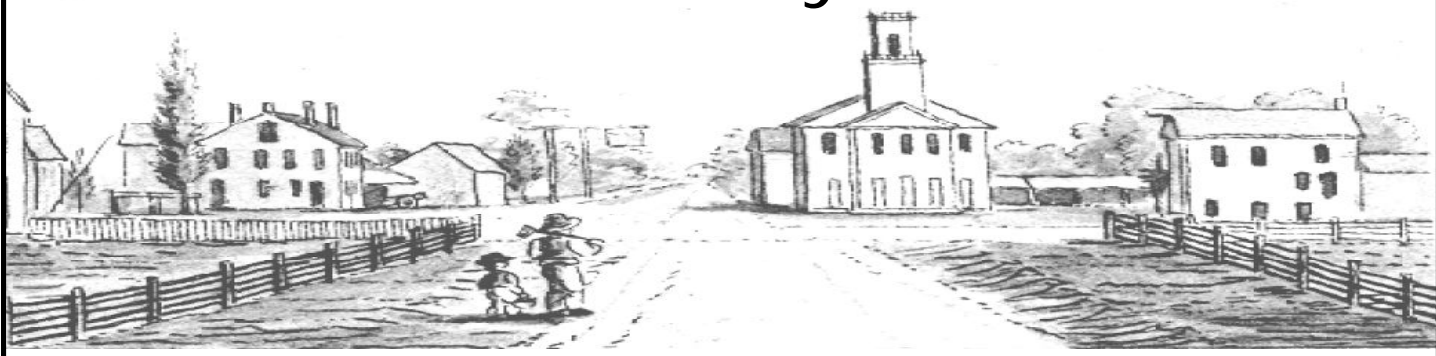


The Wintonbury Drummer



Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society

Bloomfield, Connecticut

May 2004

Next meeting: June 2, 2004 6:00 p.m.

Location: Sacred Heart Church, Father Picher Community Room, 26 Wintonbury Ave.

Program: Pot Luck Supper & Celebrating 100 Years of the Prosser Library

Panel: Alice Sorant, Jeanner Hunciker, Laura Vasselle

President's Message

This is a prelude to the annual reports of a very eventful year. However, the past month, as the Society awaits final DECD grant review from the Attorney General's Office, the WHS Financial Development Committee has had a very active month.

5/1 tag sale netted just a bit under \$1,000 and the 5/16 House Tour a bit over \$2,400.

We were blessed with exceptional good weather, for both events. The three home owners, Robert and Jennie Cook; Edgar & Ivette Dreyer and Joel and Deborah Scott, went over and above in not only allowing the Society to have their homes, but all remained to talk with visitors and answer questions. To all who made these events so successful— my sincere thanks. 5/1 tag sale-table attendants, bake table attendants, traffic controllers. For the 5/16 tour-members who distributed flyers, signs, docents, trouble shooters— but possibly as important-those who spread the word about the tour, whereby tickets were sold.

Since programs are the glue that provides interest for members attending our regular meetings, I wish to thank Bob McComb, working with Eileen, for providing such interesting topics, on a variety of subjects. We all look forward to great pot luck favorites from everyone at this meeting. The pot luck dinner will be followed by a business meeting, election of officers and program panel - "A celebration of the 100 years of Prosser Library." The WHS Treasurer, will have the dues notices for the this year for you to pick up.

For those who have computers -- hope you have had a chance to view the Web Site Janis has developed.

And finally, don't forget the Memorial Day parade.

Fannie R. Gabriel, President

CT History Day Judge

Students from grades 6-7(Junior) and 8-12(Senior) are, under the guidance of one of the many devoted teachers throughout the state, preparing for District contests. From there, those eligible go to the Connecticut History Day in Hartford. The winners in Hartford represent Connecticut at National History Day held at the Univ. of Maryland in June.

The four categories of competition are-Papers, Documentary, Exhibit and Performance. All must relate to the topic of the year as chosen by National History Day. I am proud and awestruck to serve as a judge.

Helen Stark Cross

This and That

April 25 the Society and over 30 friends met for a celebration of the life of Dr. William Jones III at the Wethersfield Yacht Club. A plaque will be placed in the SWDS, after the ceiling is completed by the core of dedicated volunteers.

We were sorry to be made aware of the passing of Robert Stoughton in February. He and his wife Arlene were long time members of the Society-before moving to Covenant Village in Middletown.

Old Wintonbury Burying Ground - Fall of 2002
Lucy, Libby and a core of 27 volunteers took down the names of those on all the stones, they could read.

5/16/2004 Sol Cushman, after having put all the information on his computer, went back to resolve conflicts in names...and stones. Angela Hauptman attended the spring gathering of the Connecticut Gravestone Network in South Windsor.

Connecticut History Day-Since 1985 the Connecticut Historical Society has sponsored the National History Day program at the state level. CHO held annually on a Saturday in early May is a wonderfully developed program to raise funds, lead workshops for teachers and students, recruit participants from around the entire state and to coordinate district contests with the final big Connecticut History Day.

Fannie R. Gabriel, President

Properties Open for Vewing

Old Farm School

1-4:00 p.m.Sundays May 23 through October 10th

Southwest District School

11 a.m. - noon first Saturday of each month May through October

Committee Reports

Acquisition Committee: A formal acquisition policy is being developed. If you would like to help with this committee's work contact the chairman.

Judge Jerry Wagner, Chairman

Education Committee: Those interested in the Old Wintonbury Burying Ground please call Lucy (860-242-1624) if interested.

Lucy Wirsul & Libby Merrow, Co-Chairman

Membership Committee:

No new members.

Jean Buscarello, Chairman

Newsletter: The deadlines for the newsletter, are for material to be received by Fannie the weekend before each of the regularly scheduled Board Meetings. For the remainder of 2004 the deadlines are:

Aug 22nd (Bd Meeting Aug 25th)

Oct 17th (Bd Meeting Oct 20th)

Fannie Gabriel & Janis Langston

Website Committee: *What's New:* 1) a Wintonbury Tracers page and on the Resources page - 2) Pinney Genealogy, 3) Jay Humphrey Filley ancestry, 4) "Capt. Oliver Filley Family" article by Eileen Phelps and 5) "Filley Family Tombstone Inscriptions with photographs."

There is lots of space available to expand the website content, so please help us... submit new information. If you are working on a project and would like to share it with the world, or if you would like to expand the material already available on the site, please contact me and we can make the information available as part of the resources of the Society.

Janis Langston, Webmaster

BREAKING NEWS! FILLEY NOTEBOOK DISCOVERED!

BULLETIN: We now have documentary proof that there were two original Filley houses in front of our Filley house!

Our intrepid historian, Fred Hesketh, while going through some of our boxes of papers that he's so kindly storing for us, discovered a small notebook and began reading. He called me, and I identified it as written by Jay Humphrey Filley, Grace Ely (Filley) Bidwell, and Dorothy Filley Bidwell. The following is an excerpt, after my introductory paragraph giving dates and relationships. Subsequent excerpts will appear in later newsletters – What a find! Thank you, Fred!

The following is from the archives of the Wintonbury Historical Society, found by historian Fred Hesketh in May 2004. The initial writing is by Jay Humphrey Filley (1810-1883), son of Capt. Oliver Filley, husband of Julia Ann (Newberry) Filley (1808-1881), followed by entries written by his granddaughter, Grace Ely (Filley) Bidwell (1867-1952) who was the daughter of Louis James Filley (1840-1906) (Jay and Julia's son), and the last entry by Grace's daughter, Dorothy Filley Bidwell (1897-1982).

“The subject of the following sketch was born in what is now Bloomfield March 13th 1810. The House stood near the road in front of the House now owned & occupied by S.P. Pinney, & was for many years occupied by my Father & Grand Father. My Grand Father moved from what is called “Pigeon Hill” in Windsor to this place & died in 1796 my father being only 12 years of age. At this period of his life, the management of the farm was thrown upon him, developing unusual energy & skill in one so young. In 1805 he married Annis Humphrey daughter of Joseph Humphrey of Simsbury. A woman of superior education & strength of character & well calculated to be a suitable partner for a man like Oliver Filley. About the year 1800 my Father engaged in the manufacture & sale of Tin Ware Tin having been introduced into the Town of Berlin from Scotland & having been but little known or used by the people at this period. Wooden ware & pewter ware were ordinarily used in domestic affairs. The tin ware was carried about in baskets & hand carts & found a ready sale at remunerative prices. Subsequently my Father established business in Philadelphia with his younger Brother Harvey Filley also in Lansingburgh, NYork with a brother in Law Augustus Filley. My Father also continued the business for many years at the place now occupied by my son Louis J. Filley in Bloomfield & which m Father bought about the year 1809. This farm he greatly improved taking the first premium of the Hartford County Agricultural society for the best cultivated farm. I speak of the early business life of my Father to show the commendable energy of character which he possessed & which has been manifested by at least some of his children in later years. My Father had six children which grew up to manhood in Oliver Dwight, Marcus Lucius, Jay Humphrey, Giles Franklin & Annis Jennette & John Eldridge. John Eldridge married & settled in Bloomfield & died in 1846. Oliver Dwight learned the Tanners trade of my Father, worked at my Uncle in Philadelphia for a while also in Pittsburgh then in St-Louis where he established a Successful business. He reared a family of seven children, four Daughters & three Sons, His stern integrity his uprightness of character, won for him many friends & he was twice elected to the office of Mayor of St. Louis At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 he was chosen President of the committee of Safety & was largely influenced in checking the rebellion in this border city of the Union. He died at Hampton near Boston after a short sickness at the age of 75 years. Marcus Lucius graduated at Trinity Colledge [sic] Hartford Conn Studied Law & finally settled in Lansingburgh NY where he practiced Law successfully for many years. Children two daughters & one son. He has for many years & is now engaged in the manufacture of stoves. Giles Franklin also settled in St Louis & has a family of seven children all boys. He is now & has been since 1853 engaged in the manufacture of Stoves, & his works are said to be equal to if not superior to any in the U States. Annis Jennett married John Chapman & resides in Springfield Mass. I have thus spoken of my Father & his children that a correct understanding may be had of the Oliver Filley Family.” [to be continued in next newsletter]

Sharon Y. Steinberg, Filley House Historian

Wintonbury Historical Society
P. O. Box 7454
Bloomfield, CT 06002

2004 Calendar of Events

- May 31** **Memorial Day Parade** - members are invited to march with the Society
- Jun 2** **WHS Annual Pot Luck Supper with Business Meeting** 6:00 p.m.
- Sept 8** **WHS Regular Meeting** 7:30 p.m. Marilyn Michaelson Sr. Center
- Oct 9** **Drum Festival**
- Nov 3** **Regular Meeting** 7:30 p.m. Marilyn Michaelson Sr. Center

2005 Calendar of Events

- Feb 2** **WHS Regular Meeting** 7:30 p.m. Marilyn Michaelson Sr. Center
- Apr 6** **WHS Regular Meeting** 7:30 p.m. Marilyn Michaelson Sr. Center
- Jun 1** **WHS Annual Pot Luck Supper with Business Meeting** 6:00 p.m

Visit the WHS website at: www.bloomfieldcthistory.org

*Submit articles for The Wintonbury Drummer,
the Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society of Bloomfield, to:
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