

# HARWINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

February 2017

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## WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION

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*The Nineteenth Amendment (Amendment XIX) to the United States Constitution prohibits any United States citizen from being denied the right to vote on the basis of sex. It was ratified on August 18, 1920.*

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There were 25 people at a program Sunday afternoon January 29<sup>th</sup> at the Harwinton Library to learn more about the topic of the women's right to vote effort. Program leader Dr. Karl Valois, from the University of Connecticut, called the path to the Nineteenth Amendment one of the great reform movements in United States history. He commented on the perseverance of the women's suffrage supporters who fought 72 years for women to gain the right to vote.

Valois said opposition to the idea came from four specific areas: political party bosses, the liquor industry, churches and, surprisingly, other women. The long road to the final passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 resulted in the formation of several local and national groups of both supporters and detractors.

The movement began in 1848 and resulted in the rise of leaders such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Carrie Nation, Julie Ward Howe, and Carrie Chapman Catt. Men, such as Frederick Douglass, also backed the effort, but it was not supported by then President Woodrow Wilson. It was Harry Burns, a 24-year-old legislator from Tennessee who changed his vote at the last minute allowing the amendment to pass. Burns' decision was based on a note he had received from his mother urging him to support women's right to vote in political elections.

### Coming February 5<sup>th</sup>: "The Road to 9/11"

The Harwinton Historical Society will offer a video program entitled "The Road to 9/11" on Sunday, February 5, 2017. This is a video history of radical Islam from the end of World War I to the attacks on the World Trade Center. The roles played by European colonialism, the division of Palestine, Arab nationalism, authoritarian governments, cold war geopolitics and oil in the development of a modern jihadist element in Islam are explored. The complexity of Middle East issues become apparent and serve as a stepping off point for a discussion about American policy toward this troubled region.

The film lasts one hour with discussion to follow. Bruce Burnett, former history teacher at Regional School District 10, will lead the discussion. The program will run from 2 through 4 PM at the Harwinton Library on Bentley Drive. All are invited to attend at no charge, and advance registration is not necessary.

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**HHS Holds Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of the Harwinton Historical Society was held on Sunday, January 22 at the Harwinton Senior Center on Weingart Road. About 23 members were present.

This marked the official start of terms for the officers and members of the Board of Directors listed in column at left. Beverly Mosher and Jim Curtis were thanked for the many years they each had served as directors.

Minutes from the December Board of Directors meeting were approved and Auditor Marilyn Mitchell reported that she reviewed the financial records for 2016 and found them to be in good order.

After the meeting light refreshments were served followed by a program on “The Hungerfords” presented by Town Historian Roger Plaskett.

Other business included discussion of the status of Harwinton House and a new interactive history program for first graders called “Then to Now” that was created by the town historian and shown to first at the Harwinton Consolidated School in January.

Volunteers will be sought to help keep the schoolhouse and barn open more often this summer and assist with other projects that will be discussed at the February 23rd Board of Directors meeting.

**A Bit of Trivia**

**Question:** Who was Elam Luddington (sometimes spelled Ludington)? **Answer on page 4**

**REMINDER:** Please pay 2017 dues by the end of February to maintain your HHS membership!



### *The Barn Corner*

## HARVESTING ICE

For many people, the first important "crop" task of the season was the harvesting of ice. This season began in January or February when pond or lake ice was at its thickest. Ice lines were marked out in squares, the size of the square depending on the ability to haul it out of the water. Lake ice was better than pond ice, because pond water moved very slowly making the ice murky and full of holes. It was important to keep the ice source free of snow prior to harvesting to insure good freezing.

The ice saw was different from a wood saw in that there was a handle on only one end, and the shape and size of the teeth were different. Once marked and cut, the ice had to be moved to a convenient place on shore to be hauled into a wagon and put in an ice house where the slabs were packed together tightly and insulated with sawdust. Surprisingly, a well-packed, well-insulated supply of ice would last a long time.

Why was the hard work of ice harvesting in cold weather so important? Before the advent of electricity, the ways of preserving food were limited. Some meats could be dried, salted, or smoked. Others, such as chickens, were kept alive and harvested as needed. Vegetables were stored in the damp earthen basement, the coolest room in the house. The only fruit that was easily kept was apples, which were often stored in barrels. Children were often told to always choose the apple that had the rotten spot, because "a rotten apple spoils the whole barrel."

Ice harvesting was the winter job of men and boys. If there was a surplus of ice, it could be sold or traded to wealthy families or merchants. The money from the sale of ice was then used to buy the things that could not be made on the farm. The existence of various ice tools, tongs, scrapers, ice picks, and others on display in the Historical Society barn is a testament to the importance of ice in early America.

- *Information contributed by David Ryan*

## LOOKING BACK IN HARWINTON HISTORY

By Joyce Peck

Back in the 19th century, R. Manning Chipman Jr. (1806-1893) was the first chronicler of Harwinton history, according to the late Raymond G. Bentley. Chipman was pastor of the Harwinton Congregational Church from 1835 to 1839. He published "The History of Harwinton, Connecticut" in 1860 and was among those credited by Bentley with helping to preserve local history.

"It is a small book and woefully lacking in detail but it does contain much of the early history of the Church and of early Harwinton," Bentley said. For example, on page 133 of his book, Chipman writes a long list of Harwinton-items manufactured for domestic use, items ranging from carpeting and brushes, rub-stones (whetstones), shingles and fur hats to ox-bows, wedges and veneering stuff, "all made in Harwinton." But after writing all that, Bentley said Chipman did not give a single location of any of those factories. Bentley says in his book "This and That of Early Harwinton" Chipman also failed to give the name of a single person engaged in these many activities.

*NOTE: "The History of Harwinton, Connecticut" by R. Manning Chipman is available in digitized form on the Internet.*

### Curator's Corner

On Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>, HHS Curator Bonnie Andrews and HHS member Mary English attended "The Fundamentals of Archival Arrangement & Description," a half-day workshop presented by Moira Conlan, Archives Consultant. The program was held at the Litchfield Historical Society and was part of an Archives Roundtable Series offered by the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board and Conservation Connection.

The Historical Society has added a scrapbook kept by Harwinton resident the late Charles Barber. The book contains articles and photos mostly related to World War II. The scrapbook was offered to the Society by Roger Plaskett, a member of and historian for the Barber family.

### **Answer to: "A Bit of Trivia" (from page 2):**

Elam Luddington, **born in 1806 in Harwinton** to Elam Luddington Sr. and Lena Monger Luddington, was a Mormon pioneer to Utah and first Mormon missionary to preach in Thailand. He was baptized by Joseph Smith Jr. in 1840 and later followed Brigham Young to the Salt Lake Valley in Utah Territory. Luddington practiced plural marriage and had three wives. He died in 1893.