

U.S. Postage Stamps by Westport Artists and The Road to 06880: Colonial Era to Present

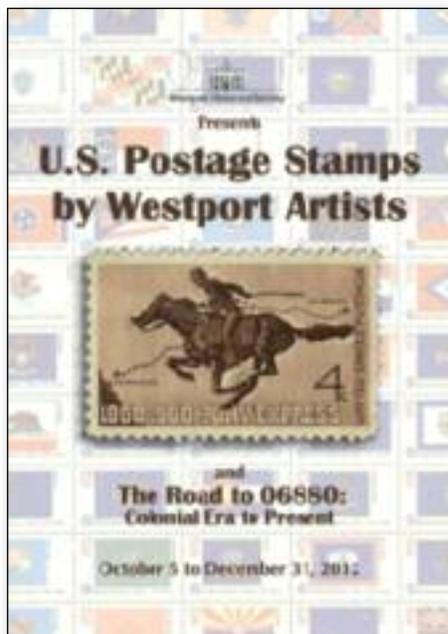
This Fall, the Westport Historical Society celebrates Westport's surprisingly visible and influential place in U.S. Postal History through two companion exhibits.

The main exhibit, curated by Leonard Everett Fisher, and mounted in the Betty & Ralph Sheffer Gallery, showcases 166 stamps and the 17 prominent Westport artists who designed them, on commission by the U.S. Postal Service's Citizen Advisory Council between 1959 and 1998, for national circulation in the billions. Featured artists include:

Ward Brackett
Miggs Burroughs
Stevan Dohanos
Naiad Einsel
Walter Einsel
Leonard Everett Fisher
Bernie Fuchs
Robert Lambdin
Howard Munce
Paul Rabut
Walt Reed
Charles Reid
Cal Sacks

Jim Sharpe
Dolli Tingle
Ed Vebell
Harold Von Schmidt

Drawing from the private collection of Westport's own Leo Cirino, a friend to many of the artists, this exhibit presents enlarged color images of all 166 stamps. Photos and biographical profiles of the artists, along with correspondence, artifacts and examples of the work for which they are better known, provide an intriguing context for the stamp designs. A focal point of the exhibit will be the influence of Stevan Dohanos, member of the Citizen's Advisory Council and himself a designer of 33 stamps, in matching artists to stamp commissions. A companion book, documenting the Cirino collection and the artists, will be published by the WHS.



The second exhibit, **The Road to 06880:**

Colonial Era to Present, in the Mollie Donovan Gallery, traces the evolution of mail delivery in coastal New England, from the days of hand-to-hand forwarding and reliance on the kindness of strangers, through development of the King's Highway Post Road, to pro-

mote timely delivery and commerce between Philadelphia, New York and Boston, and later innovations, such as named streets, numbered houses and zip codes. The exhibits will run from Fri. Oct. 5 through Monday, Dec. 31, 2012 at the Westport Historical Society, 25 Avery Place, Westport, Connecticut 06880.

We Love Our Volunteers, But We Can Always Use More

There are many areas of the WHS that rely completely on volunteer help and commitment to provide the services that make us one of Westport's gems. But sometimes volunteers come and go, and some of our committees are working with just a few, hard-working volunteers. Here are some areas where we could use more help:

As Greeters at the front door:
Wheeler House is open Monday thru Friday from 10AM to 4PM, and Saturday from 12 to 4. Volunteers work in the mornings (10 to 1) or afternoons (1-4), weekly or once a month or whatever schedule works best for each person. You'll be in the center of the action at WHS, greeting all visitors, respond-

ing to phone calls, perhaps showing people around the house, helping the executive director or education director with little projects, or helping with mailings. Barbara Van Orden, our volunteers coordinator, will give instructions on all of this. Contact WHS for fall scheduling.

In our Costume Department:

Kathleen Malloy, our Costume Curator, could use help going through our large collection to categorize items so that dresses and other costumes can be used in displays or for fashion shows. This work would be done when volunteers and Kathleen can meet together at times convenient for everyone.

In our Archives Department: This group meets every Tuesday morning,

from 10 to 12 to research questions from people who have asked via phone, e-mail, or in person for information about families, houses, events, and general Westport history; and to catalog items or collections that are donated to the WHS. Even if volunteers cannot work every Tuesday, we welcome anyone who can come in on a regular basis. Katie Chase, Archives chair, and

other current volunteers will help get you involved in these projects.

If you are interested in any of these areas, please call the Society at 203-222-1424 and give your name, phone number, and area where you'd like to work. Someone will get in touch with you right away. And thanks from all of us at WHS for volunteering!

President's Message



One of the goals of the Westport Historical Society is to inspire people to make personal connections with the past. At present, we are

in the process of connecting with the past in a momentous and enduring way.

Our beautiful home, Wheeler House built in 1795, was approved by the Westport Historic District Commission in July 2012 to seek local historic landmark property designation along with the Cobblestone Barn built circa 1847. Therefore, a study committee consisting of HDC members Bob Weingarten, Maggie Feczko and Ed Gerber along with HDC Staff Administrator Carol Leahy and WHS President Susan Wynkoop has been busy reviewing and preparing materials on Wheeler House and Barn to be presented to the Connecticut Historic Preservation/Museum Division in Hartford. This process takes months to complete but the hopeful outcome is that with approval of this designation, Wheeler House and the Barn will be Westport's gem to admire and cherish forever.

Wheeler House and Barn, located at 25 Avery Place, became listed on *The National Register of Historic Places* and *The Connecticut Register of Historic Places* in 1984 but these designations are honorary titles only and do not protect the buildings for the years to come. Only landmark status will preserve the

buildings for future generations.

Captain Ebenezer Coley built this house, originally a saltbox, for his son Michael in 1795. Throughout the 19th century the house had a succession of owners, including Morris Bradley who enlarged and converted the house in about 1867 to the popular Victorian Italianate villa style. This style is characterized by the flat roof topped by a cupola, decorative brackets, "eyebrow" windows, and a gracious front veranda.

Bradley died in 1886 and the house was willed by his widow to their daughter Julia. Julia's son, Dr. Lewis Wheeler, lived and practiced in the

to purchase the property in 1981. Wheeler House is one of the oldest surviving residences in Westport Center and is one of eleven documented Italianate houses in Westport.

The Cobblestone Barn located behind Wheeler House is the only barn with an octagonal roof in Connecticut and has seven exterior walls. The Barn is thought to have been built by Farmin Patchin, a blacksmith by trade and used in the mid-19th century as a smithy. Currently it houses the *Museum of Westport History*, displaying a diorama of the town as it looked toward the end of the 19th century.



house until his death in 1958. He willed the house to his housekeeper, who left it to Christ & Holy Trinity Church with the wish that it be known as Wheeler House.

A fund-raising drive chaired by Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman enabled the Westport Historical Society

The Westport Historical Society's ownership of historic Wheeler House is not an accident: it is a privilege and a choice that brings with it certain responsibilities, both to the prior owners who sustained it through many eras of change, adversity, and "progress" and to the community it honors by providing daily visual reminders of a proud, shared American heritage.

Please come and tour our historic buildings, join our society and take advantage of all that they offer and hopefully will offer into the infinite future of Westport, a very special place.

Susan Walton Wynkoop

From the Executive Director's desk...



Dear Friends,
What's the buzz about?
That's the perfect term to describe the banter between friends and colleagues about WHS. There is a lot to share and the reason is a simple one. There are many stories to be told and important data to make available and we want to offer a forum for that. A brief summary of events and programs over the last few months will highlight why WHS is a hub of activity:

Professor Ernie Wiegand from Norwalk Community College spoke about the history of Westport's Native Americans and how they acclimated to the local climate and adapted to the biological, geological and social change over a period of 10,000 years. With a riveting PowerPoint presentation and a lively Q and A, it was an informative evening for all participants.

Dick Harris, Director of Harbor Watch, talked about water quality in our area and exciting projects that are keeping our waterways healthy, such as a fisheries project, a river research effort and even storm drain inspections.

Gil Kernan of CleanTech PMG is a sponsor of our exhibit and a distributor of Enagic Water Systems. Gil demonstrated how a Kangen water filtration system creates clean, ionized and positive PH, alkaline drinking water that is crucial to maintaining optimal health.

Exhibit Curator Rindy Higgins, Director of Sherwood Island Nature Center, guided us down the Saugatuck River on a wonderful historical tour with Downunder Kayaking called *Kayaking the Dividing Line*. We learned about the origins of the Black Duck Café, the histo-

and best practices to make sure they stay pollution free for future generations.

Kayak tour to Cockenoe Island, an annual favorite tour on the LI Sound with environmentalist David Park. This was a great way to get an awesome workout on the water and learn about the vegetation and animal life on Cockenoe Island.

For the younger set (ages 5-10), there was summer fun for three weeks with our Education Director Elizabeth DeVoll with guest facilitators Rindy and Drew and a group of wonderful student assistants. Our staff members give kids that extra attention, which makes for a wonderful nurturing summer program.

Summer Educational Programs



Nearly 40 children over the three sessions enjoyed getting a hands-on experience of learning about nature, our local environment, and how to be a good recycler.

To all our members and supporters, thank you for participating in our journey of being the best historical society we can be. We look forward to bringing programs that excite and support new friendships and

learning.

ry of the Saugatuck Yacht Club and interesting history about Longshore's shoreline.

Jeff Yates, author of *Fly Fishing Fairfield County: Secrets of Suburban Streams*, spoke about trout fishing in the Saugatuck River with an emphasis on how we are impacting on our Local River

learning.

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

– Marcel Proust

With gratitude,

Susan Gold, Executive Director

Save The Date And Not To Be Missed!
2012 Holiday House Tour
Sunday, December 2, 2012 • 11 Am To 4pm
Twilight Soiree To Follow

Calendar of Events for Fall, 2012

Check www.westporthistory.org for details and new events

Gift Shop Flower Demo & Sale Thursday, September 20, 1 pm

Cartooning Workshop for Kids (6 weeks) Monday, September 24 3:30 -4:45 pm

Kayak Tour to Norwalk's Chimon Island Sunday, September 30, 12:30 - 3:30pm

Friday, October 5, Exhibit: Opening Reception 5:30- 7:30

Members and Invited Guests

**New Exhibit Stamps by Westport Artists and
The Road to 06880: Colonial Era to Present**

Saugatuck Walking Tour Saturday, October 6, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Columbus Day Halloween Workshop Monday, October 8, 9:30 am

Dressing Up, Westport Style October 12, 6-9 pm

Appraisal Day, Treasure in Your Attic October 27, 10am to 4 pm

Holiday House Tour December 2, 11 am - 4 pm