



Ellington Historical Society

P.O. Box 73

Ellington, Conn. 06029

June 2019 Newsletter

June Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will hold its annual meeting and potluck supper for members on Thursday, June 27, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room at Hall Memorial Library, 93 Main Street. NOTE: NEW MENU. We will provide baked ham and members are asked to bring a salad or side dish. There will be rolls if you want to make a sandwich. Beverages will be provided, and our traditional strawberry shortcake will be served for dessert.

Museum Season

The Nellie McKnight Museum is open for the season on Thursdays from 1:00 to 4:00 from June through August. Stop by to see the exhibit of thank you notes from students for our school program and old notes from Nellie's era. Tours by appointment are also available by contacting us through our website.

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org>

News from President Tim Fahy

On behalf of every member of the Ellington Historical Society I want to thank Sue Phillips, Francie Berger, and the entire library staff for allowing us to use the library for our meetings. A special thanks to Francie for arranging such interesting programs on our meeting nights.

I hope as many of you as possible will attend the annual meeting and potluck supper on June 27th. After the meal, the Executive Board would like to update the members on our view of the future of the Society and the museum.

Connecticut Open House Day

On Saturday June 8th, the Ellington Historical Society participated in Connecticut Open House Day. The museum was open from 10-2. Visitors on our first open Thursday and at the Saturday event were interested in Ellington history, old maps, genealogy, the house as it was when built in 1812, the changes made in the 1920s after the McKnights bought it, and the grapevine on the pergola.



Executive Board on the back porch on Open House Day. Photo by Tim Fahy

News from Archivist Lynn Fahy



600 pound sturgeon in the Connecticut River – from the March 7, 1960 *Hartford Courant* column “Outdoors in Connecticut” by “Nimrod.”

A reader from Ellington has added more to the history of sturgeon fishing in the Connecticut River, described in this space last week.

Morton E. Thompson of Ellington, in a letter to your reporter writes that his uncle and others used to catch sturgeon in the river weighing up to 600 pounds in the 1800s.

Thompson recalls that his mother’s home was on the east bank of the Connecticut, about one mile below Warehouse Point ... Her brother, Emery Bancroft, and others used to catch sturgeon up to 600 pounds in 1880 or before.

“When they caught a large one, they’d invite all the neighboring farmers to a picnic or barbecue on the west bank of the river about a mile below Windsor Locks. They’d carve a huge fish up and cook it on the sand with vegetables for a big dinner. My uncle invited my father, John Thompson, to one of them, and he took me along for the ten-mile horse and buggy ride. I was in my early teens. It was a large gathering, and everyone had a jolly good time. When the feed was all over, they cut up the remaining fish into big chunks, for each family represented to take home. My father brought a large chunk home and put it in a large jar to pickle it. Sturgeon,” Thompson concludes, “is fine eating.”



The Ellington Farmers Market theme on Saturday, September 21st will be “Farming Through the Years” and will feature a selection of vintage items from the kitchen of the Nellie McKnight Museum. They are representative of what would have been in a farmer’s wife’s kitchen. Try your hand at kitchen chores. We will be at the market at Arbor Park on Main Street from 9:00-12:00.

To contact the Ellington Historical Society, go to <http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org>
Under “Resources,” you can email the President, Archivist, Curator, or
Genealogist.