



SOUTH WINDSOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Schoolhouse/Museum
771 Ellington Road, P.O. Box 216
South Windsor, CT 06074
860-291-9958

September 2019

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Layout by: Vivian Dennis
Copied by: Elsie Woolam

Website

southwindsorhistory.org

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COMING EVENTS



**Save the date:
Heritage Day is
Oct. 5.**

**At left, a Colo-
nial demonstra-
tion from Herit-
age Day 2018.**

South Windsor Historical Society presents **Heritage Day**, a family-oriented celebration of the town's history. Admission is free.

The celebration is Oct. 5 (Saturday) from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Birden Farm on Main Street in the town's East Windsor Hill section.

For more information about this year's event, see page 3.

Thursday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m., Wood Memorial Library

Rick Spencer & Dawn Indermuehle present "The Grain, the Grape and the Hop Drinking Songs Old and Recent." They give a combination concert, sing-along and lecture on the songs, the history of beer, wine, cider and the Temperance Movement and Prohibition. Society members pay \$3; non-members, \$5. Refreshments are served. Wood Memorial Library is at 783 Main St.

Thursday, Nov. 14 beginning at 5:30 p.m., Topstone Golf Course

The South Windsor Historical Society will hold its Annual Dinner & Meeting and election of officers at Topstone, 516 Griffin Road. The cost is \$25 per person. Please RSVP by Nov. 7. Please see page 6 for invitation/response sheet.

Sunday, Dec. 15, Noon-3 p.m., Pleasant Valley District Schoolhouse & Museum

Mr. & Mrs. Claus come to visit the schoolhouse at 771 Ellington Road.

Greetings from the President

Dear Fellow Historical Society Members,

Well they are in. It took a week and there is one very minor detail to take care of, but the windows are installed.

One window needs two of the pins that secure the screen, yes the screen, to the window frame. They were damaged in transit. The new replacements are ordered and expected shortly. However, the three triple window units are in. They look great. You can imagine as you look at them how the originals must have appeared back when the school was built.

Bissell Ferry shelter

Another significant event at Union District School was the Eagle Scout project that erected a roof over the model of the John Bissell Ferry (above, right). Ever since we have had the ferry it has been a challenge finding a place to keep it out of the elements. This is due, in large part, because of its size. It is twenty-eight feet long, eight and a half feet wide, and the railings are eight feet high.

It resided for a few years in the Burgdorf's shed on the east side of Main Street. It then moved to my son's shed farther down the street. Because of a diagonal beam running from the floor to the roof, it was difficult to en-



ter or remove the ferry from the shed. Last year in removing it, by hand, it struck one of the foundation stones for the door frame. It could no longer be stored there.

Due to the initiative of Roy Normen, a Scout leader was found who located a Boy Scout who needed a project for his Eagle Scout award.

Thank you, Mr. Normen and Eagle Scout Sanjin Chokshi.

Restoration Talks

An exciting event took place on Sept. 9. State Sen. Saud Anwar met with members of the Wood Memorial Library Association, The Friends

of Wood, and me, along with our Society treasurer, Jerry Dalpe. He wants to help us repair our parking lot and restore Union District School.

We talked about ways which we could pursue to

raise money. Many ideas were discussed and evaluated. The most important take-away for me was that the Senator is committed to assisting us any way that he can. He requested that we continue meeting monthly. He has also requested that Mayor Andrew Paterna join our discussions. Nothing is more important than getting our local and state representatives supporting our efforts to restore the school.

Respectfully,

Brian D. Rivard, President

Society News

Fun for all at Heritage Day

By Jan Tarr

Heritage Day on Oct. 5 promises a bit of something for everyone.

Brian Rivard, president of the South Windsor Historical Society who spearheads the celebration of the town's agricultural history, said, "One of the things we are very proud of is free admission.

Unless you buy something at the event, virtually [everything] is free. Free pony rides from 11 to 3; free live music." Donations are welcome, however.



Music is provided throughout the day and can be heard wafting over the fields of Birden Farm on Main Street in East Windsor Hill. Scheduled to perform are The Doofus Band, which offers "easy-listening music, and the Sweetest Key, an all-female a cappella group, he said.

Let's hope for good weather for the 15th annual Heritage Day. Over the years it was cancelled once because of a scheduling conflict and a couple of times due to downpours. If it is drizzling, the show goes on. Check the town website if there are any question about a cancellation.

Among the exhibits and demonstrations scheduled will be antique postcards, crafts such as wood turning and candle

making, 4-H members talking about animal husbandry, Down to Earth Garden Club on invasive plants, the Historical Society on local businesses through the years, the South Windsor Mass Transit Commission, and a brace of oxen (they weigh more than 2 tons each).

Antique cars will grace the lawn at Tom LaFlamme's home across the street from the farm. Rivard said motorcycles may be part of the display as well. The day's fare will also feature items such as painted eggs, jewelry, wooden tulips, and

knitted items. About 40 booths will be erected, said Rivard, who is "very pleased" with the number of participants. It is "quite a variety."

Frank Niederwerfer will talk about people who were in the Civil War. Bob Starr will be selling the book *For My Grandchildren: The Civil War Journey of Pierre Starr, Surgeon, 39th Ohio Infantry*. It is a firsthand account of Starr's great-grandfather's experiences as a surgeon for the Union Army during the Civil War.

A teacup auction, baked goods and an opportunity to join the Society will also be available. Take a wagon ride down Main Street accompanied by guides in

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Town Parks & Recreation

Celebrating 50 Years

By Jan Tarr

Although South Windsor was incorporated in 1845, it wasn't until the 1950s and '60s that it really started to grow. It might be said that the town came of age in the 1960s with the change in government from selectmen to council-manager.

South Windsor Rotary Club, Historical Society and Chamber of Commerce were all formed in the '60s. This year, South Windsor Parks & Recreation Department is celebrating its 50th year with a full-time director. Many of its programs are actually older having started with a part-time director, Sam Brady, in 1962.

Brady told the new (and first) town manager, Terry Sprengel, that the town needed some recreational programs. "There was nothing for kids to do." One of the first programs was swimming lessons at what everyone called Spring Pond. Today the pool area is in what is now known as Veterans Memorial Park.



Top: Spring Pond in 1959 (*Wood Memorial Library & Museum*)

Below: The aquatics complex at Veterans Memorial Park (*South Windsor Parks & Recreation*)



With its lap lanes, diving boards, and accessibility for the handicapped, such a pool was not even a dream back then. Spring Pond did, however, have a concession stand and a pavilion that was used for dances.

Other activities were girls' basketball, volleyball, summer day camps at school playgrounds, junior Olym-

pics, bicycle parade and were run by volunteers, said Brady, whose full-time job was as a physical education teacher in Newington. "I had a good time. I learned a lot," Brady said of his local position. He considered seeking the job full time but, ultimately, encouraged his neighbor,

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Town Parks & Recreation

(Continued from page 4)

Jim Snow, to apply, so Snow became the town's first full-time recreation director. The position is now held by Ray Favreau who puts out a glossy directory of programs twice a year.

With its lap lanes, diving boards, and accessibility for the handicapped, such a pool was not even a dream back then.

Today the town has numerous parks, the department is housed in the former Wapping School, and programs are offered for every age from infants to senior citizens.

A hill on the corner of Sand Hill and Nevers roads has been used for years for sledding by local youngsters. Recently it was acquired by the town; brush cleared away and named Porter's Hill.

Basketball, tennis, yoga, Zumba, volleyball, biking programs even computer coding are now available. Yes, recreational programs have grown up and expanded from Brady's day.

Society News / Heritage Day

(Continued from page 3)

period costume.

This is all possible with donations, including trash cans, a dumpster and porta-potties by Billy Mitchell.

Archival/Curatorial

Annie and Edna Dibble and Sherrill Collins donated a picture of Wapping Grammar School's 7th and 8th grade classes in 1921.

Anna and Edna Dibble donated a picture of two women at a well, circa 1902.

A DVD of Lon Pelton's presentation, "In a Cow's Nose" about ferries was donated.

Bill Aman donated *Falcon's Cry: A Desert Storm Memoir* by Major Michael Donnelly, *A Country Mile* by Doris Burgdorf, *Tobacco Parish* by Barney Daley and *Thomas Burnham the Emigrant*, an 1884 ge-



A pony ride at Heritage Day 2018

nealogy as well as a booklet of facts about South Windsor. *Life* magazines about the moon landing, Jackie Kennedy and the Kennedy assassination were also donated.

John Mason gave several copies of *The House on the Hill Growing Up in Wapping* by Maureen Kenny Bojko.

South Windsor Historical Society

ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2019

5:30 p.m.; BUFFET, 6 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

@

TOPSTONE GOLF COURSE

516 Griffin Road

Cost: \$25 per person

***RSVP* by November 7**

NAME _____

NUMBER ATTENDING _____

**Make checks payable to South Windsor Historical Society
and send to Jerry Dalpe, 1090 Main St., South Windsor, CT 06074**

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Union District School Tag Sale Sept. 20-22

Get an early start on your holiday shopping while helping the Historical Society restore Union District School (right). You never know what you will find.

The three-day benefit tag sale is scheduled Sept. 20-22 at 1225 Main St. in South Windsor.

Tag sale hours are:

Sept. 20 (Friday) from 3 — 7 pm.

Sept. 21-22 (Saturday and Sunday) from 9 am—3 pm.



Built in 1905, the school is at 771 Main St., next to Wood Memorial Library.

The restoration project took another step, recently, with the replacement of several windows.

The Historical Society is still accepting donations for the tag sale ranging from costume jewelry, household items, small furniture and tools in good condition. No stuffed furniture. You can drop off the items at 1225 Main St. and leave them at the garage. Volunteers are needed to help clean items, set up, sell and put away items from Thursday-Sunday.

If you can help, please call sale's organizer Elsie Woolam at 860-289-4177.

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