



Ellington Historical Society

P.O. Box 73

Ellington, Conn. 06029

February 2013 Newsletter

February Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, February 28, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. Following the business meeting, restoration specialist Steve Marshall will present a program on a recent project, the restoration of the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse in New London. His work on old buildings has taken him from the bottom of a well to the top of a steeple and everywhere in between. Refreshments for the meeting will be provided by Sharon Czyz, David Lehmann, and David Danforth.



Upcoming Programs and Events

Thursday, April 25, 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library, Richard DeLuca: *Post Roads and Iron Horses*. New York to Boston: From Six Days to Six Hours! This program focuses on the changes in transportation technology from the days of the first post rider, through the days of turnpikes and stages coaches and steamboats to the railroads and electric railways, and the quickening pace of travel between the region's two largest cities, New York and Boston.

Saturday, May 18, *Flea Market/Bake Sale* on the grounds of the Nellie McKnight Museum. 9:00 a.m. - 2:00p.m. Nellie McKnight Museum open for tours.

Thursday, June 27, 6:30 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library
Potluck supper and annual elections (Members Only)

News from the President-Tim Fahy

Membership dues: Some members have not paid their annual dues. Reminders are being sent to them with this newsletter. If you receive one, please send your dues to the above address. Individual: \$10, Senior individual (over 62): \$8, Family: \$20, Senior family (both over 62): \$15, Patron: \$25, Business: \$50.

EHS member and archaeologist Mandy Ranslow followed up the discovery of a small pewter vessel at last summer's archaeological dig on the grounds of the Nellie McKnight Museum with an investigation by the Pewter Society into its origins. Mandy forwarded the following report to us, which confirmed that the vessel is a 19th century toy:



Any information supplied represents an opinion based on the original information and/or images provided and whilst we believe that the information below to be sound, we cannot guarantee this as we have not inspected the item, and our knowledge of pewter and pewterers is constantly being updated by new research. It is for the sole use of the owner of the item(s) in question to advance his/her knowledge/and under the terms of the offer displayed on the Pewter Society website and any information given cannot be used in connection with the sale or offer for sale of any item about which the information is solicited. It is expressly forbidden for any mention of the Pewter Society or any of its named members to be used in connection with any such sale or offer for sale or in descriptive text.

At first sight this could have been a very small, early two handled pewter loving cup similar to those from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century except that the handles are rather unique and the shape of the body of a not dissimilar but later bulbous style and closer in size to the toy tea set sugar bowls popular in the nineteenth century. I have consulted a distinguished Past President of the Pewter Society and he is also of the opinion that it is a nineteenth century children's toy rather than an early piece. The absence of decoration to the body and the rather crude finish of the handles contributed to that attribution.

The fact that the wall of the body is quite thin suggests that it is made of Britannia Metal as a pewter body would have had to have been cast and would necessarily have been thicker. The top edge is also shaped to accept a lid, which would be true of a nineteenth century sugar bowl but which would have been everted in the case of most early loving cups, which had no lids. Britannia Metal was not in common use until the nineteenth century as the alloy was only discovered late in the eighteenth. It is pewter by definition but contains no lead in the alloy.

If marked at all by the pewterer who made it the touch or trade mark would normally be found struck on the bottom but occasionally marks have been found on the inside of the body of some nineteenth century measures and similar but the attached image shows that the vessel is full of earth.