



The Wintonbury Drummer

Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society

Bloomfield, Connecticut

June 2019

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12: WALT WOODWARD AND THE BAND OF STEADY HABITS AT SACRED HEART CHURCH

Potluck Supper at 5:30 PM; Annual Meeting at 6:30; Program at 7:00

They're back—in response to last year's enjoyable performance! We have another opportunity to hear Walt Woodward and the Band of Steady Habits.

Walt Woodward is Connecticut's fifth State Historian is a musician and a professor of history at UConn. The six-member acoustic Band of Steady Habits came together as a group in 2014 to share their love of music, and to use their talents to help create a new kind of public history presentation. Rachel Smith, Teagan Smith, Jeremy Teitelbaum, Walt Woodward, Duke York, and Rick Spencer use banjo, guitars, violin, recorders, bass, percussion, and beautiful harmonies to perform songs – some old, some original, and some contemporary – to accompany the visually rich and evocative stories of state historian Walt Woodward.



Photo by Christine Petit



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vacancy

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Directors met on May 15 with fifteen directors, officers, and committee chairs present. The treasurer's report for April 30 showed YTD income of \$10,242 and expenses of \$7,005. The Flea Market and Bake Sale of May 4 added \$815 to the income side.

Glowing reports were received of the Traprock Houses program on April 3 and the All-America City program on May 8. Prosser Library is producing a video of Marilyn Johnston's presentation on the 8th which will be made available to the public.

Dick Hughes met with an architect and roof consultant to examine the Old Farm School. There are some problems that need to be fixed, but no estimate has been provided as yet. Dick is looking at improvements in roof, windows, gutters, and other areas so as to preserve this treasure of a building. These repairs will depend upon grants received.

Doug Barnard has got one estimate on replacing the History Center ramp and will be coming up with a recommendation soon. This will not be a cheap fix, as we need a quality ramp that will last for years to come. This may have to come out of our budget.

Libbie Merrow reported that the flower gardens project is still in the works but has been delayed by seeking approvals from town agencies.

Nominations for 2019-20 include Tobie Katz and Wendy Wolcott as new directors.

Ron Marchetti's house tours on Sunday, June 9 (part of Celebrate Bloomfield) already have about fifteen preregistrations. Anyone wishing to reserve a place should contact Ron at marchettiron@gmail.com.

Bill Weissenburger is planning to invite representatives from area historical societies to a luncheon in September at Seabury at which the speaker will be Rob Kret, new CEO of the Connecticut Historical Society.

Visit the History Campus this summer! Buildings open Sundays,

we ♥
volunteers!

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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Bus Tours of Bloomfield's Sites of Architectural and Historic Interest

Sunday, June 9, 2019

12:30 pm—Bloomfield's Gradual Shift toward Suburban Living.

2:30 pm—Bloomfield's Historic Houses of the Future.

The Wintonbury Historical Society will present two tours of the town, each covering homes and sites of distinct time periods in the town's development. Attendees can join both tours; the second tour may be more instructive if one joins the first tour, but its subject matter and presentation does not require that the trips be taken in sequence.

The first trip will depart from the Fannie Gabriel History Center/Old Farm School at 12:30 PM, and it should take about one hour. The tour is entitled "**Bloomfield's Gradual Shift toward Suburban Living.**" The tour will focus on developments in the town's growth as it evolved between approximately 1890 and 1940. While Bloomfield's economy and landscape during this timeframe retained a largely agricultural core, accelerating changes in society, such as standardized mechanization, the development of the automobile, and the availability of innumerable goods and services that could be purchased instead of produced at individual home sites, fed a growing demand for homes that accommodated individual families. Numerous trends in styles, size and location evolved and are reflected in Bloomfield's developing townscape. Many of these homes remain completely viable and desirable residences today; and as such, they often hide in plain sight to the casual observer. The intent of this tour is to focus attention on the unique and often quite handsome buildings of this period.



Senior Center photo

The second trip will depart from the same location at 2:30 PM, and it should last a bit more than an hour. It is entitled, "**Bloomfield's Historic Houses of the Future.**" This tour will be a slightly updated version of the tour that was initially presented in 2016. The focus will cover Bloomfield's transformation into a much more suburban landscape during the years 1945-1970. Sites of interest will include homes built immediately after World War II, the development of subdivisions, and the simultaneous construction of architecturally unique and significant homes.

Attendees can join both tours; the second tour may be more instructive if one joins the first tour, but its subject matter and presentation does not require that the trips be taken in sequence.



CATALOG OF CONGREGATIONS, conclusion

The Wintonbury Drummer appreciates the cooperation of the following churches which appeared in our Catalog of Congregations series. It was a rewarding project in many ways, and we met some great people. Visit the Society's website and find these issues of *The Drummer* under Resources/Newsletters.

Rehoboth Church of God	-	June 2015
Bethel AME Church	-	September 2015
Wintonbury Church	-	November 2015
First Cathedral	-	February 2016
Old St. Andrews Church	-	April 2016
St. John's Full Gospel	-	June 2016
Beth Hillel Synagogue	-	September 2016
First Congregational Church	-	November 2016
Lighthouse for Humanity	-	February 2017
Apostolic Fellowship Church	-	April 2017
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church	-	June 2017
Church of Latter Day Saints	-	September 2017
United Methodist Church	-	November 2017
New Testament Tabernacle	-	February 2018
Hope 7 th Day Adventist Church	-	April 2018
Sacred Heart Church	-	June 2018
Congregation B'Nai Shalom	-	September 2018
Chinese Baptist Church	-	November 2018
Destiny Church	-	February 2019
Greater Hartford Wesleyan Church	-	April 2019

Other known congregations that were not included for various reasons:

Calvary Church of God in Christ, 770 Blue Hills Avenue
 Full Gospel Foundation Building Ministries, 42 East Dudley Town Road
 Gethsemane Baptist Church, 570 Tower Avenue
 Ghanaian Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 76 East Dudley Town Road
 Grace and Mercy Ministries, 30 Tunxis Avenue
 Jehovah's Witnesses, 580 Tower Avenue
 Nalandabodhi Connecticut, 3 Barnard Lane
 New Covenant Baptist Church, 31 Walsh Street
 Pentecostal Church of Faith, 5 Chapel Street





BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: THE GREEN MACHINE

BLOOMFIELD BUSINESS CELEBRATES 45TH ANNIVERSARY



In 1974, Joel Caplin started a new business called Lawn King of West Hartford that only provided lawn care services. When in April 1975 he hired a young man named Richard Zito through the Bloomfield High School Work Experience Program, Caplin couldn't have known how much that hiring would improve his business. It was soon to be renamed "The Green Machine" and to see substantial progress.

Rick Zito had grown up on Duncaster Road in Bloomfield, one of six children of Frank and Millie Zito. Frank was a pilot, a builder, and a part-time Bloomfield policeman. Millie loved flowers and plants of all kinds. She convinced local garden clubs to care for several flower gardens on town land and got the town's Beautification Committee started. The flower bed on the southwest corner of the town green is the Millie Zito Memorial Garden. She and Rick studied together to become state-certified Master Gardeners.

In the year 2000, Joel Caplin decided that it was time to retire. Rick Zito, a partner since 1982, was able to buy the company, which by then was doing mowing, installing sprinkler systems, designing landscapes & hardscapes, and plowing. Today his three sons work with him. Ricky Jr. and Greg are also Master Gardeners and work in landscape design and lawn care respectively. Steve oversees hardscaping and excavation. With its headquarters at 1345 Blue Hills Avenue, the company employs about forty people, the majority of whom have been there for ten to twenty-five years. It offers its workers benefits and a 401 (k) plan. Rick expects people to enjoy their work and take satisfaction in making homes and businesses more attractive.

Green Machine customers may be found from southern Massachusetts to southern Connecticut with an emphasis on the Greater Hartford area. The company also does work for the town of Bloomfield (town green and Filley Park, for example) and maintains two public gardens on a volunteer basis (Loeffler Road at Simsbury Road and Cottage Grove at Blue Hills Avenue). An efficient office staff greets the public and helps everything function smoothly. In season, company employees may work at 700 homes in a week's time. They offer lawn care and fertilization, tick control, landscaping, hardscaping, irrigation, lawn mowing and maintenance, commercial property management, and commercial snow and ice management. The company is accredited in organic land care and has ten other current state licenses and certificates. Its phone is 860-243-9000, and its web site address is

www.greenmachinect.com. This longtime Bloomfield business, a local success story, celebrates its 45th anniversary this year.



Green Machine headquarters
Company photo

Thanks to Rick Zito, Sr., Greg Zito, and Lisa McGloin, who all contributed to this article.



Photos from the Trap Rock House Program at Prosser Library on April 3. Left: Ralph Schmoll hands the microphone to Ed Stanley. Center: Ed Stanley, author of Trap Rock Houses study, now of Boston, but formerly active in WHS. Right: Ron Marchetti responds to audience questions. (Photos by Richard Pierce)



PHOTO ALBUM



Tag Sale Treasures



Flea Market Photos May 4, 2019

By Janis Langston

Center: Ralph Schmoll and Doug Barnard, WHS volunteers



HOUSE WITH A HISTORY: 34 Filley Street

Over Tunxis Trails (2011) explains that Newberry was a well-known name in early Wintonbury and Windsor. The Newberrys had a residence in Windsor and a family farm that covered a large area at the southern end of Filley Street in Wintonbury. Several Newberrys built homes there, and three Newberry houses still remain: #11, built in 1785; #21, built in 1835; and #39, built in 1798. (See *Over Tunxis Trails*, page 22.)

But that wasn't all. In 1850, "the Newberrys had a small four-room two-story house built on a two-acre plot across the road, now #34, for the use of their farm workers. The original house is the section facing south toward Wintonbury Avenue. Over the years there have been additions and extensive remodeling." (pages 22-23)

Society members Bob and Edna Demery are now the owners of 34 Filley Street, and they have shared two photographs of the original four-room house. If you have driven by, particularly in the summer when their gardens are thriving, you'll have noticed that this is one of the best-kept houses on the street. Sitting in the Demerys' spacious living room with its large fireplace, one can hardly imagine how the property looked in the days of the Newberry Farm.

Further research is needed, but it would seem that the Newberrys farmed their Filley Street land for over two hundred years, until in 1923 Frederick C. Newberry sold off some acreage to Berdina B. Michael. Michael sold the property only three years later, in 1926, to Elna Koldenborg. When, shortly thereafter, Elna married Albert Neuhauser, he became half owner. The Neuhausers spent the next twenty years in the house, selling it in 1946 to Theodore and Clara Makula. When Clara died unexpectedly in 1947, the property was deeded to the Koldenborg Family Trust; and then, in 2003, the Demerys took ownership.



Left and Right:
photos provided
by Robert and
Edna Demery of 34
Filley Street when
it was new. Be-
low: Town photo
of the house to-
day.



Note: *The Wintonbury Drummer* spotlighted its first historic house in the November 2018 issue when it featured Denise Robinson's home at 32 Elizabeth Avenue.



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ARE YOU A MEMBER?

Put your membership to work with these 2019 benefits!

Do you have photographs of Bloomfield and your family that are precious to you?

Want to share them with members of your family? What will happen if there is a disaster (fire, flood, broken water pipe, leaky roof)? Get your photos scanned with no charge.

√Put the flatbed scanner to work making High Resolution files. (value: ~46¢/scan)

Want to create your own episode of "Finding Your Roots"?

√Schedule a session with a volunteer genealogist to get you started; or help clear a "brick wall."

Want to know more about your home and its history?

√Come search our files and receive 1 x 1 assistance to discover its past.



IF NOT, PLEASE JOIN, AND THEN...

Put your membership to work!

Annual dues (single or couple):

<input type="checkbox"/> Student: \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor: \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Booster: \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business: \$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate: \$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: \$150.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Champion: \$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> New		
Name:			
Address (if change):			
City:		State:	Zip:
Home phone		Cell:	
Email:			
If a gift membership, donor's name:			