



Stony Brook **CURRENTS**

Vol. IX, No. 4

A Newsletter of the Suffield Historical Society

September 2014

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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JOHN PENGILLY: ORIGINAL SUFFIELD PROPRIETOR

by Ed Chase

An ancient Indian path once paralleled the Great River (Connecticut River) on the western side. On October 30, 1678, John Pengilly received a 60-acre grant from the Suffield Committee along this well-worn route. The Pynchon account books recorded a payment from John Pengilly of one pound sterling for the grant. The same day, four neighboring grants were awarded to the Allens along this same trail that evolved into our River Boulevard. The Pengilly and Allen families were both coming to Suffield from the colonial settlement at Ipswich, Massachusetts.

John¹ had been listed as a corporal on the payroll of Ipswich under Captain John Appleton in the defense of Hatfield, Massachusetts on October 19, 1675. His participation in the battles of King Philip's War continued with Appleton's company. He marched from Hatfield back to Boston and then on to Rhode Island. Here he was part of the "Great Swamp Fight" on December 19, 1675.² During his years in Suffield, John Pengilly achieved the rank of Sargent and later Lieutenant in Suffield's Town Militia.

Sgt. John Pengilly was a Freeman and listed among the 34 townsmen allowed to vote at Suffield's first Town Meeting on March 6, 1682. By 1691, he was the owner of Suffield's first ferry across the Connecticut River. The ferry boarded from property that had originally been granted to his neighbor John Allen, but by this time Pengilly owned the land and the Allen family had relocated to Deerfield, Massachusetts.³

John Pengilly and his wife Mary had a son, John Jr.⁴, who later took over operation of the ferry.

John Sr. served as a Selectman many times between 1696 and 1733. He was often chosen as Moderator for Suffield Town Meetings as well as Assessor. He served Suffield well.

Similarly, John Jr. participated in the affairs of our local government between 1716 and 1742. John Jr. was part of



250th BIRTHDAY EVENTS

KING HOUSE ART CONTEST

Spread the word to friends and family! To celebrate our house's 250th birthday, the Society is sponsoring an art contest featuring the King House or the grounds. Artists may submit up to three works of art in any medium before January 31, 2015 to n44noble@gmail.com. Prizes will be awarded.

For details, see our May 2014 newsletter (available online at suffieldhistoricalsociety.org).

ANTIQUES APPRAISAL AND DOCUMENTS SALE

We continue our 250th celebration on Saturday, September 20. From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. appraiser John Pappas from the Gallery at Knotty Pine in Swanzey, N.H. will once again be at the King House barn.

Bring in your heirlooms or your recent "finds" for appraisal. Cost is \$5 each or three for \$10. Please, no jewelry.

The Society will also be offering for sale a selection of Suffield paper ephemera – duplicate, surplus items from our collections.

NEW TRUSTEE

The Society is pleased to announce the appointment of new member Jackie Hemond as our newest trustee. Jackie, as many of you know, returns to her hometown as the new Director of the Kent Memorial Library.

We look forward to continuing the old tradition of a fruitful partnership with the library. Several previous library trustees were instrumental in founding our Society. Among them was Samuel Reid Spencer, who donated the King House to the SHS.

PENGILLY continued from page 1

a Society of Fisheries to petition the building of a structure within the river to facilitate in catching salmon in 1737. His name also appears as a committee member in the planning for a highway from Bushe's Bridge⁵ to the Springfield bounds ... we know it now as Halladay Avenue West.

- 1 John Pengilly, Sr., was b. circa 1660 and d. May 20, 1735.
- 2 60 years after this battle, John Pengilly was alive to receive a Narragansett Township #4 Land Grant for his service in the Great Swamp Fight. That property was in Greenwich, Massachusetts, a defunct town now under the Quabbin Reservoir.
- 3 The location of this ferry was in the vicinity of the short concrete wall on the east side of River Boulevard, nearly opposite the present home of Bruce Remington.
- 4 John Pengilly, Jr., was born in Suffield on August 26, 1693.
- 5 Bushe's Bridge crossed the Fflyer Brook on what is now known as Halladay Avenue West.

REFERENCES:

Documentary History of Suffield, 1879, H. S. Sheldon.
Soldiers in King Philip's War, George M. Bodge, 1906.
The Biography of a Town, Robert H. Alcorn, 1970.
 No Pengilly genealogies were found.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Next year's March meeting, traditionally our Show & Tell meeting, will focus on residents' memories of growing up in Suffield. We'd love to hear your stories (non-members, too) and are giving you notice now so you have time to prepare a short five-to-ten-minute reminiscence.

One way to bring back your own memories might be to read the published accounts of other Suffield natives. Several residents have written their stories, available in the library, among them is "Turek and Gogulski Families" by Jim Turek. Jim is the speaker for the Society's September 17th program. Join us then to set the mood!

A GREAT PARTY!

After a delay to our raindate, the Society's July Ice Cream Social at the King House was a delightful event. Jack Cown as "Alexander King" made an appearance!

THANK YOU to Mona at Scoop du Jour (for ice cream at cost), to Highland Park Market for donating our lovely and delicious birthday cake, and to Paul and Jean Kulas for "music to eat by." You all made our Ice Cream Social a wonderful success.



HOLIDAYFEST EXHIBIT

Lester Smith, Curator

It's still summer, but here's a heads-up so we can all think of items to lend to the King House Museum for an interesting and enjoyable exhibit during Holidayfest on Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7. We're calling it **VERSATILE WOOD: From Spoons to Sculpture, from Mallets to Marquetry – Things Made Mainly from Wood.**

Suffield in the 18th century was known for manufacturing bowls, so we should have some of them, but how about some notable walking sticks or shillelaghs, perhaps an ornately carved Southeast Asian box, maybe a carved length of chain (your curator made one of those when he was a boy). Can someone offer a few duck decoys? Our Hadley chest, essentially destroyed in the 1983 King House fire, would have been a fabulous entry, but other interesting pieces of furniture could add to the exhibit.

Your imagination is probably better than mine, so please see what you can think up for the exhibit. Small items can be shown in locked cabinets if necessary. We like to gather things a week or two before Holidayfest to provide time for an attractive display.

RECENT GIFTS

King House Curator Lester Smith has received some notable gifts this summer. A large bellows from the blacksmith shop at the Merrell Farm was given by Ray Deedy. At close to six feet long, it is definitely too large to show at our meeting, but come check it out at the museum before we close for the season.

Also received were three handwritten volumes of reports of the School Visitors, handily saved from a dumpster many years ago by teacher Bob Okun. These came with a box of other paper items including an apparent novelization of the "Old Ti" story by Martin Smith. He was headmaster at Suffield Academy and wrote several articles on slavery in Suffield for *Connecticut Magazine*, a publication of the Connecticut Historical Society.



PHOTOS TO LEFT: *A child's thumb explored the icing on the King House porch before we had a chance to take this photo of the King House's 250th birthday cake.*

During the Ice Cream Social on July 17, Jan Peake helps Flat Danny watch as Alexander King (played by Jack Cown) dishes out some vanilla. The Hartford Courant, celebrating its 250th anniversary during the same year as Alexander's house, asked readers to print out their cartoon image of Business Editor Dan Haar and take photographs of Flat Danny at events all over Connecticut.



KING HOUSE

The summer exhibit featuring the *Suffield Pharmacy 1871-1993* as well as the mini exhibit on the 1983 Fire at the King House and the restoration process will soon disappear forever! Take advantage of the last couple of weeks of the King House season to visit the museum.

You are also invited to join us on our annual Fall Work Day as we prepare the house for its winter hibernation. There will be work in the yard as well as inside. Wear gloves, bring tools and join us Saturday, October 18 from 9 a.m. to noon. Rain date: October 25.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tobacco Vally Artists Association

FINE ARTS FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 6

King House Grounds 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

COLLECTIBLE CAR SHOW

Sunday, September 7

Organized by Norm Noble

King House Grounds 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

STORY OF A POLISH FAMILY

Wednesday, September 17

James Turek, Author and Historian

Kent Memorial Library 7:30 p.m.

ANTIQUES APPRAISAL

& DOCUMENTS SALE

Saturday, September 20

Appraiser John Pappas, Gallery at Knotty Pine

King House Grounds 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE

OF THE WAR OF 1812

Wednesday, October 15

Jerry Roberts, Author and Historian

Suffield Senior Center 7:30 p.m.

HALLOWEEN CANDY

Friday, October 31

Come in costume and join us on the porch!

King House Museum Dusk until 7:30 p.m.

BRADLEY FIELD IN WORLD WAR II

Wednesday, November 12

Carl Stidsen, New England Air Museum

Suffield Senior Center 7:30 p.m.

HOLIDAYFEST

VERSATILE WOOD

From Spoons to Sculpture, from Mallets to Marquetry – Things Made Mainly from Wood

Saturday & Sunday, December 5 & 6

King House Museum 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

King House Museum
232 South Main Street
Open to the Public
Wednesdays and Saturdays
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
May through September
Newsletter
Maggie Philippon, Editor
Anne Borg, Compiler



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