

Making History Every Day

May & June 2019, Volume 1, Issue 3

Oxford Historical Society, a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization

Twitchell Rowland Homestead Museum

60 Towner Lane, Oxford, CT 06478

Thank You for Your Support



Fund-Raising for Mr. Munn's Schoolhouse Continues

We're off to a good start raising money for our effort to move and preserve Mr. Munn's Schoolhouse in August. Thanks to the support of many folks, we can report \$4,950 from the following:

- Special Donations: \$ 2,630
- Online Donations \$1,255
- Ion Bank Community Awards: \$ 650

Newly Uncovered History of Munn Schoolhouse

Notes – *These listings were found in the minutes of First District (original Center School) records regarding the establishment of a select (high) school.*

September 17, 1853 Voted that R. Bronson, F. A. Candee & S. Topliff constitute a committee to ascertain the expense of fitting up **Mr. Munn's Hall** suitable for the school and also to solicit money for the same. Voted to adjourn to Wed. Eve at 6 1/2 o'clock Sept. 1(?) . 1853 R. Bronson, Clerk

Oct. 24, 1857 at a meeting moderated by Ransom Hudson, the school committee voted for a male teacher to hold school for 5 months. Board was set at \$2/wk. **Marcus Munn** was hired for \$30/mo. to board himself for 4 1/2 mos. Wm Benham, Clerk

Honor an Educator

The Oxford Historical Society offers area residents an opportunity to honor an educator while supporting the preservation of the 1850's one-room school known as Mr. Munn's Schoolhouse. Originally built as a private schoolhouse, it was later used by the Oxford's First School District as a "select school," where advanced students could be prepared for college.

The building, now located at 561 Oxford Road, will be moved to the Historical Society's Twitchell-Rowland Homestead Museum campus at 60 Towner Lane. There the Society will restore and preserve the building to offer children and adults the experience of a day in a one-room schoolhouse.

To support the move, the Society has launched the "Honor an Educator" program. Supporters can make a \$5 donation to the preservation program in honor of an educator. In return they will receive a special note card to be sent to the teacher they wish to recognize. Donors will also receive an acknowledgement of their tax-deductible gift to the Society.

Forms to "Honor an Educator" may be found on the Society's website or picked up at the Town Clerk's Office. Donation forms will also be available at the Town Budget Referendum on Thursday, May 16 at the Society tent from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are also available at the Homestead Museum on the first and third Sundays of each month from 2-4 p.m.

Donations through the Honor an Educator program will enable the development of a hands-on, living history program that will teach today's students about education in Oxford in the past, and honor the heritage of teachers who have helped Oxford's children become useful members of society.

This profile of an Oxford schoolhouse is based on information taken from files and archives of the Oxford Historical Society.



BELL SCHOOL built in 1906 on Holbrook Road served Joint District 1, the area of Moose Hill on the southeast side of town. The 1932 Oxford Town Report noted Bell School was closed in June 1932 for low enrollment. Miss Parmelee wrote on her short history that the school was burned down Dec. 1937.

Gladys Parmelee signed a contract with the Oxford School Committee to work from Oct. 3, 1918 through July 1919 and earned \$555 for the year. The following description of that school year was her handwritten record: ***“History of Bell School Oct. 3, 1918-June 13, 1919”***

On March 10 the Bell Audubon Club was organized with eleven members and the next week eight more were added. For drawing one Wednesday we colored the charts sent us with the pins and those that deserve honorable mention are Joseph Levine, Joseph Belinsky, Alton Jensen, Camille Jensen, Peter Belinsky and Paul Belinsky for good work done.

A Red Cross drive was held, and out of eleven we have eight members. Four fifths of our school are Buying Thrift Stamps and our total up to date for time since Jan. 1918 to Jan. 1919 is 23.00 and from Jan 1919 to June 14 \$5.00.

Bell school pupils have been quite interested in flowers. 56 different kinds having been brought to school. Flowers such as violets, apple blossoms, buttercups, lily of the valley, pansies, have been drawn in drawing periods.

When speaking of birds before it should have been mentioned that 24 birds were seen early in spring the bluebird being the first, seen by John Belinsky on February 3rd.

War gardens have been started by three boys John, Joseph and Paul Belinsky.

The attendance has been very good considering the sickness of the past winter, all the scholars have seemed interested in coming.

Proficiency certificates have been awarded to

Paul Belinsky	in	Grade 1	for	writing
Alton Jensen	“	“	2	“
Joseph Levine	“	“	2	“
Mary Bobrowski	“	1	“	“

Library certificates to

Camille Jensen	grade	4
Joseph Belinsky	“	7
John	“	6
Peter	“	4

Honorable mention should be made to Charles Kinney for good behavior. I can safely say, I have not corrected him in conduct five times since he started in school.

A library was obtained Jan 27 and returned April 27. All the books were a great help in our studies.

Facts

On Arbor day we cleaned school inside and also cleaned school yard.

We have had but one accident that was last fall when little Mary Bobrowsky hurt her head by falling on the door step.



Bell School Notes, continued

Due to the fact that there were no locks on the windows someone entered school and was kind enough to pull all the books out of the book case and erase the work off that was on the boards. Evidently they tho't a teacher did not find enough to do.

School closed on Friday June 13 – On June 12 a union picnic was held at Oxford Center and was very much enjoyed. So they [sic] year has passed and every one left well satisfied, all pupils passing; looking forward to vacation.



Teachers at Town-wide school picnic June 1919

TWITCHELL-ROWLAND HOMESTEAD OPEN HOUSE:

Sunday, May 19, 2-4 pm
Sunday, June 2, 2-4 pm
Sunday, June 16, 2-4 pm

ON DISPLAY: pieced quilts from the collection of member Rob Buck, featuring multiple nine-patch and star variations plus a striking Crazy Quilt.

Related items on display include a sewing basket from Marilyn Stebar's collection of family antiques. In addition a stack of previously owned quilt books are available for sale. Stop in for coffee or cocoa and treats. Shop the books pamphlets, notecards and other items available.

FREE Admission * Tours available

Twitchell-Rowland Homestead

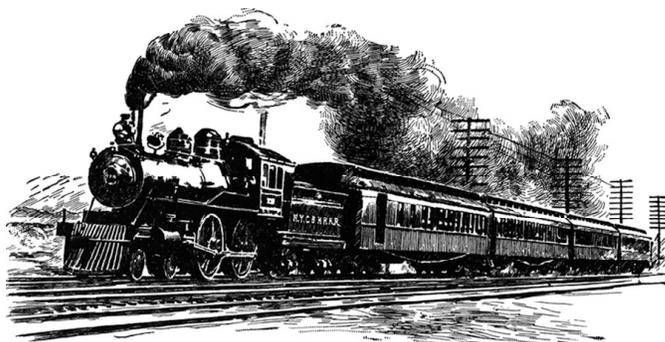
**60 Towner Lane
Oxford, CT 06478**

Look for Us

REFERENDUM TENT SHOW

Thursday, May 16 (6 a.m. - 8 p.m.) is the Budget Referendum. The OHS Tent will be on the grounds of Quaker Farm School as residents vote on the town's budget. Weather permitting, we will bring our traveling road show of books and notecards plus we will have info on the new Munn School-house project. The Society plans to be onsite from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the referendum, as long as the weather permits.

COMING THIS SUMMER...



Railroads & Oxford – Monday, July 29, 7-9 pm

Great Hill United Methodist Church

Former Oxford resident, Don Woodworth, celebrates trains and Oxford with lots of photos and tales to share. The railroad was key to the development and expansion of dairy farms in Oxford. Trains linked the town to area cities – New Haven, New York. Anyone interested in trains, Oxford, the 1800 and 1900s in New England – all will enjoy.

Admission: \$5, members \$3, under 12 free.

Join the Effort to Preserve Oxford's Historic Rural Heritage

- Follow us on facebook @oxfordhistoricalsociety.
- Like our Facebook page to let foundations know the Society has your support.
- Join the Historical Society. Download a membership at <http://www.oxford-historical-society.org/membership.pdf>.
- Sign up youth and scout groups for special tours and programs at the Homestead

Saving the Twitchell-Rowland Homestead

In 2006, the Historical Society moved a colonial era farmhouse to prevent demolition of the historic structure. The developer donated the building and the Rowland family donated land on Towner Lane to house it. Over the following months, the house was preserved and now stands as our Society headquarters at 60 Towner Lane.



1) House at original Christian Street location.



2) Society removed the porch and other non-original parts.



3) House movers Nichols Brothers, set I-Beams under house.



4) Movers placed the I-Beam supports on wheels to start move.



5) Volunteers prepared a trench on Towner Lane for Homestead.



6) Front view of house starting down Towner Lane to new home.



7) Rear view of house going down street, as seen by followers.



8) House was driven into trench prepared by excavators.



9) I-Beams under Homestead were supported by blocks.



10) The basement foundation was built under the Homestead.

We saved the Homestead. With your help, we will save Mr. Munn's Schoolhouse.