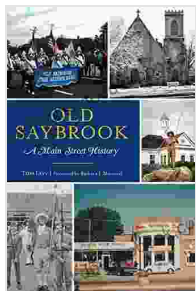


# Old Saybrook Main Street: A Journey Through Time and Commerce

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Nestled along the picturesque Connecticut River, Old Saybrook is a charming town steeped in history and maritime heritage. At the heart of this coastal community lies Main Street, a vibrant commercial thoroughfare that has served as the economic and social hub for centuries. From its humble beginnings as a Native American trading post to its bustling status as a shipyard and shipbuilding center, Main Street bears witness to the town's rich past and evolving character.



## Old Saybrook: A Main Street History (Brief History)

by Barbara J. Maynard

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 6369 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 160 pages



## Native American Origins and Early Colonial Period:

The history of Old Saybrook Main Street can be traced back to the indigenous Pequot tribe, who occupied the area for thousands of years before European settlers arrived. The town's name itself is derived from

their name for the nearby river, "Sowheag." The Pequots established a trading post along the river, which became a focal point for commerce and cultural exchange.

In the early 17th century, English colonists established a settlement in Saybrook and began to develop Main Street as the town's main thoroughfare. The street was initially lined with simple wooden structures used for trading goods, such as fur, corn, and livestock.

### **Shipbuilding and Maritime Trade:**

Old Saybrook's location on the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound played a pivotal role in its rise as a shipbuilding and maritime trade center. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the town's shipbuilding industry flourished, with numerous shipyards and boatbuilders operating along Main Street.

The ships built in Old Saybrook sailed to ports around the world, carrying a variety of goods, including timber, agricultural products, and manufactured goods. The maritime trade brought prosperity to the town and helped to establish Old Saybrook as a key center of commerce in the region.

### **Architectural Heritage:**

The architectural heritage of Old Saybrook Main Street reflects its rich history. The buildings that line the street range from historic colonial-era structures to 19th-century Victorian mansions and commercial buildings. This diverse architectural tapestry showcases the town's evolution over time.

Notable buildings include the historic Saybrook Point Inn, which served as a stagecoach stop in the 18th century, and the 19th-century Fenwick Hall, which was once a prominent boarding house. The Old Saybrook Town Hall, built in 1857, is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture.

### **Commercial Activity and Local Businesses:**

Throughout its history, Old Saybrook Main Street has been a hub for local businesses. In the early days, the street was lined with shops, taverns, and blacksmiths. Today, the street continues to offer a diverse mix of businesses, including restaurants, cafes, boutiques, and specialty shops.

The local businesses of Old Saybrook Main Street play a vital role in the town's economy and community. They provide goods and services to residents and visitors alike, and they create a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere.

### **Cultural Significance and Events:**

Old Saybrook Main Street is not only a center of commerce but also a gathering place for the community. The street hosts numerous events throughout the year, including parades, festivals, and live music performances.

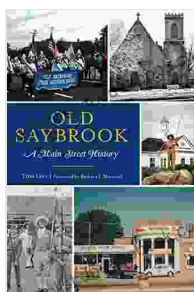
These events bring people together to celebrate the town's heritage and foster a sense of community. They also attract visitors from neighboring towns and beyond, contributing to the town's tourism industry.

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Old Saybrook Main Street is a living testament to the rich history and evolving character of the town. From its humble beginnings as a Native

American trading post to its bustling status as a shipbuilding center and commercial hub, the street has played a central role in shaping the town's identity.

Today, Old Saybrook Main Street remains a vibrant and dynamic place, offering a unique blend of history, architecture, local businesses, and cultural events. It is a destination for residents, visitors, and history enthusiasts alike, who come to appreciate the town's rich heritage and enjoy the charm of its historic main thoroughfare.



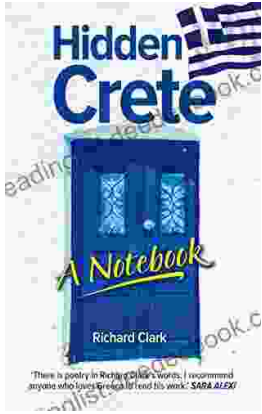
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