

# the PORTERSVILLE PRESS

www.mystichistory.org • vol. xxxix, issue ii • october 2012

## Sound Rising: Long Island Sound & America's Struggle for Independence



Detail from "The Spy Ring - Night Scene", one of several murals completed by Vance Locke in 1952 and gifted to the Setauket, NY School and community by Mr. & Mrs. Ward Melville.

Abraham Woodhull and Caleb Brewster, featured in this image, were part of the Culper Spy Ring which was run by Woodhull - code named Samuel Culper. Woodhull gave messages to Brewster, who carried them across the Sound by whaleboat to Connecticut. From there it was taken by Benjamin Tallmadge's dragoons to General Washington.

from [www.threevillagehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.threevillagehistoricalsociety.org)

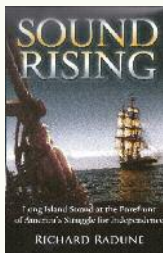
Our October presenter, Richard Radune, will discuss the Long Island Sound's connection to the Revolutionary War and highlight events from his book, "Sound Rising."

The book challenges our perception of Long Island Sound in many surprising ways. The Sound was at the forefront of American trade with the West Indies and its location placed it in a position to influence the course of history during the critical years between 1750 and 1820. Its multitude of small ports, coves and navigable rivers provided a distinct advantage by thwarting British efforts to enforce trade restrictions and collect taxes.

The volume of trade emanating from Long Island Sound is underappreciated - it was the desire of these merchants for free trade with the avoidance of customs duties that set the stage for war. The Sound played a crucial role in America's Revolutionary War victory when its naval vessels, privateers and whaleboat raiders swarmed out of these same ports to interdict British supplies and force major changes in the enemy's strategic war plans. Long Island Sound became no man's land and an emotional vortex of "Whaleboat War" involving refugees from each side of the Sound.

This groundbreaking, true story relates the Sound's involvement in the capture of Fort Louisbourg, rampant smuggling, the Revolutionary War, the Undeclared War with France and the War of 1812. Finally, it was the entrepreneurs and seamen from Long Island Sound who were most responsible for the development of New York Port and Connecticut's transition into an industrial economy.

Richard Radune, a resident of Branford, Connecticut, is an author and independent historian. After graduating from Syracuse University in 1965 with a major in U. S. History, he served as an Air Force Captain in North Dakota and Alaska. Following a 30 year business career, Mr. Radune researched & wrote the 2005 award winning book, *Pequot Plantation: The Story of an Early Colonial Settlement*. His second book, *Sound Rising*, was published in 2011. Mr. Radune's research has provided many opportunities to give presentations to a variety of organizations on both *Pequot Plantation* and the maritime history of Long Island Sound. There is strong interest in historical maritime activity and related naval military subject matter at this time due to the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812.



Radune's "Sound Rising" was designated a finalist in the 2012 Next Generation Independent Book Awards competition in both the Military and Historical Non-fiction categories. His books can be ordered through any bookstore or online distributor.



### "Your Name Here" Patronage Sought for Student History Project *by Cathy Marco*

Be a part of history in the making... literally! Since spring, members of the MRHS board have been working with local schools on an exciting new idea called the GeoHistorian Project. This unique project combines learning local history with digital film-making to "tell the story" to residents & visitors who can access the short film using smart phones with a QR reader app. (See September issue for more QR information.)

Individual donations by board members have already helped to kickstart this learning adventure concurrent with the beginning of the school year, however, we have additional expenses with which we hope you will help to make the GeoHistorian project a success! Please consider contributing today to help fund this fantastic learning approach and community preservation venture. Checks can be made out to MRHS for any amount. Please note "GeoHistorian Project" in the memo line, and mail to: MRHS, attn: GeoHistory, P.O. Box 245, Mystic, CT 06355. Patrons will receive special thanks listings in future issues of the Portersville Press!



Recently, my wife, Jen, rummaging through boxes at her mother's house, found an old monograph published in 1960 by Travelers Insurance Company entitled, "America Goes to the Polls—Highlights of the Presidential Campaigns 1789-1960". I was particularly delighted by its discovery, as I remembered studying a copy when I was growing up. Jen's discovery could not have been more timely.

Ahhh, yes, another election season is upon us, that wonderful time of the year when we celebrate the opportunity to exercise our civic duty to vote for our representatives and, every four years, the President of the United States. Of course, for many of us, enthusiasm is tempered by the quality of the campaigns themselves. And, especially in a presidential election year, the intensity of the campaigning is typically matched by complaints that the lack of civility in "this" election is the worst ever.

How quickly we forget. To paraphrase Santayana, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to believe that they are witnessing something new. In fact, when compared to prior presidential elections, one would be justified in arguing that our current partisanship is very nearly a model of decorum and good feelings.

With that old Travelers monograph in hand, I decided to check out past presidential elections regarding "civility". Why not start with the election of 1820? It was acclaimed as the "Era of Good Feelings", in which James Monroe ran unopposed (the third and last time that would occur). Amusingly, an election with no effective opposition concluded with a fistfight in Congress over the issue of whether Missouri's electoral votes should be counted, even though its votes didn't matter one way or the other. The good feelings of 1820 evaporated quickly and the 1828 election between Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams sank into a vitriolic swamp of sloganeering. Adams's campaign, managed by Henry Clay, subjected Jackson to a merciless stream of propaganda regarding



"Symptoms of a Locked Jaw"

1834 Political cartoon illustrating Henry Clay sewing Andrew Jackson's mouth shut for vetoing the National Bank Charter. By David Claypoole Johnston. From the Library of Congress

his matrimonial affairs, duels, brawling and profanity. Jackson supporters answered in kind, slandering the reputation of Adams's wife, claiming that if Adams were re-elected, the following Congress would be the last. The election gained a reputation as the first to directly appeal to the popular vote and the stories of the inaugural festivities following Jackson's victory, in which the White House was overrun by his supporters ("rabble" according to Adams and Clay), are legend.

The election of 1840 bore some resemblance to our current campaign, with charges that William Henry Harrison lived in a magnificent, princely estate. Sound familiar? And the 1844 campaign was noteworthy for an attempt to reduce incivility—the Whig party platform actually contained a plank condemning "displays and appeals insulting to the judgment and subversive of the intellect of the people." Imagine that!! It was ignored, of course.

By the election of 1860, any hope of a civil campaign was abandoned. Lincoln and the Republicans didn't bother to campaign in the south, Breckinridge and the "southern" Democrats didn't bother in the north. The result of the election was a "Civil War". So much for civility and decorum.

But, it was the 1800 election that, arguably, was the ultimate forbear of campaign slurs, insults and lies. This election, decided by the House of Representatives and viewed by many historians as significant in that it proved that a democracy could achieve a peaceful transition of power from one party to another, was nevertheless the first to sound "modern"—vitriol, spleen and intemperate speech were practiced with vigor. A hilarious spoof of how our current television campaign ads might have looked over 200 years ago, using actual comments from supporters of Jefferson and Adams, can be found on the internet at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_zTN4BXvYI&lr=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_zTN4BXvYI&lr=1) (for those reading an electronic version of this column, you can click on the link).

Thus, the lesson for this month's column is this: when you hear somebody complain that the current election is the nastiest, most negative campaign ever, one that takes "dirty" to a whole new level, remind them of Santayana and suggest they spend a little time reading about previous elections. Or, you could just laugh and then slander their favorite candidate. It's the American way!!

### 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 - Lou Allyn • Vice President - Bill Everett  
Treasurer - Barry Thorp • Corresponding Secretary - Lois Glazer • Recording Secretary - vacant

The Newsletter of the Mystic River Historical Society is published six times annually: September, October, November-December, January-February, March-April and May • Box 245 Mystic, CT 06355

Issues of the newsletter are available for online viewing at [www.mystichistory.org](http://www.mystichistory.org)





# Civil War Sesquicentennial Series - Life on the Homefront: October 1862

by Catherine Deichman

October is a month of contradictions. The *Pioneer* publishes a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier, "The Battle Autumn of 1862," extolling the constancy and comfort of nature in these trying times, and then follows this lovely, lyrical piece with a pithy article on "How Bodies are Embalmed." As W.H. Palmer and Ralph Wheeler of Stonington begin their Junior year at Yale, Chauncey Rice, formerly the editor of the newspaper and now a private in Company C of the 21st writes, from Maryland that with the sound of heavy shelling in the distance, the men have been issued twenty extra rounds of cartridges and are ready to march at a moment's notice.

The departure of hundreds more Mystic "boys" in the new 21st and 26th regiments sparks a new flurry of community sewing, baking, and packing. Faced with massive logjams of unclaimed, unforwardable parcels at railroad depots and regimental HQs, the U.S. Sanitary Commission issues strict guidelines on what may be sent to soldiers in the field. In an attempt to divert the "mistaken kindness" of the pub-



*Mystic's Chauncey Rice's environment in Maryland may have resembled his contemporaries' such as these scouts and guides for the Army of the Potomac, Berlin, Md., October 1862. Photographed by Alexander Gardner from [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)*

lic into more manageable and useful forms, the Sanitary Commission suggests monetary donations rather than further shipments of "unwanted, unneeded supplies" that weigh down the soldiers and overwhelm the regimental hospitals. While necessary from an administrative standpoint, edicts like this strain the close ties between the soldiers in the field and their communities at a time when the losses of war are beginning to be felt at home.

On October 21st, the body of Oscar W. Hewitt of the 8th Regiment, killed at Sharpsburg, is laid to rest in Elm Grove Cemetery, with "a large number of citizens and the Mystic Cornet Band" in attendance. Flags throughout town are lowered to half mast for the day, and stores are closed during the funeral. The funeral sermon is delivered in the newly dedicated Union Baptist Church. The same week, the death of one year old Nellie Fish attracts far less fanfare. Nellie's father, Major William Fish, is on duty with the 1st Connecticut Cavalry in Washington, leaving her mother, Hortense, to grieve alone.

## Honoring American Archives in October

October is American (and Connecticut) Archives Month. It is also Fire Prevention Month. The Connecticut State Library is combining these two observances to focus on how organizations and individuals can take steps to protect their valuable resources. They suggest developing a disaster plan (which MRHS has done) and also encourage us to consult our local fire department to get tips and information.

To quote from the CSL newsletter ~

*The purpose of the celebration is to remind the public through posters, special workshops and media initiatives that archives are necessary for government to continue its operation in case of disasters, that archives enable families to strengthen their bonds to each other, and that archives are one of many cultural institutions in our democracy that help citizens and officials to find out where we were, where we are, and where we might be going.*

There is, of course, much discussion of the impact of digital technology on our methods for archiving materials.

But no matter how the digital revolution proceeds, it's hard to imagine that all paper material will ever be digitized. And technology changes so fast that what was once the paradigm for excellence in preservation is now obsolete.

At MRHS we are doing our best to keep our materials well cared for and safe from disaster. You should consider how to keep your personal archives safe as well. One option is to share what you have with others. What are the chances that your computer and another's computer will crash and die simultaneously? Besides—to share is to learn. I have connected with more than one family member via the internet over the years, and have learned a lot from them. But better yet—we each have shared and saved information to our own computers. Pictures, family trees, and documents—it's all good. And we all benefit from sharing—we learn more and we preserve more. Think about it.

**Editor's Note:** *Catherine Deichman's Civil War Series (above) and the Haley Farm Souvenir piece on p. 3 are both examples of treasures from MRHS archives that have benefited from preservation to be again shared with modern-era Mystic.*

## You're Invited Saturday October 13: Cash Mob Downtown Mystic Shopping Day

Now that the summer crowds & construction has passed, bring your friends and pledge to spend at least \$20 in downtown shopping spree! Participants can pre-register online at the Patch, and/or just show up at Wide World of Bagels between 9:30 and 10:30am for your Cash Mob-ster button. Shop away from 10:30-11:30 and stay for lunch at participating merchants and restaurants! *Hope to see you there ~ from Stonington-Mystic Patch, Groton Patch & Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce*

# MRHS Membership 2012-13

## ~ Individual ~

Mrs. Charles Alfano  
Mrs. Norma Aronson  
Miss Ruth M. Atcheson  
Mrs. Eleanor P. Ball  
Ms. Charlotte Barnum  
Mrs. Charles R. Baxter  
Mr. Frank R. Bean  
Mr. Charles S. Beebe  
Mr. Richard Bennett  
Ms. Jennifer M. Billeci  
Mr. Bernard D. Boylan  
Mrs. Harriet B. Brown  
Mr. Philip L. Budlong  
Ms. Judith Cady  
Ms. Laurie Nelson Capener  
Mrs. Mary Carey  
Ms. Joanna Case  
Ms. Carrie Charles  
Mr. Thomas L. Cheney  
Mrs. Joan Cohn  
Mrs. Anna N. Coit  
Ann Connolly  
Mr. Edward Coogan  
Mrs. Rosemary Dayton  
Kate Dimancescu  
Mrs. C. Philip Donnel  
Ms. Hermine Dudda  
Ms. Patricia DuMond  
Mr. Timothy B. Evers  
Mr. Rudy Favretti  
Mr. & Mrs. George A. Fearn Mrs.  
Mina Ferguson  
Stephen Finnigan  
Ms. Alice Foley  
Mr. & Mrs. Gabriel Ford  
Ms. Gloria Fowler  
Ms. Barbara Lee Franciosi  
Susanne Furay  
Dorothy Galligan  
Mrs. Eleanor Gannon  
Mr. Charles A. Glaza  
Ms. Rose Corbett Gordon  
Ms. Elizabeth Gordon  
Colburn Graves  
Mr. Lawrence H. Hall  
Mrs. Ann Van Es Hallum  
Mrs. James Hicks  
Ms. Kathryn Hill  
Mrs. Marion Hobaica  
Ms. Lucy T. Howell  
Mr. Virgil W. Huntley  
Ms. Joy Jastremski  
Ms. Janet Kellock  
Mr. Stephen King  
Mr. Arthur Kirkpatrick  
Ms. Chandler Kissell  
Ms. Herma C. Kluck  
Mrs. Samuel S. Lamb  
Natalie Leventhal  
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Lockyer  
Ms. Jane B. Lohr  
Mrs. Leda M. Lord  
Mrs. Frank C. Lynch  
Sally McBee  
Mrs. Melissa Messina  
Ms. Patricia Miller  
Denise Mitchell-Dignan  
Judith Nickerson  
Mrs. Virginia F. Niebling  
Ms. Barbara Nielsen  
Mrs. William Noyes  
Ms. Mary Oberhelman  
Mrs. Louis B. Palmer  
Mr. David A. Patience  
Mrs. Jean B. Pearson  
Diana Phaneuf  
Ms. Susan Phillips  
Ms. Geraldine Phillips  
Mr. Anthony Pippo  
Mr. Oliver H. Porter  
Mr. Laszlo Pozsonyi  
Jane Preston

Ms. Juliana Ratliff  
Mrs. Eleanor B. Read  
Ms. Mildred L. Reed  
Ms. Jean E. Rowley  
Mr. Mark Russell  
Lisa Saunders  
Ms. Sharon E. Schnare  
Jane Schoonover  
Ms. Julia S. Stone  
Ms. Amy Swan  
Ms. Gail Swanson  
Ms. Dorothy Szeszowicki  
Mrs. Paula Thompson  
Mr. William Topkin  
Mrs. Richard Trimble  
Anna Troiano  
Karen Walker  
Mr. Steve White  
Mr. Gordon Woodbury  
Susan Wyatt  
Ms. Catherine Casey Zahn  
Ms. Patricia Zalesny  
Debi Ziegler  
Marlene Terry Ziegler

## ~ Family ~

Liz Allyn & Julie Whitney  
Dr. & Mrs. James B. Anderson  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter M. Barres  
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Barry  
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Barton  
Mrs. Deborah Bates  
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Billing  
Dr. & Mrs. Norman Boas  
Carole & Wayne Brown  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Brown  
Alan & MJ Brush  
Mr. & Mrs. Josh Burrows  
Mr. & Mrs. Craig Bush  
Laurel Butler  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Butler  
Capt. & Mrs. Wilbur O. Cooke  
Wayne Dailey & Leslie Sandin  
Connie Desillier  
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Dobbin  
Mr. Marsh A. Enquist  
Harry & Susie Ferguson  
Capt. & Mrs. Donald R. Ferrier  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Fitton  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Fulchiero  
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Gehring  
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Greener  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Ingle  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Jalbert  
Mrs. Eleanor Jamieson  
Nancy and Gary Johnson  
Mr. & Mrs. David Kay  
Robert L. & Catherine M. Kaylor  
Jack & Beth Komorowski  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Krusewski  
Helen Lafaiave  
Mrs. Horace B. Lamb  
Mrs. Spencer Leech  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Leeny  
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Leonard  
Hon. & Mrs. Robert Leuba  
Mr. & Mrs. William Martley  
Mr. & Mrs. John Mauritz  
Kan Mayorga  
Janice & John McDermott  
Mrs. Lois McDonald  
Drs. John & Marcia McGowan  
Nel and Mike Messick  
Michael Meyer & Philip Kuepper  
Mr. & Mrs. George Moseley  
Mystic Garden Club  
Mrs. James Nault  
Robert & Joan Ness  
Fredrick & Barbara Odgers  
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund F. Oliver  
Mr. Ted Parker  
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Peyton  
John & Mary Katherine Porter

Mr. Edward Purcell  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Purinton  
Mr. & Mrs. Brae Rafferty  
Bill & Lisa Reed  
Mr. & Mrs. O. Pomeroy Robinson  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter G. Roper  
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard M. Sawyer  
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Scheer  
Mr. & Mrs. David Scott  
Evan Seehaus  
Mr. & Mrs. Newell Sly  
Mr. & Mrs. Carl M. Sommer  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Springsteel Family  
Dr. & Mrs. L. Edwin Sproul  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Streeter  
Ms. Sharon Scott Stryker  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold C. Tarbox  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Van Winkle  
Mr. & Mrs. Claiborne C. van Zandt  
Dennis & Barbara Walsh  
Mrs. Margaret Wardle  
Walter and Louisa Watrous  
Mr. & Mrs. John K. Watson  
Jay Weitlauf  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Welt  
Charles and Eleanor Wenderoth  
Mrs. Simon Wohlman  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wolfe  
Judith A. Wood

## ~ Contributing ~

Aimee Allaire  
Mr. & Mrs. George Allen  
James Allyn Family  
Laura Beach  
Dr. & Mrs. Alan Bentz  
Ms. Sheila Bodine  
Daniel & Jane Brannegan  
Mr. Randall Brooks  
Ms. Marilyn Comrie  
Mrs. Webster Copp  
Ms. Theresa Courchaine  
Mr. Trad Dart  
Mr. & Mrs. James English  
Mr. H. Bruce Fielding, CPA  
Robert & Marjorie Floyd  
Mr. & Mrs. Craig Haines  
Mr. James Holley  
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert A. Holmstedt  
Mrs. Robert Irons  
Ms. Kay Print Janney  
Ms. Katrina M. Korpi  
Mr. & Mrs. John Lee  
Ms. Dorothy Leib  
Mrs. William A. Lund  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Marco  
Charles & Margaret Maxson  
Mrs. Douglas McKay  
Ms. Barbara B. Nelson  
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin North  
Cindy Palmer & Bill Kavanaugh Palmer  
Mr. & Mrs. Roland Pampel  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Panciera  
Dr. & Mrs. David Percival  
Mr. David M. Rathbun  
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Reid  
Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence A. Reiter  
Dr. & Mrs. David Rose  
Anne Schmidt & Roger Kuhns  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Simoncini  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Sinnett  
Ms. Ellen Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Smith  
Elizabeth & Peter Sorensen  
Mr. Carl A. Strand  
Mr. & Mrs. L. Wilbur Taylor  
Mr. William Thorp  
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Walker  
Cmdr. & Mrs. Thomas W. Watkins  
Mr. & Mrs. Norton C. Wheeler  
Arline & Buzz Whitaker  
Mr. & Mrs. William Blunt White  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Whitford  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward S. Williams  
Ms. Delight Wolfe

## ~ Benefactor ~

Dr. & Mrs. Sultan Ahamed  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard G. Arms  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Briggs  
John & Joan Butler  
Ms. Judi Caracausa  
Jak & David Cruthers  
Mr. & Mrs. Franklin G. Davis  
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Deichmann  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank M. Durrschmidt  
Frank's Service Station  
Mr. & Mrs. William Glazier  
Ms. Audrey Golub  
Mrs. Ingela Gram  
Ms. Sally D. Halsey  
Mrs. Anthony P. Halsey  
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Hanna  
Lydia Herd & Michael DeAngelis  
Mrs. Mildred G. Hodgson  
Mrs. James W. Lathrop  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Law  
Mrs. Elaine Lee  
Ms. Barbara A. Pearson  
Mrs. Richard A. Perkins  
Mrs. Richard Perkins  
Drs. Kent & Verna Richards  
Mr. & Mrs. Tod Schaefer  
Dana and Richard Semeraro  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold P. Smith  
Mr. J. Niel Spillane  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Stuart  
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Washburn  
Mr. & Mrs. William Webster  
Mrs. Royal C. Werner

## ~ Sustaining ~

Ms. Donna Ryan  
Mrs. Theodore T. Tylaska  
Elizabeth & Harry White

## ~ Life ~

Mr. & Mrs. Louis P. Allyn  
Kate April  
Mr. Charles Beaumont  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony C. Dinoto  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Etinger  
David & Jean Evans  
Mr. William Everett  
Mr. & Mrs. John Fiore  
Mrs. William H. Forster  
Dan Fuller  
Mrs. Ralph W. Halsey  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Hamm  
Mrs. Muriel Hinkle  
Mrs. Joseph T. Imdahl  
Mr. Stephen P. Jones  
Mr. & Mrs. James Kimenker  
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Langlois  
Mr. & Mrs. William E Lewis  
Mrs. Clifford Mallory  
Tom & Nancy McLoughlin  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O' Beirne  
Mr. & Mrs. Brendan O'Donnell  
Mrs. Marion Palm  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Patton  
Mr. William Peterson  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Pryor  
Mr. Leonard C. Reid  
Dr. & Mrs. Trent J. Repko  
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sinnett  
Mr. Morgan St. John  
Mr. & Mrs. C. William Stamm  
Mr. & Mrs. Barry L. Thorp  
Mr. & Mrs. Brian A. Thorp  
Mrs. Barbara Walker  
Mr. Ted A. Wydler

## ~ Life (Honorary) ~

Mr. & Mrs. Jon Kodama  
Mr. Stuart Lamson  
Bailey & Jennifer Pryor Family





# From the Archives: "Haley Farm Souvenir"-Part I from Lou Allyn

Over the years MRHS has published and acquired quite a few very interesting books & pamphlets. It seems a shame that most of them are secure in the Downes Building but are all but forgotten and, for all intents & purposes, unavailable to our members and audience. To rectify this unhappy situation we will be printing some of these publications in the Portersville Press and posting them on our website - in keeping with our philosophy of making our collections available in digital form to the world via the internet.

My first choice is a little pamphlet tied with a red ribbon with the cover "Haley Farm Souvenir". There is no date or other information other than the title page *The Haley Farm, Noank, Conn. Near New London, Caleb Haley, Proprietor.*":

Three years ago a friend of mine, doing business in Fulton Market, N. Y., extended to me an invitation to visit his summer home near Noank, New London Co., Conn. Time dragged on, the visit still in prospective, until the present Fall; when a letter arrived announcing the fact of his being at Noank for a few weeks recuperation, and a suggestion that the time was ripe for the fulfillment of my visit. It did seem that now, if ever, the time had arrived; consequently one Friday afternoon about the last of October found me on board a West Shore train en route for my destination, reaching there about 7 A. M. By some means Mr. H—, who had driven his niece to the Depot to take train East for Boston, missed me, and I walked to the Farm about a mile distant, approaching which I met my friend driving to the village to see if he could find me.

Mrs. H—, having been indisposed the preceding day, was sitting down to a late breakfast, for which I was just in time, after due introductions, to join her. If there is any one thing in which my friend delights more than another, it is the work of improvement which he is carrying forward at Haley Farm, Long Point; so breakfast dispatched we, of course, drove at once to the locality of the improvement now going forward.

It may be mentioned here, that the land in this vicinity and for miles in all directions is covered with boulders - boulders large and boulders small, sometimes ledges, but boulders in all shapes, boulders in all positions, boulders on boulders—everywhere. The first settlers simply removed or cleared the smaller rocks, such as a horse could easily drag out of the way, leaving hundreds of heavier ones half embedded in the soil in all directions. Thus thousands upon thousands of acres of splendid soil have been fit for naught but cattle runs of natural pasturage. To clear such land of everything to obstruct the free running of a plow, is a herculean task and it is this wrestling with the stern face of nature, that I found to be the delight of my host. A forenoon spent in watching and assisting in the operations, found me deeply interested. A device called a "Stone-puller" was quite fetching, and was the



## Wall Builder and Stump Puller

*Mr. Packer of Mystic Conn in working among the rocks of New London County found the necessity for a machine to lift heavy rocks transport them and deposit them in walls or wherever needed, so he invented one a pair of shears on strong wheels held apart by two powerful curved reaches giving room for a stone to be swung high between them. For a wall layer, when large stones, say from 1 to 10 tons, are to be moved, it is doubtless an excellent thing and has done first rate work In New London County. As a stump puller, it must demonstrate its own excellence. From American Agriculturist, Volume 25*

Much of the Wall Builder/Stump Puller work accomplished perhaps a century ago at Haley Farm, as cited below, is still visible today at the Haley Farm State Park.

invention of a near-by resident whom I was disappointed to learn had never realized much out of it, for without it, such operations as are here going forward, would be prohibited by the question of cost. Mr. H— has 428 acres of just such land as described; skirting the shores of L. I. Sound with deep coves running up on either side of his property; forming between them, Long Point, which is all included in the Haley Farm, with the exception of a tract on the extreme point, which is owned by parties who started to boom it for Summer cottage purposes, but came to a dead-lock with the town authorities regarding approaches, and who should bear their cost.

A description of the boulder-wall building may be interesting. A lot having been chosen for clearance, and direction of proposed walls staked out, all rocks within its area, are first drilled to admit the hooks of the hoisting apparatus.

This work is done in Winter by Messrs. Latham and Slater, two neighbors employed by Mr. H—, who also run the stone-puller. The cost of drilling last Winter was \$72. In the Spring, frost being out and ground settled, the stone-puller (drawn by an immense pair of oxen raised on the place) and looking like the semi-circular truss of a bridge over a country creek—on wheels, proceeds to lift every stone out of its bed by means of time hoisting tackle, which hangs from the centre of the truss just mentioned, behind, being a winch, to which the rope is led for hoisting. Every stone is dropped alongside the hole it came out of, awaiting its turn to be selected when the work of building the wall commences in earnest. Sometimes a rock proves to be larger underground than it appeared on the surface and proves too heavy for removal. In this case, blasting is resorted to; powder being used in preference to dynamite, as not being liable to splinter, but merely to crack the stone under treatment. These preparatory arrangements being complete, the line of the proposed wall is trenched 3 feet deep and 4 feet wide, the soil so excavated being utilized to fill in the great gaping holes in the ground from which the boulders have been hoisted.

The trench is then filled in with smaller rocks and broken pieces, and large ones, for that matter, so, however, that they do not come above the level of the ground; thus forming a good foundation and drain at the same time. Fine stone is laid over all, causing the site of the proposed wall to appear like a newly macadamized road, and easy for the oxen to walk over, which they have to do with every stone laid. The stone-puller is now again brought into use and the foreman of the work selects the first rock, which is hoisted just clear of the ground and hauled to the commencement of the wall, where it is deposited on the prepared foundation. This is called a "bottom," and the "bottoms" are usually from 1 to 3 tons each. When a second bottom has been laid, the stone-puller fetches lighter stones, from 1/2 ton to 2 tons each, for the top of wall. The machine is laid at right-angles to the wall, the stone hoisted as high as the pulley admits, the oxen swerved in a couple of steps, and the stone swings into its position and is lowered to its bearings more handily, and with less fuss and talk, than I have ever seen anything of the same weight moved and placed before. I found that my host was quite at home in directing a gang of men and a past grand in the art of boulder-wall construction. The "bottoms" are always a couple in advance of the top part and no more, all through otherwise the work of getting on the heavy top stones would be up-hill indeed. Hands follow the stone-puller to chock the wall before the great stones settle, that is, to fill tip all crevices, great or small, with suitable stones. Quite considerable judgment and forethought are requisite in the selection and placing of the rocks, both in building and chocking, to make a neat piece of work.

Some idea of the immense amount of work involved may be had from the fact that the present owner has been in possession for 30 years, and has annually done more or less of this wall structure and certainly has enough in prospective to last an equal period. But he has many fine loamy fertile fields, which he has wrung from the grasp of forbidding nature in this manner.

.....

# September Meeting Minutes

*Aimée Allaire, Recording Secretary Pro Tempore*

The Board of Trustees of the Mystic River Historical Society met on Monday, September 17, 2012. Board Members and Committee Chairmen/members present were Lou Allyn, Jennifer Pryor, Betty O'Donnell, Jim Kimenker, Cathy Marco, Aimée Allaire, Bill Everett, Cindy Allyn, Lois Glazier, Stephanie Thorp, Cathy Mauritz, Richard Semeraro, David Scott, Barry Thorp.

**President's Report** (*Lou Allyn*): Introduction of new Trustee David Scott and congratulations to Bill Everett and Jim Kimenker for being chosen as members of the Groton Historic District Commission. Richard Semeraro has been elected to the Groton RTM and will not be able to spend as much time on MRHS as he had hoped. Request Board's approval to market the Colors of Mystic book on eBay, with a discount less than the amount we give to our long time local supporter Bank Square Books. An inquiry was made by Bill Everett about the possible acquisition of the additional diaries of Helen May Clark. Dorrie Hanna will be consulted on the matter.

**Treasurer's Report** (*Barry Thorp*): Monies were transferred from the Vanguard account to the checking account in August; the current checking balance is healthy. The P&L shows a YTD net gain, and there are gains in donations and dues and income from the spring trip to Rhode Island; all expenses are under budget. The process has begun to use the online banking feature at Chelsea Groton Bank.

**Finance** (*David Evans*): The Committee will be meeting in October to draft the 2013 Budget. Each Chairperson or Activity Leader is asked to review YTD expenditures, take into account plans for 2013, and submit request via email by October 7. This will enable us to have a draft for the October Board Meeting.

**Corresponding Secretary** (*Lois Glazier*): Sent one piece of correspondence in July and none in August.

## STANDING COMMITTEES

**Buildings & Grounds** (*Alan Greener*): It was decided that Fall Clean-Up will be scheduled for Saturday, November 3rd, 2012, from 9am through 12 noon. Please bring your own tools but coffee, breakfast goodies and paper lawn bags will be provided.

**Curatorial** (*submitted by Dorrie Hanna*): The medical books have been transferred to the Yale Medical Library. Lou and Cindy Allyn will tour the Library soon to see them in their new home. The Mystic Streetscape Committee has

included a sign and map of Mystic in the new parklet by Mystic Pizza. The Old Mystic Fire Department has been researching, with our help, their history for a new Commemorative Booklet in honor of their anniversary. The Groton Area History Fair at Groton Public Library will be held on September 29th and Dorrie will be attending representing MRHS. Judy Hicks and Joanna Case have been helping to update Mystic's entries on a web-based cemetery database: findagrave.com. The revision to the Museum Property Act was discussed. It states that loans to historical societies & museums can be kept permanently if, after five years, reasonable efforts to contact & return the items have been ignored by the donors.

**Education/Outreach** (*Cathy Mauritz*): Thank you to the Mystic Woman's Club for their generous donation to MRHS. Discussion on how to use the \$250 earmarked for the committee to use for children's programs and student transport to and from Portersville Academy. Cathy will send her request to the Finance Committee.

**IT Committee** (*Stephanie Thorp*): The System Administrator performed routine backups of all data files and Past Perfect files on 1 September 2012. All equipment appears to be in good condition and functioning as designed. Security software was updated and virus scans of the files made for each of the three computers. Updates for all Microsoft software were made and installed successfully. Past Perfect was also updated to the latest version, 8B. Backup was made of the Past Perfect software database and stored off-site. The Main data file folders for both MRHS1&2 were made for storage off-site. Proper operation of the printers was verified from all computers. At the conclusion, all the computers were functioning properly, security software updated and checked, and backups of the data files made and stored off-site.

**Marketing** (*Sally Halsey*): A Social Media Workshop at the Library of New London was attended by Lou Allyn, Cindy Allyn and Sally Halsey. For planning over the next two years, we need to do some research into how our members and other stakeholders use social media and what they think of us. As a start, Lou is looking into using an online survey using Google Docs.

**Newsletter** (*Lou Allyn for Jennifer Pryor*): The October copy deadline is Friday, September 21, 2012. The membership list will be included in this newsletter. Based on the survey last spring, we decided to put the minutes back in the newsletter. In that same survey, over half of the members requested just an e-version of the newsletter. As a result, our printing runs have been cut in half, from 500 down to 250, at a savings of over \$900 a year!

**Nominating** No report.



**Program & Membership** (*Aimée Allaire*): The Program Committee met September 13th and is gearing up for what is sure to be a great 2012/2013 program season. All speakers are set through May 2013. There will be no September member meeting this year due to poor attendance in recent years. Instead, we will hold a special meeting on June 12, 2013 to collaborate with Mystic Seaport for the launch and sailing of the Morgan. Steve White, Matthew Stackpole, and Quentin Snediker will speak. The committee is looking into ways of both streamlining and lowering costs for hospitality's needs.

Membership has sent out a second round of reminders and overall has been pleased with the number of renewals and with the number of new members this year. We think that the quality of the speakers and topics combined with excellent marketing have been very effective in both increasing audience size and in garnering new members.

**Special Events** (*Sally Halsey*): We canceled the Fall bus trip due to lack of enough people. We had 14 paid, and one or two others who might have gone, but I had priced it that we needed a minimum of 20. Those who signed up were disappointed. If anyone has any suggestions as to how to get more people, let me know. I'm willing to try again, but don't want to cancel again....!

No report on the Historic Plaque project.

**GeoHistory Project:** (*Cathy Marco*): During the summer, preparation meetings took place between MRHS Geohistorian committee members, Mystic Middle School reps and the Home Scholar Group for implementation of the Geohistorian program starting in September. Fourteen locations were identified for getting QR codes (8 on the Groton side all planned to have plaques; 6 on the Stonington side, half to have plaques and half without). Of these locations, four were assigned to the eight active Home Scholars and ten were assigned to the May/June classes at Mystic Middle School.

A lot of historical research and work was done by Judy, Dorrie, Sally and Cathy on each of these locations and put into files/folders to give to the students as part of their project. Plans are in the works for visits by the students to their assigned location and to see the MRHS Archives Building and meet historian Dorrie Hanna and others during September and October. Possible interviews with local knowledgeable people may occur as well.

Much work needs to be done; however, the schools are enthusiastic and seem very dedicated to making this work. We have set a deadline of March or April to get this project with the QR codes for the locations completed. We all feel this will be a wonderful accomplishment by the students, the schools, and MRHS.

There has been a request from the Mystic Middle School for additional funds to pay for bus transportation. The cost for one trip for the Mystic Middle Schoolers to

come downtown to see their assigned location, visit the MRHS Archives Building, meet a historian and to visit the Mystic and Noank Library's area for town historical material has already been arranged. However, the initiative to have the high school media program work with the middle schoolers to do this project is meeting with a problem because of transportation. As a result, there has been a donation of \$200 from an anonymous source to pay for the high school media class to meet four times with the Middle School during the next few months. The additional \$200 needed has been met by three Trustees excited by the project, the students' commitment and the energy of the chairperson.

The GeoHistorian Committee also is considering hanging a banner across West Main Street during early June to introduce and promote the QR Codes on the downtown buildings and MRHS (having a QR code on the banner for MRHS). The cost of this will be \$150 to hang the banner plus the cost of the banner.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**Fundraising:** We are not planning a separate fund drive this year but will put a request for additional \$40 donations in honor of MRHS's 40th Anniversary in 2013 in the membership renewal letters.

No New Business.

*The next meeting will be held at 7p.m. on October 15, 2012.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Aimée Allaire, Trustee*

## Roll Up Your Sleeves for Fall Cleanup!

**Saturday  
Nov. 3rd  
9AM-NOON**

Fall Clean-Up will be Saturday, November 3rd, 2012, from 9am through 12 noon. Please bring your own tools and we will provide the coffee, breakfast goodies & paper lawn bags.

*See you there!*



## Newsletter Patrons

CYNTHIA AND LOUIS ALLYN  
 LAURA BEACH  
 JANE AND DAN BRANNAGAN  
 JAK AND DAVID CRUTHERS  
 DENSMORE OIL  
 DAVID AND JEAN EVANS  
 MR WILLIAM EVERETT  
 SALLY HALSEY  
 MR AND MRS DOUG HANNA  
 MRS WILLIAM HERMANN JR  
 JUDY HICKS  
 MRS DAVID HINKLE  
 MR AND MRS ROBERT KRUSEWSKI  
 MR AND MRS FRANK MARCO  
 NANCY AND TOM M'CLOUGHLIN  
 MRS MARJORIE MOORE  
 MR AND MRS ROGER PANCIERA  
 CAPT AND MRS JOHN PORTER

## Calendar of Events

31 DAYS    **OCTOBER**    31 DAYS

- Membership Meeting -  
 Wed., Oct. 24th, 2012, 7:30p  
 Mystic Congregational Church Hall at Broadway and E. Main St., Mystic  
*Richard Radune: Sound Rising and the War of 1812*

- Membership Meeting -  
 Wed., Nov. 28th, 2012, 7:30p  
 Mystic Congregational Church Hall at Broadway and E. Main St., Mystic  
*Norman Brouwer: Nautical Folk Art*

*Renew or become a Member of MRHS and receive email updates about all our meetings & events. Contact us at: [info@mystichistory.org](mailto:info@mystichistory.org) or 860-536-4779.*

30 DAYS    **SEPTEMBER**    30 DAYS

## The Membership Issue!



Please see inside on page four for the complete list of Mystic River Historical Society Members. Renewed and new members are welcome year round. If you're already a member, invite a friend! Feel free to contact us at [info@mystichistory.org](mailto:info@mystichistory.org) or (860) 536-4779 for more information.

~ Thank you for your support! ~

Non-profit Organization  
 Presorted Standard  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 Permit No. 17  
 Mystic, CT  
 06355

**PORTERSVILLE PRESS**  
 the  
 Vol. xxxix, issue ii • october 2012



PUBLISHED SIX TIMES  
 ANNUALLY - FREE

74 HIGH STREET  
 P. O. BOX 245  
 MYSTIC, CT 06355

Tuesdays 9 A.M. - 12 NOON  
 Wednesdays 1 P.M. - 4 P.M.  
 Thursdays 1 P.M. - 4 P.M.  
 (860) 536 - 4779