

MYSTIC RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
May 21, 2007

The Board of Trustees of the Mystic River Historical Society met at the Mystic Chamber of Commerce on Monday, May 21, 2007. Those present were Lou Allyn, David Evans, Tim Evers, Paul Ingle, Helen Keith, Betty O'Donnell, John Porter, Stephanie Thorp, Kit Werner, and newly elected Board members Jim Kimenker and Cathy Marco. Board members who were not present had been excused. President Allyn called the meeting to order at 7:30 and appointed Cathy Marco as acting secretary until one was chosen. Minutes of the April meeting were accepted.

Corresponding Secretary: Kit Werner reported that there were 18 pieces of correspondence during the past month. She thanked donors and volunteers for going "above and beyond."

President: Lou Allyn reported the annual meeting was very successful with 55 persons in attendance. All attendees thoroughly enjoyed the creative and tasty pot luck meals including some long-time family recipes. Guest speaker and "birthday girl" Carol Kimball also treated the members to a most entertaining and personal discussion of the history of her life.

Vice President: Helen Keith gave the report of the Nominating Committee and stated that MRHS's present officers have all agreed to continue their roles again for the coming year. In addition Cathy Marco has agreed to serve as secretary. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Report and its nominations and passed unanimously. Elected Officers are:

President – Louis Allyn
Vice President – Helen Keith
Treasurer – Bill Everett
Corresponding Secretary – Lit Werner
Recording Secretary – Cathy Marco

Allyn suggested a new day for the monthly membership meetings because of the distracting noise created by the upstairs activities occurring at the same time in the church. He commented that a show of hands at the Annual Meeting indicated that almost everyone there would not have a problem with Wednesday evenings. It was proposed and agreed that the meetings will be moved to the fourth Wednesday evening of the month rather than Friday evenings starting in the fall.

The Board also discussed the rental charge for our meetings in the Congregational Church parish hall. This year the Church is asking for a contribution of \$100 per meeting but our 2007 budget is for only \$50 per meeting. (The Union Baptist Church also has a fee of \$100 per meeting.) It was suggested that other places (i.e. Hoxie Fire Department) be investigated as well to compare rates.

At the June Board meeting, Committee Chairmen will be appointed. There currently are two openings: Education/Outreach and Hospitality. All current Chairmen will be asked to serve another term.

The Kayaker's Guide to the Mystic River is selling very well. So far 119 copies have sold for a total of \$560. Since we spent \$788 to publish these, we expect to break even very soon. We are still contacting other avenues for sales of our guide.

Allyn reported that we had been approached by William Burroughs Allen to get involved with the Fort Hill cemetery maintenance. The Board discussed this and agreed that we are not interested in being responsible or paying for maintenance.

The Town of Groton Historic District Commission brochure was sent to President Allyn and he thought it might be of interest to our members. He will email this to the members via Constant Contact and will forward it to Stephanie Thorp for possible addition to our web site.

Treasurer (Bill Everett) Allyn reported that as of May 18, 2007 the checking account balance was \$6,764.40; there were no unusual items in the P&L.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS (John Porter): Porter reported that Simonds and Co. has completed exterior painting and repair work on the Downes Building. Shutters are to be installed. Simonds also recommended that we install rain gutters and also treat the property for carpenter ants. The Committee members will pursue this. The spring tune-up of the HVAC system was conducted by Duncklee this past month and everything is in order.

CURATORIAL (Bettye Noyes): Dorrie Hanna reported that the Curatorial Committee will meet this month to discuss refinements to the MRHS acquisitions policy. Work continues on entering material into the database. We are also busy working in PVA in advance of the summer programs and on preparations for the framing workshop.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH (Helen Keith): Work has been busy on the PVA Family Activity Centers. We are still looking for period costume clothes, and storage trunks, for Grandma's Attic. Ginger Ely donated a beautiful beveled mirror with gold frame for the education program.

Beginning Monday, May 21st, Portersville Academy will start being cleaned up and cleared out. Committee members are being asked to help on Wednesday afternoons beginning on May 30th. Set up of the Family Activity Centers will begin on Monday, June 18th. The Grand Opening is planned for Sunday, July 1st from 1:00- 3:00.

Betty O'Donnell suggested at the last Board meeting that it might be interesting to ask some local school art classes to do drawings of Fort Rachel as part of an activity center.

She contacted Kelly Hall, art teacher at Cutler Middle School, who was excited about this project and will have his 6th, 7th and 8th grade art classes do tempera renditions of what they think the fort might have looked like. Prizes will be given to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each class and the winning pictures will decorate the wall in the Sandbox Activity Center.

There was a discussion of the duties of the Education/Outreach Committee Chairman. Keith reports the transition to a new Chair should go smoothly since the Committee has their activity plans in place for summer and fall. For the fall school program, we have everyone except a 1st grade class helper. There are three teams for downstairs from the 2nd week in September until the last week in October. The only outstanding work for the new chairperson will be composing letters to teachers with follow ups. Nancy McKay will be the contact/registration person who will set up the schedule for school groups this fall.

The Framing Workshop will be held at PVA at 10:00am on Saturday, June 16th. The cost is \$10 per person. There are still a few places available – register by calling the office at 536-4779.

Tim Evers reported that 15 people enjoyed the Pedicab at the Food Stroll in New London on May 16th. Starting in May, the Pedicab starts in Mystic and we may participate in the Memorial Day parade.

FINANCE (Helen Keith): Keith reported that there was no meeting of the committee this month. The next meeting will be held when warranted.

HOSPITALITY (vacant): Nothing to report.

Information/Technology (Stephanie Thorp): Nothing to report.

MEMBERSHIP (Cynthia Allyn): Lou Allyn reported. We welcome Linda and Barry Boardman as new Contributing members. Membership renewals for the membership year starting May 1st are coming in. To date we have received 232 membership renewals (\$8675), 15 gifts (\$520), and 11 newsletter patrons (\$1100).

NEWLETTER (Jennifer Pryor): Allyn reported that quite a few people have responded favorably to receiving their Newsletter electronically instead of by postal mail. The extra work involved in maintaining two distribution systems may not be worth the effort but people will be notified by email when each Newsletter is posted to our website.

PROGRAM (Paul Ingle): Paul reported that “a great time was had by all” at the Annual Meeting. Once the membership year calendar (2007-2008) is set, he will start arranging for membership meeting speaker.

SPECIAL EVENTS (Joyce Everett): Keith reported that Everett is planning a trip along the Hudson River with new sites not usually seen included in the tour. So far we have over a dozen people signed up for this October trip. Our last trip was fairly profitable for

MRHS.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Walking Tour (David Evans) Progress continued on pulling together the initial Walking Tour which will focus on Gravel Street. The document will be legal sized and printed by the Chamber of Commerce. Photos from Bill Everett have been passed to Jen Pryor for editing and several additional photos may be required. The copy is in initial draft drawing heavily from the 1970 Engagement Calendar and the 1976 Walking Tour, both prepared previously by the Junior Women's Club. Evans reports that fact checking is in process and work is needed to include examples of architectural features to be seen on the Gravel Street houses. The plan is to incorporate the "Can you find?" concept with the architectural examples. It is proposed to have this tour available on the website along with supplementary information; however, we need to determine feasibility and resources required to meet this goal. **Jim Kimenker** lives on Gravel Street and is interested in working with David on the project.

NEW BUSINESS

We will not have a Board meeting in July.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Marco, Recording Secretary

NEXT MEETING: June 18 at 7:30.