



# THE HOURGLASS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WILLINGTON

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## FOLK MUSIC FROM MANY COUNTRIES SIXTH ANNUAL MUSICAL May 4, 1996 7:30 P.M. Old Town Hall

It was six years ago that the Historical Society sponsored it's first musical, the proceeds of which went to renovate the Old Town Hall. The program has always been enthusiastically received and last year drew people from as far as Guilford and New London areas.

This year we are honoring Willington's rich cultural heritage by featuring music from those countries whose people came to Willington throughout the years including England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Canada and Czechoslovakia.

Many of the popular groups and individuals will be returning along with one or two newcomers. The Quarter Notes led by Steve Gallinat will be performing some Irish ballads along with a number of other folk songs; Bob Thurston, violinist, who always has a story or two to tell will be returning; the Willington Brass, and the Never Beens (which includes members of the King and Cortiel families) can always be depended upon to delight the audience.

We welcome the return of the Czech-American Club who have been performing throughout the state over the past several years but have not been a part of our program recently.

Shazy Hopfenberg King, member of the Connecticut Opera Company and possibly her husband, Thom, if he can find time in his always busy schedule, will sing.

Paul Navratil, student at E. O. Smith High School, and a talented violinist will perform.

The Community Chorus, under the direction of Frank and Marlene Carr, has been rehearsing since the beginning of March and now have a number of new members who have given the group greater depth.

We encourage everyone to get tickets early. They are available at the Mary D. Edwards Library at Hall Memorial School, from the Willington Branch of the Tolland Bank and from members of the Society including Isabel Weigold, 429-2656; Carl DalBon 684-1492; Betty Robertson, 429-3451.

### ADOLPH KORPER By Geraldine Novotny Hugg

In keeping with our ethnic heritage theme we wish to honor the memory of Adolph Korper who was the first Czechoslovakian to come to Willington in 1867.

Born in Bohemia February 27, 1846, Adolph was the younger son of David and Lena (Lederer) Korper and the grandson of Samuel Korper. David was a prosperous cloth dealer of Bohemia who died at the age of 56 yrs; his wife died at the age of 76.



Adolph had an excellent school education in the village of Tereschau which ended at the age of 15.

He began a mercantile career as office boy in a large seed store in Praha. The firm shipped to Hamburg for the American trade. He stayed three years and was promoted several times with an accompanying increase in wages because of his efficient services.

Two years later he came to America. He was excused from service in the Army of the Fatherland, got a passport and sailed for Bremen and arrived in New York City June 8, 1866.

For several months he stayed with friends and relatives in New York but wanted to provide independently for himself. He started out on the road with some "Yankee notions" as merchandise. While selling wares in Willington (1867) he was offered a position in the Willington Glass Co. He was given odd jobs but because of his exceptional intelligence and willingness to work, he was given charge of the store and acted as bookkeeper until the plant was destroyed by fire.

In October of 1868 he started to work for E. A. Buck & Co. in Westford, Conn. Three months later he was offered a job as bookkeeper at the Gardiner Hall Jr. Co. and began work there Jan. 18, 1869. He became their paymaster and had general charge of finances under Mr. Hall for 33 years. He was careful, conscientious and conservative and made his services almost indispensable.

In politics he was a staunch Republican and took an active part in public affairs.

He held the office of first selectman for 25 years, longer than any other man in the state (1886-1910). In 1889 he represented the Town of Willington in the State Legislature. He also served as County Commissioner of Tolland county from July 1, 1891 to July 1, 1895 and was secretary of the Board of Commissioners.

In 1870 he became a member of the Uriel Lodge, No. 24 of Mansfield and for a number of years filled offices of secretary and treasurer.

He attended the Baptist Church of Willington of which his wife was a member.

Adolph married Mary Isabel Brigham August 25, 1873, daughter of John P. Brigham, a prominent Tolland citizen. They had four children: Lena Grace, Louis John, Leo Adolph and Leslie Earl.

Ruth Korper Myhaver, granddaughter of Adolph was the town clerk in Willington from 1955 to 1964.

In the full sense of the word Korper was a self-made man. His energy, perseverance and pluck were his predominating characteristics. He was highly esteemed and respected by his fellow townspeople and all who knew him. His unselfish interest in town affairs were repeatedly demonstrated. Whatever measure or plan had for its aim the welfare of Willington, received his hearty and cordial support.

"A typical and representative citizen, loyal and devoted to all public and patriotic calls, ever ready to deny his own personal comfort, or even gain, at the behest of the public weal." This was part of a tribute to him when he left office along with a silver loving cup as a lasting remembrance of his service to the town of Willington.

## **MUSEUM OF CONNECTICUT GLASS**

The Museum of Connecticut Glass, organized in 1994, would like contributions for a tag sale which will be held on April 27th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Museum (the old John Turner house) located on the corner of Rt. 44 and North River Road in Coventry.

The sale is being held jointly with the Booth and Dimock Library who are having a book sale.



Money raised will go toward the repair of the roof of the museum.

This new organization, the only one of its kind in Connecticut, is seeking new members.

Its purpose is to preserve, from throughout the state of Connecticut, the products and symbols of manufacturing glass, particularly from the various historical glass factories beginning with the Pitkin factory in Manchester started in 1783 to contemporary glass making.

Willington's glass works was one of the earliest in the state having been organized in 1815. There were several others including companies in Westford, Coventry, Hartford, New London, Woodbury, Glastonbury, Meriden, New Haven and Manchester.

Do you have anything to contribute to the tag sale? If so contact Isabel Weigold at 429-2656.

#### **KUDOS TO FARFLE AND CARL DALBON**

The March issue of the *Hourglass* received many positive comments, particularly on Carl DalBon's story about his Italian heritage and the clever cat, Farfle I, who solved the mystery of how Moose Meadow got its name, but more importantly cited the Fenton-Ruby Park as a valuable addition to the town both now and in the future.

We welcome your comments and invite any of you who would like to contribute to the *Hourglass* to do so at any time.

#### **WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WEST WILLINGTON?**

Have you noticed a large, post and beam construction being built on Rt. 74 in West Willington across from the Track 9 restaurant? We understand that it is being built by Bob Deskus as a storage barn to replace the old barn that was demolished last year.

We have heard that the lovely, Queen Ann style house located just west of the restaurant which was built by Hans Hansen in 1912, will be opening as a gift shop in the near future.

#### **SAMUEL AND ELIZABETH COLT GROUP TOURS**

Special interest tours around the Hartford area are being sponsored by the Wadsworth Atheneum and the State of Connecticut in celebration of the extraordinary lives of Sam and Elizabeth Colt and 19th-century Victorian Hartford.

Tours include the Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe homes, the Victorian Gothic State Capitol building and Church of the Good Shepherd; or take a guided motorcoach tour through Sam and Elizabeth Colt's Hartford, including the Museum of Connecticut History, the Colt Park South Meadow Complex and Factory Village where Sam Colt built the largest Armory in the world, worker housing and wharf and ferry facilities at the river. There are a number of other tours as well.

If our Society doesn't have quite enough people (25 are needed) it is possible to combine with another group. One day trips average about \$42.00 per person. Anyone interested may contact Isabel Weigold.

#### **COMING EVENTS**

April 27 - Book and Tag Sale, John Turner House,  
Corner Rt. 44 and North River Road  
Coventry  
10:00 to 4:00 p.m.

May 4 - Ethnic Folk Music  
Old Town Hall  
7:30 p.m.

June 2 - Mansfield Historical Society opens  
new exhibit.