

WINDSOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS

BRIDGING CENTURIES, BRIDGING CULTURES

Volume 32

No. 4

December

2014

A quarterly
publication of the
Windsor
Historical Society
of Windsor,
Connecticut

George Belden: A Cabinetmaking Success Story

By Christina Vida, Curator

The 1790s and early 1800s were transformative years for craftsmen in the greater Hartford region of Connecticut. The area's economy boomed in the 1790s and then quickly retracted during the run up to the War of 1812. Businesses had to negotiate a growing labor pool, new technologies, and demand from consumers for goods in the latest fashions. The increased competition proved to be too much for some shops, while others relocated or adapted quickly and flourished well into the 19th century. Cabinetmaker George Belden's shop in Windsor is one of the successful business stories now coming to light.

George Belden (1770-1838) was born in Wethersfield and trained to become a cabinetmaker in Hartford, likely in the shop of Aaron Chapin. The Wadsworth Atheneum has in its collection a desk-and-bookcase signed "George Belden, Hartford, May 6, 1791" that Belden probably made during the final year of his apprenticeship. Although the formal indenture for his apprenticeship does not survive, the 1790 census shows two additional males over 16 years old in Chapin's home. Belden would have attained his majority in November 1791 when he turned 21. After his apprenticeship, Belden likely stayed in Hartford and continued to work with Aaron Chapin. But in May 1793, George Belden advertised that he "carries on the CABINET MAKING Business ten rods north of the new Bridge in Windsor."

In 1794 George Belden began an account with Jerijah Barber, Jr., Windsor's premier tanner whose account books are stored in the Windsor Historical Society's archives. Belden purchased a pair of men's shoes and several straps of leather on credit from Barber. Barber then used these items

as partial payment for the bedstead, two coffins, and currying face board he purchased from Belden in 1795. The two continued doing business with each other until Barber's death in 1819.

By 1795 Belden had firmly established himself in Windsor. The town taxed him for a minor, most likely an apprentice, working with him in his shop. And in November of that year, he purchased the home of Ethan Barker, a Windsor joiner and Methodist preacher. Still standing at 335 Palisado Avenue, this house would be Belden's home for the next 37 years. In July 1796 the almost-26-year-old Belden married Hannah Porter (d. 1834), daughter of Daniel and Harriet Porter, living right down the street from him.

As Belden's family grew, so too did his business. In 1800 the town again taxed him for an apprentice. And, Jerijah Barber also continued to commission work from the cabinetmaker conveniently located just north of the Farmington River bridge. When Jerijah Barber's younger sister, Rhoda, married Roger Phelps in October 1803, George Belden crafted her dowry furniture including six cherry chairs, two swelled-front bureaus, a high post bedstead and tester frame, a low post bed, a large dining table, an oval breakfast table, a toilet table, a common candlestand, and an inlaid candlestand.

It is this inlaid candlestand and the six cherry chairs that drive home how Belden was able to adapt and survive in an increasingly competitive furniture market. Belden did not learn how to inlay designs into furniture during his

(Continued on page 3)

GEORGE BELDEN.
WISHES to inform the public that he carries on the CABINET MAKING Business ten rods north of the new Bridge in Windsor; where Ladies and Gentlemen may furnish themselves with Cabinet work of every kind, and in the newest taste. Those disposed to favor him with their custom, may depend on having their work done with the greatest neatness and punctuality.
WINDSOR, May 3, 1793.

**WINDSOR
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Our Mission

The Windsor Historical Society aims to inspire public awareness and appreciation of the diverse peoples, places, and events that contribute to Windsor's evolving history. We preserve and interpret Windsor's historical record through active collecting, research, exhibitions, programs, and communications in the belief that an understanding of history can provide individuals and communities with connections to the past, a sense of belonging in the present, and responsibility for the future.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editorial Advisors, Christine Ermenc,
Barbara Goodwin, and Christina Vida
Managing Editor, Liz Henderson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Berky, *President*

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Cathy Amadasun | Sharran Bennett |
| Bernard Caliendo | Randall Clark |
| Ruth Fahrback | Randall Graff |
| William Harris | Richard Hazelton |
| Cathleen Lavallee | Aubrey Loomis |
| Dar McCormick | MaryAnn Overbaugh |
| Ed Paquette | Agnes Pier |
| William Stephenson | Stephen J. Therault |
| Mark Walker | |

Beverly Garvan, *Honorary Director*
Sterling Viets, *Honorary Director*

STAFF

Christine Ermenc, *Executive Director*
Jack Alberti, *Facilities Coordinator*
Barbara Goodwin, *Librarian*
Liz Henderson, *Admin. Assistant*
Walt Stephenson, *Facilities Coordinator*
Christina Vida, *Curator*

CONTACT US

Open Wednesday - Saturday
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Closed major holidays
96 Palisado Avenue (Rt. 159),
Windsor, CT 06095

860/688-3813, fax 860/687-1633
info@windsorhistoricalsociety.org
www.windsorhistoricalsociety.org

Copyright © 2014
Windsor Historical Society
of Windsor, CT, Inc.

Director's Report

Christine Ermenc, Executive Director



Local Businesses: Our Community's Backbone

On November 21, we held our seventh pre-holiday auction, an event which brought in \$15,000 for Society operations plus another \$5,000 when combined with previous donations for compact shelving! I am so grateful for the generosity and community spirit of our auction donors and volunteers, many of them Society members. Many auction supporters are community business people. Viewed collectively, their businesses provide a snapshot of a vibrant and big-hearted town.

Hotels and automotive services are very much a part of Windsor, located as it is directly off I-91, close to Bradley International Airport. Doubletree by Hilton, the Hartford-Windsor Marriott and the Hyatt House donated packages to our auction as did Collision Automobile, Mitchell Selig Ford, Scata's Auto and Truck Repair, and future automobile mechanics from Windsor High School.

Windsor Center is anchored by Geissler's Supermarket, Windsor Federal Savings, Rice Hardware, Windsor Chamber of Commerce, and Bill Selig Jewelers, all of whom gave certificates and gifts. We are grateful to Central Street Antiques for donating space for our auction in past years and gifts this year. Windsor has several centers for commerce; Classic Hair Designs in Deerfield and Ashley's Distinctive Jewelry and Gifts on Day Hill Road gave great donations as well.

The entrepreneurial spirit coupled with great service is a Windsor tradition. PC Development was started by two young men a decade ago and now employs seven. They and the Connecticut Cat Connection, a no-kill shelter and adoption center; Forgotten Acres Farm, manufacturers of honey products; and Get Baked bakery, all newer Windsor businesses, gave items and certificates. B. Sure Home Inspection, D'Agata Granite and Bronze, Day Hill Kennels, Grimshaw Tree Services, New England Veterinary Center, Nunes Quality Plumbing, Windsor Animal Clinic, and Zot Plumbing and Heating are long-standing and successful Windsor businesses that generously supported our auction.

Compassion as well as service is a Windsor watchword. Carmon Community Funeral Homes started small three generations ago and now serves many Greater Hartford communities. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you can read about how Mike Rabbett of Rabbett Insurance walked up and down Poquonock streets to reach victims of the 1979 tornado who were insured by his agency, inspiring many others in the aftermath to switch from less responsive insurers.

There are many wonderful doctors, dentists, and health professionals practicing in Windsor. Drs. Farley and Garceau and Gange have generously donated dental health packages for many years. Metacomet Crossfit and Yoga and Many Rivers Community Acupuncture joined them this year. And let's not forget culture and service: Northwest Park



335 Palisado Avenue, Windsor. *Town of Windsor Property Image.*

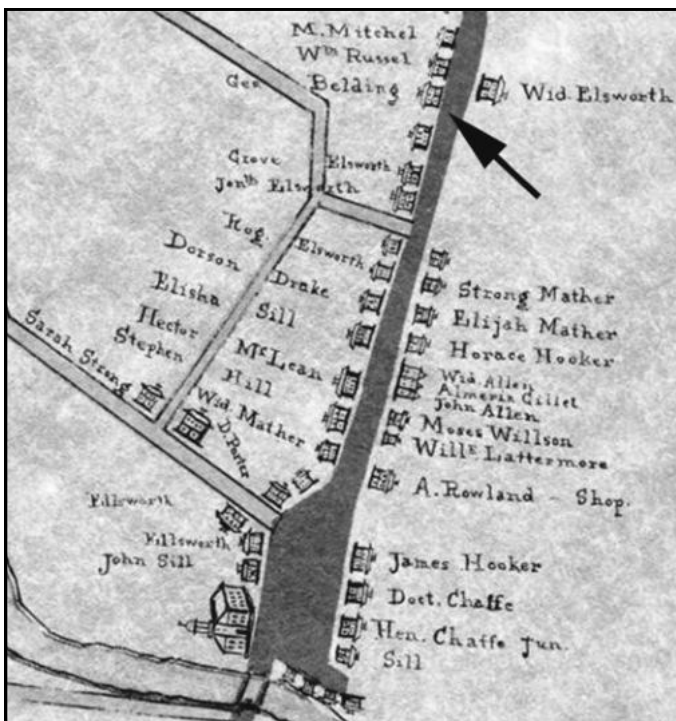
apprenticeship in Hartford. The style did not become popular in this area until around 1800. But based on this evidence, Belden taught himself how to make the new style of furniture that his customers wanted for their homes. The cherry chairs, although not listed as inlaid, were also likely made in the new fashion. Rhoda Barber Phelps' great-granddaughter, Marguerite Mills, donated three cherry chairs to the Society that are inscribed "Rhoda Barber 1802." Although the later label is a year off, these heart-backed cherry chairs with inlaid decoration look like Belden's

attempt at the newest style.

Jerijah Barber died in 1819, thus ending his account with George Belden, but Belden remained in Windsor until 1832. In that year, he sold his house and likely moved in with one of his children. His wife died in 1834, and George Belden passed away in 1838. After working in Windsor for almost 40 years, it is surprising that so few pieces of furniture are labeled by him. The current total of five includes the 1791 desk-and-bookcase and a chest of drawers, both of which were made in Hartford, and another desk-and-bookcase that was owned in Kentucky in 1962. We also know of a slant-lid desk and a chest of drawers made in

Windsor. The three Rhoda Barber Phelps' chairs, although unsigned, would be a significant addition to George Belden's known output and show how he transitioned his business from the 18th century into the 19th century.

We are always seeking objects and archival material that might contribute to our understanding of this early Windsor business. If you are aware of furniture similar to that pictured here, or have archival material related to early Windsor craftsmen, please contact Curator Christina Vida at cvida@windsorhistoricalsociety.org.



1798 Map of Windsor, drawn by Seth Pease, reproduced 1908.



One of three chairs likely crafted by George Belden, 1803.
Windsor Historical Society Collection, 1986.75

Mike Rabbett: Fifty years in Insurance

By Christina Vida, Curator

If the Energizer Bunny had been around in 1964, Mike Rabbett could have been his double. One of six children in an Irish-American family living on Poquonock Avenue, he was an Eagle Scout starting his senior year at Windsor High School and pumping gas at Hale's garage. His scout leader, Bob Williams, suggested he apply for a position at Williams' employer, Fireman's Fund Insurance, in Hartford. He landed a mail clerk job and began a career in insurance that has lasted fifty years. To honor this achievement, Mike's friends raised funds for a bench and a cash donation to the Windsor Historical Society. The bench will be used for years to come as a place to share stories – and Mike generously shared his business story with us for our Oral History Collection.

After starting at Fireman's Fund in 1964, Mike still had to juggle his senior year studies with the duties of a full-time mail clerk job. This meant leaving school 30 minutes early to take a bus to Hartford, working until 8:30 p.m., catching the last bus home, and working 6 or 7 hours each Saturday. After graduating in June of 1965, he was promoted to an "underwriting trainee" working on auto policies. As a reservist in the U.S. Army, he was called to basic training at Fort Dix in February 1966. He returned to Fireman's Fund after four months to find his old job occupied by someone else. Instead, they shifted Mike to "this new thing coming out – it's called homeowner's insurance," which bundled a property owner's multiple policies (and bills) into one. He attended a training program in San Francisco and, by the age

of 20, was his company's resident expert on homeowner's insurance policies. Mike continued to succeed at Fireman's Fund and was again promoted to a "special agent" catering to insurance agents in Connecticut and Vermont.

After ten years with Fireman's Fund, Mike was considering opening his own agency but had not yet found the right situation. A meeting with agency-owner Tom Faulkner proved fateful. Faulkner, a Manchester native, had recently relocated to Windsor but was in need of local contacts. Mike, a Windsor native and insurance man, brought both his Rolodex and industry know-how to the partnership. After some months of sorting out the arrangements, Mike agreed to work for less money and a stake of ownership in the agency. With two kids and without "two nickels to rub together," he left Fireman's Fund and joined Faulkner's agency at 77 Spring Street in Windsor.

A defining time of Mike's career was the October 3, 1979 tornado that devastated Poquonock. He immediately called Aetna, the main company they were working with at the time, and was out the next morning with the Aetna adjuster writing checks to clients. Even though many of his clients' homes and businesses were gone, he remembered where to find them and what their needs were. Every day for two weeks he walked the same route to check in with them. The day after the storm, he had delivered a \$75,000 check as partial payment to one client. Walking by the next day, Mike asked the man's wife if they had deposited the check and received a blank stare in return. "Do you remember what shirt he was wearing?" she asked. Mike recalled a plaid shirt, and she fished the shirt, and the check, out of the car. It was this personal level of care and concern that set his business apart from others. "You have to be available," Mike says. "If you take this job, you've got to be willing to do it." Mike would take a call from anyone at any time of day, except for the 30 minutes when he would have dinner with his family. If you called then, Mike's wife, Lu, would answer and let you know that he would call you back in half an hour.

Mike and Tom parted ways in 1986 when Mike opened his own Rabbett Insurance Agency. Lu has always been a major contributor to the company – walking so that Mike could have the car, working in the office while their children were in school, taking care of the family when Mike made house calls. And, about eight years ago, their daughter Shannon joined the company, ushering in technological updates. What has been the major change in the last fifty years? "Computers," is Mike's instant answer. During his first ten



Mike Rabbett, Society Director Christine Ermenc, and Kerry Ruiz donating the bench to the Society in October 2014.

Acres of Gladiolus, Fountains in the Greenhouse

By Barbara Goodwin, Librarian

Acres of gladiolus blooms. Hundreds of thousands of rooted geranium and chrysanthemum cuttings. Tulips, lilies, and poinsettias forced for the holidays. Greenhouses 150 feet long, some containing nothing but foliage greens such as ferns and ivy. It is so hard to picture it today, but in the mid-twentieth century, particularly along Windsor and Palisado Avenues, floriculture was very big business in Windsor. It is worthwhile to look back, imagine the colorful displays and earthy smells of the greenhouses, and appreciate the economic impact this sphere of commerce would have had on the community during its prime decades between 1930 and 1960.

Irish-born Edward F. McDermott, a gardener in Hartford, purchased a house in Windsor in 1910. He proceeded to erect a greenhouse in the rear yard of this property located alongside Creamery Brook across from the lower end of Broad Street Green. McDermott is recognized as the first to open a florist shop in Windsor and successfully ran it for 35 years.

Gustaf and Axel Hallgren learned the floral business from their father in Sweden, immigrated to the Hartford area around 1900, and established their own partnership in 1914. Hallgren Brothers grew most of their flowers in a large greenhouse complex at 280 Windsor Avenue in an area with other market gardens and family farms. By 1917 one greenhouse was devoted completely to growing carnations and another was filled with 5,000 chrysanthemums in the fall and 25,000 bedding plants by early spring. They sold to the local retail market and shipped extensive wholesale orders. For years Hallgren's plants and flowers decorated local social events such as weddings and high school proms.

John F. Ward came to Windsor in 1918 and found work as a gardener on Windsor Heights. By 1931 he had established his own florist and greenhouse business at 844 Palisado Avenue selling cut flowers, fresh dug bedding plants, and perennials. Ward retired in the early 1950s.

A little further south at 598 Palisado Avenue, Eugene and Edna Drake opened the Palisado Greenhouse in 1921. Although Eugene passed away just a few years later, Edna operated the greenhouses and florist business for thirty years. When she sold to the Bunk family in the early 1950s, the main greenhouse extended 150 feet eastward and other glass structures filled some of the back fields that terraced across the meadows to the Connecticut River. The new family settled into the attached two-story house. Margaret



Snelgrove Florist, 181 Broad Street, 1987
Windsor Historical Society Collection 2014.67.32

Quinn Bunk was a talented floral designer and for nearly a dozen years her husband George Bunk tended the more than 7,000 geranium and chrysanthemum plants grown annually. Their children helped with deliveries, making ribbon bows, and wrapping potted plants with shiny foil.

Ernest S. Clark, Jr. grew over 200 varieties of gladiolus in several fields in the Poquonock area. Newspaper advertisements in the 1930s invited gladiolus lovers to visit the fields and to attend the Connecticut Gladiolus Society shows at the Old State House in Hartford. Clark shipped glad blubs all across the country. He was particularly active with this specialty business between 1929 and 1935, and then turned his attention to raising tobacco.

The Snelgrove family anchored local floriculture in Windsor Center for four generations. Edwin Snelgrove brought his family and his prized plants and settled on Maple Street in 1898. When fire badly damaged their home, he purchased the house at 175 Broad St. and several acres of adjacent land. His youngest son Sidney worked at several of the area nurseries during his teens, but by the time he graduated from John Fitch High School in 1925 he had set up his own business. He peddled cut flowers door-to-door and built greenhouses, ultimately as many as six structures, on his father's property. He filled them with seasonal plants and greenery produced for the wholesale market. He and his wife Dorothy built the brick retail shop showroom at 181 Broad St. about 1935 and attracted customers with a large flashing FLORIST sign which Sidney won at a florist's convention in Las Vegas. Like the other Windsor growers, Snelgrove Florist was a family business, with the extended family pitching in and even grandchildren helping with watering and by providing an extra pair of hands during the rush times. The business had a presence "On the Green" for over eighty years.

And today? McDermott's property now holds a Geissler's Supermarket and Creamery Brook runs in a culvert underneath the road. In 1957 Mott's Supermarket was built on the site of Hallgren Brothers' greenhouse. John Ward's

Mike Rabbett, *continued from page 4*

years as an agency owner, Mike spent four nights a week with customers at their kitchen tables. But now, “as the agency grows, we need less and less people because of computers...we’re losing some of the contact that we’ve had with clients, but we’re also gaining many clients because of Facebook and our website.” Today, he says, their younger clientele don’t have the time and would rather buy insurance online. But, his home phone number is still on his business card. And you can call anytime, except during dinner with the grandkids. Then, Lu will tell you that he’ll call you back in 30 minutes.



Greg Hutchins (left), of Aetna, and Mike Rabbett (middle left), with the Kurpens (right) after the October 1979 tornado.
Windsor Historical Society Collection, 2014.61.2

Director’s Message, *Continued from page 2*

and the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum both donated items, as did the Windsor Junior Women’s Club. Restaurants: take your pick! Gift certificates from Dom’s, Jim’s, Union Street Tavern, Restaurant 75, Vito’s, and Zocco’s were eagerly snapped up by auction-goers.

It wasn’t just items and services donated: volunteers from Windsor Federal Savings and Windsor Rotary served as cashiers, recorders, and packers on auction night and Frank Carmon and T.J. Selig were our fabulous auctioneers.

The local foods and small business support movements have gained traction in recent years. But supporting local enterprise has been a way of life in Windsor for many centuries. We think this is a great tradition to continue in the New Year and we thank all of our supporters for a great 2014!

Greenhouse, *continued from page 5*

acreage is now home to a landscaping company. The Palisado Greenhouses have been taken down and only the house remains. In Windsor Center, the Snelgrove house and greenhouses are also gone and it is hard to imagine that the now vacant lot could have held so many structures. Large-scale commercial growers have replaced the local greenhouse operations run by these Windsor families. The sale of plants and cut flowers in grocery stores and on the internet has also cut into the local retailers’ market.

Snelgrove Florist, with Timothy Snelgrove as the current proprietor, is celebrating its 90th anniversary engaged in the florist trade. Their shop on Poquonock Avenue, and other local businesses such as Jordan Florist, demonstrates the diversification needed to be successful in this market today. They have added greeting cards, seasonal decorations, jams and preserves, gift baskets, and candy. Tim began making chocolates at age eleven, selling his creations to family and friends, and reinvesting his proceeds in more supplies and equipment. Today Snelgrove Florist makes upwards of 30,000 thousand pounds of chocolates and other candy annually.

Agricultural products have always been a key element in Windsor’s economy, but the specific crops and harvests have changed over time. The extensive market gardens in the Wilson area are no more, the dairy farms and butter manufactory have also vanished, the acres and acres of shade tobacco shrink more each year. The heyday of Windsor’s floriculture business lasted but one generation; however the pleasure of receiving fresh cut flowers is undiminished.

So many years in operation and so few photos of these wonderful floriculture businesses here at the Windsor Historical Society. If you have photos or memories which would enable us to more fully capture this piece of Windsor’s past, please contact our librarian, Barbara Goodwin, at bgoodwin@windsorhistoricalsociety.org.



Fountain in the Showroom, Snelgrove Florist, 1973
WHIS Collection 2014.67.25

Meet Development Intern Daniel Crittenden

What drew you to Windsor Historical Society?

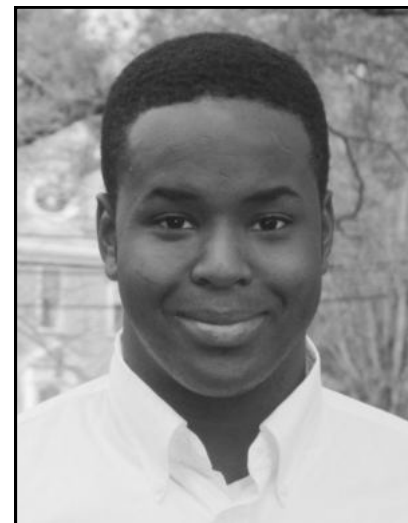
Volunteering at Windsor Historical Society provides the opportunity for me to combine my passion for non-profit development and fundraising and my love of history. Over the past number of years, I've had the privilege through fundraising to connect people to institutions and projects that, in some cases, they never even knew they loved. I worked in the University of Hartford's archives sorting collections, ranging from university marketing and communications collections to a special collection for Brothers and Sisters United -- the university's Black Student Union. My experience in the University of Hartford Archives informed me of the value of historical preservation and the devastation when historical records are lost. I enjoy looking through layers of time, and Windsor's an old town with an exceptional history.

What have you been doing for us?

I have been working on donor prospect research for the Society's Strong-Howard House campaign and database development for the Society's campaign to purchase compact shelving for library collections. I solicited business advertisements for the House Tour booklet and donations for the pre-holiday auction. I researched crowd funding and how it might be utilized by the Society.

What is next for you?

I am working on fundraising for the second annual Hartford-based "Hairplosion," a showcase for barbers and beauticians. I'm also in conversation about fundraising for a program called Active City that combines children's sport programs. I plan to stay at Windsor Historical Society- at least as long as they'll have me and as long as my schedule allows. Even if unforeseen circumstances cause this relationship to change, I'll continue to support the Historical Society, because I know the work done here is extraordinary.



Visiting the Society

The Society is open Wednesdays through Saturdays with tours of the historic houses conducted at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. Our admission fee is \$8 for adults, \$6 for students over age 12 years and seniors over 62 years. Society members, children under 12 years, teachers, and New England Museum Association members displaying a card are FREE.

Can't make it to the Society in person? For in-depth research resources, check out our website, www.windsorhistoricalsociety.org.

For daily updates and historical tidbits, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @windsorct1633, and Instagram@windsorhistoricalsociety.

Volunteers

We are so grateful to all our volunteers. Between our volunteers, staff, and donors, we are able to accomplish so much more and even surprise ourselves!

Collections: Dorothy Ball, Donna Baron, Marianne Curling, Lynn Kloter Fahy, Kevin Ferrigno, Karen Parsons and Jim Trocchi.

Development: Daniel Crittenden

Education: Ruth Budlong, Carolyn Doyle, Mary Kelling, Carlton Parkinson and Barbara Tanguay.

Front desk and administration: Lonnette Candelaria, Carolyn Doyle, Deb Dusseault, Sue Gallagher, Charlie Goodwin, Susan Jackson, Coralee Jones, Betsy and Gordon Kenneson, Willa Nemetz, Marion Nielsen, Libby Parker, Ed Paquette, Agnes Pier, Barbara Tanguay, Laura Toal and Jim Trocchi.

Grounds: Ruth Fahrbach, Laura Jary and the Town of Windsor.

Library: Elaine Brophy, Daniel Crittenden, Sue Gallagher, Bev Garvan, Betsy Kenneson, Gordon Kenneson, Sandy McGraw, Barbara Tanguay, Gail Tinto and Lois Warner.

Publicity: Gordon Kenneson

Upcoming Programs at Windsor Historical Society

For more information contact the Society at 860-688-3813 or info@windsorhistoricalsociety.org

January 15, 5 PM to 7 PM: **“Building Bridges” Exhibition Opening** at the Windsor Historical Society. Windsor High School’s Pre-AP Art students have drawn inspiration from the Windsor Historic District, Broad Street Green, and the Farmington River Bridges to create their own works of art. The exhibit will remain on view until March 1st. Come meet the young artists and enjoy refreshments at the FREE public exhibit opening. Snow date: January 22nd, 5 PM to 7 PM.

February 3, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM: **From Memory to Memoir: Writing Your Life Story** on six consecutive Tuesdays at Windsor Historical Society’s Research Library. Susan Omilian has been encouraging and guiding budding memoir writers for many years. No previous writing experience required. **Session 1: Why You Want to Write Your Life Story and Quieting Your Inner Critic.** Sessions follow on February 10 (**Mining a Childhood Memory for the Jewels, Working with Memories**), February 17 (**Focusing on Defining Moments**), February 24 (**Deciding Theme and Structure for your Life Story**), March 3 (**Using Pictures, Documents and the Rest**), and March 10 (**Editing your Memoir, Preparing it for Publication, Tips on Self Publishing**). COST: \$75 for six session course, Class size is limited. Registration and pre-payment needed by February 2. Snow date: the following Tuesday, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

February 11, 11 AM to 2 PM: Volunteer needle-workers needed at Windsor Historical Society! Ann Howard’s linens, on display in the Society’s Strong-Howard House, need one last touch of authenticity – her initials. Help us finish this final element on our sheets and bring your own linens to mark as well. We’ll supply the needles, thread, and sample marking patterns to try out. Bring your lunch and we’ll have light refreshments and a friendly sewing circle. Space is limited so please reserve your spot by calling 860-688-3813 or emailing cvida@windsorhistoricalsociety.org. Snow Date: Thursday, February 12, 11 AM to 2 PM.

February 14, 2 PM to 3:30 PM: **Happy Valentine’s Day Talk and Workshop** at Windsor Historical Society at 96 Palisado Avenue with Director Christine Ermenc. Why do we celebrate Valentine’s Day and what is the meaning behind the symbols we see on historic valentines? Get answers from the intricate Valentines of the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries shown in a PowerPoint presentation. Then create a valentine masterpiece for someone special inspired by your own imagination and the historic valentines in the presentation. Delectable chocolates and valentine treats served. COST: \$10. WHS members will receive a \$2 off coupon to be applied toward future programs.

February 16, 10 AM to 4 PM: Wondering how to entertain your children on **President’s Day**? Bring them to **Candle-Dipping** at Windsor Historical Society. We’ll provide different colors to make each candle unique. The Society’s Hands-On-History Learning Center will be open. Build a toothpick-and-marshmallow replica of the Strong-Howard House or get creative and design a structure of your own. COST: \$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$3 children, \$2 members or \$10 per family. Snow Date: Tuesday, February 17, 10 AM to 4 PM.

February 25, 7 PM to 8 PM: **African American Connecticut Explored** at Windsor Historical Society. Essayist Dr. Stacey Close, Professor of History at Eastern Connecticut State University, and Elizabeth Normen, publisher of *Connecticut Explored*, the magazine of Connecticut history, and editor of *African American Connecticut Explored* (Wesleyan University Press, 2014), will speak about the long arc of the African American experience in Connecticut with compelling stories drawn from the book’s 54 essays covering the colonial period to mid-20th century. Purchase a book and get it signed by the authors, and pick up a current issue of *Connecticut Explored* Magazine. COST: \$6 adults, \$5 seniors and students, \$4 members. Snow date: Thursday, February 26, 7 PM to 8 PM.

March 8, 2 PM to 3:30 PM: **Stories from Cherished Hopes and Honorable Ambition: A Centennial History of the Loomis Chaffee School**. What are some of the highlights of the Loomis Chaffee School’s first century? What impact has the school had on its students and faculty? Co-authors and editors, former Headmaster John Ratté and archivist and History teacher Karen Parsons will share stories from and discuss the questions and research that inspired the book. Books will be available for sale and signing after the talk. It will take place in the Gilchrist Auditorium in the Clark Science Center at the Loomis Chaffee School. Cost: FREE.

March 14, 15, 28, 29, and April 11 and 12 from 1 PM to 1:30 PM, 2 PM to 2:30 PM, and 3:00 PM to 3:30 PM.: **Captain and Mrs. Howard are at Home and Request the Honor of Your Presence!** History truly comes alive as you visit Windsor Historical Society’s Strong-Howard house museum and meet Captain and Mrs. Howard in their 1810 home. Costumed actors portraying this historic couple will welcome you into their newly renovated historic house, where yes, you CAN touch everything! Pre-registrations necessary since space is limited inside the house. Contact the Society at 860-688-3813 by the day prior to your preferred performance time to reserve your spot. Walk-ins will be accommodated only as space allows. COST: \$10. WHS members will receive a \$2 off coupon to be applied toward future programs.

April 1, Windsor Historical Society’s **“Up Close and Personal” Facebook Photo Contest** begins! This year, get up close and personal with Windsor - send us a detail image of a *public* space or building *in Windsor* with a one-sentence description of where you took the picture. Photographers of any age and from any town can submit an image. Email your jpeg file to Christina Vida at cvida@windsorhistoricalsociety.org. Submissions will be posted on the Society’s Facebook page, where all the voting will take place. Facebook users can “like” their favorite image and story to vote. The earlier you submit, the more “likes” you can receive. Submissions will be accepted until Thursday, May 21st at 5 PM. Voting will continue until Thursday, May 28th at 9 PM. The first prize winner with the most votes will receive \$100. Second prize is \$75, and third prize is \$50. Submission of an entry constitutes warranty of originality and non-infringement, as well as permission for the Windsor Historical Society, Windsor, CT, to publish the entry in print or online, including social media.

April 9, 7 PM to 9 PM: **Third Annual Shad Derby Trivia Contest** at the Windsor Historical Society. Test your knowledge at the Shad Derby Trivia Contest. Teams of up to 6 members (age 21 & up only) can compete during five rounds of questions ranging from general knowledge to Windsor-specific facts. The team with the most points gets bragging rights for a year and a gift certificate to a local establishment. Enjoy refreshments and the grand opening of the **“Shad Derby: A Windsor Tradition”** exhibition, on view from April 9th until May 30th. Teams must register in advance – space is limited. COST: \$10/contestant or \$5 onlooker.

April 25, 1 PM to 3 PM: Windsor Historical Society hosts a **Broad Street Green Architectural Open House**. See inside five historic buildings along Broad Street Green in Windsor. The 1902 Huntington House, now occupied by J. Morrissey, the 1930 Plaza Building, the 1941 VFW building (formerly the Post Office), the 1929 Windsor Federal building, and the archives vault of the 1965 Town Hall will all be available to the public for this afternoon open house. Tickets are \$10/person (children 12 and under free) and will be available for purchase in advance at the Society beginning April 1 or on the day of the tour at the registration table in front of J. Morrissey. Come enjoy lunch at one of Windsor’s locally-owned restaurants and then learn about our local history as you walk through these important structures that line the Town Green.