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# The Chronicle Quarterly

Weston Historical Society

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## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF WESTON

by Jean Studwell

The Weston Historical Society's Coley House property was recently the scene of a multigenerational gathering of adults and students who met to share their interest in the history and government of Weston.

Hurlbutt Elementary School's talented and gifted (TAG) classes, grades 3 and 4, came to the historical society bearing a gift. It was "Westonopoly," based on the board game, Monopoly, but with a Weston flavor.

The TAG classes came to the society in search of Weston history and possibly, a few more questions with answers for their game.

TAG instructor, Mark Tangerone, believed that meeting with members of the historical society who could accurately interpret an earlier time period in Weston history would not only be a great intergenerational experience for the students, but also an opportunity to glean accurate information for the completion of his students' "Westonopoly" board game. Weston Historical Society members, President Sandra O'Brien, Lynn Barrelle, Herb Day, Karin Giannitti and Jack Light all took part in bringing to life earlier times in Weston history.

Weston's Old Post Office: Mr. Day, the society's curator, began the tour at the Adams-Scribner Museum, the site of the Old Weston Post Office. It was opened in 1833 and was originally called Norfield Post Office. The students were intrigued to find that there were living quarters on



TAG instructor, Mark Tangerone (R) with some of his 3rd and 4th grade students and their TAG project "Westonopoly".

the 2nd floor and that Westonites could do "one-stop shopping" by walking about 3 feet over to the general store area. One could purchase items as diverse as rum and yard goods for making clothing.

The Coley House Property: The students moved on to the Coley House property where a look into Weston's heyday as an agricultural town with mills, forges and foundries abounding was brought to life through Mr. Day's interpretation of the buildings, farming implements, engines, mills, presses and spinning wheels.

One Room Schoolhouse: The highlight of the morning was the arrival of Helen Mason, age 95, and a Weston native. Mrs. Mason was a teacher in the 1920's at the time when all grades were

taught in one room. Usually 8 students attended ranging in age from 4 to 16. She taught reading, writing, arithmetic and history to each student on their learning ability level. In order to have a heated school, Mrs. Mason would have to arrive extra early to fill a stove with wood and start a fire that would continue throughout the school day. The TAG students asked great questions, many dealing with discipline problems and punishment. Mrs. Mason told them that she didn't have to punish her students because they were all very good.

Westonopoly: "Westonopoly" which was presented to Mrs. O'Brien, contains area streets such as Weston Road and the various school buildings, as well as Peter's Market and the Lunch Box. *continued*

WESTON  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CONCERT

Sunday, April 2nd at 3 P.M.  
Norfield Church Parish Hall

A concert to benefit the Society will be presented by faculty members of the Weston Music Center and School of Performing Arts, Inc. Featured performers will include the directors of the Center, pianists Genevieve Chinn Brings and Allen Brings. Lin Li, pianist, and Barbara Fusco, soprano, who have recently joined the faculty, will also perform. Also playing will be Deborah Wong, violinist, together with cellist Christopher Finckel and pianist Christopher Lewis, of the Hawthorne Trio, all award-winning musicians. The program will include Mozart's Sonata in F Major, K.497 for piano, four-hands, Five Hungarian Dances by Johannes Brahms, a trio for piano, violin and cello by Beethoven and three songs by Rossini. There will be a reception following the concert.



Weston Music Center's directors Genevieve Chinn Brings and Allen Brings.

Tickets for the concert are available at the Weston Town Clerk's office, or call 227-5698. The price of admission \$10, \$5 for students under 18. Tickets will also be available at the door.

The Historical Society plans to use the proceeds from the concert to purchase archival storage cartons which are acid free and will provide long lasting protection for our documents, artifacts, photographs, papers, and fabrics. The trustees have undertaken a cataloging project to organize and correctly store all acquisitions in the Coley House, barn, and other buildings.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS  
EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF WESTON

*continues*



Helen Mason, Weston native and former teacher, answering questions from 3rd and 4th graders.



Weston Historical Society President Sandy O'Brien pointing out the Historical Society on the "Westonopoly" game.

Many of the handmade playing pieces are of a historical or symbolic nature. The playing pieces include miniatures of a robin, the state bird; whale, the state mammal; mountain laurel, the state flower; the state flag; an oak tree, representing the charter oak; and Senator Judith Freedman.

Correct answers to such questions as "What's the population of Weston?" and "What's the area of Weston, in square miles?" will allow players to move forward on the board and accumulate votes toward winning an election and, therefore, winning the game.

*Source - Weston Forum*

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

The following dates have been scheduled for events for this coming year. Please mark your calendars and watch for more information as these events come closer:

- March 30 - Annual Meeting**
- July 12 - Senior Picnic**
- October 22 - Halloween Party**
- December 8 - Christmas Party**

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## LEAD IN OLD HOMES

One of the improvements of the last century has been the making of paints with a water or oil base. However, many old homes used lead-based paint which may still have lasting effects on the home, the inhabitants, the soil, and even the water. Lead was added to paint many years ago to help its longevity. The lead came as a soft paste and was mixed with linseed oil and then added to paint.

Fortunately not all homes have lead based paint, but all homes built prior to 1978 are suspect. Approximately 50 percent of these homes will have high levels, usually found in dust created by renovation, construction, or painting. Dry sanding of lead paint is the number one problem. The outside of the house is the primary place to find lead paint., but it was also used in bathrooms and kitchens to cut down on mildew and for easy washing.

Today if someone has a concern about lead paint, the first step is to test. For the last seven years Ronald Passaro, Jr. of Envirotech, Inc. of Fairfield County has been doing just that. Following regulations enacted by the State of Connecticut, Ron will enter a house with a non destructive X.R.F. gun. This is an X-ray fluorescence "Gun" which can take a sample shot of the components in every room as well as the exterior. Examples might be the ceiling, floor, one wall, window sill, door, door-jamb, book shelf, etc. A positive reading will be 1.0 mg/cm<sup>2</sup> (one milligram per square centimeter). The "Gun" is then downloaded into the computer and lead readings for the rooms tested, the components tested and the condition of

the paint and substrate will be recorded.

This test can also determine what layer of paint may contain lead. Each room is numbered and a floor plan of the home is made for use in future renovations or repainting.

If lead is found to be in the home, certain precautions must be followed. Simple vacuuming will not help as the particles are so small that they blow out of the filters of most household vacuum cleaners. However, there is a HEPA filtered vacuum which will clean up the dust and remove other allergens from the home. Chemical strippers (not sanding) are used to remove the paint. Some homes that are stained or varnished are also in danger of lead levels, but they are rare. It is

his/her thumb, thus ingesting bits of lead paint dust. Children and pets will find that the taste of the lead is sweet, which may contribute to the problem.

Ron Passaro was born Stamford and grew up in Weston. He worked for his father performing Radon testing until seven years ago. Since establishing Envirotech of Fairfield County, he has performed more than 5,000 tests. He is the founder of the National Association of Lead Inspectors which brings together inspectors from around the country to share information, develop standards, provide education, and work with government organizations to ultimately benefit the customer and the profession. Ron also was the generous donor of the Christmas

tree that stood in our back parlor at the Coley Open House.

We thank Ron, not only for the tree, but for this timely information. Although this is not meant to frighten, lead paint is a problem in many old homes. There have been several disturbing reports over the past few years about unsuspecting painters who have

sanded homes with adverse results to themselves, the homeowners, their children, and their pets. As always, it is better to be safe than sorry.

For a free copy of the EPA's booklet "How to Protect Your Family From Lead" and a brochure, please feel free to contact:

Ron Passaro, Jr.  
Envirotech of Fairfield County, Inc.

1-800-805-0080  
or  
(203) 748-3111.



Ronald Passaro, Jr. of Envirotech, Inc. holding a "gun" that will sample lead levels throughout the home.

possible to use some encasement paint on walls and ceilings or vinyl siding on the exterior to cover a lead base. Sometimes exterior lead paint can cause contamination of soil from deteriorating paint, sanding, or scraping without proper work ethics.

Lead poisoning is not just an inner-city problem. Many times a child will stand at an open window which has been painted with lead-based paint. The friction created by the Window's opening and closing will provide dust which is deposited on the sill or the floor. The child will touch the sill, floor or toys on the floor and then suck

With all the celebration of the millennium we thought it might be fun for us to reflect on the times 1,000 and 100 years ago. Although there was not the kind of communication and knowledge of happenings around the world 1000 years ago, according to The "Timetables of History," compiled by Bernard Grun, daily life in the year 1,000 consisted of such things as widespread fear of the End of the World. Potatoes and corn were planted for the first time in Peru, the Frisians built dikes against floods and the Chinese perfected their invention of gunpowder. "Beowulf," a heroic poem, was written in Old English and Leif Ericson, son of Eric the Red, was supposed to have discovered America (Nova Scotia). Although there are no written records of Weston in the year 1000, one can only assume that Indians lived in these untamed woods.

By the year 1900, life around the world and at home was busy and on the threshold of many new and exciting inventions that would bring us into the year 2,000. World events included the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia, the death of Oscar Wilde, new paintings by such masters as Gauguin, Picasso, Cezanne and Renoir, the first trial flight of Zeppelin, the Cake Walk became the most popular dance of the times, and chiffon pie floated into our lives following the invention of powdered gelatin in the 1890.

Here in the United States the total population was 76,094,000 with New York State claiming the most people with 7,268,894 and Nevada the least with a mere 42,335. The average size of the American family was 4.7 persons and the life expectancy of the male was 46.3 years and the female 48.3 years. The major causes of death were heart, artery and kidney disease, but the list also included influenza, tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhoid and malaria.

The labor force was largely made up of men and the major industry was agriculture followed by manufacturing, mining, forestry, blacksmithing, millinery. Nurses and newsboys rounded out the list, earning an average of \$12.74 per week, \$0.22 per hour, with the average work week being 59 hours. Railroads were still the major source of transportation, with ships and automobiles also on the list. There were only 8,000 registered cars in the year 1900 and under 150 miles of paved roads. The Post Office was the main source of communication. Daily newspapers, telephone and telegraph were still in minimal usage.

Here in Weston, we were still immersed in the industrial revolution, as well as keeping our agricultural base. According to Thomas Farnham's "Weston, the Forging of a Connecticut Town," Weston farmers still plowed with oxen, and they still grew rye, which they took to local mills. In a taped interview with Mrs. Lillian Squires Morton of 153 Valley Forge Road (born in Weston in 1883) she remembers potatoes being primarily raised for market, but that most crops were used to feed people's own stock and families. Local carpenters continued to build barns from hand-hewed timbers. Our children still attended one-room schoolhouses, and our social life consisted of dances held at John Lockwood's barn on Godfrey Road, sleighing in the winter and clamming at the beach in the summer. Corn was popped from corn grown right on the farm. Because of the open fields of Weston in 1900, there were few deer to be seen.

The Bradley Axe Factory, Weston's biggest industry, was still hard at work in 1900. The factory made edge tools, such as woodcutters' axes, ice axes, hatchets, and a wide variety of knives and machetes. Franklin Buckley had a plant in Valley Forge where he made various types of castings, Henry Wheeler operated a forge and blacksmith shop, and Ward Nichols had a hat factory on

Good Hill Road.

It is our hope that one hundred years from now, and 1000 years as well, that the Weston Historical Society will still be preserving our Town's history, collecting documents and pertinent pieces for display, and educating the public about our past. What is new today will one day be old and it is our hope that generations to come will be able to learn and prosper from the history that the Society offers to all of us.

## 1900-1910 PRICES

### Meat and Poultry Prices

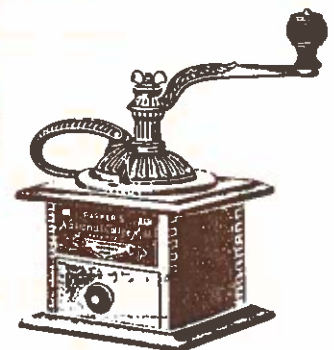
Spring Chicken	7¢ lb.	Turkey	10¢ lb.
Beef	10¢ lb.	Duck	6¢ lb.
Sausage	12 1/2¢ lb.	Duck, Dressed	10¢ lb.
Rooster	15¢ ea.	Veal	10¢ lb.
Hens	7¢ lb.	Breakfast Bacon	12 1/2¢ lb.
Pork	10¢ lb.	Goose	5¢ lb.

### Grocery Prices

PRODUCE & DAIRY		BOSTON BAKED BEANS	
Red Apples	30¢ pk.	Oysters	20¢
Seed Potatoes	35¢ bu.	Jams	10¢
Onion Sets	3 qt. 25¢	Green Turtle Meat	\$2.75
Oranges	20¢ doz.	Sardines in Oil	5¢
Lemons	15¢ doz.	STAPLES	
Dried Apricots	10¢ lb.	Tea	40¢
Dried Prunes	5¢ lb.	Coffee	15¢ lb.
Eggs	12¢ doz.	Cocoa	25¢
Butter	18¢ lb.	Macaroni	10¢
Swiss Cheese	25¢ lb.	Hominy grits	10¢
CANNED GOODS		Sugar	100lbs. \$5.80
Golden Cream Corn	10¢	Salt	100lbs. 20¢
String Beans	10¢	Salad Dressing	25¢
Tomatoes	20¢	Baking Powder	10¢
Earl June Peas	10¢	Gelatin	15¢
Sliced Peaches	25¢	Toilet Soap	3 for 15¢



ENAMELED TEAPOT 58¢



COFFEE GRINDER 49¢



DEI

DEPARTMENT STORE PRICES

LADIES' WEAR

Tailor-made Suit	\$10.00
Skirt	\$4.00
Chemise	50¢
Bracelet	35¢
Shoes	\$1.50
Waist	\$3.00
Corset	40¢
Shawl	50¢
Silk Petticoat	\$5.00
Bead Purse	59¢

MEN'S WEAR

Fancy Suit	\$9.00
Trousers	\$1.25
Shirts	50¢
Woolen hose	15¢
Suspenders	25¢
Coat and Vest	\$7.00
Linen Collar	25¢
Hat	\$2.00
Underwear	50¢
Work Shoes	\$1.25

HOUSE FURNISHINGS

Blanket	35¢
Carpet	12¢ yd.
Hammock	\$3.50
Wallpaper	roll 5¢
42-Piece Dinner Set	\$2.95
Sheet, Double Bed	58¢



TURKISH LEATHER COUCH \$15.65



VINYL GRAMOPHONE \$15



WOOD-BURNING STOVE \$17.48

By far one of the most momentous changes in Weston the 20th Century was the building of the Saugatuck Reservoir. Mrs. Lillian Squires Morton was born in Weston 1883, and lived most of her life at 153 Valley Forge Road. She shared many of her reflections of Weston in an interview taped in 1956. She was then 72 years old. She told how the reservoir had made the biggest change in Weston.

*Where the dam and reservoir are now, that was the village of Valley Forge. There was this Cogswell who had a sawmill, an upright sawmill that went up and down. He used to saw logs for local people. If you had some logs you wanted sawed into boards, you drew them there with horses or oxen and he sawed them into lumber. It was on the river and ran by waterpower, there was a big dam there on the Saugatuck River. On the other side of the river, on the left side, Franklin Buckley had a foundry where they made slugs for hats. They were delivered with a pair of horses to Danbury. Slugs were pieces of iron used in manufacturing hats. He used to farm some. Henry Wheeler, he was across the river, used to make some, not many, and he made plows and plowshares and welded. If you wanted a piece of iron welded, you took it there and he welded it. Henry Wheeler hired a blacksmith for his shop. You went there and got your horses shod or wagon work done.*

*They'd run according to the water they had. They'd have a full dam of water in the morning and they'd start up their machinery. When the water ran out, they'd have to stop. This was around noon or a little after according to how fast they ran the machines I suppose. Because of the spring thaws, business was usually good in the spring, but in the summer when the water got real low, they'd have to shut down. Then they farmed.*

*A lot of folks lived in there. There was old Dr. Gorham, he was the first one, then there was Martin Rowland and William Osborn and Bradley Hull and Franklin Buckley and Ed Gould and William Sanford and Henry Wheeler and Tom Bennett and Gene Beers and Austin Wheeler and no more until you got down to our house.*

*Then, in 1920, the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company began buying land on both sides of the Saugatuck River. With the backing of the Connecticut General Assembly if necessary, BHC was able to condemn land that they were unable to purchase and finally came forth with plans to build a reservoir which would engulf the village of Valley Forge. Ethel Follett, whose father ran a nursery for many years on Valley Forge Road near the corner of Old Redding Road, was kind enough to share some of her father's old papers regarding the building of the dam. Three alternative highway plans were presented to the townspeople. Each plan includes permanent transfer to the Town of Weston of a new concrete bridge and road already constructed from Point A to Point B. Immediate discontinuance of Danbury-Westport Road Point A to Point X, and substitution of a road already constructed around dam site from Point A to Point X. Each plan includes also a new road from Point O to Point I (near old Dimon Road) over land furnished by Bridgeport Hydraulic Company. In addition to the above, any one of the following:*

**Plan 1**

*Reconstruct Davis Hill Road from Point B to Point C Build road Point C to D to E (on Norwalk-Newtown Road) on right of way to be provided by Town.*

*Cash Payable to Town \$5,000*

**Plan 2**

*New road over land provided by Bridgeport Hydraulic Company from Point B on Davis Hill Road to Point F on Godfrey Street.*

*Cash Payable to Town \$50,000*

continued

## VALLEY LOST

*continued*

### Plan 3

*New road Point B to Point H (on Norwalk-Newtown Road) over land provided by Bridgeport Hydraulic Company. Reconstruct Norwalk-Newtown Road Point H to Point O.*

*Cash payable to Town \$30,000*

*Needless to say, the residents of Weston were not very happy with any of the plans. Unfortunately, many residents were just coming out of the depression and they were only too happy to sell out to Bridgeport Hydraulic. Many of Weston's newcomers during that time were fortunately affluent enough to be able to ignore these offers. These newcomers, along with natives, lent their support to The Saugatuck Valley Association, an organization formed to fight the plans for the dam and reservoir. The president of the association was John Orr Young, one of the most successful advertisers in New City. (He occupied the house directly across from the Norfield Church.) A statement from the Association included "fighting for a public interest beyond the sentiment, honest and valid as it is, of the people of the proposed lake bed, who stand to lose their homes. We are fighting for water rights and property rights which we hold should not have been donated 80 years ago to a commercial company, which in the last analysis is interested in larger returns on their investment.*

*The Bridgeport Hydraulic Company is in the business of selling water. We are in the business of saving what belongs to us and to our children.*

*Unfortunately, despite all their efforts the Association lost. In June, 1938, the Connecticut Supreme Court of Errors decided in favor of the Hydraulic Company. Weston was paid \$40,000 in damages for the roads the dam would interrupt, a guaranteed 4,000,000 gallons a day in the Saugatuck below the dam for a 15-year period and limited fishing and hunting privileges. Although we drive by the reservoir nowadays and see only its beauty with the changing of the seasons, we should always remember a valley lost.*

## ANNUAL MEETING

### Genealogy at the click of a Mouse

This year's Annual Meeting will be held on March 30 at 7:30, p.m. After a short business meeting, during which we will be voting on some small by-law changes, we will be rewarded with informative and interesting talk by Woody Bliss, our own Second Selectman. Woody will not be talking politics, however. He will be sharing with us his vast knowledge of genealogy, which has been a passion of Woody and his family for many, many years.

Woody was born in Minnesota and attended Cornell University where he received a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He worked for IBM for many years and was Director of Education covering North and South America and the Pacific Rim. He worked in Buffalo, Syracuse and moved steadily south until he settled in Weston. Woody and his wife, Prue, moved here in July of 1974 looking for the best education available for their three children.

His interest in genealogy had been sparked by his father, grandfather, uncle (Weston's former State Senator, Bob Bliss) his mother-in-law and several aunts as well. In 1982, Woody purchased his first PC for Christmas which enabled him to expand his research into the family history. At the time he knew of about 2,300 relatives. That number now reaches 7,000. New software and the Internet have helped extensively in contacting people across the country, but he does say that one has to be careful of the authenticity of some of the information. Currently, Woody has his entire family genealogy on a Palm Pilot which he keeps in his pocket.

In addition to genealogy, Woody has many other interests and hobbies. He and Prue lived for five years in Hong Kong and traveled extensively throughout China, India, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. For many years Woody and his friend held the all-time record for the 100-year old "Round the Island Race," a sailboat race held in the waters off Hong Kong. They set the record in a boat they brought over from California, but were recently beaten by some young Chinese sailors. As Woody said, "Records are made to be broken."

As a believer in community service, Woody has been a member of the Rotary Club, the Lions Club and the Kiwanis club. Here in Weston Woody is an active Kiwanian having served as President of the organization in 1992. He is currently a member of the Weston Board of Selectman and has been involved with the running of the town for many years, being a past member of the Board of Finance and Chairman of the Panel of Moderators. Prior to moving to Weston, he served for three years on the Board of Education when his family lived in Amherst, New York. Woody also has been very active in Boy Scouts and was the Fairfield County Chairman for the Boy Scouts Bicentennial celebration which brought approximately 50,000 people to their fair. In addition to all this, Woody enjoys skiing and his family has hosted 10 foreign exchange students over his years in Weston.

Woody also teaches genealogy and is a life member of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists. He is a member of the Bliss Family Historical Society, Bliss Genealogical Society, Ancestry.com, and Roots Web. His talk for the evening will teach us how to get started with the process of finding our ancestors. He will pass out some sheets with basic starting questions and will speak for about 20 minutes. Woody will also be teaching a series of classes on genealogy using the computer starting in late April.

It sounds like a fascinating evening and we hope that you will all be able to come and bring a friend or neighbor. We might find out that some of us are even related. Please join us at 7:30. Refreshments will be served.



Woody and Prue Bliss with four generations of the Bliss family.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

The following is a letter from one of our members, Helen O'Kelly, as she was reflecting on the changing century. We would like to share it with you here:

Dear Karin:

*For a long time I've wanted to write about what Weston was like when we first arrived in 1958. If you can use it, please do, or else I will just keep it for my children.*

*I remember at the Center the cars were MUCH smaller. In general a family might have one "good" car and one "station" car, the latter tended to be scruffy. Station wagons were popular, the old "woodies" were already rare and special. Any cars that you saw with lights on usually meant a funeral procession.*

*Our houses were also MUCH smaller and cost a lot less. In 1958 you could buy a Cape or a ranch house, in good condition, for between \$20,000 - \$30,000. Between \$30,000 - \$40,000 would get you a Colonial-type house ... or a split level like ours. For over \$40,000 you could get a really nice interesting house. And every house had to be on two acres. We didn't have central air. Then it was fans or window unit air conditioners. I saw my first dishwasher in a friend's house in 1958.*

*Our animals (this is after all, Helen writing): There was no leash law, the dogs were let out, took a walk and came in again (except two of mine, who were very bad, but that was in the eighties). Dogs would drop by and visit. We tried hard not to feed them, but a drink of water was fine. We didn't have electric fences. Dogs seemed to be better tempered then. I saw on the news recently that dog bites have increased 37% in the last ten years. Our dogs and others walked with the children to the school bus stop AT THE END OF THE ROAD, not at the end of the driveway. Whenever I walked our dogs, I always seemed to collect some more, to the delight of my children. There weren't pet sitting services. You either put your animals into kennels or paid a neighborhood boy/girl (I think Mom always helped too). It was fun to spoil the lonely animal, so we regularly bought shrimp for Kitty Lowenstein. Truly, when one of my sons was able to drive, he fed and exercised some dogs belonging to Mr. Barkoff.*

*As I said earlier, the school bus didn't stop at every driveway to be greeted by a waiting Mom. On Birch Hill, the bus stop was at the intersection of Birch Hill and Lords Highway at an old Onion Barn, maintained by Jimmy Hogg. The children used to straggle to the bus in the morning and home again in the afternoon. There were scuffles, but never anything serious. And, after waving the darlings goodbye from our back door, I could race in, happily, and have another cup of coffee. The children always ate breakfast at home, mostly juice, cereal and toast. On snowy mornings I used to make hot oatmeal so they would "have cotton wool round their hearts against the cold." (My Mom's phrase.)*

*There were no videos and much gentler TV. We watched Little Rascals and Lassie and the Waltons. "Dark Shadows" was about the scariest thing we saw. And we mostly watched the one TV in the family room. It was like a second hearth, and if we watched the news, so did the kids. No, the boys didn't read much more than they do now, but the girls used to read a lot and borrow innumerable books from the Weston Library. And, of course, my sons were NOT perfect. There were lots of visits to the Principal's Office that the boys tried to keep from us.*

*We didn't have Nannies or Au Pairs, but we did have lots and lots of baby-sitters of either sex and they were 98% wonderful.*

*My husband insists that we paid them 50 cents an hour. As he was the one who paid them and drove them home, I really don't remember. Sometimes I had to travel with my husband on business and be away three or four days, never more. Then we had older ladies move in and "run the ranch." I believe they got between \$15 and \$20 per day. And, we helped each other. For over a year I took care of a neighbor's three year old, two days a week, \$5 a week. No problem.*

*Weston Center still looks the same, if you take away the cell phones and the big cars. Peter's was there and the Liquor Store and the Hardware Store and Jimmy Hogg. Where the Bank is now, there was once a little department store when you could buy underwear and casual clothes. They even had a fashion show, right there, in 1960. In the pharmacy, you could get a prescription filled and have an ice-cream soda or other treat at the counter while you waited.*

*What we wore: Children could be outfitted at Greenberg's on Main Street in Westport, or Bloomingdale's in Stamford. Moms bought slacks and sweaters from Ann Taylor, tidier outfits from Peck & Peck or Franklin Simon. You could get a really lovely long evening dress from Flair of Main Street for \$35. Our husbands were shopping at Ed Mitchell's even then. A business suit cost \$60. I can't remember owning jeans and sneakers were for tennis.*

*We were more formal. Once I got a terrible scolding from a good girl friend because I picked the children up from Field Club summer camp wearing a navy blue shift. "You must never do that again." We really dressed up for Saturday night parties. The same friend said, "You can't over-dress on a Saturday night." Sundays were more casual.*

*We entertained at home quite a lot, but not very innovatively. Dinner parties were either roast beef or roast lamb - beef fondue was daring. Always two desserts. A lot of quiche was served at brunches. Before a dinner party at home, we often took the children to the Crest on the Post Road (now Playhouse Square), where they could have their dinner of hamburgers and milk shakes.*

*There wasn't a deer problem. My middle son swears he didn't see a deer, except in a Zoo, until he was 15. I can remember being so thrilled when we saw deer, very, very occasionally. Now I see them every day. There wasn't Lyme disease to worry about, and we'd never heard of AIDS.*

*Two other changes ... and I'm not even going to mention computers because I don't have one. But there were hardly any catalogs in the mail. Perhaps a few from the big department stores at Christmas, and that was that. Nor did we get charitable requests in every post, every day. You gave at Church, the March of Dimes solicited at Christmas and the Heart Fund in February. The United Fund raiser came to your door and I can't remember any others.*

Thank you Helen for sharing your memories with us. How many changes in such a short period of time. Thank goodness some things like the Center and caring people and good friends don't change.

**The Chronicle Quarterly**  
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**Tad Dillon, At the Keyboard**  
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JANE & BOB ATKINSON  
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WESTON, CT 06883



The real heroine of the first decade lived not in romantic fiction but in the American kitchen (above); and she, too, had her hero - it was Sears, Roebuck & Co.  
*The Fabulous Century 1900 -1910, Time-Life Books, New York*