

ROTARY ANCHOR



New London Rotary Club

District 7980 Club 6741

Chartered April 11, 1917

P.O. Box 654
New London, CT 06320
www.newlondonrotary.org

AM Meeting: Thursdays at 7AM—Muddy Waters, New London
Lunch Meeting: Thursdays at 12:15 PM—Tony D's, New London

Meeting: Thursday, December 5, 2013

Program:

December 5
Holiday Literacy Program
Anna Lathrop

December 12
Annual Meeting & Elections

Reporter:

December 5 Meredith Diette
December 12 Alan Lyon

Invocation:

December 5 Helen Sandalls
December 12 Mark Patnode

Greeter:

December 5 Alan Lyon
December 12 Emily Lavoie

Song Leader:

December 5 Mel Foti
December 12 Chris Neilan

Birthdays:

December 10 Lorraine Allen
Gary Farrugia

Anniversaries: None

The Art of the Netsuke (Carved FOB)

Speaker: Doug Allen Reporter: Todd Gipstein



November 14, 2013—Doug Allen spoke to us about Netsuke, the traditional Japanese decorative fobs that hold a man's pouch, or inro, onto the sash of his kimono, which had no pockets. The word seems to have been coined around the 16th century and comes from "Ne" meaning root — perhaps referring to the early materials used — and "tsuke," meaning "to hang." They were most popular in the 17th and 19th centuries, were usually signed, and often carved from ivory wood or coral. There was a Netsuke on each table for us to hold and examine.

Doug explained how the inro was used to keep money, tobacco, papers, maybe a personal chop or stamp. It was held closed by a bead, called the ojime, on a cord. So that the small container would not slip out of the belt on which it hung, a

small carved piece was used to provide a counter weight and stop.

Doug has a beautiful collection, and his talk was a quick sampler of some of his best pieces. As presented in Todd Gipstein's stunning photographs, the Netsuke were revealed as small (about the size of a U.S. half dollar) carvings of extraordinary beauty, detail, delicacy and, in some cases, humor and fantasy. One group of Netsuke expressed the signs of the zodiac. Because the Shinto religion is based on animal representation, they are the most common. Doug showed us carvings of a ram, rat, monkey, dragon, and even an amazing flying bat. He showed us exquisite Netsuke of human figures. A beguiling Geisha girl tempts; a worker enjoys his pipe. One Netsuke of Okami showed two faces combined into a single carving — a young girl on one side, an old hag on the other. A figurine showed her as a seductress, a bottle of sake hidden behind her back.

A fanciful Netsuke depicted a wise old man. When the carving is placed on a table, it becomes a turtle — a trick the old man learned to avoid people pestering him for advice. These two highlighted the cleverness of the Netsuke that often merge two figures into a single carving that changes depending upon how it is viewed.

A final, dramatic carving showed a wolf and skeleton fighting, drawn from a legend of a courtesan and a general and their struggle to be together.

As revealed in Doug's talk, Netsuke are exquisite and fanciful carvings that delight the eye, engage the imagination, and keep alive facets of Japanese mythology and culture.



Don't Forget

Soup Kitchen

Help prepare and serve a meal to those less fortunate

Thursday, December 12

4:00—6:15 pm

Save the Date

District Conference is coming to Mystic Marriot!!

Friday, May 2—Sunday, May 4, 2014

District Assembly—Saturday, May 3

Don't miss these great events right in our own backyard! Watch for Details.

A Reason to be Thankful

Thanks to another successful Thanksgiving dinner drive, President Meredith and Liberty Bank presented a check for \$1145.30 to the Gemma E. Moran Food Center on November 25.

This year's drive, sponsored again by Liberty Bank and 29 local Rotary Clubs, raised a record total of \$182,026 to put Thanksgiving feasts on the tables of many local families who could not otherwise afford them. Special thanks to all who contributed to making the holiday a happy one for our neighbors.

