

# COLUMBIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



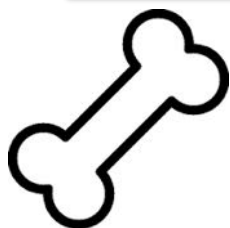
Discovering, Collecting & Preserving

The History of Columbia

Volume 51, Issue 2

September 2018

*"Discovering History, Pride  
of Place and Community"*



## Columbia Historical Society

Presents to YOU

### The Columbia Community Dog Show

Saturday, September 29, 2018

Registration 9:30, Dog Show 10-12

Held at the Pavilion at Rec. Park, Hennequin Rd.  
Columbia, CT

All Friendly Dogs and Owners Welcome or just  
Come and Have Fun

Enter your dog in one or more categories

**Best Personality**

**Most Peculiar**

**Bravest**

**Best Nose**

**Best Tail**

**Happiest**

**Most Beautiful**

**Best Ears**

**Cutest**

**Best Trick**

#### **Best in Show**

\$2.00 for one category, \$8.00 for five categories,  
\$13.00 for 10 categories.

The winner of each category will compete for in  
best in show.

Rain Date

Sunday, September 30  
9:30-12 PM

#### **Historical Society Mission**

To encourage historical research.  
To hold meetings on historical subjects  
for members & the public.  
To discover, collect & preserve  
whatever pertains to Columbia's  
History.



#### **Future Programs 2018**

The Columbia Car Show CRUISE-IN  
Sept. 9, 2018 10:00-2:00  
Horace W. Porter School, Columbia Ct.



Columbia Lake Exhibit  
The History Place 314 Rt. 87  
Columbia Ct., Aug 26, 1-4 Sept 16, 1-4,  
Oct. 20 12:30 -4



The Columbia Community Dog Show  
Sat. Sept. 29, 10:00-2:00  
Horace Porter School, Columbia, Ct.



Columbia Lake Ravine Walk Oct. 10 11-12  
Details in Walktober Brochure.



#### **Historical Society Officers**

President-Justin Holbrook  
Vice President-Judy Ortiz  
Secretary-Jeanne Nuhfer  
Treasurer-Beverly Ciurylo



#### **Board of Directors**

Tip Garritt, Past President.  
Janice Knight  
De Ramm, Town Historian Emerita  
Tom McGrath  
Millie Ramsey  
Andrea Stannard  
Carmen Vance  
Ingrid Wood, Town Historian  
Walt Woodward, CT. State Historian

VISIT US AT OUR WEBSITE [www.columbia-history.org](http://www.columbia-history.org)

# Columbia Lake

## Through the Years



On selected Sunday afternoons through October, the Columbia Historical Society will host its first exhibit in its new home, The History Place (at 314 Rt. 87 across from the Library). The exhibit is free and open to all.

The exhibit traces the history of the Columbia Lake Watershed from its early use by Native Americans, to its industrial uses during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and its recreational use since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also examines the more recent history of stewardship by the town and private groups, to ensure that it provides recreational resources for humans and important habitat for wildlife well into the future.



A special “Go Fish” game will be offered to children twelve and under who visit the exhibit and learn about the fish that live in the lake. Participants will be entered into a free drawing with the chance to win fishing equipment prizes.

Sunday **Exhibit Dates:** June 3 & 17, July 22, Aug. 12 & 26, Sept. 16  
Also Wed. 4<sup>th</sup> of July 9-12 and Saturday Oct. 20 12:30 – 4

### Associated Events:

Sat. June 2 1-3 PM – Utley Mills & Lake Watershed Walk – leaders Joan Hill & Ann Dunnack. Meet at rear of Recreation Park, 60 Hennequin Rd, at 12:45

July 15 & Aug. 19 3 PM & 4:30 PM Free 1 Hour Historical Boat trips on the Lake. Prior registration required at <millieramz@gmail.com> or 860 729-5472.

Sat. Oct. 20 11-12 – Lake Ravine Walk, details in the Walktober Brochure

If you have not had the opportunity to visit the Society’s Columbia Lake Exhibit at the History Place (the former Meeting Place and Saxton B. Library) there is still time to discover more stories like the one below. The exhibit will be open  
Sunday August 26, 1-4  
Sunday, Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:00 PM and Saturday, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 – 4:00 PM.

## Winter Fun on Columbia Lake

A memoir by Max Lessenger, Columbia Lake Association President, 1964  
From the Town of Columbia Archive and Collection

“It wasn’t all summer fun...there were many winter activities – skating parties were very popular; many built bonfires right on the ice! I remember hauling an old row boat out on the ice, loaded with kindling and set it on fire. Toasting marshmallows were part of the scene. Karl Lockwood built an iceboat and loved to sail it. There were many iceboats as well. Henry Beck has the only one left. Ice fishing was very popular and still is. Jasper Woodward used to full speed his Model A Ford Coup from the public beach. He would jam on the brakes and the car would spin around like a top. The Town passed an ordinance that prohibited vehicles shortly afterwards.”

As recollected March 3, 2008.

I have been reading past newsletters of the Society and recently came across this article shared 18 years ago. Having just finished with our state's primaries, I am reminded of what a privilege it is to live in America. As the November election fever heats up, let us remember why our forefathers sacrificed so much. M. Ramsey

### **Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence? (Author Unknown)**

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army, another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War.

They signed, and they pledged their lives, and their sacred honor. What kind of men were they? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners, men of means, well educated. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts and died in rags. Thomas McKean was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson Jr. noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt. Vandals or soldiers looted properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge and Middleton. Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished. A few weeks later he died from exhaustion and a broken heart. Norris and Livingston suffered similar fates.

Such were the stories and sacrifices of the American Revolution. These were not wild eyed, rabble-rousing ruffians. They were soft spoken men of means and education. They had security, but they valued liberty more.

Standing tall, straight and unwavering, they pledged: "For the support of this declaration, and with firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other; our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

They gave you and me a free and independent America. The history books never told you a lot of what happened in the Revolutionary War. We didn't just fight the British. We were British subject at that time, and we fought our own government! Some of us take these liberties for granted.... We shouldn't.



Columbia, CT 06237  
P.O. Box 551  
Columbia Historical Society Inc.

## The Third Annual Columbia Classic Car Show

# CRUISE-IN

Music by Columbia's Own Barry Cavagnaro

**Horace W. Porter School • Columbia, CT  
Rte's 66 & 87 (across from the Fire Station)**

- Join us for a great family event
- Food & Beverages
- 50/50 Raffle • Goodie Bags
- Face Painting • Animal Balloons
- Spectators **FREE** • Admission & Parking **FREE**
- Show Vehicles / Motorcycle: \$10 Donation
- Bring Your Cruise Buddies & Spread the Word
- 10 "Favorites" Trophy Categories
- **No Dogs, Burnouts or Alcohol**



**Sunday, Sept. 9, 2018 10:00-2:00**  
**Vehicle Registration Starts at 9:00 Rain Date: Sept 16**  
 For Car Show Information: [RecDirector@columbiact.org](mailto:RecDirector@columbiact.org) or 860-228-8513 ext. 17  
 Facebook: [ColumbiaCTClassicCarShow](https://www.facebook.com/ColumbiaCTClassicCarShow)

Benefit for:  
 • Columbia Recreation Field Fund  
 • Columbia Volunteer Fire Department  
 • Columbia Historic Preservation