



THE HOURGLASS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER ~ WILLINGTON

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No. 1

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

On September 25 at 6:30 P.M. a Pot Luck Supper will be held at the Center School, followed by the program. Please bring your favorite dish and enjoy your neighbor's, too.

For the program, we are pleased to have Martin Navratil of Willington who will show slides of a trip to the western states, including scenes from Glacier National Park in Montana and the Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. Martin is a world traveler who has many interesting stories to tell. If we each encourage someone new to come and join us, perhaps we can interest more people in the work of the Historical Society - we need new members to keep our town's heritage alive!

WILLINGTON INDUSTRIES (continued) Taken from a thesis written by John Goodrich in 1946. John was a graduate of Yale University and lived in Willington during his childhood and school years.

LUMBER INDUSTRY

Most of the tie selling business was carried on directly with the railroads through their tie inspector who acted in the capacity of a purchasing agent. It was his job to get the ties of the proper specifications as cheaply as possible. This situation resulted in considerable competition between the various sawmills for the railroad's orders.

It is of interest to note that nearly all the ties were purchased in Connecticut or Massachusetts because hard woods such as chestnut and oak were plentiful in these states. Farther north, only soft woods like beech, maple and birch which were unsuitable for ties, were available. However, recently the process of treating ties by dipping them in tar has made possible the use of certain types of these soft woods. Nevertheless, as many ties are produced in Connecticut today as in any of the other New England states.

After the introduction of the portable sawmill, emphasis was gradually switched from tie to commercial wood production. The greater output of these mills together with improved transportation facilities made it more profitable to produce lumber for furniture, handles, and box factories. In 1920 the portable sawmill was made even easier to move by the displacement of the steam engine with the lighter, more efficient gas engine.

The best years experienced by the lumber industry in Willington were from 1910 to 1920. During this period a great deal of lumber was sold. The principal consumers were the railroads who bought switch timber and car timber, and the box companies who purchased square edged pine used in making boxes. Other buyers were the chair companies and the building trades.

For the last 20 years the lumber producing industry in Willington has been on the decline. This situation is largely due to the

LUMBER INDUSTRY (continued)

fact that most of the best timber has been cut off. The third and fourth growth timber being cut today is very sappy and consequently inferior to the virgin timber found in the southern and western areas of the country. As a result competition from these areas has been slowly strangling the town's lumber industry, as evidenced by the fact that for the past twenty years the few remaining sawmills have been operating on a part-time basis.

Another factor contributing to the decline of the industry has been the lack of experienced help. After the older experienced lumber men retire or die off, no young men with lumbering experience are available. The reason for this condition may be found in the greater attractiveness of the healthier industries which has been responsible for the drawing off of the young lumber men.

(To be continued) The Cotton Thread Industry will be the next installment.

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

In August, Ann Amidon, now of Chaplin, Conn., donated the following items:

- Oil lantern with isinglass lamp
- Corn Sheller
- Grain Winnower
- Tinware, consisting of two cake tins and one pie tin.

These items had been in ANN's family for many years. The first three are probably late 18th or early 19th century. The two large items are being stored in the basement of the Old Town Hall. Our thanks to Bob King, Harold Weigold, and Walter Pudelkiewicz for their time and efforts in moving the corn sheller and grain winnower which was easier said than done, since part of a wall had to be removed and then restored in order to get the sheller and winnower out of a second-story building.

PLAQUE

A proposal by Isabel Weigold to place a bronze plaque at the base of an oak tree on the lawn of Lyon Manor in South Willington

will be put to a vote at the September meeting. The plaque will read: Constitution Oak, planted by William H. Hall 1902. The oak is a seedling of the Constitution Oak.

FLEA MARKET

The Federated Church Flea Market 25th Annual, will take place on the Green on September 12. The Historical Society has rented a space and will be selling books and pamphlets, postcards, etc. dealing with the town's history. If you have some free time, please volunteer to help in some way. Call Betty Robertson or Isabelle Weigold for information.

DATE PLAQUES

Harold Weigold has made a number of plaques for the houses in the Historical District on the Green. If you own an old house and would like to have a similar plaque made, please see Harold.

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the families of Floyd Callward who died July 5; to Charles Zemek whose wife, Emily, died June 20; and to Harriet Marco and Robert King, whose mother, Hazel King, died July 23 in Stonington.

COMING EVENTS -

- September 12 - 25th Annual Flea Market on the Green
- September 25 - 6:30 P.M. Pot Luck Supper at Center School followed by Program
- November 20-21 - St. Jude Bazaar and Country Christmas Crafts.

Anne Colgan

Betty Roberts suggests that most of our lady members might identify with this essay.

NOSTALGIA

It is said that there are three ages of woman: youth, middle age, and "you haven't changed." But change is the name of the game. Consider: we were before frozen food, penicillin, polio shots, radar, credit cards, and ballpoint pens. For us, time-sharing meant togetherness, a chip meant a piece of wood, hardware meant hardware, and software wasn't even a word.

We were before pantyhose and drip-dry clothes, before ice-makers and dishwashers, clothes dryers and electric blankets.

We got married first and then lived together. How quaint can you be?

We wore Peter Pan collars and thought a deep cleavage was something butchers did.

We were before the white wine craze, disposable diapers, and the Jefferson nickel. When we were in college, pizzas, Cheerios, frozen orange juice, and instant coffee were unheard of. We thought fast food was what you ate during Lent.

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mowed, coke was something you drank, and pot was something you cooked in. We were before day-care centers, house husbands, baby-sitters, computer dating. And the term "making out" referred to how you did on an exam!

There were five and ten cent stores where you could buy things for five and ten cents. For just one nickel, you could ride the subway or the ferry, or make a phone call, or buy a coke or enough stamps to mail a letter and two postcards. You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for \$659, but who could afford that? In 1938, nobody! That was a pity, too, because gas was 11 cents a gallon.

We were not before the difference between the sexes was discovered, but we were before sex change. We just made do with what we had. And we were the last generation that was so dumb as to think you needed a husband to have a baby.

Now consider what we did have in 1938 that college students today do not have. We had Housemothers and big Sisters. We had daily Chapel and required courses in Bible, speech, and English Composition. We had hats and white gloves, maids and white table cloths, linen napkins and candles, long past gone.

We also had girdles with garters on them and petticoats and serge bloomers for gym. We mailed our laundry home in cardboard containers, and it came back with Brownies. We had fountain pens and bottles of real ink. We had stockings made of real silk with seams up the back that were never straight.

Unlike the remote control dancers of today, we knew how it felt to have your partner hold you close and double-dip. We had Toscanini and Edward VIII and saddle shoes and cars with rumble seats. And when Ray Noble played "The Very Thought of You" on his piano, we melted.

In the springtime of my senility, I am a misfit. I don't like to jog. I don't like pasta sauce. I don't know how to pump my gas. I'm not into veggies or Yoga or Zen or Punk. My idea of a good time is to walk with a man - not jog with a Walkman.

I seek silence in a day when silence is as rare as a Gutenberg Bible. The man I live with is my husband, and after 42 years, he's still the same one.

How embarrassing.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Willington Historical Society

Individual Membership	02.50
Family (Husband-Wife) Membership	5.00
Corporate Membership	10.00

Type of membership desired: _____

Name(s) of member(s) _____

Mailing address: _____

Please make checks payable to the Willington Historical Society and
mail with this slip to: Mrs. Frances Daley
Glass Factory Road
West Willington, CT. 06279

Amount enclosed _____ Date _____

I do not wish to join the Society, but would
like to continue receiving THE HOURGLASS for
\$1.50 a year, which I enclose.

DUES ARE PAYABLE BY SEPTEMBER 30.

ENCOURAGE A FRIEND TO JOIN ALSO.

THANK YOU.