



## PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O.Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

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### MAY 2006 NEWSLETTER

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#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT -

*Martha Lutecki, 860-342-3212*

**Town-Wide Tag Sale** - Over the past six months, the members of the Tag Sale Committee have been very busy preparing for the 10th Annual Town-Wide Tag Sale which featured 150 tag sales for an all-time record! Thanks to everyone who helped in any way to make our day (May 13th) a success. Whether it was pricing items, making and delivering signs, creating the trail map, soliciting sponsors, baking, directing traffic, cooking hot dogs, and all of the other and varied responsibilities that such an endeavor requires, your help and support is very much appreciated. It was a lot of work, a lot of fun, and it brought a big smile to the face of our treasurer.

**Tour of Homes** - A committee is planning a Tour-of-Homes on October 22nd that will allow visitors to view examples of the town's long history. "Yesterday and Today" will feature nine homes dated from the 1700s to the present. If anyone is interested in serving as a "greeter" in any of the sites or in helping in any way, please contact Sue Anderson (342-0433) or me.

**Wedding Exhibit planned** - Our next Museum exhibit was inspired by a recent donation of an antique wedding dress. The Summer display will be "**Weddings through the Ages**". We are looking for 'donations' or 'loans' of items to be displayed. We would also like pictures (or copies) of weddings throughout the years. It is not necessary to have been married in Portland, just to have lived in Portland. If you have any items that we can use for this display, please call me or Regina (860-342-3092).

**Coming Events** - We will also be planning a special open house at the museum on Saturday, June 10, in conjunction with the Connecticut Culture and Tourism Commission. Also, we will participate in the The Brownstone Festival sponsored by the Brownstone Quorum held in September and we will have our booth at the Portland Fair in October.

We hope you will join us in these activities and look forward to seeing you at our potluck picnic in June. Have a safe and happy summer,

*Martha*



*The Gildersleeve third-grade students are coming to visit the museum again June 5th or 6th depending upon weather. Tour guide Mary Ann Dolan would appreciate volunteers to help with the visit. Call Mary Ann at 342-0594.*

**Local History** The wedding dress exhibit reminds us of one of the more famous weddings in our area 150 years ago. In 1829 Reverend William Jarvis became the officiating clergyman in Portland Trinity Church. His wife was Elizabeth Hart, daughter of Major and Elizabeth Hart of Saybrook. They had nine children, four of whom died early of scarlet fever. In 1830 during Jarvis' tenure, a new church was built on Main Street. While in Portland, he suffered from an extreme case of whooping cough which reduced his expressive voice to a whisper, a condition that continued the rest of his life. Reverend Jarvis moved to Middletown Christ Church (the present Russell Library) in 1838. His beautiful daughter Elizabeth was married there on June 5, 1856 to the famous gun maker, Colonel Samuel Colt of Hartford.

Bill Van Beynum, in *The Portland Citizen*, in 1958 wrote that "the afternoon ceremony was attended by everyone who was anyone and the Hartford people arrived by a special steamer chartered for the occasion. The wedding party walked on a canvas carpet laid on Broad Street from the corner of Court Street to Washington Street". He also says that Elizabeth Jarvis Colt returned frequently to Portland and to the Portland church in later years. Her visits were said to have greatly benefited the community. (Researched by Doris Sherrow-Heidenis and Ruth Freeburg.)

**2006 Open House Tour** On Sunday, October 22nd, from 12 to 5 pm, the Portland Historical Society will present "*Yesterday and Today*", a self-guided open house tour. Nine Portland Homes in a variety of architectural styles spanning three centuries will be open to the public during the tour. One of the historical sites on the tour will feature a showcase of collectibles and the works of several local artists and craftsmen. Light refreshments will be served at the Trinity Church. The Museum will also be open that day for visitors. For information or to volunteer, call Sue Anderson at 342-0433.

## CALENDAR . . .

*June 4 - Ruth Callander Birthday Celebration at Callander House Museum, 2-4 pm*  
*June 10 - Special Open House with CT Tourism Commission*  
*June 27- Potluck Picnic at Fireman's Grounds, 6-8 pm*

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**NEWSLETTER** - *Phyllis, Claire and Bill Frisbie, 5-26-06*

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*Box 98, Portland, CT 06480*

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**Newsletter!**