



HALE HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Vol. III Number 1

Fall 2017

MATUNUCK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Protecting the Cultural Landscape of Matunuck through Education

Welcome to our friends of the Matunuck Preservation Society!

The summer of 2017 is already fading from our memories as we look forward to next summer and begin planning the program. Although 2017 was our best year yet, we have great ideas for next summer which we will be sharing with you shortly as our plans materialize.

In the meantime, we want to look back at this past summer and share some memories and pictures of the summer of '17.

Our theme for the year was the Stone Walls of South County. The opening reception featured the beautiful black and white photographs by Mathias Oppersdorff, a long-time resident of Matunuck, now deceased, of several of the iconic walls in the area and the folks who created those walls. The photos were accompanied by the stories of the builders interpreted by South Kingstown resident storyteller, Marc Levitt. Levitt spoke movingly about the project at the opening reception and again later in the summer when his film, "Stories in Stone" was shown at the South Kingstown Land Trust Barn. Our most grateful thanks to the South County History Center for their loan of this collection.

Loren Spears, Executive Director of the award-winning Tomaquag Museum spoke about the Native American contributions to the stone work in and around South County; and Doug McGovern, a local amateur geologist led a large group around the restored stone walls at the S.K. Land Trust property at Weeden Farm, pointing out rocks of interest and helping the adventurers learn how the stones came to be found in the local fields and placed in the walls. We had a wonderful evening of "Music for Two Violins" featuring Laura Gulley & Julie McKenzie. All of our programs were very well attended and we thank you for your enthusiastic participation!

There were several new features at the Hale House which attracted higher numbers of visitors than in past years. Three rooms on the second floor were opened for the first time; two showcased the past years' photo exhibits and the third was outfitted as a theatre for presenting the 10 minute film about saving the Hale House and why it was important to do. That was a big hit this year and we hope to expand on our film offerings next season. How would you like to spend a rainy day at the theatre in Hale House? We will keep you posted.

There were also outdoor additions to attract visitors. A new bench at the edge of Wash Pond was often filled with folks enjoying the activity on the pond; and one could play a game of croquet set up by our friends Ron and Eugenie Maine on the lush green lawn off the east piazza.

As usual, it was the docents who made all of this possible. We cannot thank that merry group enough for their knowledge, and their willingness to share that with the public week in and week out. Our upstairs docent, Colleen Kenyon, was the best addition to the docent staff this summer. Colleen was our go to media person, welcoming any who ventured upstairs to the galleries and theatre all summer long. Everyone loved her and we are hoping she will be back next season. In appreciation for all they do for Hale House, there will be an end of season get together shortly at our beautiful annex building to say thank you once again for a banner year.

Finally, we would like to thank so many folks who donated to Hale House this year: Mary and Peter Nunes and Karin and Jim Aukerman for donations of furniture, and Holly Flagg for her donations of a portfolio of 19th century prints and sheet music. You may be noticing these new pieces when we re-open next summer. We are grateful for their interest in Hale House.

Ideas for next season's calendar are firming up, so you will be the first to hear of them when they are confirmed. Until then, enjoy the autumn and the Holidays. See you next year!

Matunuck Preservation Society

Stone Wall Geology Walk



Photo from "Stone Walls of South County"
Collection by Mathias Oppersdorff



Loren Spears, Executive Director
Tomaquag Museum



Gallery Night Opening Reception



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