FRIDAY LUNCH & LEARN SERIES
12:30pm – 1:00pm Social Time
1:00pm - 2:30pm Program

No registration required
Zoom Links for the Friday Lunch & Learn program will be included in LLI’s weekly Tuesday email to members.

OPEN HOUSE March 26 - COVID-19 Update

Members and Non-members are Welcome
Please invite your friends and family

Join us to hear the latest developments concerning, including the progression of, the Covid-19 pandemic from an expert on the subject. Covid-19 is part of a family of viruses that tend to mutate and jump from one host to another. These viral infections can become highly communicable due to their propensity to multiply in respiratory or gastrointestinal systems. We have surpassed 100 million cases and 2 million deaths world-wide. Public health measures to curtail the spread of infection have been marginally effective. We examine promising vaccines but, unfortunately, public hesitancy to accept vaccination is high and the recent emergence of genetic variants has the potential to increase case rates and diminish vaccine efficacy. The need for continuing social distancing and face mask wearing after being vaccinated is assessed. The trajectory of the pandemic remains uncertain.

Dr. Michael Parry earned an MD degree from Columbia College of Physicians & Surgeons. His residency training was completed at Columbia-Presbyterian and the University of California, San Francisco. After a fellowship at Columbia, he established the Infectious Disease Department at Stamford Hospital, and is currently Director of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology and Professor of Clinical Medicine at Columbia University. Dr. Parry has completed training in tropical medicine. He was a founding member of the New York-Presbyterian Hospital Infection Control Council and has been active on many local, state and national committees on infectious diseases, emergency management, quality and safety, and
public health. Dr. Parry is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America. He was president of the Connecticut Infectious Diseases Society from 1990 to 1993 and was that society’s nominee for IDSA Clinician of the Year award in 1995 and 1996. Dr. Parry has received numerous teaching and quality awards, and has published over 100 articles, reviews and book chapters. He has helped lead the COVID-19 response plan and vaccination initiative for Stamford Health.

No Presentation on April 2 in Observance of Good Friday

April 9 - Roseland Cottage, History of the Family and the House

Roseland Cottage in Woodstock, Connecticut, is a landmark example of Gothic Revival architecture. It was a fitting summer home to Henry Bowen, his wife Lucy Tappan and their growing family. During the five decades he and his family summered at Roseland, Bowen brought what was fashionable in New York City to his country home. The house still contains its original Gothic Revival furnishings and elaborate decorative schemes. Bowen, like many New Englanders of his time, was a staunch advocate of moral causes like temperance and abolition. This program introduces him and his family along with the beautiful estate they called home June through October every year.

Laurie Masciandaro is the Site Manager at Historic New England’s Roseland Cottage. She is a graduate of the University of Washington and earned a Master’s in American History from the University of Connecticut. Her master’s thesis, Disdaining the Republic: William Wetmore Story, Expatriate Aristocrat, reflects her primary interest in ante-bellum United States history, with an emphasis on the 19th century New England expatriate artists’ community in Rome, Italy. Laurie is a board member of the Connecticut League of History Organizations and Connecticut’s Historic Gardens and a representative on the Eastern Connecticut Regional Tourism District.
April 16 - The History of Women in Music

This is a story of a group of women musicians who persevered in a male-dominated field. There was not much support for them to succeed so they had to blaze the trail for women in music. The story begins in the early 1920s when Ma Rainey, the mother of blues, started recording her songs. We cover major female singers such as Bessie Smith, Mahalia Jackson, Ella Fitzgerald, Judy Garland and Barbara Streisand among many others. The female jazz composers, various instrument players and band leaders are also presented.

Brian Torff is a renowned bassist, composer, author and educator. He is Professor of Music and Music Program Director at Fairfield University. He is a featured bass soloist who performs in jazz festivals throughout the United States and is musical director of the Django Reinhardt New York Festival. His current project New Duke is an acclaimed eight-piece band that performs Torff’s updated arrangements of Duke Ellington’s music. In 1992 he served as co-chairperson of the Music Advisory Board for the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 2008 Mr. Torff was honored as Artist of the Year by the Fairfield Arts Council.

April 23 - Lawrence of Arabia

More than one hundred years after Lowell Thomas branded him “Lawrence of Arabia,” the legend of Thomas Edward Lawrence continues to fascinate readers and researchers alike. His influence on the shape and destiny of the Middle East as we know it today is undoubted. However, as much a legend as he was and as seemingly ubiquitous, Lawrence was not a one-man show. We briefly examine some of the faces and places which impacted his campaign as well as one key but overlooked strategic piece in the fascinating conflict that is the Hejaz Railway. It is hoped today’s participants come away with a greater appreciation of the scope and depth of that long-ago war which resonates yet today. We view a collection of pictures and maps to help tell this story.

Steve Johnson is by his own description the most amateur of historians but that has not held him back from an abiding interest in railways, CT local history, medieval history, British and Irish history, industrial archaeology and country roads rich with historic promise. Steve earned a BA in History from Marist College as well as accreditation from Queen Mary College, London. He retired from a forty-five-year
career in sales and marketing. Steve served in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia as a
teacher and travelled extensively in that country as well as in Eritrea, Kenya and
Tanzania and returned to Ethiopia in 2013 to take part in a sustainable food project
in the Central Highlands. Steve remains a member of this NGO. Steve is the past
president of the New Canaan Men’s Club.

April 30 - Origins of the *Star-Spangled Banner*

Join us to hear about how during the War of 1812 Francis Scott Key and two other
American civilians were forcibly detained on a British ship in Baltimore Harbor during the ferocious bombardment of Ft. McHenry. What circumstances conspired to have these captives use “the rocket’s red glare and the bombs bursting in air” to give them proof through the night that our flag was still there? The British stopped firing at around 3:00 AM and the Americans worried – had Ft. McHenry surrendered? Finally, as the sun started to rise, Key asks “Oh, say can you see by the dawn’s early light does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?”

Edward Hynes earned a BA in Political Science from The George Washington University in Washington D.C. He subsequently spent most of his career in financial services. Ed first became interested in the Revolutionary War as a child when he learned his neighbor’s house was partially burned by the British during the Danbury Raid in 1777. He and his wife are fascinated by history and have visited many important battlefields both here and abroad. Ed grew up in Wilton and currently lives in Norwalk.

May 7 - America in the Beginning – We’re All Englishmen, Right?

We explore the series of bloody confrontations between Native Americans, as well as in the North American theaters of European wars, as the Great Powers maneuvered to extend their empires abroad and how they helped fan the flames leading to the War for Independence. Among the grievances of citizens in many of England’s North American colonies was the belief that their rights as Englishmen were being
denied by the Crown and Parliament. After all, for over 150 years transplanted Britons had worked and fought as proud sons of Albion to bring England to the New World by perseverance and the shedding of blood in those pursuits.

**Eric Chandler** retired from a 30+ year career as an underwriter for a leading land title insurance company. He has been involved in American Revolutionary War Living History since 1974 portraying infantry, light infantry, whale-boat raider, and mounted and dismounted dragoons. Currently, he is serving his third term as a member of the Norwalk Historical Commission, sits on the Norwalk Historical Society Board of Directors and on the Board of Directors for the recreated Sheldon’s Horse, 2nd Regiment Continental Light Dragoons for which he also serves as lieutenant and adjutant. His artistic endeavors include writing and recording a comedy CD, and decades as a musician playing saxes in area Rock & Roll and Blues bands. To his credit, or shame, he had his likeness used in an issue of MAD Magazine.

**May 14 - Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice**

Travel with us as award-winning photographer Bernard Perry takes us on a memorable journey to stunning Iceland. Its huge thundering waterfalls, smoldering volcanoes, slow-flowing glaciers, spouting geysers, rugged majestic mountains and soothing thermal pools – all at the edge of the Arctic Circle – combine to make Iceland one of the world’s most awesome landscapes, the Land of Fire and Ice.

**Bernard Perry**’s work has been included in the permanent collections of 19 museums in the U.S. and Europe and he has published five books of his work to date. His photographs have been exhibited at the Boca Raton Museum of Art, the Florida Museum of Natural History, the Fairfield Museum of Art, Philadelphia’s Civic Space, the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County and the Greenwich Library Flinn Gallery.
May 21 - Saving Animals from Extinction: Tales of Species Recovery in Connecticut and Beyond

The LLI annual meeting of members will precede this Lunch & Learn.

Join zoologist and Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo's Curator of Education, Jim Knox, as he profiles his work with Species Survival Plans and wild species re-introductions in Connecticut and beyond. Learn how 21st century science is extending the reach and achievements of field conservationists and how Connecticut citizens can become involved in recovery efforts to protect our planet's most imperiled and majestic creatures.

Jim Knox is a graduate of Cornell University where he studied Animal Science and Applied Economics. He is the Curator of Education for Connecticut’s Beardsley Zoo, directing educational programming and conducting field conservation for this AZA-accredited institution. He studied great white sharks in South Africa, conducted field research on Alaskan brown bears, did field conservation for Atlantic salmon and has written for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A member of The Explorers Club, he served as an on-camera wildlife expert for the Today Show and The Early Show and lectured for the Harvard College Conservation Society. Jim has been featured in The New York Times, served as a TED presenter and as a Guest Host for Connoisseur Media Star 99.9 FM Anna & Raven Show. He writes a column, Wildly Successful, for The Greenwich Sentinel and is proud to serve as a Science Adviser to the Bruce Museum.