



# The Wintonbury Drummer

Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society

Bloomfield, Connecticut

February 2019

## SARA FRANKLIN INTRODUCES VINTAGE COOKBOOK AUTHOR

**Prosser Public Library Community Room  
Wednesday, February 6, 2019, 6:00 to 7:30 PM**

Edna Lewis (1916-2006) wrote some of America's most resonant, lyrical, and significant cookbooks, including the now-classic *The Taste of Country Cooking*. Lewis cooked and wrote as a means to explore her memories of childhood on a farm in Freetown, Virginia, a community first founded by black families freed from slavery. Her reputation as a trailblazer in the revival of regional cooking and as a progenitor of the farm-to-table movement continues to grow.



Edna Lewis

Speaker Sara B. Franklin is the editor of the book, *Edna Lewis: At the Table with an American Original*. The book features essays by food-world stars, who reveal their own encounters with Edna Lewis. Together they penetrate the mythology around Lewis and illuminate her legacy for a new generation.

Franklin has a PhD in Food Studies from New York University. She teaches courses on food culture, writing, and oral history at NYU's Gallatin School for Individualized Study and via the NYU Prison Education Initiative at Wallkill Correctional Facility. She lives with her husband, chef Chris Bradley, their twins, Cal and Eliza, and their rambunctious Boston terrier in Kingston, New York.

**READ IT IN THIS ISSUE:** **Page 2:** Board of Directors November and January Highlights; Upcoming Events. **Page 3:** Seven Ways History is Essential, No. 7; New Member Benefit for 2019; Flea Market in May; Third Graders Visit Metacomet School. **Pages 4-5:** Destiny Church, Blue Hills Avenue Extension; **Page 6:** Bloomfield 100 Years Ago; **Page 7:** the Woodford Barn fire; **Page 8:** Index for 2018, Honor Roll of Donors, State Historian's daily email.

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vacancy

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHTS FOR NOVEMBER AND JANUARY**

The Board met on November 14 and January 16 at the Gabriel History Center. The December 31 financial report showed income of \$8,468 and expenses of \$4,236. The Year-end Appeal received \$2,260. The Board adopted a 2018-2019 budget of \$9,310.

The successful October Art & Architecture Tour resulted in 85 tickets sold and net income of \$2,312, split evenly between the Society and Ironwood Community Partners. The event raised needed funds and, perhaps more important, raised townspeople's esteem for the Society. A second tour is planned for 2020.

Some members of the Board met with the Bloomfield Beautification Committee at town hall in October and January. The Committee offered to help with plant selection for the Old Farm School gardens. Practical hands-and-knees help will still be needed from Society members and, hopefully, the local Lions Club. The Board also discussed maintenance issues at the Old Farm School.

In regard to digitizing old issues of the *Bloomfield Journal* and *ZIP*, Allison Wilkos has found out that the Connecticut State Library may be able to help with expenses if it receives a certain NEH grant. Hopefully, this is a project for 2019.

**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

**March 6:** Dr. Barbara Beeching on "Mrs. Auerbach, Mrs. Woodhouse, and the Service Bureau for Women's Organizations."

**April 3:** Bloomfield's Trap Rock Houses, with Ralph Schmoll & Ron Marchetti

**May 8:** Marilyn Johnston's report on "Bloomfield, The All-American City: A Retrospective 2001-2018."

**OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS**

Caruso's Auto and Body, 36 Tunxis Avenue  
 Sir Speedy Printing, 21 Old Windsor Road  
 Geissler's Supermarket, 40 Tunxis Avenue  
 Executive Financial Services, 19 Cherry Hills Circle  
*(And there's room for more!)*

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## SEVEN WAYS HISTORY IS ESSENTIAL, #7

LEGACY » History, saved and preserved, is the foundation for future generations. History is crucial to preserving democracy for the future by explaining our shared past. Through the preservation of authentic, meaningful places, documents, artifacts, images, and stories, we leave a foundation upon which future Americans can build. Without the preservation of our histories, future citizens will have no grounding in what it means to be an American.

*--issued by the History Relevance Campaign, a group of history professionals who met from 2013 to 2015 to formulate these principles. Participants included the American Association for State and Local History. Visit the site at [www.historyrelevance.com](http://www.historyrelevance.com).*

## NEW MEMBER BENEFIT FOR 2019

Now WHS members can get photographs and documents scanned free of charge. Members need only provide a USB storage device which they would receive back containing the scans. In exchange for this service, WHS would receive the right to keep copies of the items in its archives. Photographs could be old, or not—just prior to the age of digital cameras. With the increasing possibility of storms, fire, floods, burst water pipes, leaky roofs, etc., archivists recommend scanning/ photographing as a way to preserve "priceless" family photographs. Please contact Janis Langston if you'd like scanning services. Call 243-1531 or just email [wintonburyhistory.genealogy@gmail.com](mailto:wintonburyhistory.genealogy@gmail.com).



## ANNUAL FLEA MARKET AND BAKE SALE: SATURDAY, MAY 4

Start planning now to rent space or contribute baked goods at the WHS Flea Market in May. Call or email the Society to reserve a space. Call Libbie or Ruthanne about baking/helping.

## THIRD-GRADERS VISIT OLD FARM SCHOOL



As part of their study of local history, on December 4 and 6, about 140 Metacomet School students in Grade 3 walked over to the Old Farm School in four groups. Janet and Don Baker demonstrated colonial clothing and described what life was like back then.

(r. pierce photos)





## CATALOG OF CONGREGATIONS, #19 of a series

### DESTINY CHURCH, 1061 Blue Hills Avenue Extension

The story of Destiny Church begins in Granby in the 1970s when the Rev. William Whitsitt was pastoring a congregation known as Life Church on Griffin Road, just off Salmon Brook Street. Whitsitt pastored the congregation until going into retirement, but right around the turn of the century, he came out of retirement to start pastoring New Mercies Apostolic Church in Bloomfield.

Simultaneously, in the year 2000, Ray McDonald of Avon started a new Church with a handful of parishioners, naming it Valley Apostolic Church. They met in rented quarters for about four years; and, when Robert Linder became pastor, the church began renting the chapel at Ethel Walker School in Simsbury. About four or five years later Steven Harvey was named pastor, and the name of the congregation was changed to Life United Pentecostal Church. He served there eleven years.

Meanwhile, in Bloomfield, New Mercies Apostolic Church was meeting weekly in the chapel of First Congregational Church. This congregation grew in size under the pastoral care of William Whitsitt. Then the former Our Lady of Assumption building on Blue Hills Avenue was put up for sale. Several buyers wanted it, but the New Mercies bid was accepted. Since the Boys Club had been using it for several years, church members had to do a lot of work to clean and redecorate the building. When they moved in, they were happy to have their own building and be able to meet there whenever they wanted. Sadly, Pastor Whitsitt passed away in November 2015. The church went through a difficult period, with no pastor and attendance dwindling as the church board held it together while searching for a new pastor.

So there were two congregations: one, a church with a building and no pastor, and the other, a church with a pastor and no building.

In its search for a pastor, New Mercies asked Steven Harvey to become its minister. He preached for them in July 2016. The following month, while Harvey and his wife were in England, New Mercies called him to be their pastor—waking him up about two in the morning (England time) with its phone call. He accepted the call, and when he got back to his Simsbury congregation, he told them they'd be meeting the following Sunday in Bloomfield. For a short while, the churches visited back and forth, and the people got to know one another. Then, later in 2016, the congregations voted to merge into one new church, to be called Destiny Church.

In one of Pastor Harvey's first sermons to the merged congregation, he brought some potatoes into the pulpit. He then drew an analogy between (continued on next page—>)



Destiny Church

R. Pierce photo



marriage and the merger of churches. The potatoes, he said, have been skinned and boiled. A man and a woman who marry have to be “skinned” (give up some of each individual’s self-centeredness) and “boiled” (softened, made palatable or amenable to a loving relationship). Mr. Harvey then put the potatoes into a bowl in view of the congregation and proceeded to mash them. Once this was done, and some seasoning added, he said, the mashed potatoes made a fine meal. In a satisfying marriage, two people become as one. In the same way, two congregations coming together will go through this process before they reach unanimity. Today, more than two years after the merger, Pastor Harvey can say that it has gone very well. The church is thriving and growing. Indeed, it has plans to build an addition to its building to relieve overcrowding and enhance ministry.

Steven Harvey is an ordained minister of the United Pentecostal Church. His wife, Ruth, is Associate Pastor of Destiny Church. They live in Canton and have two daughters. Steven has also worked as a sales and marketing executive with several Connecticut companies. The church is also served by Assistant Pastor Anthony Goodnight, who works with children and youth.

Destiny Church has several ministries. Sunday School for children and adults starts at 10 AM, with the main worship service beginning at 11AM on Sundays. On Wednesday evenings there is Bible Study at 7:30 PM, and once a month this is divided into “Just Men” and “Proverbs 31 Woman” groups, in addition to “Kid Life” for children. The ladies have a prayer group that meets on first Mondays of each month from 7:15 PM to 8:00 PM. Special events are scheduled for children and youth throughout the year. The men get together for study or for social events, such as the annual charter fishing excursion out of New London, while the women also have yearly social events such as the Ladies Brunch and End-of-Year Banquet. The congregation supports about fifteen missionaries around the world. Destiny is a friendly, welcoming congregation that looks forward to a promising future.



Destiny Church congregation, January 2019

Photo supplied by Lindsay Becvar

*--This article uses notes taken in an interview with church members Hope Bruff, Lindsey Becvar, and Pastor Steven Harvey. Some material is included from the church’s website, [www.ctdestiny.church](http://www.ctdestiny.church) and from its FaceBook page.*

[See the explanatory sidebars on Pentecostalism published in *The Wintonbury Drummer* in April 2017 (page 5) and February 2018 (page 5). For Our Lady of the Assumption Mission, see the article on Sacred Heart Church, June 2018 (pages 4-6). All available at [www.bloomfieldcthistory.org](http://www.bloomfieldcthistory.org). See also *Images of Bloomfield*, page 20, for a photo of Our Lady of the Assumption being moved across Blue Hills Avenue.]

# BLOOMFIELD ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

## March 19, 1919

Tonight, at the town hall, the Polly-Anna Girls' Club, assisted by the Beacon Club, both of the Congregational Church, will give the three-act comedy, "Tommy's Wife."

## May 3, 1919

Wagoner Frederick E. Pinney, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Pinney of Tunxis [sic] has arrived in Bloomfield, having been mustered out of the service at Camp Devens last Tuesday. Wagoner Pinney enlisted in the 102d Ambulance Company of the Connecticut National Guard and reported with that organization at Niantic early in July 1917. He went across and returned with the same outfit, being a member of the Yankee Division. He was in many engagements and was lucky as he came through without a scratch.

Wagoner Pinney is the proud possessor of a citation in the Twenty-sixth Division orders which reads as follows: "Wagoner Frederick E. Pinney, 102d Ambulance Company. I have read with much pleasure the reports of your regimental commander and brigade commander in regards to your gallant conduct and devotion to duty in the field on October 22 and 27, 1918, evacuating the wounded under heavy enemy fire north of Verdun, and have ordered your name and deed to be entered in the records of the Yankee Division. Signed by C. R. Edwards, Major General.



Town Hall/Prosser Library Building, and  
Gabb Tobacco Warehouse, Tunxis Avenue,  
about 1919: WHS archives photo

## May 20, 1919

A welcome home reception was given Raymond H. Barnard Sunday at the Beacon Club of the Congregational Church. Mr. Barnard gave a short talk about his experiences in France.

Miss Alice Longworth of Jerome avenue, who has been in the St. Francis hospital two months, has returned to the home of her brother-in-law, James G. Lagan, Jr., on Jerome avenue. She was struck by a trolley car about eight months ago and has never fully recovered from the effects of her injuries and shock. This is the second time she has been in the hospital since the accident, this time undergoing an operation. Her condition is now much improved.

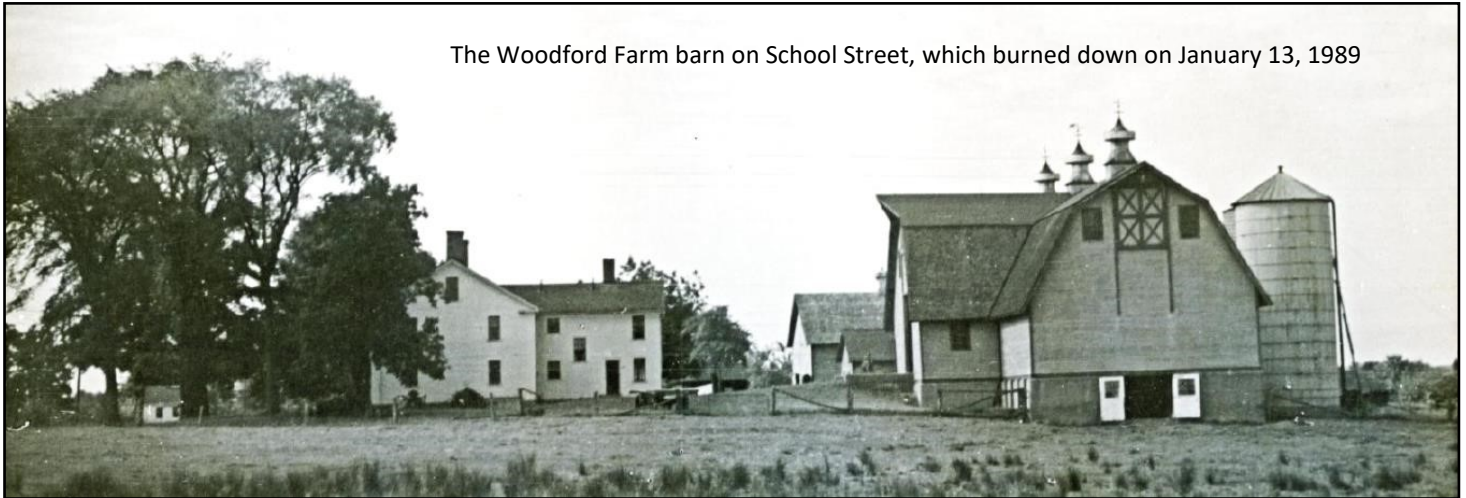
## June 15, 1919

Miss Edna A. Woodford, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Woodford of School street, surprised her parents last Thursday evening by appearing at home from Camp Sheridan, Ill., on a twenty-day leave of absence. Miss Woodford graduated from the Hartford Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1917 and early in 1918 she enlisted in the United States army as a nurse. She was sent to Fort Houston, Tex., and was located there for many months. Recently she was transferred to Camp Sheridan, which is about twenty miles from Chicago, where she expected to remain for some time. Miss Woodford likes the work in the army hospitals and will probably remain in the service for some time.

Bloomfield is now the home of a Ham and Egg Club. On Friday evening an expert from the Hartford County Farm Bureau was present at the meeting of Troop No. 55 (?), Boy Scouts of America, and organized a pig and poultry club. For the past several years there has been a pig club in Bloomfield and one year Samuel Walters, Jr., received first prize at the exhibit at the close of the season. (continued on next page —>)

This year a poultry club is also added on the list and at the meeting the other evening it was voted to call the new combined clubs the Ham and Egg Club. Ned Haley of Tunxis avenue was elected president for the coming season, George Maher was elected vice-president and Nicholas Saraceno of Wintonbury avenue was elected secretary and treasurer. Weekly reports are to be handed to the secretary and each entrant is to keep a complete record throughout the summer of his pig or fowls.

—from *The Hartford Courant* archives, accessed at [www.researchitct.org](http://www.researchitct.org)



The Woodford Farm barn on School Street, which burned down on January 13, 1989

### It's Just an Old Barn by Lucy Ann (Woodford) Wirsul

It's just an old barn, built for cows and hay.  
It's just an old barn. Why grieve? they say.  
That barn held memories of families and life,  
Of work and play and love and strife.

Built by the Barrett Brothers in 1891:  
Architectural features never before done.  
The hayloft upstairs was large and gracious;  
The cattle area was efficient and spacious.

If barns could talk, what stories they'd tell,  
A great lot of history, of lives lived well.  
This beautiful barn was center to farming,  
And held activities that were even charming.

Corn husking Bees and Barn dancing Socials  
Were held in the '20's for friends and locals.  
My teenage years held Birthday dances  
Where boys and girls exchanged shy glances.

Feeding the cattle every morning and night:  
A menu for each one that was just right.  
Filling the hay mows, no glamour to it:  
Just muscle and sweat, you had to be fit.

Milking the dairy cows two times a day  
Was life for a farmer who liked it that way.  
Calves were bottled-fed, cows got hay;  
Kids liked helping Dad every day.

To many a pet, the barn was shelter;  
Crows and barn swallows flew helter-skelter.  
At one time or other, a donkey and goats  
Were pets of the children who brushed their coats.

Chickens, dogs, puppies and ducks,  
Prize bulls and oxen and even woodchucks.  
Raccoon and pony were pets so special  
Who used the barn, to rest and nestle.

Pigs had their babies in pens saw-dusted;  
Cats hid their kittens from those distrusted.  
A goose once roamed the barnyard fully,  
Proudly aware he was being a bully.

Sheep once used the barn for home,  
But in the daylight they could roam.  
Some babies born there went to school;  
The nursery kids thought they were cool.

'Twas just an old barn, built for cows and hay,  
But sadly, some boys burned it down one day.  
'Twas just an old barn, built for cows and hay,  
But memories were in it; I'll treasure each day.

—Thanks to Lucy Wirsul and Janice Langston for  
contributing this poem and a photograph of the  
Woodford barn which was on School Street.

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## HONOR ROLL

### OF YEAR-END DONORS

*(Donations above and beyond membership, as of January 1, 2019)*

Dori-Ann and Roger Albert  
 David and Paula Baram  
 Michael and Shelley Barker  
 Douglas and Diana Barnard  
 Barbara J. Beeching  
 Doris H. Biella  
 Louis Blumenfeld  
 John and Rise Cappadona  
 David and Joan Cooney  
 Margaret Cunnane  
 Kathleen Curran  
 Kevin Gough & Paula Jones  
 George W. Grisevich  
 David and Lois Hager  
 Jacqueline Isaacson  
 Marilyn and Ray Johnston  
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 Nancy M. Kline  
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 Jean and Richard Pierce  
 Ralph and Louise Schmoll  
 Sydney T. Schulman  
 Robert and Sharon Smith  
 Patrick J. Sullivan  
 Margaret B. Thomas  
 Gail D. Tinto  
 Claudia P. Wright

## CONNECTICUT HISTORY EMAIL IS A SUCCESS

State Historian Walt Woodward's office began last June sending out a daily email called "Today in Connecticut History." It has turned out to be both informative and fascinating to read. You can receive this free email by going to <https://todayincthistory.com> and signing up. You'll enjoy it!