

YARMOUTH VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY
President's Report for 2018 -2019
June 4th, 2019

The year began with the continuation of the Grand Trunk Depot. Linda Grant went before the Planning Board and the Town Council explaining the complexities and history of the sale of the depot and the VIS's care and timeline of ownership and decisions involved into the selling of the Depot. Town Council needed to give approval for land around the depot to be used for parking for a business for the sale to go through as well. Approval was given in January 2019 and sale of the Depot was completed in March. At this time the Depot is undergoing renovation and restoration under new ownership. Much gratitude goes to Linda from the VIS for her in depth work in selling of the Depot which took much energy, time and persistence. Linda is being honored tonight receiving the Town of Yarmouth's Latchstring Award for her volunteer work to the History Center, VIS, and numerous committee's she has volunteered on for the town.

The proposed plan for the Depot included a refreshing of Village Green Park and VIS was asked to be a part of that. We certainly agreed to that and through the year have been to several meetings with town officials, Karyn McNeil, Alex Jaegerman, and Sarah Witte, who developed plans for the park, Linda Horstmann, and a few other people. VIS was represented by Linda, Barb, and Liz. Presently, the park is under renovation. It was also discovered through the sale of the depot

that this is under the National Park Service. Under Federal rules, they needed to give permission for renovation and for any land taken away, the town needed to find a new space for a park for the same size taken away. The central part of the Village Green remains the same size and there are parking spaces to the left and towards the left side of the depot. Documents for the Depot and park are archived.

The VIS is hoping to work with the Parks and Land committee for Latchstring Park. Susan Prescott is a neighbor and concerned resident and organized neighbors for a cleanup last fall of Latchstring park. Susan has also kept looking for answers when the park plans changed this past winter and barriers were not put in place at the Patty Street side. Many children come through this entrance and with traffic poses a safety issue. Susan is still working to get permanent changes through here. I am pleased she is here today to recognize her for her work on the park. Another issue arose through the winter. The plaque at Pioneer Cemetery was removed because it contained a word offensive to native Americans. The plaque was placed there back in 1929 and was removed by the town this winter. A new plaque is ordered to be put back by the town. The VIS supported the "Our Town" grant and we were able to give four benches to the new bridge area instead of a monetary donation. This grant supports public arts and will be displayed in the Main St. bridge area. We should be hearing if the town received the grant. VIS was represented on the committees of the Streetscape Committee, attending the public meetings and giving input for Main St.

VIS was also represented on the committees of Yarmouth Arts Alliance, Bridge Celebration Committee, YCAN. Tree Committee is gone for now.

The Old Meeting House is in good condition. Spraying to prevent ants continues and annual cleaning. For Preservation we hope to work on the upstairs in the future.

The Royal River Players theatre group held their production of "Haunted Yarmouth" and gave a donation and picture of the group that will be put in the OMH. They plan to do the production again in the fall. There have been a few weddings and memorial services there as well as the Interfaith Service at the Clam Festival.

Recently, the town completed putting in the new pipes underground along Hillside Dr. The lawn is re-seeded, re-graded and steps put back in place.

The archives are in good shape and digitizing should begin in the fall. Linda has maintained these.

Linda has also worked with Bob Delaney on a large Interpretive sign for Village Green Park which is in production now. There is a sample for members to see. Two signs are being re-done under warranty that were fading. These are located in Royal River parkway out to Bridge St. After a lovely Welcome last fall at Christie Harriman's home, Katie Worthing spoke about Travel and Tourism in Yarmouth. Programs continued with Laurie presenting Trendy Stanchfield to tell us How We Can Age With Our Pets and Midcoast Humane Society and Pam Adams working with the High School Freshman Class and Power Of One to present Justin Alford of Full Plates Full Potential on Finding Solutions to Child Hunger in Maine. We learned about the Architectural Survey results and about Historic House Districts with the History Center and the town and finally How We Can Stay Healthy In Tick Season. We provided gifts for over 50 families at our annual Holiday Gift Wrap and end at lovely Skyline Farms. I believe it was a successful programming year. There were varied topics, well attended and succeeded in a goal of helping the school thanks to Pam.

Publicity through our website, e-mail, The Notes, Portland Press Herald, and the town media continues. YCAN advertised our programs for Feb. and March and also a facebook neighborhood page.

The VIS is also advertised on the YCAN resource page as well as the Welcome Packet information for the School K-8 PTO.

Jean Sheridan kindly sent word via the Bartlett Circle newsletters for our programs.

Posters were placed at different areas for some programs.

There are ads for VIS and Meeting House in spring and fall YCS Activity Guide.

I am grateful for the support and assistance of the trustees for help with programs and the board meetings. Thanks for your patience. Your help certainly assisted me with grasping President duties. It is with sadness that we say good-bye to some trustees. Bonnie Hahn who has helped me with programs, fundraising, hospitality and service. She will continue to help with Service, but leaves as trustee.

Carolyn Wilson, a long time trustee, who has helped me with programs and pitched in with fundraisers, Clam Festivals and I am sure much more leaves as trustee. I hope we continue to see her at programs.

Wendy Ralph, has decided to take a break and I hope will return in the future.

Christie Harriman, who is also a long time trustee, and worked on scholarships for HS students, and the list goes on as to committees she has worked on, will take a leave and hope to see her in the future. She has been a very gracious hostess for our some of our Fall Welcomes.

Eleanor Vigue, a trustee for many years and worked on nominating committee left earlier this year. She has been missed and we thank her for all she did.

Thank you to all for all you have done for the board and VIS.

Donations planned and given are for the benches for the Main St. Bridge, Village Green Park, Maine Preservation, Full Plates Full Potential which they used in Yarmouth schools, Bridge Celebration for a sign in book and magnets. The sign in book will be stored at the History Center, Yarmouth Arts Fundraiser You've Got Mail, High School Senior Award , Summer Lunch Program and Summer Arts Program. We also gave towards half the cost for the plaque at Pioneer Cemetery and a new Interpretive sign.

It has been decided to take a look at where we are heading. Much like the park and the depot, VIS is working on a face lift in changing times. The plan is to work on the this in the summer.

Keep a watch on our web site.

Any ideas and comments are welcome.

Thanks for coming out to Skyline Farms and your participation with VIS. Hope you have a safe and relaxing summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Marin

President