

HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2015

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Antiques Appraisal May 16th

The Historical Society is sponsoring an opportunity for the public to have the value of antiques and other personal treasures evaluated by a professional appraiser. Items may be brought to the Harwinton Town Hall, 100 Bentley Drive, on Saturday, May 16th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be a \$5 charge per item and those attending will be able to meet with professional appraiser Michael Tomasiewicz on a first come-first served basis. Mike will evaluate your family heirlooms and general merchandise such as silver, textiles, furniture, glass, art, china etc.

Please do not bring firearms, stamps, dolls or coins!

All proceeds will benefit the Historical Society.

For more information call 860-485-0035

Special Event May 17

The life and works of Architect Henry Hornbostel

The Historical Society and Harwinton Congregational Church will jointly sponsor a special program on the "Architecture and Legacy of Henry Hornbostel." Hornbostel (1867-1961) was a resident of Harwinton and a world-famous architect. During his lifetime he designed 225 building, bridges and monuments. Of those, 22 are now on the National Register of Historic Places.

The program will feature an introduction by Hornbostel's great nephew followed by a 58-minute National Public Television documentary that was shown at the Napa Valley Festival in 2014.

"Major" Hornbostel lived in Harwinton from 1913 to 1954. While here he donated the design for the Old Town Hall (now the Community Hall on South Road).

His residence was in the Truman Kellogg house across from the Harwinton Green.

The program will be held in the Harwinton Congregational Church, which is handicapped accessible. **Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$2 for children under 12.** Tickets may be reserved in advance by contacting Tom at 860-485-9308 or Bonnie at 860-482-7978. Checks should be written to HCC.

Refreshments will follow the program.



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Answer to April Trivia Question: What is a Shivaree?

The Shivaree

According to the Third Edition of The American Heritage College Dictionary, a Shivaree is “a noisy, mock serenade for newlyweds”. The word is of French origin. Historical Society Curator Beverly Mosher describes below her personal experience of a Shivaree.....

I had attended a dance (a mix of rounds, squares, contras, polkas, waltzes and foxtrots) at the town hall on a Saturday evening in 1946. A well-known lady who lived nearby extended an invitation to several of the dancers to attend a Shivaree in honor of her son and daughter-in-law. They had married in a mid-western state when he returned from a tour of duty during World War II before making their way to New England. We were asked to go to the home of a neighbor when the dance concluded at midnight and wait for the woman’s signal to walk to her home a distance of perhaps one-tenth of a mile. Upon arrival, each person was supplied with a pan (something metal) and a spoon and instructed to make as much noise as possible, which would awaken the newlyweds. How could anyone sleep though all of that commotion?

Well, of course, the couple did awaken and came downstairs to be greeted by well-wishers. We were served refreshments and returned home sometime in the early morning hours.

There are variations of the Shivaree including kidnapping the couple separately and eventually returning them to their home where they are reunited. Other times, the bride is taken away from the groom who then collects money from friends to pay a ransom. Usually, those couples who had been shivareed did return the favor when friends were married.


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: May 28. HHS members are welcome to attend.

BARN AND SCHOOLHOUSE HELP: Help is needed on Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to noon to clean the schoolhouse and barn after the long winter. Please bring any of the following: dust cloths, window cleaning supplies, broom, rake.

We are also looking for people to serve as hosts/hostesses in the school and barn when these buildings are open to the public. A brief history of the buildings will be made available to those willing to volunteer. Please contact Bonnie or Dennis Andrews, 860-482-7978.

MAY TRIVIA:



What was this tool called and what was its purpose? 

Curators Corner

The Historical Society has received a report prepared as a result of a site visit last November by a traveling archivist provided by the State Library on behalf of the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board and Conservation ConneCTion with grant funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The curators are reviewing the findings and recommendations. The report highlights areas where our volunteer staff should invest time and resources in the coming years and should be used as a long-term planning tool to help the HHS further improve the preservation and accessibility of our holdings.

JUST ANNOUNCED – NEW PROGRAM !!

Saturday - May 9th - 2 to 4 PM
Sponsored by the Historical Society
Location: Harwinton Library

THE FABULOUS FIFTIES

Once again UConn History Professor Dr. Karl Valois has agreed to lead a program and discussion – this time the topic is the 1950s.

Historians are writing more and more about the "Fabulous 50's."

In the popular imagination - as reflected in countless TV sitcoms and movies - the 1950s are often portrayed as a time of "Happy Days"-- economic prosperity, family togetherness, a new consumer culture, the baby boom, and the beginnings of rock and roll.

Yet, it was also an era of conflict and tension-- the Cold War, the black civil rights movement, consensus and conformity, and poverty.

Join Dr. Valois for a lively look at this controversial decade. This free program is open to the general public, however, donations are always welcomed.



*Gonna cruise her round the town,
Show everybody what I've found
Rock-'n'-roll with all my friends
Hopin' the music never ends.
These happy days are yours and mine.*

-Happy Days, theme song

Mark your calendars: Cemetery Walk October 16

South Cemetery will be the background for a “Cemetery Walk” on October 16 (rain date October. 17). Details are still being worked out, but the initial plan is to allow an after-dark “visit” with several of Harwinton’s past residents who are buried in the town’s second oldest cemetery. The cemetery on South Road was established by town meeting in 1807 and the first burial was in April of 1809. Over the next 100 years more than 600 people were laid to rest here. Plan to attend and learn more, or get involved now by contacting Harwinton Historian Roger Plaskett at www.harwintonhistory.com or [Bonnie Andrews at harwhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:Bonnie.Andrews@gmail.com) or 860-482-7978. Researchers, actors and general helpers are needed during the planning process. Facilitators and tour guides will be needed the night of the walk. This event is a cooperative effort by the Hungerford Museum and the Harwinton Historical Society.

Connecticut Open House Day and Ice Cream Social Saturday, June 13

The Harwinton Historical Society will hold an ice cream social in conjunction with The Connecticut Office of Tourism’s 11th annual Connecticut Open House Day on Saturday, June 13th. Our 1840s one-room schoolhouse and barn museum, located on the grounds of the Harwinton Consolidated School on Route 118, will be open and ice cream will be available at a minimal cost. There is no charge for entrance to the two buildings.

This annual one-day statewide event is designed to showcase Connecticut’s diverse world of history, art, and tourism. It is a great way for residents to discover or rediscover all that is happening in our state. The state Office of Tourism is hopeful that once Connecticut residents learn about the wealth of treasures in their own backyard, they will share their newly gained appreciation and enthusiasm with visiting family and friends and become Connecticut ambassadors.

In Harwinton, the event will take place from 2 to 4 p.m.

Spring is Here – Take a Hike !

Last year one of the Historical Society’s programs focused on the short hikes available on property that is part of the Harwinton Land Trust. Springtime is a great time to get outdoors after a long winter and experience nature right here in Harwinton. Areas available for hiking include the Bull Pond Trails, Forever Forest, Laurel Marsh and Meadowview. Visit harwintonlandtrust.org for more information and directions to the trail heads.

HAPPENINGS ELSEWHERE

The Litchfield Historical Society is planning a symposium on immigration. “The New America: Discovering and Documenting the Immigrant Experience” will take place on **Monday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Registration is required by May 11. For additional information go to www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org.

The 2015 History Bites Lecture Series continues each Thursday at noon until June 4. Pre-registration is recommended but not required. To register, contact the host organization. Visit the Litchfield Historical Society web site for a link to additional information about this popular annual series.