



FINDING A SALISBURY CANNON

For the last five years a committee of the Salisbury Association Historical Society has searched for an antique cannon made in Salisbury to “bring home” an iconic example of the historic output of the Salisbury iron industry. In March 2014 the committee was fortunate to find a rare Revolutionary War era cast-iron cannon of the same size and type produced in large numbers in Salisbury during the American Revolution.

Nearly 5 feet in overall length, with a bore diameter of 3.6 inches, it is a “six pounder” that shot a cannon ball weighing six pounds. The cannon is mounted on a sturdy, reproduction naval carriage and likely weighs about 700 pounds with carriage. It probably saw service aboard ships of the Continental navy, a state navy or on a privateer. Although the cannon shows evidence of use and appears to be in generally good condition, it is no longer safe to fire.

Made in Salisbury?

The lack of identifying markings obscures the cannon’s origin. However, there is a statistically significant probability that this cannon was cast in Salisbury based on the following:

- Its physical characteristics make it very likely that the cannon was cast in the American colonies.

Its design conforms to the simple, plain patterns of American cannons of the Revolutionary period, un-

like European artillery pieces produced by well-established artillery manufacturers and graced with raised decorations, maker’s marks and identification numbers. The absence of identifying marks is helpful, in a way. It is consistent with the American foundry practice of the period, when cannons were turned out hurriedly, in wartime, under relatively primitive conditions.

- Based on available production records for the period, historians have concluded that the Salisbury foundry produced approximately 80% of all domestically produced Revolutionary War cannons.

A Bit of History

Before the Revolution, British law restricted iron industry growth in the American colonies. Fortunately, Salisbury had one of the few American iron foundries with access to high-quality iron ore and the ability to cast cannons and related wartime production without interference by the British Army and Tories. Moreover, at the outset of the Revolution, farsighted Connecticut government officials provided essential support to the Salisbury foundry.

In 1775 the Tory owner of the Salisbury foundry, Richard Smith, fled to England. That enabled the State of Connecticut, under Governor Jonathan Trumbull, to promptly confiscate the Salisbury iron operation and start producing cannons, shot and other war materiel. Nearly 850 cannons of various



Continued on page 2

Salisbury Association

Officers

President

Chris Brennan

1st Vice President

Tom Key

2nd Vice President

Roberta Olsen

Secretary

Kathy Mera

Treasurer

Joel Cohen

Assistant Treasurer

Nancy Humphreys

Trustees

John Arnold

David Bayersdorfer

Digby Brown

Louis Bucceri

Rusty Chandler

Katherine Chilcoat

Barbara Collins

Louis Hecht

Dave Heck

Ronald D. Jones

John Landon

George Massey

Richard Paddock

Tom Quinn

Ex-officio

Curtis Rand

(First Selectman)

Jean McMillen

(Town Historian)

Contact us

Phone 860-435-0566

E-mail

salisburyassn@gmail.com

Website

salisburyassn.org

Newsletter

Editor/Writer

Elaine Hecht

Design & Production

Lou Hecht

Continued from page 1

sizes were cast in Salisbury during the Revolution and distributed to Continental, state and local forces opposing the British.



In summary, given these facts, it is reasonable to suggest that the Association's six-pounder could well be a Salisbury cannon. Research into the cannon's provenance will continue along various paths.

Looking for Its "DNA"

The traditional approach to establishing provenance of artwork and antiques is to find a paper trail of ownership through auction and other sale records. For antique cannons that approach has limited potential. According to the Revolutionary War experts we have consulted, cannons quickly lost their identity once they left their foundry. During the War, the unmarked Salisbury cannons were distributed to their initial des-

tinations at artillery parks, forts, and ship gun decks where they got mixed with pieces from other sources. Most were repeatedly moved to various warfront destinations. No one kept records of origin.

The more likely approach to definitively determine origin is through scientific, metallurgical analysis of the cast iron, seeking to identify the signature or "DNA" of Salisbury iron. That approach is already being explored, but so far has not yielded useful results. Research and experimentation will continue.

Nonetheless, we are delighted to have an American Revolutionary War era iron cannon that is representative of the cannons produced by the Salisbury foundry. It serves the valuable educational purpose of bringing to life an important time in the history of Salisbury, Connecticut.

William Morrill



**Memorial to Honor
Revolutionary War Soldiers**

A bronze plaque with the names of twenty-five Salisbury soldiers who gave their lives for their new country during the Revolutionary War has been installed at the Burying Ground.

Sponsored by the Salisbury Association and the Salisbury Arsenal Chapter of the DAR, the plaque adds to the war memorials already present at Town Hall. Two of the men named on the plaque, Joseph Waterous and Nathaniel Winslow, rest in the adjacent Burying Ground.



Memo from the President

As the newly elected president of the Salisbury Association, I am reminded of the mission statement of the Salisbury Association, founded 112 years ago (1902) by a dedicated group of residents. It begins this way: "The objectives of the Association are to promote the best interests of the Town and to preserve and develop its natural attractions."

A review of recent activities and accomplishments of the Association's three main committees shows how the organization is upholding its mission.

- **The Land Trust** is actively and successfully working with landowners to conserve Salisbury's natural, ecological and scenic values. A recent example is the protection of prime farmland along the Housatonic River. The Trust holds conservation easements on parcels vital to our natural heritage. It also presents informative programs, such as the "Watershed Panel" at Town Hall in April and "Reading the Forested Landscape" this September. In addition, it funds environmental education at our local schools.

- **The Historical Society** is preserving Salisbury's history and art collections and continually presenting educational lectures and exhibits pertaining to the Town's heritage. Last winter brought an illustrated talk, "Salisbury Faces," featuring portraits from the Association's collection, and this summer we saw an exhibit at the Academy Building on Civil War letters sent home by soldiers.

- **The Civic Activities Committee** funds tree management and other projects at the Town Grove, organizes the Fourth of July celebration at the Grove and the Christmas Concert. A high school senior who performed significant community service to the town became the first recipient of the new Carl Williams' Civic Activities Scholarship, funded by the committee.

The Association is moving forward at a fast pace in the 21st century with a dynamic Board of Trustees and dedicated committee members. I am awed by the knowledge, experience and hard work everyone "brings to the table" to uphold the mission of the Salisbury Association.

Chris Brennan

Salisbury Association, President



*Former Salisbury
Association president
Dave Heck tries out the new
Presidents' Bench in front
of the Academy Building.
(Anyone can sit on it; you
don't have to be president.)*



Calendar of Events

Heritage and Era of Elegance Talks are co-sponsored by the Salisbury Association Historical Society and Scoville Memorial Library. The talks take place in the library's Wardell Room on selected Saturdays at 4:00. As noted below, other events in the calendar have a different time schedule or location.



September 20

Reading the Forested Landscape—Tom Wessels

This two-part “talk and walk” program introduces a new way of experiencing a forest and interpreting its history. Using “forest forensics,” Tom Wessels unravels complex stories etched into our forested landscape. For details see Newsletter page 8.



September 27

Dark Hollow and Beyond

An exhibit at the Academy Building featuring oils and watercolors by Tom Key. Opening reception, September 27, 5:00-7:00. Show runs through October. For details see Newsletter page 9.



October 18

Two Berkshire Heroines of the First World War—Alan Price

With the centennial of World War I upon us, this Heritage Talk focuses on two former Berkshire residents, Edith Wharton (photo at left) and Nina Duryea, who were living in France when the war broke out in August 1914. Both ran relief operations funded by supporters in the United States. In his slide show, Alan Price presents Wharton and Duryea and the charities they ran during the war.

Alan Price is the author of *The End of the Age of Innocence: Edith Wharton and the First World War*. His current research concerns the 20,000 American volunteers who went to Europe before America entered the war in 1917.

November 15

Salisbury Asylum and New England Town Farm—Peter Vermilyea

While our colonial ancestors are often held up as models of rugged individualism, they also constructed systems to take care of their less fortunate neighbors. One such system was the New England Town Farm, where a plot of land was purchased by a town and farmed by those deemed by local government to be in poverty. The workings of Salisbury's own town farm, the Salisbury Asylum, provide insight into New England attitudes about community responsibility. Peter Vermilyea teaches history at Housatonic Valley Regional High School and at Western Connecticut State University and is the author of *Hidden History of Litchfield County* (2014).

December 6

Victorian Christmas Concert

The Salisbury Association presents its winter concert at the Academy Building with the return engagement of an outstanding trio: Judith Dansker (playing oboe and recorder), Marcia Young (historical harp and voice), and Christopher Morrongiello (lute). The program includes Renaissance and Baroque music and traditional holiday songs. Reservations suggested.



February 21

Revisiting Ellen Emmett Rand—Richard Boyle

Art historian Richard Boyle presents this Era of Elegance talk on artist Ellen Emmett Rand (1875-1941). A former resident of Salisbury and New York City, Rand studied with many of the celebrated artists of her time. She specialized in portraits, often of family and local residents, and is known for her painting of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Her Scoville Sisters portrait is owned by the Scoville Library and the portrait of Judge Warner by the Salisbury Association.

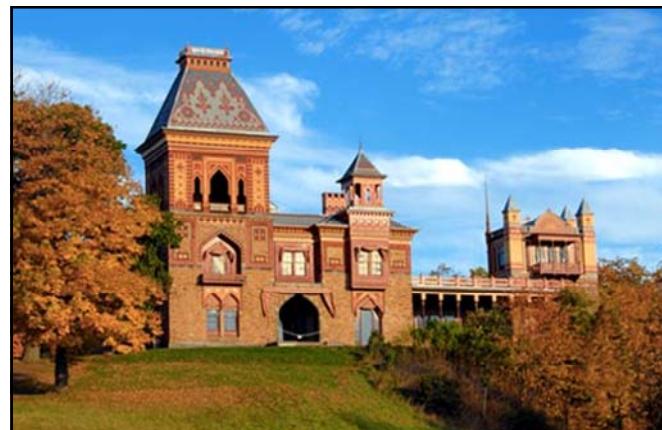
March 21

Frederic Edwin Church and Olana—Valerie Balint

Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900) was one of the premier landscape painters of the 19th century. He studied under Thomas Cole before setting up a studio in New York City, from which he traveled widely on sketching expeditions.

In 1860, Church established his family home on a farm in the Hudson Valley, later naming it Olana. He designed his home, studio and farm as an integrated environment embracing architecture, art and landscape. The artist often painted the views from his property, which is now a New York State park and historic site.

Valerie A. Balint is Associate Curator of Olana and a frequent lecturer on Church, Olana and the Hudson River School.



Salisbury Land Trust: Many . . .

Whatever the expression—“cooking on all burners” or “firing on all cylinders”—the Salisbury Association Land Trust is enjoying a highly productive year with many irons in the fire. The Trust works with landowners and conservation partners to protect Salisbury’s farmland and other natural resources; presents informative programs and exhibits on nature; and funds environmental education. Here’s a look at some recent activities and a preview of fall events.

Land Conservation

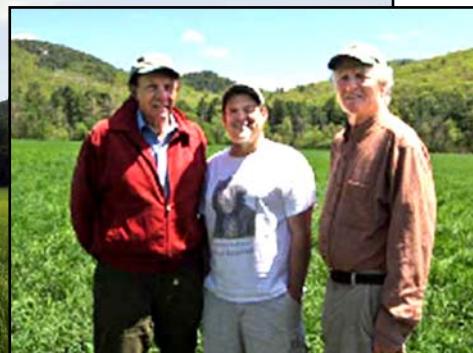
Both farmland and river are essential elements in Salisbury’s ecological landscape.

In April the Land Trust closed on the purchase of 39 acres of farm fields with prime and important statewide agricultural soils stretching nearly a half mile along the Housatonic River in Salisbury.

The Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) was a key partner in the transaction, which was made possible by support from several funders: the John T. and Jane A. Wiederhold Foundation, the Natural Resource Damages (NRD) Fund, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Salisbury Association Land Trust.

Previously owned by John and Joyce Belter, the property is located between Route 7 and the Housatonic River, half a mile south of Route 112 in the southeastern corner of Salisbury. It will remain active farmland, with a plan to protect the river while allowing public access to the river through creation of a footpath.

The parcel provides an essential wildlife corridor and vital riparian habitat for aquatic species that rely on the extended riverfront that the property provides. And as Lynn Werner, HVA Executive Director, notes: “Conserving this parcel helps to protect the adjacent Appalachian National Scenic Trail Corridor and creates new access to the river for fishing and birding along this majestic scenic stretch of the Housatonic River.”



Left to right: Lou Hecht (Salisbury Land Trust), Tim Abbott (HVA), and George Massey (Salisbury Land Trust) at recently protected farmland along the Housatonic.

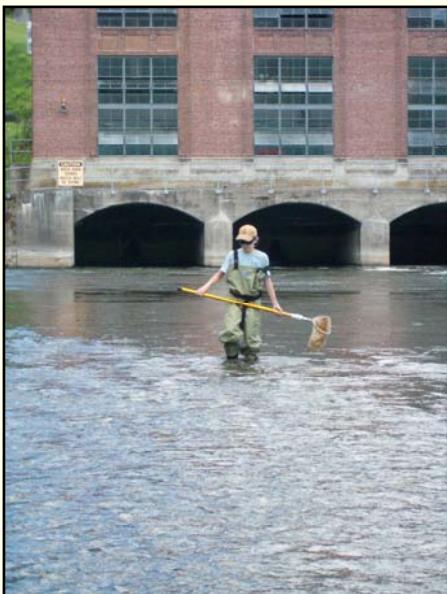
Iron's in the Fire

Environmental Education

Dear Salisbury Land Trust:

I will start by thanking the Salisbury Land Trust for helping the sixth grade at Salisbury Central School with the costs of our River Study.

Wendy Miller, of Sharon Audubon, brought a large model of a "neighborhood" complete with a factory, homes, farm, roads, a forest, etc. Various forms of "pollution" were placed on areas of the model. When liquid was sprinkled on the model, the "pollution" ran off into the water sources. The students saw how dumping waste in one location can harm other locations in the area.



The students also placed symbols of houses, schools, businesses, roads, farms, and animals on a large "Living Map" of the Northwest Corner, finding areas for development that would least impact the environment.

On our field trip, we collected macroinvertebrates from the pond and stream at the Audubon Center and from the Housatonic River. The students learned how to tally the data, prepare a lab report, and determine the health of the water sources. (You will be happy to know that, based on our data, the water sources were "clean to very clean.")

This was an excellent learning situation for our students. It was hands-on so they were excited but focused. I anticipate doing this activity for years to come.

Sincerely,
Paul J. Denza
Salisbury Central School



A WeatherBug[®] weather station will soon be installed at Salisbury Central School. WeatherBug is affiliated with Channel 3, which will broadcast the weather data from the school on the morning news program. The project received funding from the Salisbury Association's Land Trust and Civic Activities committees as well as from other local groups.

As described by Principal Lisa Carter, the WeatherBug Schools program combines a fully automated Weather Tracking Station with online, standards-based learning to deliver a fascinating educational experience. She points out that climate and weather study are part of the curriculum in many grades. WeatherBug Schools will provide math and science lessons incorporating weather data. The school will also be able to communicate with other WeatherBug schools in the country to learn about weather conditions in different locations.

Programs and Exhibits

Reading the Forested Landscape

This two-part “talk and walk” program on Saturday, September 20, introduces a new way of seeing a forest and interpreting its history.

Co-sponsored by the Salisbury Association Land Trust and Scoville Memorial Library, the program is conducted by Tom Wessels, nationally recognized landscape ecologist and author of *Reading the Forested Landscape*, on which the program is based.

The presentation opens with a morning slide show (10:00-11:30) in the library’s Wardell Room on “reading” a forest through evidence such as the shape of the trees, scars on their trunks, the pattern of decay in their stumps, the construction of stone walls, and the lay of the land. As Mr. Wessels puts it, “The process could easily be called forest forensics since it is quite similar to interpreting a crime scene.”

At noon we will depart in carpools from the Scoville Library parking lot for a guided walk at Turnip Top (part of the Edith Scoville Sanctuary). You are encouraged to bring your lunch and enjoy it on the library grounds before leaving for the interpretative walk (12:30-2:00). As Mr. Wessels notes, “For those interested in enhancing their sense of place, I know of no better way than becoming intimately acquainted with their local forests and the fascinating stories they tell.”

If you plan to participate in the walk, please leave your name and contact information with the Salisbury Association at 860-435-0566.



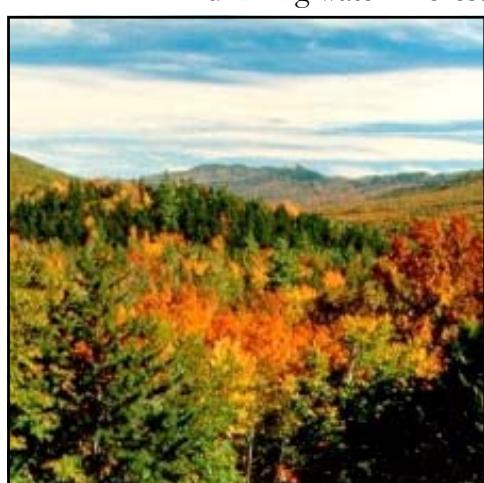
Tom Wessels, nationally known landscape ecologist and author

At the Woods Forum

Nearly all of us in this region rely on forests for the quality and abundance of our outstanding drinking water. Forests also cool and clean the air, provide critical habitat for birds and other

wildlife, offer recreational opportunities, and contribute to our local economy through wood and other forest products. And, of course, forests are beautiful.

Nearly half of Connecticut’s forestland is owned and cared for by individuals or families. To inform woodland owners in our area, a “Woods Forum” was held in March, hosted by Indian Mountain School. The event was organized by HVA’s Litchfield Hills Greenprint and its partners, including the Salisbury Association Land Trust and Audubon Connecticut. Funding was provided by the U.S. Forest Service through the North Estate Foresters Association.

The forum enabled participants to speak with experts about their forested land, forest ecology, invasive species control, woodland conservation and wildlife habitat management. Some landowners signed up for professional visits to their property by forest ecologists and wildlife experts to learn more about the diversity and health of their own woodlands and how to plan for the future.

Dark Hollow and Beyond

Landscape Paintings of Salisbury Conserved Lands and the Coast of Maine

Dark Hollow and Beyond is an exhibit of oils and watercolors by local artist Tom Key, focusing on conservation lands in the Town of Salisbury with an emphasis on the Dark Hollow preserve. Other natural landscapes and shorescapes of the Maine Coast are also included.

Dark Hollow, Tory Hill and several other conserved properties are owned and managed by the Salisbury Association Land Trust.

Tom Key's paintings have been shown in over thirty galleries and juried/invitational shows from Delaware to Maine. A long-time land trust member, Tom has served as manager of the Dark Hollow property since its acquisition in 2002.

The exhibit will be on view at the Academy Building, Main Street, Salisbury, through October. The public is cordially invited to the opening reception on Saturday, September 27, from 5:00-7:00.

A portion of the proceeds from sales of the paintings will benefit the work of the land trust.



For the Birds

June 7th turned out to be a wonderful morning for the Salisbury Land Trust's 10th annual guided bird walk at the Schlesinger Bird Preserve: mild weather, little wind and brilliant sunshine. Add to that plentiful singing birds and 20 intrepid birders and you have the makings of an awesome morning.

Our bird list grew to 32 species heard or seen, highlighted by the specialties of the preserve: Prairie Warbler, Indigo Bunting and Field Sparrow. We were graced with prolonged views of Chestnut-sided Warbler and Blue-winged Warbler, both of which can be difficult to spot, though easy to hear. We also had more good chances than I can remember of seeing the Prairie Warbler.

The Schlesinger Bird Preserve is vital habitat for these species. In fact, it is one of only two spots I know of in the Northwest Corner where you can find Prairie Warblers singing.

The Land Trust manages this 20-acre preserve at Scoville Ore Mine Road and Undermountain Road as an early successional habitat. If left alone, old fields like these are a forest waiting to happen. Land management involves periodic, selective cutting to maintain a landscape of thick ground cover with some grasses, shrubs and trees.

We can only hope that next year's walk brings together, yet again, good weather, good birds and good fellowship. *Tom Schaefer*



Bee-buzzzz, bee-zzzz: That's the buzzy song of the Blue-winged Warbler that winters in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, typically arriving in Connecticut in mid-to-late April and departing by mid-September.

3,300 and Counting

Did you know that the Salisbury Association maintains a computerized photographic archive at the Academy Building? The archive has now grown to 3,300 images. To further develop the depth and breadth of the collection, the Association welcomes donations (or loans) of photographs pertaining to Salisbury history.

Writers and other individuals looking for information about a section of town, such as Taconic or Lakeville, or specific historic figures, buildings or events, can access the archive for illustrations for books or articles. History organizations have found the collection useful for visual documentation.



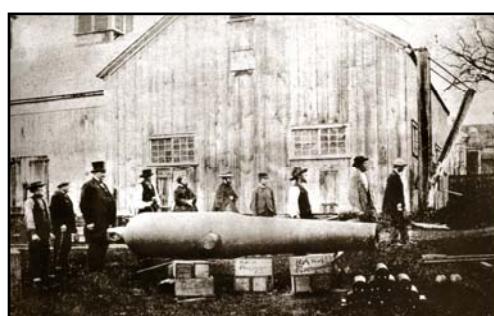
Ellen Emmet Rand with a portrait of her son, John, 1924

Computerization several years ago has facilitated access to the images, which can be retrieved by typing in a key name, word, or phrase. For example, if you wanted information about local artist Ellen Emmet Rand (the subject of a library talk on February 21), you would type in the key word “Rand” and the program would bring up images of the artist, her family and work.

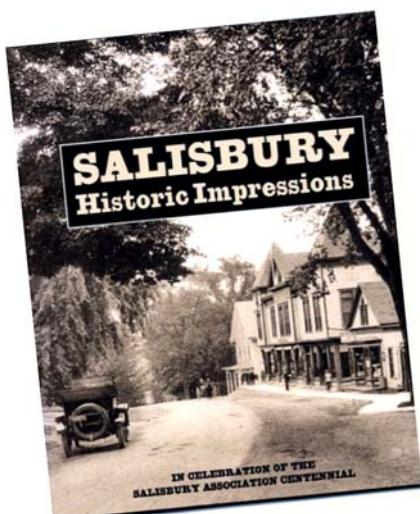
When a particular image has been selected, a print as small as 2" x 2" and up to 8" x 10" can be made on premises. If preferred, a CD can be burned, or posters special ordered. Commercial use of an image comes with a fee, a written agreement limiting use to the one-time project, and a credit to the Salisbury Association. For personal use, the fee is nominal. The Salisbury Association may underwrite projects that benefit the community.



Working with oxen at the Mayflower Farm

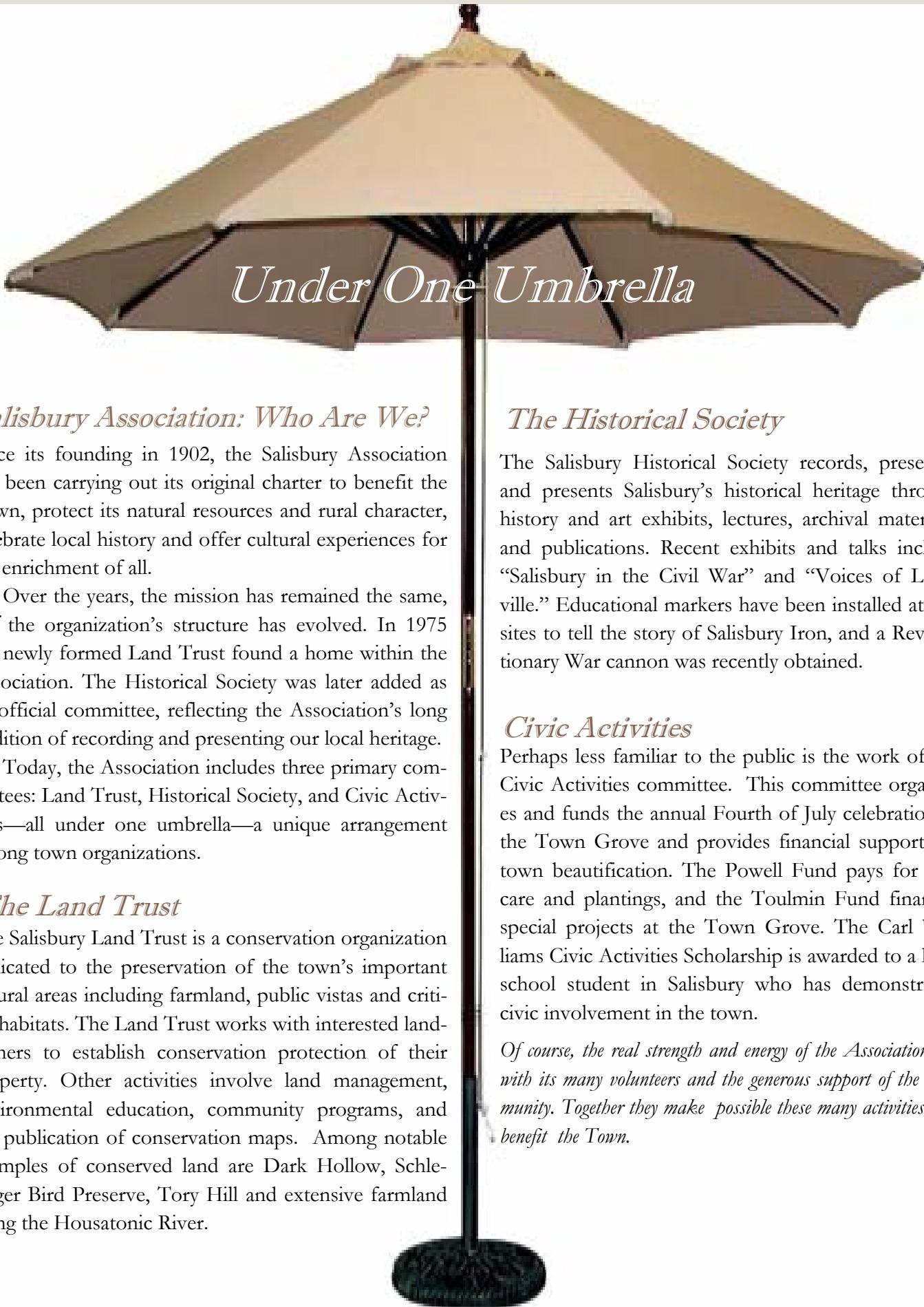


Civil War cannon made at Ames Iron Works



A Photo Reminiscence

The Association's photographic archive was the source of most of the photos used in the publication *Salisbury, Historic Impressions*. The photos are grouped by theme (Main Street, When Iron Was King, On the Farm, and so on) with brief text providing a window through which we, today, can view some of the events, people and places that shaped Salisbury's history. The publication, one of a number of local history books published by the Association, is available at the Academy Building.



Under One Umbrella

Salisbury Association: Who Are We?

Since its founding in 1902, the Salisbury Association has been carrying out its original charter to benefit the Town, protect its natural resources and rural character, celebrate local history and offer cultural experiences for the enrichment of all.

Over the years, the mission has remained the same, but the organization's structure has evolved. In 1975 the newly formed Land Trust found a home within the Association. The Historical Society was later added as an official committee, reflecting the Association's long tradition of recording and presenting our local heritage.

Today, the Association includes three primary committees: Land Trust, Historical Society, and Civic Activities—all under one umbrella—a unique arrangement among town organizations.

The Land Trust

The Salisbury Land Trust is a conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the town's important natural areas including farmland, public vistas and critical habitats. The Land Trust works with interested land-owners to establish conservation protection of their property. Other activities involve land management, environmental education, community programs, and the publication of conservation maps. Among notable examples of conserved land are Dark Hollow, Schlesinger Bird Preserve, Tory Hill and extensive farmland along the Housatonic River.

The Historical Society

The Salisbury Historical Society records, preserves and presents Salisbury's historical heritage through history and art exhibits, lectures, archival materials, and publications. Recent exhibits and talks include "Salisbury in the Civil War" and "Voices of Lakeville." Educational markers have been installed at key sites to tell the story of Salisbury Iron, and a Revolutionary War cannon was recently obtained.

Civic Activities

Perhaps less familiar to the public is the work of the Civic Activities committee. This committee organizes and funds the annual Fourth of July celebration at the Town Grove and provides financial support for town beautification. The Powell Fund pays for tree care and plantings, and the Toulmin Fund finances special projects at the Town Grove. The Carl Williams Civic Activities Scholarship is awarded to a high school student in Salisbury who has demonstrated civic involvement in the town.

Of course, the real strength and energy of the Association lies with its many volunteers and the generous support of the community. Together they make possible these many activities that benefit the Town.

Civic-Minded

The Salisbury Association Civic Activities Committee has selected Cristian Umana as the recipient of the first Carl Williams Civic Activities Scholarship.

Carl Williams, a long-time Salisbury Association member, served on many community boards, volunteering countless hours for the benefit of the town. He is a wonderful example of a model Salisbury citizen. This new scholarship in Carl's name was created to encourage and reward young people involved in Salisbury's civic activities.

After emigrating from El Salvador with his family,



Chris Brennan, Salisbury Association president, presents a scholarship to Cristian Umana

Cristian had to adapt to American culture and learn English. This year he graduated from Housatonic Regional High School and will attend Cornell University in the fall, with a plan to study environmental science.

Cristian's many high school activities included participation in the Envirothon Team, student government, American Field Service and public service with the National Honor Society. In Salisbury he assisted an elderly couple in their home, served as an intern at Trout Unlimited and a Lake Wononscopomuc Advisory Board Junior Member. He participated in science and environmental summer camps. The Committee is delighted to have selected Cristian as its first Carl Williams scholarship winner.

Other Committee activities pertain to the Fourth of July celebration at the Town Grove (unfortunately, rained out this year) and organizing the Victorian Christmas Concert (December 6). We are looking for ways to promote the Salisbury Job Program to assist youth with their first employment. *Dave Bayersdorfer*

The Salisbury Association
24 Main Street
P.O. Box 553
Salisbury, CT 06068

Presorted Standard
Non-profit
Permit #106
Lakeville, CT 06039

Postal Patron