



PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

November 2019 Newsletter

Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History
492 Main St., Portland, CT 06480 Tel: 860-342-5455

www.PortlandHistSoc.com Email: PortlandHistSoc@yahoo.com

Vol. 45 No. 3

This article on Bud's Cafe is in a series on local businesses in our Society newsletter. The purpose is to make our PHS members aware of the variety of Businesses and the People that own and operate them who have contributed to the fabric of our Portland Community.

Bud's Cafe by George M. Gilbert III

On Sunday, October 20, 2019 the weather was off and on rain but that did not dampen the spirit of Bud's Cafe's 6th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser. The humble building at 158 Main Street was filled to capacity with enthusiastic patrons. The Hale girls and their support group served an outstanding spread of food. A tent set up in the parking lot had hundreds of raffle gifts donated by local businesses and friends. Portland's auctioneer Billy Barrows was the master of ceremonies and with the help of his wife Ann kept the pace moving. There was an exhilarating spirit in the air. There was hair coloring for children and adults — pink was everywhere! One hundred percent of the \$8,000 raised that day was donated to Breast Cancer Awareness. Over six years, the the Hale Family and friends have raised \$30,797 — all to beat the drum for breast cancer awareness.

This legacy all started with Bud and Joan. After serving in the United States Marine Corps, Charles "Bud" Hale came home to Portland. Building on the skills he learned in the Marines, Bud and a friend Cy Trebbe purchased a gas station and together operated it as Calso Gas Station (currently the gas station on the right hand side after exiting the bridge east bound). Bud Hale and Joan Gilbert were married in June 1956. Bud was born and raised in Portland and Joan lived in Cromwell after moving from Williamsport, PA with her family when she was a young girl. Together they settled in Portland and raised their family of four girls — Sue, Laurie, Nan, and Wendy. During his lunch break, Bud would eat across the street at Cannata's Cafe, an establishment that Nebo Milardo owned. Before long Nebo asked Bud if he

(Continued on page 4)



Pictured left to right: Sue (Hale) Colby, Wendy (Hale) Penkes, Amy (Estabrook) Brochu, Anne Barrows.



Over 60 Gift Cards donated for Breast Cancer Awareness.

In This Issue:

Our Community -Bud's Café pg 1
Festival of Wreaths -pg 2
Membership Updates - pg 3
Sharing History - pg 3
Diversity Group - pg 5
Holiday gift - pg 5
Calendar of Events - pg 6



2019 FESTIVAL OF WREATHS JINGLE & MINGLE

Our 8th annual Festival of Wreaths will take place Saturday and Sunday, December 7 & 8, 2019, in the carriage house at 329 Main Street.

We invite local businesses, organizations, clubs, families and individuals to decorate and donate a wreath for this ticket raffle. Tabletop decorations are also accepted for the Festival. Each year, we have raffled over 30 wreaths and we promise to raffle festive and fun-loving wreaths again this year.

You can help continue this tradition in Portland by making a wreath for this special fundraiser. If you prefer, a financial donation may be made to the Festival and your name will be posted during the event. Or if you like the idea of a decorated wreath and just don't have the time or don't consider yourself crafty, for a donation of \$30.00 one of our Society elves will make a holiday decoration in your name! *We ask that everyone register by Thursday, December 5, so that we can plan our space. Wreath drop-off will be Thursday, Dec. 5, 5 - 7 pm and Friday, Dec. 6, 12 - 2 pm at the carriage house.*

FESTIVAL OF WREATHS

December
7 & 8
12 - 4 pm

Carriage House behind
329 Main St

SAVE THE
DATE!

On Saturday and Sunday, December 7 and 8, we will host two days of Portland folks, young and old, wearing their warmest sweaters, gathering to see some great holiday decorations, enjoying something warm to drink and homemade cookies, making new acquaintances over laughter and holiday cheer — “Jingle & Mingle”! From noon to 4 pm on the days of the Festival, tickets can be purchased and placed in the gift bags near the wreaths you would like to take home. On Sunday afternoon at 3:30 pm, the Portland High School A Capella Singers will again entertain us with seasonal songs. Shortly after 4 on Sunday, the winning names will be pulled before the start of Portland's Parade of Lights.

All proceeds from this event will be used to further the Society's mission to preserve Portland's history and to fund educational projects for the community. We are eagerly anticipating the arrival of many fun loving and festive wreaths created by the artsy and crafty folks of Portland this year!



Please contact Deb Ellsworth
at 860-342-1927 to sign up
or send an email to:
PortlandCThistory@gmail.com

Thank you, Members and Donors!

Your memberships and donations fund the activities of the Portland Historical Society and the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History. Without our members supporting our activities, we would not exist. Please consider joining or renewing your membership to continue receiving this newsletter and to support collecting, preserving and sharing Portland's History.

A membership/donation envelope is enclosed. Your membership expiration date is above your name on the newsletter mailing label. Any questions, please call Claire Frisbie at 860-335-8581 or email PortlandCTHistory@gmail.com. Thanks again!

Volunteers Welcome - We Need You!

Interested in history? Interested in Portland's past? Have a few hours here and there to explore and assist the Society with our collection, museum, activities??

Contact PortlandHistSoc@yahoo.com, come to our Annual Meeting/Program January 26, or come to a Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History open house.

Passing On Portland's History to the Next Generation

One of the ways that we share Portland's history each year is to host Portland's third graders at our museum, the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History. We are challenged yearly to find new and interesting ways to impart the sights and feelings of many years past to children who more and more are focused on technology.

This year, we invited 4 characters from Portland's past to speak to the children and answer their questions. We were happy to welcome: Sawoppin - a Wangunk native from 1640, William Cornwell - an English immigrant farmer from 1690, Job Hurlburt - a quarry worker/stone carver from 1850, and Alfred Gildersleeve - great grandson of Sylvester Gildersleeve and owner Gildersleeve Shipbuilding Company, 1920.



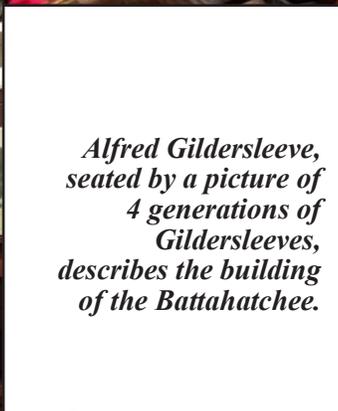
Sawoppin, wrapped in bear skin, shows stone tools of her tribe.



Our guide, Deb Ellsworth, introduces quarries & Job Hurlburt.



William Cornwell shows tools for clearing land and farming.



Alfred Gildersleeve, seated by a picture of 4 generations of Gildersleeves, describes the building of the Battahatchee.



Bud's Cafe

(Continued from page 1)

would help him serve the growing lunch crowd. Bud was soon working the high volume lunch hour at Cannata's every weekday. Unfortunately, Nebo fell sick and died, so Bud, having knowledge of the business, helped Nebo's family by buying the business in 1968. He and Joan subsequently purchased the property in 1974 from the Milardo estate. Bud always found the time in his busy life to serve the Portland community. The Portland Volunteer Fire Department benefited from Bud Hale's high energy. He served as Deputy Chief and Fire Marshall for many years. The 1960's and 1970's harbored many WWII vets who today would be labeled as having PTSD. Bud always made sure that their daily needs were taken care of—including rides to doctors, the Veterans Hospital, stores or other errands. On Thanksgiving they were invited to the Hale house to share in the family's Thanksgiving dinner if they did not have a place to spend that day. At Christmas they were given warm clothes to wear. Bud passed away from cancer in 1980 leaving behind his wife Joan, his four daughters, two son-in-laws and an exceptional legacy. He was 49 years old.



The working crew. Left to right: Amy (Estabrook) Brochu, Jesse Estabrook, Sarah Engle, Wendy (Hale) Penkes, Molly Penkes, Sue (Hale) Colby, Ann Barrows, Candy Valk, Judy (Barrows) Lane, Nancy Adams Volpe, Audrey Lane.

Bud's son-in-law Michael Estabrook took over the business until 1981 when Bud and Joan's daughter Sue assumed the role as permittee. From then on the business was woman run and owned. Sue purchased the business and building from her Mom and ran the establishment until 1998 when she sublet the business for the next ten years. In 2009 Sue's husband Gary Colby completed renovating the building. Laurie and Michael's daughter Amy took over after the renovation and has been running it ever since. Now married, Amy's daughter Harper represents the next generation. Amy has the full support of all the Hale sisters at Bud's. Sue, Laurie and Wendy are there daily preparing and serving lunch Monday through Saturday.



Molly Penkes puts the finishing touches on David Opuszynski's new hair color and style.

When Laurie (Amy's mom) was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2013 at the same time as Ann and Bill Barrow's daughter was diagnosed, they decided it was time to help the cause. Ann Barrows and all the Hale women together made a plan to raise money for breast cancer awareness. Ann with the help of her husband Bill, and Rit and Judy Lane have been the driving force in fundraising for this event. Since 2013 Laurie has been through Chemotherapy and surgery, and is now cancer free. Laurie emphasizes that *"early detection and a positive attitude is the key to beating breast cancer."*



Bud's Cafe is another Portland business that has stood the test of time and continues giving back to our community daily.



Left to right: Judy (Barrows) Lane, Ann Barrows, Auctioneer Billy Barrows, Candy Valk, Nancy (Adams) Volpe. Early morning setup of all the donated gifts from local business and individuals for Breast Cancer Awareness.

Report on the New Diversity Group

by Caroline Murray, Chairperson

centraletdiversity@gmail.com

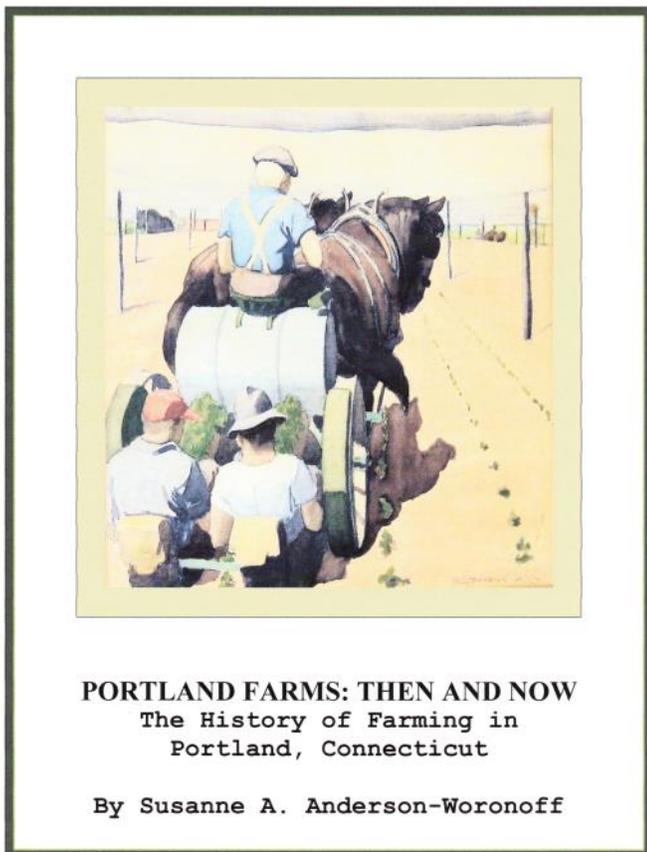
Annual Meeting Welcomes Diversity Group

On Sunday, January 26, 2020, Historical Society member Caroline Murray and other representatives from the Diversity Group will join us at our annual meeting to give a short review of the group's activities and their plans for the future. This will be followed by a history program and refreshments.

The Diversity Group formed after the Portland Library hosted a discussion on implicit bias this past April. They felt this discussion was excellent, but only a beginning. Cognizant of some bullying in the Portland schools, they were especially anxious to do what they can to make the very welcoming Town of Portland even more welcoming.

Their goals are to foster dialogue and social interaction among the diverse residents in Portland. People from surrounding towns are also welcome to join. Their plan is to provide a variety of opportunities for participants to meet each other socially and to learn about each group's struggles so that together they can seek ways to overcome these challenges.

The Diversity Group now has over fifty members and there is no fee to join. The cost of their events is minimal, covered so far by generosity of our community. Their 13 founding members include Portland's First Selectwoman, the Director of the Portland Public Library, Portland's Secretary of the Board of Education, pastors from a black church and a white church both in Portland, a long-time Portland resident interracial couple who are retired teachers from Wesleyan and a Hartford magnet school, a retired Middletown elementary school music teacher who has also lived in Portland for years, a retired Middletown Juvenile Training School supervisor from Middletown, a retired school nurse from Cromwell, a Portland couple who raised a white and a black child together both of whom are now adults and a couple of 60's activists from here in Portland.



**Limited copies remain for this holiday
gift-giving season!**

Portland Farms: Then and Now by Susanne Anderson-Woronoff, takes the reader on a journey through the farming history of the Town of Portland. It includes information and photos on over 100 farms, starting with the Wangunks, a small Native American tribe that inhabited and farmed the land over 325 years ago, to the farms of the present time. The 260-page book celebrates the living spirit of our town's history through the personal accounts and photos collected from individuals of the Portland farming community. The author's intent is to reconnect us with the heritage of farming as well as to provide the reader with a glimpse of Portland farms, then and now. *For each copy of the book purchased from the Historical Society, the Society will receive \$5.00. Cost: \$25.00*

To order books, email PortlandCTHistory@gmail.com or call Deb 860-342-1927 - shipping \$7 per book.

PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

Sat & Sun, Dec 7 & 8 - Festival of Wreaths
 12 to 4 p.m., 329 Main Street Carriage House

Sunday, Jan 26 -
 Annual Meeting of Portland Historical Society
 2 p.m. at *Waverly Center*

Check out our Facebook page or the Rivereast News Bulletin for more information on upcoming programs and museum openings.



Over many years, Evergreen Landscaping's Jim Landry has created and donated a large wreath made with a master gardener's samplings of varied and unusual greens, to the Festival of Wreaths. Come and see this year's collection and try your luck at winning one at the Festival of Wreaths! More information on page 2.

NEWSLETTER - *Claire Frisbie*, 860-335-8581, 11-26-2019

November 2019 Newsletter!

FINANCE BOARD
 Frank Connelly
 George Law
 David O'Brien

COLLECTIONS BOARD
 Rebecca Robinson
 Frank Winski

TRUSTEES
 Martha Lutecki
 Claire Frisbie
 Robert McDougall
 Christine Sullivan

DIRECTORS
 Alexia Belperon
 Amy Knous

2019 SOCIETY OFFICERS
 President - George Gilbert III
 1st Vice President - John Peterson
 2nd Vice President - Julie Mackoud
 Recording Secretary - Deborah Ellsworth
 Corresponding Secretary - Shelli Nolan
 Treasurer - James McCabe

Festival of Wreaths - December 7-8, 12-4 p.m.
Society Annual Membership Info Enclosed

NON-PROFIT ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 MIDDLETOWN CT
 PERMIT NO 575

PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 PO Box 98, Portland, CT 06480
 Address Service Requested

