



BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER NEWSLETTER

Vol. 7, Issue 4 - December, 2022 - February, 2023

From the President's Desk

www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org

P.O. Box 1393 / 98 Summer Street
Bristol, CT. 06011-1393/860-583-6309

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Bristol Sports Hall of Fame

Eleanor Wilson

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As 2022 winds down, we are predictably buried in garland, ornaments, Christmas trees, and artificial poinsettias on Summer Street, as we prepare for the Holiday Fair on December 3rd. By the time Saturday rolls around, I will be amazed, as I always am, at how beautiful the first floor of the building looks by the time visitors arrive at 10am.

Even at the building's most dressed up, it's still worth considering how far the former high school building has come since the Historical Society moved in, twenty years ago this year. The Society bought the building from the City of Bristol for a dollar, which is a pretty good indication of what a hot real estate prospect the city thought it had on its hands. Rather famously, after the transaction, the City gave the dollar back.

The building needed a spectacular amount of work at that point. From a vantage point of twenty years in the future, the purchase seems like a remarkable leap of faith. It was, at best, a huge project to take on. And yet, over twenty years, through the generosity of members, friends, a variety of preservation grants, and the tenacity of the years of volunteers who had committed to the building, the Bristol Historical Society's home has become an extraordinary meeting place. The building—the oldest public building the Bristol that remains open to the public—is home to three remarkable museums, the Historical Society, the Bristol Sports Hall of Fame, and the Memorial Military Museum. Several groups have met here over the years, including Boy Scout Troop 9. It remains a testament to the commitment of the groups and people who have leant their support to Bristol's first high school over the years. If you have not been here in the past few years, we encourage you to visit, and have a look at how this ambitious project as it has evolved over the years. If you come in December, you will even find us fully decorated for the holidays!

The building remains a work in progress with a laundry list of projects to tackle, including repointing of large parts of the outer walls of the building, and like many historic structures, there will no doubt be a never-ending supply. However, as we head into the quiet part of our season, I wanted to take a moment to remember how far the place had come and thank all of you for your support over some part of those twenty years.

Wishing you a peaceful holiday and Happy New Year,

Maya Bringe, President

BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2022 - 10AM – 4PM
DON'T MISS IT!

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

The Annual Meeting for the Society will be held at **6 pm, Wednesday, May 24, 2023**. Voting will take place for the following offices:

Second Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Director of the Board (multiple openings)

Members can make nominations for these positions during the nomination period which begins on **Friday, April 7, 2023**, and closes **Monday, April 24, 2023**. Nomination forms will be available by email, in the office during open office hours. or on our website (www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org). Candidates must be members in good standing and must have been members for a year to be considered. At the close of the nomination period, the Committee will confirm with nominees that they are willing to serve and publish member nominations and its own slate of candidates by **May 2, 2023**.

If you have any questions about the election process, please contact Steve Vastola (veeeman@sbcglobal.net). The full set of bylaws with the latest amendments is available at www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org and in the office at the Society at 98 Summer Street.

ANNUAL APPEAL

The 2023 Annual Appeal will soon be underway! Watch your mailbox for the Appeal letter and please consider a donation to the Appeal as those donations support a broad range of needs in operating budget, including building maintenance and utilities, educational programs, community outreach, and more. Donations can also be made online through our website, www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org. Together we can continue to preserve Bristol's rich past for the present and future communities.

2023 ANNUAL DINNER

SAVE THE DATE, mark your calendar now! This past years' dinner which was held at BHS was a huge success and you won't want to miss it!

August 9, 2023

Updates will follow in future newsletters.

BRISTOL BSA SCOUTERS' REUNION

On June 10, 2023, Connecticut Open House Day, the Bristol Historical Society will be hosting a Bristol BSA Scouters' Reunion. Bristol has always been a scouting-enthusiastic city. For many years scouting was so big in Bristol that it was its own council. The 1960 Annual Scouters' Day dinner program in the Bristol Historical Society collection lists 45 units; Cub packs, Boy Scout troops, Adventure posts, and even a Sea Scout ship! Plan to come to the Bristol Historical Society to view a display of Bristol-related scout memorabilia. Attend the afternoon program of reminiscing as people share stories of their scouting experiences. Afterward stay for the "Cracker Barrel" reception and catch up with old friends. More details to come. If you have any memorabilia you could lend the Society for our display, if you would like to share a story of yours, or if you would just like to be kept abreast of the details as we get closer, please reach out to Steve Vastola at 860-944-6567 or activities@bristolhistoricalsociety.org.

OCTOBER'S 3RD THURSDAY PROGRAM

BRISTOL'S POSTAL HISTORY

On October 20th our 3rd Thursday program was a continuation of last October's popular program on Bristol postal history by Bristol Historical Society member and stamp collector, Steve Vastola. Although a small audience was in attendance, we learned that postal items were a great introduction to learning and understanding both local and world history. Steve also discussed several Bristol items that we had. In addition, our display cases contained many interesting postal items for viewing. **Mark your calendar now for October 19, 2023 for Steve's next presentation.**

Eleanor Wilson, Program Chair.

NOVEMBER 3RD THURSDAY PROGRAM

BRISTOL PARKS PROGRAM

Our last 3rd Thursday program for the year 2022 was held on Thursday, November 17th. Deputy Supt. Of Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services, Sarah Larson spoke of the history of Bristol's parks and the role that Rockwell and Page Park played in shaping Bristol during the 20th century. Sarah also covered several renovations and improvements currently being done. If you grew up in Bristol attending either of these 2 parks, this was an evening of memories of those happy days. Our exhibit cases displayed old park maps, photos, postcards and renderings of improvements planned for Page Park. The Society's 2022 pewter ornament featuring both parks was available for purchase after the program. As a reminder if you haven't purchased this year's collectible ornament, they will be available at our Holiday Fair on Saturday, December 3rd from 10-4PM and at Bristol's City True Value Store, 750 Farmington Avenue.

Eleanor Wilson, Program Chair.

BRISTOL SPORTS HALL OF FAME

The 26th annual Bristol Sports Hall of Fame induction program was held on Friday, Nov. 18 at the DoubleTree in Bristol. Twenty-eight past inductees were part of the 250 attendees. Leon and Gussie Breen, deceased, Kim Corbin Varasconi, Clem Roy, deceased, Mario Marrero, Tracy Pomerence Regan, Reinaldo Soto, Chris Strahowski, and Pete Wininger were inducted into the Class of 2022. Also, in partnership with the Bristol Tramps, the first annual Julie Larese Award was presented to Ed Swicklas.



The Giamatti Little League recreation center was the site of this year's hall of fame initial student leadership breakfast program in October. Corey Wright, Little League Region Operations Director for the Central and East Regions addressed over 70 captains of the three area high schools on leadership skills to help them with their teams and in life. The program also included having students discuss real life situations that affect their teams. Two other programs are planned for December and in the spring.

The Bristol Sports Hall of Fame wishes everyone a blessed and safe holiday season.

GARDEN HELP WANTED

Do you have a green thumb? Are you a garden fairy? We could use your help in maintaining the BHS gardens beginning next spring. If you can assist us in keeping up our gardens, please contact us at office@bristolhistoricalsociety.org with your name and contact information or call 860-583-6309.

REMEMBERING RON MESSIER

The Bristol Historical Society Board of Directors was saddened to learn of the passing of long-time member and former Treasurer Ron Messier. Ron was a supporter of many organizations and causes, donating his time and talent over several decades from Boy Scouts to public service as a member of the City Council, Board of Education and Board of Finance. But what made Ron special was his ever-present smile and good spirits. He was the consummate "Bristol guy," marrying his high school sweetheart, with whom he raised 3 sons, working here and volunteering, and embracing all that was Bristol. We will be forever grateful for the time he dedicated to the BHS, at a critical transition time for the organization, as we grew into our new space and the financial obligations that followed. This month, we will remember him, and the many others who dedicated time to ensuring that the stories of Bristol will continue to be told for future generations.

MEMORIAL MILITARY MUSEUM

Are you aware that the Memorial Military Museum—along with the Bristol Historical Society and the Bristol Sports Hall of Fame—are now part of a newly designated Bristol Cultural District? Read more about the recent designation here: <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Lt-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2022/September-2022/Bristol-Cultural-District>

The Memorial Military Museum wishes you a joyful holiday season and healthy New Year!

BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

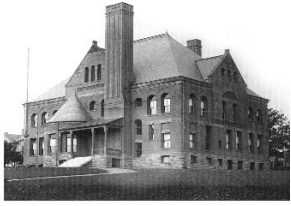
Each year the Bristol Historical Society grants a scholarship to a Bristol graduating senior. Funds for the scholarship are raised at our annual Pasta Supper which is held in February. The scholarship amount given is \$1,500.00.

We would like to continue giving this amount, however, we cannot rely on just the money raised at the Pasta Supper. If you would like to contribute to the fund but cannot attend the supper please consider completing the attached form and mail it with your donation to the Bristol Historical Society at P.O. Box 1393, Bristol, Conn. 06011-1393. Any and all donations will be gratefully accepted!

Name _____

Address _____

Amount _____



BRISTOL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER
PASTA SUPPER RESERVATION FORM
Thursday, February 16, 2023
(Snow date Thursday, February 23, 2023)
5-7PM
Parkside Restaurant
224 N. Main St., Bristol, CT.

PRE-PAID RESERVATIONS REQUIRED BY FEBRUARY 11, 2023.

ABSOLUTELY NO WALK-INS!!

ADULTS - \$30.00 CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 10) - \$20.00

MENU: Pasta, sausage, meatballs, chicken, salad, bread and dessert

BYOB: Bring your plastic glass and your favorite beverage. Corkscrew will be available. Parkside cannot serve but we are able to bring.

Please cut off below and send to Bristol Historical Society, PO Box 1393, Bristol, CT. 06011-1393 with your check to reserve your reservation. (860-583-6309)

RESERVATION FORM

Name _____
Address _____
Phone No. _____

Option #1. Indoor Seating: # _____ persons @ \$30.00 ea. = Total _____
_____ children under 10 @ \$20.00 ea. = Total _____
Gluten Free: Yes _____ No _____

Option #2. Take-out orders: # _____ persons @ \$30.00 ea. = Total _____
_____ children under 10 @ \$20.00 ea. = Total _____
Gluten Free: Yes _____ No _____

PLEASE INDICATE TIME FOR PICK-UP: (5:30PM or 6:00PM) _____

If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation. \$ _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY; P.O. BOX 1393; BRISTOL, CT. 06011-1393 (860-583-6309)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!