

## **Indian Artifact Collection-Nellie McKnight Museum**

An article in a local paper dated January 16, 1943, announces the donation from Burton Allen of a collection of “Indian Relics” to the Hall Memorial Library. At that point in time, Ellington did not have a historical society or museum but the town library had a small collection of things donated by local people hoping to preserve and display their items.

Mr. Allen was not the only local person to collect “Indian Relics” and so his finds joined those of C.H. Bancroft, Mrs. Edward White, Empson Aborn and William Kibbe, Jr. Some collections came in shoeboxes and others were mounted on wood or cardboard with wires or thread holding the arrowheads. What these various collections all had in common was a lack of documentation and identification of each piece.

The collections are now all housed at the Nellie McKnight Museum but sadly we do not know a whole lot more than years ago. The shoeboxes of arrowheads have been sorted and identified by Ellington Historical Society member Mandy Ranslow and some fellow grad students. On display at the museum are many larger pieces and what appear to be items from travels abroad to places such as Alaska and Central America.

The selections in this display case are a sampling of the entire artifact collection. Please notice the multiple markings on some pieces: gold numbering, red and white label and masking tape. Were these designations from the same person or was the collection handed down to different people? The story and identification of the pieces from the New England Indian past are important but so are the stories of who collected these pieces, where, when and why.

We are left to enjoy the pieces as they are.....