



BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WINTER NEWSLETTER
Vol. 9, Issue 4 - December, 2024 - February, 2025

From the President's Desk

www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org
P.O. Box 1393 / 98 Summer Street
Bristol, CT. 06011-1393/860-583-6309

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Second Vice President:

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Jason Messier

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Bristol Sports Hall of Fame

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Noreen Zurell

A new season is starting to emerge. I can feel it in the air and in our building, as it is being transformed into a holiday wonderland. Mary Houle and her Holiday Craft Fair committee have been busy these past weeks. The Builders of Bristol Room will serve as the Christmas Boutique, filled with wonderful items anyone would love to receive as a gift. The whole downstairs rooms will be filled with holiday cheer as the building awaits the Craft Fair and bake sale on December 7th. We hope you can stop by and enjoy the festive atmosphere and find that special something for someone!

As this year ends, it has been a very busy one for us. Many projects took place, some finished and some started but we're getting there! The main room has seen a few rentals which we hope will bring more as many comments have been made as to how beautiful the space is.

Programming saw some new ventures which were well received. The Federal Hill Walking Tour was held twice in two different months with a nice turnout each time and the Lantern Tour had its 'dress rehearsal' at BHS which allowed many of our members who could not attend the actual Lantern Tour at West cemetery to attend. It was well attended with some very positive comments! And we even added a Gaming Club on a Saturday once a month which brings in many young adults and seasoned older gamers for role-playing games. The Programming Committee has the 2025 year almost set with just a little fine-tuning left. It should be a great year!

We wish all our members a wonderful Holiday Season and a healthy Happy New Year!

Noreen Zurell, President

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR, 2024

Come join us at the Bristol Historical Society for our Annual Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, December 7th from 10am to 4pm. This year we have a plentiful array of vendors featuring a variety of creative items. There will be a bake sale with delicious homemade treats, and a Christmas Boutique with gently used Christmas items available for sale.

Come support the Bristol Historical Society, where Bristol's history is kept alive! Browse among our crafters, shop at the Boutique and enjoy some delicious treats. There's plenty of holiday spirit to go around! See you at the fair!

GAMING NEWS

Do you love role-playing games or are curious about them? Do you have kids who want to play Dungeons & Dragons or other role-playing games? Spend a Saturday immersed in a different world at the Historical Society every third Saturday, from 11am to 2pm. All ages welcome! Free to play or just come learn more about gaming at the BHS gaming club. Additional parking is in back and the museum will be open so you can learn a little about Bristol while you're here! Upcoming dates are: December 14th, January 25th, February 22nd and March 22nd.

ANNUAL APPEAL

The 2024–2025 Annual Campaign has been mailed and should have appeared in your mailbox. Please consider donating this year. Annual Campaign funds allow us to bring programs and events to the public throughout the year, to add artifacts to our collection of the city's history, and to maintain Bristol's first public high school, which remains the oldest municipal building in the city still open to the public. With your support, we can continue to preserve the past for current and future residents of Bristol. Donations can be made online at our website as well, at <https://www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org/support>.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Debbie Mangum, Louise Provenzano and Michael Patria

RECENT PASSINGS:

Justine D'Alesio, Joyce Galske and Roy Gilley

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:

If you have not renewed your membership by Nov. 1st, then your email address has been removed from our list. Don't miss out on upcoming events! Renewing your membership can happen at any time!

SAVE THE DATE - BINGO

On February 2, 2025, the Society will hold its first Valentine's Day themed bingo fundraiser at the Bristol Polich Club, beginning at 10am. The cost will be \$35, which includes a bingo card for all ten rounds and a special Valentine's Day treat. The event will feature prizes valued at \$200 or above, including rounds of golf, designer purses, tool sets, and much more. There will also be a bake sale, raffles, and a silent auction featuring unique prizes and experiences. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

A prize list will be posted with a link for ticket sales after Jan. 1. Watch your email and Facebook for details!

SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER PROGRAM UPDATE

Tom Dickau presented Part 4 of his Bristol/Forestville: Recycled Then and Now on Thursday, September 19th. A well-attended audience for the series enjoyed the nostalgia that we have for the past and hopefully for the future.

On Friday evening October 13th, several people gathered at BHS for the Lantern Tour dress rehearsal. The rehearsal was well received because it gave the audience an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the program, which can't be done on the night of the tours due to time constraints. The individuals portrayed were George Wells Bartholomew, Jr. by Bob Adamczyk, Ty Mellon and Jay Messier; Clara Mamre Norton by Nicki LaPorte, Carlos Vergil Masson by Joe Pinette; Wilfred Hopkins Nettleton by James Donovan; Julina Hitchcock Woodford by Lisa Doyle Bell; Rev. Lyman S Johnson by Kevin McCauley; Jackie McCauley played herself discussing her great grandfather William Lee Way; and Dr. Louis Lee Beach by Mel Bee.

Our program on the Great Depression scheduled for Thursday, October 18th was postponed. Rit Carter will present that program on September 18, 2025.

A second Federal Hill Walking Tour was held on October 20, 2024. The Society had some 25 individuals show up and all had an interesting time learning about the history of the Federal Hill Green and the area around the Green. Many questions were asked about the history of the area. The day was pleasant and inviting.

The conclusion of our 2024 programming year took place on Tuesday, November 19th with a history of the Bristol Boys Club. This was a trip down memory lane and the impact that the Boys Club had in the community and generations of our local youth. The panel included Jon Rulkowski, Director of Resource Development at the Bristol Boys & Girls Club, Tom Dickau, a club member and supporter, and Kevin McCauley, a longtime member of the OMs. Audience participants reconnected, shared many stories, and helped celebrate this beloved institution.

MARK YOUR 2025 CALENDAR

January 19th, 12 noon–3pm Family Potluck and Game Day. Bring your favorite games, favorite friends, favorite potluck (soup, chili, or finger foods) to share. Team up with others, explore the museum, and meet new friends for a family fun day. No sign ups required. We will supply paper goods and plastic utensils. In case of bad weather, the event will be cancelled with no future date.

The annual Pasta Supper that benefits our Scholarship Fund is scheduled for **Thursday, February 20, 2025**, with a snow date for Thursday, February 27th. The event will be held at Parkside Café from 5-7 pm. See attached reservation form at the end of this newsletter for further details.

BHS ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting for the Society will be held at **6 pm, Wednesday, May 28, 2025**. Voting will take place for the following offices:

Treasurer

Secretary

Director of the Board (multiple openings)

All members can make nominations for these positions during the nomination period which begins on **Monday, April 14, 2025**, and closes **Tuesday, April 29, 2025**. Nomination forms will be available by email, in the office during open office hours, or on our website (www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org). Candidates must be members in good standing and must have been members for one (1) year to be considered. At the close of the nomination period, the committee will confirm with nominees that they are willing to serve and publish member nominations and its own slate of candidates by **May 7, 2025**.

If you have any questions about the election process, please contact Maya Bringe (maya.bringe@gmail.com). The full set of bylaws with the latest amendments is available at www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org and in the office at the Society at 98 Summer Street.

2024 LANTERN TOUR

The lantern tour returned to West Cemetery this year with actors Bob Adamczyk, Ty Mellon, Jason Messier, Nicki LaPorte, Joe Pinette, James Donovan, Lisa Doyle-Bell, Kevin Mccauley, Jackie McCauley, and Mel Bee, portraying and/or discussing some of Bristol's colorful characters. The event was co-sponsored with the Bristol Cemetery Commission. Many thanks are due to Cemetery Commission members Mike Saman and Tom LaPorte, and BHS members Deborah Spooner and Laura Pinette for manning the check-in table with grace and good humor, and to Ellen Zoppo-Sassu and Maya Bringe for managing the events in the Cemetery. We would also like to thank the West Cemetery Association and the staff at the cemetery for allowing us to hold the event. As always, we also want to thank Bristol's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) for keeping us out of trouble, sending volunteers on tours, assisting errant vehicles that found their way into tours, and generally helping us bring people the best experience possible.

For the first time this year, we held a 'dress rehearsal' at the BHS building for those who wanted to take their cemetery tour sitting down, followed by a question-and-answer session. The additional evening was a hit, and we hope to make it a permanent fixture!

CHARITABLE GIVING AND RMDS

Did you know that if you are required to take a required minimum distribution from an individual retirement account, you may have the option of donating those funds directly to a qualified charity without a tax penalty?

Required minimum distribution rules have changed with the passage of the SECURE 2.0 Act, and those changes include a higher age at which taking a minimum distribution is required, so check with your financial advisor or accountant to see how the changes apply to you.

As always, donations to 501(c) (3) non-profit organizations—including the Bristol Historical Society—are tax deductible and may be beneficial, depending on how you file your taxes. Our tax ID number for your records is: 23-7122055.

BRISTOL SPORTS HALL OF FAME

The 28th annual Bristol Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held on Friday, Nov. 22 at the DoubleTree in Bristol before a capacity crowd of 350 guests.

Jeff Bashaw, Russ Carter, represented by his son Rit, Bob Fallon, Taylor Losey, Bunty Ray, Beth Rotko, Rick Schmaltz, and Cliff Snow, III were inducted. Family members and guests were treated to entertaining and sometimes emotional acceptance speeches that were well received by all in attendance.

The induction program was filmed by Nutmeg TV and will be re-broadcasted at a later date. Interested parties can download the Nutmeg TV App on their phones or TV App where they can watch the full event once it is uploaded. (It may be available by the time you read this.) You can also check the Nutmeg TV schedule on your TV guide as well.

The directors of the hall of fame wish everyone a happy and prosperous holiday season.



MEMORIAL MILITARY MUSEUM

The Bristol Women in the Military Committee has been working hard to plan several exhibits next year honoring Bristol WWII Female Veterans. Research has led us to countless families of these beautiful and brave women who shared their stories with us. In 2025, we will begin to share those stories with the public. One such story held a wonderful surprise.



Michelena Masterbone was preparing to celebrate her 101st birthday! She is believed to be Bristol's last surviving female WWII veteran. Committee members flew to Walla Walla, Washington in September to record an interview and celebrate Mickey's birthday along with her. In 2025, we will introduce you to her story. We promise you it is not one you want to miss! Stay tuned for exhibit and program date announcements. Please consider donating to or becoming a member of our wonderful museum, so we may continue to honor every woman who has served in any branch of the military or who is currently serving. It is our goal to preserve each and every one of their stories for all future generations. We look forward to seeing you at our programs.





BRISTOL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

B.H.S. SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

Every year we award a graduating Bristol student a Scholarship of \$1500. This is the only fundraiser used to generate these funds. Please join us for a wonderful meal, great conversations and the 'feel good' feeling you get when you know you have contributed towards helping a student further their education!

RESERVATION FORM PASTA BUFFET and SILENT AUCTION

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025
(Snow date): Thursday, February 27, 2025)
5:00PM – 7:00PM

Parkside Restaurant, 224 N. Main St., Bristol, CT.

MENU: Pasta, sausage, meatballs, chicken, salad, bread, dessert, and beverages
Beer and wine will be available for purchase.

ADULTS - \$30.00 CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 10) - \$20.00

PRE-PAID RESERVATIONS REQUESTED BY FEBRUARY 10, 2024.

Please cut off below and send to Bristol Historical Society, PO Box 1393, Bristol, CT. 06011-1393 with your check to reserve your reservation. (860-583-6309)

RESERVATION FORM Please Indicate - Eat In or Take Out

Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____

Option #1. Indoor Seating: # _____ persons @ \$30.00 ea. = Total _____

_____ children under 10 @ \$20.00 ea. = Total _____

Gluten Free: Yes, _____ No _____

Option #2. Take-out orders: # _____ persons @ \$30.00 ea. = Total _____

_____ children under 10 @ \$20.00 ea. = Total _____

Gluten Free: Yes, _____ No _____

PLEASE INDICATE TIME FOR PICK-UP: _____

If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation. \$ _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY; P.O. BOX 1393; BRISTOL, CT. 06011-1393 (860-583-6309)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Bristol Historical Society
presents

Valentine's **BINGO**

February 2, noon
Bristol Polish Club,
541 North Main Street
(Doors open at 10am)

Food and cash bar
at the Polish Club!

Bring your friends
and enjoy an
afternoon of BINGO



Bake Sale!

Reserve a table!

Tickets are \$35 - for a bingo card for all
10 games (additional cards may be
purchased)

Silent Auction with
unique items!

A special Valentine's Day treat with
every ticket

Raffles

Tickets must be purchased in
advance, and will be available on
our website after Jan. 1!

Prizes valued at
\$200 or more!

For more information, see our website:
www.bristolhistoricalsociety.org

