



WILD FLOWER SLIDE PRESENTATION

By Harold Weigold

March 20, 1992

Town Hall 7:30 P.M.

Harold has been photographing wild flowers as a hobby since 1968. Most of his photos are of local flowers but he also has a collection of flower pictures taken in the Rocky Mountains while visiting his son and family in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Harold and his wife, Isabel, have attended three Elderhostel programs at Mars Hill College in North Carolina on wild flowers of the Southern Appalachians. They are also active members of the New England Wild Flower Society which has a 45 acre wildflower garden in Framingham, Mass.

Later in the spring Harold will lead a nature walk which will be announced in the paper. If you are interested please contact him at 429-2656.

MUSIC OF THE FORTIES

May 1, 1992

Town Hall 7:30 P.M.

The Historical Society, with Betty Robertson as coordinator, will present another musical program this year, the proceeds of which will go to the Town Hall Improvement Fund. Because last year's musical, "Tunes of the Twenties", was so well received we have asked most of the same people to participate again. They have all responded enthusiastically.

It seemed appropriate to select this particular time period in our history since it is just 50 years since the country entered World War II. Music that had a war theme such as "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" was written at that time. Some of you will remember such tunes as "Chattanooga Choo Choo", "This Love of Mine", "The More I See You", "I Can't Begin to Tell You", "Mairzy Doats", or "Dance Ballerina Dance", popular in that decade.

Tickets will be available for sale at the March meeting. \$5.00 for adults and \$2.50 for children under 12.

Don't miss this opportunity to see and hear the musical talent that we have in our town.

Anyone wishing to sing in the Community Chorus should contact Marge Brown at 429-5482.

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

Jan. 1992 - 81 Grange Manuals dating from 1934 to 1960 which once belonged to Maude Amidon were given by Jonathan Covaulton who now lives in her house in East Willington--long ago the General Store and Post Office.

Feb. 1992 - A large Georgian style dollhouse complete with furnishings has been given by Vivian Carlson.

A photograph album given by Mildred Marco.

A GLIMPSE OF WILLINGTON'S PAST

Our latest publication, "A Glimpse of Willington's Past", continues to receive many positive comments - the latest one comes from Muriel Stoner who has three ancestral homes pictured in the book. She writes: "I read it from cover to cover and found it fascinating."

Copies have been sold to Yale University, The New England Genealogical Society, The Connecticut Society of Genealogists, The Katharine Brush Library at Loomis Chaffee

School, and other libraries throughout the United States.

LIGHT FIXTURES FOR THE TOWN HALL

New light fixtures for the Town Hall have been ordered and are expected to be ready and installed in time for the musical program May 1st. The money for three chandeliers was donated by Margaret Ruby in memory of her mother and father, Vasil and Olena Choma. These attractive fixtures will be more appropriate to the era in which the Town Hall was built.

Betty Robertson, vice president, has donated a hanging light fixture for the vestibule which will replace the bare bulb in the ceiling, and provide an attractive entrance to the building.

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to Eva Pratt whose husband, Ralph, died in December of 1991, and to Clara (Toberman) Beenk whose husband, Charles H., died in January 1992.

Also, our sympathy to Arthur and Sally Kaiser whose daughter, Judith, died in January, and to the families of Harriet (King) Marco and Robert King whose father died in February.

ORAL HISTORIES

Georgianna Booth has taped interviews with many long-time residents of Willington. Starting in 1985 up to 1989 she has made 20 tapes which were transcribed by Isabel Weigold.

The following people have contributed to this project:

Clara Toberman Beenk
Thomas and Betty Borovicka
Allan Brownlee
Minnie (Bennett) Cobb
Alphonse DeCicco
Rudolph and Emelia (Michalec) Kalbac
Harry and Elsie (Vesley) LaBonte
Emil and Rita (Caisse) Masinda
Caroline and Mildred Mirtl
Amelia Parizek
William J. Parizek
Esther (Hansen) Phelps
Steven and Sylvia (Cushman) Pokorny
Frank and Susan (Cavar) Premo
Theresa (Navaratil) Rada
Margaret (Choma) Ruby
Hazel Sundt
Monroe and Mabel Usher
Martha (Hanks) Walker
Merrill and Lucy (Francisco) Wilson

A MURDER IN WILLINGTON

By Isabel B. Weigold

According to old newspaper articles John Warren, at the age of 19, drowned his 17 year old bride, Julia, in Roaring Brook in 1859 while his sweetheart looked on. "The theory was that the young wife had gone into the woods to spy on her husband out in the field, and when he discovered what she was up to he angrily pounced on her and strangled her to death."

John, it is said, ran away from his home in Mansfield at the age of 17. His reputation was "none too good" when he met Julia Towne, then 15, in Belchertown, Mass. In an effort to force him to marry her she had him arrested under a statutory act. In

order to escape jail, John went through the marriage ceremony.

John and Julia came to Willington to live in a place, probably on Hancock Road, which was near that of the Hancock family who had two daughters who attracted John's attention. Julia was aware of this and, it is said, often spied on John and the two Hancock girls when they were together. Sometime later Julia went into the lot where her husband was plowing and was never again seen alive.

Nearly a month went by before an investigation was undertaken. Julia's body was found near the Willimantic River just off Rt. 32 near the Ellington/Stafford line. "Had Warren been captured at that moment he would have been tarred, feathered and lynched so great was the wrath and indignation of the townspeople."

Warren fled into Massachusetts and was taken into custody on a minor charge and locked up in the Northampton jail. Subsequently he was brought back to Connecticut and charged with his wife's murder.

Although he pleaded innocent, a jury pronounced him guilty and the judge sentenced him to life in prison. He was later pardoned after spending 57 years behind bars.

"The Civil War hadn't started when he went to prison and when he came out during World War I, he stepped into the whirring, bewildering life of the 20th century with its automobiles, its flying machines and its vacuum cleaners."

He left prison to live with his brother in Mansfield, but this new life of freedom made him ill at ease. At the age of 76, he decided to start a shoemaker's shop in Willimantic but six decades had revolutionized the shoe making trade and John found that his old-fashioned cobbling did not prove profitable. He had to give up his business and soon afterwards he died.

"Thus ended one of the tragic lives of the many lonely souls of the Moose Meadow* district in the mountainous wilds of Willington", according the the newspaper article written in 1916.

*Judging from the description of events it is this writer's opinion that this could not have been in the Moose Meadow area as we think of it today.

COMING EVENTS

March 20 - Wildflower Presentation

May 1 - Music of the Forties - 7:30 PM
Town Hall

May 8 - Business Meeting of Historical Society - 7:30 PM - Town Hall

Sept 12 - Exhibit and Flea Market

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
WILLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Individual Membership.....\$3.50
Family (Husband Wife) Membership.....\$7.00
Corporate Membership.....\$15.00

Type of membership desired.....

Name(s) of member(s).....

Mailing address:.....

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Please make checks payable to the Willington Historical Society and mail with this slip to:

Harold W. Weigold
48 Red Oak Hill
Willington, CT 06279

Amount Enclosed.....Date.....

I do not wish to join the Society, but would like to continue receiving THE HOURGLASS for \$3.50 a year, which I enclose.

DUES ARE PAYABLE BY SEPTEMBER 30.

ENCOURAGE A FRIEND TO JOIN ALSO

THANK YOU!