

HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

November 2015

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Dinner and Program Nov. 15th Travelogue to Spotlight the Baltic Sea

Experienced world travelers and Connecticut residents Rosemary and Wayne Frombach will present a program on the Baltic Sea for Historical Society members and the public on Sunday, Nov. 15.

The program will be preceded by a chicken dinner at 1 p.m. at the Harwinton Senior Center, 209 Weingart Road. Reservations are required for the dinner. Tickets (payable at the door) are \$10 for historical society members and \$12 for non-members. To reserve a place at the dinner, please call 860-482-7978 or send an email to harwhistsoc@gmail.com. The deadline for reservations is Nov. 11.

Following dinner there will also be a brief business meeting which will include a report of the nominating committee listing officers proposed for 2016. Additional nominations may be made at this meeting.

The Baltic Sea program will take place immediately after the business meeting. Those wishing to attend only the program should arrive at the senior center by 2:15. The public is welcome to attend any or all of the afternoon's events. There is no charge for attending only the program.

The Frombachs are experienced photographers and travelers and will share their photographs of the Baltic Sea which is an arm of the North Atlantic Ocean. The Baltic Sea is enclosed by Scandinavia to the northwest, Finland to the northeast, the Baltic countries to the southeast, and the North European Plain to the southwest. It is about 1,000 miles long and 120 miles wide.

**** Don't miss Sunday, Nov. 1 program on Vietnam War at 2 p.m. at Harwinton Library ****



Hike Around Bull Pond

Land Trust President Bob Ociari, left, offers some background information to a group preparing to walk Bull Pond Preserve on Oct. 23.

On Friday afternoon, October 23, President of the Harwinton Land Trust Bob Ociari led a walk through the Bull Pond Preserve. Sponsored by the Historical Society, the group also included two directors of the land trust. Bull Pond Preserve is a natural area near the intersection of Locust Road and Bull Road that includes the 20-acre Bull Pond plus an additional 51 acres with several trail loops set out over one mile through the woods.. The walk is easy and well-marked. Ociari pointed out special features of the area along the way. He encouraged those attending to visit other land trust properties especially Forever Forest (12 wooded acres with full access on Whetstone Road) and Laurel Marsh (24 acres with full access off Laurel Road).

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY RECIPIENT OF AWARD FROM THOMASTON SAVINGS BANK FOUNDATION

Susan Sadecki, far left, poses for a photo with Harwinton Historical Society President Bonnie Andrews at the Thomaston Opera House. Bonnie is holding a \$740 check awarded to the historical society Oct. 6th by the Foundation. The money will be used to purchase video equipment in order to record oral histories, a program started by historical society director David Ryan. Ms. Sadecki is President and CEO of The Main Street Community Foundation and is on the Thomaston Savings Bank Board of Directors. She is the daughter of Historical Society members Dorothy and Raymond Ciechoski.

Stone Mason Makes Repairs Along South Road

By Town Historian Roger Plaskett

Mike Angelicola is a stone mason who has done extensive work repairing the historic stone walls in Harwinton on South Road including the McConway walls and the walls built by the Cook brothers near the Community Hall and Parsonage. Most of Angelicola's work has been on a volunteer basis.

Recently Mike contacted me in my role as town historian and asked if there were a couple of grave stones in town that we would like to have replaced. Mike also does stone carving and was preparing for an upcoming demonstration. Rather than demonstrate the art of stone carving with fictitious names, Mike and I found two stones in South Cemetery that were broken into multiple pieces and were laying face-down, probably for over 100 years.

These two stones have now been replaced with the original pieces left exactly where they had fallen. Thanks to Mike for his continued preservation-minded volunteerism. Mike has donated these two stones.

The first stone he re-did was for Elizabeth Alfred, who died in 1821. The second was for Roxanna Cook, who died in 1827. These stones are nearly 200 years old, made of sandstone and have deteriorated beyond repair.

Mike has also written a book titled "Preserving Our Stone Treasures," which is available from the Historical Society.



Harwinton's First Cemetery Walk Deemed a Success

- Please see photos of actors on page 5 -

The general consensus was that Harwinton's first attempt at a night time walk through South Cemetery was a resounding success. Town Historian Roger Plaskett organized the Friday, October 16th "If Stones Could Talk" event with help from a number of local organizations including the Harwinton Historical Society and T. A. Hungerford Museum. A group of volunteers began meeting in February to plan the event.

The cemetery walk started at Town Hall where visitors were issued tickets for specific departure times. While waiting to leave, refreshments were available in the main meeting room. There was also a map showing the burial sites at South Cemetery and several poster boards that gave visitors insight into the people they would be meeting that night.

Visitors then boarded a school bus where they were given a brief overview of the cemetery's history. Once at the cemetery, the tour groups were greeted by the gate keeper then led down a lighted path by students from Lewis Mills High School's Mills Club. Along the way the group met 11 additional actors who were portraying some of Harwinton's most interesting citizens who have been buried in South Cemetery for more than 100 years.

Comments about the evening were positive and it is likely the event will be held again next year. In addition to the Historical Society and Hungerford Museum, the event was sponsored by a grant from the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation. Various local groups pitched in including the Harwinton Woman's Club, the Harwinton Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, the town road crew, Recreation Commission, Selectmen, the Mills Club, Fire Police, Town Hall staff and Torrington's Warner Theatre and All Star Transportation.

Answer to Trivia Question for October: How did Connecticut get its nickname "The Provision State"?

During the Revolutionary War, Connecticut supplied most of the food and cannons for the Continental Army thus earning Connecticut the nickname "The Provision State." When the war broke out Connecticut was a major agriculture-producing state and its established supply routes were used to transport provisions to the army that was fighting for independence from England.

Connecticut is also sometimes called "The Nutmeg State" perhaps because its colonial residents were so persuasive that they could sell a wooden replica of a nutmeg. Another theory states that the nickname comes from the actual trade in nutmegs by Connecticut merchants during the colonial period. Some historians believe that the first theory may be based on a misconception: perhaps the merchants from Connecticut sold nutmegs to ignorant buyers who did not realize that they had to grate the woody nutmegs in order to unleash their spiciness.

Neither the "Provision State" nor "The Nutmeg State" is Connecticut's official nickname. That honor has belonged to "The Constitution State" since 1959. It is claimed that Connecticut's Fundamental Orders of 1638/1639 were the first written constitution in history.

Connecticut is also sometimes referred to as "The Land of Steady Habits," which refers to the strict morals of the state's earliest colonial inhabitants.

TRIVIA QUESTION FOR NOVEMBER: What is a whistle pig?

"IF STONES COULD TALK"

2015 Tour Of Harwinton's South Cemetery

Cast of Players



Jonathan Rossetter
Played By John Wilmarth



Allen Kellogg
Played By Eric Vanleer



Simeon Barber
Played By Jeff Savage



The Graveyard Shift
Played By Bruce Richard



Rachael Wheeler
Played By Charlotte Larson



Ruth Bartholomew
Played By Sue Ryan



Submit Castle and Elvira Johnson
Played By Dane and Carol Deleppo



Joshua Williams
Played By Dave Ryan



Harwinton Historical Society



Abijah Catlin
Played By James Pabilonia



Holdah Catlin
Played By Joan Kirchner



Cyprian Webster
Played By Roger Plaskett

