



# BRICK NOTES

SPRING 2021

## *Letter from the President:*

Finally, it appears that we are coming out of this year plus “lockdown”. CHS will be slowly opening back up, in accordance with the State of Connecticut guidelines. Our Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner, usually held the first Friday in May, has been rescheduled to Friday, September 10, 2021, to be held in the Green Room of the Andrews Memorial Town Hall. Of course, this will only occur if the Town Hall has reopened to all events by that time. I will let you know by eBlast as we receive word from the Town of Clinton.

Your Board of Directors met in person on April 20<sup>th</sup> in the CHS Gardens. We had been doing Zoom meetings since November 2020. It was great to see and speak with everyone and we got a lot accomplished. The tree work was completed in March. Three large trees that were hanging over the George Flynn Library were removed and several trees had large and small limbs trimmed.

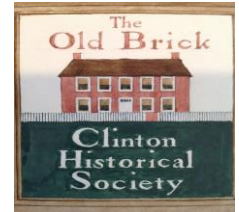
Our Spring Membership Drive is well underway and renewals have already come in at an excellent pace! Our current Membership Chair, Bion Shepard, will be stepping down. He is leaving this position in the capable hands of Marion Martinez, who graciously volunteered.

Past President, Dave Bautz, is heading up a By-Laws Committee. CHS By-Laws have not been reviewed and updated for many years. Now seemed like the right time. We are just at the beginning stages and hopefully the process will be complete by the end of the year.

Please review our CHS Calendar of Events on the back page. We are scheduling our traditional events through 2021 including our Ghost Walks, Holiday Luncheons and Dinners. As long as the State of CT guidelines allow us, we will be getting back to “normal”.

Thank you all for your continued support and I look forward to coming out and coming back from this pandemic.

Christy

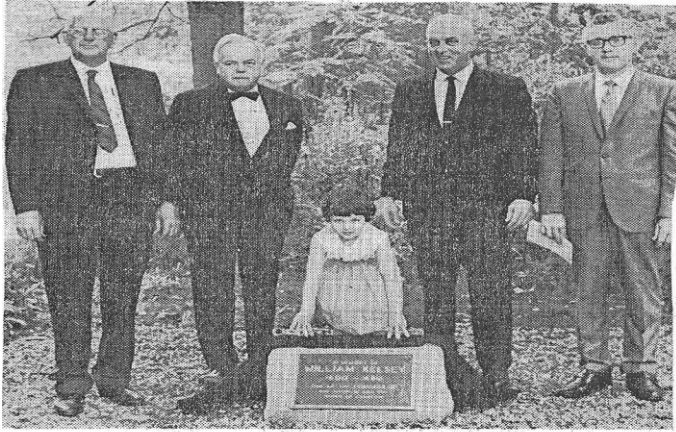


Welcome to Marion Martinez, the newest member of the CHS Board of Directors. Marion will be our new Membership Chairman. A multitude of thanks to Bion Shepard for filling this role so capably for so many years. Bion has given so much of his time and energy on behalf of CHS in so many ways and we are ever so grateful. We are fortunate that Bion has agreed to continue on as Auditor. There are still a lot of board meetings left for you to attend and our meetings would be awfully strange without you. Thank you, Bion!

**Due to the current changing Coronavirus guidelines, all Clinton Historical Society programs are slowly returning. The George Flynn Library has reopened on a limited basis and the Museum Room will open in coordination with the Andrews Memorial reopening.**



**The Buell Tool Museum** contains a wealth of examples of early colonial tools and machines used by the Buell family whose ancestors were among Clinton’s earliest settlers. The barn itself was previously located on the Buell family property on Glenwood Road. It was donated to CHS in 1998 and moved to its present location by a group of volunteers who carefully dismantled the timbers and stones, and brought them, bit by bit, to the grounds of the Old Brick where the barn was reconstructed. During this past year all of the windows have been painstakingly restored by Dave Rainey. John Quinn built and installed a hand rail by the stone stairway to the museum, making for easier and safer access to the barn. Thank you, Dave and John!!!



### Kelsey Kindred Dedicate Plaque

Shown from left to right are Harold Kelsey of Middletown, president of the Kelsey Kindred; Joseph J. Kelsey of Clinton, past president; Theodore Moser, president of the Clinton Historical Society; Wilson Busick, minister of the First Church of Christ, Congregational; and Joyce Kelsey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jarman J. Kelsey of Clinton, taking part in a plaque dedication ceremony Sunday honoring William Kelsey, one of the founders of the Congregational Church and the town of Clinton in 1663. The plaque is located adjacent to 93 East Main St., on a strip of land originally allotted to Kelsey in 1660 by King Charles of England, owner then of all American colonies. More than 40 descendants attended the Kelsey Kindred's 41st

### PROPERTIES UPDATE: TREES, TREES, TREES

Dave Bautz and the CHS properties team have been hard at work overseeing the long overdue tree work that was needed on a number of trees, particularly three large trees behind the George Flynn Library. These trees were taken down and other trees on the property have been neatly trimmed. Additionally, tree work was done on the slip of property at 93 East Main Street where the plaque honoring William Kelsey is located. The work has made the area neater and safer, particularly for the adjoining neighbors and passersby. The photo to the left has misidentified two people – Theodore Moser is second from the left, Joseph Kelsey is second from the right.

## Historic Trees in Clinton

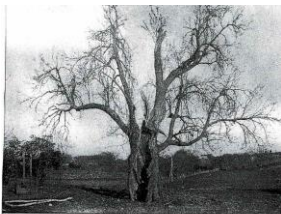
### The Meriden Daily Republican (Meriden, CT) Nov. 27, 1895 TWO HUNDRED- AND FIFTY-YEARS Oldest Pear Tree in New England in Clinton

“One of the oldest pear trees in the world can be seen in the town of Clinton., occupying a picturesque site near the boundary that separates the town from Westbrook. It is on the original tract of land that was settled by the Wrights, three in number, occupying at least 6,000 acres. The ownership of this tract passed from the posterity of the original settlers long ago. The portion on which the ancient pear tree is standing was owned by Pierce Jones, at the time of his death a few years ago, when he died. He took great pains in preserving the tree. Lawyer Wright of Westbrook, who died in that place six or eight years ago was a descendant of one of the original Wrights, and an antiquarian of acknowledged authority. He had studied the history of the old tree with great interest and thoroughness, and it was his opinion that the tree was 250 years old. Wright’s River in Clinton was named in honor of the settlers who originally took up the tract of land through which it makes its way to the Sound. On an old boulder overlooking the Sound is an inscription that has long faced the storms and sunshine, proclaiming that a Wright is buried on the spot. The ancient pear tree still bears fruit, but not altogether a savory taste. The tree is a picturesque ruin, being badly dismembered through the generations which it has survived. Principal Dwight Holbrook of the Morgan School of Clinton has taken a great deal of pains in searching out the history of the tree. Mr. Pierce Jones, who became the possessor of the property sixty-three years ago, found the tree at that time bowed under the weight of years. The testimony of Lawyer Wright, who made the tree’s history a study, is regarded as conclusive. The tree is undoubtedly the oldest of its kind in New England.”

### The Journal (Meriden, CT) March 16, 1898

### Clinton’s Historic Tree Transplanted from Willow over Napoleon’s Grave

“On grounds adjacent to the residence until recently owned by Jared Buell, at what is known as “Harbor View,” stand a willow tree, which was transplanted by Mr. Buell’s son, Edward A., from a twig brought by a sea captain residing in Gloucester, Mass., from the famous willow tree overshadowing the tomb of Napoleon at St. Helena. The original shoot had but a few buds and was planted about twenty-five years ago. To-day the tree is twenty-five feet or more in height and the trunk will measure six inches or more in diameter. It is not of the “weeping” variety, but the upper part of the tree is nearly globular in shape and the branches curve upward at the ends. This species of willow is not indigenous to this country, but is said to be common in some parts of Europe. A few months ago, this property on which the tree stands was sold to Mrs. Elizabeth F. Pratt, a wealthy western woman, who is about to build a handsome residence in place of the present structure and will fence in this historic tree.”



OLD WRIGHT PEAR TREE, 200 YEARS OLD.

### Clinton Recorder Supplement dated 1900: The Old Wright Pear Tree

“The old pear tree shown ... is a pear tree on the Benjamin Wright place on the old Westbrook road near Menunketesuck River. This tree is supposed to have been brought from England about 200 years ago, and transplanted in its present location. It has been in its present apparently frail condition for at least sixty years, and has borne fruit every season within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.”

## Albert Fitch Bellow Painting in the Old Brick by Carrie Allen



In a corner over the desk in the Old Brick hangs a solitary and quiet painting that caused quite a stir in its day - "What an adventure that was!" heralds Bob Bischoff. "Vic Mays, prominent local marine artist and society member, spotted the painting "Clinton, Connecticut" by noted 19th century landscape and

genre painter Albert Fitch Bellows of the prestigious National Gallery." It was up for sale in Old Lyme for \$50K. Then president Bob Bischoff, Acquisitions Chair Mel Arden, Treasurer Ernie Burnham and Victor Mays felt strongly that the painting belonged in Clinton, but of course they balked at the price. By the time Mel approached the gallery owner to negotiate the price, the painting had been sold. All four men, though deeply disappointed, breathed a sigh of relief. Until word reached them a year later that it was back up for auction in Stonington, and this time the opening bid would be \$25K. When Bob, Marsha, Vic,

Lynnabeth, Mel, Michelle St. John, Dibirma and Ernie arrived at the gallery, word swept through the assembled crowd that the Clinton Historical Society was there to bid on "Clinton, Connecticut", the single finest piece for sale that day. When the bidding opened, Mel Arden raised his paddle for the \$25K opener, and then, as if by magic, absolutely no one in the room followed their bid, in deference to them and the historical society they represented. When the hammer came down, and CHS became the proud new owner, auctioneer Al Goring announced that the painting was going home where it belonged, to which Mel Arden yelled "Bonzai!"

### RAN RACE IN NEW YORK: Henry Stannard Covered Ten Miles in Less Than An Hour April 21, 1835

CLINTON, CONN., THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1923:

"The New York Herald of last Sunday in reviewing "Three Centuries of Sport in New York" tells of the wonderful ten mile running race of Henry Stannard of West Main Street, Clinton, formerly Killingworth. Union Course mentioned was in the heart of what is now New York City. The Herald says: "It was in New York that foot racing got its greatest impetus with the arrangement of a big match for the prize of \$1,000. For information on this interesting Pioneer event, which might well be commemorated when the proper time comes, we owe a debt again to the diary of Philip Houe. "In his entry of April 21, 1835, Mr. Houe tells of this race, which was held at Union Course, and was the result of a wager between John C. Stevens and Samuel L. Gouverneur. Stevens bet that he would produce a man who could run ten miles in one hour and then offered a reward of \$1,000 to the man who would win the wager for him." "It was estimated that 30,000 persons saw the race, which had nine starters. Five ran five miles in thirty minutes. Henry Stannard, a farmer from Killingworth, Conn., ran the ten miles in 59 minutes 48 seconds, and Stevens won his bet. Considering track conditions, training methods, athletic paraphernalia (sic) and the like Stannard's performance does not look so bad when compared with Hohlemainen's present world's record of 51 minutes and 3 and 3-5 seconds." Henry Stannard was the grandfather of Jay F. Stannard, present cashier of the Merchant's National Bank, New Haven, and Miss Sarah Stannard of the same city. Athletically, and especially in point of lung power, he is said to have been a most remarkable young man. He had never heard of Grape Nuts and Nuxatel Iron, but he had the "pep". On one or two occasions he ran against a famous native Indian runner. One of his sons, the late Ely Stannard, for many years owned the trotting park on what is now the Rittner property, which the late T. H. Hartt acquired and operated successfully for several years. Another grand-child residing here is Mrs. Jesse H. Buell of High Street."

### CHS Board of Directors

**President:** Christy Pontillo  
**Vice President:** E. C. Schroeder  
**Treasurer:** Jack Scherban  
**Recording Secretary:** Gail Webster  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Mary Jane Morelli  
**Auditor:** Bion Shepard  
**Buildings and Grounds:** Dave Bautz  
**Librarian:** Charlotte Neely  
**Museum Curator:** Anne Baker  
**Old Brick Curator:** Laraine Scherban

**Publicity/Website:** Megan Stine  
**Facebook Page:** David Perrelli  
**Newsletter:** April Shuman  
**Garden:** Dianne Gustafson and John Quinn  
**Hospitality:** Shora Rainey and Sue Schreck  
**Adam Stanton House Liaison:** E.C. Schroeder  
**Membership:** Marion Martinez  
**Buell Tool Museum:** Dave Rainey  
**Collections Curator:** Dave Perrelli  
**Programs:** Carrie Allen  
**Gifts and Grants:** Carrie Allen and Dave Perrelli





## Clinton Historical Society

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Find us on Facebook

Clinton Historical Society

[www.facebook.com/CHSOldBrick](http://www.facebook.com/CHSOldBrick)



### Old Brick Faerie Gardens

*The Faerie Gardens will once again grace the gardens at The Old Brick.*

*Our wee community was so popular last year that we would like to add more houses for all of our faerie visitors to enjoy this season. Join in the fun and create a tiny dwelling for our gardens. We have a variety of houses using different bases such as bird houses, flower pots and watering cans!*

For more information contact the following:

**Gail Webster at**  
[glwebsterct@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glwebsterct@sbcglobal.net)

**Carrie Allen at**  
[carriefallen@gmail.com](mailto:carriefallen@gmail.com)

**Dianne Gustafson at**  
[gustafsondianne@gmail.com](mailto:gustafsondianne@gmail.com)

### CHS Annual Plant Sale

This year's annual plant sale will be held on Saturday June 26, 2021 from 9:00 AM to noon and we are in need of perennial plant donations. As you're tending to your own gardens, please consider digging up some of your plants to put into pots and deliver them to the back porch of the Old Brick anytime prior to the sale. Be sure to label your plants so we'll know what we're selling. This is one of our best fundraisers of the year, thanks to the generosity of your plant donations and purchases. In addition to plants, this year we will be selling garden stepping stones that were made by members of the Garden Committee. Social distancing and mask wearing will be practiced and sales will be by cash or check only. Thank you to Dianne Gustafson and John Quinn, who chair the Garden Committee and oversee this event.

### It's Gardening Time!

The CHS Garden Committee welcomes all who would like to join them on Tuesday mornings from 9 AM to noon weekly as they tend to Old Brick's beautiful gardens. Come learn about gardening from our exceptionally experienced gardeners as they work to preserve one of Clinton's most beautiful places, come and sit and relax all while enjoying our gardens full of perennials, shrubs, herbs, and trees.

### CHS Calendar of Events Summer/Fall 2021

#### Connecticut Open House Day

Saturday, June 12, 2021  
Noon – 4:00 PM

#### Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, June 26, 2021  
9:00 AM - noon

#### Smoke House Demonstration and Tasting with Jim Barnett

Saturday, July 24, 2021  
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

#### Garden Party

Saturday, August 14, 2021  
5:00-7:00 PM

#### CHS Annual Meeting

Friday, September 10, 2021  
Green Room Andrews Memorial  
6:00 – 8:00 PM

#### Annual Ghost Walks

Tues. Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> and Wed. Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>  
Rain Date October 21

#### Christmas in Clinton

Sun. Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

#### Annual Holiday Luncheons

Wed. Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> and Thurs. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>

#### Annual Holiday Dinners

Fri. Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> and Sat. Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>