

(Letter from the Co-Presidents continued)

Another potential initiative that might also be pursued in the coming year would be to create better linkages between our traditional preservation efforts focusing on town history and historic architecture and those efforts by our peers active in preserving Guilford's natural environment by creating preservation-themed hikes through Guilford's protected open spaces and along its numerous trails. Those open spaces and forests and trails pass through and near numerous sites with historic resonances and affiliations with Guilford's past history. Connecting those natural resources with their historic backgrounds could do much to deepen the experience of both and bring more people into our preservation efforts in future years. An inaugural "History Hike" is already under development for the coming spring.

As you can already see from the foregoing, GPA is a dynamic, growing force for preservation in our town. We look forward to the contributions of energy and ideas from all of you, our members, in the year ahead and encourage you to become active in our many worthwhile undertakings so that preservation of our remarkable community will continue in the years ahead. Please donate generously to our work by renewing your membership and considering a designated gift as well.

With all best wishes,

Rob and Shirley

PLEASE NOTE

This newsletter replaces the annual appeal letter you have received in recent years. The annual appeal is the major fundraiser for the operating budget of the Guilford Preservation Alliance.

This year we offer you the opportunity to designate additional contributions to two programs:

The Yankee Magazine award-winning Historic Guilford Walking Tours, and/or Early Guilford Days, the local history program for Guilford's 4th graders.

Please use the enclosed remittance envelope for your convenience. Thank you!

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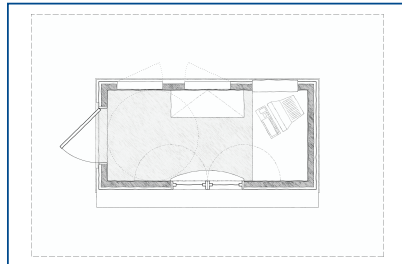
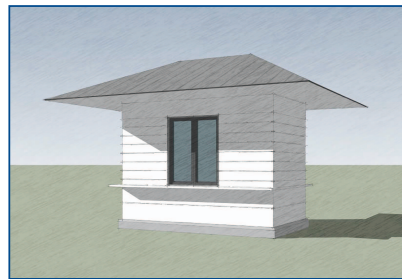


GUILFORD PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2013

Heritage Tourism Initiative



There has been much written in the news in recent months about GPA's plan for a visitors' information kiosk, which is a key component of its Heritage Tourism Initiative ("HTI"), whose intent is to foster economic growth for our town merchants, as well as increased visitation to and utilization of our town's historic house museums, and its wealth of cultural and natural resources. GPA looks forward to providing this kiosk to the town as its 375th anniversary gift.

GPA's board of directors began the HTI in 2011 after recognizing that Guilford's historic, cultural and natural resources, as well as shopping, dining and cultural

events could be focused to generate economic impact through increased visitation while continuing to preserve irreplaceable resources. Working under the professional guidance of Ms. Carolyn Brackett, Senior Heritage Tourism Staff for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, GPA commenced on a multi-year planning process to guide Guilford in developing a heritage tourism component for its local economy.

Starting with a community-wide workshop led by Ms. Brackett in October 2011, 26 different local organizations, agencies and state government units embarked upon a collaborative planning process that eventually comprised four community workshops, a three day site assessment visit, creation of a Recommendations Report and, ultimately, adoption of a five year Strategic Development Plan earlier this year that is specifically geared toward the promotion of heritage tourism in Guilford.

In the course of supporting the development of this strategic development plan, the GPA has disbursed \$24,000 from the Marge Schmitt Fund to date. It has received generous support, as well, from the Guilford Foundation in furtherance of the HTI's Historic Guilford Walking Tours, led by Dennis Culliton and staffed

with GHS students, which is the first program to be designed and implemented in this process to introduce heritage tourism to Guilford. GPA was recently awarded a grant from Connecticut Humanities and an additional matching fund grant from the Guilford Foundation which, when added to various in-kind services and contributions, amounts to \$28,000 raised to date for the planning of a visitors' information kiosk on town land adjacent to the Community Center.

The creation of a visitors' information kiosk was identified in the strategic development plan as a key component in creating a successful heritage tourism program in Guilford. Such a kiosk will provide a critical focal point and meeting place for the dissemination of heritage tourism-related information to town residents and visitors to Guilford alike. Existing tours such as the Historic Guilford Walking Tours could launch from the location, tickets could be bought and sold from the site and helpful information, directions, maps and other tourism materials and brochures could be distributed. Our goal is to staff the kiosk between May and September for 5 days a week with a combination of volunteer seniors, high school students and members of the general public who will be trained by GPA.

The actual structure is conceived as modular in nature with both an open window for in-person staffing and a computer touch screen to provide heritage tourism information at all hours so that it will function as a clearinghouse for useful information even during hours when it is not being staffed by our volunteers. GPA estimates that actual construction costs for the kiosk will be between \$75,000 and \$100,000. The computer component of the kiosk will offer links to the Chamber of Commerce, Guilford Green Merchants and restaurants, stores and arts organizations. GPA will provide historical information with input from the 5 house museums and several local history experts, as well as information derived from three public workshops funded by Connecticut Humanities that were led by Dr. Nancy Morgan and Mr. Jeff Dawson, experts in historic place-finding and interpretive signage, respectively, in late September.

To date, our proposal for siting the kiosk on town land adjacent to the Community Center on Park and Rec property has met with unanimous approval from the Park and Rec Commission, as well as unanimous final approval from the Historic District Commission. The Board of Selectmen similarly voted unanimously in favor of the plan, as did the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning and Zoning Commission. Final installation of the kiosk will take place sometime in late 2014 during the town's 375th anniversary year after the completion of successful grant-writing and fund-raising campaigns.

— Shirley Girioni and Rob Vavasour, Co-Chairs, Heritage Tourism Initiative

Notable Notes of Guilford

Carl Balestracci will present a program entitled "Notable Notes of Guilford" on **Tuesday, November 26, 2013 at 7:00 pm at the Guilford Free Library.** This program is co-sponsored by the Guilford Preservation Alliance and the Guilford Free Library. Carl is a former Guilford teacher and First Selectman. His deep interest in many areas of Guilford history has led him to become a very knowledgeable speaker. He eagerly researched the music history of Guilford to prepare for this event.

Carl will answer the following questions in his talk:

- Why did our Town drummer end up in the stocks?
- Which native son made musical history with General Pershing and President Coolidge?

- When ticket sales were down, how did Gypsy Rose Lee "pack-em-in" a the Chapel Play House?
- Who was Guilford's "Music Man" in 1950 and what is his legacy to us all?

Also included will be photographs, artifacts and of course, a little music in this presentation!

— Pat Lovelace



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Historic Guilford Walking Tours

After a first year of many successes for the Historic Guilford Walking Tours, we started this year earlier but not necessarily wiser. Most of the month of June our attendance was low except for the Connecticut Museum Open House Weekend where we joined the five house museums in Guilford and provided free tours on Saturday, June 8th. Over forty people took the tours that day.

Our tours have had three goals: to promote local tourism, to support our house museums and local merchants, and to get the high-school-aged students of our town to engage and interact with the history and preservation of our community. We have had great support from the Guilford Preservation Alliance, The Guilford Foundation, The Food Center, Breakwater Books, Page Hardware, Mix Design, and the Greene Art Gallery.

The early summer tours were not so well populated often because of the extreme heat. Our first-year and experienced guides sweated and persevered through the tours refining their scripts and presentation skills. As the weather became more Shoreline seasonable, the tourists returned to the streets of Guilford.

We did some special tours this summer; first for the children's program at Melissa Jones School, then for an exchange group from Turkey, and finally for the performing arts camp sponsored by the Shoreline Arts Foundation. Each tour was customized for the group (and in one case we even added interpreters).

A bright note over the summer was guide Megan Vanacore's creation and implementation of the Historic Guilford Bus Tours. Megan created, marketed, and led tours of various historic neighborhoods in Guilford from Meetinghouse Hill in North Guilford, to Nut Plains, and to Sachem's Head. These tours used the Park and Rec bus and driver to bring groups of guests on these tours, which incorporated a favorite stop at the Dudley Farm market on Saturdays. We supported Megan and her goal towards receiving her GSA Gold Award.

In September, as we struggled with experienced guides leaving for college and new guides becoming overscheduled with academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities, we found that the demand for tours continued to stay steady. When surveyed to find where customers were finding out about the tours in Fairfield, Hartford, and Middlesex counties, we were informed that under the Google search "CT Walking Tours" our website and Facebook pages are popping up in three of the top four listings. Furthermore, when searching for "New England Walking Tours" on Google, we show up as the ninth listing. I also have been active on Twitter posting as @Guilford History and we now have 150 followers, many of whom are involved in Connecticut and New England broadcasting, the local print media, and the tourism trade. We have been re-tweeted by Guilford's own



Ryan Hanrahan and @CTGirlAboutTown. I think that our online footprint may allow us in the future to have a steady foundation of guests while always searching new markets.

As always, we are looking to the future. With Guilford's 375th celebration next year, we have already been asked to develop custom tours for two of the feature activities. The first request is for a tour associated with the Civil War Encampment for the weekend of 31 May 2014 on the Guilford Green, and the second is for the Guilford Covenant/New England Trails Weekend in early June. Both tours will be a programming challenge but will allow continued positive exposure of the Walking Tours while we bring tourists and townies into and through our community to enjoy our heritage and spend a little of their money.

We appreciate the first two years funding of the tours by the Schmitt Fund of the Guilford Preservation Alliance as well as the generous funding of the Guilford Foundation. Although we are aiming towards becoming self-sufficient, our marketing, payroll, and training expenses at this time exceed our expected revenues in the near future. We hope to secure continued funding by a private or organizational donor to ensure that the Historic Guilford Walking Tours continue to meet our three goals of promoting local tourism, supporting our house museums and merchants, and educating our future leaders in the history and preservation of our wonderful and unique community.

— Dennis Culliton

COMING: RAILROADS IN GUILFORD



The next time you are in Guilford's new railroad station, notice the blank walls above the doors and the stairway. With the much appreciated help and cooperation of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Guilford Preservation Alliance will soon fill these public spaces with large historic photographs of the old depot, its complex of buildings, long-gone people, steam locomotives, and even a horse called "Old Bill," who carried people and packages back and forth from the Green.

In time for the town's 375th anniversary celebration, this permanent photographic exhibit in the south pavilion of the station will serve to educate today's Guilford residents and visitors about the railroad history that helped stimulate the development of our community.

— Ellie Green

Guilford Preservation Alliance and Early Guilford Days



Thanks to the initiative of the Guilford Preservation Alliance Education Committee in 1992, Guilford's fourth graders continue to enjoy Early Guilford Days over twenty years later. Sarah McCullough and Becky Light had the vision to propose a program to teach colonial history through the history of Guilford. They felt that Guilford's rich history could provide the students with hands-on experiences to bring history alive. Two of Guilford's historic societies, The Dorothy Whitfield Historic Society (the Hyland House) and the Guilford Keeping Society (the Thomas Griswold House), agreed to work with the Preservation Alliance to develop the program.

The school system was approached and agreed to add the program to its curriculum. A grant was obtained from the Connecticut Humanities Council to plan and write a teacher's guide for Colonial Day, as it was then called. In August of 1995, the committee of historic society representatives and fourth grade teachers met for four days to develop the program. Follow-up sessions followed and a teacher in service workshop was held in October. In November the plan and accompanying Teacher's Guide were presented to and accepted by the Board of Education. The Teacher's Guide was revised and expanded by a committee in 2004 and reprinted through a grant from the GPA.

Two trunks were made by school custodian Harry Martindale, Sr. Tassy's Trunk was for artifacts and hands-on materials, to be circulated throughout the year to all fourth grade classrooms. Becky's Trunk contained child size colonial clothing made by Cox School parents. These clothes were presented to the students to give them examples of costumes to wear on their day.

The teacher's guide also contained information on the architecture of the period from Sarah McCulloch's

Walking Tour book. Also, included were biographies of early Guilford citizens written by Becky Light. The students used them to adopt an identity for the day. Descriptions of workshops, and worksheets for pre- and post- Early Guilford Day activities are also included.

In the fall the students visit the Griswold House, Hyland House or Medad Stone Tavern to participate in a scavenger hunt for artifacts related to life in Early Guilford. This begins their study of our nation's early history through life in their own town.

Each year Guilford's fourth graders, their parents and volunteers descend on Boston Street for four days in May to go back in time and see through hands-on activities how life was in the early days of Guilford's history. Five workshops are held at each museum, such as: herbs, blacksmith, tinsmith, hearth cooking, knot tying, weaving, games, colonial school, stenciling, paper cutting, and rug braiding. Parents and volunteers occasionally present other workshops which reflect areas of their expertise.

This program continues to be funded in part by the GPA through the Becky Light Fund. The school's PTOs and the school system provide additional funding.

— Pat Lovelace

Letter from the Co-Presidents

As the year draws closer to its end, it seems like a good time to look back on what we have been doing since assuming the GPA's first co-presidency in June, as well as to tell you our vision for the GPA in the years ahead. That vision combines equal parts of getting back to basics by reviving traditions that have lapsed in recent years, as well as initiating what we think will be innovative, new departures for GPA in the year ahead, as we seek to broaden its visibility in the wider Guilford community and to promote better understanding of the importance of preservation values to the health of our community's economy, environment and legacy of historic homes and house museums.

With regard to getting back to basics, Judie Fine has agreed to assume the important responsibility of being GPA's official Records Manager. Meeting throughout August with Shirley Girioni, Judie has begun to systematize and create filing categories for GPA's archives and working documents at our office space in the Guilford Savings Bank annex building on Boston Street so that all of our extensive records will be physically located in one secure space and arranged to provide easy access to members. This is a major organizational undertaking and we are grateful to Judie for agreeing to take over the systematizing and maintenance of GPA's always-expanding records and document files. If any former board members are in possession of such GPA archival documents, please send them along to Judie.

With this publication we are reviving our annual newsletter so that our membership can have an at least once-yearly update on all of GPA's many activities and projects, particularly as the scope of those activities and its collaborative involvement with other town organizations has grown markedly in recent years. Until now, that function has solely fallen to the efforts of board member Sharon Olson who continues to serve as GPA's webmaster from Lawrenceville, New Jersey.

Our new board member, Jan Maiale, has provided invaluable services during the first year of her involvement with GPA's Heritage Tourism Initiative as its Publicity

Chair, making sure that members of the general public have timely notice of HTI-related events and workshops. But the annual newsletter is the one place where all of GPA's many other activities and undertakings can be showcased. Board member Ellie Green has agreed to take responsibility as Newsletter Chair for coordinating its re-launching with this issue, with considerable input from other board members whose articles appear herein, a considerable effort for which we are hugely grateful, particularly as she adds it to her already generous contribution of time as Membership Chair.

Another important GPA institution which we are looking forward to reviving is the annual preservation awards event under the leadership of board members Joe Nugent and Walter Corbiere. That event, which has not been held now for quite a number of years, is an important event linking GPA both to its existing members, as well as to members of the general public, whose efforts to promote preservation values by restoring historic structures or landscapes, or by educating us about the history of our town, enhances the quality of life for us all in Guilford. We look forward to reintroducing our annual awards event in the spring of 2014 and hope that it will provide yet another wonderful event to celebrate Guilford's 375th anniversary from a preservation perspective. We are also moving forward to complete the inventory of architecturally significant structures begun in 2005 by applying to SHPO for a grant to accomplish that work.

In addition to the above, we also look forward in the year ahead to pursuing several innovative initiatives to broaden GPA's visibility in the community and to encourage more young people to become interested in preservation work. One such initiative would be to actively recruit one or two board members each year from the GHS junior and senior classes so that their perspectives on what local preservation issues should be addressed can be brought into the mix and their skills as future preservation leaders be developed through board membership and participation. The demonstrated interest of students from those high school years has already been made evident by the success of the Historic Walking Tours and we might look to that cadre of enthusiastic tour leaders to recruit our youth board members.

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