



PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O.Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

MARCH 2005 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S REPORT -

I would like to thank all of our members for their contributions throughout the past year. It takes a lot of work to keep up the Museum building, catalog inventory, plan exhibits, coordinate fundraisers, etc. We can always use more help in any of the above areas, so let us know if you would like to help us in 2005!

I would like to develop an Ethnic Heritage program about the various immigrant groups who settled in Portland between about 1850 and 1925 for our archives, exhibits and programs. The grant I applied for to support the research effort wasn't accepted. However, I don't think this should deter us. You probably have memories and artifacts that we could copy or photograph that would be important to future Portland historians. Many of our older members are children and grandchildren of immigrants. We would like your stories about your family: why did they come to Portland; what types of jobs did they have?

What were family outings or activities like; tell us about growing up in Portland during difficult times like the depression or the World Wars. Did the family take part in the social or church groups? What about your school days, or summer work with your friends in the tobacco fields or in other local industries. If you have pictures or documents of your family, we can copy and return them. If you have artifacts of the period perhaps you would loan them for an exhibit. Let us know.

If anyone would like to work on such exhibits with me, please let me know. This was such a vital time period of interesting change in Portland and deserves better documentation.

Also, do we have any volunteers for another "Growing up in Portland" program? Our last program featuring a panel of our Esteemed Members was very well attended and enjoyed by all. Let me know if you would like to be a part of our next panel. Depending on the response, perhaps we can plan this program for April or early in the fall.

- Regina Woltmann

think spring!
ninth annual town-wide tag sale day
Saturday, May 14, 2005

Here's how you can be a part of it:

- ☛ **Encourage family and friends to sign-up their home tag sale for a spot on our map or rent a space at the Grange lot.**
- ☛ **Donate discarded items for the Society's own tag sale.**
- ☛ **Tell your out-of-town friends about it.**
- ☛ **Contribute to the May 14 bake sale at the Grange.**

Ruth Freeburg, 342-3636, Eleanor Crowther, 342-2907

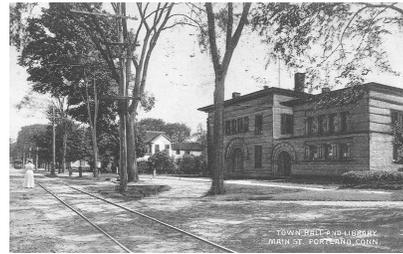
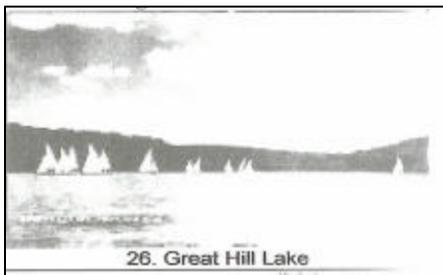
NOTES . . .

Bob McDougall's interesting book "*Images of Portland*" sold more than 400 copies and enriched our treasury nicely, thanks to his dedication of the profits to the Society. The Library and the Town Clerk's Office kindly were active sales outlets for us and are still selling the books. They are also available at the Museum and by mail.

Sue Anderson has a new fund-raising project. She is working on a Coloring Book highlighting the past and present history of Portland. Children of all ages will enjoy coloring the original drawings and learning more about the history of their home town. The book will be available in the Spring.

Bargain Hunters! If you attend tag sales or auctions, please watch for a male manikin for the museum. Our present models are all female and don't take to male uniforms and other male apparel well. Of course, we're looking for a bargain! Leave a message at the museum, 342-5455, if you find anything..

We are pleased to have recently received a nice bequest from the estate of the late **Patricia White Rockwood** of Delray Beach, FL formerly of Mystic, CT. Mrs. Rockwood was a life member of the Society. Her mother was Marian Gildersleeve White, Alfred H. Gildersleeve's oldest daughter. Her bequest has been added to the endowment benefiting the Museum of Portland History.



TOWN-WIDE TAG SALE

Along with the first robin, our "Numbered Pole" expert will soon be on the Callander House lawn sprucing up the identifying markers for each house on the Town-Wide Tag Sale trail. This is our ninth year hosting this major fund-raiser for the museum. Eleanor Crowther has begun conferring with the volunteers who organize the various elements that must come together to make the day a success. The date has been set, May 14. It is always the second Saturday in May, (despite the date identified on your Society calendar). The map printer has been alerted - John Peterson is managing solicitation of the map business sponsors - the tag sale applications (advance copy page 3) will be available April 1 and close April 30. The closing lead time allows the designers and printer to prepare the trail map.

It's time to become familiar with your attic again, to plan your own sale or to donate to the Society's sale. The Society will have both a tag sale and a silent-auction tent on the Callander House lawn. The auction will offer special, more "pricey" items. Last year we had more than a dozen items ranging from a small dinette set to an antique buffet. Prints, mirrors and frames were especially popular. April and May dates to leave donations at the Callander House garage are: April 23, 30, and May 7. Pick-ups can be arranged by calling our information volunteer, Ruth Freeburg, 342-3636.

If you're available for short term projects, volunteers to price items, deliver house identity poles, and notify radio stations about the tag sale would be helpful.

Alerted by Yankee Magazine and local media, last year thousands of visitors came from surrounding towns and states to check-out the 123 tag sales on our map.

9th Annual Town-Wide Tag Sale
Sponsored by The Portland Historical Society, Inc.
Benefiting the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History

PLAN A TAG SALE

Saturday, May 14th

8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

RAIN OR SHINE

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:

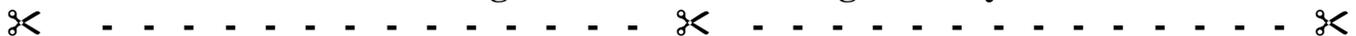
- The Historical Society will help to promote your Tag Sale.
- Your contributions will help fund Historical Society projects.

The Portland Historical Society will provide:

- ☛ Tag Sale Hints
- ☛ Advertising
- ☛ House Marker sign
- ☛ Location Map w/ sale types

Option	How it works:	Sign up by April 15th	Sign up April 16 - 30
1.	Have a sale at your own home or neighborhood for your benefit.	\$20.	\$25.
or 2.	Tailgate at Hemlock Grange parking area, jct. Rte. 17 & Sage Hollow Rd.	\$20.	\$25.
or 3.	Donate items to benefit the Historical Society tag sales at Hemlock Grange and Callander House. (No clothing, text books, or unwieldy items, please.)	Items may be delivered to the Society Saturdays, April 23, 30, & May 7 at Callander House garage, 492 Main St. from 9-11 AM. Pickup also available. Call 342-3636.	

BAKE SALE with coffee & hot dogs at Society Tag Sale, Hemlock Grange, 17 Sage Hollow Road on Tag Sale Day.



*Clip and send to Portland Historical Society Tag Sale, P. O. Box 98, Portland, CT, 06480
 Make checks payable to: Portland Historical Society*

Contact Information:	Options (Please check all that apply)	Before April 16	April-16 - 30
Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Home sale	\$20.	\$25.
Sale Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailgate at Grange	\$20.	\$25.
Phone:	Circle Home Sale Type: toys/tools/misc./_____		
Will you have Tag Sale if it rains? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

CALLANDER HOUSE MUSEUM NEWS . . .

Museum exhibits through April feature the history of the “Merrie Mixers Square Dance Club”, Mary Lewis’ 45 year school teaching record as teacher and as principal of Gildersleeve School, photos of old houses related to her genealogy with several early Portland documents. Winter is celebrated with old sports and ice-fishing equipment, a 1920’s raccoon coat, and a black bearskin sleigh robe. Our regular collection has been enhanced with a Portland rocks and minerals display courtesy of *Mark Mitchell*.

Museum Docents - *Mary Ann Dolan*

The docents who volunteered for the museum opening on February 6th were treated to an unexpected visit from Ruth Callander’s grandniece, Wendy Whicher. She spent a couple of hours with us, admiring the museum for the first time while sharing stories of Ruth and memories of visits to her home. Miss Whicher lives in Colorado, but is visiting with family in New Britain for a few months while she conducts research for a book about Ruth’s grandfather, the Reverend Alvah Lillie Frisbie (1821-1917).

The wonderful thing about being a museum docent is that you never know who will walk through the door, bringing with them stories to share with you and great memories of Portland. There’s no reason to have any trepidation about being a docent because you don’t need to “know everything about Portland”. Docents work in groups for each museum opening, and if there are questions that require research, they can always be referred to members having expertise in the particular area of interest. As docents we are responsible for welcoming museum visitors and guiding their exploration of the exhibits. If you are interested in joining the docent group, please contact Mary Ann Dolan at 342-0594. We’re planning an orientation meeting for new docents during March.



*Pat Crowther’s father’s raccoon coat.
(or could it really be Inspector Clouseau?)*

HOLIDAY EXHIBIT A SUCCESS . . .

The doll houses and trains display brought many visitors from Portland and surrounding towns. Collectors and would-be collectors were enchanted with the wonderful miniature rooms while folks of all ages stood mesmerized by the train display action.

Tom Ladny is already working on a surprise addition to the Crowther-Ladny train layout. Can we find ten more doll houses to complete the year-end display for 2005? *There are only 10 more months to finish that doll house you’ve been working on!!*



THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

Before the advent of Coast Guard Ice Breakers

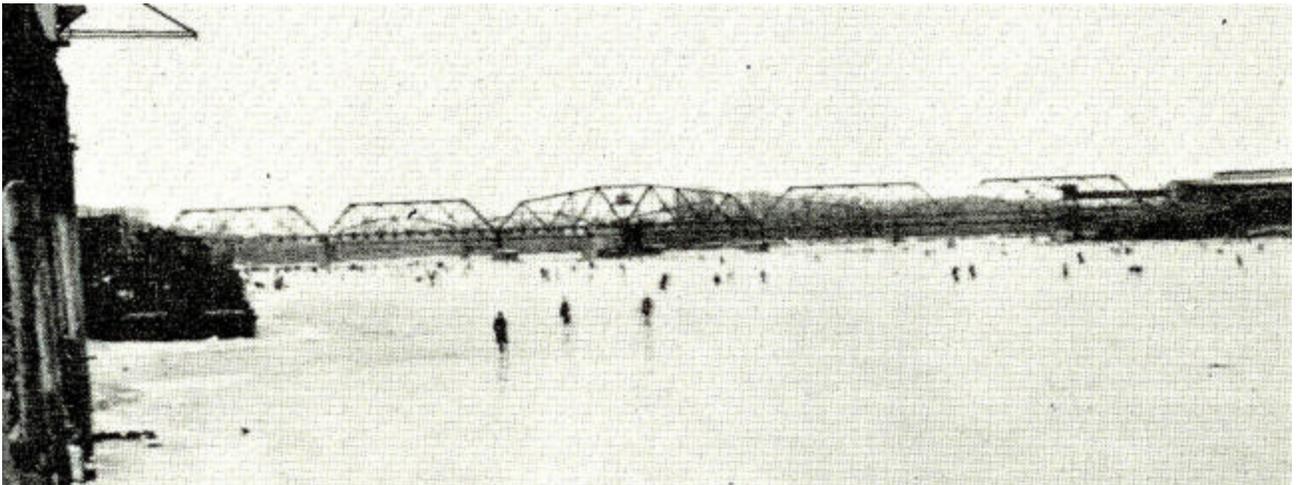
100 YEARS AGO: DECEMBER 24, 1904
(from the Middletown Press)

PORTLAND - Nearly all the pedestrians use the ice now as a passage to Middletown. There is a good path across, just below the highway bridge. At the Portland end at high tide, there are a few feet of water, about ankle deep, which makes it necessary to walk up to the quarry dock to reach the land. A plank placed across this annoying place would save a great deal of trouble.

100 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 7, 1905
(from the Middletown Press)

PORTLAND - At Pacousett pond on Monday last, about 100 lines were set, and the ice was covered with small holes, which the fishermen had made in order to try their luck at pickerel and perch, the latter being the most numerous. Eli Tryon, who visits the pond several times a week, finds the fishing very good indeed; and Monday captured a fine string of fish.

(Suffering annoyance saved bridge tolls!)



River travelers - 1898 bridge in background

Excerpt from "Yankee Township", Carl F. Price, 1941

Miss Margaret S. Dart of Middle Haddam cherishes a collection of fifty-eight letters received by her great-uncle Cyrus Hurd, from his father, mother and three sisters in Middle Haddam, at various times from 1849 to 1863, while he was in California with the gold diggers. One of the letters from his mother, Mrs. Belinda Norton Hurd (nee Smith), dated in March, 1856, describes a great sleighing party of five hundred people from various towns along the river, in three hundred sleighs, that assembled at the hotel in East Haddam, dined there and then rode up the river on the ice to Middletown and back. The letter is sprightly, full of humor, and makes much of the wonderful opportunity they had had of visiting the great metropolis of Middletown! Perhaps some of the people of Hog Hill (*and Portland*) joined in these sleigh parties, which had long been a custom of this region.

**IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS
AND SUPPORTERS WHO DIED IN RECENT YEARS**

Sam DelRusso *Clarence Ferguson*
John Flanagan *Robert Goodrich*
Warren Jackson *Anne Kavanaugh*
Donald Kelsey *Patricia Rockwood*
John Russell *Audrey Scheer*
Charles Woltmann

30th Annual Meeting. The November, 2004, Annual Meeting inducted a new Vice President, **John Peterson**, the only change in our board roster. Treasurer **Jim McCabe** reported an encouraging financial picture for the Society which raised more than \$18,000 in non-endowment income. We hope to do as well this year with our fund-raising projects. *Concentrate on sunny weather for Town-Wide Tag Sale Day, May 14th!*



Charter members Bob McDougall, Hazel Robinson, Marion Anderson and Vivian Dower at our 30th Annual Meeting.

callander house cupboard

Items may be ordered by mail or obtained at the museum..

<i>"Images of Portland"</i> book by Bob McDougall	\$20.	Portland Scenes Notepad (50 pgs., 5 scenes)	\$3. Ea.
Callander House Stoneware Jar\$25. Ea.	Portland Scenes Tea Towel	\$6. Ea.
2005 Heritage Calendar	\$6. Ea.	Calendar (back issues)	\$5. Ea.
Magnets (as shown & described in Sept., 04 Newsletter)	\$2. Ea.;	3 for \$5.;	set of 20: \$30.
Meshomasic Forest Video (John LeShane)	\$5. Ea.		

Please include \$2. shipping charge for each \$10. of order.

IS YOUR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP CURRENT FOR 2005?

We've listed below paid-up members as of early February for the current year. If you're not listed, check the Mailing label on this Newsletter. If "Life" appears, your life membership has been paid. If "2005" appears, you have paid your dues for this year. Otherwise, the last year for which we have received dues is shown.

The Society needs you as a contributing member. Not only financially, but also with your suggestions, your help and your knowledge of Portland's past. Dues: (Individual \$10; family \$20; lifetime \$250) should be mailed to: Portland Historical Society, Inc., P.O.Box 98, Portland, CT 06480. Call me, Bill Frisbie (342-0303) if you have questions.

Ahlberg, Dorothy	*Dolan, Mary Ann	*Jackson, MaryJane	Parks, George & Constance
Anderson, Alan & Joan	Dower, Walter & Vivian	Johnson, George & Carolyn	*Peltz, Ethel Grower
Anderson, Darren D.	Downing, Isabel	Johnson, Hazel S.	Perruccio, William & Virginia
Anderson, Marion	duPont, Judith Gildersleeve	Johnson, Robert & Christiane	Peterson, Ernest & Phyllis
Anderson, Suzanne	Ellsworth, Elizabeth P.	Johnson, Stuart & Beatrice	Peterson, John & Marlene
*Aresco, Patricia S.	Ellsworth, Frances & Family	Jozus, Ivar & Carol	Petzold, William & Paula
Blacha, Edward S.	Epstein, Dr. Joseph & Estelle	*Kavanaugh, Anne	Prout, Janet
*Bourret, Sandy	Fine, Jeff & Fiona	Keenan, Violet D.	Puglisi, Sal & Ethel
Bransfield, Susan S.	*Finkelstein, Mark J.	Kelsey, Jean	*Richards, Lucile Chapman
*Brede, Colleen M.	Flood, Mary H.	Keser, Marie	*Robinson, Hazel
Brede, Kathleen & George	Foster, Myron & Jane	Kollias, Paris J.	Robinson, Rebecca G.
Broberg, Grace	Fraulino, Faith & family	Kutz, Mrs. Roselies	Rousseau, Edward A.
Bronson, Charles & Nancy	Freeburg, Ruth S.	Kuzminski, David & Ronna	*Sarbaugh, James
Bryan, Marion Basiel	Frisbie, Bill & Phyllis	Labbadia, Karen	*Schufer, John H.
Burbank, Marybeth Keser	Geiges, Myrna G.	Lantos, Dr. Joseph & Family	Schultz, Brian & Suzanne
*Burke, Dr. & Mrs. Gerald	Gilbert, Ann & John	Larson, Bill & Evelyn	*Scianna, Mr./Mrs. Peter P.
Bylan, Joy C.	Gilbert, Bob & Arline	Law, George & Elaine	*Sloan, Ann Gildersleeve
Cannon, Mary Anne	Gilbert, Joan R.	LeShane, John	Smith, John C.
Castelli, Sandra	Gildersleeve, Rick & Lynn	Levay, John J.	Sprague, Frances M.
Chalfont, Helen F.	*Gildersleeve, Richard O.	Lindquist, Robert C.	Stanciff, Robert C.
Chapman, Fred & Barbara	Gildersleeve, Kirsten & Oliver	Lineen, Marty	*Stemmler, Michael A.
Chowaniec, Duane Marie	Giuliano, Michael & Marra	Lojeski, Marjorie H.	*Sullivan, Bill & Chris
Clark, Barbara	*Goodrich, Beatrice	Lucas, Jacqueline Hale	Sullivan, Francis & Hildur
Cohan, Fred & Susan	Graves, Richard & Judy	Luppi, Joanne A.	Sweet, Jane
Collins, Any & Gary	Grover, Alan & Ruth	Magnotta, Dorothy	*Taylor, Donald A.
Conklin, John F.	*Guernsey, Jacqueline C.	Markham, Donald R.	Taylor, Loraine B.
Connolly, Peter & Jeanette	Guild, Virginia	Masley, Linda	Tierney, Peggy
Cotter, Richard	Guilmette, Randy & Joan	Mattesen, Greg/Kelly/Amelia	Tyler, Bruce & Karen
Cozzi, Yvonne	Hale, Edward	*McCabe, Jim & Martha	Valk, Candy
*Cramer, Lucille C.	*Hale, Elsie M.	McCormick, Janice	Van Steenberg, Lisa
*Crowther, Dr. & Mrs. D S F	Hale, George & Judy	*McDougall, Dylan Stephen	*Van Steenberg, Richard
*Csere, James	Hale, Robert A.	*McDougall, Robert W.	Waldman, Arthur & Phyllis
Cunningham, Denis	Harder, Larry & Drusilla	McMahon, Anna Natalie	Washburn, Bethia Robinson
*Cunningham, Linda	Harmon, Richard & Jean	Mueller, Nancy & Tom	Weeks, Sarah & Kenneth
Dalton, Sharon & Ray	Harper, Judy & John	*Muller, William R.	Weiner, Martin
Davis, Jan & Dan	Heerdt, Bruce & Doris	Nash, Jane	Werdelin, Norma
DeBerry, Carol M.	*Hetrick, Terrance J.	Natalie, Virginia R.	*Whatmore, Kenneth & Jean
*DeGraff, Norma	Hill, Jim & Carol	Newberg, Beverly C.	White, Mr/Mrs Wm. Blunt
Dillon, John & Bernadette	Hoar, Luva Mead	*Olsen, Walter	*Wilson, Alfreda B.
Dilworth, Jeanne C.	Hodge, Stephan & Jeanette	*Organek, Mr./Mrs. Edward	Wilson, George & Leora
DiNatale, Fran	Hughes, Joan B.	Otterbein, John & Diane	Woltmann, Regina
	Hunt, Donald & Linda	Paredez, Kathryn	Young, Charles & Susan
			Zampini, John & Kate

CALENDAR . . . (All programs are held at the Portland Library, Mary Flood Room, at 7:30 PM, unless otherwise indicated.)

- February 22 - Portland Library - “*The Triangle Neighborhood - an early black community in Middletown*”.** The speaker will be local historian, Liz Warner, who wrote “*A Pictorial History of Middletown*”, and edits a column in *The Middletown Press*: “*Press in the Past*”.
- March 22 - Senior Center - “*Connecticut’s Octagon Houses*”** - Laura Clementsen will share her research and pictures of 16 octagon houses in CT.
- April 26 - Portland Library - to be announced**
- May 14 - Hemlock Grange, Callander House, and the streets of Portland - *Ninth Annual Town-Wide Tag Sale***
- May 24 - Senior Center - “*Your Town and the Civil War*”** - Michael McBride will dress in a Civil War Uniform and display artifacts from the war, as he discusses Portland’s Civil War soldiers and battles they were in.
- June - Potluck Picnic**
-

NEWSLETTER - *Phyllis and Bill Frisbie, 2-26-05*



PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Mary Ann Dolan
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Newsletter!