



The King House Museum

Stony Brook CURRENTS

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A Newsletter of the Suffield Historical Society

January 2010

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.

Suffield Historical Society

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JAMES BARLOW ORIGINAL SUFFIELD PROPRIETOR

The origins of James Barlow were unknown to H. S. Sheldon when he wrote his *Documentary History of Suffield* in 1876. Further research has not yet solved this mystery.

According to Sheldon's history, James Barlow was granted 50 acres, part of which was located along High Street in 1680.¹ It was also recorded in town records that James Barlow and Sarah Huxley were married January 10, 1688. He died March 16, 1690.

A son, James Jr., was born on January 27, 1688, and James Jr. married Mary Harmon on April 1, 1714. The son had a large family and removed with them to Bedford (now Granville, Massachusetts) sometime before 1746.

James Barlow Sr. is mentioned in town meeting records, in 1684, concerning a new highway. Likewise, James Jr. is mentioned in 1711 and 1713 and again in 1726, when he was granted additional acreage as compensation for new highways, the last date probably referring to the construction of Spruce Street. In 1737, James Jr. was elected Surveyor of Highways. Two years later, records include his name concerning the establishment of a West Society. Thus we know that James Jr. was a useful and respected citizen in Suffield.

With the Barlow family's move to Granville, the surname disappeared from town records. It returns again in the female line. The eighth child of James Jr. was born in Suffield as Deborah Barlow in 1729. Deborah married Justus Rose, a descendant of Robert Rose.² In 1778, their son, Gad, married Caroline Hale of Suffield and settled in the old Hale homestead. The fourth child of Gad and Caroline (Hale) Rose, Barlow Rose, was born in Suffield in 1784. Barlow Rose married Clarissa King of Suffield. He was a successful farmer, businessman and ran a saw mill. His beautifully restored home stands on the south side of Mountain Road, just east of Stone Street and Rocky Gutter Brook.³

1 His house lot on High Street is now the fifth lot south of Russell Avenue on North Main Street.

2 Robert Rose was one of the ten original adventurers who founded Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1634.

3 Suffield Historical Society member Eleanor Rose Chase is a direct descendant of Barlow Rose and thus James Barlow the Suffield proprietor.

CELEBRATING OUR NEW BARN

We celebrated the opening of our new barn in style on a sunny October afternoon. President Ed Chase and Curator Lester Smith thanked the builders, wagon restorers and volunteers, specifically Gary Mandirola, who pushed the project to fruition. Visitors then explored the barn exhibits, mingled with friends, enjoyed cider and cookies and the foot-stomping music of the Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers.



Martin Buffam, who supplied and erected the barn frame, is flanked by SHS President Ed Chase and Treasurer Gary Mandirola on Dedication Day.

Since October, Lester has added more items including a ca. 1945 aerial photo-mosaic of Suffield discovered in Bridge Street School storage and a tobacco leaf sizing bench donated by Patricia Noble. The stables still contain an old family carriage owned by Parkes Loomis, an ornate tobacco weighing scale from the Sutton barn, and other smaller items which we hope eventually will be on exhibit. At last we can showcase more of the treasures the Society has acquired over the years!

It was the generosity of Evelyn Phelps that made this barn possible. A plaque now hangs in the barn to honor her memory and to acknowledge her gift and our appreciation.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members: Robert Andryzeck, Barbara Sutula, Sandra Taylor, Verne Spear, Scott Zielinski, Jason Qua, Albert Taylor, Martin Buffam and Addison and Susan Marsh.

ARCHIVES TREASURE TROVE

Progress in our new archives room is slow but sure. Paper items are being sorted and filed or boxed using the same organizational scheme as the Historical Room at the town library.

Some of what we rediscovered includes:

- records about the Spaulding family and their concrete block business and Mapleton Avenue greenhouse business known as Spaulding Gardens;
- information about the Schwartz family who summered for many years at Brookside on Boston Neck;
- books and papers from the Gay family;
- cartons of photographs taken by Roger Loomis, a professional photographer active in the 1950's and 60's and Society president in the 1980s; and
- the Caldwell papers.

The archives may be accessed by an appointment with Anne Borg or Lester Smith. Call the King House to schedule a time.

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And a special note from the volunteers at the King House: "Not only was the newly renovated and winterized bathroom appreciated by summer visitors, but it is a wonderful convenience for those who are working at the house over the winter!"

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS BENEFIT SOCIETY

We would like to publicly thank Rob Domin for his well-executed Boy Scout Eagle project, completed in late August. Rob laid out and installed a new gravel sidewalk which takes visitors to the porch entrance. The project involved organizing Scout workers and ordering materials as well as planning layout.

With Rob's hard work, this long-envisioned project has finally become a much appreciated reality.

Rob's mother, Gail Domin, generously volunteered materials and her day off to put rock all along the south porch area to prevent dirt splashing up and to promote drainage. Gail also planted two bushes to conceal the new air conditioning unit on the north side of the house.

Her contribution has substantially added to recent improvements and is gratefully recognized.



Ruth and Bill Westervelt of East Granby examine the watches and clocks in the Shed Room display case during Holidayfest.



Tom Zera, Della Zera Winans and Helen Zera use the new computer purchased by the Polish Heritage Committee. More information will appear in our April issue.

HOLIDAYFEST AT THE KING HOUSE

The Holidayfest open house on the first weekend of December attracted over 110 visitors to the King House Museum, where they enjoyed the holiday decorations, the refreshments, and the ambience of a warm fireplace in an old house.

The special exhibit, *Knowing When: Clocks, Watches and Other Timepieces*, turned out to be very popular. Noon on both days was entertaining as the chimes and cuckoos sounded.

There were 108 individual items ranging from a tiny bejeweled bracelet watch to the Society's own 1801 tall clock made in Suffield by Simeon Smith. The "other timepieces" included four sundials and three hourglasses; there was even a reproduction 1681 water clock lent by the American Clock and Watch Museum in Bristol.

Curator Lester Smith was surprised and delighted at the generosity of those who lent items for the show. He thanks them for their trust, and he also thanks all those who helped in so many ways to make the exhibit successful.

Now please help us plan future shows; we would welcome suggestions for possible themes.

IN MEMORIAM

Jim Baker, a valued trustee and volunteer of the Society, died last fall after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Despite his illness, Jim came to meetings and work parties. He maintained his keen sense of humor and his infectious smile. We miss his presence and his common sense contributions. We extend our condolences to his wife, Joan.



ABOVE: The King House lawn showcased classic cars during Suffield on the Green.



LEFT: Fred Hanzalek visits Gary Mandirola at the Suffield Historical Society booth during these September festivities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ICE HARVEST

Saturday, February 6 Noon - 3p.m.

Granville, Massachusetts

SHS, the Suffield Land Conservancy, and Noble & Cooley are co-sponsoring an ice harvest at Noble & Cooley Mill Pond on Water Street.

Learn how to handle the antique tools to cut blocks of ice. Event dependent on weather conditions.

Check website for change of date.

CONNECTICUT GENEALOGY RESOURCES WORKSHOP

Wednesday, February 17 **7:00 p.m**

Kent Memorial Library

Art Sikes will evaluate the public and private genealogical resources available in Connecticut.

SHOW AND TELL NIGHT

Wednesday, March 17 7:30 p.m.

Kent Memorial Library

Sign up for a 10-minute presentation on a subject related to local history. Enjoy anecdotes about local characters, folklore, and artifacts. Schedule a presentation by calling Bob Stewart 860 668 2928.

WILLIS SEAVER ADAMS, ARTIST

Wednesday, April 7 7:30 p.m.

Kent Memorial Library

Bill Sullivan and Suffield Academy students present the life and work of

Suffield-born artist Willis Seaver Adams.

The 19th-century painter specialized in Connecticut River Valley landscapes and continued his painting until his death in 1921.

SPRING CLEANUP

Saturday, April 17 9 a.m. - Noon

King House

Save the date.

Raindate: Saturday, April 24

HUDSON RIVER VALLEY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, May 15

Save the date.

Trip includes Clermont Mansion, Marine Museum, PT boat ride, and other attractions. A brochure and registration information will be included in our next newsletter.

Suffield Historical Society

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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
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