

HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2015

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OFFICERS:

President: Eleanor Woike
Vice Pres.: Nancy Schnyer
Secretary: Loda Sheehan
Treasurer: Harry Schuh

DIRECTORS:

Luella Bartes
James Curtis
Carol Kearns
Candace Jones-Pacholski
Elaine Sederquist

CURATORS:

Beverly Mosher
Bonnie Andrews

BUILDINGS:

Dennis Andrews



This entrance to the 71-acre Allen M. Heflin Wildlife Sanctuary and Bull Pond Preserve area is located on Locust Road, a short distance from Bull Road.

See Story page 2

Manifest Destiny Topic Of January Program Series

At the request of previous program attendees, the Harwinton Historical Society will sponsor a program on "Manifest Destiny," a major topic in American history. Dr. Karl Valois, a professor of history at the University of Connecticut's Torrington Branch, will explain how the United States expanded across North America to encompass 48 states and later Alaska and Hawaii.

The first session on **SATURDAY, January 17, 2015** will be an introduction to "Manifest Destiny" with a brief discussion of the original 13 colonies and the creation of the United States by the Treaty of 1783, the Land Order of 1785, and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Also included will be the story of the Louisiana Purchase (1803), the acquisition of Florida in 1819, and the American settlement of Texas.

The second session on **SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2015** will include the story of the Mexican War and how President Polk took in Texas and the American Southwest, including California. Discussion will also include the settlement of Oregon and the acquisition of Alaska and, later, Hawaii. There will be a final discussion of the various controversies surrounding these actions.

All sessions will take place at the Harwinton Library from 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM with a snow date of **FEBRUARY 8, 2015**, if needed. All are welcome at no charge although donations are gratefully received.



Harwinton Land Trust President Describes Town's Natural Areas

On Sunday, Dec. 7, President of the Harwinton Land Conservation Trust Bob Orciari presented a program to the historical society that explained efforts to preserve and improve natural areas that have been donated to the trust. Orciari said volunteers made major contributions to the effort in 2013. They built bridges and boardwalks, marked property boundaries, maintained footpaths and participated in general cleanup activities. All of the efforts were for the public's enjoyment.

Orciari described the various Harwinton properties that are accessible to the public with a particular focus on Bull Pond and its history. Entrance to the Bull Pond area is on Locust Road just north of Bull Road and across from the Harwinton fairgrounds. The 20-acre pond is included in 71 acres of forestland known as the Allen M. Heflin Wildlife Sanctuary. A well-marked walking trail leads to the forest and there is a wildlife observation platform not far from the driveway entrance. The pond itself provides a place for fishing, ice skating, canoeing or kayaking. Bull Pond has a history that stretches back to the 1700s and includes the 20th century donation of 71 acres by Allen M. Heflin, which established the wildlife preserve.

Other Harwinton properties that are accessible to the public include 12 acres on Whetstone Road known as Forever Forest that has a well-maintained 45-minute hiking trail. Sign posts point to 26 species of trees within the forest. The trail head is on Whetstone Road, about a quarter mile south of Route 118.

Meadowview (22 acres) has a new hiking trail that leads to a pond and overlook. This is about a 20-minute walk. Meadowview Road is located off Woodchuck Lane in east Harwinton.

See Land Trust, page 3

Land Trust, continued from page 2

Laurel Marsh (the Hock-Lebreque Wildlife Refuge) is located across from Wilson Pond on Laurel Road. A short trail leads to a wildlife observation platform that overlooks a marsh within this 24-acre preserve.

Indian Meadow is a natural area with potential for wildlife management. The 34-acre parcel is west of White Oak Drive between Route 4 and Meadowview Road.

High Meadows Farm includes 6 acres between Birge Park Road and Lake Harwinton Road and is a natural area that protects the headwaters of Leadmine Brook.

Members of the land trust encourage the public to take advantage of the opportunity to visit these pristine wooded areas. In addition to the 170 acres of land that is accessible to the public, the land trust also oversees another 90 acres of land that are held in a conservation easement.

Curator's Corner

The curators monitor sales of three Harwinton history books (“Vignettes,” “This ‘n That” and “More Memories”) which are available at the Town Hall as well as from the curators. The books and several other items were also sold at the Harwinton Library as part of the Hometown Holiday celebration and Library Friends sale. Other items for sale included notepaper, ornaments and a collection of pottery by Pam Chambers of Tanglewood Pottery in New Hartford. Pam demonstrates her pottery making skills at the Harwinton Fair. This year’s sales at the library resulted in a profit of \$222 for the historical society.

- Curators Bev Mosher and Bonnie Andrews

**** A BIT OF TRIVIA ****

Answer to December Trivia Question: Who was Lewis S. Mills. *Lewis Sprague Mills, for whom the Region 10 High School is named, was the popular rural supervisor of schools in Harwinton and Burlington from 1927 to 1939. He was also an author and photographer. Mr. Mills introduced music and art into the local school curriculum and asked the town to provide free textbooks for students. Mr. Mills was able to attend the 1960 dedication of the school that bears his name.*

A Bit of Trivia for January:

What is the connection between the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Harwinton and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Torrington?

Answer in February newsletter.

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

All members are encouraged to attend the annual meeting and election of officers of the Harwinton Historical Society that will take place the last Monday of January (Jan. 26) at the Harwinton Senior Center on Weingart Road beginning at 6:30 PM. Refreshments will be served and annual reports will be available. The following names have been presented by the nominating committee. Additional nominations may be made the night of the meeting.

President: Bonnie Andrews *

Vice President: Nancy Schnyer *

Treasurer: Harry Schuh *

Secretary: Elaine Sederquist *

Board of Directors:

Term Ending 2015: Carol Kearns and David Ryan *

Term Ending 2016: Jim Curtis and Shirley Gay*

Term Ending 2017: Luella Bartes* and Candace Jones-Pacholski*

Curators: Beverly Mosher* and Bonnie Andrews*

Building Supervisor: Dennis Andrews *

Historian: Roger Plaskett *

Auditor: Marilyn Mitchell *

Legal Counsel: Patrick Wall *

Immediate Past President: Eleanor Woike

* Subject of vote at January annual meeting

Other Upcoming Meetings

Jan. 15. The Board of Directors of the Harwinton Historical Society will meet January 15th at 6:30 p.m. at the Skinner House on Bentley Drive. Annual reports and 2015 budgets should be ready for review at this time.

Membership dues (\$15 per person) are currently payable for 2015. Checks may be made out to the Harwinton Historical Society and mailed to Treasurer, P.O. Box 84, Harwinton, CT 06791. New members are always welcome.

The Torrington Historical Society continues to make “A Christmas Village Story” DVD available for sale for \$20 on its website: torringtonhistoricalsociety.org. The 63-minute film tells the history of Torrington’s Christmas Village in pictures and personal accounts.