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SALEM
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2020 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

A LETTER FROM THE TRUSTEES

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to the Summer newsletter.

In 2015 when we conceived of a virtual historical society, we weren't sure that an on-line historical society, one without archives and collections, would catch on. We envisioned ourselves as a hub where members could easily search for resources accessing the mountains of material collected and written about Salem's varied history but stored in dozens of institutions spread throughout the area. At a time when everybody is staying closer to home, we are happy to announce that we are nearer to this original idea and invite you to view our revitalized website at <https://www.salemhistorical.org/>. Since we haven't seen you for a while, we would like to recap some events we sponsored last year and introduce you to the many new projects we are currently working on. Also note some important 'save the date' announcements for this year.

Above all, we would like to invite you to this year's annual meeting to take place on July 16th from 7:00-8:00PM to be held on Zoom. Please join us to meet the trustees and bring along your beverage of choice.

We look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions on the events you would like to see this coming year, hopefully in person or virtual. Register on our Contact Us page, <http://www.salemhistorical.org/contact> by July 15th and we will send you the Zoom information and password the day of the meeting. We are very much looking forward to seeing you then.

Remember to access this information and the annual meeting you must be a current member. If your membership is not up to date click the following link to renew <http://www.salemhistorical.org/membership>.

So, please enjoy the new and improved website, access the archives, databases and books and let us know if you're interested in joining us as a volunteer or committee member on some future event.

Thank you for your continued support.

SAVE THE DATE

SHS ANNUAL MEETING July 16th at 7:00 PM on Zoom

This year the SHS Annual meeting will take place on July 16th at 7:00 PM on Zoom. The event will be open to our current members. Please sign up by registering on the website by July 15 <http://www.salemhistorical.org/contact>

Message: Annual Meeting. We will send out a Zoom invitation and password the day of the meeting. After a few moments introducing the trustees, we would like to spend time with our members hearing your comments and thoughts. The event will run from 7:00-8:00pm. We look forward to seeing you with your favorite beverage.



A NEW VISION and MISSION

Over the past several months the Salem Historical Society (SHS) board has taken this opportunity to evaluate and fine-tune our mission and strategic direction. Our updated vision and mission statement reflect what we have learned and are testing on the ground.

Vision:

Salem Historical Society reveals and shares the boundless history of Salem, collaborating with community partners to reach and educate a broad audience.

Mission:

The Salem Historical Society promotes scholarship and public history to explore and share Salem's rich history with the world.

REVOLUTION 250 AND SALEM

In 2026 the nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. Revolution250 <https://revolution250.org/> is a consortium of organizations working together to commemorate the 250th with events leading up to and through the American Revolution in Massachusetts.



While Boston, Lexington and Concord receive much of the attention regarding revolutionary Massachusetts, Salem figured prominently both before Paul Revere's Ride in April 1775 and after the British evacuation of Boston in March 1776.

SHS is working with other Salem organizations and Revolution250 to research, educate and commemorate revolutionary Salem. Did you know that when General Gage closed the Port of Boston in May 1774, he moved Customs to the Port of Salem, followed closely by his own encampment in Salem. And in the fall of 1774 the First Provincial Congress of Massachusetts met in Salem. Once the war started Salem men and women of all races provided support and served in militia, commonwealth and continental army and navy units. Most importantly

Salem's privateers relentlessly attacked the British Navy and commercial shipping throughout the war.

Since 2017 the Salem Historical Society has collaborated with the Leslie's Retreat Committee to commemorate the February 26, 1775 unsuccessful attempt by British troops to find and confiscate patriot cannons hidden in Salem. The 2020 re-enactment featured a rousing sermon by Reverend Barnard followed by the confrontation with Colonel Leslie and his British soldiers. First Church provided a lovely collation after the event and the Witch House provided programming regarding women and the revolution. SHS congratulates the Leslie's Retreat Committee on its fourth successful event. **Mark your calendars for February 21, 2021 for the next Leslie's Retreat re-enactment.**

For more information about Massachusetts and the American Revolution, especially for teachers, see these videos at: <https://revolution250.org/for-teachers/>

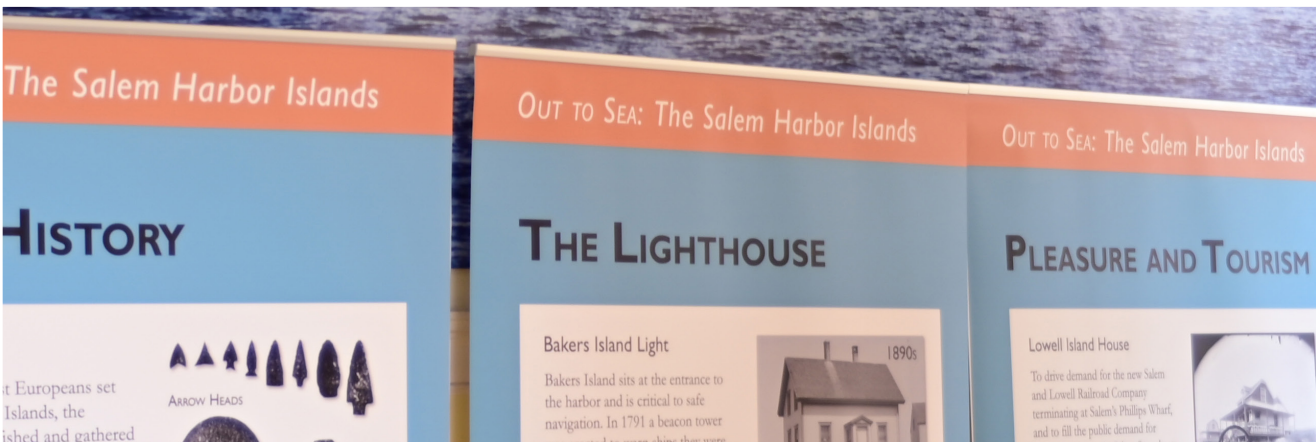
PAST EVENTS

EXHIBIT - OUT TO SEA: THE SALEM

Last August 22, 2019 on a very hot summer night the Salem Historical Society held its opening reception for our first exhibit, *Out to Sea: The Salem Harbor Islands* presented in partnership with The Salem Museum at Salem's historic Old Town Hall. The exhibit complimented the museums regular displays by focusing on Salem's history but choosing a subject that many people are unfamiliar with, the harbor islands of Salem. Bakers, Children's and Misery Islands have been a part of the Salem community for centuries but today remain as elusive to the citizens of Salem as ever. Originally utilized by the Naumkeag people the islands have a long and storied history. Captured in six detailed panels the exhibit covered topics ranging from the islands Early History, Ma and Pa Lighthouses of Bakers Island, Pleasure and Tourism

on Lowell Island, Health and Healing on Children's Island as well as panels on Flora and Fauna and the Natural History of the islands looking toward the future and the danger climate change will have on the local coast and islands.

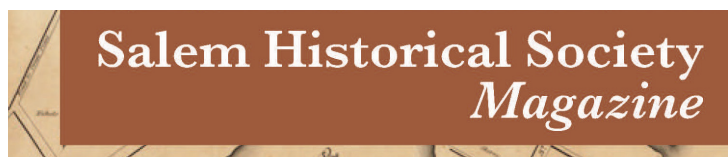
Enjoying light refreshments among the Museums displays, Society's Trustees were joined by many SHS members as well as board presidents and members from other local organizations such as the The House of the Seven Gables, Essex National Heritage Area, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and many other guests. We invite you to our website to view the panels, posters, murals and ephemera as originally displayed. <http://www.salemhistorical.org/online-exhibits/>



SPECIAL EVENTS COMING SOON

Members, the Salem Historical Society is proud to announce a collaboration with the **Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS)** for a very special event on **July 29, 2020 at 5:30PM** on Zoom. Our two societies will come together for the first time to present a virtual lecture with MHS's Peter Drummey, the Stephen T. Riley Librarian. Mr. Drummey will provide an exclusive look at the collections held by MHS of Salem related documents, publications and artifacts. Mr. Drummey is world renown for his expertise on MHS's extensive collections. Members will receive notice of this event in the next few weeks.

ANNOUNCING A NEW DIGITAL PUBLICATION



Calling all writers! The Salem Historical Society is very excited to announce the launching of a new on-line magazine focusing on Salem's rich and diverse history. The *Salem Historical Society Magazine* will be in the vein of Salem's bygone historical journals, such as the time-honored Essex Institute Historical Collections, initially published by the Essex Institute of Salem. This new publication will allow for wider public access to Salem's varied stories using modern digital tools. Preference will be given to pieces which explore lesser known facets of Salem's history. Topics focusing on the social, political, economic, cultural, architectural, literary, and art history are all welcome. Submissions on diverse groups are encouraged as well as narrative histories, biographies, historiography, transcriptions, book reviews.

A call for submissions will be sent out in the next few days with all material expected to be returned by September 15, 2020.

A publication date of January 2021 is planned.

ACTIVITY FROM THE SHS MAILBAG

QUERIES & RESEARCH by Irene Axelrod

The Salem Historical Society receives approximately 20-30 inquiries via our email account salemhistoricalsociety@gmail.com each month from members, local residents, and people interested in Salem from across the globe. While questions asking about various aspects of the Witch Trials are often represented, we receive many requests asking about genealogy. Folks want to know where an ancestor lived, was buried or how to obtain birth, marriage and death certificates of their ancestors. We often refer these requests to the genealogy organizations listed on our Resources page so individuals and families can follow up themselves. Some requests require detailed research and for that SHS charges a small hourly fee.* Many of the inquiries we receive can be compelling and allow all of us an opportunity to broaden our knowledge of Salem's history and people.

While we receive questions on a wide range of topics such as information about Roger Conant from his 10 times great-grandson researching a school paper, or information as to where Charles Lenox Remond lived, and where is the burial location of Captain John Derby of the vessel *Quero* who famously sailed across the Atlantic carrying news of Lexington and Concord arriving before the British ships ensuring that the Americans version of events was received first.

Recently, we received a question regarding a supposed dancing school conducted by a William Turner in the early 19th century. We were able to find the dance instructor, Mr. Turner, his school and its location in Salem. We also discovered that one of Turner's pupils was Nathaniel Hawthorne! Young Nathaniel wrote his mother in Maine when he was fourteen, "I think I had rather go to dancing school a little longer before I come to Raymond." Turner retired a few years later in 1820 after nearly forty years of teaching dance. In the Salem Gazette of October 24, 1820 he wrote that his season ending ball, was "the closing scene of my professional life."

CIVIL WAR DIARY by SUSAN BAKER



Kaplan, Lee Ann Cunningham.
"John P. Reynolds."
Cunningham Family US, n.d.,

The Salem Historical Society (SHS) frequently serves as a connecting point between donors and possible depositories for historic material. A great example of this involves three Civil War diaries sent to us by a donor in Groton, MA. The diaries were written by John P. Reynolds (1840-1919), documenting his time serving with the Salem Light Infantry, also known as the Salem Zouaves, and later with the 19th MA Infantry, where he was promoted to Captain.

Although a handful of other Reynolds' diaries are available at both the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, none of his papers were held by a local Salem institution. It seemed fitting that the material stay in Salem, as Reynolds lived here all his life and served in the Salem Zouaves. The Society was able to put the donor in touch with Salem [State University's Archives and Special Collections](#) department, where the papers are now housed and available to all.

*Questions come from folks who have family roots or specific research interests in Salem. Many of our Trustees are trained historians and archivists. Often we receive request for further detailed and in-depth research questions that require access to the many local libraries and archives. For these inquires SHS charges a small hourly fee of \$25.00, however, this year **members get a 50% discount**. Once our resident researcher, Irene Axelrod, former librarian for the Phillips Library, has assessed the length of time involved in the research she will contact you ahead of time. Please see our research policies and fees <http://www.salemhistorical.org/research-form> found on the Research Information tab of the website.

WALKING TOURS

As we continue to add more content to the website, we are currently creating videos of some of our popular walking tours. Originally created by SHS for the Essex National Heritage Area we are working on visual strolls through the streets of Salem. Focusing on Salem's Maritime Neighborhood, this tour explores Salem during the Golden Age of Sail, showcasing Salem's heyday when ships sailed around the world. A second tour also originally created for ENHA focused on the neighborhood where Nathaniel Hawthorne, grew up. This tour will take us to the areas where Hawthorne lived and wrote about in his famous novels. Trustee, Beth Bower created a tour for the Bridge Street Neck Association and a video of the walk is planned. Members look for emails over the summer notifying you of when these tours will be available on our website.

SALEM'S MARITIME



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE



BRIDGE ST. NEIGHBORHOOD



WHAT THE TRUSTEES ARE UP TO

July 1, 2020 at 6:30 PM

LIVE AND ONLINE: The Life and Work of Lydia Pinkham

Salem Historical Society Trustee, Irene Axelrod will discuss the life of Lydia Pinkham and her role as an international enterprising woman. Join Irene on-line with The House of the Seven Gables. Please note this is a ticketed event. Contact The House of the Seven Gables at <https://7gables.org/>

SOLD OUT

August 26, 2020 at 6:30 PM

STRONG WOMEN OF THE GABLES

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage Trustee Robin Woodman will explore the business acumen of two of The House of the Seven Gables' most prominent women, Susanna Ingersoll, who amassed a real estate fortune long before women had the vote, and Caroline Emmerton the accomplished philanthropist credited for saving the House of the Seven Gables in order to fund her settlement work. Please note this is a ticketed event. Contact The House of the Seven Gables at <https://7gables.org/>

September 9, 2020 at 7:00 PM

THE GREAT DEBATE: THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE US NAVY

Salem Historical Society Trustees and local historians, K. David Goss and Robert Booth, will debate the birthplace of the U.S. Navy. K. David Goss will argue on behalf of Beverly as the birthplace while Robert Booth maintains that Marblehead is the true home.

The debate will be moderated by Annie Harris of ENHA, David Olsen of The Salem News and Charlie Newhall, also an SHS Trustee.

Sponsored by Essex National Heritage Area this event is rescheduled from a previous time and now will be held on September 9, 2020 at 7:00PM. Please note this is a ticketed event.

Contact ENHA at <https://essexheritage.org/>

JANUARY 1, 2021 12:00-1:00 PM

FIRST DAY HIKE

The National Park Service, the City of Salem, Essex National Heritage Area, Eastern National, Mass in Motion, and the Salem Historical Society invite locals and community members to participate in First Day Hike, a national initiative established by America's State Parks to get people outdoors and connecting with places in their own backyards. This will be the fourth year that Salem community members have participated in First Day Hike lead by Salem Historical Society Trustee David Moffatt.

This event is free and open to the public.

Exciting things are happening at Salem Historical Society! Be sure your membership is up-to-date so that you receive invitations to events and more announcements as we continue our collaborations to create special events. <http://www.salemhistorical.org/membership>

The Trustees welcome your comments and feedback. If there are initiatives above that interest you and you would like to be part of SHS events or committees, contact us with an email to salemhistoricalsociety@gmail.com with your interest and ideas.