May 26, 7:30p

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Remember to bring your attic treasures to Appraisal Day, Saturday, March 20, at the Mystic Congregational parish hall.

The law offices of
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Peter F. Stuart
Attorney At Law

Tel (860) 536-3388
Fax (860) 536-3461
Email: pfs@mysticlawyers.com

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