Dear HSOY Members,

During this past year the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth continued to share Yarmouth’s past with the local community and around the world. With active participation from volunteers, we have sponsored many lectures in person and on zoom, reservation walks, a Styles & Stories costume show with talks, a trip to Newport, RI that included Belmont House and Rough Point, home of millionaire tobacco heiress, Doris Duke. A new summer program was created for families at the Wetu. Families engaged in crafts, trails, and talks reflecting the life of indigenous peoples of Yarmouth. Our Halloween event had volunteers dressed as famous past residents. This event included a scavenger hunt where the ghosts of sea captains and other former residents had to be found while walking the property of the captain’s house.

We are currently developing new plans to expand our programs and update our displays and exhibits to elevate our place in the community. I’m proud to announce a new addition to our winter events. We will feature a Christmas House Tour at the Bangs Hallet House. Each room will be decorated to reflect a holiday story. Wi-Fi has been added to the Bangs Hallet House which enabled us to install a video screen in the first-floor exhibit room. Video and slideshows will be shown to supplement the exhibits there and will make use of our large photo collection.

After a hiatus of three years, members were elated to attend the Annual Dinner at the Old Yarmouth Inn. Our featured speaker was our own Marie Kesten Zahn whose talk was entitled Taxes, Trade, and Treasure: The Culture of Tea in Colonial America. Awards were presented to four people who have made significant contributions to the organization during the past three years. Recipients of the awards were Anne Grammer, Laurel Gabel, Melanie Barron, and Glen Nelson.

This summer we welcomed the return of the July 4th picnic. Guests feasted on the traditional meal of hot dogs, baked beans, coleslaw, watermelon & various homemade desserts with a variety of beverages. The North Side Band delighted us with the sounds of summer.

Membership has grown to approximately 580. A free first year membership is still offered with 80% choosing to join for subsequent years.

As part of a plan to improve the grounds we have received a gift of disease-resistant elm trees. They will be planted along the entrance road to the Kelley Chapel meadow. The trees will be available in two years which allows the Historical Society time to seek donations to cover the cost of planting them.

Our library continues to grow with suggestions by board members Our social media is also doing well with an increase in followers. To date we can report 5,360 followers on Facebook, 319 on Twitter and 821 on Instagram.

The trails continue to be visited by a record number of people. The Committee for Trails is currently working on additional signs and maps. Our historic buildings have been improved by the recent installation of a new air conditioning system on the first floor of the Bangs Hallet House, painting of the interior of the Kelley Chapel and painting and power washing the Cobbler Shop.

The Historical Society of Old Yarmouth has accomplished many programs and projects this year to present and preserve our history. In the coming year, we plan to expand and create new ideas to enrich the community.

Sincerely yours,

Aleina N. Laughton, President
Historical Society of Old Yarmouth 2022