



Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society  
Bloomfield, Connecticut November 2012

## Past Perambulations: A Paper Route in the 1940s

*The Hartford Times* was a daily afternoon newspaper serving the Hartford area starting in 1826. It was first owned by the Gannett Company and later was sold to the *New Haven Register*. It began to struggle financially and closed down in 1976.

In the 1940s I was on their payroll. The bundled papers were delivered to me at my home on School Street, and I delivered them. My route went from what is now the Seabury Retirement Community to Fuss's Grove, which is today about where Park Avenue runs east to Blue Hills Avenue. It was about one mile.

My age then was twelve or thirteen. I was so proud I owned a paper route! I had between forty and fifty customers. The paper sold for three cents a day or eighteen cents a week. I was responsible for collecting two cents from each customer to pay the company. I made a penny each day for each home delivery. I made one third of the value of the product, 33⅓ %, not bad.

My bicycle was my transportation, and I started delivering the families that lived on Petersen's farm (which is now Seabury), down Wintonbury Avenue to School Street, and Park Avenue east to Blue Hills Avenue. It was a long trek, but the ride home was always faster, especially with a tail wind.

Saturday was pay day. I was expected to collect eighteen cents per week per paper. That was fine if everybody paid; but I found some were not home, some forgot, some didn't care, etc. Even in post-Depression times, there was a margin of error, but not enough. Many people left two dimes and didn't want the two cents change. Others met me at the door and wanted their two cents. If I was lucky, they would leave a quarter under that mat or other designated place like the milk box container.

If I delivered fifty papers a day, I owed The Times \$1.00 a day, \$6.00 a week. This was paid right off the top, and everything left was mine. If I was lucky, I made \$3.00. So much for one-third ownership—but what lessons I learned!

Please send your memories to PO Box 7454 or [Wintonbursociety@att.net](mailto:Wintonbursociety@att.net). Thank you.

By Helen Woodford

## SOCIETY DIRECTORY

### President

Richard Pierce

### Vice-president

Douglas Barnard

### Treasurer

Charles Dechand

### Secretary

Winifred Granger

### Past President/Curator

Fannie Gabriel

### Board of Directors

#### 2012

Winifred Granger

Robert Berman

Selena Brooks

Robert Ike

#### 2013

Judy Dahlgren-Dechand

Dr. Ralph Schmoll

Marilyn Stockton

Shirley Thompson

#### 2014

Gregory Babal

Libbie Merrow

Gail Tinto

Quinton Johnson

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM AT PROSSER

Do you automatically think “first Wednesday” when you think of Historical Society programs? Well, guess again. The program and membership meeting in November will be on the **second Wednesday** to accommodate the Prosser Library calendar. That’s Wednesday, November 14, 7:00 PM at Prosser.

We’re excited to welcome Matt Warshauer as our speaker. He will speak on "Connecticut Copperheads: Civil War Dissent in the Land of Steady Habits." The talk will highlight some of the political ferment in the highly polarized Civil War years and show how, even in Connecticut where so many supported the war, there were some very vocal opponents.

Dr. Matthew Warshauer is a Professor of History at Central Connecticut State University. The author of three books, he is a specialist on 19<sup>th</sup> century political and constitutional history. His most recent book, *Connecticut in the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival*, is a riveting and eye opening account of the state’s often turbulent history. Dr. Warshauer currently serves as co-chair of the Connecticut Civil War Commemoration Commission, and is helping to coordinate activities across Connecticut to focus on the importance and lasting legacies of the American Civil War and Connecticut’s involvement in it. We are fortunate in having Prosser’s cooperation in bringing him to Bloomfield.

## NEW DIRECTORS ELECTED

Five people were recently elected as directors of the Society. **Robert Berman** lives on Hiram Lane, was a retirement plan administrator, and has served on the Bloomfield town council. **Selena Brooks** lives on Beacon Hill Drive and is a Bloomfield teacher at the Middle School level. **Robert Ike** lives on Darby Street, is an administrator with the state Department of Transportation, and serves on the Bloomfield Board of Education. **Quinton Johnson** lives on Woodland Avenue, works at The Hartford, and ran for state representative this year. **Shirley Thompson** lives on Tunxis Avenue and is a retired Hartford teacher and a former chair of the Bloomfield Board of Education.

Under Society by-laws (V.3), the Board of Directors fills vacancies which occur between annual meetings. These new directors were named at the Board meeting on October 24.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHTS

As the meeting of October 24 opened, the president highlighted two recent successful activities, the third grade visits to Old Farm School (see separate article) and the Sacred Heart Car Show and Family Festival on September 30. The latter is becoming a popular annual community event, and our Society's table and literature was busy. We sold about \$42 worth of publications.

Dick Pierce reviewed our participation in the Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs). We earned a Silver Certificate for completion of Section 1 on Mission, Vision, and Governance, and a certificate for Section 2 on Audience is pending. Pierce was in Middletown September 24 and 25 for the workshop on Management, the third and final section for this calendar year. The topics addressed included fiscal responsibility, fund raising and long term sustainability, safety and security, facility care and visitor amenities, risk management, and compliance with laws, codes, and regulations. He will attend follow-up sessions in October, November, and December. StEPs is a two-year program, and the 2013 year will consist of sections on Historical Structures and Landscapes (January 28-29), Collections (May 20-21), and Interpretation (September 23-24).



Treasurer Charlie Dechand reported on the first three months of the fiscal year, July through September. Our total income for the period of \$2,293 came largely from dues and donations and was just \$23 more than our budget planned for. Our expenses totaled \$2,472. Of this, building repairs cost about \$1,000, and utilities, program, printing, and postage accounted for much of the rest. We spent \$202 more than we had budgeted for, leaving a checking account balance of \$4,529 on September 30.

Historian Fred Hesketh showed a copy of *Grange Poems*, a small book published in 1892 by Venelia Case of Bloomfield. He is researching her family connections.

For the Publicity Committee, Doug Barnard reported on Old Farm School visitors for the 2012 season. The school was open on 22 Sundays, and 19 docents participated. There were 225 visitors, including 123 Metacomet children.

For the Fund Raising Committee, Greg Babal showed designs for the proposed historic house markers which will be offered for sale to local owners of such homes. The Board asked Greg to go ahead and have one made up as a model. Libbie Merrow discussed plans for "Holidays in Olden Times," to be held on Sunday, December 9 (see separate article). She asked for volunteers to be at the Eggleston House, Old Farm School, and History Center and distributed tickets for Board members to sell.

In other activity, Pat Robair reported that a successful cleanup of Old Wintonbury Cemetery on October 13 attracted a dozen participants. Ralph Schmoll and Libbie Merrow attended a stimulating workshop on Oral History sponsored by Connecticut Humanities. In October, Dick Pierce attended a Regional Kickoff Event sponsored in Windsor by the Connecticut League of History Organizations.

Under new business, Dick presented five names in nomination to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors: Robert Berman, Selena Brooks, Robert Ike, Shirley Thompson, and Quinton Johnson. The Board voted to accept these nominations, thus bringing Board membership to its full number of twelve.

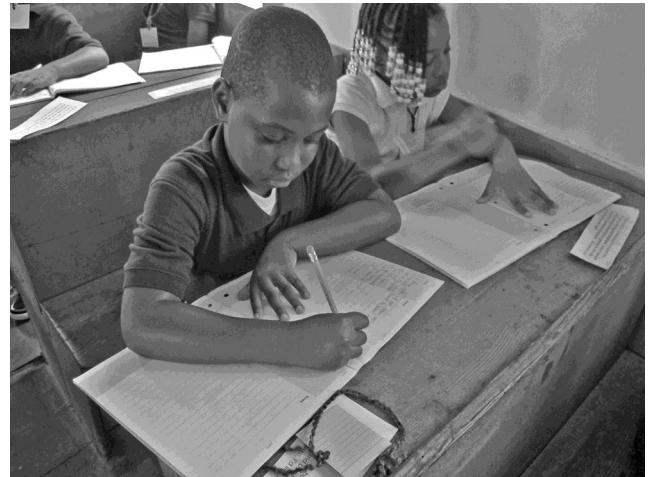
## METACOMET SCHOOL VISITS

Curious and alert third-graders visited Old Farm School on September 12, 13, 14, and 17. “How did the kids get to school?” “Where did they go to the bathroom?” “Did they have recess?” The children were full of questions, some even having written a page full in their notebooks. Dressed in their neat school uniforms, having walked over on a beautiful, sunny day, they sat at the desks on the second floor of the building, hands raised for questions, eager to participate. Society members Dick Pierce, Libbie Merrow, and Shirley Thompson were there to greet them.

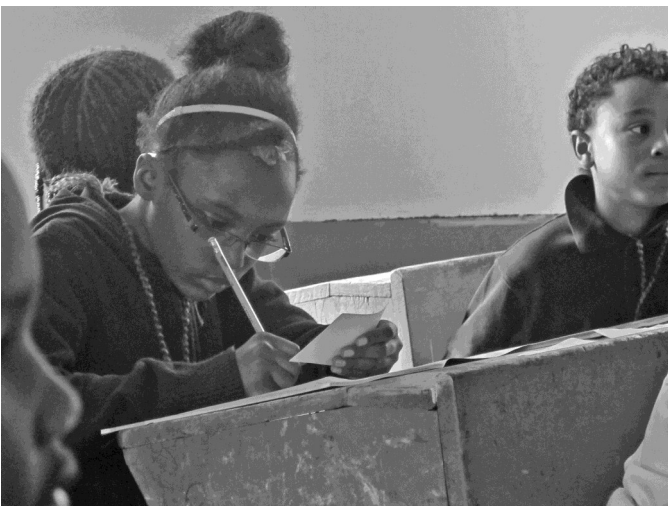


Starting this fall, Laurel School houses all children in kindergarten through grade 2. All children in grades 3 and 4 go to Metacomet. During the four days of visits, we hosted 120 children. Each one got a chance to ring the bell and was given a souvenir pencil and a colorful sticker saying “I visited Old Farm School.”

Libbie had prepared for the children name tags with names of fictional children who might have attended the school in 1796. There was Betsy Barton, whose grandfather made sleigh bells and Abigail Filley, whose father made beautiful tin boxes. Jeremy Gillette’s father ran a grist mill, and Jeremiah Wright’s father was a ship’s captain. William Miller was sad that Washington could not continue as president, and Nehemiah Newberry wanted people to elect Jefferson. Some, like Oliver Case, even had a parent who was in “the war.” Children told their fictional names and read aloud a brief description that Libbie had prepared.



According to lead teacher Lisa Lamenzo, the children returned to school full of enthusiasm for history and the school had several positive comments from parents.



## MEMBERSHIP

### CHANGES

#### New Members:

Michelle Petersen  
Kayla Costenoble  
Doris Ahrens  
Neal LeBaron  
Susan Harrigan  
Maureen Slane

#### Deceased:

Carl Reisner  
Warren Foster  
Leonard Bull  
Hope Engley



609 Cottage Grove Road, October 1985. Drawing by Burt Smith.

## CURATOR'S CORNER: The Scotland Schools

When reading the Curator's Corner in the last issue of the *Drummer*, you may have become aware that something did not look right. Inadvertently, the whole background of the Scotland school, leading up to the students' names, was omitted. Here, then, is the first part.

In 1843 the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation annexing a part of Simsbury, called the Scotland Parish, to the town of Bloomfield. The considerable conflict over this annexation is described in *From Wintonbury to Bloomfield*, pages 55-56. In the 1800s the Scotland District was served by two schools. A map in the aforementioned volume shows the Scotland South School located at the southeast corner of Adams and Duncaster Roads. The Scotland North School was near where St. Andrew's Church now is, at the intersection of Hoskins and Tariffville Roads. In 1970 the North building was moved to Simsbury's Massacoh Plantation on Hopmeadow Street.

The first picture of the North Scotland school was taken in 1889. By 1891 it had so few students that the two schools were combined. Although the old North school house was no longer used as a school, it was still listed as an asset valued at \$100 until 1933, when this listing was discontinued.

It seems that the North School may have later been reopened. In 1927 the records show students there. Among the eighteen students were Bendix Ahrens, James Goodwin, Fred Griffin, Helen Poetzch, and Marion Poetzch. In 1930-31 at the same school Edith Martin was teacher for Grades 1-5, and her students included Fred Griffin, Ed Janowetch, and Fred Wasilausky.

A search of town records from the Town Clerk's office in the Bloomfield Town Hall on March 4, 2003, yielded the information in the table on the next page. Annual Reports of the town begin in 1883.

Date	School	No. of students	Teachers	Appropriation
1883	Scotland North	25	Florence Cushman	\$201
	Scotland South	22	Lucadia P. Hoskins	\$157
1884	Scotland North	26	Florence Cushman	\$201
	Scotland South	22	Fanny McGurk	\$157
1885	Scotland North	30	Louisa M. McGurk	\$201
	Scotland South	21	Maria Warner	\$175
1886	Scotland North	23	Maria Warner	\$201
	Scotland South	22	Fanny McGurk	\$175
1887	Scotland North	26	Nettie G. Newberry	\$201
	Scotland South	19	Ellen H. Adams	\$175
1888	Scotland North	16	Nettie G. Newberry Isabel Cushman	\$201
	Scotland South	23	Ellen Adams	\$201
1889	Scotland North	11	Grace Perkins Sylvia J. Barnard	\$201
	Scotland South	18	Ellen Adams	\$210
1890	Scotland North	12	Nettie Newberry Frank E. Pease	\$210
	Scotland South	16	Sarah B. Burnham John A. Wilcox	\$210
1891	Scotland North	4	Nettie Newberry	\$105
	Scotland South	17	Ellen Adams	\$225
1892	Combined schools at Scotland South	24	Ellen Adams	\$225
1893	Scotland com- bined	21	Ellen Adams	\$245

History makes us some amends for the shortness  
of life. —Philip Skelton, 1707-1787

*The Drummer* is published five times a year by the

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## A BIT OF HISTORY: Tudor and Ellen Whiton, 1909

From *The Hartford Courant*, May 21, 1909 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers):

Mr. and Mrs. Tudor Whiton celebrated their golden wedding Tuesday. They have lived in Bloomfield for upwards of three score years. Mr. Whiton is the proprietor of the Whiton wagon works in Bloomfield. He was born in the town of East Windsor (Wapping), March 24, 1836. His parents were Augustus and Harriet Foster Whiton, one of a family of four children, two sisters of which are living, Miss Ellen J. Whiton, a teacher in the public schools of Waterbury, and Mrs. Imri Spencer, who resides in Waterbury. His father, Augustus Whiton, was a blacksmith and decided to move to Bloomfield in 1843 and began the blacksmith and steel yard business. After a few years attending the public schools, Tudor Whiton took up the blacksmithing business with his father and was associated with him in this and wagon and carriage building on a large scale until the father's death in 1885. The Whiton wagon works became famous throughout the state and as successor to his father he has done a large and successful business in wagon making and many of the delivery teams of Hartford now bear the plate or name of T. Whiton, maker. In his sixty years of experience he has won a reputation second to none in wagon building. May 18, 1859, he married Miss Ellen Barnard. He enlisted in the Civil War in Company D, Twenty-second Regiment, C. V., but did not engage in battle as the war ended soon after his enlistment. In politics he is republican and has been elected to several offices in the town, having served as a member of the board of assessors several years and also on the board of selectmen for four years, a part of the time as first selectman. Mrs. Whiton was one of a family of six children of Harrison J. and Sarah Blakesee Barnard and was born in the northern part of Bloomfield, then known as Simsbury. One sister, Mrs. Mary B. Talmadge, died a few years ago, but there are now living four sisters, Mrs. Sarah Griswold, Mrs. Charlotte Filley, Miss Sylvia J. Barnard of Bloomfield, Mrs. Harriet Ashwell of Hartford, and one brother, Louis H. Barnard of this town. Mr. and Mrs. Whiton were parents of six children, three of which are living, two children died in infancy and a daughter, Harriet, died several years ago. Those living are Mrs. Walter D. Wyckoff of Hartford, Mrs. Marshall J. Bradley of Bloomfield and Harry A. Whiton, architectural draughtsman in the employ of the United States. A few members of the family gathered at the home on Tuesday in celebration of the event.



Augustus Whiton's Carriage Shop, 1890

## Seven things we do as a historical society

- (1) We collect, preserve, and make available for viewing and research various records, facts, and materials relating to the history and citizens of Bloomfield, Connecticut.
- (2) In our organizational structure, research, collection, and publication, we value the societal diversity which characterizes our town.
- (3) We identify, preserve, and mark buildings and locations within the town that are of historical interest.
- (4) We record current history for the benefit of future generations of the town.
- (5) We distribute documents, pamphlets, journals, and books relating to town history.
- (6) We maintain historic buildings and a museum/library in which people can experience what it was like in the past and do research in local and family history.
- (7) We work with our public schools on programs of local and area history.

### Calendar of Events

Nov. 14, Program at Prosser, 7 PM

Jan. 16, Board of Directors, 7 PM  
at History Center

Feb. 6, Program at Prosser, 7 PM

Mar. 13, Board of Directors, 7 PM  
at History Center

April 3, Program, 7 PM, TBA

May 15, Board of Directors, 7 PM  
at History Center

June 5, Program, Annual Meeting  
and Potluck, 6:00 at Sacred Heart



### THE WINTONBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS:

## “HOLIDAYS IN THE OLD DAYS”

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> 2012  
1:00 TO 4:00

Tour includes open house at the Eggleston house (with music and refreshments), tours of the old school house, the History Center holiday displays, and activities for children.

Tickets are \$5.00 per person, \$10.00 for a family. Tickets are available in advance by mail at Wintonbury Historical Society, P.O. Box 7454, Bloomfield, CT. Tickets are also available at the door on the day of the event.

Parking is at the Wintonbury Historical Society History Center, 153 School Street or at the Metacomet School (next door to the History Center).