

EAST HADDAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL

Well...we've reached the end of 2020! Another year older and a new one has just begun. To quote John Lennon: Let's hope it's a good one, without any fear.

I want to begin this newsletter by thanking the members who have renewed their membership for 2021, and I hope that the rest of you are soon to mail your renewal or to renew through the online application at our website www.easthaddamhistory.org. Many thanks to Membership Chairperson Annlee Sortland!

Your membership dollars are especially vital to the Society during this pandemic as we have not raised any revenue through our usual process of events, programs, and gift store sales.

The Board of Trustees is in the process of creating an operating budget for 2021, which is a balancing act between the desire to invest in the Museum and the reality of pandemic-related loss of revenue. We will continue our duty to safeguard Society assets and to build toward a better future.

Speaking of the future, the Board has been extremely pro-active this year in executing plans for growth. I want to summarize these areas. First, the addition of a storage room located between the main building and the Wynn-Shepard Room is almost complete. Designed by East Haddam architect and Board member George Fellner (Fellner Architects), the addition includes a rooftop deck for the two rental apartments with a center staircase that greatly improves both the aesthetics and functionality of that space. The room will allow for storage of tables, chairs, and tools in one central location that is easily accessed through interior double doors. Second, the three-year strategic operating plan will be completed in January, and will be presented to the membership soon thereafter. The work of crafting the plan was done at three Board retreats this fall (held outdoors, with masks, and socially distanced) that were ably led by our consultant Kathy Craughwell-Varda. This project was supported by a grant from CTHumanities. The prioritized goals of the strategic plan will drive all Board activities from 2021-2023. I need to stress that the work of implementing the goals will involve not just the twelve Trustees, but, we hope (and expect), many of the members as well. There will be plenty of opportunities in the near future for members to volunteer for committees and other activities. This is our town's history museum, and one of the main goals of the strategic plan is to grow our connection to the community through increased outreach and growth of membership.

The Historical Society was very proud to have collaborated with the East Haddam Land Trust this year in hiring Ken Simon (Simon Pure Media) to write, produce, and direct the mini-documentary series *Saving Land, Saving History*. This project was made possible by principle funding from CTHumanities. The documentaries can be viewed on our website www.easthaddamhistory.org.

The Historical Society is also collaborating with the Hale-Ray Alumni Association to fund a series of mini-documentaries that tell the story of the 1958 Hale-Ray soccer team that went undefeated and were immortalized by Middletown Press sports editor Fred J. Post as "The Zero Boys". This video series is being written, produced, and directed by Hale-Ray alums Justin Bellucci and Eliot Francese.

East Haddam is fortunate to have so many talented residents, and the Historical Society anticipates working on future storytelling projects that will illuminate the multifaceted history of our town and its many villages.

The Nominating Committee (Brian Evarts, Chair) submitted the slate of nominees for Executive Committee and Board of Trustees for 2021. The full slate was approved by the Board at the November meeting. The Executive Committee (Corporate Officers) serves a one-year term. They may serve three successive years in office. I want to thank the Executive Committee for agreeing to serve for a second year. Following is the list of 2021 Executive Committee, Trustees, Alternate, and Historian:

Executive Committee

President	Bruce Sievers
Vice-President	Laurie Alt
Treasurer	William Barney
Recording Secretary	Honora Myers
Corresponding Secretary	Phil Piccola

Trustees

Janine Broe	Judi Glover
Chris Conti	Joanne Maynard
Brian Evarts	Russell Shaddox
George Fellner	Anthony Valentino
Jim Francese	Gabrielle Weissbach
Doug Galford	Dana Wolf

Alternate

June Plecan

Executive Director

Marianne Halpin

Historian

Dr. Karl Stofko

The Board wishes to acknowledge John Ciullo, Toni Dumaine, Nancy Ballek MacKinnon, and Pat Thomas who have finished their terms on the Board. We thank them all for their service to the Board, and look forward to their continued involvement in Society activities.

One of the biggest disappointments this year was the cancellation of Dr. Stofko's annual presentation "*Mysteries of East Haddam*." This would have been Dr. Stofko's 30th Anniversary, which is all-the-more reason to look forward to 2021, to celebrate his return! And a special thank-you to Marianne Halpin for continuing to serve as Executive Director. Marianne catalogues the collection, plans and hangs exhibits, works with volunteers, supervises our student intern (Lexi Desiata), and responds to phone calls, emails, and inquiries from researchers and interested parties. There would be no Museum without Marianne. And thank-you to our volunteers whose many contributions help to make our Museum such a special place for us all to enjoy.

With thanks for our good fortune and with hope for the future, I wish you all a peaceful holiday season,



Bruce Sievers
President