

West Haven Historical Society plans centennial exhibit June 12-13

The West Haven Historical Society will hold an Open House Exhibit "From Village to Town" as part of the city's Centennial Celebration on Saturday June 12 and Sunday June 13. The display, at the Poli House 686 Savin Avenue, will be open to the public 10-4PM both days. Admission is free. A free will offering will be appreciated.

"We are delighted to share with the public many artifacts, photographs, and archival material that explain why West Haven became a separate town," commented Jon Purmont, President of the Historical Society. Included in the exhibit are maps which detail the growth and development of West Haven (West Farms) from a colonial settlement in 1648 to its evolution as a separate town in 1921.

One part of the exhibit will display information and advertisements regarding West Haven businesses and industries that found a receptive home in the shoreline community prior to 1921. Located on Water Street, the shipbuilding and lumber businesses were followed by the development of diverse industries on Wood Street, Washington Avenue, and Elm Street and in Allingtown on or near the Post Road. Several business owners established factories on Elm Street near the West River.

Another section of the exhibit will focus on photographs of Savin Rock recently acquired by the local society. These unique and special photos of restaurants, hotels, rides, and picnic areas are from the Joseph Holt Collection given to the West Haven group by the Woodmont Historical Society. They add an important dimension to West Haven's decision to separate from Orange in 1921.

The display will demonstrate West Haven was well on its way to becoming an "urbanized suburb" no longer tied to the small farm-based community in Orange.

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