

WINDSOR LOCKS PRESERVATION NEWS

A publication of the Windsor Locks Preservation Association, Inc.

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www.wlocksct.com/railroad

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello!

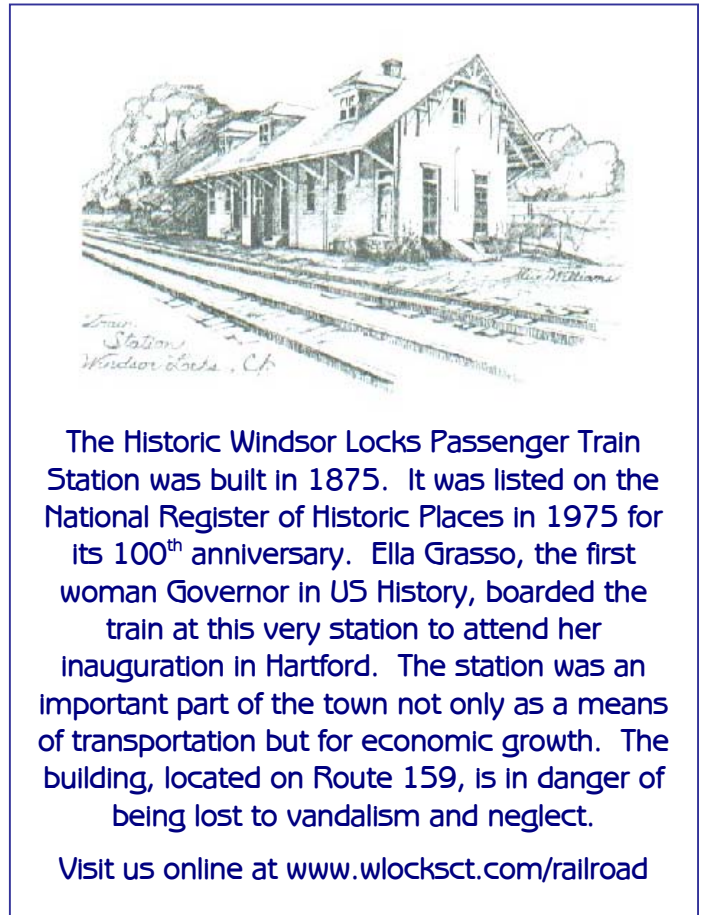
I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Barbara Schley. I'm the co-founder of "Let's Save the Windsor Locks Train Station".

When I moved to Windsor Locks several years ago, I was struck by the quaintness of this small town. I purchased an old 1875 farmhouse – the Cleavland Homestead and busied myself, as I've done many times in the past, in the restoration. After completion of that project, I moved next door to another 1875 farmhouse. The past year has been spent on that project. And although I haven't had a lot of spare time, something always loomed in the back of my mind – the Old Train Station.

The railroad has been a large part of my life. My great grandfather, grandfather, and father were all railroad engineers in the South. My brother in law still works for Kansas City Southern.

Let's Save the Windsor Locks Train Station!

The Windsor Locks Preservation Association was formed on October 25, 2004. We received non-profit status in December 2004. Our goals are to encourage and educate the public and town government on the importance of preservation. Our main focus is to obtain and preserve the Historic Windsor Locks Passenger Train Station. Additionally, we are introducing an educational program into the school system and have encouraged students to become involved in our efforts.



The Historic Windsor Locks Passenger Train Station was built in 1875. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 for its 100th anniversary. Ella Grasso, the first woman Governor in US History, boarded the train at this very station to attend her inauguration in Hartford. The station was an important part of the town not only as a means of transportation but for economic growth. The building, located on Route 159, is in danger of being lost to vandalism and neglect.

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When I was a little girl, some Sundays my mother would make the trip uptown to the local station, to watch the train come in. There was always an air of excitement. People buzzing about, the sound of the clackity-clack on the tracks as the train pulled into town, whistle blowing, billowing big puffs of smoke and the squealing of the brakes as it slowed to a stop.

On some occasions, I rode the train to Baton Rouge or New Orleans. The world next to the tracks was so different. The train passed through fields of cotton and sugar cane, old country roads and many small towns. And now and again, it would stop, people getting off or boarding.

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The Windsor Locks Station was built in 1875. In those days, rail was the main way to travel. The station became a portal to Windsor Locks, allowing people to come and go with more freedom than before. Trains mobilized the country. In 1975, Ella Grasso, the first woman Governor in the United States, took a train from this very station to her inauguration in Hartford.

Over the years, as the automobile took over and super highways began to snake their way throughout the country, trains were used less and less. With train travel on the decline, many stations were closed. The Windsor Locks Station closed.

Sadly, the building has sat empty for over 30 years. It's the last original, historic building remaining in that area from old Main Street. The building has not only suffered from neglect but also a fire. It's something we should all take pride in but instead, it has been allowed to stand, all alone, and deteriorate.

I have a vision of this important piece of our past becoming an equally important piece of the future of Windsor Locks. For all of the historically important buildings of our past that have been lost, I hope you will all join me in making this vision happen. Let's Save the Windsor Locks Train Station!

Barbara Schley, President
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Windsor Locks Preservation
Association, Inc.
"We're on the Right Track!"

PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

We began publishing the newsletter in October 2004 to let everyone know about what was happening with respect to Saving The Train Station. Effective June 1, 2005 the Preservation Association's newsletter is available quarterly. The newsletter, as with everything, had grown and due to the expense of producing and mailing it, we felt that for now, the quarterly letter should be sufficient to keep all informed. For those with email, your email updates are still sent as news and updates are available. ❖



Windsor Locks Train Station Magnets
are now available!



YOU CAN HELP! Attend our public meetings, join our membership and attend fund raising events! Membership is only \$10.00 yearly. We have many items available for your generous donation! Notecards \$5.00, Cookbooks \$10.00, Magnets \$1.50, Prints \$ 20.00 (unmatted) and Prints \$25.00 (matted).



Windsor Locks Train Station circa 1967