

Residents can take part in historical scavenger hunt with 'Passports to Plymouth'

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BRISTOL – The Plymouth Historical Society will participate in Connecticut’s Statewide Open House Day June 12, giving out copies of the “Passport to Plymouth” historical scavenger hunt for a chance to win prizes.

Those who plan to participate can pick up the Passport to Plymouth at 9 a.m. at the historical society at 572 Main St. Sponsored by a grant from the Main Street Community Foundation, the passport has 20 historic sites throughout town, along with maps, descriptions and photos for people to visit and answer questions at each site. People can then return to historical society at 3 p.m. that day with a completed passport to receive gift certificates for ice cream cones at Cleveland’s Country Store.



"Find this gravestone in St. Matthew's Cemetery when doing the Passport to Plymouth" -Photo submitted by Jerry Milne

Jerry Milne, of the Plymouth Historical Society, said the passports were originally designed to celebrate the town’s 225th anniversary last year. However, those celebrations were largely postponed due to the covid-19 pandemic.

“We were able to distribute a couple to second grade classes in March 2020 before they closed,” Milne said. “We also made them available at the library, but a lot of people were still reluctant to go anyplace. There will be 50 passports available on June 12.”

Milne said some sites featured in the passport include the original town hall, which was purchased and renovated by Helen Nejfelt in 2015 and is now “Antiques at the Green.” The passport also includes the Eli Terry Jr. Water Wheel, the Lock Museum, a village in East Plymouth that was home to persecuted British loyalists during the Revolutionary War and the Plymouth Burying Ground, the oldest cemetery in town, established in 1747.

“There are 38 Revolutionary War soldiers buried there,” Milne said. “They each have granite slabs which say which unit they served with and when they died.”

Milne said the intent of the passport is to “educate residents in a fun way about the unique heritage of their town, to make them proud to be from Plymouth and to create a sense of place and belonging. The sites were chosen for their historical significance but are also spread all over town so people see places they never knew existed.”

Although the inside of the Plymouth Historical Society will be closed on June 12, it will have a unique display going outside that day – a steam engine from 1850.

“It’s very powerful and runs on compressed air,” Milne said. “It’s about six feet in diameter with big leather belts and you’ll be able to see pistons going back and forth. It originally powered the Shelton Tuttle Carriage Company, which was across from Cleveland’s Country Store. You can still see the foundations there today. It later went on to power the Minor Sawmill before the Plymouth Historical Society came into possession of it in the early 1980s. It was restored and is in great working condition.”

Milne added people can expect to see a bigger Plymouth Historical Society next year.

“We’re putting an addition on the museum which is still being built,” he said. “Archival materials are being transferred to this climate controlled space.”

For more information, visit plymouthhistoricalsociety.org or call 860-681-7935.

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