



Ellington Historical Society

P.O. Box 73

Ellington, Conn. 06029

February 2017 Newsletter



The Ellington Historical Society will meet on **Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street.

Ed Parry, master gunsmith, will present a program about making reproduction guns and how he came to own a gun made for a McKinstry from Ellington. Mr. Parry is a Revolutionary War re-enactor with Ye Olde Lebanon Towne Militia.

Refreshments will be provided by Doris Johnson and Judy Stomberg.

News from Past President-Tim Fahy

Alice Klee Kalas passed away in January. Alice was a member of the Ellington Historical Society for many years. We send our condolences to her family and friends.

The annual **Flea Market and Bake Sale** will be held on Saturday, May 20 from 9:00-2:00. Our event once again coordinates with the Ellington Congregational Church Indoor Tag Sale. The Nellie McKnight Museum will be open for tours that day from 9:00-2:00. Forms to rent a space are on our website <http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/LocalDocFiles/2017TagSaleLetter.pdf>.

Copies of Elizabeth Davis Goddard's book, *A Family Album* will be available for purchase for \$15 when the museum is open for the flea market. Goddard's memoir of growing up in Ellington at the beginning of the 20th century was published by the historical society in 2002. This delightful read includes photos of the Davis family, including her father, Dr. Edwin Davis, who made house calls in a horse and buggy.

We also still have copies of Dorothy Cohen's *Ellington, Chronicles of Change*, reprinted in 2010, available for \$20. Lynn Kloter Fahy's two Images of America books, *Ellington* and *Crystal Lake, Tolland County* are \$21.99 each. Proceeds of the sale of all of these books benefit the historical society.

News from the Curator-Nancy Long



Ellington Historical Society 50th Anniversary

As we begin 2017 it is time to look back fifty years to the formation of the Ellington Historical Society. Selections from minutes will be featured this year to commemorate those who organized the society and remind us how important history is to our community. Nellie McKnight was a driving force in the formation of the historical society and it is not surprising that she bequeathed her home to the society to be used as a museum after her passing in 1981.

The first minutes were recorded on December 15, 1966. An organizational committee met in Hall Memorial Library with eleven attending: Miss Nellie McKnight, Ed Myer, Mrs. Dorothy Hartman, Clyde Cordtsen Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hein, Mrs. Beatrice McConville, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Friedman, M. Harrington, and Mrs. Eva Bordua. Two temporary officers were elected to serve until the society was formally organized: Miss McKnight, Chairman, and Mrs. Eva Bordua.

The American Association of State and Local Historical History provided a guideline for organizing historical society. A committee meeting discussed and personalized these guidelines and the results were presented to the members on January 19, 1967. They were as follows:

The purpose of this society shall be to create interest and activity in the field of local history through:

- Conducting a program of meetings on subjects of local history or historical interest;
- Providing an educational program in cooperation with local organizations by means of exhibits, publications and talks relating to Ellington;
- Acquiring and maintaining for preservation and research a collection of records, facts and material, past and present, relating to the history and to the citizens of Ellington;
- Preserving, identifying and marking buildings and sites of historic interest;
- Carrying on in general any and all activities appropriate for a historical society.

The first open meeting of the Ellington Historical Society was slated for March 1967 and a speaker from the State of Connecticut would present a program for the meeting. Meetings were scheduled for Thursday evenings. A committee was formed to draw up by-laws and set dues.

Installments of the beginnings of the historical society will follow in each newsletter and on our website.

News from the Archivist-Lynn Fahy

Member **Tom Curtiss** recently donated a 1910 personal calendar planner. It was owned by Miss Mabel Berger of Ellington. On the cover of the planner is inscribed, "Compliments of Edward White, Flour, Grain & Feed, Carriages & Wagons, Rockville, Conn."



Writer **Kumiko Makihara** visited the Hall Memorial Library on January 12th to see artifacts related to her great-great uncle, Yanosuke Iwasaki from Japan, who attended the Edward Hall Family School in Ellington in 1872-1873. Iwasaki succeeded his brother Yataro and became the second president of Mitsubishi in 1885.

On a visit to Ellington in 1901, Iwasaki donated \$2,000 to the Hall Memorial Library, which was under construction. The money was used to purchase stained glass windows depicting Iwasaki's former schoolmaster Edward Hall, his father John Hall, and his brother, Francis Hall.

Pictured with Kumiko are L-R, Ellington Historical Society Archivist Lynn Fahy, Library Director Sue Phillips, and Nellie McKnight Museum Curator Nancy Long.

In September's newsletter, I mentioned the Spalding Family Papers, which are held in microfilm format at the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan. Several letters were from the **Sexton family**, who in 1812 built the house that is now the Nellie McKnight Museum.

One letter that the library printed for me was dated July 30, 1833. It was from Charles Sexton to his son, Joseph Addison Sexton, describing his activities that month in Ellington. Charles wrote of haying and harvesting oats both for himself and for a Mr. Chapman.

The 4th of July was celebrated in two very different ways that summer in Ellington. A speech at the County Temperance meeting promoted the cause of temperance, which Sexton wrote was making progress in the county. At the John Chapman house, however, the holiday was celebrated by about 100 guests with dinner, rum, and a brass cannon. Sexton wrote that was a very patriotic celebration, too.

Upcoming meetings

Thursday, April 27, 2017, 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library



T Barnum - The Prince of Humbugs

Presented by our own member, Joe Ouellette

American showman, businessman, entertainer, promoter of hoaxes, founder of the circus as we know it today, author, publisher, politician, philanthropist and the first show business millionaire. He left a great legacy. Don't miss this one!

Thursday, June 22, 2017 6:30 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library
Potluck supper (Members Only)

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