

THE GUILFORD KEEPING SOCIETY



Preserving and Sharing Guilford's Treasures

Fall 2025 - NEWSLETTER

GUILFORDKEEPINGSOCIETY.ORG

President's Letter

Greetings!

As we move into fall, the Guilford Keeping Society is moving forward with events for the remainder of the year. Please see the calendar in this issue for our schedule of events.

Our next event is the annual parking for the Guilford Fair, one of our largest fundraisers. We provide parking for the three days – and always need volunteers to work with our board members to fill all the shifts. If you can spare two or so hours to help in this important fundraising event, please email us so we can fit you into the schedule. It is a fun time and the money raised helps support all our programs.

The following event is our fall beer tasting which will be held at the Medad Stone Tavern on October 4, from 3 pm to 6 pm. Tickets will be available soon and we look forward to another successful event - with beer options and great food and fellowship. We hope to see you there!

Our annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 6:30 pm at the Guilford Free Library. A short business meeting will be followed by a presentation by Jim Powers, former teacher at Guilford High School and local historian.

Our annual open house on January 1 will be held at the Medad Stone Tavern from 2 to 5 pm. This event is known for its great food, time for greeting friends and board members and, in general, a great time to be had by all attendees. We extend an invitation to the entire community to join us then!

Our events from earlier this year are outlined elsewhere in this newsletter.

As discussed earlier, we received a grant through the American Rescue Plan Act administered by the Guilford Foundation for the Town of Guilford. The \$26,000 grant has allowed us to proceed with long awaited reglazing, repair and repainting of the many windows at the Medad Stone Tavern preserving them from weather damage. We have made great progress on this undertaking and appreciate the work Guilford Glass is providing to preserve the Tavern. Be sure to look at this work when you are at the Tavern.

We have vacancies on the Board and are looking for new members to join the Board. If you have interest in the GKS and want to help us by joining the Board, please feel free to contact me.

We have had a generous donation which will be used as a match for fundraising. Please see the article in this newsletter with information on the project and on how you can help us match those funds.

Work parties at both properties will continue and we hope that you can join us to help maintain our grounds and buildings. The Board cannot do everything alone so your participation is needed and welcome.

As a member of the Board, we rely on the entire membership for their support and guidance. The Board is always thankful for all the financial support and volunteerism that we receive.

Our success is due to you!

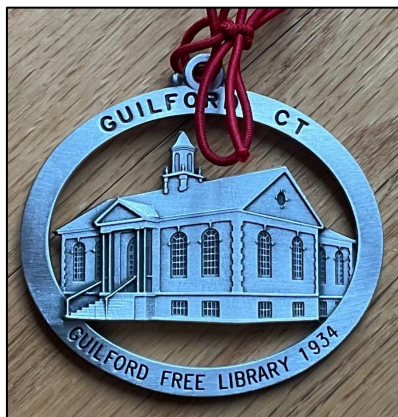
Best,
Stephen B. Dudley

President

MISSION STATEMENT: THE GUILFORD KEEPING SOCIETY COLLECTS, PRESERVES AND SHARES THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE OF GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

P.O. BOX 363, GUILFORD, CT 06437 • 203-453-2263 • REGISTERED 501C3 NON-PROFIT

GKS's annual ornament depicts the Guilford Free Library



On Tuesday, January 23, 1934, at two-thirty in the afternoon, the Guilford Free Library officially opened its doors for the first time. During the afternoon, about 200 people from Guilford registered at the library as library patrons.

In 1933, Frederick C. Spencer gave land to the town for the library to be built on. The cornerstone was laid in 1933. The library edifice was a Georgian style building with Leete's Island granite stairs.

Edith B. Nettleton was the first librarian when the library opened. Early in her tenure, she introduced a science of exhibitions. During her 44-year tenure as director, the library building changed dramatically as library services were expanded to meet the needs of the growing population. After Edith's retirement in 1978, she became a Historical Room volunteer, where she developed the historic archives. In 2003, she was present when the Edith B. Nettleton Room was named in her honor.

The Guilford Keeping Society maintains photographic albums and other archival material in the Edith B. Nettleton Room.

This pewter ornament is the latest in the series offered by the Guilford Keeping Society. The price is \$20.00.

In Memory of Tom Black



Tom Black, past president of GKS, passed away on June 19th at the age of 82. Aside from being our past president for many years, treasurer, as well as in many other roles over the years, he ran the Annual Antique Show at the Thomas Griswold House for more years than can be remembered. Tom and his fellow GKS members did a wonderful job as a team every year organizing, setting up the field, making sure the dealers were happy, being sure the grills were working, cleaning up, etc., etc. He was a great organizer and multi-tasker who was a great problem-solver for many aspects of GKS.

Sue Stoddard and Tom's adult children, Seth Black and Sarah Lingenheld, send a very heartfelt thank you to all the Guilford Keeping Society members who came out to clean up the tavern inside and out before Tom's family had their celebration of life there in August to honor Tom. It was a beautiful day, and the place never looked better. The Medad Stone Tavern is a beautiful spot for such events!

Early Guilford Days were once again held on four days (one per school) in May this year. Through various workshops at the Thomas Griswold House and Hyland House, fourth-grade students, teachers and parents learned about and experienced what life was like during the colonial period. These workshops were presented by GKS board members, and the very much appreciated volunteers from the community, parents, and retired teachers.



Mandie Canestri & Valerie Sorrentino

A Record-Breaking Day for GKS: 2025 Guilford Keeping Society House Tour



The 2025 Guilford Keeping Society House Tour was a resounding success, drawing approximately 450 guests from all over CT for a rare glimpse into some of Guilford's most fascinating homes, spanning centuries of architectural charm—from the 1700s to a sleek modern home of 2024. Thanks to the enthusiasm of our community and generous sponsors, the event raised over \$20,000 to support the Guilford Keeping Society's preservation and education initiatives.

Eight private residences opened their doors to the public, each offering a unique look at Guilford's diverse architectural heritage and vibrant living history. Whether you came to admire antique floorboards or gather inspiration for a future renovation, this year's tour offered something special for everyone.

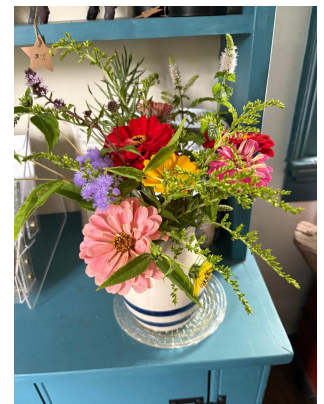
In addition to the private homes, a featured nonprofit location- "Gavin and Friends" by Sarah Tuxis was included in this year's tour—highlighting not only the building's unique history but also the vital work of a local organization dedicated to the betterment of our community.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our sponsors: **Rotary Club of Guilford, Bishops Orchards, CK Architects, Jeff Beatty Law, Common Vision, and Sound Generational Wealth.** Their support played a crucial role in making the day smooth and memorable.

We also thank the more than **60 volunteers**, as well as the **House Tour Committee, ticket outlets, florists, and advertisers** whose time, creativity, and dedication made every detail shine—from floral arrangements and signage to ticketing and logistics.

Interested in opening your home or lending a hand at a future house tour? We'd love to hear from you. Reach out to us at info@guilfordkeepingsociety.org and help us continue to share Guilford's story, one house at a time.

*Thank you to the Guilford Garden Club
for the beautiful flower arrangements
supplied and placed at the Thomas Griswold
House throughout the season.*



Wine Tasting



Many wine enthusiasts attended the Guilford Keeping Society Wine Tasting at the Medad Stone Tavern on April 26. The tasting featured a delicious variety of wines from the U.S. and abroad, as well as hors d'oeuvres supplied by GKS members. Attendees carried note cards to assess the wines and order them if they wished to purchase more. The Silent Auction, highlighted by the dinner for twelve at the Medad Stone Tavern prepared by Peter Mousch, helped raise funds for the GKS museum maintenance.

A perennial fundraising event for the Keeping Society, the Wine Tasting was organized by Frank's Package Store. Distributors Slocum & Sons, Brescome Barton, Opici, and CDI provided servers and wine. The Keeping Society thanks them for their assistance.



Photo from the Guilford Keeping Society Tag Sale and Plant Sale, Sunday, June 15th.

We can use your help

The Guilford Keeping Society is looking for volunteers to work on specific needs at our two museums.

- Docents to share the history of the museums.
- Volunteering at Early Guilford Days in May.
- Volunteering at other events.
- Tavern Crew: to clean the Medad Stone Tavern to make it shine.
- Tavern Garden Crew: to maintain the flower beds.
- Griswold House Crew: to clean and make the interior glow.
- Gris Gardeners: to maintain the front garden & herb garden at the Griswold House.
- Experience/interest in grant writing.

Email info@guilfordkeepingsociety.org if you're interested in helping us in any of these areas.

Summer Picnic

The Guilford Keeping Society summer picnic was held on July 5th at the Thomas Griswold House. Blacksmithing and woodworking presentations were provided by Steve and Eric VanDerMaelen. Attendees enjoyed playing games, the pie-eating contest, tours of the house, listening to music, and sitting out in the beautiful weather. The GKS is grateful for the support of The Guilford Foundation and Ascend Bank.



Porchfest 2025

Thomas Griswold House



Shoreline Ringers & Skunk Misery Ramblers!



Makeover at the Medad Stone Tavern

The Medad Stone Tavern got a makeover on April 19 as a small but dedicated crew of volunteers turned out to remove underbrush, prune plants and generally clean up the property. One tree was removed from next to the driveway and a mass of thorn bushes and weeds was hacked away to open up the yard behind the tavern for future events. Other tasks included carting off an old (non-historic) doghouse and raking up a winter's worth of sticks and brush. Our next task will be clearing the field north of the tavern to provide overflow parking and event space.



Summer Camps at GKS Museums

The Guilford Keeping Society sponsored three camps this summer, led by Pat Lovelace. Due to popular demand, two **Historical American Girl Dolls** were held this summer. Campers learned about the everyday lives in the dolls' time periods by reading their stories and hearing about when they lived. The campers wrote in their own journals, made crafts, played games from the doll's era, cooked food from recipes they would have used, and had a tea party in the parlor of the Medad Stone Tavern museum.



American Girl Dolls

Campers at the **Colonial Life Camp** learned about life in early Guilford at the Thomas Griswold House museum. In addition to crafts, cooking and playing games from that time period, a Native American Day and a Revolutionary War times day were also included. Our blacksmith showed the campers how iron items were made at that time.

From the GKS Photo Archives

Buffalo Bill & five Sioux Chiefs visit Guilford in 1916

William F. Cody, a.k.a. *Buffalo Bill*, and five Sioux chieftains were on tour with the Wild West show in New Haven when they visited Guilford in July 1916 at the invitation of Howard C. Nobel of Sachem's Head. They first drove through downtown Guilford where they attracted much attention. They then proceeded to the residence of H. C. Nobel in Sachem's Head. Newspaper reporters from the Shoreline Times and the Hartford Courant were in attendance.



Colonel Cody and H. C. Nobel were in business together. Cody had a new design for a bridle bit, which was manufactured and marketed by Mr. Nobel's factory in New Britain.

Some of the Sioux chieftains had been touring with Cody's show for eighteen years. They didn't speak English, so while Noble entertained Cody and his other guests, the chieftains went for a swim in Bloody Cove, where the local photographer, Henry S. Davis, photographed them.

After luncheon Davis, took another series of glass-plate photographs of the group on the veranda with local children, in the rose garden, and while seated in the brand new 1916 Cadillac type 53.

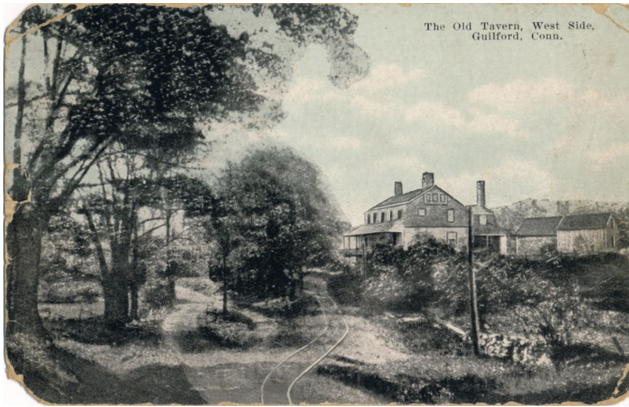
When departing, the chieftains bestowed upon their host, Mr. Noble, a new name "*Muzzascow Tonka*", which in Siouan translates as "*Big Money Man*".



In 1637 an historic incident took place at the very spot where the chieftains went swimming. That was two years before Henry Whitfield and his company arrived at Guilford.

A skirmish had ensued at Sachem's Head between Pequot warriors and Mohegans led by Uncas. The Pequots were forced to retreat but left behind their chief or Sachem who hid behind rocks offshore. When he swam to the mainland to escape, he was shot and wounded by Uncas' warriors who were waiting for him. The waters turned red with blood, and the locality was given the name Bloody Cove. The Sachem was dragged ashore and beheaded. His head was placed in the fork of an old oak tree for all to see, and thereafter the area became known as Sachem's Head.

Buildings & Grounds



Generous donation to be used as start of a matching campaign for the replacement of the Medad Stone Tavern Bridge.

As noted in the last newsletter, we have received a generous donation. Barbara Bishop, a longtime member and supporter of the GKS, donated \$30,000. After discussion and consideration, the Board has decided to utilize this donation as the start of a matching campaign for the replacement of the collapsed bridge at the Medad Stone Tavern.

Plans were prepared for the bridge replacement, through the generosity of a local engineering firm. The proposed bridge will look like the previous bridge, but will be more substantial construction and should not require maintenance nor funding for many years. Bids were received last year, but, unfortunately, GKS was not able to fund the project at that time.

Mrs. Bishop's gift gets us about half way to the needed total for the bridge.

We are requesting our friends and members to support this project and contribute to match this gift. It is our hope that this campaign will allow for the construction of the bridge in the 2026 construction season.

Please help us match Mrs. Bishop's gift and get the bridge built!

Matching gifts may be mailed to P.O. Box 363 or made on guilfordkeepingsociety.org/donate

Medad Stone Tavern Porch Repairs

Substantial rotted wood was found on the porch at the Tavern. As is often the case, investigations of the visible rot uncovered additional damage. Through the efforts of Board member Steve VanderMaelen, assisted by John Oboyski, The rotted areas were removed and replaced. In order to improve the longevity of the repaired areas, the Board decided to install gutters on the porch roof, to catch roof runoff before it landed on the porch deck. The repairs and the gutter installation have been completed and the Board is very pleased with the results.

Thomas Griswold House Oil Tank

Due to advanced rust, the oil tank at the Griswold house is being replaced

Clapboard Hill Schoolhouse

The board hopes to have an announcement on plans for this structure very soon.

Please stay tuned!!!

Maintenance of our properties

Many of our board members spend many hours in keeping our properties in good condition. These efforts are greatly appreciated! Thank you!



Stables available at the Medad Stone Tavern.

The Board continues to seek a new tenant for our stables at the Medad Stone Tavern. We can stable up to two horses and have two fields for grazing. Interested parties can email us for details (info@guilfordkeepingsociety.org).

— THE GUILFORD —
KEEPING SOCIETY
—

Beer Tasting

Saturday, October 4 ~ 3 - 6 pm



Medad Stone Tavern
171 Three Mile Course
Guilford

Join us and sample the many wares of craft brewers and
get a taste of history at the Keeping Society's 1805 tavern

Tickets: \$35.00 Advanced Purchase
\$40.00 At the Door
ADULTS 21 and Older

Tickets available at the door, or in advance at The Hartmann Group,
Lighthouse Square, 705 Boston Post Rd., Guilford and at the GKS website

www.guilfordkeepingsociety.org

Sponsors: Bishops Orchards,
Campagne Kestner Architects,
Common Vision, Inc.,
Connecticut Humanities, Sound
Generational Wealth



Stony Creek Quarry Tour

Saturday ~ October 18

10:00 a.m.

99 Quarry Road

Branford, CT

[Tickets available online for \\$22](#)



or for \$20 at Page Hardware, Taken for Granite,
or at the quarry on the day of the event.



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*Admission to
Museums is Free*

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Annual Meeting Speaker

James T. Powers, a historian, archaeologist, lecturer and educator for over forty years, is a former teacher at Guilford High School as a teacher of history. His presentation at the annual meeting will be about Guilford's early years.

Jim is the author of several books. The first was *Saving the Farm*, a book about the beginning of the Dudley Farm in North Guilford. Additional books he has written include the popular *Shadows Over Dawnland*, *Seeing the Past*, *Ancient Wisdom*, *Modern Hope*, and *On Edge of Uncertainty*.

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Location
10/4/2025	Fall Beer Tasting	MST (3-6 pm)
10/18/2025	Quarry Tour	99 Quarry Rd (10 am)
11/19/2025	Annual Meeting	Guilford Free Library (6:30 pm)
1/1/2026	New Year's Day Reception	MST (2-5 pm)

Go to www.guilfordkeepingsociety.org for more details.

Thank You

The Guilford Keeping Society Board of Directors is appreciative of the generous support of its members, volunteers, and sponsors.

A Special Thank You to our Corporate Sponsors: Bishops Orchards, Campaigne Kestner Architects, Common Vision, Inc., Connecticut Humanities, The Guilford Foundation, Ascend Bank, Guilford Preservation Alliance, Rotary Club of Guilford, & Sound Generational Wealth.

Since its founding in 1947, contributions from so many over the years have allowed the GKS to continue its mission to collect, preserve, and share the history of Guilford, CT, for present and future generations.

With your help every year, we can continue our mission.

Memberships can be processed online at guilfordkeepingsociety.org.

*If you prefer to mail in your membership, information can be found on the website and mailed to:
GKS, P.O. Box 363, Guilford, CT 06437*

Guilford Keeping Society
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