



The Chronicle Quarterly

Weston Historical Society

Spring 2001

Volume 21, No 1

LYME PROJECT

by Prue Bliss

Over a year ago, the Center for Disease Control awarded the Westport/ Weston Health District a monetary grant to educate the public regarding deer ticks and their resultant Lyme Disease. This grant was the first and only one given to Westport/ Weston because of our high incidence of Lyme Disease.

A steering committee was formed involving citizens of both towns to formulate plans. An early decision was made to set up a demonstration site for the "do's and don'ts" of reducing tick population on residents' properties.

After a lengthy search, the Coley Homestead was selected as this demonstration site for several reasons:

1. It is a visible, accessible location
2. Parking is available
3. The grounds abound in both "do's and don'ts"
4. The Weston Historical Society Board of Trustees was agreeable to lend its support to this project.
5. Community groups such as Weston Kiwanis and the Weston Garden Club were willing to

contribute their volunteer efforts to preparing the site.

As a result of several months of hard work, the demonstration site will have its official opening on April 21, 2001.

Gardens have been planted with shrubs that are both deer resistant and historically accurate since we want to keep the Homestead's restoration accurate to the year 1900. Mr. Tom Johnson of Lexington Gardens has given us hours of planning and actual planting of these gardens.

Several tick harboring areas have been cleaned up as much as possible. Weston Kiwanis has held several work projects at the Homestead clearing brush, cleaning stone walls, and laying wood chip tick barriers.

Sal Gilbertie donated a fabulous collection of herbs for the herb garden. Sorry to say, the woodchucks found some very appetizing. (I can't understand how the Coley's coped with the woodchucks.)

The Weston Garden Club has planted a large variety of bulbs, many of which should be blooming as the exhibit opens. The Garden Club also donated \$1,000 to the effort, and deserve our sincere appreciation. Hardy perennials

will be planted when the weather allows.

Country Green sprayed tick repellent in the working areas before this work began. This was done by Paul Saltanis at no charge. We decided to spray to protect the volunteers.

When the exhibit opens, there will be maps of the self-guided walking tour, which will have about 20 stations. There will be signs at each station describing the positive or negative aspect of the method being demonstrated.

We have worked closely with tick experts to produce as much helpful information as possible. I consider this a marriage made in heaven -- we will be demonstrating to the public several means of protecting their property -- and at the same time gaining exposure in the community for this wonderful piece of history existing on Weston Road.

(Ed. Note: Please join us. There has been a great deal of work put into this project and this area is plagued both with deer and deer ticks which have created one of the fastest rising epidemics in the country. Thanks to Prue, Tom Johnson, Sal Gilbertie, Paul Saltanis, Kiwanis and the Weston Garden Club for making this project a reality.)



ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will take place on Thursday, March 29, 2001, at 7:30 p.m. in the Weston Library Community Room. There will be a short business meeting reviewing the past year and the nomination and election of four new officers for the Board of Trustees. Refreshments will be served before and after the meeting, and a program will be offered featuring Stanley Mason of Weston, who is known worldwide for his inventions.

Please join us at 7:30 for a fun and informative evening.



STANLEY MASON INVENTOR OF EVERYDAY THINGS

The speaker for this year's annual meeting will be Mr. Stanley Mason of Weston, a world famous inventor of what he calls "everyday things" which make people's lives easier. Mr. Mason is called the "Wizard of Weston" because of his inventions, innovations, and his creative thinking which he also teaches. Stanley has spent years taking products on the market and making them better. One example of such an invention is the disposable diaper. Although the diaper was already in existence, Stanley shaped it to better fit a baby, made it double thickness on the bottom and single thickness on the sides, and gave it sticky tape to hold together. He got the idea when diapering his own baby and kept thinking that he was putting a square cloth on a round bottom.

Mr. Mason invented his first item when he was only five years old. (You will never guess what the item was.) Living with a no-nonsense father, Stanley learned quickly that necessity was truly the mother of invention. His mother gave Stanley his creative genes and love of the artistic side of things. After his first invention, he continued on, sometimes alone, and sometimes with his friends, to change things for the better.

Mr. Mason attended State College in Trenton in New Jersey where he grew up and has held executive positions at Hunt Foods, Martin Aircraft, Armstrong, American Can and U.S. Steel.

In 1973 he started Simco in the space above his garage to foster inventive genius and has gone on to establish four entrepreneurial companies. The Mason Research Foundation is currently researching ways of using the Chinese Tallow tree, the seeds of which contain fats and oils that Mr. Mason is hopeful will be of use as a fuel.

Mr. Mason lives in Weston with his wife Charlotte, a former beloved Weston school teacher, and continues to work for ways to make our lives better with his inventions.



(Ed. Note: Information for this article was taken from "Inventing Small Products" by Stanley Mason, Copyright 1997 by Crisp Publications, Inc. and from the Video "The Wizard of Weston," produced and hosted by Dolly Curtis.)



ACQUISITIONS

We are going to begin a new column with this issue in which we will keep you apprised of our newest acquisitions. When we were left the Coley House in 1963, there was virtually nothing remaining in the house, and the furniture and accessories we have now have been mainly donated with the kindness of Weston residents.

Now that we have a new acquisition policy in effect (part of the 5-year plan described in the last issue), it will be easier for us to acquire items that have historical significance to Weston, the surrounding community, and to the Coley House specifically. With that in mind we have accepted the following items:

Jane Atkinson from the Weston Public Library donated a 3 volume set of "Service Records - Connecticut - Men and Women in the armed forces of the U.S. during World War I 1917-1920."

Arthur Hoe, Newtown Turnpike, Weston donated (1) sample of tinder Indians used to start a fire, (2) arrowhead "rejects" from Devils Den (Indian "camp"), (3) charcoal from Indian camp in Devils Den (circa Revolutionary War time), and (4) a cigar box of various arrowheads, spearheads, knives/scrapers, hammer rock, pottery and bone chips.

Ernie Albin, Jr. of Newtown Turnpike, Weston gave us a document recognizing the military appointment to David Godfrey (September 20, 1808), two documents of regimental orders to David Godfrey (August 20, 1810)

and (August 12, 1812), and the Property title from W. Hawley and David Bulkley to Daniel Godfrey, January 12, 1794.

Bill Reis of Steephill Road, Weston, found several items in a small barn on their property which would have been used on a Weston Farm of 100 years ago. (1) Large Oxen Yoke, (2) Double tree hitch with shaft, (3) electrified wall lamp, (4) washboard, (5) two old wrenches, (6) timberclamps, (7) two pitch forks (one two-tine, one three-tine), (8) one hume for horse harness and (9) hinge parts.

Gayle Beyea of Newtown Turnpike, Weston donated an "etching" of the "Congregational Church and the Academy" in Weston (3 x 5 matted), and a postcard with a black and white photo of a house "Good Hill Road, Westport, Conn." written on the front. The note on the back was addressed to Mr. E. D. Burbank.

Mr. Ernie Albin also donated a vise, a grindstone, and a horse bridle found in the house belonging to Minerva Heady. Mr. Albin is a cousin of Minerva and he lives in Minerva's uncle's house which was moved across the road from its original site.

All of these acquisitions are important to our history and we wish to thank the donors of these items, as well as Lynne Barrelle, Mary Ann Barr and Mike Cuddy for accepting and cataloging these recent donations.



The Chronicle Quarterly

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THEN AND NOW

As a follow-up to our article in the last Chronicle, we have included an aerial map of the Coley property which might help put the pictures from the last issue in a better context. We have also included a few pictures of the property which do show the pigs, and the yard with very few trees.

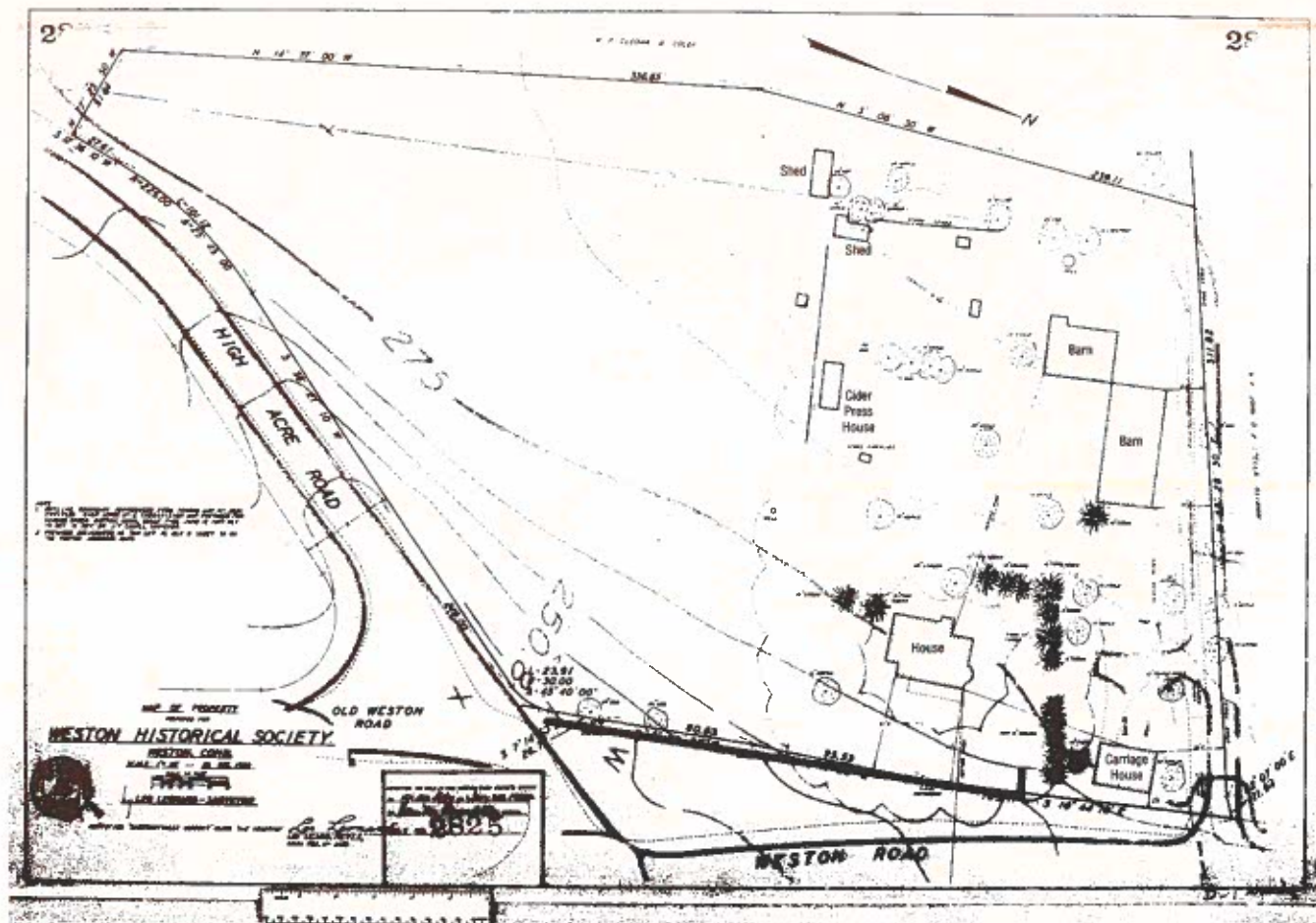
It is a shame there are not more pictures depicting the property as it once was many, many years ago, but we again want to thank Ted Lockwood for letting our imaginations take us back to earlier times.



Then



Now



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Our calendar of events for this year combines some of our annual events with some new events that will be taking place this Spring. The first event will be our workshop for the making of Bluebird houses. For a nominal fee (to cover the cost of the wood), members will be able to come to the Coley House grounds on Saturday, March 24, 2001, at 10:00 a.m. With the help of Herb Day, Jack Light, and Jim Schaper, you can make your own birdhouse to take home. There is nothing as beautiful as a bluebird flying in your yard. It is like your very own piece of sky.

On March 29, 2001, at 7:30 p.m. we will be holding our Annual Meeting. There will be a brief business meeting covering the progress of this past year, the nomination and election of four new officers for the board of trustees, refreshments, and a program to be given by Stanley Mason of Weston who is known worldwide for his inventions. Please come and bring a friend.

This year we will be having a new event which will take place on Saturday, April 14, at noon. This event will be an Easter Egg Hunt. (See separate article.)

The opening of the Lyme Project will be held on April 21 with a special tour being given to the Newcomers on April 12. Prue Bliss and the Weston Garden Club have been working hard to put this program in place. It should be informative to all of us in Weston and we hope you will join us. Time to be announced. (See separate article.)

The Senior Citizen Picnic will be held Wednesday, July 11, at noon. Our annual Halloween Fair will be held October 28 and our Christmas open house will be on December 7, 8 and 9. Details of these events will follow.

Please come and join us. If you would like to volunteer to help, please call the ColeyHouse at 226-1804, or Karin Giannitti at 762-9208.

EASTER EGG HUNT

This year we will be holding an event we hope will become an annual day of fun for us and the community. Each year many young children help us with our Halloween Fair and in an effort to thank these young people we are holding an Easter Egg Hunt on April 14 at 12:00 noon. The event will last until all the eggs are gone.

There will be egg hunting for two groups - Toddlers, five years and younger, and a group for ages 6 - 12. This event will be free to all, the only requirements for admission are that you come with basket and wear a hat. This can be an Easter Bonnet, cowboy hat, baseball hat, whatever you wish.

Our Famous Halloween Gorilla and Chicken will be attending with their Easter Bonnets, as well as the Easter Bunny himself

**SO GRAB A BASKET, DON YOUR BONNET AND
JOIN US APRIL 14.**

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Westport, CT
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