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## Barkhamsted Historical Society Newsletter (published September 1999)

### **Barkhamsted Center School House**

We have completed work on the grounds of the Center Schoolhouse as shown in the photo below. Brush and a couple of trees have been cleared, stumps removed, the area was graded, raked and seeded. The new lawn has come in very nicely. Overall the site was in very good shape for the annual visit of the Barkhamsted Elementary School fifth grade in June. We owe special thanks to the Metropolitan District Commission who donated heavy equipment and operators for the landscaping work, and to the Regional #7 Vocational Agricultural students who did such an excellent job putting in the lawn.



Photo of the Barkhamsted Center Schoolhouse, Route 181, Barkhamsted (August 1999).

### **Historical Society Membership Drive**

Won't you please consider signing up or renewing your membership in the Historical Society? Our annual membership campaign is in full swing and we have enclosed an envelope to make it easy for you to respond. Our annual dues are:

Single \$ 7

Family \$10

Senior \$ 5

Feel free to include an extra donation over and above the dues amount. We very much appreciate the generosity of our members. Your support is what motivates us to continue the work of the Historical Society toward preserving the history and traditions of the town of Barkhamsted.

The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31. If you would like to become more active in Historical Society work, by all means please make a note to that effect on the membership form.

### **Annual Meeting and Program - Friday, September 10, 1999**

Join us at the Senior Center (West River Road, just north of Pleasant Valley) for the Historical Society's annual

meeting. What a coincidence!•Friday, September 10 is the town's 220<sup>th</sup> birthday. Barkhamsted was incorporated on this date in 1779. To celebrate, we have a special program by Walt Landgraf showing scenes of Barkhamsted "then and now": what they looked like years ago and what they look like now. With Walt providing background information on each site, this should prove to be very interesting.

Before the program we will have a very short business meeting for which we need your participation. One new item we want to try this year is our first annual Hall of Fame election. Members will have the opportunity to nominate and then vote on those people, places or events (past or present) that have had an extraordinary impact on the town of Barkhamsted. The winning selection that you vote in will be inducted into the Barkhamsted History Hall of Fame- our first entry in what we hope will be an interesting and educational institution. So come on down and have a piece of the Barkhamsted birthday cake and see what we have going on.

## **Historical Society News**

During the last year the Historical Society has been active on several fronts. Some of the projects we are working on or have completed during the last year include:

### Ullmann House

During the year we have met with the Department of Environmental Protection concerning the historic Ullmann House on the East River Road at Peoples Forest. Our goal is to preserve the house, to hopefully take an active role in repairs and use the house and nearby property for Historical Society activities. We have asked the DEP to consider leasing the house to us, or enter into an operating partnership. This could be a very significant project for the Historical Society and we will keep you informed of developments.



Photo of the Ullmann House, Peoples State Forest, Barkhamsted (August 1999).

### Historical Society Collection

A major initiative that the Historical Society started last year is the reorganization and processing of the extensive number of items in our collection. The new system we have adopted uses a better numbering and identification process and includes improvements in how the items are organized and stored. We have implemented this new system and have cataloged the numerous items that have been received in the past several years. The data has been entered into a computer database so that it can be printed and sorted easily. Still to be done is the conversion

of the entries already cataloged under our old system, and finding a better home for the collection so that items are readily accessible. Many thanks to Verna Gilson who we hired to get us started on this project. Verna proved to be very valuable in not only doing the bulk of the cataloging, but in setting up the new system and providing us with valuable advice on how to manage the collection. Please contact us if you would like more information on items in the collection, or if you need to access any of the items. And by all means contact us if you have items relating to Barkhamsted that you would like to donate, including photos, documents, implements, etc, etc.

### Flea Markets

The Historical Society again sponsored a flea market on three consecutive Sundays in May of 1999 at the Pleasant Valley Drive-in. This is our main fund raising effort, and a lot of work goes into organizing and operating the sales. The event is growing and we feel that it has the promise for major success in the future. We are very lucky to have the support of the drive-in owners who let us use the site without cost. Please watch for this event next year and drop by to see the wide variety of bargains offered by the growing number of vendors.

### History Student Scholarship

This year the Historical Society contributed a \$250 scholarship to the Greenwoods Scholarship Foundation for a high school student pursuing a history major or the study of history in college. This is something we would like to continue in the future if funds are available.

### Historical Society Web Page

The Historical Society has had a small web page on the Internet for several years. This year, with the help of Leslie Moore, the site has been redesigned. Currently we still show only basic information and several photos, however we have big plans for the future. We hope to gradually expand the site to include more and more features and information. Many thanks to Leslie for all the work she did getting us off to a good start and building this foundation for the future. We are very excited about this new way to communicate with our members and friends. The site can found by following the Barkhamsted Historical Society links from the Barkhamsted municipal page at [www.state.ct.us/munic/barkhamsted](http://www.state.ct.us/munic/barkhamsted) or you can go to it directly to our site at [www.barkhamstedhistory.org](http://www.barkhamstedhistory.org).

### Program Series

This was the second year that the Historical Society has put on our program series during the winter months. We enjoyed four excellent programs on the first Friday of February, March, April and May at the Senior Center and look forward to repeating the series in the year 2000. When the series for 2000 is finalized, we promise to share the topics and speakers with you via a direct mailing with times and dates. The new and larger event room at the Senior Center should be completed by then. We look forward to seeing you there.

### National Register of Historic Places

The home of chairmaker William Moore in Riverton was added to the National Register of Historic Places in April 1999. The Connecticut Historic Commission is starting the process to nominate a six building district in Barkhamsted Center comprising the Center Church, parsonage, former town hall, Merrill Tavern (MDC house), the Center Schoolhouse and the Nathaniel Collins house.

The Historical Society supports this recognition of some of the town's important buildings for inclusion on the Register. It is our understanding that prospects are excellent for the Center district nomination to be successfully listed. On October 14, 1999, the State Historic Preservation Board will make a recommendation to the National

Park Service which will review the nomination and makes the final determination.

### Recommended Reading

A book that may interest you is *New Englanders on the Ohio Frontier - Migration and Settlement of Worthington, Ohio*, by Virginia McCormick and Robert McCormick. In 1803 a group of New Englanders migrated west to central Ohio. They were primarily from Granby, Connecticut and Blandford, Massachusetts and at least two were from Barkhamsted. The book covers their trip west and the hacking out of the new town and a new life in the Ohio wilderness. Published in 1998 by the Kent State University Press (Amazon.com has it).

### The place to be: The Stone Museum

If you haven't heard of the Stone Museum at Peoples Forest, you've been missing out on a wonderful resource for information on natural history, local history and on Peoples Forest itself. Walks, talks and programs are going on weekly there during the warm weather months, and we especially recommend the Saturday evening programs. For more information, watch your newspaper or visit the Stone Museum web page at [www.stonemuseum.org](http://www.stonemuseum.org).

### Frank and Harriet Bouteiller

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Frank and Harriet Bouteiller. Many of us fondly recall our student days riding Frank's bus and seeing his friendly face each day. Harriet had a long history in town as a school teacher and administrator. Both Frank and Harriet were instrumental in fanning the Center Church back to life and into the vibrant institution that it is now. Both were very supportive of the Historical Society and other organizations in town. They are two friends and good citizens that we sorely miss.

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