



BRICK NOTES

Letter from the President

Dear CHS Members,

I trust all of you had an enjoyable winter. Fortunately we haven't had as much snow this time around. For those of you who might be out and about, I am happy to announce that our Museum Room in the Andrews Memorial is now open year 'round every Thursday from 5 to 7 PM. Anne Baker, our Museum Room Director, launched the "soft" opening February 7th. Every week we are seeing more folks stopping in to learn about Clinton's history and view our exhibits. We are staffed on a rotating basis by many members of the CHS Board of Directors.

In this issue of Brick Notes we have included a center insert. On one side is your invitation to our annual pot luck dinner. On the other side is the CHS calendar for the rest of 2019. You can easily remove and place it on your refrigerator or near your calendar at home. Enjoy the articles and information herein and remember to save the insert as your reminder.

On a sad note, Abraham Pierson School will be closing in June. I attended Abraham Pierson while growing up in Clinton. Our George Flynn Library has a nice selection of information and artifacts about the school. April Godwin Shuman (April went there, too) and Laraine Scherban have been identifying such items. We will be placing these items in our "Abraham Pierson School" exhibit in the Museum Room, opening mid-April.

I am blessed with a super smart, hard working, imaginative group of Board members and volunteers. They make ideas come to fruition, plus.

Our George Flynn Library Director, Charlotte Neely, has purchased a new large-document scanner. Now, our library staff will be able to copy and scan the larger documents such as maps, deeds, newspapers, and legal notices. Charlotte and her staff are scanning these documents into our database. Her goal is to digitized all of our archives.

We are always looking for assistance from our membership. Anyone who has some time and would like to help in any way please contact us through our email: choldbrick@gmail.com. You might consider helping with our gardens, or baking for our bake sale, just to name a few. Also, Laraine Scherban is training docents for the Museum Room and The Old Brick. If you are interested in guiding tours of these historic gems, please contact Laraine at chsoldbrick@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner Friday, May 3rd in the Andrews Memorial Green Room. Have a great Spring!

Christy



We're Heating With Gas! Cold Winters will no longer be as much of a threat to the CHS pocketbook or to the integrity of our "home" and collections. We have converted the furnace in the Flynn Library to natural gas and have



replaced the old inefficient oil-fired boiler in the Old Brick to a new natural gas "on demand" unit. During the 2017-2018 heating season we ran out of both heating oil and propane on a couple of occasions and propane became so scarce that we were advised by our supplier to turn down the heat to conserve, in the face of uncertain supply availability. These factors motivated your board to act on its pending plan to convert the heating systems. Although it will take a few months of heating to measure the savings, we are already benefiting from the peace of mind of a steady, trustworthy fuel supply and a more even "heat" experience for the library volunteers.

We all owe the Victor and Lynnabeth Mays family our thanks. It was their generous memorial gift in the parents' names that made the new heating systems possible. It is a very fitting memorial indeed; warm friends continuing to give us warmth through many years to come.

Dave Bautz, Buildings and Grounds Chair

Library volunteers at work supervising the digging of the gas line



CHS: An Overview of Who We Are and What We Do

CHS Mission Statement

The Clinton Historical Society is committed to collecting, protecting and preserving Clinton's history, and presenting it to the public through a variety of programs which the community can participate in and enjoy.

Membership We currently have approximately 300 members. A yearly membership letter is sent out in April. It is always our goal to grow in numbers. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to consider joining us. Members can help out in as many ways as they would like, but certainly volunteers at any event or on any committee are more than welcome.

LOOK FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL LETTER IN THE MAIL. THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE CLINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Clinton Historical Society encourages you to also become a member of the Adam Stanton House.

Old Brick Built in 1750 by Captain Elisha White, "Old Brick" is a New England house museum containing portraits, period furniture, and many domestic tools appropriate to an 18th century house. Donated to CHS in 1987 by Sally MacMillan, the house has been restored to reflect 18th century tastes and serves as a gracious gathering spot for CHS events

George Flynn Library This archival library contains more than 40,000 documents, maps, photographs, and other paper materials relevant to Clinton's history as well as a collection of significant paintings. A group of 10 or more volunteers staffs the library every Wednesday morning from 9:00 AM - Noon. We encourage visitors to stop by to see what the library is all about, to do research into genealogy and other matters.

Volunteers search the archives to seek to provide answers to any inquiries. CHS is always looking for donations of documents, photos, etc. to add to its collection.

The George Flynn Library is also the home of a diorama of Main Street Clinton circa 1915 which was built by Bert Godwin. Please stop by on any Wednesday to take a look.

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 first 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 then brought them, bit by bit, to the grounds of Old Brick where the barn was reconstructed. Today the Tool Museum serves as a window into the past, allowing CHS to show visitors just how tasks were accomplished in the days prior to power tools and machines.

The Gardens at the Old Brick are open to the public during daylight hours. Filled with perennials, shrubs, herbs, and trees, the gardens are at their peak from June through September. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the garden and sit on the lovely granite bench dedicated to Lynnabeth and Victor Mays. Of particular note is the witch hazel, located in the southeast corner of the garden, which has historical significance not only because of its frequent use by early settlers for medicinal use but also because of its use by Unilever/Pond's, a corporation that dominated manufacturing in Clinton for decades.

The Smokehouse is located between Old Brick and the Flynn Library. It was believed to have been built around 1810 by the family of Captain W.H. Williams. The

smokehouse would have been used for smoking fish, fowl, hams, and bacon. It was originally located behind the house at 110 East Main Street and was part of the property

owned by St. Alexis Church. In 2017 the church offered the smokehouse to CHS which was pleased to accept the offer. The building was moved and situated near the kitchen entrance of the house. Stone artisan Andrew Pighills dismantled the building, granite slab by granite slab, and transported it in pieces across the street where it was rebuilt with historical accuracy, with just a few changes to keep it structurally sound.

Museum Room in the Andrews Memorial Town Hall

The Museum Room is located in our town hall, down the hall to the right as you enter the front of the building. The room contains permanent exhibits depicting Clinton's history. Among the permanent exhibits are early Native American tools, Clinton's origins in England, education in Colonial times, Clinton during the War of 1812, industry in Clinton, shipbuilding along the Indian River, and the transformation of Main Street through the years.

In addition to the permanent exhibits, we mount a special exhibit each year focusing on a topic of interest using documents, photographs, and other items in our archives. In recent years there have been exhibits featuring *Summer in Clinton*, *Baseball in Clinton*, *Genealogy Through the Family Bible*, *The history of the Clinton Land Trust*, *the history of The Morgan School*, and *The 350th anniversary of Clinton*.

The Museum Room is open to the public Thursday evenings from 5:00 - 7:00 PM and is staffed by CHS volunteers.



Programs The following programs are annual events at CHS. Some of them combine fund raising with public engagement, education, and/or historical awareness.

Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper Held on the first Friday in May, this annual event functions as both a business meeting and a social gathering.

Winter Lecture Series For most of the past decade, we have offered two or three lectures or educational programs during the winter months, on topics related to Clinton's history. Past programs have included *The History of the Clinton Department Store*, *Revisiting the History of Rail in Clinton*, and *The Founding of Yale University and Its University Library*, and the *Clinton Manor Inn*.

Memorial Day Open House, Bake and Plant Sale Old Brick, our primary house museum, and the Buell Tool Museum are both open on Memorial Day in conjunction with an annual fund raiser Plant Sale held by the Garden Committee. A Bake Sale is also part of the day.

Pierson Days Over a two-day period in early June, more than 170 fourth grade students (eight classes) from the Abraham Pierson School visit our campus each year to learn about life in Colonial Times. The students visit Old Brick to learn about 18th century family life and to see the bed that their school's namesake, Clinton founder Abraham Pierson, once owned. They tour our heritage gardens where our Garden Committee teaches the children the differences between medicinal, culinary, and aromatic herbs. Next they visit the George Flynn Library for an introduction to our archives with maps, photographs of early Clinton, and the model of Clinton circa 1915. The Buell Tool Museum gives them a hands-on experience

with early tools, including a corn grinder.

Connecticut Open House Day As part of this state-wide event the Clinton Historical Society opens the Old Brick, our gardens, the Buell Tool Museum and the 1915 Main Street diorama.

Shakespeare in the Garden In August each year CHS hosts a troupe of young actors from the Kidz Konnection perform a Shakespearean play, free of charge, in our garden space. Visitors are invited to come early and picnic on the lawn.

Garden Party This annual event is traditionally held the first Sunday after Labor Day. Held in our heritage garden, it serves as a meeting and a social gathering.

Ghost Walks Every October CHS holds these popular events. They are both educational, social, and serve as fundraisers. Walks in the past have included tours of historic houses along Main Street and the Indian River Cemetery. Actors from the Kidz Konnection appear dressed in period clothing as the "ghosts" of famous or prominent historical figures from Clinton's past. The ghosts perform skits or monologues, narrating historical stories about the characters they are portraying.

Christmas in Clinton As part of this popular town-wide event CHS opens the Old Brick for tours. Visitors partake of tasty refreshments as they enjoy live music.

Holiday Luncheons and Dinners CHS hosts two holiday luncheons and two candlelit dinners as fund-raisers, giving visitors a chance to dine in our beautifully decorated house during the holidays.

Scholarships We offer two scholarships to graduating seniors each year. The Ernest C. Burnham Scholarship of \$1000 is awarded to

a student who has shown genuine appreciation for history and has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the field. The Victor Mays Scholarship of \$500 is awarded to a student who has shown exceptional talent as an artist and has demonstrated a commitment to pursue a career in the visual arts field.

Partnership with the Stanton House Beginning in 2013, CHS agreed to a partnership of institutional support for the Stanton House. We encourage you to support this vital piece of Clinton's history by becoming a member supporting this organization. This membership to the Stanton House is separate from membership to CHS.

Public Signage Two large, illustrated public signs, one installed on Main Street near the Visitor's Center, and one installed at the Indian River landing behind Town Hall. The Main Street sign depicts a walking tour of historic buildings located in the National Historic District along the north side of Main Street. The Indian River sign depicts Clinton's history of shipbuilding.

Publications and Communication In addition to publishing our newsletter regularly, in either printed form or as an e-newsletter, information is frequently sent out via email "blasts." CHS has a walking tour brochure which is available free to the public. We have published booklets about the history of Clinton (formerly Killingworth/Kenilworth), and notecards featuring paintings of Old Brick for purchase. CHS also has a website: clintoncthistory.org and can also be found on Facebook.



Bequests and Donations

Please consider mentioning the Clinton Historical Society in your will. You can also donate stock and securities that you have held for more than a year and gain a tax benefit. You will be able to deduct the current fair market value of the stock, even if you paid less for it, and you won't pay capital gains taxes.

If you are age 70 or older and have an IRA, consider making a tax-free donation directly to CHS from your retirement account. A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) will count toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). Such a donation should not affect your taxable income as long as the money is transferred directly from the IRA to the charity. We

encourage you to speak to your tax professional prior to any gift. If you would like more information about donating from your IRA or donating securities, please contact our investment adviser, Sam Pappas, at Mystic Asset Management. You can call him at 401-453-5558 or email him at sam@100shares.com.

Our Holiday Luncheons and Dinners were once again a great success due to the efforts of Mary Bovich, Faith Mangler, Rich Manley, Eric Ambler and their teams of volunteers. Thank you to you all!!

President: Christy Pontillo
Vice President: E.C. Schroeder
Treasurer: Jack Scherban
Recording Secretary: Gail Webster
Corresponding Secretary: Mary Jane Morelli
Auditor: Bion Shepard
Building & Grounds: Dave Bautz & Roger Pudem
Librarian: Charlotte Neely
Museum Room Curator: Anne Baker

Old Brick Curator: Laraine Scherban
Website/Facebook: Megan Stine
Publicity: Megan Stine
Newsletter: April Shuman
Garden: Dianne Gustafson & John Quinn
Hospitality: Mary-Kelly Busch & Anne Baker
Adam Stanton House Liason: E.C. Schroeder
Membership: Bion Shepard
Programs: Carrie Allen

