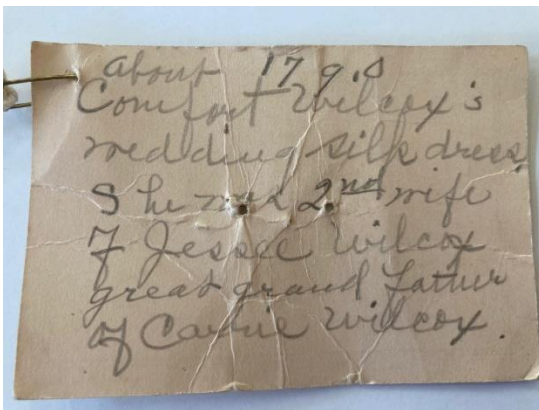
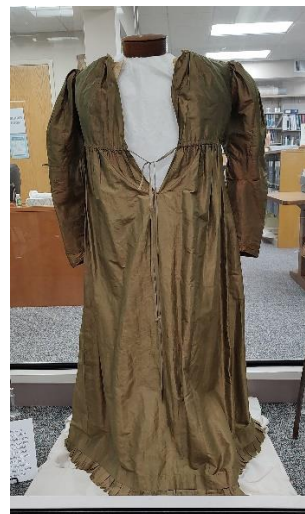




In honor of our golden anniversary, the Avon Historical Society has a display in the History Corner of the Avon Free Public Library. This installation shows a very small sample of artifacts from our collection of over 700 items covering more than 230 years of Avon's history! The highlight of the exhibit is a circa 1790 women's silk dress used for the wedding of Comfort Peck to Jesse Wilcox on February 5, 1794. The provenance on this dress came to us in two ways. First the photo below of the handwritten note by the donor, Carrie Wilcox (1876-1972) who was the great granddaughter of Comfort and Jesse. She donated the dress in 1985. Second is the note in Rev. Rufus Hawley's journal of 1794: *Wednesday Fair, very windy & extream cold. The Associatn Spent the forenoon in religious conversatn, broke up p.m. I rode home. Married Jesse Willcox of Northington (Widoer) & the Widw Comfort Peck of Bristol.* Comfort and Jesse, who are buried in West Avon Cemetery, had five children. Neither had children from their first marriages. Jesse grew up in Avon on Cider Brook Road. His brother, Joshia Wilcox, was a soldier in Capt. Ralph Stoddard's Co., 8th Connecticut, during the American Revolution. This dress was recently conserved through a grant from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Abigail Phelps Chapter in Simsbury. A grant is pending with the Americana Corners Foundation to purchase a museum-quality mannequin and display case to house the dress in the new museum. If the grant is not won, the Society will fundraise for the cost. Donations are always welcome.



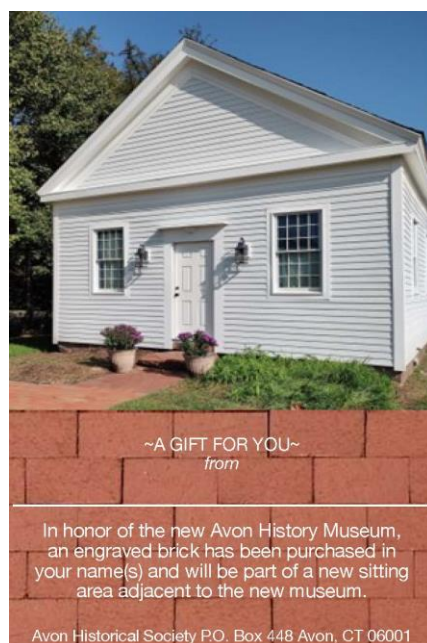
Note from donor



Dress on display in the History Corner
(oversized mannequin for the dress)

HELP US PAVE THE WAY – BUY A BRICK!!!

Have you bought a brick yet? No? Why not! Now is the time as the order for bricks have to be placed for the new patio to be laid this summer. The Society has GIFT CARDS for giving a brick for any occasion you wish to commemorate. See Page 5 to order your brick and let us know if you wish a GIFT CARD to be given. You can buy directly online or by mail. We encourage everyone who loves history to help us by buying a brick! (below is a sample of the gift card)



Update on the new Avon History Museum

NOD – NORTHINGTON – AVON

The three names of Nod, Northington and Avon will lead visitors through the new Avon History Museum opening later this year, as the historical society tells the story of our town's rich heritage. Visitors will learn about the Paleo-Indians, who lived here 12,500 years ago, and about the valley after European contact, when Nod was a section of Farmington. European settlers brought a new way of life to the Valley, making villages such as ours "att Nod" - as proclaimed around 1647 by Steven Hart, the first non Indigenous person to live here by the Farmington River.

Decades later, Nod had grown to several hundred English residents. They petitioned to have their own parish of Northington, because they were "north of Farmington." About 80 years later, in 1830, residents again petitioned to incorporate as the town of Avon. Some say the name came from the River Avon in England, but this has never been proven. The new Avon History Museum will have signage, interpretive panels, artifacts, and more. Window banners will tell stories in ways that can be updated as modern history happens. The exhibits will follow national initiatives to be diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

This year the Avon Historical Society celebrates its 50th anniversary. We are proud of our work to honor and learn from the past as Avon evolves and changes in our modern world.



AVON TALKS Podcast is going very well. It is produced and edited by Avon resident, Ethan Guo, a freshman at Tufts University. He is focusing on four main themes: Avon Historical Narratives, Avon Historic Buildings/Landmarks/Sites, Avon Historical Events and Modern Avon History. Each month there will be new and exciting discussions that you can listen to at your leisure. The most recent postings are the History of Heublein Tower with Jay Willerup, president, Friends of Heublein Tower and History of Avon Old Farms School with Art Custer, history teacher and now historian for the school. You can listen at: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/2024219> Or email your contact information to: avontalksahs@gmail.com to receive monthly notices of new editions of the podcast!

New Kiosk on the history of the Avon Rails to Trails



If you live in Avon, take a drive to the Avon Public Works department on Arch Road and stop at the parking lot for the Farmington Valley Heritage Trail at the top of the hill on the left. At the parking lot is a kiosk and directional sign about Avon. In particular, the kiosk has history of the rails to trails system that was the precursor to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail we have in Avon today. This kiosk and directional sign was designed by Teja Lakamraju for an Eagle Scout project in 2022 and 2023. The directional sign is modeled after an original directional sign that was in the center of Avon in front of the Constitution Oak. The tree is still standing at the end of Old Farms Road and Route 44. The kiosk explains how the national Rails to Trails movement started in 1986, later funded by Congress in 1991 to convert unused railways to walking and biking paths. Our trail started as a CT/MA initiative but has grown into a 3,000 mile trail from Calais, ME to Key West, FL. So next time you are on the trail in any part of Avon, Simsbury, Farmington, etc., you are on a piece of American history. The Avon Historical Society made a modest donation to Teja's project and assisted with historical context for the text of the kiosk. Congratulations Teja!!!

Updates, Events & Announcements

- *TODAY Magazine*, an online magazine focusing on the Farmington Valley, featured the Avon Historical Society's 50th anniversary in their January issue. See pages 14-16: https://issuu.com/deckertbruce/docs/-today_-_1-2024?fr=sNzU5ZjYzNzg1NDM
- Just over one year ago the Avon Library received a national grant called Save America's Treasures in which they would assist the Society in preserving and digitizing objects relevant to the agrarian history of Avon, which is most of the 18th and 19th century. The work has been ongoing and as each item is assessed, it is added to a new program called Connecticut Collections. To view the items posted to date, visit <https://ctcollections.org/> and type in Avon Historical Society. To date 231 objects, of the over 700 in the collection, have been photographed and uploaded for everyone to see.
- Our 5th *TABLESCAPES* event is happening on March 15 & 16 at The North House. We will again feature a "Tableware Tag Sale" of gently used dishes, platters, bowls, glassware, barware, silverware, casserole dishes, baking dishes and supplies all priced to sell with proceeds to benefit the Avon Historical Society. Do you have anything to donate? Drop off is Thursday, March 14, 2024 at the Belle Ballroom behind The North House from 10:00am – 3:00pm. Call Mary Harrop at 860-670-3225 for more details or for pick up! See page 8 on how to buy tickets! We hope you will join us for this important & fun fundraising event.
- The 4th annual *UNEARTHING HISTORY: The Discovery of a 12,500 year old Paleo-Indian Site Along the Farmington River in Avon, CT* webinar series begins again on March 7. Full details on how to register are on Page 7. Be sure to sign up soon for all five events sponsored by the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Committee. There is no cost to attend these webinars.
- **America 250** is the national commemoration of the Declaration of Independence to be held on July 4, 2026. In Connecticut this commemoration is being administered by Connecticut Humanities for **America 250 CT**, a commission appointed by Gov. Lamont. Their website is: <https://ct250.org/> In order for historical societies, museums, organizations and individuals to think about how to participate in this national commemoration, a one-day planning conference entitled "Declaring Freedom" will be held on Saturday, March 16 at Central CT State University in New Britain, CT. It is being organized as part of the Association of the Study of Connecticut History's (ASCH) Spring Convocation and is open to the public. Through the incredible generosity of Avon Historical Society member, Pat Moran, the first 250 registrants will attend free of charge! Pat is a native of Avon who has a deep love of American history, art and gardens! Her funding of this conference is a testament to the role Connecticut played in our nation's development 250 years ago. According to the CT Humanities website, the goal of America 250 CT is to have, on a very local level, civic, cultural and historical education events and programs to promote, document, identify and preserve the historic resources, including archives, buildings, landscapes, objects and sites related to the semiquincentennial period. To register to attend "Declaring Freedom," visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/declaring-freedom-aschs-spring-convocation-tickets-789094582137?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl>



Help Us Pave The Way!

Buy an engraved brick for the new **Avon History Museum**



Photo taken Fall 2023 - Still Under Renovation

Join us as we transform this 200-year-old schoolhouse into a new museum featuring Avon's rich history. Located in Avon's original center, with a planned 2024 grand opening, the Avon History Museum will be accompanied by a brick sitting area. Proceeds will benefit the creation of permanent & temporary exhibits inside the new museum.

Memorialize a loved one, your family, an ancestor, your business or yourself!

Personal: 4" x 8" for 3 lines (\$100) **Business:** 8" x 8" for 6 lines (\$250) of text

20 characters per line, including spaces and punctuation. Provide your name or message below:

Purchase online at www.avonhistoricalsociety.org or mail this form with your check,

payable to: The Avon Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 448, Avon, CT 06001

REMEMBERING CONNECTICUT'S COLORED REGIMENTS: FILM SCREENINGS AND DISCUSSION

SUNDAY, FEB. 4, 2024, 1-3 PM
AVON SENIOR CENTER

635 WEST AVON RD., AVON, CT 06001 (SNOW DATE: FEB. 11, 2024, 1-3 PM)



SCREENINGS • DISCUSSION • RECEPTION

Screening of "The Connecticut 29th" written and produced in 2023 by Berlin Equity Action Team. This 15-minute video includes a brief history of the 29th, 30th and 31st Connecticut Colored Infantry during the Civil War. Chris Barlow of the Berlin Historical Society will provide background about the making of this film which won "Best CT Film" at the Mystic Film Festival.

Screening portions of a documentary about the 29th Connecticut written and produced in 2020 by John Noone, retired CT National Guardsman, for the Connecticut National Guard. It is a narration of OUT OF THE BRIARS written in 1910 by Alexander Newton who served in the 29th Connecticut.

Moderated discussion after both screenings with John Mills, President, Alex Breanne Corporation, a non-profit that researches lesser-known stories of the American enslaved.

SPONSORED BY THE AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AVON LIBRARY, AVON SENIOR CENTER

Unearthing History: The Discovery of a 12,500 year old Paleo-Indian Site Along the Farmington River in Avon, CT

Photo provided by Archaeological
and Historical Services, Storrs CT



2024 series sponsored
by a grant from



7:00 pm EST via Zoom
Free to attend.

Register at www.avonctlibrary.info

MARCH 7

The History of Native American Archaeology in Connecticut, presented by Nicholas Bellantoni, emeritus state archaeologist with the UCONN State Museum of Natural History and adjunct associate research professor in the Department of Anthropology. He will take the audience through the history of archaeology in CT bringing it up to present day with new discoveries and the process during the work at the Brian D. Jones Site.

APRIL 11

Bioarchaeology in North America: Ethics, Issues and Where the Field Stands in 2024, presented by Alex Garcia-Putnam, PhD, University of New Hampshire. He will talk about the field, basics of bioarchaeology, the lack of skeletal remains found in the United States and some of the reasons for, and implications of, that lack of data.

MAY 9

Foraging in the Paleoindian Period: A Macrobotanical Analysis at the Brian D. Jones Site in Avon, CT (tentative title), presented by Katharine Reinhart, Project Archaeologist/Botanical Analyst, Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc, Storrs, CT. She will focus on the analysis of plant evidence from the site to learn what they ate and where they found it.

SEPT. (tbd)

Microscopic Evidence for the Manufacture and Use of Stone Artifacts at the Brian D. Jones Site, presented by G. Logan Miller, Assoc. Prof. Anthropology, Illinois State University.

Watch the webinars from the
2021-2023 series on the
Avon Library's YouTube Channel:
www.youtube.com/user/afplct

OCT. (tbd)

Update on the Brian D. Jones site in Avon, CT since discovery in 2019 presented by the team at Archaeological and Historical Services, Storrs, CT. October is Archaeology Month in Connecticut, so this presentation will be 90 minutes with time after for Q&A.

In partnership with



Webinar series created by : Avon Historical Society, Avon Free Public Library, Avon Senior Center

TABLESCAPES

30 CREATIVE & ORIGINAL TABLESETTINGS

A 2-day fundraiser to benefit The Avon Historical Society

FRIDAY, MARCH 15 & SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2024

10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Belle Ballroom, The North House, Rt. 44, Avon, CT



Expanded Tableware Tag Sale both days!

Tickets on sale now.

\$15 pre-show / \$20 at the door

Order tickets by calling 860-670-3225 or online at:

www.avonhistoricalsociety.org





AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MISSION: to identify, collect, preserve, utilize, publish, display, and promote the history and heritage of Avon.
(Approved by the AHS Trustees, Jan. 10, 2001)

ABOUT US: We work to deliver transparent, fair and inclusive processes and experiences, free from discrimination of any form. We seek to build a culture of inclusion within our members, volunteers, visitor experiences, organization events and our community.
(Approved by the AHS Trustees, March 9, 2022)

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Dr. Helaine Bertsch, Vice President
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MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

**Dues can be paid online through our website, clicking on the QR code above,
or by mail at: P.O. Box 448, Avon, CT 06001**

MEMBERSHIP DUES SCHEDULE:

\$25 INDIVIDUAL
\$50 HOUSEHOLD
\$25 SENIOR CITIZEN (60+)
\$100 CORPORATE
\$300 LIFE (precludes future dues)
\$20 STUDENT

Contact us at: 860-678-7621 (leave a message) or at info@avonhistoricalsociety.org

All donations are tax deductible according to law and are acknowledged in writing upon receipt.

Active and Proud Member of: www.farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org

PO Box 448, Avon, CT 06001-0448, 860.678.7621 • avonhistoricalsociety.org

