

River & Sound

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

Issue 15 🌿 Summer 2014

Welcome to our new home!



Photos: Roger Breunig and James Meehan

The Old Lyme Historical Society opened the doors of our newly-acquired building to the general public before, during, and after the Memorial Day parade.

A good number of people stopped in to see our display of photo enlargements selected from the Society's various publications, and to chat with Board members about our future plans for the former Grange building.

This iconic structure at 55 Lyme Street was purchased by the Old Lyme Historical Society in late February to "Give History a Home."



Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.

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

oldlymehistoricalsociety.org

Funds were raised through a successful capital campaign to pay for the purchase of the building. The second phase of the campaign seeks to raise funds to renovate the building to include an office, climate-controlled archival storage, display space for historic artifacts, and an area for lectures and presentations.

The Society plans to hold future open houses from time to time, and eventually regular office hours will be established. In the meantime, stop in and visit us anytime you see the American flag flying from the front porch.

Mark Lander

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*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.*

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Photo: James Meehan

From the Co-chairs

Spring and summer 2014 have been very exciting for the Historical Society. Our Capital Campaign has been quite successful, raising more than 80% toward our goal of \$225,000, which includes the purchase of the former Grange Hall and future renovations to bring the historic building up to date and provide climate-controlled storage for the Society's archives. Our most sincere thanks to all who have contributed. We are now reaching out to additional potential donors with the hope that they will help us to reach our goal.

The Society kicked off the spring season by participating in "Light up the Night," a commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the burning of the ships at Essex Harbor by the British. A large crowd turned out for the re-enactment of a narrated bonfire, complete with musketry and cannonfire at the town's dinghy dock on Ferry Road. Thanks to the Board of Selectmen, the Old Lyme Fire Department and Old Lyme Public Works for their support. Shortly after this event, we held our annual dinner lecture at the Senior Center. As in the past, Ned Pfeiffer gave a fascinating presentation, this time on the history of agriculture in Old Lyme and attendees were, as usual, well fed by Coffee's Country Market.

We introduced our new building to the public with an open house on Memorial Day. Visitors had a chance to view a selection of historic photos, see the iconic backdrop and to chat with Board members. The Society held another open house during the Midsummer Festival, adding book and poster sales. The building is now being used for Membership, Board and Committee meetings.

At our annual membership meeting in June, officers were elected and new Board members announced. They are: Dick Miller, Kevin Cole, Arthur "Skip" Beebe, Bob DiNapoli, and Ned Farman. Also at this meeting the Scholarship recipients were announced. Congratulations to David Muckle and David Peck. Departing Board member Catherine Christiano received the Chairmen's Award for her outstanding work as publicity chair.

Upcoming events include an open house for Historic District residents, a fundraiser dinner at Filomena's Restaurant in Waterford, and the launch of the 2015 *Now & Then* Community Calendar.

In closing, we'd like to ask members to support the following businesses as a way of recognizing their contributions, either financial or in kind, to our fundraising campaign: Big Y Foods, Bouvier Insurance, All-Pro Automotive, Essex Savings Bank, Chelsea-Groton Savings Bank, Judge's Farm, Laysville Hardware, Reynolds Garage and Marine, Brushline Design, Middlesex Tree and Old Lyme Law (attorney Fran Sablone). See you at 55 Lyme Street!

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

The Historical Society was saddened to hear that newly elected Board member Heather Dillenbeck died June 10, 2014. Our most sincere condolences go to her husband Dick, and their family. Heather would have been a great addition to the Board.

Old Lyme's Midsummer Festival

The day dawned clear with moderate temperatures. It was an auspicious beginning for the Historical Society's participation at 55 Lyme Street in the Old Lyme Midsummer festival on July 26, 2014. A crew headed up by Co-Chair Mark Lander had expended some significant sweat energy to gussy up the building and grounds and the old gal looked "mighty purty" as Curley said in the venerable 1943 musical, *Oklahoma*. In fact, there was more than a passing comparison in Old Lyme that day with an earlier time. For one thing, people were walking everywhere. Yes, there were the shuttle (aka school) buses available to ferry people about, and yes, there were people wearing far less clothing than in olden days. But there was also a genuine interest in absorbing at a leisurely pace what this charming New England small town has to offer.



Photo: James Meehan

People walked along carrying shopping bags filled with locally grown fresh produce, bread, table linens, and newly purchased local art mixed in. Some people bought OLHSI maps, postcards, books, and posters. Many more browsed the publications, and then went into the building to see what it was like.

Some fifty people participated in informal chats about the building, reminiscing about animal husbandry and agricultural pursuits which marked the activities of the Grange. They asked probing questions about what the Society plans to do now that they are the official custodians of the 1896 building. Board member Jennifer Hillhouse was quick to provide enthusiastic answers to those questions by saying that an office and an archive are high on the list of priorities now being discussed by the Facilities Committee as well as handicap access, new exhibits and lectures. It was a good day for the town and an even better day for the Society. P. S., the weather held out until the very end.

Alison Mitchell

Get All the Latest OLHSI News – Like us on Facebook!

The Old Lyme Historical Society now has an official Facebook page so users can keep up with all the latest OLHS news and events.

Maintained by Board Member Kristen Magnussen, the page is building up a steady following of dedicated history buffs. Each week, Magnussen posts a vintage Old Lyme photo or news clipping as a topic for commentary.

Users are invited to post their guesses as to where a particular spot was located, or comment upon the various news items from days gone by. Some popular items of interest have been Jane's Waffle House, Alice Rogers' Book Shop, the Sound View Train Station, and a 1964 movie casting call at the Old Lyme Inn.



Like Us On Facebook
facebook.com/OldLymeHistoricalSociety

THE CHARM OF THE PLACE
OLD LYME IN THE 1920S



BY CAROLYN WAKEMAN


Old Lyme Historical Society

The Charm of the Place

OLD LYME IN THE 1920S

BY CAROLYN WAKEMAN

Second Printing Now Available. \$25.00

Available at the Old Lyme Historical Society, 55 Lyme Street,
Old Lyme Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library,
Florence Griswold Museum & oldlymehistoricalsociety.org

Mark Your Calendar!

Dinner at Filomena's
Fundraiser

Sunday, September 14, 2014
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

*Includes two kinds of pasta,
salad and focaccia.*

Open seating.
Cash bar available.

*Filomena's Restaurant
Utopia Centre, 262 Boston Road,
Waterford, CT*

\$20 per person.

Old Lyme's Historic Plaque Program



Photo: Martha Hansen

The Old Lyme Historic District Commission would like to invite Old Lyme homeowners to participate in the Historic Plaque Program. If your house, located anywhere in Old Lyme, was built in or before 1939, it may be eligible to receive a historic plaque.

The Old Lyme Historic District Commission started the plaque program in 2006 to acknowledge historic buildings in Old Lyme. Since that time over 35 properties have been researched and issued plaques. The plaques include the year the house was built, the name of the original owner, and provide a visible record of the history of Old Lyme.

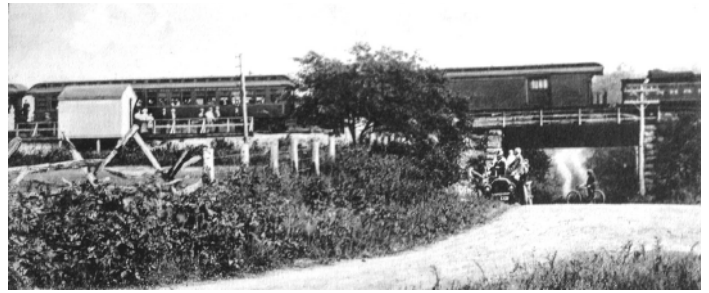
A house need not be located in the Historic District to be eligible. Having a historic plaque will not impose any restrictions on the owner's ability to remodel or make changes. It is simply a recognition of the house's history.

Participation in the plaque program requires documentary research of the past ownership of the property. Advice on researching your property can be obtained from the Historic District Commission. Upon completion of the research and review by the Commission, you may order a plaque (\$120) through the Town of Old Lyme. The 16" x 13" white oval plaques are made of a lightweight synthetic material with black lettering, as shown.

If you would like to participate in the program, please contact us at the Old Lyme Town Hall (860) 434-1600 for information.

Martha Hansen
Historic District Commission

Do you know where this Old Lyme site is?



On the Road to the Train Station at Sound View, now called "Cross Lane." Photo: James Meahan

OLHSI Scholarship Program

The *Vintage!* Event is the primary source of funding for the Old Lyme Historical Society's Scholarship Program. This year was the third *Vintage!*, held on Sunday, March 9th at the Old Lyme Town Hall. The event raised enough funds to allow the Society to provide scholarships to two LOLHS students: David Peck, who will be attending Bowdoin College and David Muckle, who will be attending Clark University in the Fall.



Planning for next year's *Vintage!* is already underway. The event is scheduled for March 8, 2015 from 1-4 at the Old Lyme Town Hall.

Join OLHSI in bringing Old Lyme's past to the present!

Benefits of OLHSI membership

- A subscription to the *River & Sound* newsletter
- Your own copy of Lyme Street walking tour
- Advance notice of and discounted rates for selected events
- A 10% discount on our books, and the opportunity to buy them in advance
- Priority status to obtain genealogical research material at the PGN Library
- Training in historical research techniques, and opportunities to be involved with our oral history project
- The realization that your tax deductible contribution is supporting a vital cultural resource

2014-15 Membership

Become an OLHSI member or renew your membership today.

Dues are fully tax-deductible.

___ New member ___ Renewing member

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

___ Student \$10 ___ Individual \$20 ___ Family \$35

___ Patron \$100 ___ Business/Corporate \$100

___ Benefactor \$250 ___ Lifetime \$500 ___ Additional donation

Please make your check payable to the Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.

You may also use PayPal, on our website. *Thanks for your generosity!*

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

Are you interested in volunteering with the OLHSI? If so, what areas are of interest to you?

The OLHSI is a non-profit corporation incorporated in the State of Connecticut. It is a registered charity with the state Department of Consumer Protection and is recognized by the IRS for 501(c)3 status.

Join or renew your membership online at oldlymehistoricalsociety.org