



The King House Museum

Stony Brook CURRENTS

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A Newsletter of the Suffield Historical Society

September 2006

The mission of the Suffield Historical Society is to collect, preserve and stimulate interest in the history of Suffield and the region and to actively share it. The Society hopes to inspire a sense of community, as well as to provide an understanding and appreciation of Suffield's past.

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Original Suffield Proprietors: The Brothers Harmon

by Ed Chase

Samuel, Joseph, and Nathaniel Harmon hunted and trapped this area ten years before the settlement of Suffield. The number of beaver pelts and other furs they sold to Major John Pynchon indicates their familiarity with the surrounding topography. Perhaps having greater knowledge of the area than any other white men of the time, they sought to secure a grant for a town in this wilderness. The three brothers were the *first* three grantees of Suffield in 1670.

Samuel secured land on what is now Remington Street. Unmarried and without children, his land passed to his brothers upon his death in 1677.

Joseph, too, originally settled with a farm off Remington but moved to his homelot on the west side of High Street in 1677 for protection from the Indians. (The town was burned and abandoned in 1675 during King Philip's War and resettled in 1677). Joseph and his wife Hannah Filley had ten children.

Nathaniel's homelot was adjacent to Joseph's on what is now the most northern part of the Phelps-Hatheway House property; his farm was located off Remington. He and his wife Mary Skinner also had ten children. In 1709, the Town purchased his homelot for the new Congregational minister. His payment was partly in cash and partly as land on Sheldon St. His son Samuel would settle there just west of our new high school building complex. One of the pink barns still standing was originally the Harmon house.

Multitudes of descendants of Joseph and Nathaniel Harmon exist today in Suffield and far beyond. The brothers who once were prominent figures in town government are noted today by Harmon Drive (near where the brothers' farms once existed) and the Harmon Woodlot owned by the Suffield Land Conservancy (a gift from descendants in the 1990s).

Material taken from the Harmon Genealogy, The Papers of John Pynchon, and H. S. Sheldon's Documentary History of Suffield.

John and Elizabeth Harmon had eight children. Samuel, Joseph and Nathaniel were three of their sons. Samuel, b. 1643, d. without issue 1677. Joseph, b. Springfield 1646/7, m. Hannah Filley of Windsor 1673, d. Suffield 1729. Hannah d. Suffield 1729. Nathaniel, b. Springfield 1653, m. Mary Skinner of Windsor 1685, d. 1712. Mary m. 2nd, John Hanchett, 1713, d. 1730.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL A SUCCESS

The Society hosted an ice cream social on Thursday, July 20. Cooler weather made it a perfect evening for eating outside. Most attendees packed picnic suppers, and the Society served root beer floats and sundaes. Nearly 100 attended.



People lingered to visit and chat. Small groups dotted the lawn while music from a bygone era played in the background. June and Chris Hodges provided old-time games and manned the ice cream freezer, urging everyone to help crank. Alice Dahms, Joan Baker, Nancy Noble and Anne Borg spooned up ice cream.

Our motive for hosting the event was to raise our profile in town and to make a stronger connection in people's minds between the King House Museum and the Historical Society as well as to have a good time. It was a most congenial evening and an unqualified success.

FRESH MINTED LEMON ICE

For those of you who loved our homemade ice cream, here's the recipe:

- 2 tsps. grated lemon rind
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 1/2 cups water
- 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup fresh orange juice

Combine grated lemon rind, sugar, and water in pan. Cover. Bring to a boil, and let boil 5 minutes without stirring. Stir in mint leaves, and let stand 3-4 minutes. Pour through strainer to remove leaves. Add the juices. Chill thoroughly. Pour into ice cream maker and churn-freeze according to directions. (Chilled and unchurned, this makes a delicious addition to iced tea!)

FROM *OLD FASHIONED ICE CREAM RECIPES*, BY BEAR WALLOW BOOKS, c1989.

KING HOUSE REPAIRS

The Property Committee hopes you've noticed that the porch repairs begun in the fall have been completed. A fresh coat of paint on the porch now welcomes all our visitors.

The new roof on the main house and the ell has also been completed.

Projects such as these continue to be a major expenditure for the Society. Volunteers help us keep the upkeep affordable, and with that in mind we ask you to join us for a work day on Saturday morning, October 21.

Volunteers are needed to clean gutters, do some yard work, and other odd jobs. The work session will run from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. *Your help is needed ... please join us.*

Healthy, young muscles assist Chris Hodges with hand-cranked ice cream while others jump in to custom design their sundaes.



ANTIQUÉ CAR SHOW

The Society will hold its annual antique car show on Sunday, September 10 on the grounds of the King House Museum from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. as part of the *Suffield on the Green* festivities. Cars will be on display free of charge.

During the car show, the King House Museum will also be open. Admission to the museum is \$1.00 for adults and free to students. As always, Society members are free of charge.

Those who are showing cars should bring them to the King House by 10:00 a.m. on Sunday. Please call Ed Chase at 668-2962 with any questions.

KING HOUSE EVENTS

The King House hosts an art exhibit and sale on Saturday, September 22. Sponsored by the Tobacco Valley Artists Association, the show has a raindate of September 30. The museum also opens on Saturday, October 14 as part of an eight-house tour sponsored as a fundraiser for Community Health Resources. See our calendar for

CURATOR'S REPORT

by Lester Smith

It's always fun when the fourth graders come to the King House Museum each spring, and their visits on June 1 & 2 this year were no exception. Over 200 came, in eight batches along with a good number of parents in addition to the teachers. Many wrote nice letters afterwards, and some have returned with parents or grandparents.

Other visitation has been variable, ranging from none some days to as many as ten in four groups one busy afternoon. Invariably, our visitors express their sincere appreciation of the museum.

It's not too early to consider what you might be willing to lend for the special exhibit during our Holidayfest weekend, December 2 & 3. This year the theme will be *Needlework, Then and Now*.

Let us show your old treasures as well as your new creations. I know that many of our members and friends have interesting and impressive examples of crocheting, quilting, knitting, needlepoint, embroidering, hooking, and other techniques whose names I can't recall.

Please help make this another great show. We'll have white-gloved docents on station to control unwanted touching. Call the King House (668-5256) or the curator (668-7256) to let us know if you have treasures to lend.

And please come and visit! The King House Museum remain open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 1 to 4, through September.



Trapunto quilt, circa 1848, ready for Needlework, Then and Now

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Regular renewal has always been in September. With the increase in membership during this year, we have begun to print your renewal month on your mailing label.

For the majority of our membership it is September and that means the time is now! Enclosed in this month's newsletter is your annual renewal notice.

Thank you for your continued support.

Application for Membership

I/we subscribe to the mission of the Suffield Historical Society as published in its inaugural newsletter and wish to be included in its membership.

Miss/Ms/Mr./Mrs. _____

Address _____

Telephone (optional) _____

E-mail (optional) _____

Dues: Individuals \$10 Family \$15
 Youth (under 18) \$2 Patron \$25
 Donation _____

Please check any committee or committees that are of interest to you.

- Collections Development
- Docents Exhibitions
- Property Membership
- Program Special Events
- Publicity and Marketing

The Internal Revenue Service has granted tax exempt status to the Suffield Historical Society.

Please complete this form and mail it with your check to
Suffield Historical Society, c/o Gary Mandirola, 1600 North Street, Suffield, CT 06078.

⁴Upcoming Events

Annual Antique Car Show

Sunday, September 10 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM
King House Museum

See article inside for details.

300 Years of Connecticut Architecture

Wednesday, September 20 7:30 PM
Kent Memorial Library

Historian and lecturer Bill Hosley describes the development of architecture in our region, including comments on local examples.

4th Annual TVAA Art Show

Saturday, September 22 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
King House Museum

See article inside for details.

CHR House Tour

Saturday, October 14 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
King House Museum

Part of an eight house tour as a fundraiser for Community Health Resources

Paddy on the Railway

Wednesday, October 18 7:30 PM
Kent Memorial Library

The Boston & Worcester Railroad link through Springfield to New York State required a workforce of hundreds of Irish immigrants. This 1833 construction is brought to life through tales by Dennis Picard.

Atlantis in Fantasy Land

Wednesday, November 15 7:30 PM
Kent Memorial Library

Professor Ken Feder discusses Plato, the descriptions of Atlantis, as well as the misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the archaeological record used to support the historical validity of Atlantis.

Holidayfest: Needlework, Then and Now

Saturday, December 2 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Sunday, December 3 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
King House Museum

See curator's column on how you can participate.

Suffield Historical Society

P.O. Box 893

Suffield, Connecticut 06078

(860) 668-5256

www.suffieldhistoricalsociety.org

King House Museum
232 South Main Street

Open to the Public
Wednesdays and Saturdays
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
May through September

Newsletter Editor
Maggie Philippon