

River & Sound

Old Lyme Historical Society
"The history of Old Lyme – the people of Old Lyme"

Issue 19 🍀 Summer 2015

OLHSI Tenth Anniversary 2005–2015

This year, the Old Lyme Historical Society celebrates ten years since its founding. A small but dedicated group of Old Lyme citizens formed this fledgling group in February 2005. The first Historical Society newsletter listed the board members as: David Bikerman, Wendy Brainerd, Toodie Foote, Tim Griswold, Jennifer Hillhouse, Patsy McCook, Alison Mitchell, Thomas Schellens, Jessie Smith, John Stratton and Judy Tooker.

The Society's first public appearance was at the Memorial Day Parade in May 2005, when members staffed a festive float wearing period garb and handed out brochures about the newly formed Society. This was to

be the first of many such appearances, often in the Society's signature horse-drawn wagon featuring members sporting wonderful hats and parasols to the delight of spectators along the parade route.

In August, 2005, the Society hosted a show of historic postcards at what was then the Grange Hall at 55 Lyme Street, and later brought a more curated version of the postcard exhibit to the Sill House Gallery at the Lyme Art Academy. Other events followed, including the spectacular launch of the Society's first self-published book—a commemoration of the 1938 hurricane, complete with wind tunnel effects and Hurricane cocktails. Over the years, the Society has published a total of five books, and hosted receptions for each: *Poverty Island*, *This Ancient and Interesting Town*, *The*

Hurricane of 1938: Old Lyme Remembers, The Landsavers; Rumrunners, Governors, Beachcombers and Socialists; and *The Charm of the Place*. Other publications include the popular *Now & Then* calendar and a poster of the *Noteworthy Houses of Old Lyme*. The Society also sponsors an annual dinner lecture with town historian Dr. John Pfeiffer, occasional graveyard tours, and other stand-alone exhibits and events. The first



Photo: James Meehan

donation of material for the Archive were copies of Civil War Captain John D. Griswold's letters at Antietam, given by Muffie Whitley.

In 2007, the Society's website was created, thanks to a small grant from a friend. A dedicated office space was leased at the Old Lyme Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library in 2009. In 2014, through many generous contributions from members and other interested donors, the Society was able to purchase the Grange building at 55 Lyme Street, and is now in the process of creating a permanent, temperature-controlled archive for its donated materials and files. Construction has begun on refurbishing the space, and the Society welcomes all members, new and old to witness the transition of the Society into the next ten years.

With the approach of the Society's Tenth Anniversary, we are seeking any photographs, written memories, or other information that early members may wish to share. Please let us know if you have any memorabilia of interest.

Middle School Students Chair Art Project

Historical Society Board member Bob DiNapoli took on an unusual assignment this spring. The Historical Society had been bequeathed over fifty vintage Windsor Style wooden chairs by the Grange when it purchased the building. Bob came up with a wonderful idea that students from Region 18 Middle School might be interested in painting them. Bob gave each chair a special restoration. With the permission of Lyme-Old Lyme Superintendent of Schools Ian Nevaizer, he approached Thelma Halloran, Artistic and Art Educator to broach the idea. She enlisted 10 students who designed and executed imaginative designs for the chairs. These ranged from two Congregational Church designs (Corah S. Engdall and Tanner Griffin), Wee Fairie Village (Sophia Ortoleva), Setting sun and reflection (Haley Stevens), Cardinal and nest (Isabella F. Hine), Lakeside boat dock (Cora Melton), Charter Oak (Riley Nelson), Bird Tree (Lillian Grethel), We, the People (Riley Fruth), and Waterfall (Audra Berry).

A silent auction was held on the chairs during the Memorial Day tag sale at 55 Lyme Street. Bidding was spritely, and all ten chairs were snapped up by 2 p.m. Each chair has a plaque identifying its provenance. Someday in the distant future when someone admires one of these chairs, they will know that in 2015 some very creative children had fun while doing a very nice deed for the Historical Society. Hats off to Bob, and to Thelma Halloran and of course, to these students.



Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.

55 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 352, Old Lyme, CT 06371

oldlymehistoricalsociety.org



*The mission of the
Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.,
is to collect, preserve, and interpret
the rich history of Old Lyme
and its environs for the benefit
of its residents and visitors.*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Timothy Griswold and Mark Lander

Co-Chairs

Martha Hansen *Secretary*

Carol Winters *Treasurer*

Arthur Beebe, Roger Breunig,
Jane Cable, Kevin Cole,
Bob DiNapoli, Ned Farman,
Ted Freeman, Dolores Green,
Isaiah Griffith, Julia Griswold,
Jennifer Hillhouse, Ellis Jewett,
Leslie Markowicz, Alison Mitchell,
Stephen Moore, Michaelle Pearson,
Dyanne Rafal, Sheila Wertheimer,
Adela Wilmerding, Karen Winters

James Noyes
Board Member Emeritus

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Michaelle Pearson

Designer: James Meehan

Editorial Contributors:

Bob DiNapoli, Timothy Griswold,
Mark Lander, Alison Mitchell,
Michaelle Pearson

Photography:
James Meehan

Printing:
Essex Printintg

**Old Lyme
Historical Society, Inc.**
55 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, CT

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 352, Old Lyme, CT 06371

Telephone: 860-434-0684
Email: info@oldlymehistorical.org

oldlymehistoricalsociety.org

From the Co-Chairs

Your Historical Society continues to move forward with improvements to our building and several activities completed and forthcoming.

Our annual membership meeting took place on June 8. We bade farewell to retiring Board members Janet Littlefield, Kristen Magnussen, Dick Miller and Susan Morrison, and welcomed four new Board members: Ted Freeman, Isaiah Griffith, Stephen Moore and Sheila Wertheimer. Our annual scholarship was presented to LOLHS senior Ian James who plans to major in history with an eye to becoming an attorney. The annual Chairmen's Award went to four colleagues who have become known as the "*Tuesday Moring Work Crew*" for their extraordinary efforts to adapt our building to its new use: Ellis Jewett, Ted Freeman, Arthur "Skip" Beebe and Kevin Cole. Speaking of their efforts, they have completed work on renovating the office and should soon be wrapping up work on the front of the building with new energy efficient doors and windows. They have also begun work on converting much of the lower level into archive storage space and work areas.

In May, we sponsored a wine-tasting and tapas fundraising event graciously hosted by the Old Lyme Inn. Co-chair Mark Lander and Board member Kevin Cole wrapped up the 350th year commemoration of the 1665 Loving Parting between Saybrook and Lyme with a presentation to the third graders at Mile Creek School. We enjoyed a very attentive audience and the presentation was well received. We hope to build on this sort of activity with future school presentations. Exhibits Chair Alison Mitchell, ably assisted by Society members Sandie Downing and Jim Meehan, put together a wonderful exhibit on the early schools of Lyme (as Old Lyme was called until 1855). This exhibit, in our building at 55 Lyme Street, will be up until August 2nd and will be followed by other exhibits on our town's history. On June 27 we held the first "event" in our building: a talk by Board member Michaelle Pearson and her husband Jim Lampos on their new book *Remarkable Women of Old Lyme*.

In the next few months we will co-sponsor a Town Band Concert on the South Town Green near the Congregational Church on July 19th at 4 PM, with an ice cream social at intermission. On July 24th and 25th, the Society will be one of the sponsors of the Midsummer Festival and we will host an open house on Saturday—please stop by!

On September 13 we will again sponsor "Dinner at Filomena's" in Waterford as a fund-raiser for the Society. The Buscetto family, proprietors of Filomena's, will provide a pasta dinner and return 50% of the ticket sales to us. Last, but not least, in October, we are planning for another successful plant sale. Details about these and other events will be posted in the media, on our website and on our Facebook page.

We thank our membership and many other individuals and businesses for their continued support. Please visit us during the Midsummer Festival and any time you see the flags flying on our front porch.

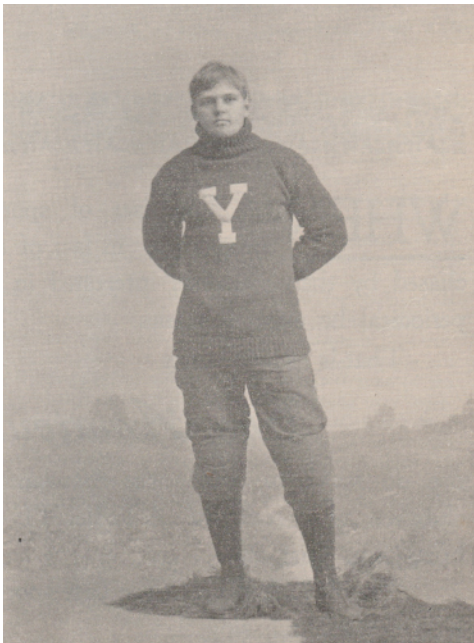
Timothy Griswold & Mark Lander
Co-Chairs, Board of Trustees
Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.

Annual Dinner Lecture with John Pfeiffer, Ph.D.

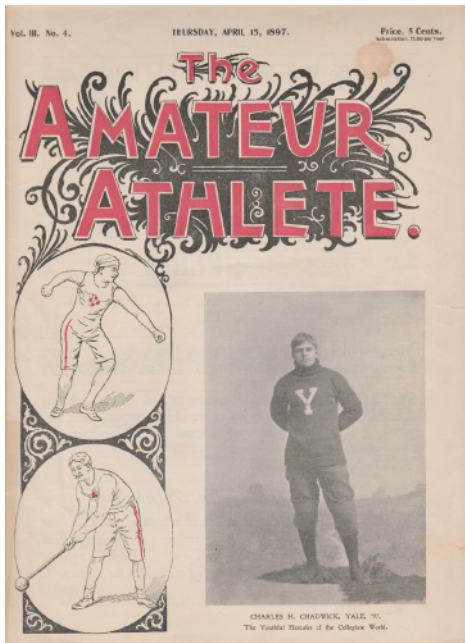
On Saturday, April 18th The Old Lyme Historical Society hosted its Annual Dinner and Lecture at the Lymes' Senior Center. Old Lyme Historian Dr. John Pfeiffer's spoke to a near-capacity crowd about the extremely important role that "Wood: Our First Natural Resource" has played throughout Lyme's history. The control of this resource was the subject of our first public meeting and was recorded on the first page of our Society records. Our Lyme founders and their descendants continued to reassert their rights and responsibilities regarding wood over the centuries. The delicious dinner was catered by Coffee's Country Market.

Old Lyme profile

Charles H. Chadwick (1874-1953)



Charles H. Chadwick, Yale '97.
The Youthful Hercules of the Collegiate World.



The Amateur Athlete
Vol. III. No. 4. Thursday, April 15, 1897.



Chadwick family photo taken circa 1915
at family home on Ferry Road in Old Lyme, CT

Nothing warms the heart of a newsletter writer more than to hear the words “*You’ve got mail!*” Sometimes one wonders if anyone actually reads the newsletter or just skims it, and puts it in the circular file while standing in the post office. So, when not too long after the Spring 2015 Newsletter went out, we were pleased when our hard-working web-mistress Martha Hansen forwarded an email from a reader in San Francisco. His name is Daniel Woodhead III. It turns out that he is the great nephew of our Charlie Chadwick, who wrote all those delightful Letters to Papa in the 1880s. Mr. Woodhead thought that we might like to know more about Charlie later in life. Would we ever! So, bless his heart, Mr Woodhead sent a packet of information and photos about Charlie and his family including a photo of him in his football uniform at Yale. The Society’s archive will now have a far more complete file on the Daniel Chadwick family and his descendants for future researchers to view.

The New York Times obituary (September 29, 1953) provided by Dan Whitehead outlines Charlie’s life as being one of extraordinary talent and diversity. After attending school in Brooklyn, New York, Charlie went to Yale University from which he graduated in 1897. He held the Ivy League strong man record as well as being a great football lineman. He played guard for five years, including one season while he was in law school. He received an L.L.B. from New York Law School in 1899, and was admitted to the New York bar, and began practice the same year.

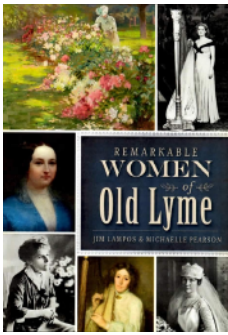
He was a deputy assistant district attorney in New York under William Travers Jerome from 1902 to 1906, and assistant corporation counsel for the city in 1908 and 1909, when George B. McClellan was Mayor. During this time he also wrote for *The New York World* articles on football that were syndicated to *The Chicago Tribune* and other newspapers. Several years later after moving to Boston, he wrote short stories which appeared in *Century*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, *Everybody’s* and other magazines. He also wrote two novels *The Cactus* (1925) and *The Moving House of Focado* (1926). For several years, beginning in 1932, he was an extension lecturer at Harvard and the University of Massachusetts.

He married twice, but remained close with his siblings. His younger brother George, who was referred to as “*Baby*” in his Letters to Papa, was a celebrated Yale football star, who was the captain of the undefeated 1902 team. Charlie’s sister Alice married Daniel Woodhead, Daniel Woodhead III’s grandfather. Charles Chadwick died September 28, 1953. Just think of what all that practice writing nightly letters to his father produced!

On another note, the Society has just been given three boxes of materials about the Center School which celebrated its 80th year for our archive. Thank you to Helen Scott and her youthful compilers at Center School, we will enjoy cataloguing this material.

— Alison Mitchell

Authors Speak About Remarkable Women of Old Lyme



Old Lyme Historical Society Trustee Michaëlle Pearson and her husband Jim Lampos recently released a new book, *Remarkable Women of Old Lyme*, published by History Press. The book features stories of Old Lyme women including Phoebe Griffin Noyes, Evelyn MacCurdy Salisbury, Florence Griswold, Katharine Ludington, Elizabeth Tashjian and many more. The couple previously authored *Rumrunners, Governors, Beachcombers and*

Socialists — A History of Old Lyme's Beaches, which was published by the Old Lyme Historical Society in 2010.

On Saturday, June 27th the Old Lyme Historical Society sponsored an Author Event at 55 Lyme Street. This was the first such event at the Society's new home, and was very well-attended. Pearson and Lampos gave a detailed presentation about many of the Remarkable Women contained in their latest book. The talk was followed by a book signing, during which refreshments were served. Attendees were also able to view the current ongoing exhibit "*A Glimpse of Early Schools in Lyme, Connecticut, 1650-1868*".



Remarkable Women of Old Lyme is available for sale at all OLHSI events, including the upcoming Midsummer Festival on July 25th.

Author photo by Angela Chicoski Photography



Photo: James Meehan

Memorial Day Tag Sale

The Society's Memorial Day Tag Sale took place on May 25th from 10am - 2pm. Initially conceived as a way to clear out some of the vintage items (china, flatware, etc.) that the Society inherited after taking ownership of the Grange building, the tag sale was expanded to allow intake of donated items from the public. The response to this call for items was overwhelming, and the pricing, tagging and cleaning crew logged many hours getting these items catalogued, organized and ready for sale. Thanks to Leslie Markowicz, Carol Winters, Jennifer Hillhouse and Dyanne Rafal — the chief organizers/miracle workers of the sale, and also to the many other Trustees, friends and family members who pitched in to make the event a success. Proceeds from the tag sale will be used for general upkeep and expenses pertaining to the building.

A Glimpse of Early Schools in Lyme, Connecticut, 1650–1868



Visiting the "*Glimpses of Early Schools*" exhibit at the Old Lyme Historical Society are Center School 5th grade students (back row) John Coffey, Zoe Jenson, Gabe Katwaru-Dunphy, Emily Nickerson, (front row) Lizzy Duddy, Elise Bernardo, and Lauren Presti. Missing from photo is Anne Colangelo. (Photo: James Meehan)

A Glimpse of Early Schools in Lyme, Connecticut, 1650-1868 is a mini exhibit at the Historical Society that may be viewed through August 2nd whenever the Historical Society is open (when flags are flying at 55 Lyme Street) or by appointment, call 860 434 0684.

Glimpses traces the role education played in the development of the town of Lyme. Even before that, the founders of Connecticut County had issued a mandate in 1660 stipulating that all towns of fifty (50) families were to hire a schoolmaster to teach reading and writing. In towns of one hundred (100) families, it was mandated that a school be established to prepare students for institutions of higher learning. It is clear from the town records lovingly compiled by Jean Chandler Burr that from shortly after the town was established in 1665 the town had every desire to comply with the mandate as education was seen as essential to the town's growth. In August 1674 "it was voted that the County Schole shall be at Norridge". In January 1680 William Measure, an innkeeper, was chosen and "Agreed to keep A Schoole and to teach Children to Read Wright and Cost Accounting According to their Capasitys". In return for his services as a teacher he received Eighteen pounds "by way of a Towns rate".

One-room schoolhouses soon were being constructed in various parts of town. Each contained a fireplace and several windows. As payment, families had to bring "one load of Wood Cutt fitt for the fire for each Child they shall send". The Hornbook, a wooden board with a handle was the initial teaching tool. Printed ABCs in upper and lower case, some sounding syllables and often, The Lord's Prayer, were attached to the board and protected by a thin layer of cow's horn. Literacy rates were amazingly high in the Connecticut Colony. By 1750, it is estimated that 75% of males and 65% of females could read and write. By the time Lyme and Old Lyme were separated in 1855, there were eight school districts in town. We are still trying to locate all eight one-room schoolhouses in Old Lyme. If you have any information, we would love to know. Please call 860 434 0864 or send an email from our website www.oldlymehistorical.org

The Society will be open all day during the Midsummer Festival, Saturday, July 25, 2015.