

# Lyme Public Hall Newsletter



*The Lyme Public Hall Association, Inc.*

*Vol. 12, No. 1 Spring 2013*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Local History: Up Close and Personal

When my family moved to Lyme almost 20 years ago, I had quite a bit of familiarity with the town. My parents had lived here during the 70s and 80s, and my great aunt since the 20s. Though I grew up in Colorado, I grew to love the intimate feel and small-town charm of New England and it has become the place where I intend to stay.

My husband's roots go even deeper, although it took us some time to find that out. He knew that his great-grandmother was a Brockway, and that she had a connection to Lyme, but not much more than that. A happy coincidence led to a meeting with a new neighbor, whose grandmother was also a Brockway. Turned out that these grandparents were sisters, and their brother had built and run the Hadlyme Country Store. A bit more digging around in genealogical records revealed that Grandmother Brockway's father was Levi Luther. That family is well established in Hadlyme.

Some months after we moved in, the previous owner of the house sent us some research he had done on its history. It turns out that it was built by none other than Levi Luther! We knew it felt right as soon as we set foot in it, but it must have been because of the friendly ghosts of relatives past.

My husband has a family album quilt passed down through several generations, with fading signatures that didn't mean very much until we began to connect the names with those that kept popping up in the genealogies—Brockway, Luther, Comstock and others. It is entirely possible that the quilt could have been made in our house, but certainly close by, over a century ago. It is no wonder that Lyme just feels like home.



*Levi Luther House c. 1850*

The point of this story is that history is everywhere we go in town. The Lyme Public Hall Association and the Local History Archives seek to preserve that history and to engage the community through our programs and events. We hope you will join us. You never know what your connection to the past might be.

—Leslie Lewis

### **Membership information enclosed.**

This will be your only membership mailing of the year. Your support makes everything we do possible. Please consider joining or renewing today!

---

## 150 Years Ago in Lyme, from the Lyme Local History Archives

On Sept. 22, 1863 the customers at Henry B. Sisson's "Union Store" in Hamburg bought molasses, swordfish, ham, spool thread, a shirt bosom, agate vest buttons, plaid, cambric, a hoop skirt, fancy braid, indigo, scissors, milk pail, chamber pot, all spice, cinnamon, black tea, coffee, tobacco, shoes, gaiters, eggs, opium and snuff—signs of growing commerce and tastes.

The Joshuatown Union Sewing Society, a social fraternity of men and women, had been established in 1859, ". . . for purposes of acquiring and diffusing knowledge and to avoid sectarianism and bigotry." It was now in its fifth year with a lending library.



*Four Warner sisters (Betsy, Emma, Annie and Jane) of Joshuatown from a c. 1850 tintype. Warner family men and women were well represented in the Joshuatown Union Sewing Society membership lists along with LaPlaces, Brockways, Beebes, Tookers and Danielses.*

The town of Lyme was recruiting volunteers to fill its quota for the Union Army at the call of President Abraham Lincoln. A new book about Lincoln, *The Pioneer Boy and How He Became President* by William Thayer was a prized possession of Lyme resident, Abial Stark. In a fine hand on the inside cover he wrote "Abial Stark Senr August 27, 1863 North Lyme."

An impressive side-wheeler steamship, the "City of Hartford", traveled the Connecticut River daily between New York, Middletown and Hartford with stops at Hadlyme and Lyme at Ely's Ferry Landing. John Sterling of Bill Hill was the ship's freight clerk but he also ran a successful commission business filling special orders from Lyme residents for goods such as silk, lemons, and brandies available from the big cities.

The 1863 annual meeting report of LBS or The Ladies Benevolent Society (Hamburg Congregational Church) states: "Two barrels of old clothing, books, papers, etc. were packed to be sent to the suffering Freedmen." The previous year the Society had sent handwork of "comfortables" (quilts), socks, mittens and bandages as well as reading material to Union soldiers.

---

### Who to Contact:

*Local History Archives:* Carolyn Bacdayan, 860-434-9292,

acbacdayan@sbcglobal.net

*Programs:* Leslie Lewis, 860-526-8886.

*Rentals:* Kathy Tisdale, 860-434-1920

*Bequests and Donations:* Jerry Ehlen, 860-434-9353, bloodst@sbcglobal.net

*Newsletter editors:* Ann Brubaker, Leslie Lewis

*Writers for this issue:* Carolyn Bacdayan, Jim Beers, Bill Denow, Leslie Lewis, John Pfeiffer

*Newsletter layout:* Lisa Reneson

**Questions? Comments?** Email the Lyme Public Hall Association at [info@lymepublichall.org](mailto:info@lymepublichall.org)

For the latest information on events, check [www.lymepublichall.org](http://www.lymepublichall.org)

---

Membership in the Lyme Public Hall Association is open to anyone with an interest in the Lyme community. The Association receives no town funding and is supported through tax deductible membership fees, donations, and fund raisers. We invite you to join. The membership year runs from May 1-April 30. Select the support level that works best for you. Make checks payable to Lyme Public Hall Association, Inc and remit to P.O. Box 1056, Lyme, CT 06371.

Supporting - \$15

Subscribing - \$25

Contributing - \$50

Sustaining - \$100

Additional donations of cash, appreciated securities, or future bequests are also welcome. Thank you for your continued support. To join our e-mail list for notice of upcoming Lyme Public Hall events, send a request to: [info@lymepublichall.org](mailto:info@lymepublichall.org)

## Connecticut Soldiers and the Siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana, 1863

Lyme resident Jim Beers has been sharing his knowledge of the American Civil War for the past two years. His third talk this June will focus on Connecticut volunteers and the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana. (See *programs calendar*)

By the fall of 1862 Union forces had a clear vision of the need to control the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. With the Mississippi under Union control, the Confederacy would effectively be cut in half, preventing the east-west movement of men and materials. New Orleans and Memphis were captured in early 1862. This left strategic Vicksburg, Mississippi as the only Confederate blockade point on the river.

Realizing the need for an additional blockade, Confederate Army engineers surveyed the area at Port Hudson, twenty seven miles upstream from Baton Rouge. A commanding eighty foot high bluff on the east side of the river afforded an ideal artillery location just as the river makes a 150 degree turn to the west. Deep ravines and swampy river backwaters provided excellent defensive positions to the east. Construction of fortified positions began in early August, 1862.

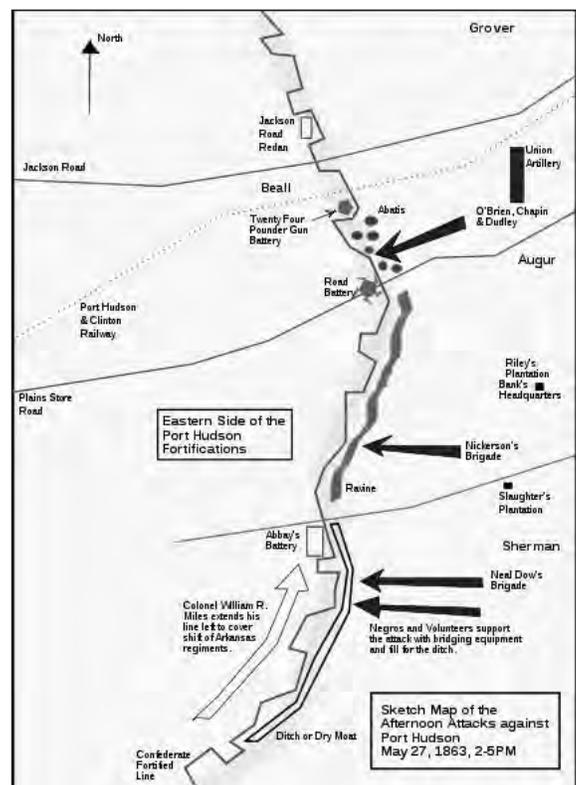
From May 22 to July 9, 1863 Union forces surrounded, assaulted and laid siege to the Port Hudson fortifications. The 26th Regiment, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry which included men from Lyme played a crucial role in the siege. Military records show that 101 men from Lyme

served in regiments raised in the state of Connecticut. Considering that Lyme was an agrarian community of 1250 people at the time, this loss of manpower must have imposed significant hardship on families. Thirty-four of those Lyme men would volunteer for the 26th Regiment. The regiment was made up of primarily New London County residents who signed on for nine months. It was organized at Norwich November 10, 1862, arriving at New Orleans on December 16. The regiment of 825 men was assigned to Gen. Thomas Sherman's 2nd Division.

On May 27 they participated in the first assault on Port Hudson. The Union had 30,000 troops, well supplied with ammunition, artillery and food. The 7,500 defenders of Port Hudson, initially had adequate ammunition, but artillery and food were at a premium. The defensive perimeter was 3.5 miles long and this forced the defenders to maneuver within their positions in order to block simultaneous attacks on the perimeter. Union naval forces, predominately mortar barges had been bombarding the defenses continuously since May 8.



*Confederate cannons and trenches at Port Hudson.*



Continued on page 6

---

# Nehantic

Dr. John Pfeiffer

*Dr. John Pfeiffer who recently lectured at the Lyme Public Hall discusses the history and prehistory of this group of Native Americans that occupied southeastern Connecticut and were centered in Lyme.*

---

Prehistory: Archaeological evidence indicates that Native American residence in Lyme goes back to at least 10,000 years ago when environmental conditions were quite different from what is now seen in our area. These first residents who had migrated from Asia over the Bering land bridge. Their lifestyle was nomadic hunting and their likely focus was caribou. They also fished the streams and tidal waters. Over the course of the year they may have travelled 500 miles or more following migrating herds. They grouped together in hunting bands of 25 or so and had temporary living sites and no one place could be considered a permanent residence.

Groups of various Native Americans settled in the lower Connecticut valley making semi-permanent then permanent habitations in the following millennia.

By around 3000 years ago a strong case can be made for Nehantic ancestry of the groups residing here. Until European contact and subsequent settlement, the Nehantic lived in an environment not unlike that which we see around us today. They took advantage of the natural abundance of food resources and began supplementing this with agriculture about 1000 years ago. Nehantic territory included both sides of the Connecticut River, eastward to Waterford and north 8 to 10 miles. Population was probably about 2500 to 3000.

Drastic change beset the Nehantic with the appearance of Europeans. This disrupted all aspects of Native American life and like most colonial experiences around the world led to desperate social conditions. Immediately after the first European fisherman and explorers came to these shores, epidemics ravaged the Nehantic. Without any natural immunity to European diseases, 98% of the population died.

Those that remained became allies to the English settlers. This was probably a practical decision made by

the survivors. They saw their own people dying like flies and the *Whites* unscathed. Based upon this observation, Nehantic interpreted the English God to be more powerful than their own. This is likely the reason that the Nehantic were the first Native American group to become Christian. Their leader Wequash, was friend to both George Fenwick and Roger Williams and a Christian convert.

As allies, the Nehantic helped the English during the Pequot War of 1637, while at the same time offering their Pequot brothers and sisters a safe haven in their village. Nearly 50 residents of Pequot took advantage of the offer prior to the attack.

Allied along with the English was another group, the Mohegan. They were led by Uncas. Over the ensuing decades the Mohegan and Uncas became the Native spokesmen for all native groups in the area and clearly capitalized on this position. Uncas became the predominant authority to transfer land to the English and clearly he and his relatives signed over parcels that in no way were ever theirs.

After the Pequot War, the Nehantic attain a legal right to 300 acres of their land at Black Point in East Lyme as well as a hunting territory in the vicinity of Gungy road and the East branch of the Eight Mile river. Today it encompasses the area around Cedar Lake, Hartman Park, as well as the Nehantic State Forest. These "reserved" lands ( the basis of the term *Reservation*) become the home for the remaining Nehantic until the late 1860's.

The Black Point reserve surrounds the burying place for the Nehantic. It is where Wequash was interred upon his death in 1641. His deathbed request in front of Puritans George Fenwick and Roger Williams was that he be buried in the burying place of his ancestors. The burial ground was used up into the mid 1850's by Nehantic residents . Some of the gravestones erected as markers can be seen at Union Cemetery in East Lyme.

Life on the reserves for the Nehantic in many ways represents change from the traditional path established over the past 3000 years. While some hunting and fishing as well as agriculture persisted, many of the Nehantic

---

men and women worked for wages on the neighboring farms and plantations. Instead of the traditional lifeway, they became tied to the English cash economy. Nehantics worked clearing land, building stone walls, cutting and milling lumber, sailed and crewed aboard ships, worked on fishing and whaling ventures. Nehantic women worked on the farms and plantations helped raise the children, tend the gardens, feed the livestock, and do many of the necessary domestic chores.

Buying supplies at the English trading house was commonplace. The purchase of alcohol and its overuse, unfortunately, became a growing problem. Loss of self respect and identity tore at the core of Nehantic social order. They were thought of by most accounts to be on the fringe of society. From the English perspective, as with most indigenous groups around the world, Natives were considered inferior.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, some Nehantic chose to move off the reserved land. Others relocated west to New York, then Ohio, and finally Wisconsin in the *Brothertown Movement*. As a result, population count of those living on the reserved lands shows a continuous decline. However, the analysis of “tribal roles” over time also indicates women becoming increasingly more numerous while their male counterparts were disappearing at a disproportionate rate.

Recent research by the author has uncovered an explanation for this phenomenon that goes back to the English colonial policy of *impressment*. To fight the 17th and 18th century European colonial wars for supremacy, European combatants replenished military troops by various forms of recruitment. As early as the late 1670’s many Native men were taken from the reserved lands and put into military units to fight for the English king. Two thirds of the 750 men that had to be raised for service to the king from New London county were “indian” recruits.

This recruitment policy was expanded during the 1700’s to include inferior groups as “Negroes, Servants, Vagrants, and Indians”. English authorities would instruct press gangs to, literally, go into various areas and pull men off the street. In 1711 in the city of New York, one quarter

of the men disappeared overnight. Colonists continually rioted over this English recruitment policy. In many ways this one policy was a major factor for the American Revolution.

Nehantic men fought in King Phillips war, the French and Indian War, and later in the American Revolution as well as the War of 1812. During the French and Indian war, Nehantic men fought alongside recruited colonists marching from Lyme, to southern New Hampshire, to northeastern New York, and as far away as eastern Nova Scotia. Nehantic suffered 50% mortality! They distinguished themselves at the battles at Old # Four, Fort William Henry, Fort Ticonderoga, and later in Nova Scotia at Canso, and Louisburg.

With the dwindling numbers of Nehantic men in Lyme, many of the remaining families chose to become part of the fiber of America. This is the America that’s the melting pot of peoples from diverse backgrounds who from practical necessity formed a vibrant society. During the 19th and 20th century many Nehantics attempted to blend in and hide their native heritage. Inter-marriage with whites, as well as those of African descent, and other Native groups was commonplace.

Not all Nehantics chose this path. Mercy Nonesuch was one of the last Nehantics to live a traditional lifestyle. In her teens she was a servant for the Griswold family, later marrying a Mohegan man and moving to his home. She lived into her 90’s and was interviewed by Connecticut magazine in 1912. She ended the interview with the statement, “They may call me extinct, but that does not make me extinct”.

With the civil rights movement of the last 50 years, there is a new interest and respect for the Nehantic. In our area, those with Nehantic roots are researching their ancestry and are proud. Equally, there is a societal appreciation of the 3000 year path that Nehantics have made and the contribution that they have rendered for all of us. They too are now recognized as part of the reason for us being here. They have helped make Lyme what it is.

---

## Lyme Public Hall Association Members May 2012 – April 2013

Abrahamsen, Thor & Susan	Ehlen, Jerry R. & Jenkins, Gary L	Lanza, Judith	Evan Ross
Ahnell, Paul & Jane	Elgart, Matt	Larson, Charlie & Elin B.	Ross, Phyllis & Herb
Aidinoff, Bernie & Elsie	Ellison, Todd **	Lawlor, Mr & Mrs William F	Rosseau, Richard
Ahlberg, Douglas & Dianne	Embree, M/M Jeb	Leatherbee, Jim & Kathy	Rowe, Jeff & Kathy
Angers, Thomas & VanDaff, Tim	Enman, Brett & Jennie	Lee, Richard & Heidi *	Rutigliano, Joe & Jeanne
Armond, Paul & Harger, Fred	Eno, Megan	Lenhart, Mark & Sara	Safaian, Gita - Hamburg
Bacdayan, Albert & Carolyn	Eno, Ralph & Penny	Lewis, Ralph & Leslie *	Cove Endodontics
Bair, Barbara	Erhart, David & Grace	Lightfoot, Ann	Saltzman, Marcy & Joel
Bakke, William & Patricia	Ermler, Rick & Pat	Lindeen, Charles & Joan	Sauer, Claire
Ballard, Robert & Barbara	Evankow, Steve	Livingston, Martin & Janis *	Saxton, Craig & Pietrina *
Ballek, Rowland & Nancy	Evans, Douglas & Ann Lacey	Lombardino, George & Nina	Schlauder, Joann & Kurt *
Barringer, Charlotte	Falstrom, John & Angie	Long, Barbara & Walters, Roxann	Schneid, Jared & Marna
Beaudette, Michael & Edna *	Feltham, Ethel H. *	Lord, Parker & Diana	Sisk, Brand & Donna
Beers, Howard & Charlotte	Fennema, Jim & Ellen	Lubow, Mariam A. & Oscar B.	Slater, Bernard
Benner, Bill & Mimi	Fetter, Trevor & Melissa	Lyme Land Conservation Trust	Soper, Tappen & Susan *
Bireley, Ed & Linda	Fischer, Kurt & Susan	Lyme-Old Lyme Junior	St. Louis, Tom & Mary Powell *
Bischoff, Tom & Terry	Flanagan, Michael & S. Cooke *	Women's Club *	Stark, Bruce & Patricia
Blackwell, Barbara	Frankel, David & Liz	Maddocks, Eric *	Stefanski, Lawrence & Carly
Bladen, Ashby & Ginger	Friday, John & Judith *	Martin, Fred & Marie *	Stone, Mary & Hawkins, Joel
Bloom, Barry & Joan	Furgueson, Michael & Sherley *	Matthews, Mary	Sulger, Jack & Laurie
Boehning, Bill & Diana	Gaskell, John & Greenbaum,	Mattson, Steve & Maddy *	Sullivan, Anthony & Jerilyn
Bombaci, Edward	Suzanne	Mazer, Deborah	Sutton, J. David & Barbara Bennett
Brautt, Conrad & Judy	Gaughran, Philip D. & Gretchen	McFarland, James & LeRay	Thach, Margaret
Brennan, Andy & Adrienne	Gencarella, Winnifred & Stephen	Melchreit, Richard & Anna-Marie	Tiffany, Jack & Sue
Broom, Skip	Gerber, Donald & Carleen	Mildrum, Louis & Jacquelyn	Timken, John & Polly
Brown, Suzanne *	Giaconia, John W., Sr.	Miner, Jean & Malone, Jim	Tracy, John & Sharon
Brubaker, Ann H. *	Gibbons, James & Elizabeth *	Mitchell, Alison C.	Traggis, Anthony & Trimble Nancy
Buch, Walter H. & Elizabeth L.	Godley, Robert M.	Molyneux, Richard	Tucchio, Michael A.
Burns, Peter & Dolly	Gravatt, Scott & Denise	Monroe, Julian & Margaret	Tuck, Lina
Buttrick, Harry & Ann	Gregory, William & Rita	Monte, Charles H. & Andrea	Tyler, Humphrey & Susan
Carpiniello, William	Griffith, Donald	Moore, George & Rosemary	Ulrich, David & Judy
Cartmel, Brenda & Winter, Steven	Guitar, Mary	Morgan, Elizabeth J.	Walters, Milton & Caroline *
Caruso, Sal & Mary Ellen	Gustafson, Barbara	Mulligan, Sandy	Wardlaw, Stephen & Lynne *
Childs, Thomas & Susan	Gustafson, Barbara "Bobby"	Murphy, John & Marcia	Way, James Raymond
Clark, Herb & Sharon D *	Handy, Sally & Parker	Neely, Laura Beth & Warner Swain	Webster, Bob & Betsey *
Clement, Carl & Anne	Hanes, Lee & Joy	Nelson, David	Weed, Gary & Carol
Clements, Nick	Hansen, Judy	Nelson, Jil	West, Eugenia L. *
Clements, Roger	Heap, Roger *	Niblack, John & Heidi	Wholean, Nicole & Kieran
Clippinger, Rich	Heffernan, Mitch & Cheryl *	Noyes, Bruce & Tammy	Wieschenberg, Peter *
Collins, Patti	Hill, Wendolyn & Sutton, Richard	Olansen, Ronald & Maureen	Wilkins, Richard & Marilyn M. *
Cone, Alione S.	Hogan, Kevin & Kim	Paonessa, Kenneth & Mary	Willauer, George & Cynthia
Cone, Les & Marta	Hosley, Charles & Carolyn	Patterson, Michael & Elena *	Wing, Thomas & Andrea *
Cooper, Rick & Gwen	House, George & Linda *	Pecher, Dr. Stephana	Wininger, Amy M.
Critchett, Donald & Jane	Huber, Stephen & Carol	Pennala, Shirley G.	Witkins, Jim & Janis
Crowley, Juliette	Hungerford, Doris	Pierce, Scott & Rosemarie	Wood, Bob & Nancy
Crowther, Beverly	Huntley, Virgil W.	Platner, Brian & Beverly	Wood-Muller, Rudolph G.
Cub Scout Pack 32	Huntley, William & Loisann	Platt, Robert & Mary	Woodward, Betsy
Dahle, Karen & Hessel, Sue	Husted, Anita	Plimpton, Kenneth D. Jr. **	Woody, J Melvin
David, Barbara O. *	Immordino, Peter & Susan	Purcell, Ellen	Young, Ruth E.
Davison, Jane	Jarrabeck, Frank	Rand, Allen & Marita	
Davidson, Patricia	Kanabis, Richard & Kimberly	Rand, Doris	* Sustaining Member
Davies, Tom & Judy	Kistner, Robert & Mary Ann	Reddy, Michael & Judith	** Life Member
Deane, Curtis & Shoemaker, Tom *	Klimek, Robert	Reed, Carolyn S.	
Decker, Peter & Patricia	Kloman, Anne & Felix	Rennhard, Hans H.	
Dempsey, Jim & Alice	Kneen, Martha & Lord, Hercy	Reynolds, Marilynn & Gary *	Thank you to all of our members and
Denow, Bill & Sara	Knight, Douglas & Williams, Sus	Rhodes, Joseph & Lee Erwin	supporters. Please consider renewing
Dill, Erwin & Jean	Krusen, Gordon & Cole, Susan	Rich, Norman & Joan	your LPHA membership using the
Duran, Lee & Judith	Kurlansky, Steven & Patricia	Richardson, Mike & Faye	enclosed envelope.
	Lander, Mark & Ann	Roche, Frank & Nancy	

---

# Upcoming Programs 2013



**THE LYME PUBLIC HALL**  
*Historical Organization and Archives*

**Earth Day Weekend, April 20 and 21**

***Lyme Spring Clean-Sweep***

Town-wide roadside clean-up. Free trash bags available at Jane's and Hadlyme stores.

**Sunday, April 21, 1 p.m.**

***First Annual Lyme Public Hall Open House***

(see page 8)

Tour the Lyme Local History Archives, find out about volunteer opportunities.

**Sunday, April 21, 2 p.m.**

***Talk: Slavery In Lyme and the Browne "Plantation" in Salem***

Bruce Stark, retired Assistant State Archivist, on slavery in Lyme and Connecticut.

**Sunday, May 5, 2 p.m.**

***Walk: Cove Characters***

Tour the historic Cove Cemetery in Hadlyme with local historian Jim Leatherbee.  
Co-sponsored with the Hadlyme Public Hall

**Thursday, June 13, 6 p.m.**

***Annual Meeting & Community Potluck Dinner***

Featuring the Eight Mile River Band, a local favorite.

**Sunday, June 23, 2 p.m.**

***Talk: 1863: Lyme and the American Civil War***

Jim Beers discusses Connecticut involvement in the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana.

**Wednesday, July 3rd, Thursday, July 4th,**

**Friday, July 5th**

**Exhibit: *Then and Now: Lending Libraries of Lyme***

**Saturday, August 3, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

***Annual Tag & Bake Sale***

A bargain hunter's delight! For drop off dates, go to [lymepublichall.org](http://lymepublichall.org).

**Saturday, September 7, 9 a.m.-4 p.m**

***Historic Quilts Workshop***

A day-long workshop with CTQuiltworks. For details, email [abru@comcast.net](mailto:abru@comcast.net)

**Saturday, September 21, 2 p.m.**

***Tour: Bill Hill and Ashlawn Farm Coffee***

Learn about the famous Bills of Bill Hill and current enterprises at Ashlawn Farm.

**Sunday, October 20,**

***RiverQuest Cruise: Geology of the CT River***

A late afternoon cruise with Ralph Lewis \$45 for non-members, \$40 for members.

Call Leslie Lewis at 860-526-8886 to reserve a place on this trip.

**Saturday, November 9, 5-7 p.m.**

***The Lyme Public Hall's Traditional Chowder Dinner***

Join us for this delicious Hall tradition, featuring homemade corn chowder, clam chowder, cole slaw, breads, and apple crisp. Charge.

All events are free unless indicated.

For details about this year's events go to [lymepublichall.org](http://lymepublichall.org)

---

## continued from page 3

The morning of May 27 Union forces began what were supposed to be coordinated attacks from three directions but in actuality were three separate attacks over eight hours. The northern perimeter attack had to overcome natural barrier of an 80 foot deep ravine, entangled with brush, vines and fallen trees. Many units became disorganized; men separated from their officers, heat exhaustion affected many, and once they emerged from the protection of the thickets, Confederate fire slaughtered hundreds. Some units sustained 50 percent casualties. By noon, the northern perimeter fighting had subsided, with the battlefield covered with thousands of Union casualties, dead, dying and those too scared to move. The Port Hudson defenders sustained less than 100 casualties.

During the morning battle, General Banks field headquarters was located between the northeast and eastern battle zones. By noon, having only heard artillery and not musket fire coming from the eastern sector, Banks rode over to Sherman's 2nd division to investigate. Banks found Sherman in his tent having lunch. The 2nd Division contribution to the morning assault was thirty artillery pieces firing into the eastern perimeter defenses. Furious, Banks threaten to relieve Sherman of his command, if he did not attack immediately.

Sherman's men began their attack at 2 pm, across a 600 yard open field. The field was named after the family plantation to which it belonged, Slaughter's field. The 6th Michigan and 15th New Hampshire lead the 26th Connecticut. As the attackers advanced, the rebel gunners targeted mounted Union officers; General Sherman was shot from his horse. And then, after recovering his footing, he was struck by cannon shot in the leg and was removed from the field. At 200 yards, the rebel positions opened fire with muskets loaded with buckshot and cannons shifted from shot to canister. Col Kingsley of the 26th CVI was wounded; the 26th Connecticut advance stopped 70 yards from the breastworks. By 5 pm the Union forces requested a truce to remove their casualties. One in five of Sherman's men were casualties, over 1000 men, rebel forces had less than 30.

By the second week in June, the Union army had over



*T.W. Sherman who commanded the early afternoon assault.*

150 pieces of artillery, plus the firepower from the river forces. The defenders were facing starvation. Rations were down to horse and mule meat and the ever plentiful rats. Medicines for the wounded and sick did not exist, and desertions were depleting the rebel ranks.

On June 14 a series of attacks tried unsuccessfully to force the surrender of Confederate forces. The third attack was directed against the most southern boundary. Despite being above division strength and having cavalry support, only the 15th New Hampshire and 26th Connecticut participated in the charge through a deep ravine, entangled with brush and trees. The attack failed to gain the breastworks and the casualties were horrendous. After this assault, the 26th CVI had fewer than 200 men fit for duty. The June 14 attack resulted in 1,792 Union casualties against 47 for the defenders, with no ground gained.

After the June 14 attacks, both sides began siege techniques with local raids on trench positions, sniping, and artillery barrages. Union firepower managed to degrade rebel artillery positions and equipment, rendering them ineffective. When Confederate General Gardner received word that Vicksburg had fallen he realized that the situation was hopeless.

On July 9, fewer than 3,000 defenders were able to stand for the formal surrender proceedings, attesting to the deplorable conditions within the perimeter. The record shows that the 26th CVI lost 55 men, killed in battle, with 90 men succumbing to disease. The 26th was released from Port Hudson and made its way by river steamer and train to Norwich, where it was mustered out on August 17, 1863.

---

## The Lyme Local History Archives at Work

The Archives participates in the programs of the Connecticut League of Historical Organizations and in “Conservation ConneCTion”, a program administered by the Connecticut State Library to help Connecticut’s small museums and archives to provide the best possible care for their collections. We have benefitted from their excellent workshops, consultants and the opportunity to network with the preservation community. Now we are eagerly looking forward to welcoming the public in the dedicated, purpose-built room for the Archives, in the new Lyme Public Library when it is completed.

Over the past year,

- Twenty-seven donations of historical material about Lyme families, houses, neighborhoods, businesses and organizations were received.
- Fifty-five requests were responded to for photographs of specific subjects, about family genealogy, history of Lyme churches, neighborhoods, houses and slavery in the region; and a few consultations on preservation practices for home treasures. The requests came from individuals, businesses, museums and non-profits in East Haddam, Essex, all the Lymes, and from Ontario, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Wisconsin.
- More than 1000 hours were donated by the volunteer archivist and assistants Lynn Hosley, Roxanne Walters, Faye Richardson and Susan Fontanella.
- The Archives Committee has worked hard in a wide range of planning, development and outreach projects—Ann Brubaker, Mary Juliet Paonessa, Patty Kurlansky, and Sara Denow .

The 2012 July 4th exhibit at the Lyme Public Hall, *Lyme in Detail: Architectural History of Lyme 1690-1850*, stimulated a great deal of interest. It combined material from the Archives, house histories and materials shared by current Lyme residents, and the exhibit team’s research



*Joseph Sill House, 1725, an example of a Colonial saltbox.*

and photography. The focus was on both the characteristic and unique design features in Lyme houses from the Colonial and Revivalist periods as well as a 20th century Rustic period. Four displays based on material from the Archives were also placed at the Lyme Library: *Lyme in Love* (antique valentines); *Through the Lens* (Lyme family tintypes, daguerreotypes and glass negatives); *The Classical Revival in Lyme Architecture*; and a map of East Coast Indian groups printed in Holland in 1665.

*Thank you to the following for supporting the Lyme Public Hall Association through donations of goods, services, or grants:*

Cerimon Fund, a private foundation  
Essex Savings Bank  
Ashlawn Farm Coffee  
Lyme Garden Club  
Brett Enman – Treasures, Old Lyme  
Joy Hanes – Old Lyme

And thanks to all who donated their baked goods and volunteered time to various LPH functions in 2012!

We are also grateful for special contributions received in memory of Rosie Fox, Nicholas S. Hill IV, and Walter Schonscheck.

---

**The Archives is open to the public 10 a.m.-noon on Tuesdays or by appointment. For more information, donations of historical materials or volunteering, contact Carolyn Bacdayan at (860) 434-9292 or [info@lymepublichall.org](mailto:info@lymepublichall.org)**



**THE LYME PUBLIC HALL**  
*Historical Organization and Archives*  
 249 Hamburg Road  
 P.O. Box 1056  
 Lyme, CT 06371

NONPROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Deep River, CT  
 PERMIT NO 9

*The Lyme Public Hall Association is dedicated to the appreciation of Lyme's history, culture, and community through the preservation and use of the historic hall, its archives, and historical programs.*

**POSTAL  
 PATRON**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Leslie Lewis, *President*  
 Bill Denow, *Vice-president*  
 Bethany Clark, *Secretary*  
 Jerry Ehlen, *Treasurer*

Ann Brubaker	George House
Barbara Carlson	Debbie Mazer
Roger Dill	Doris Rand
Morgan Ely	Kathy Tisdale

**First Annual Lyme Public Hall**

**OPEN HOUSE**

**Sunday, April 21, 2013**

Have you ever wondered what the Lyme Public Hall's Local History Archives are, where they are, or what they look like? Are you looking for volunteer opportunities or membership in an organization that benefits your local community? If so, then join us on Sunday, April 21 for the First Annual Lyme Public Hall Association Open House, to be followed by a lecture on slavery in Lyme by historian and Lyme resident Bruce Stark.

Members of the LPHA Board of Directors and Archivist Carolyn Bacdayan will be on hand to talk about the wide variety of volunteer jobs, particularly in connection with the Archives. Refreshments will be available. If you have any questions, feel free to contact [info@lymepublichall.org](mailto:info@lymepublichall.org).

**1-2 pm Informal Open House**

Tour of the Local History Archives,  
 a program of the Lyme Public Hall  
 Membership Information & Volunteer Opportunities

**2 pm Public Lecture**

by historian and former state archivist Bruce Stark  
*Slavery In Lyme and the Browne "Plantation" in Salem*

*George House and Bethany Clark helping out at the Annual Chowder Dinner. There are many opportunities to volunteer at the Lyme Public Hall, including events and working in the Local History Archives.*

