

# HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## March 2015

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### OFFICERS

**President:** Bonnie Andrews  
**Vice Pres.:** Nancy Schnyer  
**Secretary:** Elaine Sederquist  
**Treasurer:** Harry Schuh

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Marilyn Mitchell

#### LEGAL COUNSEL

Patrick Wall

## NEW PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED !

### The Roaring Twenties

The 1920s have been famously called “an oasis in time between two cataclysmic events – World War I and the Great Depression.” It has also been termed the “first modern decade,” owing to the rapid expansion of credit, the proliferation of millions of automobiles, new household appliances for the middle class, the birth of radio, the phenomenal rise of movies, the advent of sports as big business and the producer of celebrities such as Babe Ruth, developments in the arts (including jazz), and the appearance of liberated young women who were referred to as “flappers.”

Yet, there was also a “dark side” or conservative counter-reaction – the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, hatred of foreigners and immigration quotas, prohibition, the Scopes Trial, and the Red Scare.

Join Dr. Karl Valois (from the University of Connecticut) for a lively and spirited look at this wondrous decade. The program is to be presented at the **Harwinton Library on March 22 from 2 to 4 PM**. There will be no charge, but donations are always appreciated.

### World War I Era Programs

The Historical Society will combine with the Hungerford Museum and Harwinton Library to provide programs on the World War I era on March 28 and 29 at the Harwinton Library.

On March 29 Harwinton’s own Dr. Holly Richards will discuss the causes of this war and the entry of the United States in the conflict. She will provide information on the subsequent role of the US in the peach negotiations.

Richards is a professor at Central Connecticut State University and the University of Hartford. In addition to .....

*.....See World War I, Continued on page 4*

A BIT OF TRIVIA

Answer to February Trivia Question:

The current Town Hall building at 100 Bentley Drive was built in 1989

*March Trivia Question: The Blizzard of 1888 was named the worst snowstorm in Connecticut history. How many inches of snow fell from the start of the storm on the evening of Sunday, March 11, until it ended on March 14, 1888?*

*Answer in April newsletter*

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Upcoming Programs & Events

The Historical Society’s Board of Directors is planning a number of programs and activities for 2015 including the following:

- World War II Program April 19 and 26.
- Antiques Appraisal (date to be decided)
- Annual second grade tour of schoolhouse and barn (late May/early June)
- Ice Cream Social (date to be determined)
- Participation in Connecticut Open House Day June 13 from 2 to 4 p.m.
- Annual Appeal - August
- Harwinton Fair – first full weekend in October (Oct. 3 and 4, 2015)
- *New!* Cemetery Walk in October (exact date to be announced)
- Annual dinner for members in November.

If you are able to assist with any of these activities, please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

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**MEMORIAL:** A memorial service for the late Cherie Marie Delay Shanley was held on Feb. 14, 2015 at the Harwinton Congregational Church. Cherie was a founding member of the Harwinton Historical Society and lifetime citizen of Harwinton in addition to serving as town clerk for many years.

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**PLEASE NOTE:** If you are receiving this newsletter via the US Postal Service, but you have an email address that you are willing to share, it would save the historical society financially if you would forward that email address to [harwhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:harwhistsoc@gmail.com) so that you could be put on the email distribution list. Your email address will not be shared. Only members who do not have email will receive copies of the newsletter via the postal service.

**IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS:** Please send your suggestions for programs, activities or the newsletter to: [harwhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:harwhistsoc@gmail.com) or PO Box 84, Harwinton, CT 06791.

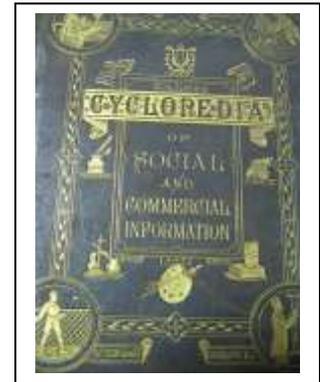
Curators Corner

## Cyclopedia Provides a Glimpse of Life in the Past

The curators generally attempt to acquire items that have a direct relationship to Harwinton and its history. But once in a while an artifact with a broader, more general purpose comes along and proves to be quite interesting in its own way.

Last year Harwinton residents Paul and Sharon Newcity offered the Historical Society a copy of Colliers “Cyclopedia of Social and Commercial Information” published in 1886. The book was reviewed and accepted by the curators and collections acquisition committee.

The compendium is chock full of information that makes it obvious that a great deal has changed in the last 129 years, both locally and globally. One section of the book concerns itself with driving – not SUVs, trucks and hybrids – but horses, wagons and buggies. There is even a lesson in bicycle riding, which might still be useful today.



In another section titled “How to Learn to Write,” penmanship is addressed. “Begin with a good paper, good pens, good ink,” it advises. However, “Curlicues, flourishes and ornamental capitals may delight an amateur in a show-case; a thorough business man detests them in his correspondence. In a lady’s writing they are simply vulgar.” Imagine what the writer would think of the many texting shortcuts used on social media sites now. LOL .

Today there is still an occasional emphasis on the correct use of punctuation. For example, punctuation has been illustrated on tee shirts and sweatshirts that advertise the proper use of the comma as in the recent popular saying “Let’s eat grandma” versus “Let’s eat, grandma.” The Collier’s book offers a 19<sup>th</sup> century example of what happens in a paragraph where punctuation is lacking: “Lost on Broadway on Thursday evening last an umbrella by an elderly gentleman with a carved ivory head.”

An 1882 version of this cyclopedia has been digitized by Google from the library of the New York Public Library and uploaded to the internet. Inside you will find sections on many topics including etiquette, housekeeping hints, commerce, money (are you familiar with eagle, half eagle and double eagle coins?)

But, if you like thumbing through the old pages of a book, browsing through the Historical Society’s version might be interesting and fun. Who knows, you might even avail yourself of some good luck when you come across the four-leaf clover someone pressed between the pages many years ago.

*NOTE: According to Wikipedia: “Collier’s Encyclopedia was long considered one of the three major contemporary English-language general encyclopedias. Together with [Encyclopedia Americana](#) and [Encyclopædia Britannica](#): the three were sometimes collectively called “the ABCs”.*

**World War I Programs, continued from page 1...**

Dr. Richards' program, the staff from the Hungerford Museum will display and explain World War I artifacts from the museum's collection.

The program on **March 29** will take place from **2 to 5 p.m. at the Harwinton Library**. This is free and open to all who are interested. Registration is not necessary for the Roaring 20s program March 22 or the World War I program on the 29th.

**Downton Abbey Fashion – March 28**

In a related program: "Downton Abbey: Fashion and Social Change" Susan Jerome will discuss women's fashions and issues of the same time period as World War I. Jerome is the Collections Manager at the University of Rhode Island Historical Textile and Costume Collection. This library-sponsored presentation will take place at the Harwinton Library on **Saturday, March 28 at 10:30 a.m.**

**Registration is necessary for the Downton Abbey event by calling 860-485-9113.**

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**SCHOLARSHIP:** The Harwinton Historical Society will be awarding a \$500 Scholarship to a Harwinton resident and 2015 graduate of Lewis S. Mills High School. Based on a recent decision by the Board of Directors, details of the criteria for the award are being coordinated with the Lewis Mills Scholarship committee. This will be the first time the historical society has participated in this awards program. Awarding of the scholarship will be handled by the Lewis Mills Scholarship Committee.

**ANNUAL DUES:** Historical Society dues for 2015 were due by the end of February. To continue your membership or to join, please send \$15 per person to the Harwinton Historical Society, Attn: Treasurer, PO Box 84, Harwinton, CT 06791.

**VOLUNTEERS:** The society cannot function without help from many people. Please offer to help in some way.

**BOARD MEETINGS:** The Board of Directors will meet on the last Thursday of the month at 3 p.m. at the Skinner House, Bentley Drive. Next meeting: March. HHS members are welcome.

**HARWINTON FAIR:** As you begin to "think spring" and are cleaning out items you no longer want or need, think about whether they could be donated to raise funds for the Historical Society. at the annual fair October 3 and 4. Remember, "one man's trash is another man's treasure."