

# History of Duck River Garden Club

*By Priscilla Bayreuther Swanson*

I moved to Old Lyme in 1966 from Waterford, CT where I was a member of the Oswegatchie Garden Club. I continued to attend their meetings as Old Lyme did not have a Garden Club and Lyme Garden Club was (at that time) for residents of Lyme only.

In 1969, I decided, with the encouragement of friends, to start a Garden Club in Old Lyme for those interested in gardening, conservation and floral arranging. I invited five friends from different areas in town to a meeting at my home. We decided on a date, time and place for our first meeting.

We met at St. Ann's Episcopal Church on the second Monday of September 1969, and elected officers, planned programs for the year and had articles written for *The Day* and *Hartford Courant* newspapers.

Some of the original members were: Priscilla Bayreuther, Jan Hine, Ann Ward, Judy Payer, Doris Johnson, Betty Merrill, Louise McGarry, Maureen Davis, Sandy Schlirf, Sheila Babcock, Betty Brown, Ann Johnson, Sue Waugh, Bunny Silvestri, Nancy Brancart, Marie Hall, Kathy McCourt, Billy Stefanik, Trudy Balboni.

We met under the name "Old Lyme Garden Club" for almost one year and decided to join The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. Lillian Rathbun, a member of the Lyme Garden Club was the Federation President. In speaking with her, we had no problem joining the State Federation except for our name, Old Lyme Garden Club. The local newspapers confused our name with the Lyme Garden Club giving us publicity when it belonged to them and visa versa. This did not please them as they were an old established club. In order to become federated, we had to change our name.

There were many suggestions, and the majority favored "Duck River Garden Club of Old Lyme". I was the first president 1969-1971. Original logo was by John Colton.