



PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

NOVEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings! So much has happened since our September Newsletter.

The Brownstone Festival was a great success: we had 60 people visit our Museum that day. The wedding dress display was very popular. Perhaps for next spring and summer we can have a military uniform display to showcase Portland's veterans. The Brownstone Quorum is planning another festival for next September so we should begin planning activities for all ages to enjoy. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

The weather finally cooperated and the Portland Fair enjoyed a sunny weekend at long last. Mary Ann Dolan did a wonderful job coordinating all the people to "man" our booth at the fair over the weekend. A special thanks to all who volunteered their time!

Our most recent venture was a very successful Tour of Homes, "Yesterday and Today", coordinated by Sue Anderson, Chairperson of the House Tour Committee. I'd like to personally thank everyone - her Committee, homeowners, crossing guards, docents, florists, and anyone else who helped in any way to ensure the success of this major fundraiser for the operation of the Museum. Although it was a lot of work, we had a lot of fun as well!

The 2007 Calendar created by Bob McDougall and Doris Sherrow-Heidenis, pictures and describes all the tour sites for a lasting memento.

We are always open to new ideas for programs and exhibits so please let us hear from you about your thoughts and suggestions. We look forward to seeing you at our programs.

Sincerely, *Martha Lutecki*

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME -

SEE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE!

More than 30 years ago a small group of interested residents met to discuss forming a historical society in Portland as a means of preserving Portland's history for future generations. Enthusiastic fellow citizens were very supportive of that mission and became Charter Members of the Society. Sadly, many of those responsible for establishing the Society have passed away, but we continue to honor their memory by our support for the Society and its mission.

We hope you will join us again for 2007 as we continue to operate the Ruth Callander Museum of Portland History, which has hosted thousands of visitors, including local grade school classes, since our Grand Opening in 2003; continue to collect, exhibit and preserve Portland artifacts for the enjoyment of future generations; and, continue to offer historical and cultural programs free of charge for residents of the community.



The Society's popular booth at the fair

PROPOSED BUDGET - 2007

2005 through 10/31/2006 Using Budget 2

Category Description	2006 Actual	2006 Budget	2007 Budget
Books			
Book	614	1,100.00	500
Coloring Books Sales	836	2,460.00	1,000
St Clement's Book	195	0	15
postage-book	0	-12	-12
printing-Books	-949.54	-950	0
TOTAL Books	695.46	2,598.00	1,503
Calander Sales			
Calander Sales	1,831.00	2,076.00	2000
postage-Cal		-100	20
printing-cal	-1,680.00	-1,974.00	294
TOTAL Calander Sales	151	2	149
Callender House			
Interest Inc	0.41	1	1
Memorials	0	300	300
_DivInc	6,264.16	5,806.00	6200
_LT CapGnDst	4,602.22	1,744.00	2,000
_RtzdGain	393.13	0	0
_ST CapGnDst	299.67	312	0
House Maintainace	-43.46	-2,006.00	-5,000
Insurance	-2,412.00	-2,882.00	-2880
Landscaping	-638	-900	-900
Misc-ch	0	-365	-365
Repairs	0	-214	-214
Security	-234	-234	-234
Utilities			
Gas & Electric	-406.43	-652	-652
Heating Oil	-1,775.70	-1,977.00	-2000
Telephone	-154.35	-289	-200
Water	-632.82	-460.74	-700
TOTAL Utilities	-2,969.30	-3,378.74	-3552
TOTAL Callender House	5,262.83	-1,816.74	-4,644.00
General Operations			
Donation	818.96	766	700
Dues	3,285.00	2,820.00	2800
Misc Inc	0	50	0
Sale Of Copies	0	600	0
Bank Charge	-46	-56	-50
Dues and Subscriptions	-35	-35	-35
Licenses and Permits	-25	-25	-25
Misc	-11.12	-279	-500
News Letters	-929	-617	-1000
Portland Fair Booth	-120	-80	-120
Postage-Gen	-650.55	-226	-700
Programs	-328	-1,000.00	-1000
Rent	0	-50	-50
TOTAL General Operations	1,959.29	1,868.00	20
Income			
House Tour	7,055.00	0	0.00
Food Expense-ht	-241.96	0	0
Insurance-ht	-414	0	0
Misc-ht	-194.44	0	0
Postage-ht	-11.58	0	0
TOTAL Income	6,193.02	0	0.00
Museum			
Misc-mus	-253.7	-1,195.00	-1195
Museum	-21.16	-244	-244
Postage-Mus	0	-9.17	-10
Printing-Mus	0	-500	-500
Supplies, Bus	-20.11	-64	-64
TOTAL Museum	-294.97	-2,012.17	-2,013.00
Products			
Products-Misc	429	578	500
Yankee Mag	32	96	-32
materials	0	-149	-150
Misc-prod	-66.43	0	0
postage-prod	-46.5	-11	-50
Video Production	0	-78	0
TOTAL Products	348.07	436	268
Tag sale			
Bake Sale	302.5	354	300
Food Sale	666.8	441	600
Tag Sale Ads	775	875	775
Tag Sale Callander House	1,579.45	1,182.00	1500
Tag Sale Fee	3,405.00	3,000.00	3000
Tag Sale Grange	274.15	168	200
Ads	0	-83	-100
Food Expense	-250	-278	-280
Misc-Tag Sale	-236.86	-48	-48
Postage-TAG	-59.5	0	-40
Printing-Tag sale	-300	0	-300
Rent-Tag Sale	-50	-50	-50
TOTAL Tag sale	6,106.54	5,561.00	5557
OVERALL TOTAL	20,421.24	6,636.09	840.00



The 2007 Historical Society Calendar "Yesterday & Today" Tour Four Centuries of Portland Homes

The theme of this year's calendar is the Historical Society's October 22, 2006 House Tour, which featured eleven buildings in Portland, one 18th century, five 19th century, two 20th century and three 21st century structures. These included eight residences, two homes converted to commercial use, and a church. For the 12th month, the Betty Keser Scott Garden at the Callander House Museum was chosen. The centerfold of the calendar features photos of exhibits by five local artists and collectors which were on display at 329 Main Street on the day of the tour.

Order yours now! (see page 5)

Open House Tour - Sue Anderson, Chairperson

Thanks for your wonderful response to our Open House Tour event! It was a huge success, and with your support of it, we raised approximately \$6,200 to benefit the programs of the Portland Historical Society and the operation of the Society's Museum. Our ticket sales totaled 362.

A very special thank you to all of the homeowners who graciously opened their homes, the exhibitors for allowing us to showcase their crafts and collectibles, the committee and docents for all of their hard work, the garden clubs and local florists and garden centers for their generous donations, Business and Legal Reports of Old Saybrook for the printing of the tickets, Ed Richardson, for identifying the Notable Trees featured on the tour, the bakers in the High School class for their cookie donations, the Trinity Church for the facilities that were loaned to us, and to everyone who supported and helped with this event.

It was indeed a wonderful afternoon, (even the weather was in our favor), when the historic town of Portland showed off its old and new homes to visitors from every corner of the state and beyond. We even attracted visitors from Florida and Rhode Island!

Thanks, again, to everyone who helped make this such a memorable event!

ATTENTION!
DOLL HOUSES AND TRAINS ARE COMING!

Holiday opening, Sunday, Dec. 3, 2 to 4 pm
(Houses for display? Call museum at 342-5455)



NOTES. . .

Pat Crowther, our volunteer Callander House maintenance official, has repainted the garage and is now replacing the entry porch plastic and screens with attractive storm and screen windows. He has also been overseeing the removal of the in-ground oil tank and its replacement with an above ground model that meets modern codes and is in the style of the house.

Museum Gifts

When Hyime Paley heard about our shortage of mannequins for the wedding gown display, he devoted a day to search out discarded ones, and presented us with 3 more forms for our display.

Museum Visit

Beverly Montgomery and Linda Juliani of the Madison Historical Society visited the museum recently to return to Portland the diary of former resident C. N. Murray, which was found in their collection. Four small books dated 1868, 1871, 1872 and 1873 record his days. Murray was the Master of a schooner in the coastal trade. The diaries contain details of his freight: coal, lumber, brownstone and hay, ship condition and the all important sailing weather. There are many familiar ports listed, and where the next load might be from. We believe Murray lived at the corner of Prospect and Summer Streets

Docent News - Mary Ann Dolan

At the end of September I had the opportunity to attend a Docent Symposium held at the Long Hill Estate in Middletown, organized by their docent group, and funded by a grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council.

Volunteers from over 20 local museums attended, and many ideas for increasing the number of volunteers and making them comfortable with their duties were shared.

One idea was to involve students in the museum docent group. Some local museums have created docent teams that include middle school or high school students along with a parent or grandparent. They found that the adults were able to share their experience of growing up in the town, and the students benefited from the interaction.

It's also a unique experience to add to those college applications! If you or someone you know is interested in this sort of opportunity, please call me at 342-0594.

NOTE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP DUES

The number above your name on this Newsletter address label indicates the last year for which your dues have been paid. If in doubt about membership status, please call Bill Frisbie, 860-342-0303.

PORTLAND HISTORY

Thomas R. Pickering (1831-1895)

Inspired by a question from a Canadian about Portland's "important Thomas R. Pickering", we offer this Beers' Biographical Record, published in 1908.

The Honorable Thomas Richard Pickering, whose death occurred February 21, 1895, was a citizen of prominence in the State of Connecticut and of National reputation, a man whose force of character and true worth brought him to the front. His birth took place in Manchester, England, the family being of Norman ancestry. His father, Thomas Pickering, a mechanical engineer of Manchester, came to the United States late in the 1830s, his family, consisting of his wife and two children, Thomas R. and Mary, following him to this country. Mary is now the widow of William Marshall, and resides at Meriden, Ct. The mother died soon after arrival in the new home, and later Mr. Pickering (Sr.) remarried, William H. Pickering of Hartford being a son of that union.

For some time Thomas Pickering (Sr.) followed mechanical engineering, but he finally went into the tea and coffee business in New York. His son and namesake was sent to the best schools his father could afford, and as a youth worked for his father in the store, but this did not agree with him, as his natural bent was toward mechanics.



[Pickering's first enterprise was the manufacture of velocipedes (bicycles). He was the first designer to add wire spokes to the wheels. As a result, his light cycles were very popular.]

Since those days, his great invention, the Pickering Governor, has been known and is in use all over the world. The first model was formed by the youth at his bench, with the crudest of tools, and can be seen in the Patent Office in Washington, with the spring that, for want of a better, the young inventor took from a pair of hoops like those worn by the women of that time. This invention proved a success, a company for its manufacture was formed in Portland, the inventor being made president thereof, and thus he became known over the country; the Pickering governor is now in use on almost every steam engine manufactured. *[(Model in Callander Museum). His brick factory still stands on Pickering Street.]*

In 1876 Mr. Pickering was selected by the government as a commissioner to the Centennial Exposition, and later was sent to the Paris Exposition, representing the company and his country with the greatest credit. Without regard to politics he was again selected, when a commissioner was required to be sent to Australia, and to Vienna, Mr. Pickering being considered the best qualified for the position. During the progress of the Centennial Exposition, Mr. Pickering issued a pamphlet on Connecticut exhibits that attracted widespread attention and increased his fame. When the great Cotton Centennial was held at New Orleans, he was appointed assistant commissioner. He was decorated by the Emperor of Austria with the Order of Franz Joseph, and by the President of France with the cross of the Legion of Honor. Mr. Pickering never sought political honors, but was elected to the Senate in the fall preceding his death.

Thomas R. Pickering first married Miss Elizabeth Bird, a native of Hunterdon, N. J., who died in 1865, the mother of two children: Adelaide, the first of these, died in 1890; she married Dr. George Lunney, of Washington, D.C., who died when his child was but three years old, and the child was adopted by the present Mrs. Pickering, who had his name changed to T. Lunney Pickering; Joseph B., the second, died of typhoid fever, which he contracted at the Centennial Exposition, in 1876, when eighteen years old.

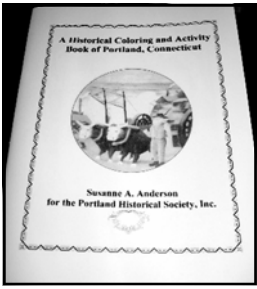
[A memorial to Pickering's daughter Adelaide, the tower clock on Trinity Church, is still visible.]

The second marriage of Mr. Pickering was to Miss Myra Davis, a native of New Jersey, who now lives in Portland in the elegant home (337 Main Street) where she and her late husband had delighted to dispense a generous hospitality, for the Senator had hosts of friends all over the country and also in foreign lands.

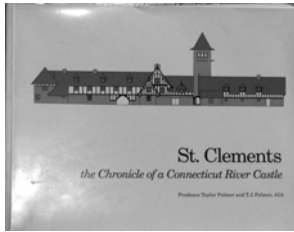
Pickering was a member of many clubs and associations. Quiet and unostentatious in his manner of living, he was most liberal and gave abundantly to every charitable enterprise. Portland lost, in the death of Senator Thomas R. Pickering, one of its most useful and distinguished citizens.

[Pickering's funeral was a major occasion in the state. The service at Trinity Church drew the Connecticut Governor, and the entire State Senate. Three hundred folding chairs had to be provided for the service. His family plot is in Trinity Cemetery.]

SELECTED ITEMS FROM THE CALLANDER HOUSE CUPBOARD



Sue Anderson's Coloring & Activity Book of Portland History. 56 pages Great gift for ages 3 to 9 - \$5.



St. Clements - the Chronicle of a Connecticut River Castle. by Prudence Taylor and T.J. Palmer. Available at \$15.



Robert McDougall's "Images of Portland"-128 pages illustrating the town's past. Every Portlander's coffee table needs a copy at \$20.

2007 Portland Heritage Calendar celebrating "Yesterday & Today", Tour of Four Centuries of Portland Homes & buildings. Calendars are available at \$6.



Callander House Stoneware Jar - a 1997 memento commemorating the gift of the Callander House as Portland's History Museum. Jars are \$25.



Decorative Linen Tea Towel with Portland Scenes in maroon and white available for \$6 each. (Towels have a rod pocket for easy hanging.)



Portland Notepads and Meshomasic Videos. Notepads of 50 pgs. with 5 Town Scenes are \$3 per pad.

John LeShane's Video of Portland's State Forest is \$5.



Magnets (approx. 1-3/4"x 2-5/8") of 40+ views of Portland Postcard Scenes available at \$2 each, 3 for \$5, and a set of 20 for \$30. Call Sue Anderson, (860) 342-0433 for more details.

To order any of the above items, list here and mail in the enclosed envelope:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, ST, Zip _____
 Phone _____

**Send to: Portland Historical Society, Inc.
 P. O. Box 98
 Portland, CT 06480-0098**

**Make check payable to:
 Portland Historical Society**

Quantity	Item	Price	Total
_ Postage: Please add \$2 for each \$12 of order			

CALENDAR . . .

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

November 5 - Museum open house - 2 to 4 pm.

November 14 - **Annual meeting & potluck supper** at
Hemlock Grange - Please bring a casserole or salad to
serve 6 - 8 people and your own set-ups. The Board
will provide desserts and beverages.

December 3 - Museum open house 2 to 4 pm.

HOLIDAY TRAIN, DOLL HOUSE AND TOY EXHIBIT!

December 10 - Holiday exhibit open 2 to 4 pm.

December 17 - Holiday exhibit open 2 to 4 pm.

December 27 - Holiday exhibit open 2 to 4 pm.

January 7 - Holiday exhibit open 2 to 4 pm.

January 23 - Video presentation of **Portland's 100th
Anniversary Celebration in 1941.**



1830 Wedding Gown of Julia Lansing Kelsey
Loaned by Carolyn R. Johnson

NEWSLETTER - *Phyllis and Bill Frisbie, 11-8-06*



PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

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Newsletter!