



Westbrook Historical Society September 2022 News

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Members:

Summertime always brings us new visitors, new researchers, and new ideas. This summer also brought us news that could mean big changes for our society: In August, Westbrook announced that the oldest house in town may soon be donated to the town. The house is the David Bushnell Memorial House, at 121 South Main Street. It is currently owned by Leighton Lee III, who is willing to donate the house to the town if the town agrees to use the building for historic purposes.

The issue of accepting this gift is on the agenda at a special town meeting called for September 22, 7 p.m. at the Mulvey Municipal Center, 866 Boston Post Road. Legal voters of the Town of Westbrook and all others qualified to vote on matters of the town, can consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen, which reads "To approve the acquisition of certain property and building(s) located at 121 South Main Street, and to authorize the First Selectman to execute such documents as shall be necessary to acquire such property."

Many considerations and details need to be worked out, including how our Westbrook Historical Society will be involved. Your ideas and comments are always welcome. Email us, comment on Facebook, come to our monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, or stop by the museum on a Wednesday morning. We love to hear from our members.

Sincerely,

Marcy Fuller, President, Westbrook Historical Society.

OVER THE SUMMER . . .

- We launched **THE WESTBROOK MEMORY BOOK**. We are encouraging members of our Westbrook Historical Society and our Westbrook community **to enter a handwritten memory** of Westbrook into the new Memory Book. The book is located at our museum for visitors and future generations to read.

- The Aage Hogfeldt art and sculpture exhibit attracted many visitors to our museum. **Recording Secretary Gail Colby** has been spearheading this initiative. More than \$1,000 of art was purchased with proceeds benefiting our society. The exhibit remains on display in our museum, with some items available to purchase.
 - Have you noticed the refurbished Aage Hogfeldt sculpture, the *Horseman*, on the front lawn of Aage Hogfeldt's original property on Route One (the former Westbrook Gallery property near the Westbrook/Old Saybrook line)?
- More of John H. Wilson's art was donated and some is sale in the museum.
- Technology is our friend, but one of those needy friends who wants a lot of attention. At our society, **President Marcy Fuller** and **Archivist Sandy Forest** took the lead this summer to keep our friend updated, upgraded, and happy.
- We now have a book scanner! Which means we can work on digitizing our museum's collection. We could use some volunteers to give an hour or two to work with us in doing this. Please consider volunteering. No experience needed.
- **Archivist Sandy Forest** (and our society's cemetery expert), has been working with the town to restore Westbrook's smallpox cemetery graves, improve the landscaping around it, and erect a fence to protect this sad part of our town's history.
- Sandy is also busy untangling the many branches and twigs of the complicated family trees of those buried in the Old Burying Ground.
- We continue to receive donations of items, attract new volunteers with new ideas, welcome new visitors, and help visitors find information.
- We opened on Saturdays in July!
- **Suzanne LePage** agreed to fill the much-needed position of Membership Chair, as we continue grow our membership.
- **OUR 2022 "DAY ON THE GREEN,"** our society's annual arts and craft fair and a favorite event of our town for over forty years, was held September 10. It was a big success due to the variety of artists and artisans from Westbrook and other towns and states, the effort of Westbrook Historical Society members, and great weather!
 - **Lisa Carlo** of our society chaired this year's event. "We had an interesting mix of favorite vendors from previous years and first-time vendors. At the event this year were paintings of local scenes and by local artists, photography, a variety of handcrafted unique items, ceramics, jewelry, handbags, doll clothes, and soaps. And of course, the popular ice cream truck!"
 - Our museum was open during the fair, and had continual stream of visitors, both members and non-members. Outside and inside, we exhibited and sold the Aage Hogfeldt works, Westbrook history books, our Westbrook tea towels (always a favorite), and new notecards.
 - "Continuing this tradition of this fair is a favorite of our society. The volunteers enjoy the day, and the event also raises funds to help preserve the history of our town. We thank the members who volunteered and made this event the success that it is, with particular thanks this year to our Fair Chair, Lisa Carlo," said Marcy Fuller, President of the Westbrook Historical Society.

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

- **OCTOBER 1, Sat 9-2:** Come see our Society's scarecrow in the **Scarecrow Contest** on the town green at the Fall Fair (sponsored by Westbrook Congregational Church). What will our scarecrow be dressed as? Come and see. All we will say now is that it captures a significant piece of Westbrook history. **VP Nile Barrett** and member **Linda Durie** (two artistic ladies!) are in charge of our creation.
- **OCTOBER 15, 11:00 AM.** Take a short, guided, graveyard **tour of Westbrook's oldest cemetery** – the Old Burying Ground – to be followed by a **Cider and Donuts reception**. The Old Burying Ground is located at the corner of Boston Post Road (Route One) and Old Clinton Road, directly across Old Clinton Road from the Westbrook Congregational Church. You will hear the stories of some of our town's earliest families whose gravestones stand there to this day. At the reception afterwards, across the street at the Congregational Church hall, you can see photos of what lies below the gravestones today, a discovery made possible through the 21st century technology. Cider and donuts will be served, compliments of our society. This event is FREE and open to the public. (Well-behaved children are welcome.)

COMING SOON - NEW CHILDREN'S WESTBROOK HISTORY BOOK!

- **"I LIVE IN WESTBROOK, CONNECTICUT"** is coming out this fall. This new book is for children (and adults) to learn about the history of our town. Both the author and illustrator are long time Westbrook residents and Westbrook history lovers. The author is children's book author Frances Coneybeer Russell. Bud Loomis is the illustrator. Our society provided and confirmed the historical facts on which they base the book.
- The book will take the reader on a journey to the beginning of our town. It begins with the Native Americans in 1635 and weaves our town's story until Westbrook became incorporated in 1840.
- The books are now available to PRE-ORDER at busterbrownbooks.com. When released the books will be available at the Westbrook Historical Society and several other locations, including Julie's Cup of Joe.
- Watch for news of the release date and book signing dates our Westbrook Historical Society Facebook page.
- If you love Westbrook history, or you'd like to learn the story of our town for the first time, you will love this delightfully refreshing and colorful book. (We've seen the first drafts!!)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PRESERVE WESTBROOK HISTORY?

- **Volunteer an hour or two** to help us digitize our museum collection (No experience needed).
- Come to the **Oct 15 Cemetery Tour, and cider/donuts reception** that follows. Bring family and friends. (It's free.)
- Record yourself in Westbrook history! Stop into the museum and write a handwritten Westbrook memory in the **new Westbrook Memory Book**. Your name and comment will be forever recorded in Westbrook history.
- Read our **Facebook** page. Comment and share your Westbrook photos and memories too.

REMINDERS:

- **Third Tuesdays of every month.** 6:30 p.m. Monthly Westbrook Historical Society Meeting. At the museum. All members welcome.
- **Wednesdays, 9 to noon:** Our Museum on the Town Green is open.

WHO'S WHO AT THE WESTBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

President: Marcy Fuller

Vice President: Nile Barrett

Archivist: Sandy Forest

Treasurer: Darlene Jones

Recording Secretary: Gail Colby

Corresponding Secretary: Claire Smith

Membership Chair: Suzanne LePage

Textile and Clothing Curator: Roberta DeLeo

Publicity: V. J. Peregolise

Day on the Green Coordinator: Lisa Carlo

The Westbrook Historical Society Museum is located at 1196 Boston Post Road on the Westbrook Town Green and is open to the public Wednesdays 9-12 and by appointment.

Tel: 860-399-7473

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 148, Westbrook, CT 06498

Email: westbrookhistoricalsocietyct@gmail.com (don't forget the ct!)

FACEBOOK: [Westbrook Historical Society](#)