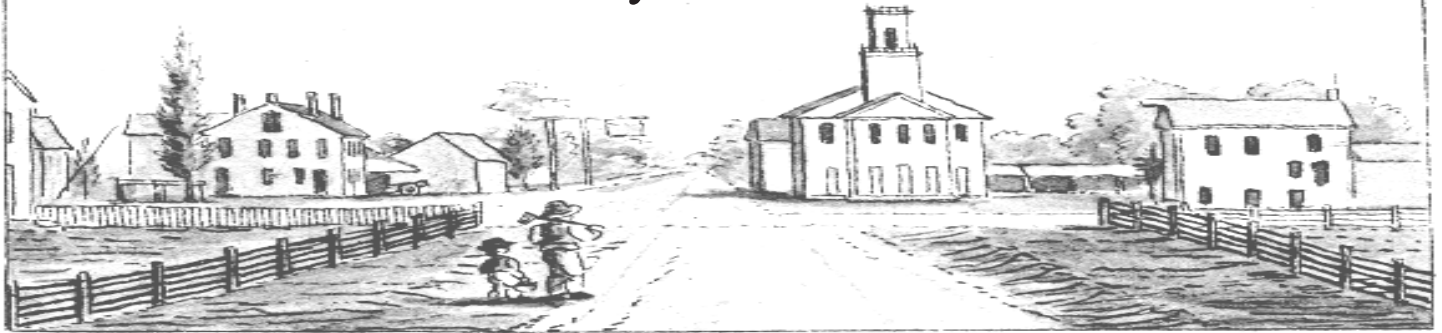


# The Wintonbury Drummer



***Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society***  
***Bloomfield, Connecticut*** ***May 2001***

***Next meeting: Annual Meeting - June 6, Pot Luck Supper begins at 6; Program at 7:30. Sacred Heart Church, Center of Town, Wintonbury Avenue, Bloomfield.***

***PROGRAM: Charles Dechand will show a video of highlights from previous meetings this year.***

## **President's Message:**

In November, members viewed a well-documented video on traprock houses delivered by Ed Stanley, former Vice President of the Society. To add to the story of these houses, Don and Jan Baker, current owners of the David Grant traprock house on 77 Maple Avenue, graciously are opening their home for a June 3<sup>rd</sup> tour of this house from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$25, which will benefit the Filley House. Flyers previously have gone to members relating pertinent facts about the tour, and a plea to offer help as a docent, or for "goodies." A call to Fannie at 242-1016 with such an offer will be appreciated.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, at the Sacred Heart Community Room, the Society will enjoy its Annual Pot Luck supper. According to Doris Jordan, Hospitality Chair, the supper will begin at 6 p.m. Please make sure that you bring plates and utensils -- and a pot luck contribution. The meeting will feature election of officers, annual reports, and a selection of Charlie Dechand's videos of this year's programs.

Recently, Judi Sitkin, our Education Chair, organized a bicycle tour of local cemeteries and the Old Farm School for Bloomfield High School students. Judi will be giving us a full report of this tour. Our thanks to Lucy Wirsul and Mary Murray for their help in the tour's success. Speaking of the Old Farm School -- please say "yes" to Mary Murray when she asks you to give a Sunday afternoon sometime during the months the school is open: from May through October from 1-4 p.m.

My sincere thanks to all who have made for another eventful Society year.

Fannie R. Gabriel, President

## **REMINDER: The Grant House and Gardens Open House on June 3, 2001**

The Wintonbury Historical Society invites you to a Gala Reception and Tour of the David Grant house and gardens at 77 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield. Don and Jan Baker, current owners, have offered the use of their house for a fund raising party for the Filley House Restoration Fund. The event is on Sunday, June 3, 2001 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and will include a tour of the house and gardens and champagne, wine and hors d'oeuvres. For tickets, call 243-5195, 242-2953 or e-mail Lmas36@home.com. This is an opportunity not to be missed! The Grant House, built in 1832, is a magnificent and gracious home, lovingly cared for, and will give us excellent ideas for restoring our Filley House.

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### **Old Farm School Docents Needed!**

Be a docent! You as a docent at the Old Farm School will receive excellent training and education about the history of the Old Farm School, how it was run and built, what school was like for an 18<sup>th</sup> century Wintonbury student, what toys these children played with, what kinds of books they were given, and what they learned in school. We have a wide variety of children's artifacts that you will learn about and share this knowledge with people who come on Sunday afternoons to see our Old Farm School from 1-4 through October 15<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Mary Murray at 242-0323.

### **Call for Historic Gardeners!**

We will be breaking ground shortly for a small, historic garden not far from the front door of the Filley House. Named Julia's Garden in honor of Julia A. Newberry Filley, the first woman to live in the house, this small plot needs gardeners. Following the guidelines of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this is the first step to a comprehensive plan for the landscaping and gardens for the Filley House site itself. Please call Sharon Steinberg, research chair, at home at 286-1066 or e-mail your interest to her at [cd0000910@mindspring.com](mailto:cd0000910@mindspring.com).

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### **OUR ANCIENT CEMETERIES**

Hold Saturday, July 21, 10 - 2 for a special Filley House fundraising event. Ancient cemetery expert, Ruth Shapleigh-Brown of the CT Gravestone Network will guide us through identifying carvers, the how-to's and why for's of ancient stone restoration, preservation, and some tricks to reading those hard-to-read markings. Watch for flyers and announcements in the Bloomfield Journal and Hartford Courant.

If interested in becoming a member of the Community Education Committee, please call Judi Sitkin at 232-4602. We have a variety of programs on the burner.

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### **Welcome New Members!**

Robin Cloud  
Patricia Roohr  
Estelle Taylor  
Bernadene Owens  
Constance Neyer  
Kevin Johnson

A correction:

Please note that Barbara Jay Gardner, a new member announced in the last newsletter, is Barbara J. Filley Gardner, the great, great granddaughter of Julia A. Newberry Filley – Barbara loves verbenas, too! (see Julia's diary in this issue) **Welcome ! -**

**Jean Buscarello, Membership Chair**

## ***From Julia's Garden:***

Tuesday, April 27, 1852

Busy cleaning house most of the day.  
Just at night rode down to Steeles with  
Husband and got some mountain ash trees for  
my yard. Excessively cold coming home.  
Expect to take cold

Thursday, September 16, 1852

Have been over to quilt for Harriet to  
day – it is very cool – went on to the hill for  
peaches. Mrs. Kingsbury's child died of  
Dysentery.

Monday, May 23, 1853

Called at Mr. Wilcox's \_\_\_ my old home –  
It is delightful there now – the lilacs are in full  
bloom – and every[thing] looks so green and  
fresh – Mrs. W. feels quite lonely – and a little  
homesick I think – Called also at Mr.  
Whitmans

May 1853

I have planted a number of trees and  
shrubs this spring

Atthias – Roses – Honeysuckles Poplars  
and other forest trees

Louis and I set out a Maple, north of the house  
– which he planted three years since – and it is  
quite a favorite with us – Will either of us live  
to see its branches for a shade? God only  
knows – Man sows the seeds – and some one  
unknown to us may reap the fruits

Saturday, May 20, 1854

Have been to Hartford. . . Brought home  
some dahlias Heliotropes and verbenas

Transcribed by Sharon Y. Steinberg.  
Permission of Connecticut Historical Society

## **BICYCLING THROUGH OUR ANCIENT HISTORY**

Twenty-three Bloomfield High School Social Studies students, two social studies teachers, Mrs. Nelson-Kauffman and Mr. Johnson, one parent, and Police Department Community Services Liaison, Officer Bolden participated in an outdoor classroom event on May 14. Led by Judi Sitkin and based on the "Bicycling From Wintonbury To Bloomfield" short ride, the group cycled through some ancient Wintonbury history. After a short stop at Bloomfield Bicycle Shop, we met Lucy Woodford Wirsul at Latimer Hill Cemetery for a wonderful introduction to the early settlers and Lucy's Woodford ancestors. The students spent additional time exploring the names and dates in this historical treasure.

From there, we rode to the Old Farm School where Mary Murray tied together the history of the ancient schoolhouse with the Woodford family and many other early settlers. Bell ringing announced our presence many, many times and students found much to excite their academic imaginations.

We hope this will be the first in a series of school oriented programs sponsored by the Wintonbury Historical Society for the benefit of our home and public school programs.

Judi Sitkin, Education Chair

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### **SATURDAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT THE FILLEY HOUSE!**

Are you interested in hands-on involvement with the Filley House project? Do you want to meet people who love the house and site enough to work on Saturday mornings? We need help! On most Saturdays mornings, beginning at around 9:30, some of us go up to the site and work on a variety of small projects. We are currently rehabilitating the well house, such as putting on appropriate shingles and siding, and also putting in a historic garden. If you are interested, either come up to the site, or call Sharon Steinberg at 286-1066.

### **Visit from the Filley Family**

Col. O.D Filley, Jr., his wife, Marion Shaffer Filley, his daughter Barbara Filley Gardner, and her husband Bob Gardner visited Bloomfield on Mother's Day weekend, which was also Marion Filley's birthday – happy birthday! The family met some old friends and made some new ones at a gathering graciously hosted by Duncaster, toured their ancestral home, and enjoyed their visit. O.D., Jr., is Capt. Oliver's great, great grandson (Capt. Oliver, Jay Humphrey Filley, Louis James Filley, Oliver Dwight). Marion, (nee Shaffer), grew up in the Roberts house (formerly Dr. McCrann's house, now owned by the Farnham family) and met O.D., Jr. in Bloomfield when they were young. We wish them well, we look forward to their next visit, and welcome them as new members of the Wintonbury Historical Society.

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**Wintonbury Historical Society  
P.O. Box 7454  
Bloomfield, CT 06002**

### **Filley Fest is Coming – With Your Help!**

We have scheduled our Second Annual Filley Fest for Saturday, September 8, 2001, but it won't happen without your help! We need people to help make decisions about what our Filley Fest will be this year. We have been given a grant of \$1,000 from the Greater Hartford Arts Council, and we have lots of ideas, but we need yours, too. We plan to meet up at the house on Saturday mornings along with the volunteers – who also are working on planning and participating in the event – we welcome everyone's ideas and input! Please call Sharon Steinberg at 286-1066 or Fannie Gabriel at 242-1016 for more information about upcoming meetings.

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***Submit all articles for The Wintonbury Drummer, the Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society of Bloomfield, to Sharon Steinberg, Editor, 12 Regency Drive, #7, Bloomfield, CT 06002; or to Fannie Gabriel, President, 400 Seabury Drive, #5158, Bloomfield, CT 06002.***