



Port Chester Historical Society Newsletter

Spring 2022



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Annual Membership Drive of the Port Chester Historical Society was a success. Not only were there membership renewals, but there were also new members. The Port Chester Historical Society welcomes anyone and encourages anyone to be a member of the Port Chester Historical Society.

UPCOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING DATES

The Port Chester Historical Society General Membership Meetings are open to the public and are held on the first Thursday of the month via Zoom at 7:30 PM. The 2022 upcoming meeting dates are as follows: June 2, 2022; July 7, 2022; August 4, 2022; September 1, 2022; October 6, 2022; November 3, 2022; and December 1, 2022.

The information on how to attend will be included in an email before the meeting. To be added to our email list, please email your contact information to portchesterhistoricalsociety@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming meetings!

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The Port Chester Historical Society is pleased to announce that it will again this year award a \$500 scholarship to a Port Chester High School senior. The winner will be announced at the scholarship award ceremony on May 19th. This year's essay asked students to answer the following question... *"What event or location in the Village of Port Chester is so important to you that you think it should be memorialized? Explain why and how you think it should be remembered."* The Society will soon post the winning essay on its website.

EVENT COMMEMORATING MAY 14TH!

To commemorate the 154th Anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Port Chester, the Port Chester Historical Society is planning a virtual presentation by Historical Society Director Norm Davis, an expert on Port Chester history. It will be similar to the one he created for the Village of Port Chester Sesquicentennial Committee held in 2018 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of Port Chester. This video presentation will be available on the Society website: <https://www.pcnyhistory.com/>.

More information to follow soon!

INVITING THE BOT TO TOUR THE BUSH-LYON HOMESTEAD

As the new trustees have been sworn in recently as a result of the March 2022 Village election, the Port Chester Historical Society will be inviting the mayor and trustees to tour the Bush-Lyon Homestead and meet with the members of the Port Chester Historical Society. This potential event will hopefully open the lines of communication between the Port Chester Board of Trustees and the Port Chester Historical Society. The Port Chester Historical Society hopes to be able to work with the Village of Port Chester on future events and projects.

GARDEN CLEANUP

The Port Chester Historical Society is organizing a garden clean-up and maintenance day for the Native American / Colonial Garden at the Bush-Lyon Homestead. Our objectives are to make sure all the plants are ready to have an excellent growing season in the spring and summer. More information to be announced soon!



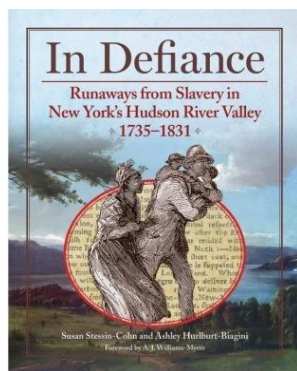
GIRL SCOUTS EVENT AT LYON PARK

On Saturday, March 19, 2022, the local Girl Scout troop held a successful and well-attended event at Lyon Park to recognize International Women's Month. Daisy, Brownie, and Junior Scouts from the Port Chester / Rye Brook service unit attended. The event, called HERstory, was dedicated to recognizing notable Port Chester women from the past and present who have had a positive impact on the community. The Girl Scouts even made a poster board honoring several amazing women who have achieved amazing things in and for Port Chester.

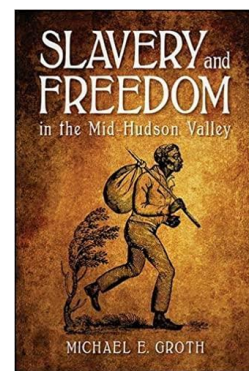


JUNETEENTH

To commemorate Juneteenth, now a federally recognized holiday, there will be many local events. The Port Chester Historical Society plans to keep collaborating with the NAACP and local religious organizations for a celebration at the Bush-Lyon Homestead. In addition, the Historical Society will also be donating two books to the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public



Library for our Local History Section. A BIG thank-you to the library! Go to the PCRB Library to see these excellent books focused on slavery in our area. The first is In Defiance - Runaways from Slavery in New York's Hudson River Valley, 1735-1831 by Susan Stressin-Cohn and Ashley Hurlburt-Biagini. This excellent book includes reproductions of notices for runaways created by their enslavers and published in local newspapers. The advertisements are compelling - you cannot help cheering for each runaway. The



second is Slavery and Freedom in the Mid-Hudson Valley by Michael Groth. Groth has taken the time to meticulously cover this mostly forgotten aspect of New York History. More information will be coming soon on the upcoming celebration!

RECENT ACTIVITY

On March 22, 2022, the Village of Port Chester Board of Trustees held a public hearing regarding a proposed law to create a Historic Preservation Commission. Various members of the community spoke, including Jordan Allen, Peter Feinman, Mike DiVittorio, and Russell Butkiewicz. Additional members of the community sent in letters. The Historical Society supports the preservation of historic buildings, educating the public, and celebrating our past.

TARPS

THANK YOU to the Village and the Board of Trustees for putting a tarp on the second outbuilding. We respectfully request that the Village address the holes in the other buildings and the remaining holes on the second outbuilding.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEE NORM DAVIS DESCRIBES THE ORIGINAL LOOK of the BUSH LYON HOMESTEAD

It has always bothered me that the Bush-Lyon House is always shown in it's "1930" version, as if it had always looked that way. But we know that's not the case; it was a typical English saltbox shape, common for farm houses in the area from 1700 to 1800.

When was the house originally built? That's a good question. Its construction suggests mid-1700's. Many historians have used the date 1720 but this is impossible if the house was built by Abraham Bush (born 1714). It may have been built by Abraham's father Justus, but he didn't own the property until 1726. It may have been built by John Lyon for one of his sons, and then "gifted" to John's daughter Ruth on her marriage to Abraham. Or, we may never know. The construction seems to be ordinary and typical for the mid 1700's - say, 1750. I'm okay with that. But in any event, it's about time we had a look at the house in it's earliest form. That's why I did this rendering, based on the foundation, and the framing of the bays. The house would have been quite simple: a small center hall and stair, one room each side, and two rooms above, all built around a central chimney. That configuration still exists today. Sometime before 1800, a one-story full-width "lean-to" addition was built at the rear, connecting to the main roof, which made the familiar "saltbox" shape.

A cold storage wing was added to the back (north) in the early to mid 1800's. On the right side, a large wing, about a third of the current house, was added sometime in the mid 1800's.

We know of these alterations because they appear on a map drawn by Andrew Bush, before 1850. He may have drawn his plans when the large wing was added.

The house was occupied well into the 20th century and it reflects some of the alternations needed to make the house habitable by modern standards. Heating, plumbing and electrical improvement were needed; siding and roofing is no longer original; the earlier stone chimney is now brick, and a large porch was added. The original kitchen was moved into the rear lean-to addition but it may have moved several times since then as well. The kitchen in the lean-to that exists today is a partial reconstruction of how it may have appeared.

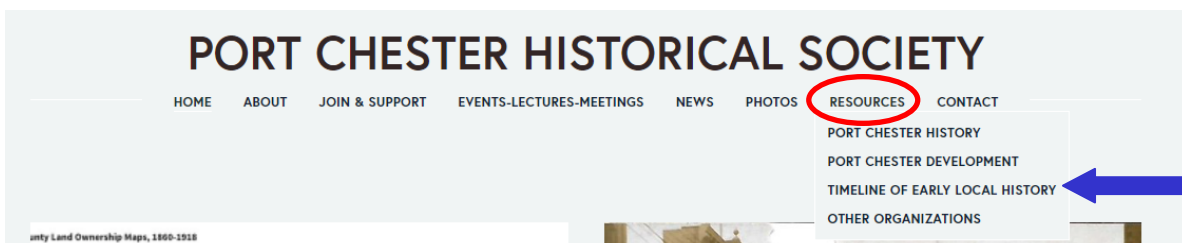
And the rest, as they say, is history. But this is how the house probably appeared soon after its construction, around 1750 (shown at the left below). This rendering show the original parts of the on the far left with windows appropriate for the time. The entry door is centered, as was the custom. The house ends on the right at the boundary of the original foundation. One of the original barns is visible at the far right; this barn is still there, in the same location, and is also documented on Andrew Bush's sketch in that position.



ANNOTATED HISTORICAL TIMELINE

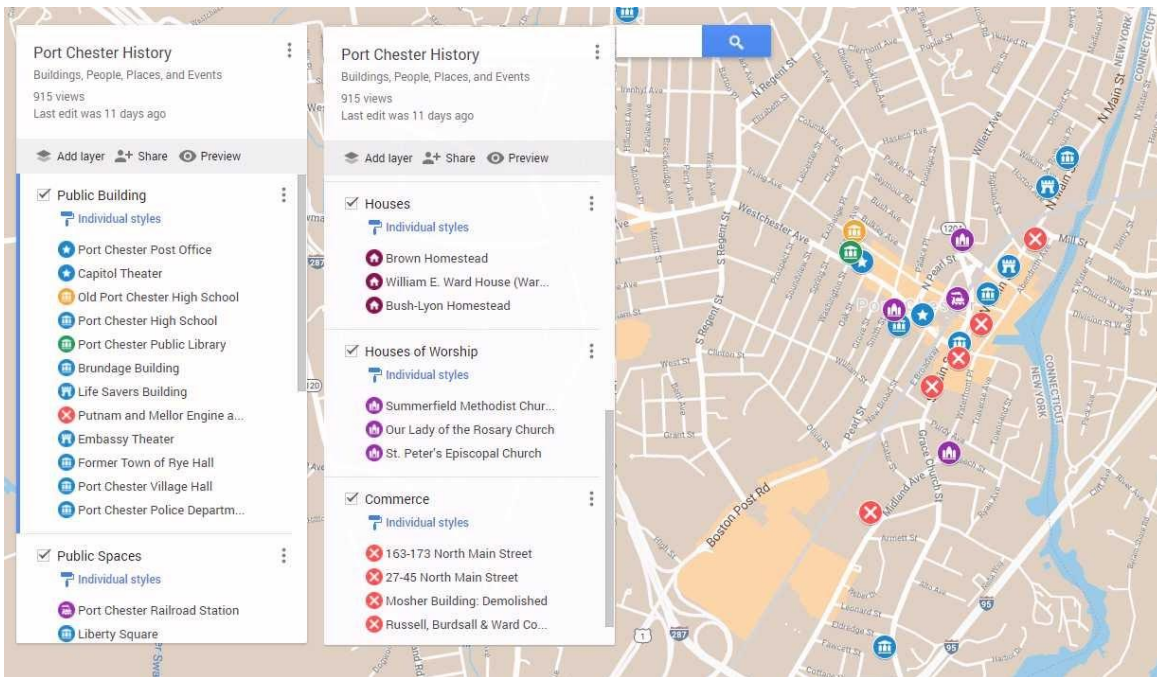
One of the missions of the Port Chester Historical Society is to educate the public on local history. To promote this aspect of this mission, the Port Chester Historical Society has created and posted a timeline to the website on the local history of the area, starting 11,500 years ago! The timeline presents a multitude of local history events along with links to reputable websites where more information can be found. A reader can browse through the dates or take a deep dive into each of the links provided. Much of this history is not well known - there was a LOT going on in our area!

This is an ongoing project, so check back for updates as we include them. The timeline can be found at www.pcnhistory.com. On the top menu, click on “Resources” and then click on the “Timeline of Early Local History” link.



INTERACTIVE LOCAL HISTORY MAP

The Port Chester Historical Society is working on an interactive map of historic buildings and locations in and around the Village of Port Chester. The map will be a free resource for anyone interested in exploring Port Chester's past, online. If you know of a building that should be on the map, please drop us an email! Our email address is portchesterhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.



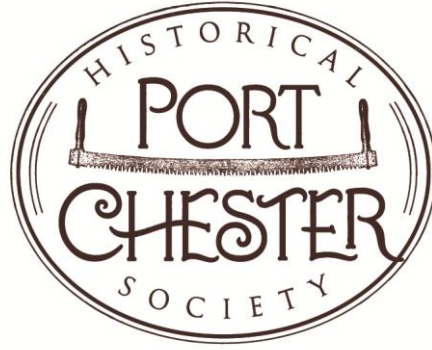
Map Link: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=10UEO9xvvyUIjbepBjqomdDa74IvPVqft&usp=sharing>

FOLLOW THE PORT CHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY ONLINE

- Visit our web page at [Port Chester Historical Society](#)
- Take a virtual tour of the Bush-Lyon Homestead at <https://sites.google.com/view/bush-lyon-homestead>
- Join us on Zoom at one of our monthly meetings
- Like us on Facebook @PortChesterHistoricalSociety
- ...and on Instagram @PCNYHistory
- ...tag your photos with #PCNYHistory
- Contact us/subscribe to our newsletter at portchesterhistoricalsociety@gmail.com



Point your camera at the QR Code above to jump to the Port Chester Historical Society website.



Join The Port Chester Historical Society TODAY!

Annual Membership

- Individual \$20.00
- Family (Household) \$30.00
- Senior (Over Age 62) \$10.00
- Student (Enrolled in HS/MS) \$0.00
- Commercial/Business Sponsor \$500.00

Lifetime Memberships

- Single Lifetime.....\$200.00
- Family Lifetime\$300.00

Please check the appropriate box
and return with your check (made out to *The Port Chester Historical Society*) to:

The Port Chester Historical Society, P.O. Box 1511, Port Chester, NY 10573

or sign up at **www.pcnhistory.org**

Member Name: _____

Member Address: _____

Member Phone: _____

Member Email: _____

Member Benefits

Your membership to The Port Chester Historical Society entitles you to participate in the love of local history, all newsletters and mailings, advance invitations to public and member-only events and tours, and programs as we develop them. Commercial or business sponsors are eligible for recognition in our newsletter and other printed material, as well as acknowledgment at public events and gatherings.