

Guilford 250th Plaque

BY DON MCLEAN

In the previous issue of the *Gazette*, there was a nice story about historic road markers in Guilford. But I noticed the article missed an historic plaque that I think should have been included: The Guilford 250th Anniversary commemorative marker in front of the Historical Society Museum in Guilford Center. This marker is only a few feet from the Royall Tyler marker, which did make it into the story.

As co-chair—with Addie Minott—of the 250th celebration, I was involved with some of the details of the plaque project, and I am taking this opportunity to re-introduce townspeople to the marker, and give credit to those who worked on it.

The Guilford 250th filled the entire year 2011, from the ringing of all town church bells on January 1—including the bell at Guilford Center Meeting House across the road from the Museum—to the big New Year's Eve party up the road at the Grange hall. In between those dates, many of the events (at least one each week!) took place in historic Guilford Center, making the choice of location for the marker most appropriate.

After the celebration was over, we decided that we should leave a memento, so that people visiting or living in Guilford in the future would get the idea that we had a great celebration of our semiquincentennial.

Throughout our anniversary, one thing that was very prominent was our Guilford 250th logo, created by graphic designer, Joy Wallens-Penford, of Guilford, who died early in 2020. The round logo,

which appeared on all publications, posters and flyers, was displayed all over town on t-shirts and sweatshirts. Those who donated to the fund for the celebration received a logo fridge magnet. We also had on sale coffee mugs and even beer glasses for the recreation of the famous Franklin Barbecue. And some people probably still have the bronze keepsake medallion.

The logo was a stylized depiction of Guilford's iconic landmark, the Green River Covered Bridge. The commemorative plaque is simply that logo, a round bronze casting. Joy supervised the artwork that was submitted to the foundry, making sure the colors were as true as possible, though it has unexpectedly faded over the eight years.



Guilford 250th commemorative plaque stands in front of the Historical Society museum.

The Guilford Historical Society was pleased when we asked them to have the plaque in front of the Museum. We decided that the appropriate mounting for the marker would be a large stone, and there was one obvious Guilford resident who would find, move and place

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(left to right) Addie Minott, Joy Wallens-Penford, Richard Clark, and Don McLean at 250th commemorative ceremony.

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Preschooler cooks up something tasty in the school forest

Guilford 250th Plaque, continued

that stone: the late Eddie Clark, known throughout town for his expertly crafted stone walls. Hal Kuhns, of Guilford, took on the job of permanently attaching the plaque to the stone.

There was one final thing we had to do before leaving the plaque for future generations: The dedication ceremony was held on Sunday, June 28, 2012. After Addie Minott and I spoke on behalf of the 250th Committee, a number of whom were present, committee member Dick Clark addressed the gathering on behalf of the selectboard. Then Joy “unveiled” the marker (by removing the black plastic trash bag!) We decided it would be undignified to break a bottle of champagne over the marker, so we dribbled some on it, instead.

The 250th marker shares the location with two others: the Royall Tyler historic plaque, and a lesser-known item: On the other side of the Museum’s front door, and embedded flat in the ground, is a stone from the original, now demolished I-91 Guilford Welcome Center. You may wish to visit this trio of Guilford markers in front of the Museum at 4063 Guilford Center Road.

Local AIDS Project to Hold Postponed Annual Walk

BY WANDA ATOMANUK

The AIDS Project of Southern Vermont will hold its 33rd Annual AIDS Walk on Tuesday, December 1st at noon in conjunction with our World AIDS Day commemoration. The event, to be held outside in downtown Brattleboro, will include a socially-distanced walk, a vigil, speakers and music.

Despite our disappointment in not being able to hold our annual May walk, the two occasions allow us to show support for people living with HIV and to commemorate those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses in our community as well as globally.

World AIDS Day takes place every year on December 1st and is an opportunity to remind the public and our government that HIV has not gone away—there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and stigmas, and improve education.

Our long-time volunteer and dear friend, Shirley Squires (1890 Guilford Center Road) will once again raise funds for the AIDS Project in honor of her son Ron. She had already mailed out her letters to supporters when the pandemic hit and the Walk had to be postponed. Shirley was amazed at the number of responses she received within a few weeks of mailing the letters. To date, over 300 of her faithful supporters have contributed to her efforts, bringing her to just \$2,000 shy of her fundraising goal for 2020.

We hope you will join Shirley in raising funds so we can continue our important work in southern Vermont. For more information, contact Maeve: 802-254-4444.

To set up your page or donate to Shirley’s page, go to firstgiving.com and enter her name in the search bar.



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