

HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

January 2016

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OFFICERS

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Secretary: Elaine Sederquist
Treasurer: Harry Schuh

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Town Historian Donates Map of South Cemetery

Harwinton Historian Roger Plaskett has completed a project that is an important addition to the preservation of Harwinton's history. Roger spent about four months this past fall creating a "to scale" drawing of the grave sites of those known to be buried in South Cemetery, Harwinton's second oldest burial ground. The map was first displayed in Town Hall during the "If Stones Could Talk" cemetery tour last October.

Since then Roger has completed an index of interments and is now working to photograph the gravestones in order to post them on the "Find A Grave" web site. Both the index and photos will be of great value to researchers.

- See *Town Historian*, page 3



South Cemetery

*"This may be my most significant contribution to
Harwinton's history"*

- Historian Roger Plaskett

Upcoming Historical Society Events

Program: Sunday, Jan. 10th from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Harwinton Library: "Slavery in Connecticut" led by UConn history professor Dr. Karl Valois. Contrary to popular belief, slavery DID exist in the North before the Civil War. Every northern colony had slaves, including Connecticut. Dr. Karl Valois, who has taught at the University of Connecticut for the past 29 years, will lecture about the origins of slavery in America and how Connecticut and the North benefited from slavery. Among the topics discussed will be: the distribution of slaves throughout our state; the prominent citizens who became slaveholders; the nature of the slaves' work; and the important forces of the antislavery movement that successfully agitated for the gradual abolition of slavery in our state. All are invited.

Reports Due: Friday, January 15th: All reports from officers and committee chairpersons (treasurer, secretary, curators, buildings, programs) are due to Bonnie in an electronic version.

Meeting (Directors): Thursday, Jan. 21st at 3 p.m. at the Skinner House: Board of Directors meeting to work on a budget for the upcoming year.

Program: Sunday, Jan. 24th from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Harwinton Library: Program on "Korean War" led by UConn history professor Dr. Karl Valois. Long regarded as "the forgotten war," the Korean War was the first major showdown of the Cold War and the first major test of the United States in its new role as the "world's policeman." Dr. Valois will lecture about the origins of the war, the incredible ups and downs of the conflict, the epochal conflict between President Harry Truman and General Douglas Mac Arthur, and the enduring legacy of the war.

Dues: Membership dues for 2016 are due now and may be paid at the annual meeting or by submitting the form in this month's newsletter. Dues are \$15 per person except for those who are life members. (Due to a change in the by-laws life memberships are no longer available).

Miscellaneous HHS Information

- Storm closings for Harwinton Historical Society events will be announced on Channel 3, WFSB.
- Proceeds from our table at the library's holiday craft sale in December came to \$120. Thanks to those who helped with the sale and to the library for allowing us to participate.
- Central Connecticut State University history professor Holly Richards presented a "Women in History" program in December.
- Many of the programs offered by the Harwinton Historical Society are made possible by a grant from the Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund of the Foundation of the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.
- On Sunday, Nov. 15, about 40 people attended a general meeting of the Historical Society preceded by a chicken dinner. A brief business meeting was held to report the officers nominated for the 2016 calendar year followed by a travelogue program.

Town Historian Donates Map, *Continued from page 1*

This is the first indexing of the burials in South Cemetery since 1932-1935 when a Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) project directed by Charles R. Hale created a record of vital information from headstone inscriptions in over 2,000 Connecticut cemeteries.

After Roger created the original map he revisited the stones and their locations where he found and corrected a number of minor errors – both in his map and the Hale Collection. In addition to the updated map, Roger has produced an index that is part of a tri-fold display. This information has been archived at town hall. A duplicate tri-fold has been donated to the Historical Society.

The index gives the exact location of each identified stone in "X" - "Y" coordinates.

Example: Alfred, Job, died Apr 24, 1839, Age 74

Location L-X44-Y93 (Left side of aisle- horizontal 44' - back from wall 93')

In future years the sandstone grave stones will be much less readable than they are now as became evident from the 1932 Hale Collection to what is visible now. By capturing these names and locations for future researchers, some of Harwinton's early ancestors will never be lost in time.

Roger said, as Town Historian, "This may be my most significant contribution to Harwinton's history as it will be on public file forever long after I am gone."

A Bit of Trivia:

Trivia question for January 2016 (answer in the February 2016 newsletter):

Which star on the United States flag represents Connecticut?

Answer to December 2015 Trivia Question: How many points does a snowflake have? **The answer is six.**

According to Yahoo Trivia all snowflakes have one thing in common. They are all six-sided crystals of ice. They can be found in seven different shapes – prismatic column, hexagonal plate, cup, hexagonal column, needle, flat plate or dendrite. There is actually an International Snow Classification System that scientists use to observe the large variety of snowflakes.

Harwinton Town Meeting Reminder

Selectmen have scheduled a town meeting on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 7 p.m. at town hall. The topic of expansion of the town public library will be on the agenda.

Increased Spending on History in New Federal Funding Bill

The Harwinton Historical Society (HHS) is a member of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), an organization that provides resources and training to help state and local history organizations to be successful in saving and telling the story of their own community.

The following article, which HHS received from AASLH on Dec. 21, may be of interest to some of our newsletter readers:

The history community fared well in the FY2016 federal funding bill that Congress passed on December 18, 2015. This \$1.15 trillion omnibus appropriations package increased funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for the first time in six years. Though at its lowest funding level in constant dollars since 1971, NEH received a \$2 million boost. Its budget is now \$148 million.

Also noteworthy is that the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) will receive level funding. And this is a win. As reported by our colleagues at the [National Coalition for History](#) (of which AASLH is a member), “The original appropriations bill considered in the House Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee would have cut NHPRC’s FY ‘16 budget by 40 percent from the FY ‘15 level of \$5 million to \$3 million. The situation allowed NCH to use the contacts gained from the History Caucus, and the cut was rescinded at the House Appropriations Committee markup. The NHPRC was the only program in the entire bill to have funding restored.”

The Smithsonian Institution received \$21 million more than last year, Library of Congress will be up \$9 million, and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) received a \$2.2-million increase.

Two charts showing the budget changes for these and other history, archival, and education programs are available on the [National Coalition for History website](#).

To read more, visit on.aaslh.org/OmnibusFY2016.

NOTICE: Change in by-laws proposed

The Harwinton Historical Society’s Board of Directors is proposing the following change in the society’s by-laws. Under Article IV (Board of Directors), Section 2 (Directors), b.

“The Board of Directors shall submit a budget at the February meeting for approval of the membership.”

Proposed change: “The Board of Directors shall submit a budget at the **January** meeting for approval of the membership.”

This proposal will be the subject of a membership vote at the annual meeting Jan. 31st.

**Notice: Historical Society Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 31st at 2 p.m.**

The annual meeting of the Harwinton Historical Society will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2016 at 2 p.m. at the Harwinton Senior Center, 209 Weingart Road. The agenda includes:

- Call to order
- Review of Minutes from Feb. 1, 2015 annual meeting
- Review of Minutes from Nov. 15, 2015 regular membership meeting
- Distribution of Reports for Calendar Year 2015
- Election of Officers for 2016 – no changes proposed from current slate
- Review and Vote on proposed by-law change
- Budget proposal for 2016
- Discussion of activities in 2016
- Other Old Business
- New Business and issues for the good of the society
- Adjournment followed by:
- Outline of an oral history program by David Ryan and viewing of oral history interview with Henry Delay and Donald Smith discussing the old Swimming Hole.

Light refreshments will be served.

All are welcome to attend and contribute, but only members will be allowed to vote.

2016 Harwinton Historical Society Dues – Please Detach and Mail

Dues for 2016 are \$15 per person (with the exception of life members) and should be paid on or before the last day of February 2016.

Dues are enclosed for the following name(s):

Address:

Email:

Amount enclosed @\$15 per person: _____

Please make checks payable to the **Harwinton Historical Society** and mail to:

**HHS Treasurer
P.O. Box 84
Harwinton, CT 06791**