



# WEST WINDSOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## 4th of July Weekend

*West Windsor Town-wide Celebration, July 2 - 4.*



The celebration kicked off the weekend on Saturday, July 2, with the annual Bean Supper, coordinated by SCIP and the West Windsor Historical Society at the Grange Hall. Smiles were plentiful as eager Albert Bridge students waited on tables while SCIP parents and Historical

Society Board Members helped in the kitchen preparing, washing dishes and serving coffee to guests.

The parade went off without a hitch with numerous floats and participants of all ages and talents. Thanks again to all those valuable volunteers and WW 4th of July Committee who made it possible.

### The Great West Windsor Cemetery Hunt of 2011

The winners of the Great West Windsor Cemetery Hunt of 2011, an event sponsored by the West Windsor Historical Society, received their awards at a formal ceremony on Saturday, June 4 at the Brownsville Grange. Sarah Yates, winner of the first prize,

received a \$25 gift certificate to the Brownsville General and a copy of Historic Houses of West Windsor. Second prize winner, Emily Jones, received Vermont Chocolates and maple candy as well as a copy of Historic Houses. Honorable Mentions went to the Mello Family, Hayley Mullins, and the Perry Family. All winners were presented formal certificates by

### Calendar of Events

***This Old Town  
Music, Storytelling &  
Community Picnic***  
Sunday, September 18th  
Mary Blood Library  
& Veterans Park at 4 pm

***Art Show***  
Fri. Sept. 30 - Sun. Oct. 2  
Story Memorial  
See back for more details.

***Fall Supper***  
Sunday, October 9  
Chicken & Biscuits  
4:30-6:30 pm

***Annual Meeting***  
Friday, October 21  
6:30 Social Hour  
7:00 Pot Luck Dinner  
8:00 Tentatively Scheduled:  
*John Greenall: Carriages of  
the Century*

***This Old Town***  
November 6th, 4 pm

***Spring Auction***  
Sunday, April 29, 2012

Tom Kenyon, a director of the Historical Society and long time Society supporter, Ann Mathews.

Both Sarah and Emily will be honored at the Society's Annual meeting on October 21 with signed copies of The History of West Windsor to be presented by the author, Mary Fenn, a Society founder. ✦ *Leone Bushkin*

FOURTH OF JULY WEEKEND (CONTINUED)



Jack Bertrand portraying Calvin Coolidge, Eleanor Hannah being driven in a beautiful vintage Chrysler,



A few of the many highlights from the parade were

and our very own hometown favorite, Edson Pierce in his Naval uniform.



*Edson and Blanche Pierce*



*The Museum Records Committee continues to pour through the Vermont Journals which were donated to the Society. Their current mission involves scouring the articles in search of news about West Windsor. Here below is an excerpt of one such entry. Pictured in photo on left: Mary Jane Wentworth, Vicki Harlow, Fran Cady and Hilda Conn.*



VERMONT JOURNAL, JUNE 11, 1861 ... PAGE 8

WEST WINDSOR PATRIOTISM

The Patriotism in this town continues with unabated vigor. The military, lately organized, bids fair to make a fine company, judging from the character and enterprise of its officers: as also of many of its privates. Flags continue to be raised in every section. The ladies are awake manifesting much zeal in our national affairs. The ladies in the

west part of town, in the west school district, so called, got up a beautiful flag of goodly dimensions, which was raised last Saturday in the afternoon, upon a pole 110 feet in height. Early in the afternoon the people in the vicinity and the adjoining towns began to collect: the "New Military" formed at Sheddsville and marched within one fourth of a mile, where they were joined by the ladies, some forty in number,

who marched in procession to the spot. Although disappointed in not obtaining their speaker -- the Rev. Mr. Closson of Cavendish -- the exercises were very appropriate and satisfactory; which consisted in the firing of guns, sentiments, singing, martial music and "cheering" which made the hills resound for miles around.

— *West Windsor, May 27, 1861*



# 4th of July Weekend Photo Album



Matt Kantola, Molly Hausman, Jon Nichols, Terry Shearer, and Bill Stillson.

Elianna Knight poses for a classic photo op.



The Baked Bean Supper's enthusiastic volunteer waitstaff from Albert Bridge School.



Fred Jenks is driven by Alex Drost and joined by Brian Holloway and friends.



Band members raise their voices and play their tunes.



The dynamic duo, Mary-Anne and Adam Boyce, ride their patriotically decked bicycle.

HURRICANE IRENE, SUNDAY, AUGUST 28, 2011



Hurricane Irene hit the east coast with a vengeance. Although it was downgraded to a tropical storm when it arrived in New England States, many, if not most Vermont communities, were pummeled. Rivers and brooks swelled and overflowed, many times re-routing themselves, carving out huge chunks of roads,

collapsing bridges, and ripping through homes. Brownsville suffered its losses as well. In Brownsville, two significant bridges were swept away. One on Route 44 just east of the village, and the Bowers covered bridge located just south of the intersection of the Westgate, Bible Hill, and Harrington Roads. Three noteworthy structures in the village of Brownsville, the Brownsville General Store, Fire House, and old Schoolhouse (which is now a the Smith residence)



were also damaged in the flood. Fortunately the General Store was able to open the next day with damage limited to the basement. The Fire House suffered significant

destruction to the parking lot and driveway as well as the first main floor. The Smith's house closest to where the Mill Brook and Beaver Brook merge had to be evacuated as water breached the bank and began to rip through the property and into basement windows.

Additional areas that suffered considerable damage were Rush Meadow Road, Brook Road and the west side of Banister Road. The road crew has fortunately restored some parts of Banister Road and Brook Road to the existing homes, however, both are no longer a through roads.

Townfolk everywhere responded with humanity and compassion to those who were ravaged by the floods. On the following Saturday friends, neighbors and family arrived at the Smiths' home early in the morning to begin the clean up. Paul Biebel donated the use of his equipment, two dumpsters arrived and everyone began the long process of cleaning up. They worked tirelessly throughout the day, to clean out the finished basement which had been ruined by the flood waters and filled with debris. *JKBodnar*



**GEORGE A. SWALLOW -- GLASS PLATE NEGATIVES COLLECTION**

*Reprinted from the Vermont Historical Society Newsletter*

The Leahy Library recently received a tremendous gift of 482 glass plate negatives taken by Brownsville, Vermont, resident George Swallow at the beginning of the twentieth century. "This collection documents the buildings, landscape, and people of this West Windsor village in a very skilled and sensitive way," says Vermont Historical Society librarian Paul Carnahan.

The collection came to the historical society through a

circuitous route. It was offered for sale to Vermont Historical Society trustee J. Brooks Buxton of Jericho, who immediately recognized the importance of the collection and purchased it for the society. Upon examining the collection further, Brooks took an immediate liking to the collection and contracted with a local digital imaging company to create scans of 100 of the images. All that was known about the glass plates at this time was that they showed some Brownsville scenes; the photographer was unknown.

In April of this year Brooks brought the full collection of plates in their original boxes, 33 in all, and a compact disc of scans to Barre. The library staff immediately set to work trying to identify the photographer. They noticed that the inventories on many of the boxes mentioned "Carolyn," who seemed to be a young girl. A quick search of the 1900 census showed only one Carolyn in West Windsor: Carolyn Swallow, aged six. Her father was George A. Swallow, a jeweler who ran his own shop. Her mother was

“Alma,” a name that also showed up on the boxes of glass plates.

A quick check of *The Heritage of West Windsor* by Erla Bear Scull (1980) informed us that George Swallow “was one of the most interesting personalities found in the records of the community.” He seems to have been quite handy, repairing watches, running a printing shop, raising bees, and fishing. No mention of a photographic interest was included in the biography of Swallow, but a search on Ancestry.com turned up photographs of George Swallow posing with a camera. It was clear that we had identified the photographer!

Swallow lived in the village of Brownsville in the town of West Windsor where he operated a general store, was postmaster, and pumped gas. Many of his photographs show the geographic area where he lived in the heart of Brownsville, including people sitting on the porch of his store and wagons stopped on the street in front of it. Indeed, as donor Buxton states, the collection “represents a microcosm of life in a Vermont village at the turn of the twentieth century.”

Swallow (1864-1951) captured the buildings, landscapes, and activities of his community. The

collection includes several of the construction of the new civic building known as Story Memorial Hall, which was dedicated in 1915, and the Mary L. Blood Memorial Library, which had been given to the town in 1901.



*Brownsville General Store (early 1900s)*

The collection includes several images of large groups of people gathered on top of nearby Mount Ascutney, as well as photos of a baseball game, haying, sugaring, prized livestock, a new motor car, and the bounty from hunting expeditions. Among the images are photographs of “The McKinley Stone,” a huge piece of granite that had been quarried nearby from the base of Mt. Ascutney and was headed to Canton, Ohio, to be used as one of the sarcophagi in the McKinley National Memorial there.

Swallow also took pictures of the countryside near his home. According to Buxton, “He had a genuine feeling for Vermont topography and his attachment to the land.” Upon viewing scans of some of Swallow’s images for the first time, Jennifer Bodnar, a member of the board of directors of the West Windsor Historical Society, said,

*They are a treasure to behold. As I opened each image on my laptop I felt as though I was able to travel back in time, turning back the years seeing the people, the buildings and roads that made up this town and helped create it as it is today. I am particularly struck by the Post Office/General Store which is next door to where I live and*

*where George A. Swallow once lived. The picture was taken out of the bedroom window and a horse drawn stage-coach is pulled up to the front of the Post Office. My how times have changed! Thanks for sharing this treasure trove.*

The Vermont Historical Society will be sharing George Swallow’s images with the West Windsor Historical Society to assure that they have the most exposure possible. A selection of his images is on the VHS’s Flickr photo sharing site at [www.flickr.com/vermonthistory](http://www.flickr.com/vermonthistory).

*✍ Paul Carnahan*

**EURO**

## Sticker Contest

Do you like to design? The West Windsor Historical Society is inviting community members to submit designs for a Euro Sticker. Euro stickers should be created in two-color format either by hand or on the computer. The finished size when printed will be 4”x 6” oval labels

and will be screen printed in two color with removable adhesive on the back. Deadline for submissions is Dec. 15, 2011. Please email digital pdf files of the stickers to Jennifer Bodnar at [jkbodnar@comcast.net](mailto:jkbodnar@comcast.net) or mailed to WWHS, Euro Sticker Contest, PO Box 12, Brownsville, VT 05037. Please send in your contact information: Name, Telephone Number, Address and email. We will announce the winner in the Winter 2012 issue!

**Officers**

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ANNE YATES	1st Vice President
NANCY LOUX	3rd Vice President
MARY-ANNE BOYCE	Membership Secretary
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**Fall Newsletter Sponsors**

**James & Barbara Nowland**

*In memory of Grandparents Roy & Sara Nowland and Parents James & Christine Nowland*

**Susan and Michael Epstein**

*In Memory of Beryl Hinton*

**Frances M. Cady**

*In Memory of Beryl Hinton for the years we worked together in the Historic Records Office*

**Walter T. Rich**

**Laurence R. Blood  
Stewart & Sara McCracken  
Glenn & Shelly Seward  
Harold & Elizabeth Hestnes**

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

**Student** (Age 17 or under)... \$5

**Senior** (Age 65 or older)... \$5

**Regular:**

- Individual..... \$10
- Couple..... \$15
- Family..... \$20

**Sustaining:**

- Individual.....\$25
- Family..... \$50

**Patron:**

- Individual..... \$100
- Family ..... \$200

**Life Member**

- Individual ..... \$250
- Family..... \$400

Photographs By:

*Jennifer Knight Bodnar*

**Art Show:**

Friday & Saturday 9/30 & 10/1:  
10:00 am to 4 pm. Sunday 10/2:  
10 am to 2 pm. Lunch and Bake Sale. Over 2 dozen artists and artistsans representing a variety of crafts: Woodwork, Quilting, Jewelry, Knitted and Felted pieces and more. For more information contact: Hilda Conn at 484-9549 or hildyconn@gmail.com

**West Windsor Historical Society**

P.O. Box 12, Brownsville, VT 05037

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED