The Orange Historical Society’s Bryan-Andrew restoration staff has worked feverishly since the house was purchased in 2000 by the Town. Each year, using funding from various grants and donations, a different phase was undertaken until the house has almost been completely restored to its 1740 life. As with other historical societies, the home is open to the public, however, this home has a twist, a complete commercial kitchen. Yes, a commercial kitchen. A portion of the house was built in the 1930’s and is now ready to use as a prep kitchen to serve food in the 9-foot hearth.

The cooking staff has been offering hearthside suppers as well as a “make it and bake yourself” Colonial dessert. Seven Milford Herb Crafters came together to make and bake an 18th century Apple Charlotte recipe using authentic Colonial bake ware in a Dutch oven. Afterward, they were given a tour and when the cake was done the group sat for tea and their creation. In addition, a week earlier, fourteen people were invited to a pot roast dinner, with Lovage potatoes, winter squash soup, green beans with mint and other delicious items topped off with the Apple Charlotte also baked in the Dutch oven. All foods were served from the hearth in a 1740 atmosphere, just like a family of the time eating in the hall where the evening meals were held.

The fireplace contains two interior ovens, a beehive for baking and a warming oven. The staff utilized the help of Victoria Haynes from Sturbridge Village to run through the method of baking in the large, brick oven. Five individual foods were prepared and put into the oven, in order of their baking time. After about 2 hours, the group sat for their “first” meal of bread, beans, apple pie, custard and molasses cake. The staff is working on additional days to perfect their baking skills. Not so easy in an 18th century oven with a 21st century mindset.

The commercial kitchen has been approved by the health department and Nina Ruckes, Marlene Silverstein and Ginny Reinhard all took a course in public food service and will be on hand for future cooking and baking events. Walking into the house, you are back in 1740. Turn left and you are in the 21st century.
**Taste of the Past**

For over 15 years, the society has hosted a re-enactor to portray someone from history, with a lunch of colonial style soups, breads and dessert. It has been a success for us as a fundraiser and we have enjoyed bringing this history filled luncheon to the public. We will be enlightened by Patty Carver, a well-known actress and musician who will portray 4 women of the Women's Suffrage Movement. Next year, 2020 will be the 100th anniversary of that historic event when women were given the right to vote.

Come join us for The Taste of the Past to be held on Saturday, April 25, 2020 at the First Congregational Church on the Green from 1:00 to 3:30. Reservations are required and advertising will be forthcoming next year so watch for the information in the Orange Town News.

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**We Have a New Sign**

After more than thirty years, the sign at the Stone-Otis house was showing its age. Not looking spiffy enough to announce our 1830 homestead, we approached Autografix in Branford. Having made two signs for the Guilford Keeping Society, we felt a good partnership with John Miller and his team. The Academy sign is in need of replacement having been repaired, over the years and subject to the elements as well. The cost for one sign is all we could afford but if you wish to help us replace the Academy sign, feel free to join us to put our best foot forward for both historical buildings.

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**The Great Give**

Keep the Date for the 2020 Great Give, a 36-hour non-profit event running from 8:00 A.M. May 5th to 8:00 P.M. on May 6th. At this time, folks who want to support the Orange Historical Society in its effort to bring history to the town through the Academy, the Stone-Otis House and the Bryan-Andrew House go to [www.thegreatgive.org](http://www.thegreatgive.org) and pledge an amount of their choice. We will be emailing as many of you as we can to remind you of the event which last year was very successful for us. We want to top our numbers in 2020 so keep the dates May 5th to May 6th for the Great Give.
The 2nd Floor is Finished

Typically, the 2nd floor of a two-story home is organized into bedrooms and perhaps a bathroom as well. In the Bryan-Andrew house, it IS the bedroom. The Bryan family had 8 children and the 2nd floor, called the garret is now complete. The bed is an early rope-bed with a feather mattress. Underneath is the trundle bed with its own roping and mattress making it efficient for space, while allowing for an extra sleeping area. It is not clear how many children William and Samuel Andrew had in the house as the deeds, showing their purchase of 2/3 of the homestead from Nathan II in 1775, are not clear who actually took possession of the home. Nathan I passed away in 1766 giving his son the 2/3 and his wife Elizabeth 1/3 of the house which was the dower rights of the day.

Nathan’s will reads as follows: To the Widow one third part of the House and Barn & Viz (that is to say) the west Room in the House, with the Cellar under the Same with Liberty to pass thro the other part of the House into the Cellar and also the use of the Ovens with Liberty to pass to and from as needed also the Bed Room in the Linto (lean-to) and also half the milk room the Same with Chamber over the same: also the west end of the old Barn to the floor way with use of the floor way for carting in Hay and thrashing as she needs also one third part of the stable, taken off from the west End with privilege of passing to & from the same all & 10 pounds (money) Right in the Saw Mill. She was also given 63 ½ acres to be taken off from the west Side of the Farm. It goes onto describe, in detail which fence line, which heap of Stones and the brook. Given the details of the saw-mill at the corner of Lambert Road and Porter Lane, the brook, now quite small, was probably the brook mentioned.

It is interesting to read the executor’s bond with the reference to the 7th Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord, George the Third by the Grace of GOD of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith etc., One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Seven. There was a pre-printed form for the executors to sign. With the sale of the 2/3 portion of the house to William and Samuel Andrew in 1796, these references were obviously eliminated. The garret (Garrit) is only mentioned in the bequest to Nathan’s son as follows: two thirds of the dwelling house Viz the East Room and Entry way below and above the East Chamber with the Garrit above. In researching the Bryan-Andrew house by looking at the house itself, we determined that there was in deed a part of the house, on the backside referred to as the linto or lean to.

This is the part of the back of a house that makes it look like a saltbox with part of the house having a sloping roofline. When we were conducting the archaeological dig, the back of the house was marked and dug only to find a series of large stones, 4 in all, lined across the back at equal distance from each other. This formed the basis of a footing for the uprights, making the lean-to. This being on the north side was just what was needed to keep food cold year-round. Only a portion remains in what the previous owner used as a tool shed that is now the bathroom.
The Orange Historical Society Newsletter

Furniture Barn

Before the Treat House was given to the contractor, we were allowed to take out any furniture we felt should be saved. Mostly 1920’s styles but all in good condition. We have a trailer, temporarily donated by Eagle Leasing for the duration of the collection. If you are interested, let us know. 203 795-3106.

The Bryan-Andrew House Once Again

During the summer, we were approached by Boy Scout, Miles O’Sullivan requesting an Eagle Scout project. The house and grounds have seen several scout projects but when Miles came to discuss the possibilities, he came up with a great one. Let’s build a wall, he said. A wall indeed was needed at the back of the house since we had to dig out that area to prevent rainwater from seeping into the basement. Not having funding for this project, it was put way back in our list of “to do”.

Now we had a bona fide offer to build a wall! Some years back when the Goddard school was built, next to the Saybrook River, they unearthed a tremendous amount of river rock, well river boulders. I asked the foreman if we could have what they were going to bury and our back yard is a treasure trove of river rock, the same rock Nathan used to build his foundation. One of them can be seen as part of the front steps.

There is a small section of rock which is actually an old wall in the back yard and with some archeological digging, I found what might have been another wall on the opposite side, indicating that instead of a mere wall, it might have been a foundation wall. It would make sense that a small house could have been built before the main house. Digging into that area before another section of wall is built might be a good idea. What do you think?
The Academy Museum and Antique Shop

An ongoing fundraiser for OHS is the antique shop located in the Academy Building at 605 Orange Center Road. Going into its 9th year, the sales of antiques, collectibles and historical society items, in its own way, account for financial support for small restoration projects at the Bryan-Andrew House. Additional financial support from grants and donations is vital to the restoration of the town’s oldest home having been built upon the marriage of Nathan and Elizabeth Bryan in 1740.

The Academy’s primary function is a museum with displays of old phone, radios, and cameras with a significant display of the New Haven and Derby Railroad artifacts, a railroad that would have made a difference to the economy of Orange had it not been outsized by the larger railroads in the area. The original reason for the building of the Academy was for town use and a high school on the second floor. Photographs of several of the classes are on display in a replica of the classroom to the rear of the Academy with several of the desks from the district schools.

This building is the 2nd in this spot as the first one was smaller and moved to an area behind the convenience stores on Orange Center Road, on a small rise. Used for grain storage, it eventually burned down. The current building was built in 1878 and is used by the Orange Historical Society and the New Haven & Derby Railroad Club to promote the history of the Town of Orange. The display, in the basement of the building, shows the railroad in its prime when it ran from New Haven into Derby through the town. While on Facebook type New Haven & Derby Railroad Club into the search box and you will be able to see what is waiting for you when you visit them.

In addition to what awaits you on the first floor and the basement is the 2nd floor. Named the Mary Woodruff Research Center, OHS staff members continue to file and protect the paper history of the town using archival materials to assure the longevity of documents that are over 150 years old. Journals, maps, deeds and school records are only a part of what is being collected and available to the public upon request. Unfortunately, not all historical items are saved by families and are discarded without thinking of them as important documents for the history of Orange. In some cases, we have had to buy journals and Bibles seen on EBay of all places. BUT we have been fortunate several times to purchase, at high cost, items originating in Orange over 150 years ago in some cases.

The research center is named for the author of the History of Orange available for sale at the Academy.
It’s Now a Pile of Rubble

As I reported in our April 2017 newsletter, the Joseph Treat house, locally known as the Finer house on Turkey Hill Road, was to be razed, having been part of the parcel of land purchased by the Town of Orange. A restoration contractor team was given the homestead to remove the interior that was then sold throughout the State of Connecticut to refurbish other old homes.

The Bryan-Andrew house became one of those recipient homes when our restoration contractor, Edd Oberg sold us two doors and two sections of walls from the Treat house. The garret is a large room, the length of the house, divided by the huge chimneystack. These two walls and doors returned the garret to its original configuration with original hardware which is so rare to find in any antique shop or auction.

The house is no longer standing but a pile of rubble ready for the dumpster. I’d like to think that the soldiers who were treated there in 1777 for smallpox may have held onto the home that became their salvation after being dumped on a Milford beach by the British during the Revolutionary War. Are you skeptical? Me too but stranger things have happened.

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If you, like me, enjoy the convenience of shopping online and shop on amazon.com, consider using www.smileamazon.com for your purchases. By signing onto smile.amazon.com and choosing the Orange Historical Society (OHS) as your charity of choice, OHS will receive 0.5% of your eligible purchase price as a donation. You do not have to do anything differently except go to smile.amazon.com instead of amazon.com. The AmazonSmile Foundation will do the rest.

In this way, you can support the efforts of OHS to bring living history to Orange. Your support means that OHS can maintain the Academy Building Museum, the Stone Otis House Museum and the Bryan-Andrew House Museum as well as open the buildings for tours, events and other special activities.

If you would like more information about smile.amazon.com, please contact Marlene Silverstein, Treasurer at orangehistorical@yahoo.com (please put smile amazon in the subject box) or 203-397-3065.

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