

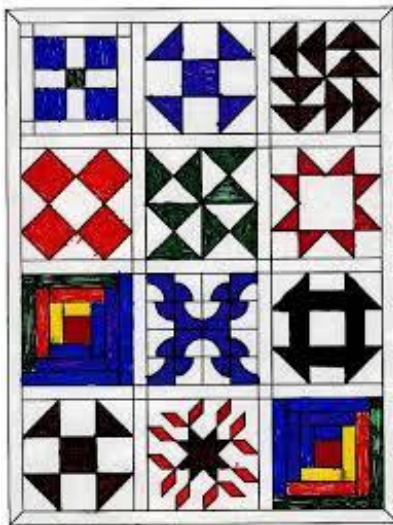


Ellington Historical Society

P.O. Box 73

Ellington, Conn. 06029

February 2016 Newsletter



The Ellington Historical Society will meet on **Thursday, February 25, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street.

After a brief business meeting, **Quilts and the Underground Railroad** will be presented by **Bev Russo**.

The quilt code theory is the idea that African American slaves used quilts to communicate information about how to escape to freedom. Women created quilts to use as signs for escaped slaves travelling north on the Underground Railroad. Bev Russo has a degree in American Studies and Education and has done extensive research on this topic.

The program is free, and the public is invited. Refreshments for the February meeting will be provided by Dave Lehmann and Nancy Lombard.

News from the Curator-Nancy Long

These quiet winter months give us time to think ahead to our museum season beginning on Thursday, May 5:

- The annual **Flea Market and Bake Sale** will be held on Saturday, May 21 from 9:00-2:00. Our event once again coordinates with the Ellington Congregational Church Indoor Tag Sale to offer guests the best of both venues. The museum will be open for tours that day from 9:00-2:00.
- We plan to be open for **Connecticut Open House Day** on Saturday, June 11. This event is sponsored by the Connecticut Office of Tourism and is a statewide event. We will keep you posted on the hours for the museum and our activities for the day.
- This time of year we visit the elementary schools in town and show items from our museum collection and discuss town history. We will be contacting teachers this month to set up visits.

Nellie's Diary

This winter I am reading Nellie McKnight's diaries for details about her life in the center of Ellington. This month's entry is from Saturday, January 31, 1976 and it is the day of the Bicentennial Ball. Nellie is 81 years old:

Sunny most of the day. I had hair-cut and set at Country Curls at 9 a.m. In p.m. took bath and dressed in Frances McKnight Wood's green taffeta dress. At 6:30 Sheldon and Nancy Smith (Ellington Congregational Pastor and his wife) picked me up and took me over to the Bicentennial Ball at Stafford Speedway. Nicely decorated. Many costumes. Didn't start dinner until after 8:00. Chowder, beef, turkey, ham; small round potatoes, corn muffins, squash, string beans, salad, pickles, cranberry sauce, strawberry and rhubarb pie (seemed more like a puff with sauce over it). A performance by the Train Band and then the Grand March led by Robert Cardin and me. People at the head table were introduced. Mr. Paluska (First Selectman) asked to escort me to the podium where I was given a package which proved to be a plaque with a copy of the invitation, ticket, expressions of appreciation. Given corsage of small white rosebuds, baby's breath with white and blue ribbon.



I am interested in any information from society members or the general public about their interactions with Nellie and welcome any recollections about her. Please contact me through the EHS website or at njlong@comcast.net.

News from the Archivist-Lynn Fahy

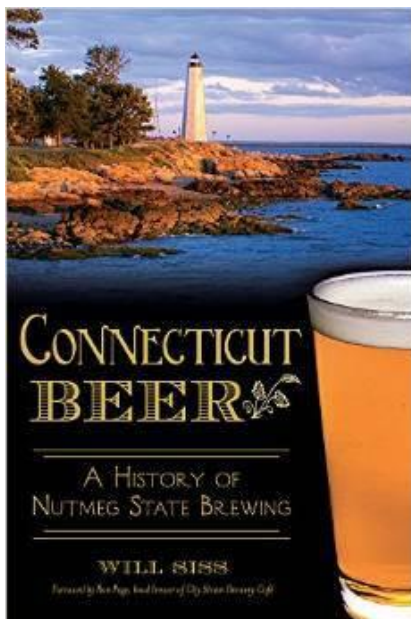
The Nellie McKnight Museum Archives has issues of *Ellington Town Talk* from 1960-1962. It was published weekly at Crystal Lake by Frederick B. McMahon. The Thursday, January 7, 1960 issue had an item titled, "Battle of sexes program'd for Grange meet Jan. 13."

Ellington Grange No. 46 has an interesting program lined up for its regular meeting to be held Wednesday evening, January 13 at the Town Hall. On this meeting night lady and gentlemen teams will each put on a half hours show in competition with each other as the evening's entertainment...Mrs. Rachel Pease is the chairman of the ladies' group and Horace McKnight is in charge of the men. Neither group know(s) what the other is planning for a program and their antics should prove most entertaining. Judging of the competition will be done by visiting Grangers. All Grangers attending this meeting will enjoy the competition with its laughs and real entertainment.

Originally established in Ellington in 1886, Grange No. 46 started out as a group to benefit farmers, with a buying co-op and programs on various aspects of farming. It became involved in community affairs and was a place for social interaction in the town before there were all the opportunities that we have today.

Upcoming meetings

Thursday, April 28, 2016 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library



Connecticut Beer- A History of Nutmeg State Brewing Presented by author Will Siss

Will Siss, author of *Connecticut Beer: A History of Nutmeg State Brewing* (The History Press), will discuss his book and provide a presentation that takes you back in time. He'll talk about beer in Connecticut from its colonial roots to breaking news about the ongoing brewery explosion in the state.

Thursday, June 23, 2016 6:30 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library
Potluck supper (Members Only)

Visit our web site at <http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org>