

Phone calls are being made to members friends and neighbors to assist us in making this a GIANT SUCCESS. We have promises of donations of some nice pieces of furniture, old bottles, dishware, household goods of all kinds and many, many miscellaneous articles. We are accepting everything except clothing.

MEMBERS are asked to bring something for the Bake Sale as well.

Items may be brought to the Town Hall on Friday, May 21 between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. or on the 22nd from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.

You are encouraged to contact your friends and neighbors and ask them to donate something to the sale or to come and buy. Advertising by word of mouth as well as through the local advertising papers, newspapers, and posters is planned.

Sylvia Carman is in charge of the bake sale. If anyone would like to donate to the bake sale but cannot bring it themselves, contact Sylvia at 429-2243, and she will make arrangements to get it.

Anyone having large TAG SALE items that need to be transported by truck should contact Nick Marco, 429-2300; or Gene Carman, 429-2243.

MAY MEETING - Wild Flowers and their Medicinal Purpose.

May 21, 1982

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF LOCATION.

The meeting will be held at the Town Hall this month since we will be preparing for the Tag and Bake Sale before and after the meeting.

Barbara Shaw of Moose Meadow Road in Willington will present a program on edible and useful wild plants at the Historical Society Meeting 7:30 Friday evening, May 21, at the Old Willington Town Hall on the green. Barbara will show and explain how to identify at least fifty specimens of wild plants which grow in Willington, and tell how to use them. She will also brew five

types of tea made from wild plants for the audience to sample.

Mrs. Shaw teaches ninth grade science at Illing Junior High School in Manchester, and is also currently co-teaching an adult education class on wild plants at Goodwin State Forest. She was a speaker at the Connecticut Outdoor Education Workshop on May 1, and will be guest speaker at the Astinocks Historical Society of Putnam on May 18.

The meeting is open to the public at no charge. Those attending are encouraged to bring writing materials to take notes.

WORK DAY IN APRIL

Our work day was not a total success. We (two of us) worked from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and organized part of our book collection. We expect to try again with the hope of more people next time.

PUBLISHER COMES TO WILLINGTON

Lex Paradis, representative of the Phoenix Publishing Co. in Canaan, New Hampshire met with the executive committee on March 29th and discussed the ramifications and cost of publishing our history.

The completed manuscript consists of 338 pages of text, 4 pages of chronology, 68 pages of bibliographical notes and 30 pages of lists comprising town officers, military personnel, clergy and others. 50 pages of photographs were allowed for. This would, in printed form, amount to a total of 368 pages.

The projected cost for 1000 copies was estimated to be \$17,284. 1500 copies would be \$19,704. This does not include \$1000 which he allowed for contingencies. The cost per book was estimated to be \$18.00 based on 1000 books or \$13.00 for 1500.

He emphasized that there is a qualitative difference between a publisher and a printer, and stated that we could have the book printed for less than the above figures but we wouldn't get the benefit of editing, design features,

Publisher Comes to Willington (continued)

set up, and various other kinds of assistance that their company provides. The committee was impressed by the quality of his presentation and his sincere interest in our project.

No decisions have been made at this time. We have made inquiries to other publishers but have not had any response to date. No matter whether we decide to by-pass a publisher and just have it printed or not, we will still need to raise approximately \$15,000.

Unless we find some more angels, we will have to put off the date of publication for at least another year.

ANGELS COME IN ALL SIZES. YOU TOO CAN BE AN ANGEL.

EVALUATION OF THE HISTORY

Mr. Paradis wrote the following evaluation of the manuscript which this editor thinks is meaningful coming from an outside source, one who has no knowledge of Willington or its background.

"The manuscript is the work of a professional in every respect. The content is well planned and presented, is scholarly without being pedantic, and at the same time attains a high degree of consistent readability. It is not only a history of Willington but also of New England and gives the reader a broad historical perspective of the past two centuries. The text reflects Mr. Demers' scholarship and concern for the human side of history and enables the reader to see how Willington's development was shaped by events which took place beyond the town's borders."

Unofficially Mr. Paradis told the executive committee that he is not given to extravagant praise but he felt it was one of the finest histories he has ever read and he's read a great many.

PEN PICTURES OF WILLINGTON

By Jennie H. Church

July 31, 1930

The Daleville section was originally called the Topliff district, as it was settled by Clement Topliff, who built the first house in that part of town.

The house at the top of the hill, built by his son, Cyrus Topliff, still stands (now owned by Hugh and Nellie Miller) far above the valley, where a group of houses forms the little hamlet of Daleville.

He built a saw mill and grist mill where the factory is now located and north of the schoolhouse there was a brandy still. He owned a farm of 600 acres, hired much help and was one of the prominent men in town.

In 1825, there was a fulling machine and carder and about 1840 Thomas Dale founded the Willington Silk mill industry. There were various changes and later James Regan manufactured shoddy cloth. He sold out to James Hoyle and moved to Rockville, where he engaged in business. Mr. Hoyle made cloth and for years the little village was active and prosperous. At present the pearl button business is carried on in the same building, the old sawmill, with some alterations.

At the time Mr. Regan lived in Daleville there was a long stretch of road from West Willington to Skungamaug, bordered by dense woods. Someone attempted to hold him up and rob him one night as he was going to Rockville but by a miracle he turned his team around and got away, returning to Willington. In about the same place, many years later, but when the woods were still thick, a man and his daughter were on their way home from Willington to their home in Rockville. Just in the loneliest spot a man sprang to the middle of the road and attempted to seize the bridle of the horse. On the other side of the road was another man. The intelligent horse reared straight up, throwing the man, shield across the road and then ran at his greatest speed. The men were seen to skulk off out of sight.

As you went up the steep hill from Willington Hollow in the extreme eastern part of town you came to a beautiful estate, many years ago owned by Benjamin Wenberg of New York and the hill has since been known as "Wenberg" hill. Here the large family resided with occasional visits from Mr. Wenberg. The home

Pen Pictures (continued)

was a stately mansion, the grounds were extensive and beautiful and there was a little colony of buildings. Way down by the brook, under the trees, was the wash house. In a large grass plot was a summer house. For curing meat there was a smoke house and a large ice house was well stored with ice.

A governess was installed in the pretty schoolhouse. There were barns and many horses and expensive pedigreed dogs. There were also maids and hired men. The girls were great horse women and each of the four had her own horse and drove fearlessly down the hills, night or day. The family entertained lavishly and the choicest foods and all kinds of luxuries came from New York in abundance. It was like the city brought to Willington, with its allure and attractions; but the years brought changes and Mr. and Mrs. Henberg are quietly sleeping in the Willington Hill cemetery. A new house has been erected on the site of the old one, which was burned and the place is now the George Lowry Poultry Farm.

(To be continued)

Open letter to Members and Friends of the Society:

The Society has been working for the past ten years, in a low-key way, raising funds through the sales of our books, cards, stationary and maps. Membership dues have helped defray operating costs.

We have been able, through the generous donation of Mr. and Mrs. Clarke Ruby, to hire a capable historian to analyze and interpret the research done by Isabel Weigold and write a complete, well-documented history which is now ready for publication. This is the first time that a complete history has ever been written about Willington. One publisher pronounced it one of the "finest histories he has ever read." It would be a shame not to publish due to lack of support for the project.

All this leads up to the fact that we would encourage members to pay up back dues and/or make donations in any amount. Any donation would be tax free since we are a non-profit organization. Checks may be made payable to the Willington Historical Society and sent to Mrs. Raymond Daley, Glass Factory Schoolhouse Road, West Willington, Connecticut 06279.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee

Betty Robertson, President
Ernest Kline, Vice President
Harold Weigold, Secretary
Frances Daley, Treasurer
Raymond Daley, Historian
Harriet Marco, Program Chairperson
Nancy Desmarais, Membership Chairperson
Isabel Weigold, History Research
Committee