



# THE HOURGLASS

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER ~ WILLINGTON

Vol. IX

Willington, Connecticut - March 1981

No. 3

**MARCH MEETING** - March 19, 1981  
Time: 7:30 p.m.  
Place: Center School Music Room

### DOLLS; THEIR HISTORY AND RESTORATION

Ms. Carlson, Early Childhood Resource Coordinator at Center School, has collected and repaired dolls, and will share some of her treasures and expertise with us on Thursday, March 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the Center School Music Room. Ms. Carlson will tell us some of the history of dolls, and show us, with examples, how the making of dolls developed from the wooden puppet-like figures of the 1700's to the plastic, unbreakable dolls of today.

In the early 1800's dolls had china heads; after about 1880, dolls were made with bisque heads and composition or wood bodies. One of the first, unbreakable dolls had a tin head. Plastic and vinyl dolls have been on the market since World War II.

Dolls can be classified in two general categories, toys and character dolls. The toy dolls were intended to

be children's playthings; character dolls include bed dolls and various costume dolls, depicting a particular culture or event.

Ms. Carlson will display books on the history, dress, and identification of dolls, and before-and-after pictures of dolls she has repaired. She will give pointers on how to properly repair, maintain, and dress these small-scale human figures.

A question-answer period will follow Ms. Carlson's presentation. Bring in any doll which interests you, and share it with us. We can learn together a bit more about the dolls we enjoyed and played with, and those loved by all children from long ago to here and now.

### FELT WALL HANGINGS

A Community and Faculty Workshop to learn the art of felting will be held on Wednesday, April 8 beginning at 3:30 p.m. at Center School Cafeteria.

Beth Beede will direct the workshop.

Cost of materials will vary from \$4 to \$8.

Twenty people can be accommodated and reservations should be in by April 5.

The workshop will include a pot luck supper at 5:30 p.m.

A display of felt work, masks, balls, wall hangings etc. is on view at Center School.

**SHEEP SHEARING DEMONSTRATION**

Sheep shearing demonstrations and explanation of wool felt wall hangings, along with student projects and community workshops, will take place on March 31, at Center School - All purpose room.

Shearing Session I - 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.

Shearing Session II - 1:30 - 2:15 p.m.

The community is invited to each session.

**NEW AGREEMENT FOR USE OF OLD TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE**

Members of the executive committee met with the Board of Selectmen in November and modified the original agreement. There will be no rental fee but the Society agreed to pay the cost of maintaining and operating the gas heater and to maintain the leased premises in satisfactory condition.

**INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT WILMINGTON HILL AND INDUSTRIES OF WILMINGTON**

Ernest Kline and Isabel Weigold have been invited to speak at the Mansfield Historical Society meeting on March 10 at 8:00 p.m. at the Buchanan Center, Mansfield Center. Ernest will speak on his research of the houses around the Town Common and about his committee's efforts to establish the Common as an historical district.

Isabel will give a brief talk on Wilmington's early industries, primarily on the Gardner Hill Iron Co. and its influence on the development of the town. Early photographs, old spools, labels and thread samples will be displayed.

This will be the second in a series of talks aimed at learning more about their neighboring towns. Their January

meeting focused on the "Thread City"

The public is invited to attend.

**LOST ! ! ! ! !**

Mrs. Beatrice Malo Brett recently wrote to one of our members wondering if anyone has seen, or knows of the whereabouts of a framed copy of the poem, "Ode to the Backhouse" which her father, Walter Malo, had framed and hung in the outhouse connected with "Ye Olde Manse", now the home of Alice Cassella. Mrs. Brett believes the poem was written by James Whitcomb Riley. Anyone having any information about this "framed copy", please contact Betty Robertson, or Isabel Weigold.

**OLD CHRISTMAS CARDS AND OTHER GREETING CARDS WANTED**

Mrs. Brett has been making attractive gift enclosures, for the benefit of the annual Welfare League, using old greeting cards and would be appreciative of any donations. Anyone having old greeting cards to donate may contact Betty Robertson or Isabel Weigold.

**LETTER FROM JAMES BUCKAM DATED MARCH 5, 1927 (Continued from November's Hourglass)**

Following to Tinkerville/Forestville he writes:

Another business in that vicinity was carried on by Oregon Forest viz. the making of paper hat. The hats were hand braided and then pressed by machinery. The Fuller brothers made 'neck stocks', pocketbooks and sold many maple trees for shading the streets of Providence, R.I. At one time they delivered a load that required six yoke of oxen to haul them to the city and brought back a check for one thousand dollars.

Jeremiah Bishop ground grain and bolted buckwheat and rye into flour. He also made steelyards, and at one time he bought a large quantity of rusty goods: took them to his shop: polished them over nicely and sold them for new steelyards.

The Estlin place is where they made scythes and hoes. At the Burnham Lillibridge place much lumber was sawed and adjoining the sawmill was a shop where blocks for spools were made, also wagon spokes. There is scarcely a vestige of many of those old shops to be seen. To be sure the streams remain and flow unvexed to unite with other rivers; but the men who toiled have long since vanished away. When I look upon these places which have disappeared I think of the poem entitled "Ben Bolt":

"The millwheel has gone to decay  
Ben Bolt (sic). The rafters have  
all tumbled in, and a quiet now  
hangs around those walls as you  
gaze,  
Takes the place of the clden din."

(To be continued)

#### AN OLD TIME STORY OF WILLINGTON

"In the early settlement of this township each householder of any account had a deep wolf pit dug near his dwelling in which to entrap marauding beasts of prey. In a certain region of the town were three near neighbors, each being provided with one of these traps. One of these neighbors, among other peculiarities, always had the courage of his convictions, and consequently had some enemies. Out of deference to his living posterity we will name him Tom Scott. One morning one of their two neighbors said to the other, "What do you think I found in my trap this morning?" "Why a wolf, of course", replied the somewhat surprised neighbor. "Worse than that." "Well it was the devil, then, I guess." "No worse than that," replied the jocular neighbor. "Then," said the other, "it must have been old Tom Scott." "You're right", was the reply; "it is old Tom Scott." "If you don't believe it, come and see," and they trudged off to extricate the old man from the untoward and watery predicament.

(Taken from February, 1905 Tolland County Press).

#### GIFTS

Mrs. Sally Merrow, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. L. McBee, has given a number of items to the Society which are invaluable additions to our growing collection. Among the gifts are:

1. Color chart of all samples of thread made by the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company.
2. Spool printing patent revised - original.
3. Child's pants belonging to Gardiner Hall Jr. when he was five years old. Gardiner was born in 1837 and was grandfather to Gardiner Hall Jr., husband of the present Mrs. Gardiner Hall.
4. Two "Indian" stones.
5. Books.
6. Music and plays staged in Willington.
7. Large aerial photo of South Willington dated 1936 and sixty-six other photos.
8. Original photos used in a Conn. Circle Magazine article about the Thread Co.

#### WHERE WERE TOWN RECORDS KEPT BEFORE THE TOWN HAD A VAULT

For years town records were kept in the individual homes of those who held office. Prior to 1939, when the old vault was built on Jared Sparks Road, records were kept in the general store. The general store was the house between the Helfgott's and the Callwards and now owned by Frances Daltzell of New York.

#### SECOND ANNUAL OLD TIME MUSIC FESTIVAL May 22, 1981 - Center School

Those who came to, enjoyed, and went away humming from the song-fest on May 16, 1980, will be glad to know plans are underway for the Willington Historical Society's second Annual Old Time Music Festival to be

presented in May. Many of last year's participants have agreed to come and thrill you again, stirring memories and renewing the pleasure of singing together songs we know and loved. We hope you will be surprised and pleased to remember the verses of tunes you haven't heard in many years. All the songs on the program will again be over 100 years old.

We will repeat some of the favorites on the program last year, and include other popular oldies time did not permit.

Mrs. Aldona Downing (music teacher, at Center School) will be song leader and help the audience join in the choruses throughout the program.

SAVE THE DATE - MAY 22 - CENTER SCHOOL

"CONNECTICUT'S GOLD IS GREEN".

Thomas McEvoy of the Department of Natural Resources was the guest speaker at the November meeting. He showed glass slides, using an antique projector, of Connecticut's woodlands and spoke of the early logging methods, the Chestnut blight and how to manage woodlands to the best advantage. A short film "Connecticut's Gold is Green" was shown which proved to be colorful and informative.

#### CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- March 17 - INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT WILLINGTON  
 Speakers: Ernest Kline  
 Isabel Weigold  
 Mansfield Historical Society  
 Duchanen Center  
 Mansfield Center  
 8:00 p.m.
- March 19 - BOLLS - THEIR HISTORY AND RESTORATION  
 Speaker: Vivian Carlson  
 Center School Music Room  
 7:30 p.m.
- May 22 - SECOND ANNUAL SONG FEST  
 Center School All-Purpose Room  
 7:30 p.m.