



# The Chronicler

*Newsletter of the Hartland Historical Society, Inc.  
Gaylord House Museum, 141 Center Street, West Hartland*

*Mail to: P.O. Box 221, East Hartland, CT 06027—hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com*

*HartlandHistoricalSociety.com*

*Fall Edition 2023*

You are invited to join us for a zoom presentation by John M. Green, retired Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy, residing and teaching in San Diego, CA. He will present his interesting findings on

## Hartland Revolutionary Soldiers: Daniel Driggs & Elihu Remington

**Come join** us at the Bethany Church to enjoy this presentation on a large screen. **Or join** zoom meeting by going **to our website** at hartlandhistoricalsociety.com, click Events, click Fall membership meeting. You can access the zoom meeting by clicking zoom button at the bottom of the page.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81902212625?pwd=NVPsNUJlU2pLdHdGc2pEb2hoUW5DQT09>

Meeting ID: 819 0221 2625

Passcode: 722117

**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS. A BRIEF HHS MEMBERSHIP MEETING AFTERWARDS**

**ALL WELCOME—MEMBER AND NON-MEMBERS**

**Oct. 8**  
**2023**

8 October 2023, Sunday

2:00 PM

Bethany Church

Refreshments

Free

East Hartland

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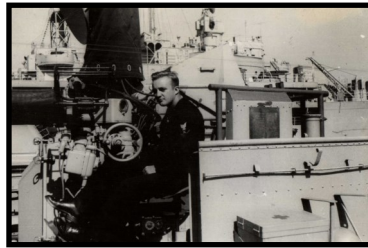
## Memorial Day Celebration, 2023

### Honoring Walter Yanchak, Korean War Veteran

By Joan Makowski

“Good morning everyone. My name is Joan Makowski, it's an honor to be here today. During my military career I spent a majority of my time as an executive officer assigned to the 76th division United States Army reserve. Our mission was to train initial entry soldiers, giving them the skills and knowledge needed to become a soldier in the United States Army. In 1985-86 the 76th division executed the first USAR mobilization Army training center at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. In 1990-91, during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the division validated and deployed 600 soldiers with the 3rd army. So today, on Memorial Day, I can't help but think about those soldiers who received their initial training by a division I had once been a part of. Today is the day of reflection and remembrance dedicated to those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may have the freedom we enjoy today.

It is my privilege today to honor my father Walter Yanchak, a Korean War Veteran and long term resident of Hartland. Born son of John and Louise Yanchak on April 3, 1931, my father was one of seven children. Many of his siblings also served in the military, including his brother Albin, who served during the WW2 Era in the Marines, John in the Marines during the Korean War, Peter also in the Marines, and youngest brother William in the Army during the Vietnam war. He would always talk about his days growing up on Lester Street, riding bikes, fishing and hunting in the fields behind their childhood home. Upon graduating from high school, Walter enlisted in the Navy on January 10, 1951, and served as a gunners mate on the USS Oriskany-an aircraft carrier, and the USS O'Hare, a destroyer. **Photos: boot camp, others on Destroyer**



He talked mostly about his time on the Oriskany. He talked of places he had seen before the ship joined the Pacific fleet, such as the Mediterranean. Before departure from San Diego, the Oriskany became the first aircraft carrier to endure the treacherous waters of South Americas and round Cape Horn. The ship then joined UN forces and Koras, arriving in Yokosaka in October 1952. Shortly after joining Task Force 77, the carrier was struck hard with bombing attacks. Two Oriskany pilots managed to down 2 Soviet MIG-15s in what was the first multi-jet dogfight in Navy history. Following a brief period in Japan, the Oriskany returned to combat where three members were killed when a general purpose bomb from a F4U Corsair aircraft broke loose and detonated. The carrier continued and eventually departed the Korean coast in April 1953.

My father would always tell us a tale of a dog aboard the Oriskany. In this story, he would always tell me that the dog aboard the ship, Schatzie, was a beagle. You see Schatzie came aboard the Oriskany in Tripoli, and was a gift from the American Consul general named Andrew Lynch. This

beagle had made the same journey as my father and the 1400 other men aboard the ship. After doing a little research however, I discovered this beagle was actually a dachshund. My father, due to his love of beagles, had changed the breed of dog for his storytelling purposes. Incidentally, the same day the 2 Soviet MIGs were shot down, Schatzie delivered four puppies aboard the Oriskany. Imagine that little 20 pound dog navigating herself around the flight deck and elevators. In my opinion, Schatzie should be honored for keeping morale high among the sailors.

For his service, my father had earned several medals. These include: • The National Defense Service Medal • The Korean Service Medal • The United Nations Service Medal • And the Navy Occupations Service Medal

**Photos: The Oriskany and its planes**



Dad was proud of his time in the service and proudly wore hats and jackets displaying the ships he had served on, and even had a vanity license plate ORIS 34. In his pick-up truck - he loved seeing other veterans either in their uniforms or with a hat like his. He would always stop to shake their hand and ask questions about their service.

Upon his discharge in 1954 Dad met the love of his life, Josephine Kilian, or “cupcake” as he called her. Despite objections from her family, my parents married in 1955, and purchased land in West Hartland shortly thereafter. They built a beautiful home, and discovered all the land had to offer, including wild blueberries and mushrooms. Dad loved living in Hartland. He was a quiet man, mainly keeping to himself and a few friends. He loved hunting and fishing, but most of all, took great pride in landscaping his home and property. He considered it to be one of the best kept yards in Hartland, always working on the lawn, apple trees and flowers. But his greatest joy was clearing the swamp land on his property himself. He worked 3rd shift as a machinist at Pratt and Whitney. Almost every day after work he would come home, put me in a playpen as my mother went off to work and would carry my playpen and I down to the swamp to clear the property that would become his ¾ acre pond. Needless to say I learned how to pick rocks and clear brush at an early age. He enjoyed stocking his pond with trout either purchased through the extension service or re-homed from Howells pond. One thing he did not enjoy was when the fish disappeared through the night.

Mom and Dad hosted many large family get-togethers on their property and even had a large family wedding in the 1970s, which all my cousins will still agree was the best wedding ever. Upon re-

tirement at 58, Dad continued to work on his garden tractor and could be seen on his garden tractor throughout the day. Although he was much of a home-body, he had gotten to see all the world in his navy days.

In all honesty, my father was a complicated man. He was stubborn and could certainly hold a grudge. His famous quote was “I is who I is”. But if you got the time to talk to him about his garden, apple trees, pond, or more importantly his service or family, you would know the softer side of him, and he would be the first to offer you apples, the opportunity to fish in the pond, or one of his Christmas trees, gifts of his love and hard labor, perhaps the best gifts one could give. My dad rarely showed emotion, perhaps that was his generation or upbringing. But you knew when he was truly happy and proud. As hard as he tried to hide them, tears would swell up in his eyes. I remember seeing them on many occasions such as when I graduated basic training, when I received my officer commission at UCONN, and when he traveled to Alabama to watch me graduate from basic training. I saw those same tears of pride when my son sacked a quarterback playing football, or when my daughter scored a goal in field hockey. I watched the tears again when he talked of all my nieces and nephew’s accomplishments and world travel. He truly loved his family and the life he made in Hartland.

As you leave this ceremony today I ask that you look around this cemetery and find a headstone with the American flag displayed alongside it. You may be standing beside one right now. Remember the name engraved on that stone throughout the day. Reflection and remembrance is what Memorial day is for. Thank you for honoring my father today. I know those tears of pride are swelling in his eyes right now. And thank you for attending this ceremony honoring all those who have given the ultimate sacrifice.”

## Blueberry Picnic, 2023

It was the perfect summer day, hot and sunny. The delicious homemade blueberry dishes were plentiful. The companionship was incomparable with attendees ranging in age from a 10-month-old to octogenarians. Live music was provided by Cindy Rines and Friends, and the young and the young at heart had the opportunity to get up close and personal with a real fire engine. Who could ask for anything more?

The Hartland Historical Society’s August 13, 2023 Blueberry Picnic was one for the record books. Sixty-seven people attended our annual event where we celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the West Hartland Volunteer Fire Department. Hilary Wilson, current volunteer, recounted tales of establishing the department, building the firehouse, fundraising to purchase equipment, and responding to particularly memorable service calls. One story recounted the day in 1966 Joseph Zimmerman lost the firetruck! (Don’t worry-it was merely misplaced and was returned to its garage unscathed.) Thank you to everyone who attended the Hartland Historical Society’s Blueberry Picnic. A special shout out goes to the attendees who tried our Gaylord House Museum’s scavenger hunts and played Hartland Jeopardy. The winner was Peg Lilliendahl with 11,111 virtual blueberries, more than enough to make several virtual blueberry pies. Peg also won a one-year membership to The Hartland Historical Society. **Photos: 1955 W. Hartland Fire Dept. Horace Clark, Frank Celio, 1980 new addition, and in 2014.**







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East Hartland, CT  
06027

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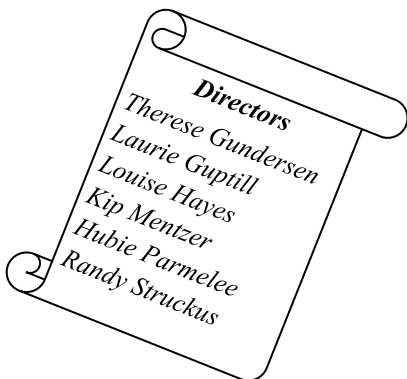
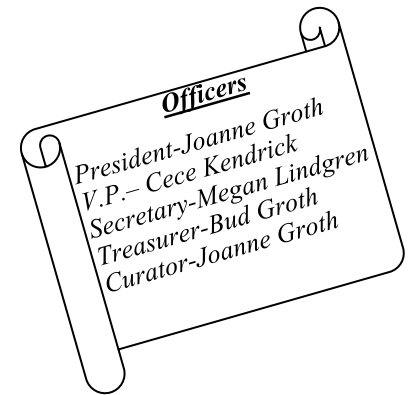
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**The Hartland Historical Society's** mission is to discover, procure and preserve whatever historical facts may be available relating to the civil, military, literary, cultural, and ecclesiastical history of the town of Hartland; and to investigate and preserve such traditions and knowledge as now exist only in the memory of persons. The Society will be responsible for sponsoring and exhibiting the collection of historical articles, pictures and other items relating to the town.

Hartland Resident  
Postal Customer

### In This Issue

- ◇ **September 30, Hartland Library Community Event**  
1930 Girl Scout Camp canoe has new home
- ◇ **October 8, Fall Presentation & Meeting**  
*Findings of 2 Hartland Revolutionary Soldiers by John M. Green, retired Lieutenant Commander USN*
- ◇ **Walter Yanchak Korean soldier honored on Memorial Day**
- ◇ **Blueberry Picnic** celebrated W.H Fire Dept. 75th Anniversary



### 2023 Calendar

- ◆ **30 Sept. 10-4pm** Hartland Community Day at the Library
- ◆ **8 Oct. 2-4pm** Membership Meeting & Presentation
- ◆ **9 Dec. 8-11am**, Santa Pancake Breakfast, E.H. Fire House & Town Hall

