

New Fall Exhibit: Saugatuck: A Harbor & Haven of Community Exhibit Opening: Thursday, November 13, 2014 from 5:30pm -7:30pm

The **Westport Historical Society**, in partnership with the Town of Westport, was just awarded a grant of \$8,000 from the Connecticut Humanities towards the cost of *Saugatuck: A Harbor & Haven of Community* exhibition and related programs.

This audience-focused exhibit in the Sheffer Gallery, which opens this November, will focus on the village of Saugatuck, Westport's historic center through the imagery of Robert Lambdin's mural, "*Saugatuck in the 19th Century*." Located on the river that divided Fairfield and Norwalk, Saugatuck emerged as a post-Revolutionary War harbor, evolving into



a mid-1800s industrial center and immigrant haven. After commercial decline, this area of Westport is experiencing 21st century rebirth and its history is rich with vibrant stories with broad humanities-focused appeal. Today's economic and social vitality offers a unique opportunity to build anew an awareness and appreciation in local and

regional audiences of the historical, economic and cultural significance of Saugatuck, for its not simply "a neighborhood of Westport."

In the Mollie Donovan Gallery will be a related exhibit, *Saugatuck: History under the Highway*. Here will be photographs and maps of Saugatuck before and after the Connecticut Turnpike (I-95) was constructed.

There will be a large interactive "Memory Map" on which residents can mark where a family lived or an early, or Italian owned, business once stood, or still does, what it catered to and what years it was in operation. People can also share some of their own memories of Saugatuck

28th Holiday House Tour Taking Shape

Hitch another reindeer to the sleigh – the Westport Historical Society is adding a sixth stop to its annual Holiday House Tour this year. "There were just so many great choices," Cate Tiefenthaler and Stacey Danielson, co-chairs of the WHS's 28th annual winter fundraiser, said by way of explanation. The tour is Sunday, December 7th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will be followed by a Twilight Soiree from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at the Lillian August fashionable flagship store in Norwalk.

Designer Olga Adler's beautiful Saugatuck Shores contemporary. Cool blues and splashes of red are signatures of the European-born Adler's style, which she describes as a "mix of

European and American influences with touches of Global Chic." So get ready to be dazzled. Adler's home had to be elevated after Hurricane Sandy and was completely renovated at the same time.

Weston artist/designer Kerri Rosenthal's fresh take on a Colonial. Rosenthal's interiors, like her art, are influenced by her early career at a Dutch fashion house that stressed "eye-catching color combinations." The designer's contemporary art is well-represented in her home, and one of her canvases will be auctioned off at the Soiree.

Designer Donna Gordon's Weston chateau. Gordon's spa-

cious, pale pink home is a grand example of French provincial style. With its welcoming open-shuttered French windows and warm stucco exterior, you'll think you're arriving for a holiday party in Provence. After passing through a stately entrance hall you'll be treated to front-to-back rooms filled with French antiques.

An expanded Cape on Greens Farms Road and a beach house on Danbury Road are next. The former was designed by Westport architect Jeff Kaufman of JMKA Architects; the latter is the work of Peter Cadoux Architects, with a decor by Lillian August. Details on the two homes were not available at press time and will be released at a later date.

A 1920s Frazier Peters house on Ludlow Road rounds out the list. This dwelling has such signature features as a stone exterior, faience tiles on window and door sills and a cathedral-

ceilinged living room. A feature not found in other Peters houses is circular woodwork above the staircase. The Westport Historical Society published a book this year featuring Peters' distinctive stone homes.

Guests at the Twilight Soiree will enjoy cocktails and appetizers and have an opportunity to take part in a silent auction of gift items donated by local stores and restaurants. In addition to the Kerri Rosenthal painting, there will be antique French pottery, home furnishings hand-picked by the designers on the tour, and getaway trips to an architect's Cape Cod vacation home, a ski house and an apartment in Washington, D.C. – all to benefit the WHS. So be sure to mark the date on your calendars. For further information, contact Barbara Brauner at (203) 222-1424.

From the Executive Director's desk...



Dear Friend,
"Expect the unexpected" is a good motto for the Westport Historical Society. I say this because as an

observer of the daily happenings of running a volunteer organization, you just aren't certain of who will walk through our door because they happen to be in the neighborhood and are intrigued by the poster announcing a great exhibit. Just a few weeks ago, I was honored to have Joanne Woodward stop by to see the show—a welcome visitor for sure. *Larry Silver/Westport Visions*, our current exhibit, is compelling. Larry's images are powerful stories of a Westport during a simpler period of our town's history. It brings back memories of places and experiences when there were no cell phones and you tuned into the surroundings with a thirst for fun and adventure. You didn't have to look hard to find it in Westport. It was beckoning you from every corner. All you needed to do was have your eyes open and be available to what was unfolding around you. It's all part of having that mindset of not expecting anything and being open to the opportunity of living fully.

The Westport Historical Society is that place where you can just relax and let your senses guide you through the building. It is never the same on any given day. First you never know who you might meet when you come in. You will certainly be greeted by a friendly face in the Remarkable Gift Shop. If you haven't met Mimi or Olivia, you're in for a treat. They know Westport so well that they can share a story or two that will certainly bring a smile to your face and probably a long conversation that you never expected. We have the resources in our shop that will jog a lot of memories and we encourage you to stop by and flip through our books to see what treasures you might uncover.

Our events are offered all year and they are as unusual as the people who make them happen. Our community's talent and expertise bring so much great energy to our building that it is a pleasure to be able to offer a variety of programming that draws a community together. Our *Coffeehouse at the*

Wheelers started out as one concert and now we offer these musical evenings every three months because Suzanne Sheridan and friends love to play in our gallery and share their music. Our audience is growing and people love the sounds that fill our gallery—another unexpected joy and experience at WHS.



Our annual kayak trip to Cockenoe Island is another way we reach out to people who can enjoy being on Long Island Sound and visiting a

place that is part of our environment, rich with history and beauty.

As a witness to the potential of what we can bring to Westport through the creativity of our members and volunteers, it is a true privilege to be open to the unexpected. I applaud you, our members, for your continued support, and am grateful when people come to our facility, not quite sure of what to expect, but always being glad they did.

Yours in peace, Sue

Kids Get a Big Top History Lesson at Westport Historical Society

WESTPORT, Conn. – Kids got a chance to learn about local history and three-dimensional art while having big-top fun at a circus workshop offered by the Westport Historical Society.

Throughout the weeklong program, which finished Thursday, kids learned about Alexander Calder. The sculptor had a home and studio in Connecticut and created the Calder Circus, small wire models of circus figures that move. They also learned about circus creator P.T. Barnum of Bridgeport. The kids also created their own Calder Circuses, as well as other art projects, and played circus games.

"It was really fun," said Parker Teed, 11. Parker has participated in a number of the Historical Society's summer programs, including a Junior Detectives program last week where kids learned more about Westport's history from some of the town's senior citizens. "This week we got to make our own circuses. We made fire breathers, and ringmasters and tight rope walkers."



Noelle DeFelice displays the miniature circus she made at the workshop at the Westport Historical Society. Photo Credit: Casey Donahue

Elizabeth DeVoll, the Historical Society's education director, said the organization tries to make local history fun for kids. Through programs such as the circus workshop and the Junior Detectives, kids can be

intellectually stimulated in the summer through educational activities.

"It's a little more intellectual kind of fun than they would get at a typical camp," DeVoll said. "We try to make it a little different and fun. They almost don't realize they're learning."

Schools have been cutting back on teaching local history, DeVoll said. For many years, Westport third-graders would learn about the town's history, then tour the Historical Society with their families. But that program was canceled after the switch to the Common Core, which does not focus on local history.

"We're trying to get that reinstated. People love it," DeVoll said. "Westport has such amazing history, and the kids

are really into it."

Mitchell Manusky, 8, came all the way from Easton to take part in the program. He said history is one of his favorite subjects in school.

"You get to learn about the past, and how things were and how they've changed," he said.

In addition to learning about history, the kids also learned about each other and made friends.

"You get to meet kids you wouldn't normally meet and all play together. It's unique in that way, because of all the different ages, and backgrounds and schools," said Noelle DeFelice, one of the students.

"It was really fun. It's good to make new friends," said Jared Gordon.

The Historical Society is also bringing in more adults through an exhibit of group photographs taken from the last century of Westport's history. Many of the photos were found in the vault, and DeVoll said the Historical Society has been inviting the public to come in and see whether they can identify any of the people in the photographs.

The interactive exhibit has brought many people in who have never visited the Historical Society, and that many have enjoyed seeing old photos of familiar faces, she said.

by Casey Donahue

A fond farewell to our most favorite art store in Westport **Max's Art Supply** – we will miss you Shirley! We wish you only the best and know that we were honored to be supported so generously by you over the years. We're grateful for all that you've done to nourish and support the local artist community. We were proud to be your friend and you'll always be in our hearts.

WHS Archives- A great place to go for old images of Westport! A prize-winning author Alison Lurie, whose latest book *The Language of Houses: How Buildings Speak to Us* about the structures we build and how they both reflect and affect us, was successful in finding (with the help of Katie Chase) over 15 images of older buildings that are still standing. We're happy to help people research projects and find the historical information and/or images that they're seeking.



Ed Gerber, President of the Westport Historical Society, hosted a luncheon in his Historic 18th Century home to thank the WHS major donors. Joni Andrews, Jane Sherman, Sara Menchaca, Sara Krasne and Shirley Mellor (Not in photo, Ann Sheffer) Photo by Phyllis Groner



Westport Historical Society
Get Connected.

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Event Calendar: September to December 2014

Go to www.westporthistory.org for updates and more information on all events.
For reservations, call: 222-1424 • M-F, 10 am – 4:30 pm, Saturday, Noon – 4 pm

Sunday, September 28:

When Ghosts Appear, History Speaks 2-3:15pm

Wednesday, Oct. 1- Dec. 17:

Children's Workshops 3:45 -5pm

Saturday, October 11,

Old Saugatuck Walking Tour, 4pm

Friday, October 24:

Coffeehouse at The Wheelers 6-8pm

Tuesday, November 4: Children's Election Day Program 10am – 2 pm

Thursday, November 13: Exhibit Opening 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Betty & Ralph Sheffer Gallery:

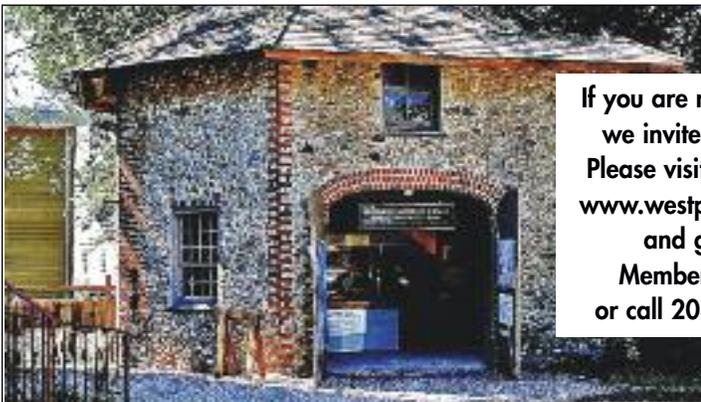
Saugatuck: A Harbor & Haven of Community

Mollie Donovan Gallery: Saugatuck: History under the Highway

Sunday, December 7:

Holiday House Tour 11 am – 4 pm

Twilight Soiree 5 – 7:30 pm



If you are not a member, we invite you to join. Please visit our website: www.westporthistory.org and go to the Membership page or call 203-222-1424.

