



The Chronicle Quarterly

Weston Historical Society

Summer 2003

Volume 23, No 5

ASPETUC CHRONICLES

The Easton Historical Society is very excited to announce a new book coming out this summer entitled The Aspetuc Chronicles (sic), Narratives of Former Days in Easton and Weston, Connecticut (1899-1901), by John Dimon Bradley. Lois Bloom and Pricilla Chatfield of the Easton Historical Society are the editors of this publication and are excited to share their hard work with us.

As many of you know, Weston originally included land that is now the town of Easton. Easton became a separate community in 1845. Lois

writes "in 1899, at the age of 80 years, John Dimon Bradley began recording his memories of life on a farm on the Aspetuck River in rural Weston in the early 1800's. Like other farming families in post-Colonial New England, the Bradleys lived off the land. His father grew flax, wheat, rye, potatoes and vegetables; kept a cow for milk and butter and raised sheep for meat and wool. His mother made her own candles, soap, butter and cheese, in addition to spinning and weaving flax for the family's linens and summer clothes, and wool for flannel in winter. He describes, in particular, the locally

made tools they used for both farm work and the work of the household. He tells about his education in the local district schools and The Weston (Staples) Academy."

It is interesting to note that John Dimon Bradley's father, Aljah was born and grew up on a farm on Codfish Lane in Weston. John Dimon was born and grew up in what is known as the Bradley-Hubbell House at 535 Black Rock Turnpike, originally Weston land. This house was donated to the Easton Historical Society in 1999, along with 4.35 acres. Lois Bloom was able to follow some information which brought her to the original leather bound accounts ledger of the "Chronicles". It was safely tucked away in an attic in Westport, owned by Patricia Audley, a great granddaughter of John Dimon Bradley. In April, 2002, Pat and Harry Audley very graciously presented the Historical Society of Easton the original Aspetuc Chronicles as a gift.

All proceeds from the sale of the book are being used to continue the restoration of the Bradley-Hubbell House, now listed on the *Nation Register of Historic Places*. To order a copy of the book, send \$20.00 plus \$1.95 for postage and handling, to the Historical Society of Easton, P.O. Box 121, Easton, Ct. 06612. For more information, call 203-261-2090.



Aljah Bradley's house, Codfish Lane, Weston



Weston Historical Society

MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing class of trustees who with such diligence gave of their time and efforts to the Society. Lynne Barrelle, Gale Beyea, Reg Bowden, Jack Light and Cynthia Williams served on the board and exhibited what it really means to be a trustee of the Weston Historical Society.

They gave countless hours to see that acquisitions were documented correctly, events run smoothly, helped whenever called upon, established a great master plan, kept excellent records and did what it takes to make our Society what it is today.

I challenge the present board members to use their example in taking care of the business of the Society. Trustees have a role that makes them special. They lead the other members in following the master plan, arranging special events, fund raising, and all the efforts that it takes to let the people of Weston know and appreciate the value of our organization.

We have a challenging year ahead of us to raise the money necessary to do as the master plan has outlined. Let us all work toward that common goal and make our Society the best in the area.

Thanks for all your efforts.

Paul Deysenroth, President

From the Editor:

Having just returned from the Seniors Picnic at the Coley House, and reading over the articles for this issue of the Chronicle, I am yet again so impressed with the people with whom I have the privilege of working. Cynthia Williams and Gayle Beyea organized a wonderful picnic for the Seniors. Paul Deysenroth and Ernie Albin cooked hot dogs and hamburgers and several other volunteers took up serving duties at the lunch. Many others delivered salads and cookies which were enjoyed by all.

Judy Albin was excited about a meeting planning field trips to the Coley House this Fall for the Second Graders, Jacqui Schneider was talking about the next stage of our inventory which will be books. Jim Shaper continues to help out with the house and grounds; Mary Ann Barr still comes every Saturday to work on the archives.

This truly is volunteerism at its finest and I feel so grateful to be a part of such a great organization, especially the friends and acquaintances I have made along the way. I not only look forward to coming to help, but also seeing people that I care for.

For anyone looking for something to do, the Historical Society will embrace you with open arms and will be grateful for just one hour, one plate of cookies, or anything else you can give. Please consider joining us. You'll not only have fun, but you'll learn a few things and meet some great people.

Karin Giannitti

REPEAL OF OLD LAWS

Mary Ann Barr

Past and present sometimes collide in unexpected ways. Connecticut State Senator Judy Freedman's newsletter report of the 2002 congressional session contained a column about a present law that repealed past laws. The article described how every now and then the State General Assembly repeals outdated, obsolete statutes.

Two of the repealed statutes caught my eye since they might have been of great interest to Westonites years ago. One prohibited "the location of a cemetery with 600 feet of an ice pond intended to produce ice for domestic use." The other imposed "fines and jail sentences on people who adulterated molasses, or sell molasses that has been adulterated with salts of tin, terra alba (what is terra alba?), glucose, dextrose, starch, sugar, corn syrup, or other starch products." From research done by Jim Hoe in the Society Archives, we know molasses was made and sold commercially in Weston, and every community obtained ice from local ponds. We have one or two ice cutting saws from Weston residents of 50 to 100 years ago among our farm equipment in the Barn Museum. I got curious about these laws and when they were enacted; just when did our ancestors have to be careful where they located cemeteries and how they made their molasses. I called the Connecticut Legislative Library and learned that cemetery locations were regulated as of 1889 and molasses was regulated as of 1887.

Though basically inconsequential information which might be considered important for nothing more than a game of Trivial Pursuit, I found it gave me two, small, intriguing details about life in Weston 100 years ago. It helped tell a little more about daily life for our forefathers. Now I will have to research what terra alba is.

"DING DONG BELL PUSSY'S IN THE WELL"

When we go to the sink and turn on the tap for a glass of water, or hit the shower early in the morning, we forget that this would have been considered a luxury back in the 1800's. When David Dimon Coley built his home in 1841 water came from a well which was dug by hand and lined with stones to prevent the dirt falling into the water source. The well is 22 feet deep and has a 5 gallon a minute capacity. The water that filled in the well was brought into the house by bucket for drinking, cooking, washing and bathing. Toward the end of the 1800's, technology allowed for the installation of a pump for the well.

Outside the kitchen of the Coley House is located just such a pump. Jim Schaper, trustee and keeper of the grounds, was able to locate and purchase, with the help of Paul Scribner, a Myers Cog Gear Single Acting Force Pump (see ad for pump) giving us the opportunity to use this well as the Coley family would have done over 100 years ago. Thank you Jim for bringing this historical reproduction to our Society.

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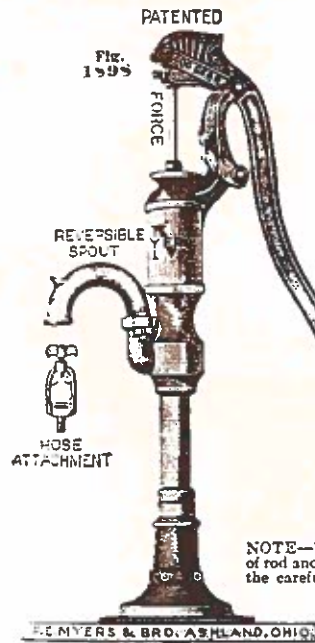
Karin Giannitti, Editor
Tad Dillon, At the Keyboard
Custom Printing & Graphics,
Design/Production

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Todd Ryker

The Myers Cog Gear Single Acting Force Pump.



PATENTED
Fig. 1898

REVERSIBLE
SPOUT
HOSE
ATTACHMENT

Fig. 2275



PATENTED.

Malleable Iron Shield Over Cog Gears.

With Adjustable Base and
Reversible Spout.

Has Patent Glass Valve Seat and
Poppet Valve.

Anti-Freezing.

Made With Galvanized Pipe Only.

Fig. 1898 represents the Myers Cog Gear Single Acting Force Pump. The advantage of this style handle is that it allows the piston to move in a direct line without swaying from side to side, as is necessary with the ordinary handle.

This extra leverage adapts the pump to deep wells.

The spout is attached to the pump head by means of bolted flange union, making it reversible.

The water flows from the spout in a smooth, even stream, equal to that of any double acting force pump.

NOTE—The Pump Rod is held by set screw. This permits the adjustment of rod and plunger, after which the rod can be cut off. This does away with the careful fitting of rod before putting pump together.

Fitted With Brass Lined, Polished Iron
or Brass Body Cylinder

4 FOOT SET LENGTH

PRICE LIST, Represented by Fig. 1898.

With Brass Lined Cylinder.

| Pump No. | Cylinder Size Inches | Valve Seat | Pipe, Inches | Gallons Per Hour | Code | List |
|----------|----------------------|------------|--------------|------------------|-------|---------|
| R1070 | 2 1/2 | Glass | 1 1/4 | 306 | Tide | \$12.50 |
| R1072 | 3 | Glass | 1 1/4 | 440 | Tided | 13.00 |
| R1074 | 3 1/2 | Glass | 1 1/2 | 600 | Tidy | 14.50 |

With Polished Iron Cylinder.

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|---------|-------|-----|--------|---------|
| R1076 | 3 | Glass | 1 1/4 | 440 | Tie | \$11.00 |
| R1077 | 3 1/2 | Glass | 1 1/2 | 600 | Tied | 12.00 |
| R1078 | 3 | Pt. Br. | 1 1/4 | 440 | Thrice | 10.50 |
| R1079 | 3 1/2 | Pt. Br. | 1 1/2 | 600 | Thrift | 11.50 |

With Brass Body Cylinder.

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|--------|---------|
| R1071 | 2 1/2 | Glass | 1 1/4 | 306 | Tierce | \$13.00 |
| R1073 | 3 | Glass | 1 1/4 | 440 | Tisf | 13.50 |

Pumps with Perfection Brass Seat take Glass Seat List.

The Perfection Brass Seat interchanges with the Glass Seat in same Cap.

Fig. 2275 Sanitary Base for 4 1/4" or 6" O. D. Well Casings to prevent surface water from entering the well. No extra charge for 4 1/4" when ordered on the Pump.

FOR OUR GRANDMOTHER HELEN MASON

The following message was received too late to be read at Helen Mason's Memorial Service so we have included it in this issue of the Chronicle. It is a loving tribute to a grand woman who

gave our Society and the town of Weston a sense of its history.

This is from the four daughters and one son of Jocelyn Mason Cain - Connie, Chris, Barbara, Jenny and

Carolyn, who grew up near Chicago.

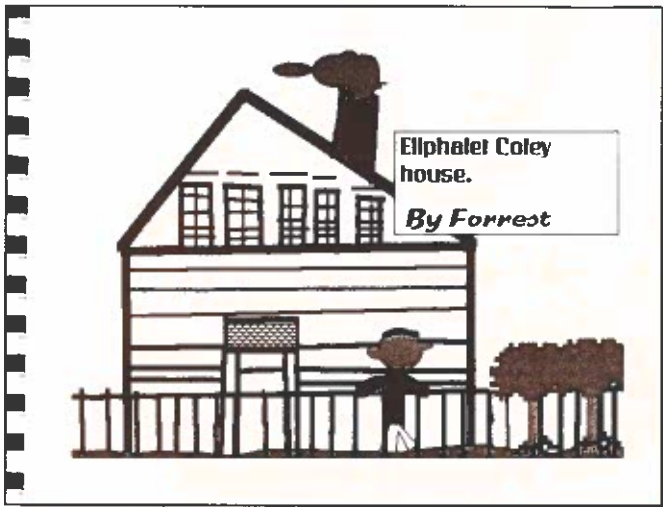
"For us, Helen was a very special grandmother. She always remembered our birthdays and we always took note of *continued page 6*



WESTON PASS

Presented by
Mrs. Larrabee

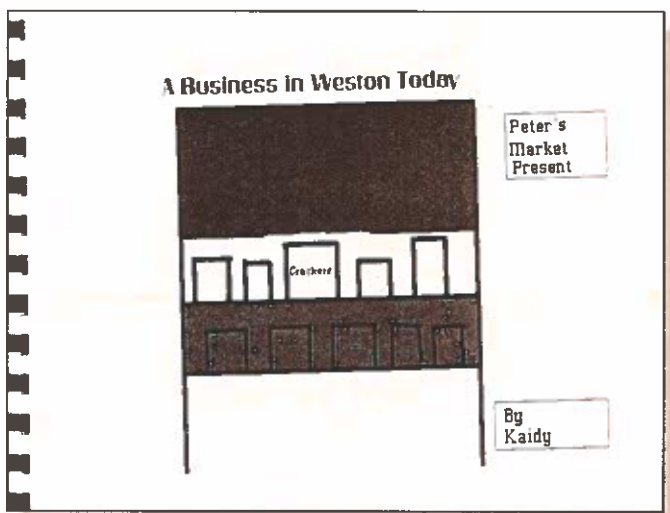
In our spring, 2003 issue of the Chronicle Quarterly we shared some of the work done by Mrs. Larrabee's Second Grade Class from the Hurlbutt Elementary School. The children of the class created a multi-media presentation comparing Weston from the past to the present. In our last issue we included the Weston Fire



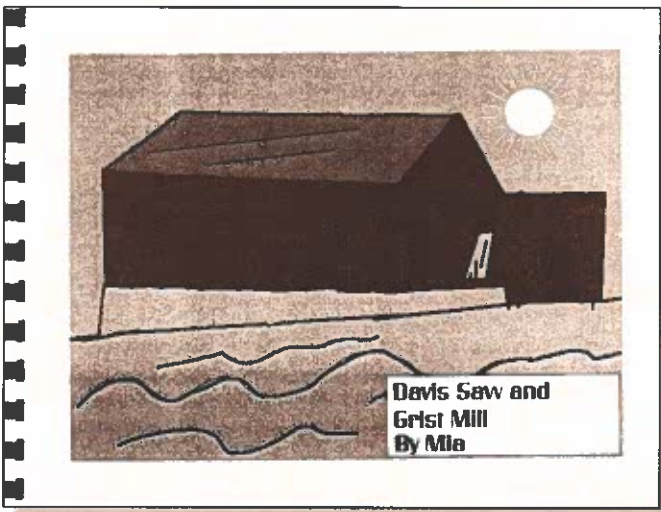
Illustrated and written by Forrest Savage

The Eliphalet Coley House
By Forrest

What was one of the finest houses in Weston in 1835? It was the Eliphalet Coley house. It was located in the northeast corner of Weston and Northfield Roads. It was a center-hall style farmhouse. It is now the office of Attorney Guidera. I wondered if the inside has changed much because the outside is the same.



Illustrated and written by Kaidy



Illustrated and written by Mia Kamisar

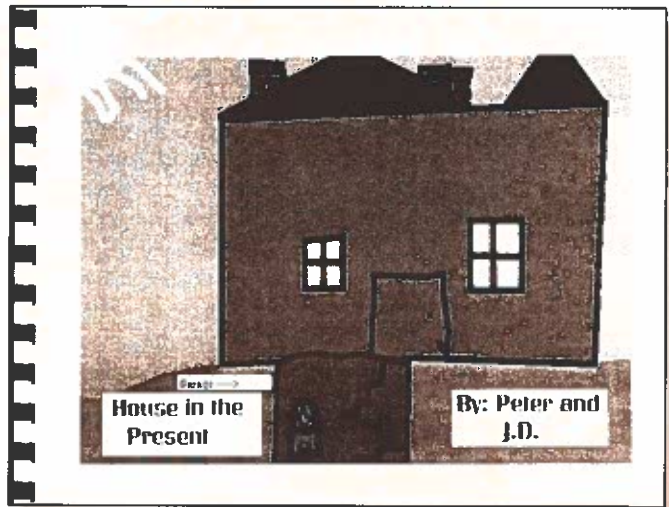
Davis Saw and Grist Mill
By Mia

What would it be like to work at the Davis Saw and Grist Mill? It would be dirty. It was built in the late 1700s by Mr. Davis. Frank Cobb bought the Mill and, after many owners, it became the Cobb's Mill Inn. And today it's a restaurant. Have you ever had dinner there?

AND PRESENT

ed by
Second Grade

House past and present, and the Norfield Church. This issue we would like to show you the children's presentation of businesses old and new and houses and how they have changed. As the children stated "We hope you like our presentation. We bet you'll learn something too."



Illustrated and written by Peter Robbins and J.D. Simons

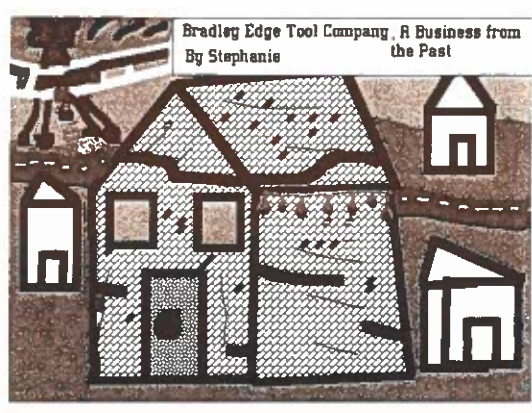
Peter's Market Today By Kaidy

Would you get most of your food from a farmer today? You might get some at the Farmer's Market in the summer and fall, but on most days you would buy food at a market, such as Peter's market. How many times have you been to Peter's Market? Would you have bought frozen food 200 years ago? No, because they didn't have refrigerators or freezers back then. Now we have refrigerators and freezers to keep frozen food in. Did they have fruit rollups back then? No they didn't have fruit rollups. They didn't have a lot of fancy packaged food that we have today. They also didn't have a lot of money. I can't imagine not having cans of soda, chips and fruit rollups!

by Kaidy Wollman

Houses Today in Weston By Peter and J.D.

How are the houses today different from the Houses in the 1800s? They are a WHOLE lot different. Even some of the garages are bigger today than the entire houses that were built in the 1800s! The houses back then had no garages. There were no cars back then because there were horses and buggies. There were only a few rooms in the houses. People didn't have a lot of bathrooms in a house either. Houses that are built today have more than one. Today most houses have a lot of rooms too. We like living in our big houses that have lots of room.



The Bradley Edge Tool Company By Stephanie

The factory was located on Lyons Plains Road near the intersection of White Birch Road. It was started by Gershom W. Bradley. Operating from about 1834 until 1911, the Bradley Edge Tool Company was rebuilt after the terrible flood of 1854. The Saugatuck River rose over its banks and destroyed the factory. It completely burned down in 1911. The land was sold to Bridgeport Hydraulic Company. It doesn't exist today.

Illustrated and written by Stephanie DeFranco

FOR OUR GRANDMOTHER HELEN MASON

continued

the arrival of boxes containing her Christmas presents – which arrived shortly after Thanksgiving; Helen was well organized!

“After Granddaddy died, she kept us in touch with who he had been and the life they had shared in Connecticut. She came to our weddings. She shared her love of entertaining. But Helen wasn’t just Don Mason’s wife. She was a role model for us in her own distinctive way. She traveled – we got postcards and Christmas presents from Scandinavia; we met up with her when she visited her cousin in England. Several of us have traveled and lived in pretty remote places – Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, and Mexico – and we trace our travel bug to her.

“And long before there was women’s lib, we knew Helen was a career woman, commuting to New York. In the 1950’s we had circus cut-outs on our bedroom wall that derived from Helen’s work on a Jell-O campaign. While our brother, like Don Mason and our father, went into engineering, we girls followed in Helen’s footsteps, into careers as a hospital social worker, lab experimentalist, music teacher, and art history professor and provost at Swarthmore College.

“We feel fortunate that Helen married our grandfather and we will miss her.

(Ed. Note): We will certainly miss Helen as well and are grateful that we have so many reminders of her at the Society, especially the lovely yellow rose that grows outside our front door – a cutting from a bush belonging to Helen’s mother. How lucky for you all to have such a creative, intelligent, and wonderful grandmother.

HERB GARDEN

Mary Ann Barr



The Coley property has a lovely herb garden thoughtfully planned and cultivated by the Weston Garden Club. It has been named the “Betty Hill” Herb garden in honor of one of our long time, dedicated Weston residents. Some years the garden has a good yield and we have been able to cut bunches of herbs such as Rosemary, Lavender, Artemisia. After drying the herbs we have been able to make room freshening potpourris.

Cutting and drying herbs was an integral part of life for hundreds of years and housewives learned, and passed on to their daughters, their own favorite methods. A staple piece of furniture in many early kitchens was a frame or rack for hanging bunches of herbs to dry.

Recently we found yet another method of herb drying from a very modern source – the internet. Miss Mary’s Victorian Household Hints (website address: newsletter@missmary.com) gives the following advice for herbs:

“Herbs when hung up to dry in loose bundles will soon lose their odor. They should be thinly spread out on newspaper, in a warm place, but shaded from the sun, and when well dried, pressed together and put into paper bags. It is a good plan to strip off the leaves, and run them fine through a sieve, and put into wide-mouthed bottles, and label them. Gather the herbs just before they commence to flower.”

We may try this method this year when the herbs are at the proper stage for cutting. If we choose, we could also use them to spice up recipes, make medicines and even make dyes as was done in the “old days”.....I think we will just stick to drying.



Below:
Center bird bath of herb garden. Cat nip in bloom on back right.





HERB DAY RECOGNITION & APPRECIATION DAY

May 17, 2003 dawned clear and was the perfect morning to dedicate the Barn Museum at the Coley Homestead to Herb Day. As you know, Herb was dedicated to preserving Weston's past and spent many hours helping the Society in various ways. One of his pet projects was the Barn Museum. He sorted, collected, labeled and displayed many farm implements, tools and equipment used by farmers and their families from Weston over many, many years.

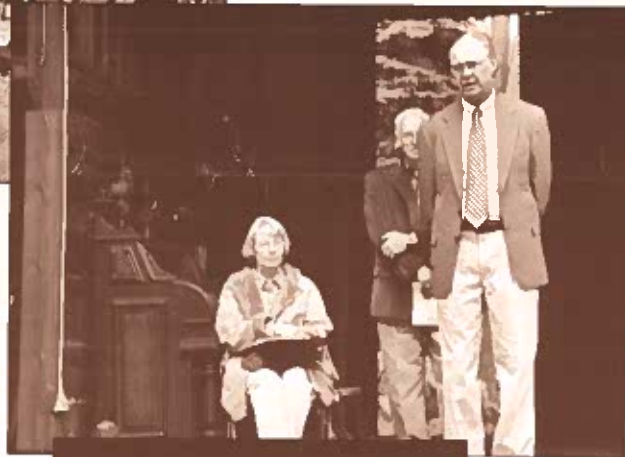
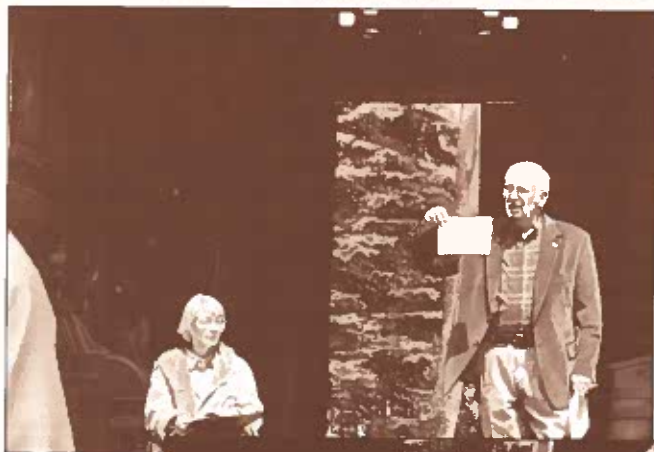
In honor of Herb's hard work, we have made a plaque

(Herb himself made many plaques for old homes in town) to put on the Barn, making it the Herb Day Barn Museum. The festivities were attended by members of the Society, Boy Scouts, and the Norfield Church. First Selectman Woody Bliss read a proclamation proclaiming Saturday, May 17, 2003 as Herb Day Recognition and Appreciation Day and he "called upon our citizens and institutions to honor this remarkable man who contributed so much to the welfare, spirit and congeniality of the town of Weston."



Left,
Cynthia Williams, Gayle Beyea, Jane Atkinson,
Sandy O'Brien, Jim Sohaper, and
Herb's son Dave Day enjoying the festivities of
Herb Day Appreciation Day

Below,
Paul Deysenroth,
Society President,
showing copy of
plaque that will be
placed on barn in
appreciation of
Barn Curator Herb
Day. Herb's wife
Fran looks on



Above,
Reverend Ken
Frazer speaking
about what Herb
meant to Norfield
Church

Right,
Barbara King and
the Boy Scouts
honoring Herb Day
for his work in
scouting. L.R.
Fran Day
Damon McLoughlin
Weston Pack 75
Greg Pross
B.S. Troup 788
Jared King
Weston Pack 75
Barbara King
Cub Master



Left,
First Selectman
Woody Bliss
reading
proclamation
proclaiming
May 17, 2003 as
Herb Day
Appreciation Day

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WHO? WHAT? WHERE? HOW?

Mary Ann Barr

Chenhall?.....hmmmm. Never heard of Chenhall. What is it? Or who? The word stuck out as I read through meeting notes of the Historical Society. Another unfamiliar word stuck out as well – **McClellan**.

McClellan?....Chenhall?.....Not historic Weston names. So what was this all about??? And what did these terms, or names, have to do with the Historical Society? I learned from Jacqui Schneider.

Jacqui, a past Trustee of this Society and current tireless worker for the cause, explained “Chenhall and McClellan” at last April’s Board of Trustees meeting. She along with Karin Giannitti, has worked diligently for about the past three years cataloging our collections in the Coley House. Early in the project Jacqui realized the need for a foolproof system of cataloging. So she did her homework by researching other facilities’ methods for cataloging collections and inventory. That led her to Robert G. Chenhall and his system of classifying objects. It is called the “Chenhall Code” and is a standard system for museums and other institutions. It is explained in Chenhall’s book entitled *The Revised Nomenclature For Museum Cataloging*. Jacqui purchased this book and proceeded to learn all the “how to’s.” Thus armed, she and Karin began to photograph, tag, and write up all the information about each article. In the past three years they have documented some 400 items – and that is just the beginning.

Research of each item often required digging into files and archives for documentation that we might already have. This brought Jacqui and Karin to Kevin B. McClellan’s appraisal done in 1991. McClellan was a professional appraiser hired by the Society to evaluate our collection at that time. Intervening years have seen the addition of many more items to our collection. That, combined with items being moved around from time to time made locating and iden-

tifying objects nearly impossible. We not only need to list every item, we needed to create an index (or “finding aid”) that would enable us to track each one properly.

One or two mornings each week you can find Jacqui and Karin at the Coley House working at this on-going project (I haven’t done the math, but over the past three years, that is a lot of man – or woman – hours). The results, however, are worth it. We now have an up-to-speed system that gives us known information for each object in our collection, and tells us where it is stored or displayed. This may seem like dull work, but there are constant interesting discoveries, big and small. On a Saturday morning last spring I found Jacqui bent over an unusual object found in a small teapot. Jacqui had it listed as “unknown” but wanted one more try at identifying it. I joined her and we scrutinized the item in vain. It looked like small scissors, except that the cutting edges were flat, meaning they couldn’t cut a thing. Enter Charlie McCullough. Charlie is a fountain of information about old-time things so I suggested showing the object to him. He knew what it was all right. It turned out to be a pipe bowl cleaner, and Charlie showed us how it worked. We were fascinated and we could picture a long ago end-of-day scene with some Weston farmer pulling out his pipe, tobacco pouch and pipe bowl cleaner for a relaxing smoke after a hard day in the fields pitching hay or adding rocks to a stone wall.

Though this project is just one of several at the Historical Society, it is an important one; keeping track of, and documenting, our collection of historic items. Combined with the other on-going projects carried out by the Society’s dedicated volunteers, it helps make the Weston Historical Society a viable education resource for Weston’s history.