



HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WILLINGTON

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No. 3

MARCH PROGRAM: EASTERN CONNECTICUT GRAVESTONE CARVINGS AND THE MEN WHO CREATED THEM.

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to hear Fred Fredette from Scotland, Conn. to speak on the significance of gravestone carvings, their symbology, the interesting epitaphs and the men who did the engravings. He will present slides to illustrate his talk.

This will be of particular interest to us since we are planning to photograph the stones in our oldest cemeteries in order to have a pictorial record especially of those stones which are deteriorating. Some of the carvers who worked in the eastern Connecticut area may have carved some of our Willington stones.

All programs are open to the public so come and bring a friend.

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Center School

DATE: March 16, 1984

ENGLISH PLAYERS COMING TO WILLINGTON

The Willington Library Board of Directors of the Mary D. Edwards Public Library and the Willington Historical Society proudly announce the presentation of the play, Echoes

ENGLISH PLAYERS COMING (continued)

in America. The play will be performed by a professional British touring company the evening of Tuesday, March 6 at 8: p.m. in the Library.

The performance is funded by the Connecticut Humanities Council and will be presented to the public at no charge.

The play, under the original title Echoes in the Valley, was drawn from oral history interviews with British textile workers. It has been adapted to reflect the lives and times of mill workers in New England at the turn of the century. There will be a discussion period after the performance followed by a reception and refreshments.

Georgianna Boeth and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Daley will be hosts for two guests each and the Board of Library Directors will be hosting the rest of the company.

Willington is fortunate to have the opportunity to see this unique performance since only five states are sponsoring the group and Willington is one of seven towns in Connecticut participating. The other towns are Hebron, Coventry, Mansfield, Somers, Putnam and Quinebaug.

WILLINGTON CALENDARS

The calendars were popular items - of the 150 ordered we have 10 left. Any one interested in getting one may contact Isabel Weigold at 429-2656.

CONVALESCENT HOME TAG SALE

The Society now owns a four drawer file cabinet which was obtained at the tag sale held February 25th at the Willington Convalescent Home, now called the Lyce Manor. We are still looking for a legal size file cabinet with either two or four drawers. If anyone knows of one or if you should see one listed at a tag sale - let us know.

BAZAAR RETURNS

We took in \$132. 10 at the St. Jude's Bazaar held in November. A large part of this amount was for the sale of our History of Willington which is still selling well.

TOUCH NOT THE LORD'S ANNOINTED

Generations ago Rev. Gideon Nobel was the pastor of the "First Church of Christ" in Willington. Some time during his long pastorate an ecclesiastical council assembled to try him for the alleged charge of "drunkenness while on duty." The alleged and immediate charge which led to the trial was an exhibition of silliness in the pulpit one Lord's Day, when his deacons were obliged to remove him therefrom.

In those days everybody drank, ministers and all. On the day set down for the trial a servant girl in his employ arose to testify in the case. It was said that she had been labored with by the prosecution to testify against the pastor, it having been all along supposed that she would say that he was not a hard drinker, especially in the family.

After she had dropped her uplifted hand, after receiving the oath, and the counsel for the prosecution had asked her a leading question directly bearing upon the issue, she suddenly lost her voice and was never known to speak afterwards, although she lived for many years.

The friends of the pastor, of course, somewhat gleefully said to each other, "Touch not the Lord's Anointed," etc. We had this story from the lips of a daughter of an eye witness at the trial.

This alleged manifestation of sudden dumbness is a well-known tradition in these parts.

Taken from the Stafford Press on March 15, 1905.

TIME CAPSULES IN WILLINGTON

We know of at least two time capsules and have heard recently about a third. There is one in the cornerstone of the old Town Hall which is supposed to contain: A copy of the pamphlet history of the Congregational Church and Sabbath School; a list of the church members of the time (75), the names of the pastors; a list of the deacons of the church from 1759; a list of the families of the Congregation and the names of the church building committee; the names of those who subscribed for the building, and the amount; a copy of the Tolland County Press, Hartford Post New York Daily Witness and Religious Herald.

This occurred in 1876.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

1. Five Year Books published by the Eighth Grade students in the years 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958 and 1959. Called the Green Leaf the loose leaf books include class pictures, the Class Song, Class Motto, Colors, etc. Given by Raymond Pike who was a teacher in Willington for many years. He now lives in Crossville, Tenn.
2. A newspaper clipping and picture of George Wallis and Charles Kramer, then president of the Historical Society, receiving the bust of Jared Sparks which was given to the Society by the Stafford Library Association in November of 1970. Another article attached concerned a talk given by Charles Lyons, former mail carrier, to the Historical Society Given by Georgianna Booth.

NEW ACQUISITIONS (continued)

3. An item copied from "Encyclopedia of American Cars 1940-1970" concerning the Diehlmobile quoted as follows:

"The Diehlmobile three-wheeler was made by H. L. Diehl Co. of South Willington, Conn. Its unique feature was that it could be folded up flat, and fit into the trunk of a normal car. With wire wheels and 3-horsepower Briggs and Stratton engine, it weighed 225 pounds. Its price was only \$299.50."

Given by Glenn Tiziani of Stafford Springs, CT.

4. A series of letters written by William Curtis and some of his children. William Curtis was a native of Willington but left in the 1820's. His letters are written during the 1860's from Pike's Peak where he had located a silver lode and was mining it.

Others are written by Sarah Curtis concerning the death of her children and graphically depict the life of the times. The editor will extract parts of these letters for later editions of the Newsletter.

Given by William Utermohlen of Washington, D.C.

5. Purchased a 6" eagle flask from Penny Dione for \$55.00, made in the Willington Glass Co.

COMMON DENOMINATOR

A little boy doing his homework asked, "Grandpa, will you help me find the common denominator?"

Replied Grandpa, "haven't they found that thing yet? They were looking for it when I was in school!"

George E. Bergman

The second time capsule contained a silver quarter dated 1895 and a five cent piece of the same date and was placed in the cornerstone of the wall that runs in front of what was then the home of William Henry Hall (Now the Lyon Manor).

The third time capsule which we have

recently heard about is supposed to be buried at the foot of an oak tree on the front lawn of the Parhus home now occupied by a Mr. Hyde on the corner of Pinney Hill Road and Route 32. This information was passed on from owner to owner but there is no other proof of its existence.

THE THIRD TIME CAPSULE?

Recently the students in the Gifted and Talented Class at Hall Memorial School have been studying about archeological digs and decided to conduct a dig in Willington. They studied the records, contacted the Historical Society and interviewed members of the Hall family whose forebears owned the house at one time, and then did a scientific dig. Nothing was found.

They are still interested in finding out more about this third time capsule. Do any of you know anything about it?

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

6 March 1984 -- ECHOES OF AMERICA

Place: Mary D. Edwards Library
Hall Memorial School

Time: 8:00 p.m.

16 March 1984 -- EASTERN CONNECTICUT
GRAVESTONES AND THEIR CARVERS

Place: Center School

Time: 7:30 p.m.

18 May 1984 -- OLD FASHIONED MUSICAL

Place: Center School

Time: 7:30 p.m.