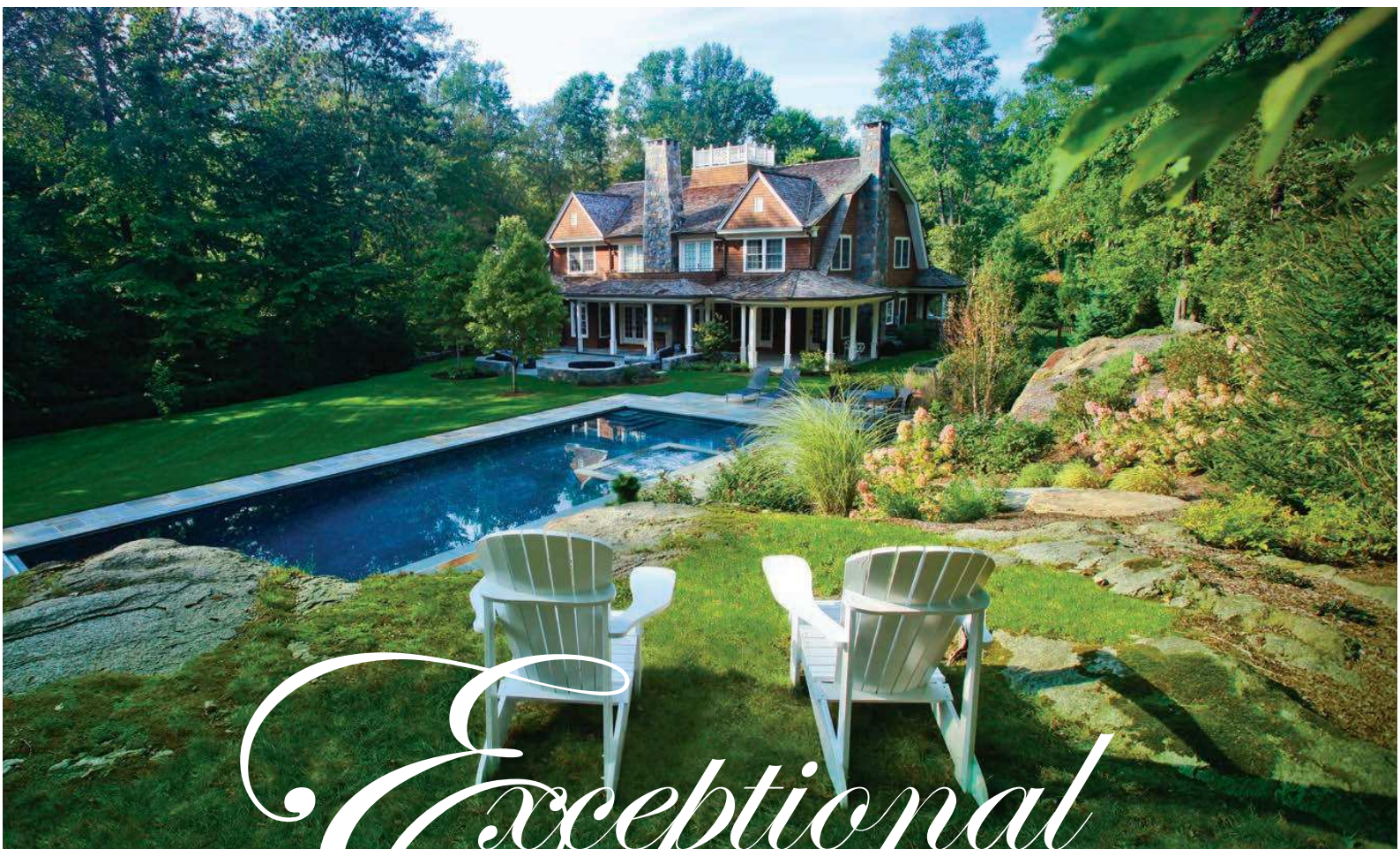


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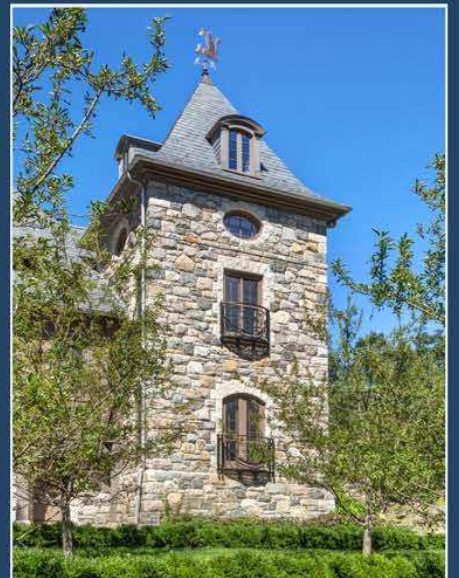
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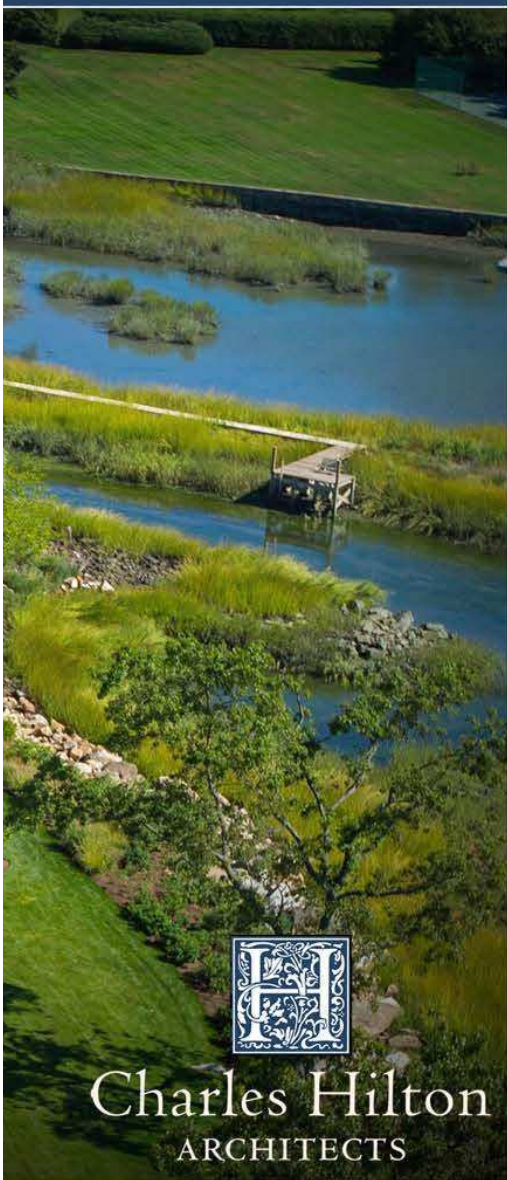


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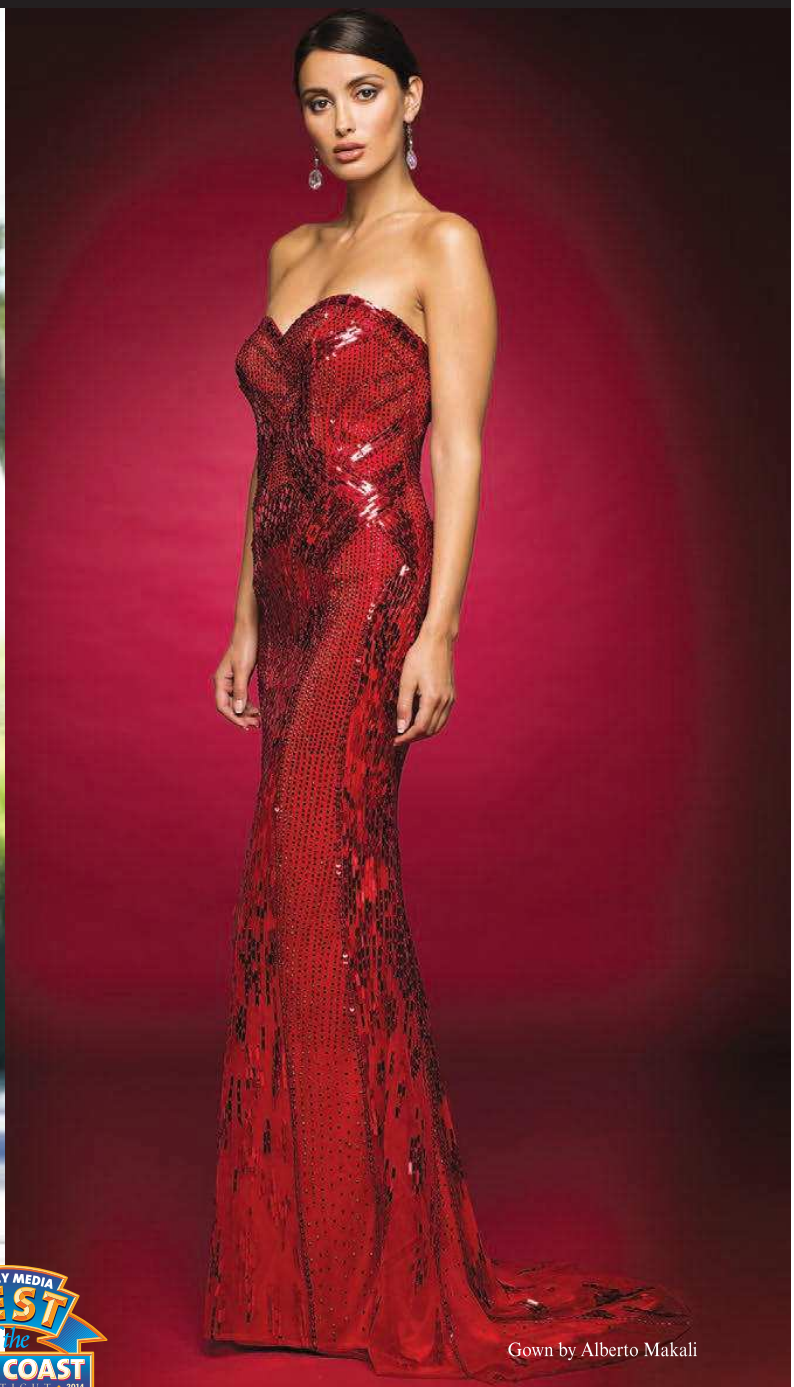
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Stamford, CT 06902



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203-222-1122

556 Post Rd.
Westport, CT 06880

TAKE PRIDE

W elcome, from the Town of Darien! Darien was founded in 1820 and has a current population of just over 20,000 residents. Located on Connecticut's Gold Coast, Darien is one of the wealthiest communities in the US and was listed at #2 on CNN Money's "top-earning towns" in the US as of 2010.

We are conveniently situated among the two larger cities Stamford and Norwalk, with the Long Island Sound to the south. We offer easy access to both the Merritt Parkway and I-95 for commuting, plus two train stations on the Metro North Line for a quick 42-minute commute into NYC.

Our town has so many amazing resources and benefits: award winning schools, 2 public beaches for residents, a newly renovated YMCA, Library and Police Station, 4 country clubs, a hunt club and two yacht clubs. Additionally, we offer a unique organization called Post 53 that provides medical services year-round and is staffed by high school students!

We have abundant restaurants and shops, including a new Shake Shack and a Whole Foods, with more development expected as we prepare for major renovations and upgrades in both downtown Darien and Noroton Heights over 2018 and 2019. As part of that, we will add rental apartments & condominiums, and additional parking.

There's not enough room to write about all the incredibly accomplishments Darien has achieved in the sports and arts. The Darien Lacrosse 2017 team was recognized in numerous polls as NATIONAL CHAMPS with an additional 13 State Titles. We also have 5 ice rinks within a short distance, contributing to the High School State Championship in Ice Hockey in consecutive years 2015 and 2016. The arts are a big part of our



community as well through Darien Art Center and the YWCA providing musical and dance instruction, and our YMCA offers a nationally ranked gymnastics program.

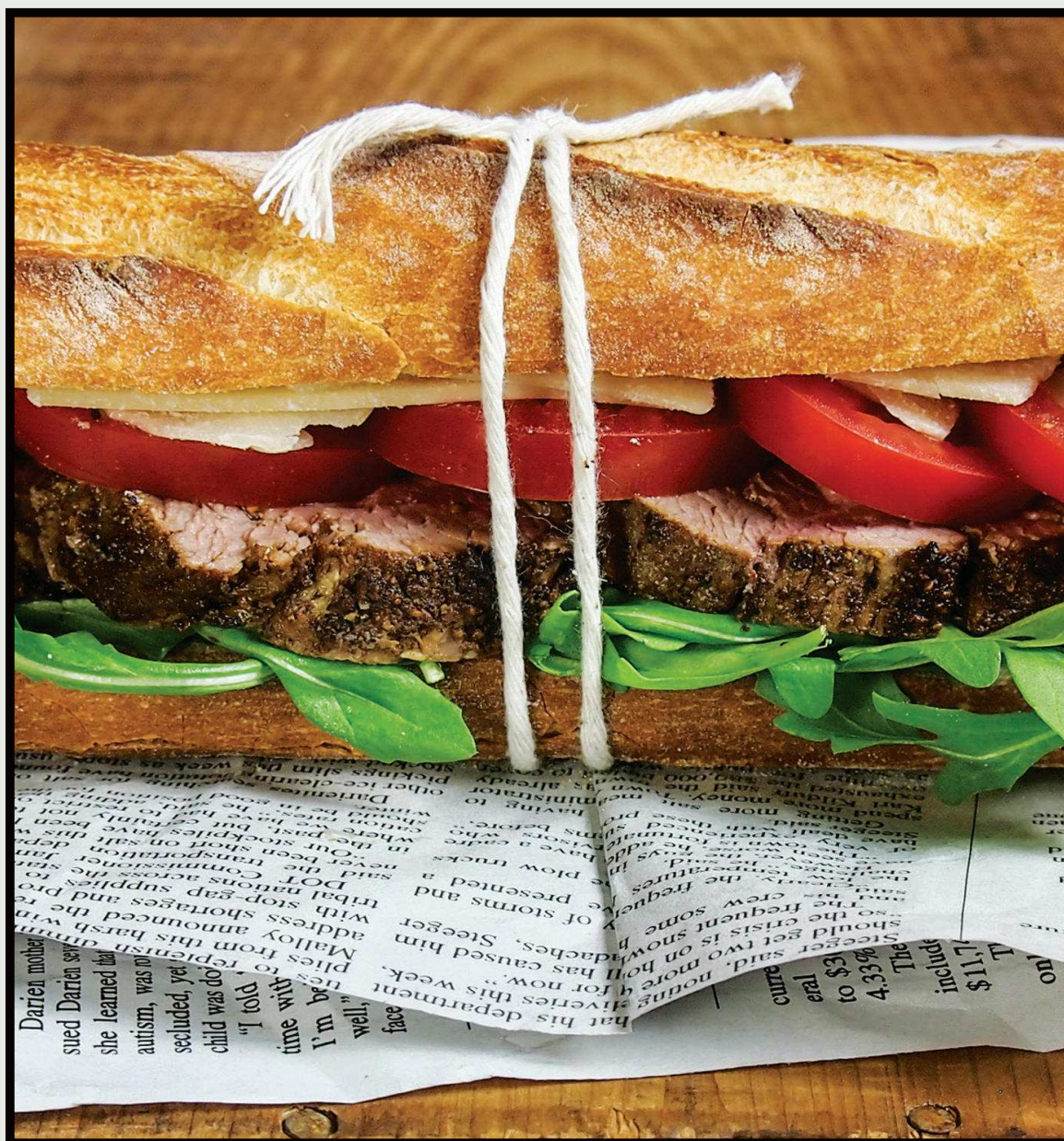
Darien is a magical community you'd find yourself lucky to call home!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Barbara Hazelton'.

Barbara Hazelton
2018 President
Darien Board of REALTORS®

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LETTER FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN

YOUR TOWN

I'd like to extend to you a warm welcome from the beautiful town of Darien, one of New England's most desired places to live, work and play. We're a small, picturesque, coastal community nestled between the vibrant cities of Stamford and Norwalk and within a short drive or bike ride to other beautiful Fairfield County towns. With two commuter rail stations and easy access to I-95 and the Merritt Parkway, Darien is an ideal community for folks who work in the New York metro area and points north.

Darien is treasured for its focus on families, community and a relaxed quality of life. Within just 14.9 square miles, we have friendly neighborhoods, two public beaches, 205 acres of park and recreational facilities, a nationally acclaimed public library, an equestrian facility, indoor ice rink, seven public school facilities, a community baseball complex and the Mather Center, home to our thriving senior program. With 16 miles of coastline, Darien also offers plenty of water recreation.

Downtown Darien is bustling with new and time-treasured shops, restaurants, businesses and commercial offices that, together, create a welcoming place. Our well-maintained, tree-lined streets are a reflection of the care we take in preserving our natural environment.

Darien is home to many nonprofit agencies that support the needs of our residents and those in neighboring towns. Dedicated volunteers are the backbone of these organizations, as well as our schools, faith communities and local government. These volunteers, along with our professional municipal staff, allow us to sustain a superior quality of life in Darien.

The Darien public school system consistently ranks among the best in Connecticut, and two of our seven schools have received the prestigious Connecticut Blue Ribbon Public School distinction. Our students earn placement in top colleges and universities nationwide.



We're proud of the strong educational foundation we're able to provide and our annual town budget is evidence of Darien's commitment to excellence in education. Our residents also value and support first-class emergency services through a new state-of-the-art police department, three volunteer fire departments and a student-run emergency medical service. Darien also enjoys a strong, stable tax base and employs conservative financial policies, allowing us to consistently receive the highest possible ratings. I hope you enjoy our wonderful town and look forward to meeting you when you do!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayme Stevenson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jayme J. Stevenson
First Selectman



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LETTER FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEEL AT HOME

The Darien community has attracted residents and businesses for more than 200 years with its location on the water and proximity to cities and towns along the corridor between New York City and Boston. Originally occupied by the Siwanoy Indians and then part of Stamford, the Town of Darien was incorporated in 1820.

While Darien has a long and rich history—from colonial days through the 1800s and the industrial revolution—today it's a suburban community that offers residents a short commute to many locally based corporations and small businesses, as well as an easy 55-minute express train ride to New York City's Grand Central Station.

Our residents enjoy community programs developed for people of all ages, a state-of-the-art local library, a new senior center, two nature preserves, two beaches and access to Long Island Sound. In addition, we have top-ranked schools that provide a quality education for Darien students. We truly have something for every interest and stage of life.

The Darien Chamber of Commerce serves a vital membership of local businesses, both small and large retailers and restaurants. In the past 10 years, our town has gone through an exciting revitalization driven by local business leaders that's attracted new and desirable eateries and shops, many owned by residents. Yet even with the growth, Darien still maintains a charming, small-town feel. Shoppers and diners come to Darien from neighboring towns, from Westchester county and from New York City.

The Darien Chamber of Commerce sponsors events throughout the year for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. Restaurant Week, Darien Sidewalk Sales and Family Fun Day and Holiday Magic are just a few of the



events that are extremely popular in our community.

Come experience Darien. We're sure you will enjoy yourself and feel at home here.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan S. Cator".

Susan S. Cator
President, Executive Director
Darien Chamber of Commerce

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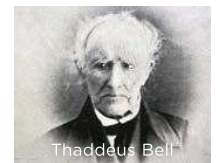
THIS IS HOW A **QUAINT NEW ENGLAND TOWN** EVOLVED FROM A RURAL FARMING SETTLEMENT TO THE URBANE COMMUNITY IT IS TODAY

With a sparkling waterfront, gently rolling hills and miles of quiet country roads, Darien has become a very desirable place to call home.

Conveniently located close to, but apart from, the bustle of its more urban neighbors to the east and west, its 20,000 residents owe much of their peaceful surroundings to the town's earliest citizens, who made their living in a farm-centered economy. Developing slowly over its first two centuries, Darien's rural character helped it retain the qualities that make it so attractive today.



Collender Mansion on Long Neck Point



Thaddeus Bell

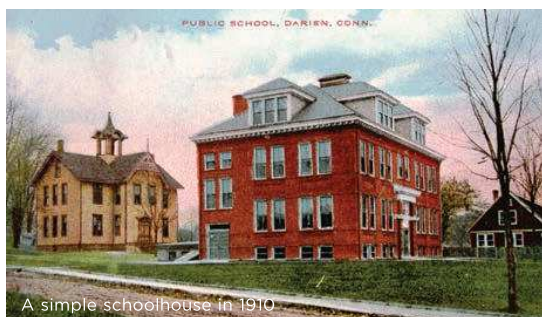
EARLY DAYS

As new settlers moved out to open country, farther from the original town centers of Colonial Norwalk and Stamford, the 15 square miles of woods, fields and shoreland that eventually became Darien seemed like a good choice for homesteading. With significant shore frontage and protected coves for seagoing trade, as well as land suitable for crops and livestock, an industrious newcomer could make a living.

The earliest records are not complete, but Piamikin—the Sagamore (chief) of the Roaton tribe who lived in the area between the Five Mile River and Pine Brook (now the Goodwives River)—sold this large parcel to Andrew Ward and Richard Law, representatives of the town of Stamford, in 1645, in exchange for four coats and a quantity of tobacco. While there was certainly no population boom at that time, the Stamford town fathers were thinking ahead, making sure there would be desirable territory for future expansion.

Darien has no village green. Instead, the town grew up around centers of commerce and transportation. Main roads connected farmers' products with their buyers, and determined Darien's early growth patterns. These byways, little more than rough cart paths 300 years ago, were the routes for moving crops and livestock from the farms to gristmills and waterside landings for the sea trade. As the town was roughly bisected in Colonial times by the King's Highway, later straightened to become the Boston Post Road (Route 1), this main road became, and remains, the natural center of commerce.

HISTORY



A simple schoolhouse in 1910

More farmers and tradesmen, and then merchants, began to settle this area “in between” the two established communities of Stamford and Norwalk, and the population of this piece of countryside eventually grew large enough to warrant its own identity. In the late 1730s, the Colonial legislature granted permission for a new parish, which gave the residents authority over taxation, schools and religious matters. They named the parish Middlesex Society; most history buffs speculate that the name is a reference to its “in-between-ness.”

When the General Assembly finally voted to allow the parish to incorporate in 1820, the new town was named Belville after the “father” of Middlesex’s quest for independence, local assemblyman Thaddeus Bell. But Bell then declined the honor, crossing out Belville in the town’s charter and substituting Darien. A traditional term for the isthmus of Panama—an area “in-between” the North and South American continents—Darien seemed a more

exotic name for a place in the middle, but the author and the reasoning behind his logic has never been established definitively. While this mystery endures, incorporation allowed the town to fully claim its own identity.

RAIL LINE ARRIVES

Still a community of farmers, fishermen, shoemaker and coastal traders, Darien’s population grew slowly, and until the mid-19th century it hovered around 1,000. However, the arrival of a rail line in 1848, with a depot close to the Boston Post Road, signaled the beginning of rapid changes in the development and character of the town. As wealthy businessmen could easily commute from the commercial hub of New York City, they began to acquire property and build large and gracious homes along the town’s attractive shoreline. In just a few years, a second depot was built at Noroton; it grew over the next generation into a satellite commercial center for town. Some of the first developers put houses for the middle class within walking distance of the train stations.

Smart developers took advantage of Darien’s desirable location and began to transform the countryside into residential neighborhoods that would be called upscale today. The first suburban development in town was the brainchild of Melville Mead, who in the late 1860s purchased a large residence on Sedgwick Avenue, bought eight adjoining acres, laid out a road that he called Prospect Avenue, and proceeded to sell the 24 lots in his subdivision to others seeking handsome homes in this



Cross-county trolley in the early 1900s

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DARIEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

picturesque community. It was a pattern destined to be repeated—all over town—for the next century. Along with the financiers and wealthy merchants came service employees to tend these households. New small businesses served the carriage trade, opening shops along the Post Road. The town expanded more rapidly, and the beautiful shoreline attracted summer visitors as well.

In the 30 years between 1880 and 1910, the building boom persisted and the percentage of land dedicated to farming dwindled, as the Industrial Revolution supplanted the need for local agriculture. The town's population doubled, to around 4,000. Mansions appeared in choice locations, and some of the old fields were transformed for leisure. Wee Burn, the town's first golf club, opened with six holes in 1897. The area that was once quiet farmland had become one of the genteel bedroom communities along the Sound, a refuge from the noise and bustle, but still convenient to the city.

THE MODERN ERA

By 1913, the remaining old-timers and smitten newcomers were proud enough of their pretty town to come together and celebrate its history and charms, resulting in a local extravaganza dubbed The Pageant of Darien, held over Labor Day weekend that year. Kenneth Reiss, who has recently written a massive volume detailing the town's history (*The Story of Darien, Connecticut*, Darien Historical Society, 2009), describes the costumed participants: troupes of "rouged Indians, dancing water sprites, big-hatted Puritans and heroes on horseback," presented in a natural grassy amphitheater adjoining Gorham's Pond. What distinguished the proceedings—aside from the carefully costumed players—was the fact that many of the celebrants came in motorcars. This four-wheeled transportation would again advance the residential character of the town that persists today.

The railroad, automobiles and, for a brief period, a trans-county trolley, followed by bus lines, speeded up the increase in Darien's population, as travel was made quick and simple. The commercial strip along the Post Road, as well as the smaller hub around the Noroton Heights station, offered plenty of goods and services to the growing population. Gradually, the farms disappeared, with new schools serving the increasing population.

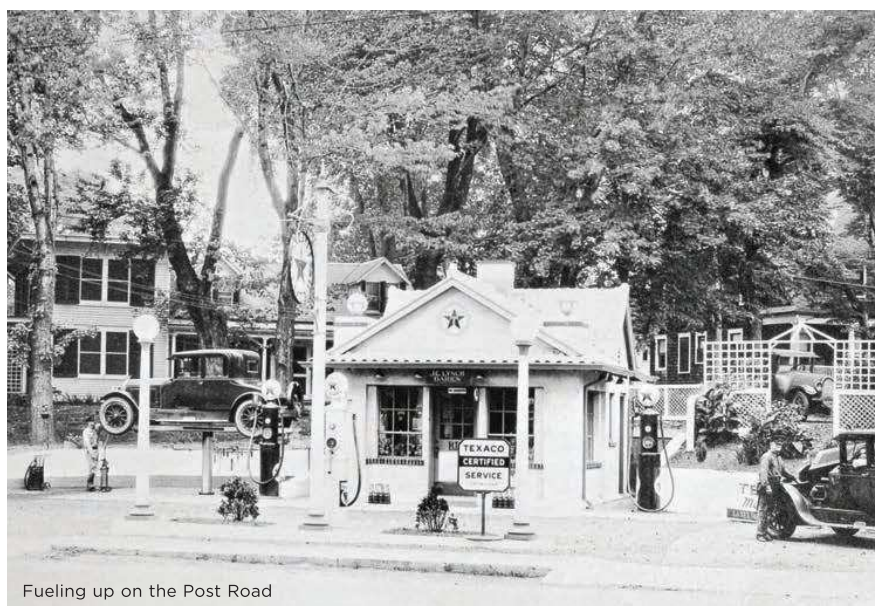
The post-World War II building boom did not bypass Darien. It became one of the county's most attractive commuter towns; an image of Mom and her two children, waiting at the station for Dad to arrive on the 6:26 p.m. train from New York, was captured by *Life* magazine in



Tokeneke Road in 1890

a 1949 article about Fairfield County, and is an almost iconic symbol of the good life in Darien. Once the Connecticut Turnpike—now better-known as I-95—was opened in 1958, an easy commuting distance to the large number of cities within a small radius sealed the town's happy fate as a gracious suburban mecca.

Now fully developed, with new lots for home building both rare and very desirable, Darien can still boast of its lovely geography, the recreational opportunities provided by its parks, beaches and clubs, and a school system that is nationally recognized for its high-performing scholars and athletes. Thanks to the early farmers who maintained its quiet beauty while places nearby became more urban and more crowded, the town remains a little bit of heaven on the shores of Long Island Sound. •



Fueling up on the Post Road

TOWN GOVERNMENT

AT THE HELM

HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF THE LEADERSHIP
SYSTEM **THAT KEEPS DARIEN RUNNING SMOOTHLY**

At its incorporation in 1820, Darien's need for government was met by the New England tradition of decision-making by town meeting. Three selectmen administered town business—mainly keeping roads and bridges passable—and a town clerk kept records. With Darien's current population nearly twenty times as large as the original agrarian community, town government now fulfills multiple functions for the well-being of its citizens.

Since 1951, the legislative business conducted by town meeting is now accomplished with the Representative Town Meeting form of government. The RTM is composed of 100 members representing the town's six districts, with the number of representatives in each district determined annually by a formula based on elector apportionment, with each member representing approximately 100 registered voters.

There are four other independent but interrelated major components of local government. Elected officials now include a First Selectman and an additional four-member Board of Selectmen, elected every two years in odd-numbered years; all serve at-large. A six-member Planning and Zoning Commission, seven-member Board of Finance, and nine-member Board of Education are elected to staggered terms. Other elected officials include Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Tax Collector, Constables, Judge of Probate, Justices of the Peace, Registrars of Voters and a three-member Board of Assessment Appeals.

The major town functions other than the Board of Education, which has a separate facility, are directed from the Town Hall at 2 Renshaw Road; a town administrator, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, oversees daily operations of the various town offices.



Darien Town Hall

For its size and largely residential character, the town of Darien has a relatively low tax rate, and its highly educated population—77 percent of the over-25 adult population have bachelor's degrees or higher—places great value in the quality of its schools, which are well-financed and have an excellent reputation, both state- and nationwide. The municipality is well managed, enjoying Moody's highest rating of Aaa. A state-of-the-art public library and a new police headquarters were recently opened, demonstrating the town's commitment to well-appointed and high quality municipal facilities.

The town maintains a comprehensive website (darienct.gov), where residents can find agendas and minutes of all the various board meetings, detailed information about town services, and listings for key personnel, including all members of Representative Town Meeting and the districts they represent. •



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With plenty of local facilities for medical care and exercise, and convenient access to hospitals, specialized treatment and fitness opportunities in town as well as in adjacent communities, the options abound for Darien residents to maintain long-term good health for themselves and their families.

In an emergency, first response is critical, and the dedicated volunteers of Darien's **POST 53** man three fully-equipped, state-of-the-art ambulances, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The all-volunteer group, founded more than 40 years ago, consists of local high school students and adult advisors. Training is extensive, with young adults having had more than 140 hours of classroom study and 20 hours of practical training. At age

16 these teens take the state exams for basic level EMT training. During school hours, adult advisors staff the first responding ambulance. All "Posties," as they are locally and affectionately known, work out of the organization's headquarters at 0 Ledge Road. When paramedic intervention is required, a paramedic from Stamford EMS will be dispatched to the location of the emergency.

Three excellent hospitals serve Darien. West of town is the 305-bed **STAMFORD HOSPITAL**, a member of the New York-Presbyterian Healthcare System. Now undergoing a complete renovation with state-of-the-art features that will be fully in place in 2016, it's also a teaching affiliate of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. The hospital has received numerous recognitions for its services and specialties, which include cancer care with CyberKnife treatment capabilities and the Bennett Cancer Center, heart services, orthopedics and women's health.

The main hospital campus on Shelburne Road is part of a regional network of facilities that include Tully Health Center, its large outpatient facility on Strawberry Hill, plus the Darien Imaging Center and the Wilton Surgery Center.

East of town, **NORWALK HOSPITAL** is a 328-bed, not-for-profit, acute care community hospital with more than 500 physicians on its active medical staff; many trained at the nation's leading medical schools and hospitals. It is also a teaching facility of the Yale University School of Medicine and ranks among the nation's leading hospitals in providing quality surgical and heart attack care. A new ambulatory pavilion will open in 2015 to expand the area's growing roster of choices for outpatient services.



TOP: WILLIAM TAUFIC



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*affiliate: Columbia University College
of Physicians and Surgeons*

NewStamfordHospital.org

WELLNESS

Both Stamford and Norwalk hospitals are verified as Level II trauma centers by the American College of Surgeons.

Further west, Darien residents may also opt for the services of **GREENWICH HOSPITAL**, a 206-bed facility. Like Norwalk, it is an academic affiliate of the Yale University School of Medicine; it is also a member of the Yale New Haven Health System. The hospital represents all medical specialties and offers a wide range of medical, surgical, diagnostic and wellness programs.

Local residents in need of assisted living arrangements will find two such facilities in Darien: **ATRIA DARIEN**, a senior and assisted-living community on Ledge Road; and **MAPLEWOOD SENIOR LIVING**, offering assisted living and memory care, on the Post Road. In neighboring New Canaan, the **WAVENY CARE CENTER** is a skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility for older adults, and those affected by illness and injury. The center also provides a special long-term unit for people with Alzheimer's and other forms of memory loss, called The Village at Waveny Care Center. Respite care, geriatric evaluation and home care services are part of the center's newly named Life Care Network.

Also in New Canaan, treatment of psychiatric and addictive disorders is provided at **SILVER HILL**, a nationally recognized, nonprofit hospital.

To maintain and improve fitness and well being, the **DARIEN YMCA**, with a new facility opened in 2012, offers an enormous range of activities. Among them are classes for children and adults of all ages; a 10,000-square-foot fitness center; summer camp; preschool and after-school programs; lifeguard training; and a much-admired gymnastics program that starts children as young as twelve months in basic skills development. Comprehensive information about Y programs and complete seasonal schedules are available on the Darien YMCA website. Other local fitness facilities include **BODYTUNING**, **ELEMENTS YOGA**, **EQUINOX**, **FITNESS TOGETHER**, **FLAIR FITNESS**, and **JOYRIDE CYCLING STUDIO**; **CHELSEA PIERS** and the **SARNER HEALTH & FITNESS INSTITUTE** (in Stamford Hospital's Tully Center) are located in nearby Stamford. •



MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE

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203-989-2414
atriaseniorliving.com

GREENWICH HOSPITAL
5 Perryridge Road., Greenwich
203-863-3000
greenhosp.org

MAPLEWOOD SENIOR LIVING
599 Boston Post Road
203-293-6872
maplewoodatdarien.com

NORWALK HOSPITAL
34 Maple Street, Norwalk
203-852-2000
norwalkhospital.org

POST 53
0 Ledge Road, Darien
Emergency: 911 (Ambulance)
Non-Emergency: 203-655-8980
post53.info

SILVER HILL HOSPITAL
208 Valley Road, New Canaan
866-542-4455
silverhillhospital.org

STAMFORD HOSPITAL
30 Shelburne Road, Stamford
203-276-1000
stamfordhospital.org

WAVENY CARE CENTER
3 Farm Road, New Canaan
203-594-5200
waveny.org



Norwalk Hospital

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PARKS & RECREATION

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If you relish time spent in the outdoors, you'll love Darien. The town maintains a variety of parks, including two beautiful beaches with extensive facilities. Walkers, cyclists, swimmers, sailors and sunbathers will all find a place to enjoy among the community's recreational offerings. In addition, many youth sports have organized teams in Darien, so children can stay busy and active all year long.

For beachcombers, there are two spots to enjoy. Located on 22 acres off Nearwater Lane, **WEED BEACH** includes a bathing beach, bathhouse, concession stand and picnic areas, as well as a children's play area. There are also six tennis courts, five paddle tennis courts, a fire pit, a warming hut that's rentable to groups and a fully equipped fitness trail. Weed Beach is also home to the Darien Junior Sailing Team. Situated in a truly beautiful location, on eight acres at the mouth of the Goodwives River, **PEAR TREE POINT BEACH** has two beach areas, a bathhouse, a boat launch ramp, concession stand and a handicapped accessible picnic area, with tables and grills. The Darien Boat Club is here, too. Parking stickers for the beaches are available through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Darien is home to a number of nice parks. Located on 27.5 acres off Brookside Road, **CHERRY LAWN PARK** is one of the town's busiest recreation areas. Features include four tennis courts, a basketball court, a softball court and Casey Field—a multiuse playing field. The park also has a wonderful playground, with a number of swings and playscapes, as well as several picnic areas, a gazebo, a natural pond and public restrooms. Cherry Lawn contains the plots reserved for Cherry Lawn Community Gardens and is home to the Darien Nature Center.

BAKER PARK is an 11.7-acre recreation area located off Noroton Avenue. It functions as a neighborhood park and offers a large playground for young children, as well as space for families to relax. In the afternoons and evenings, its multipurpose ballpark/soccer field



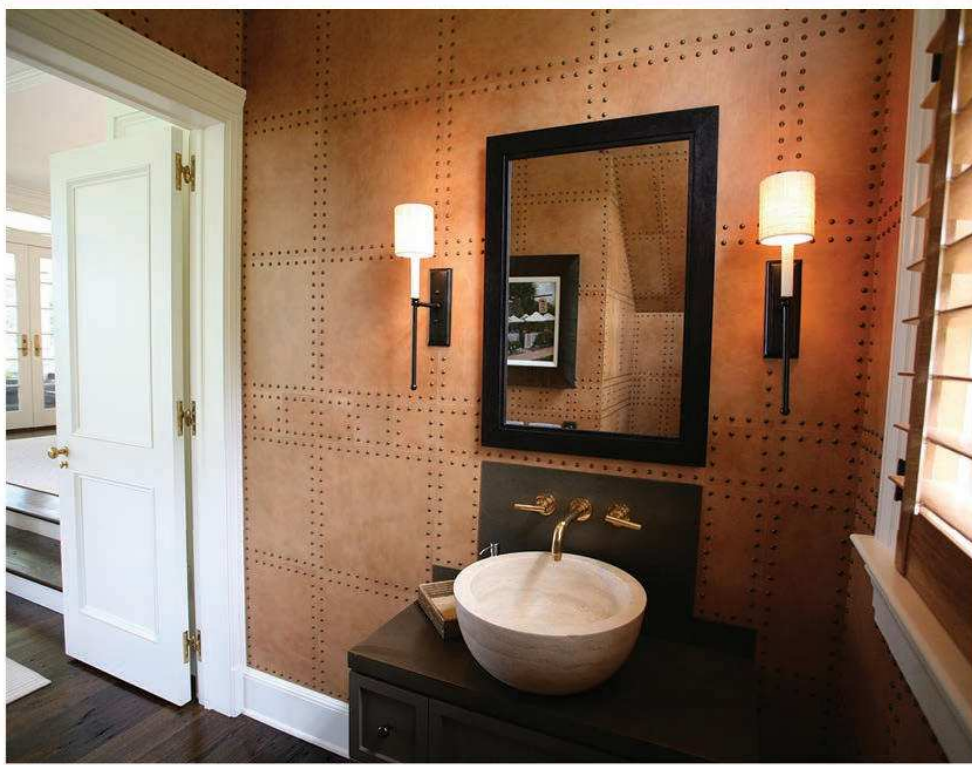
Darien Junior Sailing

is used by the Darien Little League and Soccer Association.

Darien has made a serious investment in sports facilities for its youth programs. In addition to fields at the town's schools, at Baker and at Cherry Lawn, **MCGUANE PARK**—named for Father James McGuane, who spearheaded many youth sports activities in town—has three playing fields, children's play equipment and swings, and a community building with concessions, picnic facilities and indoor batting cages. Fields are used by major- and minor-league age groups in the Darien Little League, for Challenger baseball and girls softball.



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PARKS & RECREATION

Other venues for local teams are a soccer field and two softball fields in front of the **TOWN HALL** at the corner of Route 1 and Renshaw Road. **HOLAHAN FIELD**, located at the rear of the Town Hall, is a Babe Ruth Baseball field with 90-foot base paths; it's also used as a practice field for the Darien Junior Football League.

For indoor sports year-round, there's **DARIEN ICE RINK**, which offers skating programs for youth of all ages, plus figure skating and hockey instruction. There are programs for adults, too, along with public skating sessions. A retail shop for sports equipment is on-site.

Darien maintains its county- and state-wide reputation for the number and quality of its youth sports teams. Families here can find sports for their children—and themselves—in all four seasons. Depending upon the sport, town leagues support teams from the early elementary years until high school. See the listings at right for contact information for youth football, basketball, soccer, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse and sailing. Great links at the town's Parks and Recreation website will help you find additional details

While Darien maintains many fields and facilities for its local teams, natural sanctuaries have not been overlooked. **TILLEY POND PARK** is a serene, eight-acre oasis located near the center of town. Benches along the park's walkways are illuminated with lights, and specimen trees accent wooded areas. The pond itself is studded with fountains; a stone hut with a fireplace at the water's edge is its centerpiece.



Another place that offers great natural beauty is **STONY BROOK PARK**, comprised of 11 acres on Ledge Road. This preserve has low-impact hiking trails and many natural wonders along its paths, including a waterfall. **SELLECK'S WOODS** is a hidden gem in Darien, with 28 acres situated between I-95 and the Metro-North railroad. This preserve encompasses an additional 22 acres known as Dunlap's Woods. Three entrances provide access to this park's extensive trail system, and it's a beautiful place for observing nature and bird watching. **WOODLAND PARK** covers more than 64 acres and can be accessed from Middlesex Road and West Avenue. It features two trail systems, two ponds, a stream and footbridge.

Another jewel among the town's recreational facilities is the **DARIEN NATURE CENTER**, built by the generosity of town residents for the purpose of environmental education. Located in a beautiful facility in Cherry Lawn Park, it houses a collection of wild creatures and offers programs and camps for children in all age groups. In collaboration with the Darien Land Trust, the Center also presents environmental lectures and films.

Many parks in Darien permit dogs on and off-leash on various days and at various hours. For more information on where and when to bring your pet to a park, contact the Parks and Recreation office. •



SOURCES

DARIEN PARKS & RECREATION
2 Renshaw Road
203-656-7325
darienct.gov/parkrec

BEACHES AND PARKS

BAKER PARK
Noroton Avenue

CHERRY LAWN PARK
120 Brookside Road

DARIEN NATURE CENTER
120 Brookside Road
dariennaturecenter.org

MCGUANE FIELD
Noroton Avenue
(near Noroton Heights firehouse)

PEAR TREE POINT BEACH
Pear Tree Point Road

TOWN HALL/HOLAHAN FIELDS
Route 1 & Renshaw Road

SELLECK'S WOODS
Parklands Drive
selleckswoods.com

STONY BROOK PARK
Ledge Road

TILLEY POND PARK
Lakeside & West avenues

WEED BEACH PARK
155 Waterlane Road

WOODLAND PARK
Middlesex Road
woodlandparknaturepreserve.com

YOUTH SPORTS

DARIEN FIELD HOCKEY
darienfieldhockey.com

DARIEN ICE RINK
55 Old Kings Highway N.
203-655-8251
darienicerink.com

DARIEN JUNIOR SAILING TEAM
sail.darien.org

DARIEN SOCCER ASSOCIATION
dariensoccer.org

DARIEN YMCA BASKETBALL
darienhoops.org

DARIEN YOUTH BASEBALL & SOFTBALL
dybs.org

DARIEN YOUTH HOCKEY
dyha.com

DARIEN YOUTH LACROSSE
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ARTS & CULTURE

CREATE SOMETHING ORIGINAL

DARIEN IS RELATIVELY SMALL
IN SIZE, BUT IT'S BIG ON ARTS
AND ENTERTAINMENT

Over the centuries, Darien's natural beauty has drawn artists and writers to town. Creative greats such as Vincent Colyer, John Frederick Kensett and Helen Frankenthaler once called Darien home, as did author Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Lower Fairfield County, with its close proximity to New York City, has long been a hotbed of artistic endeavor and that interest in culture is in the town's DNA today.

No discussion of Darien's cultural scene is complete without a mention of the **Darien Historical Society**. Its headquarters, the Bates-Scofield House Museum, was built in 1736 in what was then Middlesex Parish. Today, the organization hosts exhibitions, lectures and educational programs, and houses artifacts and publications that tell the



Geary Gallery



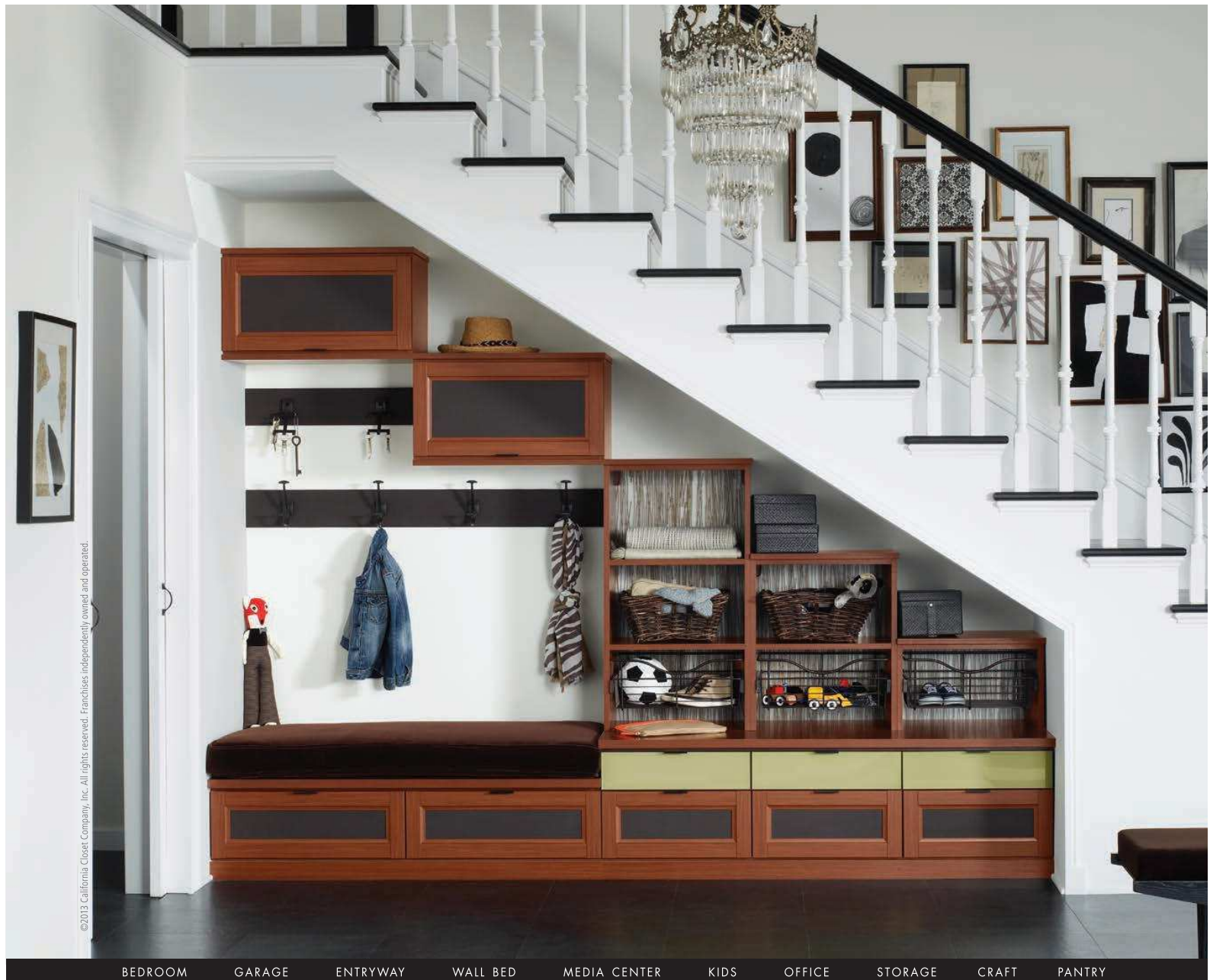
Darien Arts Center

town's story from its founding. In 2009, the historical society rebuilt the original 1827 Scofield Barn and attached it to its museum as a new primary exhibition space. Storage space was added for a collection of some 10,000 books, documents and photos, and 3,000 pieces in the costume collection, one of the largest in Connecticut.

Another key cultural center in town is the **Darien Arts Center** (DAC), located behind Town Hall. When it was established in 1975, it was a small nonprofit organization; today, it's a major source of fine arts entertainment and education. DAC welcomes 800 students every week through four programs—dance, visual arts, music and children's theater. The stage program, formerly known as the Darien Players and now called Darien Arts Center Stage, features actors and actresses from the tri-state area (including

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ARTS & CULTURE

Broadway), who put on professional performances year-round. The dance program at DAC is one of the largest in Connecticut, and the visual arts program hosts the popular Darien Art Show every spring. The judged show has been a Darien tradition for more than 50 years.

Cultural programs at the **Darien Community Association** (DCA) are diverse. The association has branched out and grown since it was founded in 1923. Based at the Meadowlands estate on Middlesex Road, this eight-acre venue is home to a 15,000-square-foot

Regency-style home with garden that's listed on the National Register of Historic Places. DCA hosts multiple programs throughout the year, including an academic and an art lecture series, plus foreign language classes for various skill levels. One popular draw is the Theater Bus, which transports groups to Broadway for lunch and discounted shows in the fall, winter and spring. DCA also is home to The Blue Notes, a philanthropic group of singers (mostly women, though men are welcome, too) who travel to local senior centers to perform and socialize. The DCA sponsors social groups for men and women, and recently opened a four-acre bird sanctuary beside Meadowlands.

In many towns, the local library is morphing into a community hub; in Darien it's a cultural center, too. In January of 2009 the **Darien Library** found a home in a new, state-of-the-art building on the Post Road. Today, the library boasts the highest media circulation per capita in the state. It has several digital media labs with modern equipment and services, including three 3-D printers, a green screen and one of the fastest Internet connections in Connecticut. Darien Library has relationships with more than 100 book groups and hosts up to 20 authors every year for lectures and book signings. The Museum of Modern Art chose Darien Library as the first to collaborate with on special programs; thus, one wing is home to an impressive art exhibit borrowed from MoMA, and the library often hosts guest speakers from the museum. For children, there are as many as 18 programs every week, including story time and technology-focused sessions in the TEA room (technology, engineering and arts). Especially innovative is a children's summer program that pairs a reading list with an app through which readers contribute to forums and discussions.

Other examples of the town's commitment to the arts can be found in smaller venues, such as **Geary Gallery** on the Post Road, which hosts exhibits from some top artists, among them Peter Max, John Stobart and Ray Ellis. In Noroton Heights, **Barrett Bookstore** is home to a great selection of literature and hosts author talks for children and adults. Darien resident Sheila Daley took over in 1997, as big-box chains such as Borders went spine up, so to speak. Conveniently sited opposite the Noroton Heights train station, it boasts cozy nooks and a functional fireplace. For young dancers, there is the **Walter Schalk** school. The main studio is in New Canaan, but Darien hosts a satellite location. Founded in 1957, it's one of the longest-running dance schools in the state. With such cultural treasures, you'll be hard-pressed not to find a wealth of inspiration in Darien. •



RESOURCES

BARRETT BOOKSTORE
203-655-2712
barrettbookstore.com

DARIEN ARTS CENTER
203-655-8683; darienarts.org

DARIEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
203-655-9050; dariendca.org

DARIEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
203-655-9233
darienhistorical.org

DARIEN NATURE CENTER
203-655-7459
dariennaturecenter.org

GEARY GALLERY
203-655-6633; gearygallery.com

WALTER SCHALK
203-762-7508; walterschalk.com



JUST NEXT DOOR

BRUCE MUSEUM
203-869-0376
brucemuseum.org

CARRIAGE BARN ARTS CENTER
203-972-1895; carriagebarn.org

LEVITT PAVILION
203-226-7600
levittpavilion.com

PALACE THEATER
203-325-4466
palacestamford.org

ROWAYTON ARTS CENTER
203-866-2744
rowaytonartscenter.org

SILVERMINE ARTS CENTER
203-966-9700; silvermineart.org

SHAKESPEARE ON THE SOUND
203.299-1300
shakespeareonthesound.org

STAMFORD MUSEUM AND NATURE CENTER
203-322-1646
stamfordmuseum.org

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE
203-227-4177
westportplayhouse.org

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SOCIAL CLUBS

THE GOOD LIFE

IF YOU LIKE A BUSY SOCIAL SCHEDULE, YOU'LL FIND IT IN DARIEN, WHERE THERE ARE NUMEROUS CLUBS FOR ALMOST ALL INTERESTS



As it evolved into a sophisticated suburban enclave, Darien's rural character and beautiful shoreline became assets for leisurely pursuits. Like-minded residents organized membership clubs around golf, tennis, sailing, swimming, horsemanship and other pastimes to enhance the experience of living here. Today, a number of social organizations in town have welcomed members for nearly a century (or more), and continue to contribute to the quality of life in Darien.

The **COUNTRY CLUB OF DARIEN** opened in 1957 on Mansfield Avenue, with a nine-hole course, six tennis courts, a swimming pool, clubhouse and a membership of 400. A year later, an additional nine holes and two paddle tennis courts were added. In 1986, Edgar S. Auchincloss, who had initially developed the club on a portion of his parents' 140-acre vacation retreat, made the offer to ensure the club's continuing existence by allowing the membership to buy the club property. Over the ensuing years, club facilities have been renovated and improved, including a nearly total rebuild and modernization, concluded in 2010, by golf architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan, which that year won a Renovation of the Year award from *Golf Inc.* magazine. Also known by its acronym, CCD, the club is recognized for its luxurious appointments.

The Darien waterfront has historically attracted many boating enthusiasts. Among several facilities for local sailors is the **DARIEN BOAT CLUB**, founded in the late 1940s. Having grown from a few charter members to a current roster of 800-plus, the club offers a well-protected anchorage with slips for 260 boats, from dinghies to 28-foot power and sailboats. It also has a launch service and numerous other sailors' amenities. The club is conveniently situated between the



many harbors of Stamford and Norwalk. Members can socialize at three club-sponsored picnics and a lobster and clambake every September.

Dedicated to “good fellowship, community service and fun,” the **DARIEN MEN’S ASSOCIATION**, started in 1977, is open to all men in Darien and surrounding towns, aged 50 or over. The association offers late-morning meetings every Wednesday, with a featured speaker and refreshments, plus a full roster of events planned by its social committee, including a variety of field trips in the New York metropolitan area. Its regular gatherings are held in the historic Darien Community Association on Middlesex Road.

Founded in 1953, the **DARIEN WINTER CLUB** is the oldest continuously running men’s ice hockey club in southwestern Connecticut and Westchester County. Most members live within Fairfield County; membership is open to men aged 30 and over, and the majority of members have had experience in high school and college-level hockey. Composed of teams competing at two levels of play against similar teams in the New York metro and Connecticut areas, the group also plays in a variety of tournaments in the U.S. and Canada.

For those who love gardening, conservation and camaraderie around these activities, the **GARDEN CLUB OF DARIEN**, begun by a group of women led by Mrs. John Sherman Hoyt in 1929, continues to welcome new members and carry on a program of education and

civic beautification. The club has enjoyed a 70-plus-year affiliation with Garden Clubs of America, and undertaken such efforts as planting Victory Gardens in the World War II era, donating mature trees to the town’s elementary schools, establishing permanent receptacles for recyclables at the town dump in the 1970s, and planting a wildflower meadow at the Darien Nature



SOCIAL CLUBS



Garden Club of Darien



Darien Community Association

Center in the 1990s. It also conducts competitions and flower shows, giving those who are passionate about plants ample opportunities to expand their horticultural expertise.

Founded in 1963, the **MIDDLESEX CLUB** is a swimming, tennis and social club owned by its membership of approximately 250 bond-holding families. The club's 10-acre property on Echo Drive North includes a six-lane, 25-meter pool, diving tank and one-meter diving board; there are also eight Har-Tru tennis courts and four paddle courts, as well as a clubhouse, tennis pavilion and snack bar. The staff includes professional tennis, swimming and diving coaches. The club organizes both children's and adult teams, and participates in a variety of inter-club competitions. Beyond the opportunities for instruction and competition, the club runs a day camp and holds a number of social activities throughout the year, including cookouts, parties and dances.

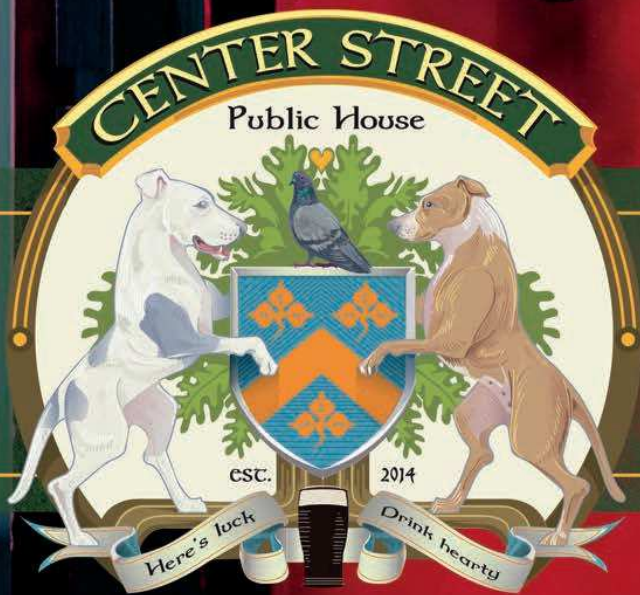
Another Darien institution, the **NOROTON YACHT CLUB** was founded in 1928 and dedicated to promoting family participation in sailboat racing and recreational sailing. With easy access to Long Island Sound, the club is

located in Darien harbor, west of Long Neck Point. It has a long tradition of one-design racing; members sail J-24s, Sonars, Ensigns and 2.4mRs. The club has a fleet of over fifty cruising boats, too. Noroton's fleet participates in club races as well as local, regional, national and offshore distance racing and cruising events. The club also has a large and respected junior sailing program, for member and non-member children ages 8 to 18, and it hosts the Darien High School sailing team in the spring and fall.

A Darien landmark founded in 1914, the **OX RIDGE HUNT CLUB** is situated on about 37 acres that were formerly owned by the opera singer John McCormack, and operated by him as a dairy farm. It features two outdoor rings and one indoor riding ring, a large front yard, outdoor wash area, indoor heated wash rooms and several tack rooms. The club offers stabling to accommodate 70 horses—those owned by the club as well as boarded animals. In addition to lessons and summer riding camp, Ox Ridge hosts a wide range of competitions and shows, with a full summer schedule of events at the club. Members also travel to many shows in New England, New Jersey, New York, the Eastern Seaboard and Florida in the winter.

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SOCIAL CLUBS



Located on an idyllic cove with beautiful views of Long Island Sound, the **TOKENEKE CLUB** is another long-lived institution, incorporated in 1907 with a single tennis court, swimming in the Sound and bathing on the beach. From this simple beginning, the membership now makes use of its sixth clubhouse with fine dining as well as snack facilities, completed in 2008. It offers a total of nine tennis courts, a 25-meter swimming pool and diving well, beachside cabana building and a bathhouse, plus sailing, water polo, paddle tennis and a children's camp, all in use in the busy summer months. While most of the membership is drawn from the nearby community, the club's bylaws allow for a certain number of members outside the Tokeneke boundaries.

While it is the oldest of Darien's membership clubs, founded in 1896, **WEE BURN COUNTRY CLUB** maintains a most reserved public face. One popular legend is that its name, Scottish for "small stream," was suggested to one of the club's founders—summer resident John Crimmins—by another Darien summer resident, Andrew Carnegie. By reputation, its golf course is one of the toughest (a 139 slope) and also one of the most beautiful in the Northeast. It has an elegantly appointed Spanish-style clubhouse, and the main grounds on Hollow Tree Ridge Road offer tennis and paddle tennis, bowling and trap shooting. Wee Burn also maintains its own private beach club in Rowayton.

The story goes that, while waiting for their club to finally build a new 18-hole golf course in another location, some disaffected Wee



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SOCIAL CLUBS



Burn club members got together to found **WOODWAY COUNTRY CLUB**, and proceeded to hire renowned golf course architect Willie Park, Jr., to build it. The course, which opened in 1918, is set on 200 woodland acres and was restored to its original splendor in 2007, at the direction of golf course architect Mark Mungeam. Woodway is consistently among the top courses in Connecticut, and the club is designated an Audubon Sanctuary. In addition to the course, driving range and bowling alley, and a clubhouse with several elegant fine dining venues, the original property also offers a newly-completed tennis complex with Olympic-sized pool and diving well, a fresco dining, tennis and paddle tennis courts, and a summer camp facility. Woodway maintains a private beach club for its members in the coastal Shippan neighborhood of Stamford.

Since Darien's social clubs are all private membership organizations, each one has its own requirements and application process. Consult the listings in the resources box for contact information. •

RESOURCES

COUNTRY CLUB OF DARIEN
300 Mansfield Avenue
203-655-9726
ccdarien.org

DARIEN BOAT CLUB
135 Pear Tree Point Road
203-655-1927
darienboatclub.org

DARIEN MEN'S ASSOCIATION
sma.darien.org

DARIEN WINTER CLUB
darienwinterclub.org

GARDEN CLUB OF DARIEN
gardenclubofdarien.org

MIDDLESEX CLUB
20 Echo Drive North
203-325-3557
middlesexclub.org

NOROTON YACHT CLUB
23 Baywater Drive
203-655-7686
norotonyc.org



OX RIDGE HUNT CLUB
512 Middlesex Road
203-655-2559
oxridge.com

TOKENEKE CLUB
4 Butlers Island Road
203-655-1481

WEE BURN COUNTRY CLUB
410 Hollow Tree Ridge Road
203-655-1477
weeburn.org

WOODWAY COUNTRY CLUB
540 Hoyt Street
203-322-1661
woodway.org

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Sun 11:30am to 10:00pm
1077 Post Road, Darien • 203.662.3226 • scenawinebar.com*



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1104 Chapel Street, New Haven • 203.869.4080 • harvestwinebar.com*

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In addition to its rural character and beautiful shoreline, Darien's educational offerings also make it an enviable place to live. The town's residents place a priority on high-performing schools.

In Darien's agricultural past, one-room schools were the norm, but as the population grew in the late nineteenth century, emphasis on the town's role in public education also expanded. The town fathers, many of them successful businessmen and entrepreneurs, recognized the importance of offering excellent learning opportunities. Today, more than 4,800 students—about 85 percent of the town's school age children—are enrolled in the five public elementary schools, middle school and high school.

If you research Connecticut schools, you will routinely find Darien High School at or near the top of annual state rankings. The most recent school profile, published for the 2013-14 school year, notes that more than 97 percent of public school students pursue higher education, reflecting the district's commitment to preparing its children for the future. The high school offers 39 honors and advanced placement courses; 97 percent of the more than 600 AP exams taken in 2013 resulted in scores of 3 or higher. Mean SAT scores of 1814 (for critical reading, math and writing) far exceed the state and national averages. The class of 2014 produced seven National Merit Semifinalists and 17 letters of commendation.

Much is revealed by the district's stated educational philosophy: schools exist for children. A curriculum that

not only provides a range of opportunities to excel in academics, but also serves children's needs to explore the arts and develop body as well as mind with a robust program of athletics, makes the public school system particularly appealing.

Opportunities for athletic development begin early in the town of Darien, with swimming and gymnastics classes at the YMCA for children just out of toddlerhood. By the time students enter high school, they can choose from 66 teams in 22 different sports; the Darien Blue Wave is a formidable competitor. Currently, more than 74 percent of the student body participates in at least one sport each year.

For elementary school students, two programs provide easy transition for after-school activities. The Kid's Club, a program of the Darien YMCA, offers bus service to its classes and activities from the five elementary schools. Additionally, Darien After School, a fully insured program currently running in three elementary schools (Holmes, Royle and Tokeneke), offers students the opportunity to walk directly to after-school activities; each of the three sites has a trained on-site director when the program is running during the school year.

Darien also has multiple options for preschool, beginning with Mommy and Me toddler programs, through pre-kindergarten. The Darien YMCA's Holly Pond School is very popular, with classes in gymnastics and swimming among the offerings for those enrolled.



Many of Darien's local churches also offer well-regarded nursery and pre-K programs. In Darien, registration for nearly all preschool programs happens in January. While slots may be open later in the year for the following September, consult the various programs for their deadlines and policies.

In addition to the town's many fine private preschool programs, the Darien Public Schools offer an Early Learning Program for 3 and 4 year olds. This program, operating since 1996, is a reverse mainstream program where children with special needs and children with typically developing skills learn from each other in a nurturing environment. Further information is available through the Darien Public Schools website.

For families who choose private education, Darien's Pear Tree Point School offers a pre-kindergarten through grade five program; schools in surrounding towns provide excellent choices of all-boys, all-girls and coeducational programs, from preschool through grade 12.

While Darien public schools currently offer no continuing education programs for adults, there is a large adult education program in Stamford (go to stamfordadulted.org for more information). Residents can also avail themselves of numerous programs and learning opportunities at Darien's outstanding public library. College classes and degree programs are also within a quick commute of Darien, at Norwalk Community College, Fairfield University, Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, the University of Connecticut and Sacred Heart University, with its campuses in Stamford. •



Nursery/Preschool	Location	Phone
<i>(Pre-K is also included in Private School listings where a program is offered)</i>		
Darien Nature Center	120 Brookside Road dariennaturecenter.org	203-655-7459
First Congregational Church Nursery School	14 Brookside Road uccdarien.org	203-655-3150
Holly Pond School at Darien YMCA	2420 Post Road darien-ymca.org	203-655-8228
Methodist Family Center Preschool	345 Middlesex Avenue methodistpreschool.org	203-655-7407
Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School	2011 Post Road npns.org	203-655-3223
St. John Preschool	1986 Post Road stjohnpreschool.org	203-656-0548
St. Luke's Parish School	1864 Post Road slpsdarien.org	203-655-4067
St. Thomas More Happiness Preschool	374 Middlesex Road stmdarienct.org	203-655-6053
Community Cooperative Nursery School	4 Trolley Place, Rowayton ccnsct.com	203-866-2184
Early Learning Program Darien Public Schools	Royle & Tokeneke elementary schools	203-655-9666



SCHOOLS



DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools	Location	Phone
Hindley Elementary School	10 Nearwater Lane	203-655-1323
Holmes Elementary School	18 Hoyt Street	203-353-4371
Ox Ridge Elementary School	395 Mansfield Avenue	203-655-2579
Royle Elementary School	133 Mansfield Avenue	203-655-0044
Tokeneke Elementary School	7 Old Farm Road	203-655-9666
Middle School	Location	Phone
Middlesex Middle School	204 Hollow Tree Ridge Road	203-655-2518
High School	Location	Phone
Darien High School	80 High School Lane	203-655-3864



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SCHOOLS



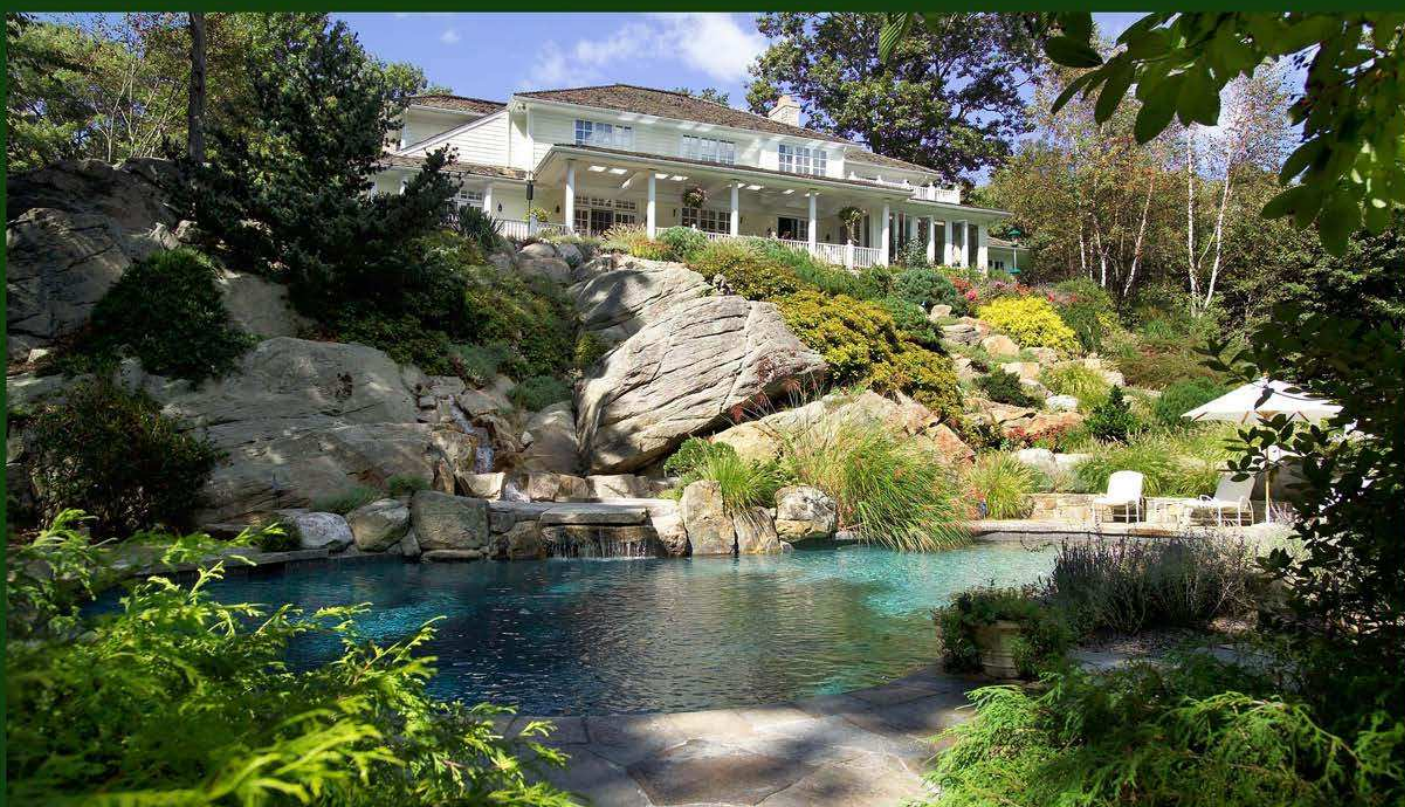
Private Schools	Location	Phone
Pear Tree Point School Pre-K through grade 5	90 Pear Tree Point Road Darien ptpschool.org	203-655-0030
Brunswick (boys only) Pre-K through grade 12	100 Maher Avenue Greenwich brunswickschool.org	203-625-5800
Fairfield College Preparatory School (boys only) Grades 9 through 12	1073 N. Benson Road Fairfield fairfieldprep.org	203-254-4200
Greens Farms Academy Pre-K through grade 12	35 Beachside Avenue Westport gfacademy.org	203-256-0717
Greenwich Academy (girls only) Pre-K through grade 12	200 North Maple Avenue Greenwich greenwichacademy.org	203-625-8900
King Low Heywood Thomas Pre-K through grade 12	1450 Newfield Avenue Stamford klht.org	203-322-3496
New Canaan Country School Pre-K through grade 9	635 Frogtown Road New Canaan countryschool.net	203-972-0771
Convent of the Sacred Heart Pre-K through grade 12	1177 King Street Greenwich cshgreenwich.org	203-531-6500
St. Aloysius School Kindergarten through grade 8	33 South Avenue New Canaan staloyssiusschool.net	203-966-0786
St. Luke's School Grades 5 through grade 12	377 North Wilton Road New Canaan www.stlukesct.org	203-966-5612
Whitby School Pre-K through grade 8	969 Lake Avenue, Greenwich whitbyschool.org	203-869-8464

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL; PEAR TREE POINT SCHOOL; DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL; PEAR TREE POINT SCHOOL

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RETAIL SCENE

ON THE TOWN



A BENEFIT OF LIVING IN DARIEN IS THE **OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE** AND ENJOY GREAT **RESTAURANTS, SHOPS AND MARKETS, MANY RUN BY RESIDENTS**



Long ago, coastal Connecticut was a seagoing culture. Darien's beautiful shore had safe harbors that made it part of the bustling commerce along Long Island Sound. Once the railroad arrived in the mid-19th century, a vibrant trade district emerged around the Darien station in the center of town, and then near the second depot in Noroton Heights. When the automobile took Darien to the next level of population growth, the Boston Post Road became the main commercial thoroughfare. Today, you'll find many of the town's shops, restaurants and businesses located there, although they're supplemented by several other locations: the Goodwives Shopping Plaza on Old Kings Highway; Noroton Heights Shopping Center; Grove Street Plaza; and stores along Tokeneke Road, as well as on other streets intersecting the Post Road. The town's government and businesses have made sure there's plenty of off-street parking around these retail centers so that shopping is convenient for residents.

THE LOCAL DIFFERENCE

Part of the business district's small-town charm is the fact that so many enterprises were founded, and are currently run, by Darien residents. While several national brands have shops in town, most have local management that adds the personal touch usually found in family businesses. These enterprises make up such a large part of the retail and restaurant presence that Darien residents often remark on the friendly service provided



Bodega



Along the Post Road

by proprietors whom they recognize as neighbors.

Events hosted by the Darien Chamber of Commerce give locals opportunities to enjoy all the business district has to offer. Darien's annual July sidewalk sales, better known locally as the Summer Celebration, is a weekend of family fun. Retailers make a big effort to offer great buys, and there's plenty to amuse the children, including snow cones, face-painting and a contest to guess the number of gum balls in a large jar. In December, Holiday Magic in Darien features hot chocolate for all, singers from Darien High School, and a very special visit from Santa that coincides with the lighting of the traditional downtown holiday lights. In February, indoor sidewalk sales and restaurant week bring fun to the midwinter season. More than just food and shopping, the retail district is an important contributor to Darien's strong community feeling.

FOOD & DRINK

From quick stops for breakfast food to chic little bistros for Sunday brunch, to great social gathering spots for a meet-up after work, there is a restaurant in Darien for every taste and time of day.

What better place to start than the **SUGAR BOWL**, a Darien luncheonette known for its homestyle breakfasts, serving up hundreds of plates of eggs-any-style every week since the 1960s. Another institution, **POST CORNER PIZZA** has provided the main dish for countless informal parties and late-night TV-watching,

in addition to its role as an easy stop for a family night out or an after-the-game supper for teens. For lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch, **RORY'S** is Darien's original pub and it's still going strong. Try the clam chowder, the Meggin "Thanksgiving" sandwich or a burger any way you like it.

Southern Connecticut is known for its selection of good Italian restaurants, and Darien is no exception to the rule. **PAPA JOE'S**, with its traditional fare, has been joined in recent years by **CESCO'S TRATTORIA**, an upscale eatery in the Goodwives Plaza, and **SCENA WINE BAR & RESTAURANT**, one of four award-winning wine bar locations founded by the Siguenza family. Darien is part of Connecticut's Gold Coast, so its restaurant roster would be incomplete without seafood. **TEN TWENTY POST** has a fine selection of fish and shellfish, and a popular oyster bar. **THE GOOSE**, another Darien favorite, is famed for its lobster sliders.



Scena Wine Bar & Restaurant

RETAIL SCENE

Darien's palette of international flavors includes **COROMANDEL'S** Indian cuisine, **WILD GINGER DUMPLING HOUSE** and **TENGDA ASIAN BISTRO**, which offers Asian fusion cuisine in a modern setting. For foodies with a taste for farm-to-table, **ESTIA'S AMERICAN** is another offering from star chef Colin Ambrose, whose eponymous Amagansett and Sag Harbor restaurants gave him celebrity status. For those who like a lively social scene while dining, there is **DARIEN SOCIAL**, which features live music and patio seating.

Darien also has many delis, gourmet shops and food and wine emporia. **UNCLE'S DELI** is centrally located and has a great reputation for its overstuffed sandwiches. To stock up at home, **PALMER'S MARKET** in Noroton Heights has been serving Darien since 1921, and has been family-owned and operated for five generations. The store carries groceries, plus fine meats, fresh produce, flowers and prepared gourmet foods to go; it will also provide fine catering for local parties. Other supermarkets in town include **WHOLE FOODS** with its selection of natural and organic products, and a very popular branch of **TRADER JOE'S**.

For wine and spirits, **FRATES**, **LEARY'S LIQUOR CABINET** and **NICHOLAS ROBERTS** have been offering extensive selections of domestic, international and boutique brands for years.

SHOPPING & SERVICES

So many Darien residents love sports year-round that serving this enthusiasm calls for a dedicated retail presence. For nearly 70 years, the **DARIEN SPORT SHOP** has provided clothing and equipment for every sort of athletic and outdoor endeavor. Today's inventory also features sportswear, casual clothing and accessories for men, women and children of all ages, from infants to teens. For business and casual wear, **BROOKS BROTHERS'** Darien shop on the Post Road caters to local tastes and the store's manager lives in town.

The fashionable Darien woman has plenty of choices for her closet in nearby shops. **HELEN AINSON** has been a go-to source for special occasion and cocktail dresses, evening wear and designer sportswear for more than 35 years. Also on the Post Road, **ERICA K.** offers a wide range of fashions by the top names in contemporary design. To accessorize, there is no better choice than **DAVID HARVEY**, a purveyor of fine jewelry to local customers for a full century.

Beauty also gets a boost from a good selection of spas and personal care salons. Local aestheticians and stylists at **LANPHIER DAY SPA**, **ANDREW STEFANOU SPA/**



SALON, WILLIAMS & COMPANY, VERSAILLES MEDICAL SPA and others provide attention to skin, hair, nails and all over well-being. Skin services are also available through **AESTHETIC SURGERY CENTER**. For supplements, medicines, health and beauty aids and even little gifts, longtime locals will send you to **GRIEB'S PHARMACY**. In business for generations, the store still makes home deliveries. Health and wellness is not just skin-deep; that's a credo locals live by and it explains the presence of many gyms and fitness salons in town, including **JOYRIDE CYCLING STUDIO**.

Because our town has a robust inventory of beautiful homes, it comes as no surprise that there are a number of shops catering to house and garden needs. **RING'S END**, the lumber yard and hardware emporium, has serviced local contractors and weekend DIY warriors since 1902. For sprucing up landscapes, locals consult two longtime fixtures. **NIELSEN'S**, still a family business after 70 years in Darien, not only has a wide selection of plants and flowers, it's also a full-service florist. **GARDENERS CENTER**, just across the Post Road, has a staff of dedicated plantsmen eager to help customers find just the right greenery, annuals and perennials to enhance their property. For the services of a fine florist, many locals recommend the creative eyes and hands of Adam Manjuck at **FLOWERS AND FLOWERS**. Don't forget the pool and patio; **SEASONS TOO** carries loungers, dining sets and umbrellas to finish any outdoor space. There are seasonal home decorations, too.

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RETAIL SCENE



Estia's American

has a fine selection of linens and accessories. At **POST MODERN HOME**, mid-century modern specialist and owner Drew Clark plucks vintage finds for his showroom floor, which draws customers from throughout the tristate area. For textiles to dress your windows, create custom bedding or reupholster your favorite chairs, **GOOD GOODS** has a great selection. And if you enjoy a respite while shopping, check out **BROWNE & CO.** The proprietor has a diverse inventory of gifts and home accents plus a menu of tasty treats and beverages.

For leisurely time at home, there's nothing like a good read, and independent bookseller **BARRETT BOOKSTORE** delivers; the retailer has operated since 1939 and has been a presence in town for 25 years. To keep the kids occupied, don't forget the **DARIEN TOY BOX**. Whatever goods and services are needed, look no further than downtown Darien. •



The Goose

A SAMPLING

RESTAURANTS

BODEGA TACO BAR
980 Boston Post Rd.
203-655-8500
bodegatacobar.com

BURGERS SHAKES AND FRIES
800 Boston Post Rd.
203-202-9401
burgersshakesnfries.com

CENTER STREET PUBLIC HOUSE
22 Center Street.
203-309-5522
centerstreetpub.com

CESCO'S TRATTORIA
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-202-9985
cescostrattoria.com

COROMANDEL
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-662-1213
coromandelcuisine.com

DARIEN DINER
171 Boston Post Road
203-655-3181
dariendiner.com

DARIEN DOUGHNUT
370 Heights Road
203-656-2805

DARIEN SOCIAL
10 Center Street
203-614-8183
dariensocialct.com

ESTIA'S AMERICAN
1020 Boston Post Road
203-202-7051
estiasamerican.com

HEIGHTS PIZZA
330 Heights Road
203-656-3200
myheightspizza.com

JAKE'S PLACE
4 Ledge Road
203-655-2305
jakesplacect.com

LITTLE THAI KITCHEN
4 West Avenue
203-662-0038
littlethaikitchen.com

MAMA CARMELA'S ITALIAN DELI
1981 Boston Post Road
203-655-9004

MEATBALL & CO.
20 Center Street
203-309-5600
meatballandco.com

PAPA JOE'S RESTAURANT
1973 Boston Post Road
203-655-1330
papajoesdarien.com

POST CORNER PIZZA
847 Boston Post Road
203-655-7721
postcornerpizza.com

RORY'S
416 Boston Post Road
203-655-9453
rorys.net

SCENA WINE BAR & RESTAURANT
1077 Boston Post Road
203-662-3226
scenawinebar.com

SUGAR BOWL LUNCHEONETTE
1033 Boston Post Road
203-655-1259
sugarbowlodarien.com

TENGDA
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-656-1688
tengdaasianbistrogroup.com

TEN TWENTY POST
1020 Boston Post Road
203-655-1020
tenttwentypost.com

THE GOOSE AMERICAN BISTRO & BAR
972 Boston Post Road
203-656-2600
thegoosedarien.com

THE MELTING POT OF DARIEN
14 Grove Street
203-656-4774
meltingpot.com

THE WATER'S EDGE AT GIOVANNI'S
2748 Boston Post Road
203-325-9979
watersedgeatgiovannis.com

UNCLE'S DELI
1041 Boston Post Road
203-655-9701
unclesdeli.com

WILD GINGER DUMPLING HOUSE
971 Boston Post Road
203-656-2225

SHOPPING

CLOTHING FOR HER

AQUARIUS
871 Post Road
203-655-7303

ERICA K.
1049 Boston Post Road
203-655-8088
ericakdarien.com

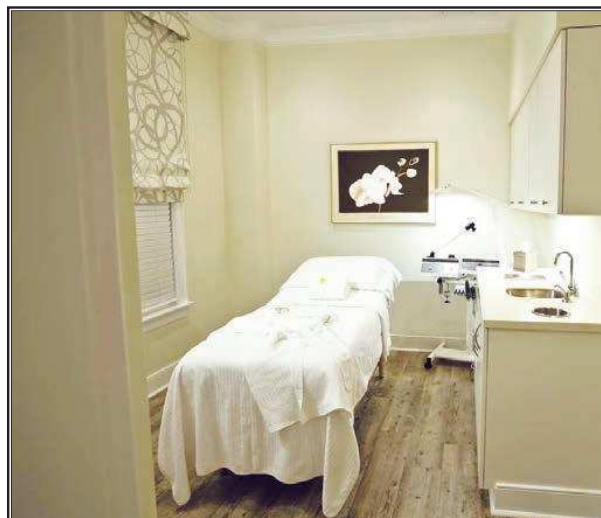
HELEN AINSON
1078 Boston Post Road
203-655-9841
helenainson.com

SPREE
1076 Boston Post Road
203-655-0226

WISHLIST
1101 Boston Post Road
203-655-0050
shopwishlist.com

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987 Boston Post Road
203-656-1825
brooksbrothers.com

COMPLEAT ANGLER
555 Boston Post Road
203-655-9400
compleatangleronline.com

DARIEN SPORT SHOP
1127 Boston Post Road
203-655-2575
dariensport.com

ORVIS
432 Boston Post Road
203-662-0844
orvis.com

FOR CHILDREN

PINK LEMON BLUE LIME
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-202-9994
pinklemonbluelime.com

WIGGLES & GIGGLES
1074 Boston Post Road
203-309-5109
wigglesandgigglessshop.com

CONSIGNMENT

DARIEN THRIFT SHOP
996 Boston Post Road
203-655-4552
dariendca.org

DOUBLE EXPOSURE
1090 Boston Post Road
203-655-8799
doubleexposureboutique.com

THE CHILDREN'S ATTIC
282 Tokeneke Road
203-655-4192
thechildrensattic.com

BRIDAL

A LITTLE SOMETHING WHITE
1292 Boston Post Road
203-309-5110
alittlesomethingwhite.com



FOOD/GOURMET/HEALTH/ SUPERMARKET

BAKERY

SONO BAKING COMPANY
49 Tokeneke Road
203-309-5401
sonobaking.com

**UPPER CRUST
BAKERY & CAFÉ**
980 Boston Post Road
203-655-7566
uppercrustdarien.com

CANDY

CHUNKY PAM'S SWEET SHOPPE
1096 Boston Post Road
203-202-7981
chunkypams.com

COFFEE ROASTER

NEAT
20 Grove Street
203-202-7215
neatcoffee.com

GOURMET/CATERING

AUX DELICES FOODS
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-662-1136
auxdelicesfoods.com

BROWNE & CO.
865 Boston Post Road
203-656-1920
dianebrowne.com

DARIEN CHEESE & FINE FOODS
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-655-4344

HEALTH FOOD

GREEN & TONIC
1098 Boston Post Road
203-656-1036
greenandtonic.com

WHOLE FOODS MARKET
150 Ledge Road
203-662-0577
wholefoodsmarket.com

ICE CREAM

GOFER ICE CREAM
1020 Boston Post Road
203-202-2661
http://gofericecream.com

SEAFOOD

DARIEN SEAFOOD MARKET
1941 Post Road
203-655-9124

FISHERMAN'S NET
11 Old King's Highway N.
203-655-0561

SUPERMARKET

PALMER'S MARKET
264 Heights Road
203-655-2077
palmersmarket.com

STOP & SHOP
148 Heights Road
203-655-8755
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-662-1227

TRADER JOE'S
436 Boston Post Road
203-656-1414

WINE & SPIRITS

FRATES WINE & LIQUOR
1937 Post Road
203-655-4747
fratesliquor.com

LEARY'S LIQUOR CABINET
186 Heights Road
203-655-0508
learysliquorcabinet.com

NICHOLAS ROBERTS
1053 Boston Post Road
203-656-9463
nicholasrobertsltd.com

WHITE BRIDGE WINES & SPIRITS
284 Tokeneke Road
203-655-0658
winebargains.com

WINEPORT OF DARIEN
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-655-2726

HOME DÉCOR/FURNISHINGS

ANTIQUES/ART

GEARY GALLERY
576 Boston Post Road
203-655-6633
gearygallery.com

**ROSE D'OR ANTIQUES AND
APPRAISAL**
1076 Boston Post Road
203-655-4668
rosedorantiques.com

SHIRAZ PERSIAN CARPETS
903 Boston Post Road
203-662-0446
shirazantiquerugs.com

FABRIC/TEXTILES

GOOD GOODS
859 Boston Post Road
204-655-8100

HOUSE OF NEEDLEPOINT
839 Boston Post Road
203-655-9112
houseofneedlepoint.com



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203-202-9933




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300 Heights Road
203-202-9933

COULEUR PROVENCE
863 Boston Post Road
203-655-9775
couleurprovence.com

DENEMEDE
679 Boston Post Road
203-655-7355
denemedede.com

POST MODERN HOME
110 Boston Post Road
203-202-9647
postmodernhome.com

SEASONS TOO
836 Boston Post Road
203-655-8444
seasonstoo.com

SWIMM POOL & PATIO
512 Boston Post Road
203-656-4336
swimmpoolandpatio.com

OTHER MERCHANDISE/
SERVICES

AUTO DEALERSHIP

BMW OF DARIEN
140 Ledge Road
203-656-1804
bmwdarien.com

H&L CHEVROLET
1416 Post Road
203-202-3329
hlchevy.com

MINI OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY
154 Boston Post Road
203-348-4700
minifairfieldcounty.com

NISSAN DARIEN
1335 Post Road
203-655-7451
nissandarien.com

BARBER

DARIEN BARBER SHOP
889 Boston Post Road
203-655-9804

JOHNNY'S & COMPANY
320 Heights Road
203-655-1188
johnnysandcompany.com

KENNEDY'S BARBER CLUB
1089 Boston Post Road
203-202-9311
kennedysbarberclub.com

BEAUTY/SPA/SALON/NAILS

ANDREW STEFANO SALON
25 Old Kings Highway N.
203-656-5656
andrewstefanosalon
andspa.com

FREDRIC & CO.
1060 Boston Post Road
203-656-6695
salonbuilder.com

JADE NAIL & SPA
887 Boston Post Road
203-662-9498

LANPHIER DAY SPA
20 West Ave.
203-656-4444
lanphierdayspa.com

POSH NAIL AND SPA
1077 Boston Post Road
203-309-5454

THE STUDIO
979 Boston Post Road
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thestudiodarien.com

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CALENDAR

SOCIAL CIRCUIT

OUR TOWN HAS **MORE THAN ITS SHARE OF GALAS, BENEFITS, SPORTING EVENTS AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY FUNCTIONS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES**



In a town so full of active and civic-minded people, it's no surprise there's a full calendar of social events for residents of all ages, from black-tie balls to vintage car shows, family fun runs and an old-fashioned Fourth of July fireworks display. Here's a listing of some of the town's most popular annual happenings.

FEBRUARY

- **Restaurant Week** and Indoor Sidewalk Sales
- Valentine's **Tea** at the Darien Community Association

MARCH

- **Keep the Green** in Darien Benefit for the Darien Land Trust
- Annual **Antiques Show**

APRIL

- **Easter Egg Hunt** at the Darien Community Association
- Darien Library's **Spring Gala**





- Maritime Aquarium **Gala**
- **Time for Lyme** Benefit
- Stepping Stones Museum Kaleidoscope **Ball**
- **Center for Hope** Luncheon
- The New Covenant House of Hospitality **Celebrity Breakfast**

MAY

- Memorial Day **Parade**
- **Darien Historical Society** Costume Exhibit
- Opus for **Person-to-Person** Spring Benefit
- Junior League of Stamford/Norwalk **Spring Benefit**
- Hindley Happening **School Carnival**
- Darien **Boy Scouts** Tag Sale
- **Farmers' Market**, May through December

JUNE

- Darien **Summer Concert** Series at Grove Street Plaza (through August)
- Fathers Day **Car Show** at Tilley Pond Park
- **Shakespeare on the Sound** at Rowayton's Pinkney Park
- Darien Arts Center **Art Show and Sale** (through July)



- Ox Ridge Charity **Horse Show**
- Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation **Race for Research**
- Parks and Recreation **Family Night Out** at Weed Beach

JULY

- Fourth of July **Fireworks**
- Darien **Sidewalk Sales** and Family Fun Days
- YWCA **Push-n-Pull Parade**
- **The Big Assist** Charity Hockey Game

AUGUST

- **Tax-Free Week**

SEPTEMBER

- **Chamber of Commerce** Partnership Golf Event
- Norwalk Hospital **Fall Gala**
- The Community Fund of Darien **Road Race**

OCTOBER

- **Halloween Parade** at Darien Community Association
- Tokeneke **Pumpkin Carnival**

- Family Centers' **Road to Hope 5K**
- **Breast Cancer** Alliance Lunch

NOVEMBER

- **Turkey Bowl**: Darien vs. New Canaan

DECEMBER

- Junior League of Stamford-Norwalk's **Winterfair Gift Market**
- Darien Nature Center's Festival of **Wreaths**
- Holiday Magic and **Holiday Lights**
- **Gingerbread Houses** and Cocktails for a Cause



SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

HELPING HANDS

DARIEN RESIDENTS **ALWAYS FIND THE TIME TO MAKE COMMUNITY SERVICE A PRIORITY. HERE, GIVING IS A GIVEN**

With mesmerizing natural beauty, a prime suburban location and top-tier schools, Darien has a lot to offer its residents. In return, many of those who live here give their time and talent to community service, and that commitment makes this town very special indeed. Are you looking to lend a helping hand to a great cause? The following is an overview of the service organizations in town that residents can support.

The **COMMUNITY FUND OF DARIEN** organizes and raises money for human services throughout the area. Volunteers assess the most critical needs in the region, such as homelessness, mental health and hunger. The nonprofit then determines which organizations will receive grants in a given year. The Fund gives money to about 25 groups every year. In addition, some of the money raised filters into a Youth Community Fund, through which local students award grants to service organizations. communityfunddarien.org

Darien's **CENTER FOR HOPE** is a local branch of Family Centers, a lower Fairfield County association with more than 2,200 volunteers and 14 facilities including locations in Greenwich, Stamford and Darien. The Center for Hope affords services for bereavement and critical illnesses, or any sort of life-altering circumstances. It specializes in offering individual and family counseling for a host of traumatic circumstances. The center also holds community education programs on topics such as mental health and parenting. centerforhope.org

A BETTER CHANCE supports girls from low-income communities by providing high-quality educational opportunities. ABC offers a home to high school girls, who live with resident directors in a Darien location. They are also paired with host families for all four years of high school. The girls are



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SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

enrolled in top public schools, including Darien High School. Since ABC was founded in 1981, every graduate has gone to a four-year college. abcdarien.org

OPUS FOR PERSON-TO-PERSON is Darien's branch of Person-to-Person, an organization that helps 24,000 Fairfield County residents obtain necessities such as food and clothing. Opus has more than 200 volunteers. Its Baby Basics program distributes newborn essentials to hundreds of new mothers each year. During the holiday season, the group holds a book and toy drive; in the summer, hundreds of children from low-income families are sent to summer camps. opus4p2p.org

AT HOME IN DARIEN offers transportation services every weekday for seniors and the disabled who need to get to medical appointments, classes or concerts. These volunteers pick up the elderly at home and drive them to locations in Darien, Norwalk, Stamford and New Canaan.

athomeindarien.org

Established in 1990, **DARIEN ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP** has a mission to educate residents about simple lifestyle changes that benefit the environment. Over 2,300 elementary school students attend the group's educational programs every year. DEG created a central recycling center, implemented a well-organized town recycling program and started a movement to ban plastic bags in grocery stores.

darienenvironmentalgroup.org

Established in 1960, the **DARIEN LAND TRUST** owns more than 200 acres of land in town, including Holly Pond, the Five Mile



River wetlands and Dunlap Woods. As a member of the National Land Trust Alliance, this organization preserves undeveloped town land and ecosystems, and creates forest paths and hiking trails. darienlandtrust.org

The **DARIEN FOUNDATION** is one of the town's newest and most successful nonprofits. Founded in 1998, it awards grants for projects aimed toward technological upgrades. The volunteer board of directors meets monthly and hosts two major fundraising events annually. The group raised \$3 million in its first 15 years; one-third of that amount went to Darien public schools for projects such as physics and microscopy labs at the high school and a music, art and design lab at Middlesex Middle School. The Darien Foundation has also given grants to EMS Post 53, the YWCA and the Historical Society. darienfoundation.org

Darien's **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** is a branch of the national organization. It provides information to residents about elections and candidates in an effort to foster active and informed voting. lwvdarien.org

Since 1946, the **VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS** have been helping local vets deal with the many hardships of civilian life. This group acts as a liaison to the federal veterans administration, it hosts job training and health care information sessions, and it creates support groups and networks. The

VFW also arranges hospital visits and runs the Commander's Food Drive, and will soon establish a food pantry for veterans. darienvfw.org

The **DARIEN ATHLETIC FOUNDATION** was founded in the fall of 2012 by members of the community, in conjunction with the town's youth sports organizations. Its mission is to support youth and high school athletics in Darien. DAF has plans for several projects in the future, including the turfing of several existing fields at both Darien High School and Middlesex Middle School. darienaf.com

The **DARIEN YMCA** is more than just an excellent fitness center and sports facility. This nonprofit offers key community services, too. Every year volunteers help to tutor young students, run sports programs and plan special events for community members. darien-ymca.org

Established in 1976, the **YWCA OF DARIEN AND NORWALK** is one of just four YWCAs in Connecticut. Programs include crisis services for women and a children's center. The YWCA also manages an impressive job search support program that has been employed by thousands of women in lower Fairfield County. The group's Newcomers Club holds several events throughout the year to bring new residents together. ywcadariennorwalk.org

The Darien **BOY SCOUTS** organization, funded by the Andrew Shaw Memorial Trust, was founded in 1926. More than 300 boys participate in two Boy Scout Troops and four Cub Scout packs that build character and promote honor and service. Not to be outdone, the **GIRL SCOUTS** have a strong presence in the town too, not to mention delicious cookies. darienscouts.org

THE DEPOT is Darien's youth center, run mostly by students. Founded in 1989, this hot spot hosts dances, concerts, grade-level parties and various athletic activities in a supervised and substance-free environment. Each month, The Depot holds Q&A sessions with the Darien police about salient issues in law enforcement and safety. The Depot also offers counseling services and other resources for youth. dariendepot.com •





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COMMUNITY

HOUSES OF WORSHIP



As with most other Connecticut settlements, the first religious gatherings in Darien were among Congregationalists, and according to the records of the town’s First Congregational Church, members assembled in private homes for services as early as 1686, as travel to the church in Stamford in winter was treacherous. In 1737 the Connecticut legislature authorized the formation of Middlesex Parish, and in 1744, congregants built their first meeting hall and installed Moses Mather, a newly ordained minister from Yale, as their pastor. A scholar and a patriot during the Revolutionary War, Mather’s ministry continued for 64 years.

Most of the beautiful church buildings in town were built in the last half of the 19th century, and reflect the architectural styles of the era. Darien’s original Methodist church was built in 1851. When the structure was destroyed by fire, the congregation built a second church on the Post Road in 1888 that is now used by the town’s Baptist congregation. The current Methodist church—built in the 1960s and then damaged by an electrical fire, restored and rededicated in 1983—stands on Middlesex Road.

Episcopal services were first held in Darien at Union Chapel on the Post Road in 1854. Two years later, stones were laid for the foundation of St. Luke’s parish church; the structure that was dedicated in 1857 is still the centerpiece of the parish. A second Episcopal parish, St. Paul’s, was established nearly 60 years ago. Services are held in its modern brick church on Mansfield Avenue.

Other congregations formed in the 19th century in Darien erected houses of worship around town, and many original buildings are in use today. The Presbyterian Church in Noroton was built in 1866; St. John Parish, a Roman Catholic church, opened on the Post Road in 1889. The town’s second Catholic parish, St. Thomas More, was carved out of the growing congregation at St. John in 1966, and built its contemporary church building on Middlesex Road in 1972. The houses of worship listed below have facilities in Darien. Assemblies of many other denominations can be found in neighboring communities such as Stamford and New Canaan so newcomers from nearly every religious tradition will find a spiritual home nearby. •

SOURCES

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
988 Boston Post Road
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calvarydarien.org

DARIEN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
345 Middlesex Road
203-655-1469
umcdarien.org

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH
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203-655-3407
christiansciencedct.org

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF DARIEN
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uccdarien.org

NOROTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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ST. JOHN ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
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saintlukesdarien.org

ST. PAUL’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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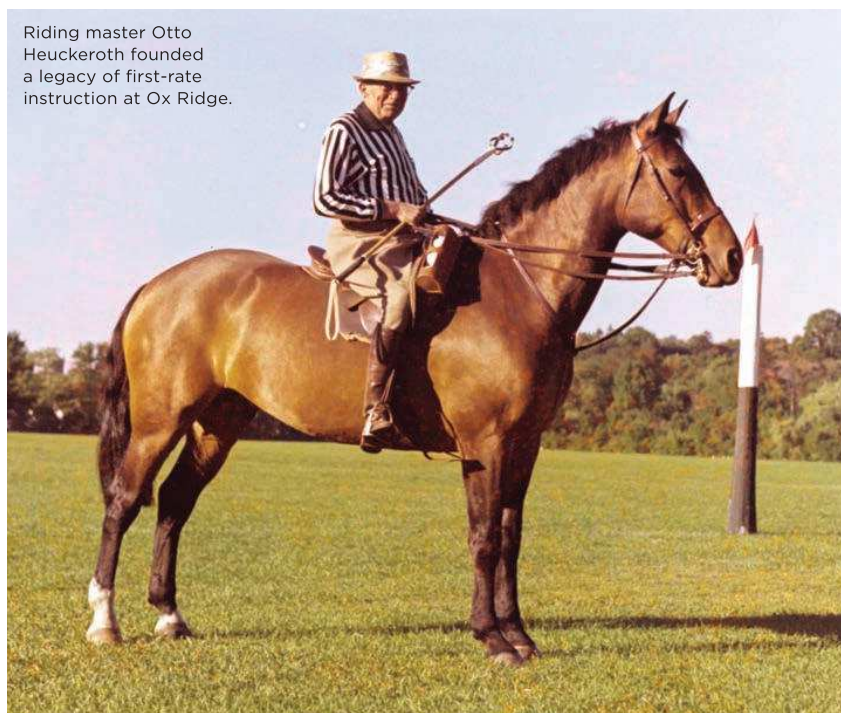
When Patty Heuckeroth was a toddler growing up at the Ox Ridge Hunt Club in the late 1940s, her father, Otto—the club’s general manager and head trainer—used to ride by the house at lunchtime every day, swing her up in the saddle and canter around the polo field. “I had two older brothers who didn’t ride,” she says. “By the time I came along my father had lost hope.” He needn’t have worried. From the moment she first felt the adrenaline rush of being on a horse, the young Patty was hooked—or, as she says today, “hell bent for leather.”

Patty went on to become one of the most accomplished junior equestrians of her generation. After high school, she moved to Virginia to work with Gene Cunningham, one of the country’s top trainers, where she continued to hone her skills as a professional. In 1969, she built a horse farm in Southern Pines, North Carolina, long a winter destination for the horsey set in the Northeast. To this day, she credits her success in the show ring to her early training at Ox Ridge. “My father gave me the basics, then the horses taught me.”

Patty is just one of many great riders who got their start at Ox Ridge in the late 1940s and early 1950s. There was also George Morris, Ronnie Mutch and Victor Hugo-Vidal, all of whom learned the sport under the watchful eyes of Patty’s father, Otto Heuckeroth, and his assistant, V. Felicia Townsend.

“Miss V taught everybody before they were anybody,” says Flavia

Riding master Otto Heuckeroth founded a legacy of first-rate instruction at Ox Ridge.



“Over the years, the fortunes of the club waxed and waned. There have been hard and good times, and hard years again.”

Callari, a longtime board member of Ox Ridge. Miss V's roster of star pupils included George Morris, an Olympian and former chef d'Equipe of the U.S. Equestrian Team. In his book *Hunter Seat Equitation*, Morris thanked his early mentors: “To V. Felcia Townsend for giving me confidence and Otto Heuckeroth who taught me about ‘the Horse.’”

THE SPORTING LIFE

Located on a broad sweep of land between Mansfield and Middlesex roads in Darien, the Ox Ridge Hunt Club was incorporated in April 1914 by a group of polo and hunt enthusiasts. They bought sixty acres from John McCormack, an opera singer and gentleman dairy farmer. On weekends they would play polo and foxhunt. Other equestrian disciplines—dressage and English-style hunt seat—followed. The first horse show at Ox Ridge was held in 1926. Otto Heuckeroth arrived a year later. The German riding master was a strict disciplinarian who always put the welfare of the horses first. “My father and Miss Townsend stressed horsemanship and sportsmanship,” says Patty. The pair set a high bar, founding a legacy of first-rate instruction that produced thousands of fine riders over the years. That instruction helped to establish Ox Ridge as one of the preeminent equestrian facilities in the country.

But Ox Ridge was even more. It was a place where like-minded people bonded over their shared love of horses. “Our entire social life revolved around the club and its activities,” says Doris Gawhyler, 90, who first came to Ox Ridge in 1964. Doris and her physician husband, Max, moved from New York City to a house on the edge of the polo field, where they still live. Every day they'd walk over in the afternoon to ride their horses and then let them graze; afterward they joined other club members for cocktails in the bar and potluck dinners. “On

Wednesday night Otto organized drills in the indoor ring. We'd have German marching music and he'd put the horses and the riders through their paces,” she says. “On Sundays, we'd go for trail rides and then gather for brunch. In the winter, we'd go skijoring across the polo field.”

Over the years, the club's fortunes waxed and waned. There have been hard times (the Depression, two world wars) and good times (the heydays of the '60s, '70s and '80s) and hard times again. “When I first came here, the barns were full, and there were tons of juniors and ponies,” says Theresa Bowling, a former board member who started riding at Ox Ridge in 1996. “I remember one day in particular, thinking ‘Enjoy it, because it won't always be like this.’” Indeed, not long after, a combination of factors—trainers leaving, aging facilities, the economic downturn—made the club's prospects for growth look dim. By 2005, the once thriving membership had dropped off to a handful of loyal supporters and two-thirds of the 60-stall facility was empty. Faced with a townwide rise in property taxes, Ox Ridge was pushed to the verge of bankruptcy. Its storied past and rich legacy seemed destined to end up in a few cardboard boxes in an attic somewhere.

Against all of these odds, the board persevered. The group turned to experts for help in coming up with a sound financial plan. “We were very aware we had a piece of history in our hands,” says Bowling. “Our priority was to do whatever it took to keep the club from going bankrupt. We started running it like a business and not like a family farm.” In 2004, the board hired a new general manager and head trainer, Alan Griffin. “He has an amazing work ethic,” says Alison Potter, the club's business manager. “We hadn't seen that in a while. He's completely selfless when it comes to this place. And that attitude has trickled down to all of the members and the board.”

RIDERS RETURN TO THE RING

Now, after a multiyear capital improvement campaign, the club celebrates its centennial anniversary sporting refurbished barns, state-of-the-art riding rings and spruced-up grass turnout paddocks. There are treadmills to rehabilitate injured horses and heat lamps in the wash stalls to soothe irritated skin. A grant from Connecticut Light and Power provided the funds for a new heat-sensor lighting system, which has cut energy costs in half. Today, for the first time in many years, the barn is operating at capacity, and the youth riding program has been revived. Also thriving is the therapeutic riding program Pegasus, founded here in 1975. "There have been some pretty tough times over the years," says board member and rider Sue Knapp. She and her family lived across the street from the Ox Ridge Hunt Club and as a little girl she would beg her parents for riding lessons. When she was 9 years old, they bought her a junior membership. She remembers being dropped off by the school bus and hanging out at the barn until dinnertime. "We didn't have the amount of extracurricular activities that kids have these days," she says. "We had our riding and that was really it. Ox Ridge was our home away from home."

Jim Buchanan, president of the board, remembers his first encounter with Ox Ridge as a young boy living in Stamford. "It was the biggest thing I'd ever seen," he recalls. Fourteen years ago, when his own daughter was looking for a place to ride, one of his employees suggested Ox Ridge. "I thought it was a private club," he says. "I had no idea people were welcome to come in and have a look around."

That misconception is one the club struggles with to this day. "We are a private club but we welcome new riders," says Potter, who started riding in 1998. Ten years ago, Potter stepped into her current position as business manager. "I told myself I'd come in to dust things off," she said. "Now, every morning I pull into the driveway and pinch myself."

Similarly, Griffin planned to spend just a few months at Ox Ridge when he arrived in 2004 to fill in while the head trainer at the time spent the winter show season in Florida. "I

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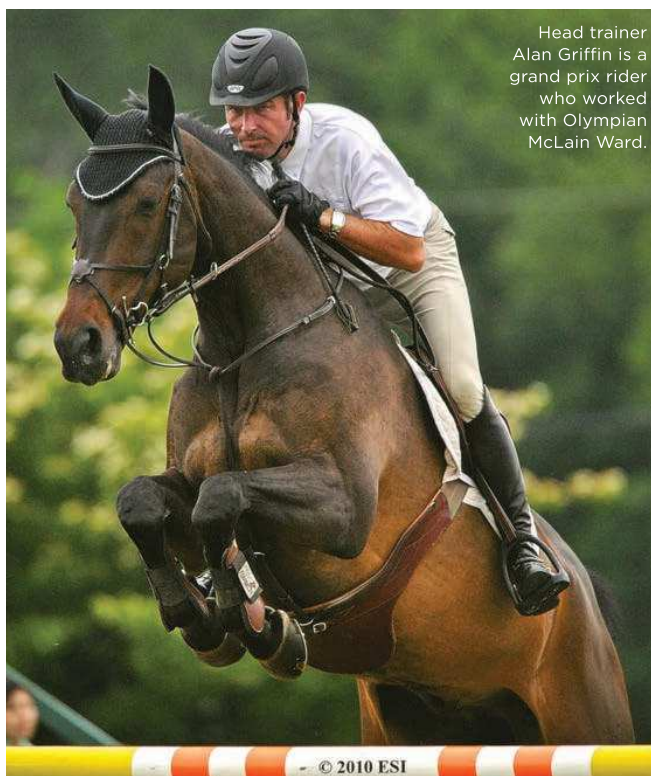
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didn't think I'd be doing it full time," says Griffin, a grand prix rider who had previously worked with Olympian McLain Ward. For Griffin, bringing Ox Ridge back to its glory days has been a labor of love. "The first years were very hard," he recalls. "I love trying to keep the old history, but we needed to bring the facilities up to date. The main thing was re-doing the stalls, getting the paddocks back and putting in new footing in the rings. Today, we have two of the best sand rings around."

In order to stay competitive, the club has made some concessions. There are still three levels of membership—active, associate and junior—but there is no initiation fee and the monthly fees are nominal. Today, there is a small but active membership. In the old days, new riders had to commit to become members after 10 lessons. Now, riders who don't own their own horses may buy lesson packets of ten, and keep renewing them for as long as they would like. In addition, seasonal memberships are available for riders who want to board their horses for four months. "It's great for somebody whose trainer is in Florida for the winter," says Callari.

Callari has been a driving force in the effort to get the club back on solid footing. "I love Ox Ridge and its history," she says. "It's a hard industry and a hard economy, but we try to be respectful neighbors and to be good to the town of Darien." As for what the future will bring, anything is possible. "Our location is ideal and management is top-notch," says Buchanan. "First, we had to rebuild Ox Ridge. Now, there are people who really care about it." •



Head trainer Alan Griffin is a grand prix rider who worked with Olympian McLain Ward.



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Quote & Photo from Graham's Upper School "Meditation" Speech

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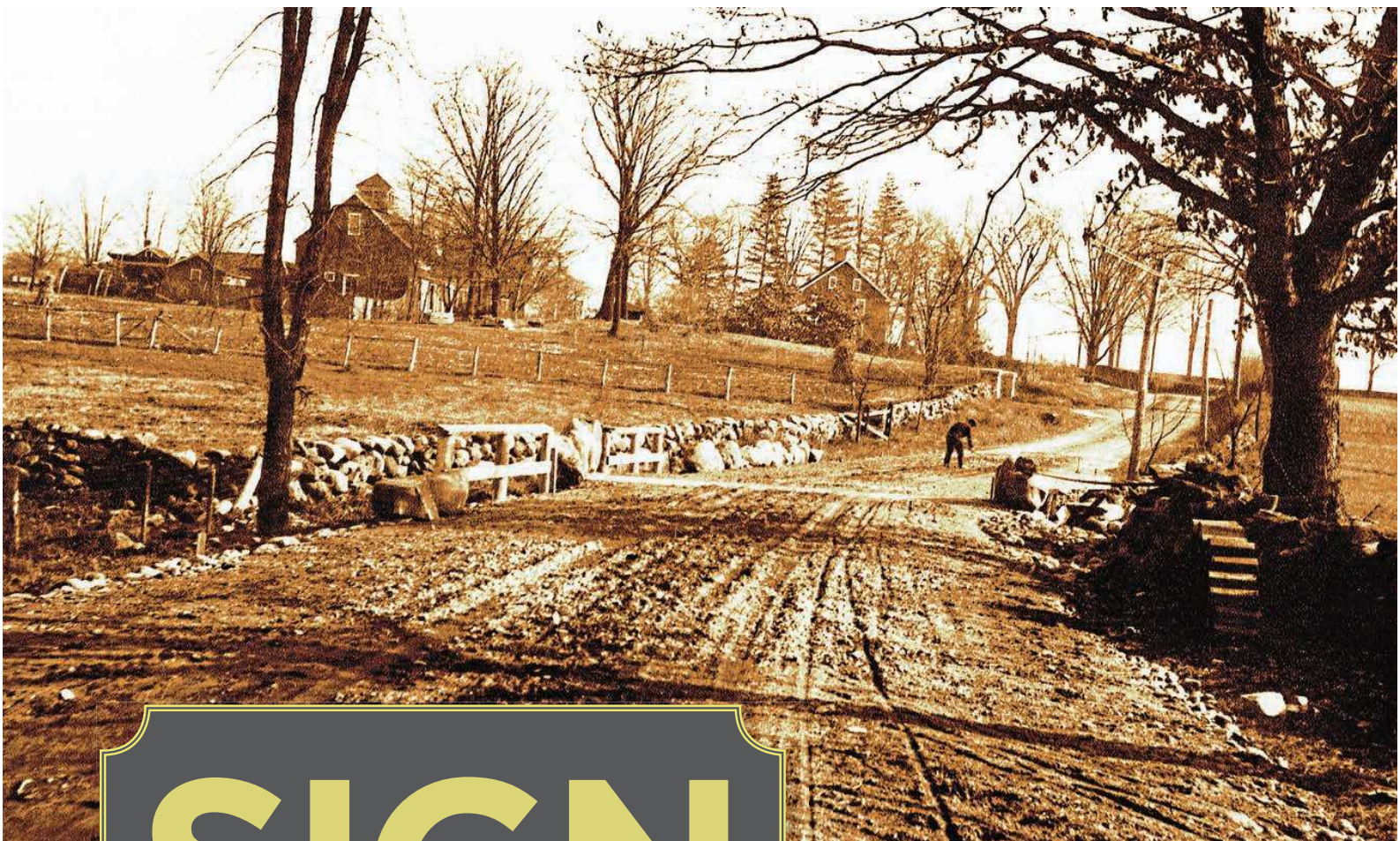


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SIGN LANGUAGE

STREET NAMES OFFER CLUES TO THE **PEOPLE AND EVENTS** THAT SHAPED THIS TOWN

by BETH LONGWARE DUFF

What's in a name? When it's on a street sign, the answer is often "a terrific story." That much is true in Darien, where street names carry clues about prominent families, pioneers, poets and more.

STEPHEN MATHER ROAD

Stephen Tyng Mather (1867-1930) was the great-great grandson of the iconic Dr. Moses Mather of Darien, but unlike the reverend who commanded the pulpit at the Middlesex Society for 60 years, Stephen had a sense of adventure. Born in San Francisco, he spent five years as a reporter for the *New York Sun* before heading out to Death Valley to join his father in business. A wiz at promotion, he coined the highly successful "20 Mule Team Borax" branding logo that allowed him early retirement as a millionaire. A dedicated conservationist, Mather began his third career as assistant secretary of the interior and, eventually, the founding director of the

National Park Service. Under his stewardship, total park area in the U.S doubled, and jewels like the Grand Canyon, Acadia and Mount McKinley national parks were added to the park service.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DARIEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KEEWAYDIN DRIVE

Keewaydin is a Native American Ojibway word meaning "northwest wind" or "home wind." It was also the name of a Darien estate owned by Mrs. E. S. Auchincloss in the early 1900s that was bordered by Mansfield and Brookside avenues. The farm-estate complex, typical of the period, was pieced together from several parcels of land over a period of years. It boasted a U-shaped riding stable/coach house/garage rendered in the same modified Georgian architectural style as the Big House. Two streams, large vegetable and flower gardens, orchards, an egg and chicken operation, a dog kennel and a dairy rounded out the amenities. Over the years, the Auchincloss family sold off the estate, including a major portion that became The Country Club of Darien. Keewaydin Drive cuts across the northwest corner of the club.

CLUBHOUSE CIRCLE

Before moving to its current location, Wee Burn Country Club's first home was on what is now called Clubhouse Circle off the Post Road. Established in 1896 as the first golf club in the state of Connecticut and one of the first in the country, Wee Burn's course was laid out by George Strath, a Scotsman who had the good fortune of being both an expert golfer and an experienced landscaper and gardener. He was also the club's first golf pro. Annual membership dues in those days were \$125, and for that members had to put up with one rather unusual hazard. According to the club's lease with the landowner, nothing was to interfere with his use of the property for grazing cows. The fourth hole, therefore, was neatly fenced off for that purpose. By 1903, however, things were back on par. Wee Burn purchased the original 48 acres plus an additional 10 for \$38,000, enabling it to remove the fence and add three more holes and four tennis courts. The operation moved to new digs on Hollow Tree Ridge Road in 1925. The original clubhouse, also known as the Seely House, still stands on Clubhouse Circle.



When playwright Edwin Milton Royle moved to Darien in 1909, he was already the toast of Broadway for his politically incorrect play *The Squaw Man*. It was turned into a film — the first feature-length movie made in Hollywood — and marked the directorial debut of Cecil B. DeMille. Royle, his actress/wife Selena Fetter, and their daughters Selena and Josephine, settled into The Wickiup, a 21-room Brookside

Road estate across from Cherry Lawn Park. During their eleven years there, his work turned to more serious matters like *The Struggle Everlasting*, which he called the first play of symbolism by an American. It added to a body of work that included vaudeville sketches and one-act plays. Ned and Selena also gave back to the community. Both had leading roles in the 1913 Darien Pageant, and he served a term on the Board of Education. Royle Elementary School was also named after him.

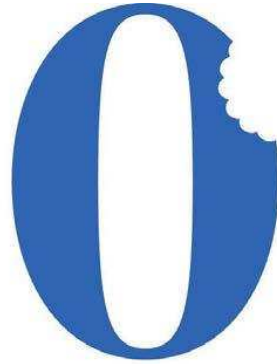
ROYLE ROAD

QUAKER LANE

Darien was home to one of the first Quaker communities in Connecticut, established by the Sellecks, one of the town's most prominent families. The first Quaker, or Friend, in what was then called Middlesex Parish was Catherine Clock, born in 1726 to a German immigrant and the daughter of the local gristmill owner. Catherine married up, becoming the 20-year-old wife of Nathan Selleck Jr., eldest son of the prosperous owner of Sellecks Farms in present day Tokeneke. The Sellecks became Friends around 1781, when Nathan successfully petitioned the selectmen for permission to free his servant Jack. (Abolition had been long championed by the Quakers.) It wasn't until 1794 that the Friends of Middlesex received the blessing of their counterparts in the Purchase Monthly Meeting in New York, and it would be another 15 years before they were strong enough to stand completely on their own.

BARRINGER ROAD

Emily Dunning Barringer (1876-1961), born in New Canaan, graduated second in her class at Cornell University Medical School, yet when she applied to Gouverneur Hospital for a staff position she was turned down because of her gender. Dr. Barringer reapplied and was accepted, going on to become the first woman to complete post-graduate surgical training. Her experiences as the first female ambulance surgeon were the basis for her autobiography *Bowery to Bellevue*, which was made into the MGM film *The Girl in White*. As chairman of a special commission of the American Medical Women's Association, she lobbied successfully to allow female doctors to receive commissions in the U.S. Army and Navy. She was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame in 2000.



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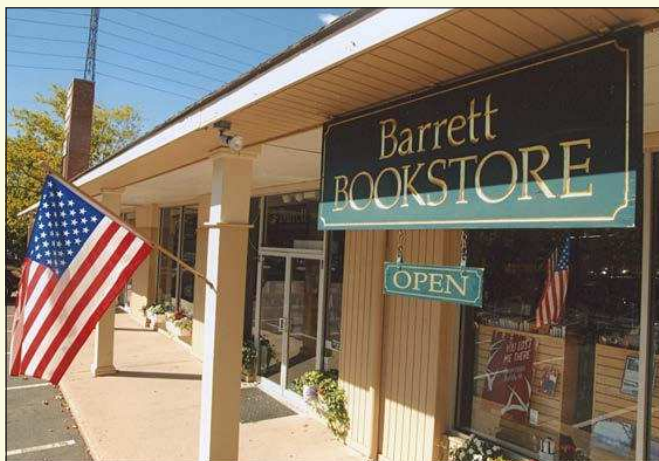
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DARIEN IN A NUTSHELL

As it grew from a small farming community to a lush suburb, with great schools and excellent services and amenities, Darien had many milestones. Some were big—its independence from Stamford, for example—but there were many other achievements worthy of note. Here's a sampling of what's happened in town over the past three centuries.



- 1696** The Pond-Weed House is constructed at the foot of Hollow Tree Ridge Road. It remains there today.
- 1741** Middlesex Parish is established.
- 1744** Moses Mather is hired as pastor of Middlesex Parish.
- 1775** As the army prepares for war with Great Britain, George Washington passes through town.
- 1790** Darien's harbor, a port in the vibrant trade route, becomes known as Ring's Landing.
- 1806** The Connecticut Turnpike is chartered by the state. It's known today as the Boston Post Road.
- 1820** The state legislature declares Middlesex Parish independent of Stamford.
- 1840** The steamer *Lexington* catches fire and burns off the coast of Darien. Many souls are lost.
- 1848** The inaugural train of the New Haven to New York line makes its first run through Darien.
- 1850** There are nearly as many shoemakers as farmers in Darien, as the shoe trade flourishes.
- 1854** Darien travelers pay the last toll on the Connecticut Turnpike as toll booths are removed.
- 1864** A home dedicated to the care of Civil War veterans is built by local philanthropist Benjamin Fitch. It becomes a model for veteran care.
- 1866** Melville Mead begins turning Darien into a residential suburb, selling lots along Prospect Avenue.
- 1897** Wee Burn golf club is organized. Legend holds the name was suggested by Andrew Carnegie.
- 1907** Tokeneke Beach Club is begun as a summer gathering place where residents can socialize.
- 1913** Darien residents stage an extravaganza of music and dance, the Pageant of Darien. The event loses money, but the townspeople love it.
- 1914** The Ox Ridge Hunt Club is founded on a dairy farm once owned by opera singer John McCormack.
- 1918** The retail district is destroyed by a fire that began when a workman aimed a torch at a frozen pipe.
- 1921** Rocco Palmer founds Palmer's Market.
- 1927** Darien High School opens its doors to students.
- 1928** The rivalry between Darien and New Canaan football teams begins, with a 26-6 Blue Wave win.
- 1944** Hilda and Christian Nielsen open Nielsen's Florist.
- 1946** The Zangrillo family opens the Darien Sport Shop.
- 1949** Mrs. Gordon Lamont establishes Darien Book Aid, today an international charitable organization.
- 1949** Grieb's Pharmacy opens. The shop still offers delivery service for its Darien customers.
- 1956** Edgar S. Auchincloss breaks ground for what will become The Country Club of Darien.
- 1958** The Connecticut thruway opens, finally relieving congestion on the Post Road.
- 1960** In the 10 years since 1950, the population of Darien grows 57 percent, from 11,767 to 18,437.
- 1967** Architect Richard Meier completes a house in Darien for Frederic Smith that receives national acclaim.
- 1970** Darien EMS/Post 53—the only ambulance service in the nation staffed and run entirely by high school student volunteers—is founded.
- 1975** Scenes for *The Stepford Wives* are shot in Darien.
- 1999** Three centuries after the first farms were cultivated, the Farmers' Market arrives in Darien.
- 2009** The new Darien Public Library is featured on the cover of *Library Journal's* design issue.
- 2013** Darien High School is ranked No. 1 in the *U.S. News'* "Best High Schools in Connecticut." •

BIG PICTURE

TOWN PORTRAIT

Darien offers a perfect balance of small-town milieu and big-city access. Served by Metro-North Railroad, the Merritt Parkway and I-95, the town sits conveniently close to key metropolitan areas in the Northeast. Nestled along a gorgeous stretch of the Long Island Sound that's often referred to as Connecticut's Gold Coast, Darien is just 36 miles from Manhattan and 155 miles from Boston, yet its pristine parks and beaches, along with a pedestrian-friendly town center, allow residents to feel as if they're very far from the hustle and bustle of a large city.

THE BASICS

Population	21,114
Median Age	39
Households	6,557
Residents w/bachelor's degrees or more	77%
Town School Enrollment	4,800 (approx.)
Median Home Price	\$1,300,000
Labor Force	9,327
Unemployment	4.6%
Size	14 sq. miles (approx.)
Distance to Major Metro Areas:	
New York City	36 miles
Hartford	64 miles
Boston	155 miles

Modern folk artist and Darien resident **NOBUKO MIKI**—also known as Nobu—created the image on this page. Nobu is one of the town's most beloved artists. She has painted landmarks of Darien and other New England hamlets, and many of her pieces are in private collections. She's also contributed work to support local nonprofit groups, including the Darien Library and the Darien Nature Center.





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