

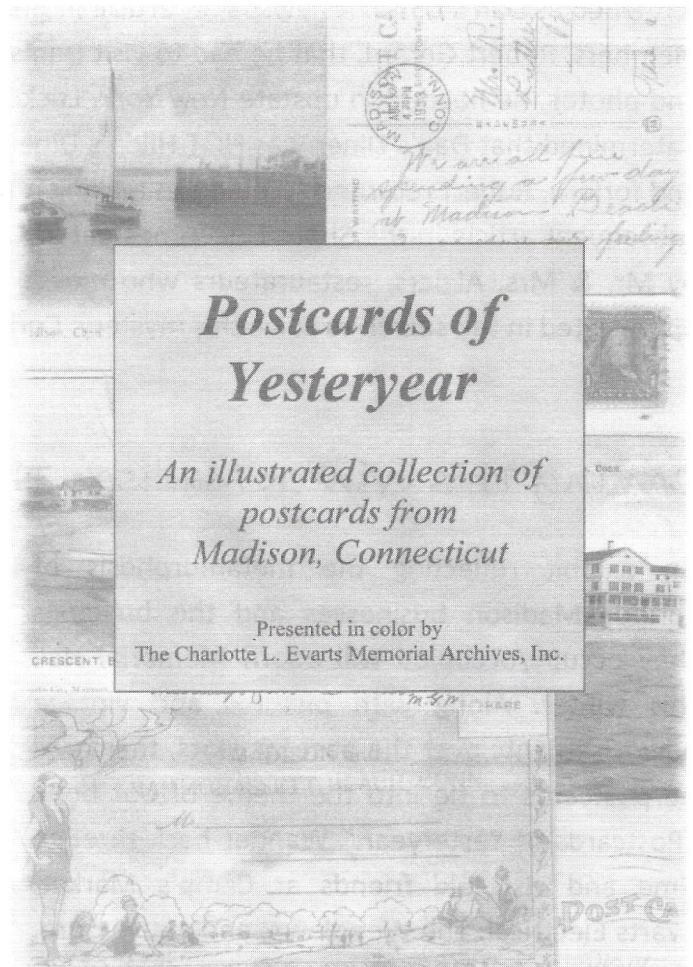
The Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives, Inc.

Postcards of Yesteryear

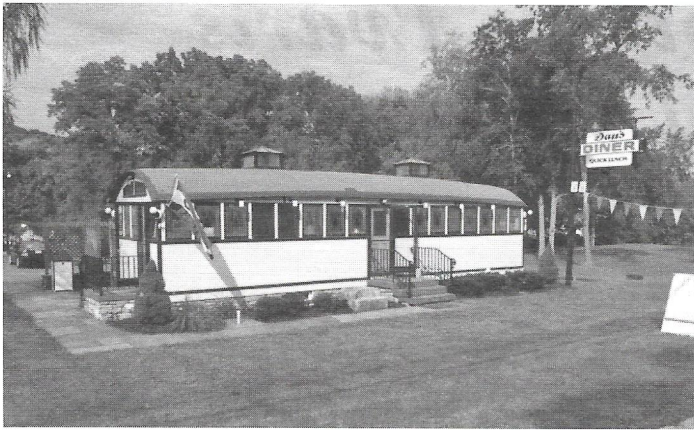
Do you remember the excitement of getting postcards as a child? Or when a friend or relative sent one from a place they were visiting? The cards were always colorful and depicted the place or landmark of that vacation spot.

In February 2012 CLEMA formed a committee to compile an illustrated collection of postcards from sites around Madison. As a vacation destination for decades, there are many postcards that chronicle the history of our town. The committee members were assigned various chapters such as East River, West Wharf, The Green, and Madison Center. Many months were spent culling the most pristine and interesting images from the various collections that have been donated to CLEMA. The chapter teams picked from literally hundreds of postcards, and created original captions describing each scene and formatted them into a book entitled "Postcards of Yesteryear." The captions elaborate on local history and people, and makes for an interesting read.

Just in time for the New Year you will be able to purchase this full color compilation in "Postcards of Yesteryear" from the Archives. Watch your local paper and mailbox for ordering information.



Book committee members from left clockwise: Ray Hencir, Fred Murphy, Art Symonds, Robert Gerard (chairman), Bob Genesius, Carol Blackwood, and Don Liepelt. Missing from photo: Marcia Sokolinicki, Pam Landon, and Henry Griggs.



HELP!!

Hilda's Diner, found and lost all in one weekend! Hilda's, a Jerry O'Mahoney Diner, originally sat next to Madison Hose Co. #1 at the Cumberland Farms' location until 1955. It had been previously reported that this diner was moved to Durham, renamed Moe's Diner, and subsequently the Durham Diner. After a kitchen fire in 1990, the diner was abandoned until

purchased by Dan Rundell and moved to Spencertown, NY. Following a ten year restoration it was reopened as Dan's Diner. A newspaper article in the Durham Town Times so intrigued one of our board members, Robert Gerard, that he had to visit Dan's Diner. Loaded down with various historical articles and photos, he headed to upstate New York. Luckily Dan was there and after a brief discussion it was determined that Dan's Diner was NOT Hilda's Diner, although it was the one from Durham. Depressed and forlorn, Robert returned to Madison making it his mission to determine the fate of Hilda's Diner. A subsequent article in the Shore Line Times dated October 27, 1955 reported the diner was purchased by Mr. & Mrs. Algiers, restaurateurs who moved it to Mystic. Any first hand knowledge would be appreciated in the search to solve this mystery. Contact CLEMA at 203-245-5667.

Coming This Winter: Madison Then & Now

An exhibit reflecting the metamorphosis of various Madison businesses and the buildings they occupy/occupied will adorn Memorial Hall this winter. Along with pictures and vintage advertisements over the past 50 years, there will be postcards to tie into the theme of our book "Postcards of Yesteryear." Wander back through time and visit old friends at Camp's Market, Evarts Electrical, The Woodlawn, and many more. Pictured on right was once the home of Nick's Restaurant, now R. J. Julia Booksellers.



Established in 1995, the Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving and making available for public use archival materials related to Madison, CT. Visit us at 8 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443 or on the internet at www.evartsarchives.org. CLEMA's hours are: Tuesdays 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. and Fridays 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. or by appointment by calling CLEMA at (203) 245-5667.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE MONROE BUILDING

782 -788 BOSTON POST ROAD

The Monroe Building is a much-admired structure in town and a local landmark. A report by the CT Historical Commission states that it is the "first urban style commercial building in Madison." Wondering about its name? The building honors its first owner, pharmacist J. Harrison Monroe.

The structure was constructed in phases - the eastern side being the oldest. The foundation of this section was begun in 1911 and the upper floors were completed in 1912. Original occupants of the eastern side were: the pharmacy on the first floor (opened in summer 1911), the Tuxis Club on the second floor, and local Masonic Lodge on the third floor.



The Monroe building in 1911 before the construction of its western addition. CLEMA's Joseph H. Darling, Jr. Collection

Work began on an addition to the western side of the building to accommodate a post office. The post office occupied this section's first floor. With the completion of the western side, the Tuxis Club expanded its space to include the second floor of the new addition. However, the Club's use of the added space would only last through November 1913 as another purpose would take priority - the introduction of a local telephone exchange. Despite a delay caused when a fire broke out in the addition, the unveiling of Madison's first locally situated telephone exchange occurred in May 1914.

Over the years, new occupants replaced the original ones. By 1939, the Masons began meeting in Memorial Hall; the post office moved across the street to a new building dedicated in 1940; and the telephone company relocated to a new building to the east in 1952. It was reported that the drug store was sold to pharmacist Harold Dinerstein in 1946. The fate of the Tuxis Club is unclear.

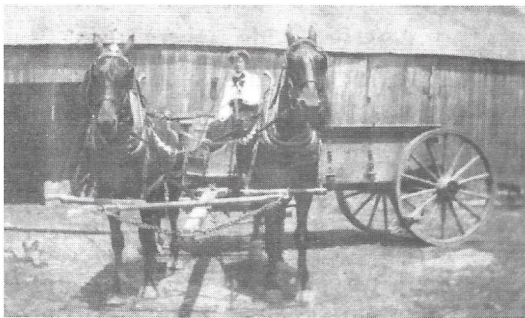
Keeping with the times, the building has also changed its appearance. Did you know that it once sported a coat of white paint? Through the many decades of its impressive history, the Monroe building remains the cornerstone of downtown Madison and a great place to shop and do business.

CLEMA's Eventful Year

CLEMA continued its role as a research center for Madison history. Visitors hailed from all over Connecticut and as far away as Oregon. Topics investigated included: Camp Laurelwood history, local Girl Scout history, and Saint Margaret Roman Catholic Church history as well as Madison's eastern boundary for the Shellfish Commission. First Church's third meetinghouse for an art exhibit at the Florence Griswold Museum was also researched along with Madison politics and culture in 1997 for a Florida college student's movie project. Hand Academy and Academy Elementary School history was provided for the town's Ad Hoc Academy Investigation Committee's public presentation. CLEMA provided research for Madison Historical Society's commemoration of the War of 1812 and walking tour of Liberty Street.

Further fulfilling our educational mission, CLEMA developed for Jeffrey School fifth graders a PowerPoint presentation highlighting Madison during the Civil War. This spring, Brown Middle School students toured the Archives to learn about Madison during the American Revolutionary War. The Archives' entry in the Madison Chamber of Commerce's autumn scarecrow exhibit related to viewers the local lore of the "Ghost of Cedar Rock."

CLEMA wishes to thank our many friends, who kept the Archives' collection growing in 2012. A sampling of the accession list shows these gems: Border Arts Club records, 2012 Hand High School yearbook, Tropical Storm Irene emergency response notices, vintage images of Railroad Avenue, Academy Elementary School group faculty/student photographs, and Civil War-era letters of Union soldier George Whedon. Many thanks go to the Friends of Scranton Library who gifted CLEMA a circa 1890s East River School spelling book found among their book sale donations. Deep appreciation goes to VFW members who provided an honor roll of WWII veterans as well as maps of area cemeteries pinpointing the locations of veterans' graves. The generosity of MHS cannot be overlooked, which donated Future Farmers' Fair programs. Accolades are extended to all the photographers who forwarded digital copies and snapshots of local events both past and present.



Images of domestic life in bygone Madison are rare. Thanks to Sue Dahlberg who allowed CLEMA to make digital scans of these wonderful photographs.

OLD IS NEW AGAIN

The steel railroad bridge over the Hammonasset River was replaced earlier this year with an almost identical structure. See the pictures below.

