



BOX 363, GUILFORD, CT 06437 • (203) 453-2263 • WINTER 2021/22 • REGISTERED 501(C)3 NON-PROFIT

Letter from the President



Hello and welcome to our Winter Newsletter!

What a year it has been! We were so happy to have some events to offer our membership in 2021, after the long pause we took during 2020 due to COVID-19. It's hard to believe we are approaching 2022. We are excited to celebrate the Guilford Keeping Society's 75th anniversary in 2022. We have a full calendar of events planned for the year and hope to see you at them starting with our New Year's Day Open House which will be held on Saturday, January 1st between 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. at the Medad Stone Tavern. We will be following town protocols regarding vaccinations and masks.

We sincerely wish all of you a happy holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year! As we have mentioned on other occasions, as we approach our 75th anniversary we believe it's more important than ever to continue our mission while maintaining our high standards and excellent reputation on behalf of this extraordinary community. Everything we have achieved thus far has been due to your generous support and we cannot thank you enough.

Yours,
Bob Hartmann, Jr.



Medad Stone Tavern Exterior and Front Parlor

MISSION STATEMENT: The Guilford Keeping Society collects, preserves and shares the history and heritage of Guilford, Connecticut for present and future generations

GKS 2022 Calendar of Events

Date	Event
January 1	New Year's Day open house 3 pm until 5 pm at MST
March 19	Tavern Night at MST
April 23	Wine tasting at MST
May 14	Tea at the Tavern
May 30	Memorial Day picnic at TGH
June 4	Museums Open
June 11	CT Museum Open House
June 11	75th Anniversary Part at TGH
July 15 - 17	Selling ornaments and Handcraft Expo
July 7 - 15	American Girl Doll Camp at MST
August 8 - 12	Colonial Camp at TGH
September 16 - 18	Fair Parking at TGH
September 24	Beer Tasting at MST
October 15	House Tour
November 16	Annual Meeting
December 11	Holiday High Tea at the Tavern

*****Events subject to change*****

Images from 2022 GKS Calendar – 75th Anniversary



The Thomas Griswold III House

The classic saltbox dwelling was built by Thomas Griswold for his two youngest sons in 1768. The great, spreading Slippery Elm tree stood in a symbolic gateway for those entering or leaving the town. The house is one of two historic museums run by the Guilford Keeping Society. Photo: Oliver Husted, 1900



A DOUBLE-MASTED NEW HAVEN SHOOP

c.1910



LIGHTHOUSE AND DWELLING ON FAULKNER'S ISLAND

c.1900

Meet Our New Board Members

Keeping Society Board of Directors

Officers

Robert Hartmann, Jr.
Fran Swietlicki
Tom Black
Sue Stoddard
Hope Ryan

Board Members

Gail Buxton
Stephen Dudley
Dan Fisher
Kat Genera
Joshua Leete
Carol McGrath
Cyrus Miller
Peter Mousch
Dana Nelson
Tony Piscitelli
Susan Smith
Steve VanDerMaelen

Past President

Winnie Seibert

Museum Director/Curator

Pat Lovelace

Joshua Leete grew up in Guilford attending Guilford Schools, Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington and received his BA from SCSC. After a short stint working with his Uncle Brad, a stonemason, and injuring his back, he turned his energies to becoming a master carpenter. Prior to Josh's election to the GKS Board, he did the total restoration of the south end of the Balestracci-Hoff woodworking barn on the Thomas Griswold House property. As a descendant of William Leete, one of the founders of Guilford, he is fascinated by history. Josh loves being in the museums and being able to help.

Tony Piscitelli came to Guilford after being hired by Stanley Barnes to be one of his teachers. He taught 4th and 5th grades at Calvin Leete before moving to Adams to teach 7th and 8th grade science. He also taught earth science at the Outdoor Science Center before retiring after thirty-four years. Tony does a lot of volunteer work as a member of Rotary and at his Episcopal Church. He is very interested in the Colonial Period in America. In fact, the period of 1620-1776 is his favorite time in our country's history. Tony plans on helping with GKS buildings and grounds.

Guilford Keeping Society Annual Meeting

The Guilford Keeping Society held the 2021 annual meeting on November 17th at the Guilford Free Library. It was a very nice turnout of members who have supported GKS over the years and it was nice to see everyone after such a lengthy pause on activities due to COVID-19. The board held a short meeting to discuss regular agenda items and then the group was treated to a presentation by Jim Powers. Jim is a retired Guilford teacher and has written some wonderful books that are both interesting and educational. Jim discussed his book "Shadows over Dawnland". The book provides a look back at life during the early days of Guilford and its surrounding towns with a unique perspective of the Quinnipiac people who faced many challenges ranging from an epidemic, and the arrival of the English who proceeded to colonize their homeland. It was fascinating to be able to envision what Guilford was like back then with the Mennunkatuck people, as Jim discussed parts of Guilford that we still know and love. After the presentation the attendees had the opportunity to purchase the book and Jim graciously stayed around to sign them. Books are available at Breakwater Books.



Bridge Collapse at the Medad Stone Tavern



GKS experienced a scary event at the Tavern this fall. The bridge at the Medad Stone Tavern collapsed as a truck attempted to drive over it to deliver some mulch. Fortunately, nobody was injured. Earlier in the fall, a tree fell on the structure, and this may have caused a weakening in the bridge. The collapse happened during the Boy Scout Troop 471 camping weekend. The Boy Scouts were still able to do their clean-up project at the Tavern, and we thank them for the great job that they did. They were able to spread the mulch, help renovate the display area for some farm equipment, and do some much needed weeding.

The bridge repair will be a major project that will be costly as it will require some re-engineering to replace the structure. The planning for this has begun. For now, the access to the bridge is roped off as it will not be passable for vehicles until the repair is complete.

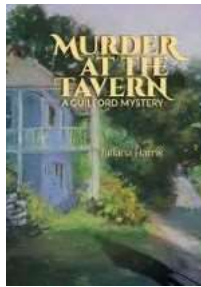
“Murder at The Tavern”

On a brisk and cold November day the Guilford Keeping Society held a Book Reading and signing event at the historic 1803 Medad Stone Tavern. Juliana “Julie” Harris, a poet, novelist, actress, and singer spent the afternoon at the location of her first mystery novel, “Murder at The Tavern”.

The event was the idea of Laura Hartmann, who organized the event to welcome friends and members back to the Tavern after a long hiatus due to the Corona virus. What better way than to hear Julie Harris read excerpts from her first murder mystery!

“Murder at the Tavern: A Guilford Mystery” is set on the grounds and woods of the Medad Stone Tavern and features a well-known Guilfordite as a suspect. Julie’s inspiration was a chance encounter with Rufus Bishop on the Tavern’s grounds. Thirty-five years later she spun that memory into an exciting mystery.

Following the reading and signing the guests enjoyed a delicious selection of appetizers and a variety of beverages. It was delightful to see members and friends at GKS’s first event since New Year’s Day 2020.



The Medad Stone Tavern is Available for Outside and Private Events

The Medad Stone Tavern offers a warm and welcoming place to have group meetings, get-togethers, and celebrations. The Guilford Garden club has done a wonderful job decorating the Tavern for the Holidays. The Garden Club had their Holiday party at the Tavern recently. The Guilford Newcomer’s club also held a fundraiser at the Tavern recently. If you are interested in renting the Tavern for an event, meeting, or private affair, please contact GKS at: (203)-453-2263.

Holiday Décor at Medad Stone Tavern – Courtesy of the Guilford Garden Club



A Little Pony Named Trinket

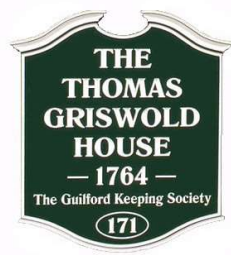
We are deeply saddened to report that Trinket passed away on Saturday, December 11th due to complications resulting from his choking on a carrot. We had two horses in residence in our barn at the Medad Stone Tavern Museum. Frosty, the larger horse, is 30 years old and Trinket, the pony, was 33 years old. Because of their age and lack of molars they cannot eat carrots. On November 13th. Someone disregarded the "Please do not feed the horses" signs and fed Trinket a carrot. The carrot became lodged in his throat. The vet tried for several days to dislodge it and was unsuccessful. Trinket's owner, Marty Russo, decided to send him to the New England Equine Center in Patterson, New York. They were able to remove the carrot, but because of his irritated throat he was unable to eat, so they fed him intravenously. He also developed pneumonia.

After several weeks of treatment with antibiotics he was finally able to return home on Monday, December 6th. A friend of Marty's created a Go Fund Me collection to help Marty pay for the expensive care. His barn mate Frosty was thrilled to have him home. The two were best buddies! Many people have contributed to Trinket's recovery, and we thank them all for their support and concern. He fought very hard, and we will miss him very much.

Trinket



Trinket and Frosty



The Thomas Griswold House Project

The Thomas Griswold House Project Began late winter 2021 when GKS applied for two grants. The Guilford Foundation gave Guilford Keeping Society a \$1500 grant toward the restoration and the repair of the Balestracci-Hoff Barn located on the Griswold House grounds. In June the 1772 Foundation awarded a matching grant of \$5000 for the exterior painting of the Thomas Griswold House and fence.

In June GKS initiated the Thomas Griswold House Project Campaign to raise funds to match the 1772 Foundation grant and additional monies to enable the completion of the proposed work on the Balestracci-Hoff Woodworking Barn. Seventy-three members and friends have generously donated an unexpected \$13,350, including a gift received last week. Altogether, with the two grants, The Thomas Griswold House Project stands at \$19,850.

The Balestracci-Hoff Barn's top priority was the south wall which had serious structural concerns. It was totally restored in September by Joshua Leete. At the same time Jonathan Wuerth and SteveVanDerMaelan acquired a number of windows from an 18th century Higganum home they were working on. They selected the best six single sash windows to be installed in the Balestracci-Hoff Barn to provide much needed interior light. The initial prep was done by Jonathan and Steve, while Philip Greene is completing the final prep and painting. How very fortunate to have antique windows that are figured with wavy and bubbly glass.

Once GKS received notification of the 1772 Foundation Grant award and receipt of matching donations a painter was engaged. Due to the weather and being at the end of the season's list work began very late. All prep has been completed and the bare spots at the Thomas Griswold House are being primed.



Thomas Griswold House and Barn

Guilford Keeping Society
P.O. Box 363
Guilford, CT 06437

Return Receipt Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 142



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GUILFORD KEEPING SOCIETY



1947 - 2022