

Historical Society of East Hartford

Newsletter, March 2011



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

April 12, 2011 marks the 150th anniversary of the Attack on Fort Sumter, an event that started the Civil War. The War between the North and South resulted in the greatest loss of American lives in any US military conflict. It lasted four years. Dozens of East Hartford men and boys went off to fight for the Union; some never to return home. We plan to highlight the Civil War throughout the next four years here in our newsletter; the underlying conflicts, the battles and the soldiers. With your help, we hope to bring to the fore the role that East Hartford played in those four years. This was an event that impacted a nation – town by town. Many of our members may be willing to contribute their research either in the form of an ancestor's records of service or letters from the front lines. If you do not know the where or how, it is possible that the rest of your ancestor's history is in the Connecticut Archives or other resources. If you are willing to share your family's connection, we would love to hear about it.

Our Society has reached another milestone - 1761 happens to be the year during which Edmund Bement built the Huguenot House. Our little museum is now 250 years old. Edmund's son, Makens, took over the house and raised his family here. Edmund, a Revolutionary War soldier, is buried in the military section of Center Cemetery. We have events scheduled during 2011 to commemorate the house and its owners.

The Historical Society has been invited to join in a town event named the "Podunk Rendezvous". This event is still in the planning stages and the Formation Committee has asked the Town for permission to stage this four day event at Martin Park. The Executive Board has agreed to open the buildings at the park during the event, should the Town approve the permit. If the Town gives its permission, this would be a large endeavor intended to promote tourism with activities planned for the attendees around the early colonists, the Indians and colonial wars. There are eight separate encampments planned; one being a vignette of colonial home-life. That's us...and we come with real props. The French and Indian War re-enactors have been assigned to the front lawn of the Park near the entrance and the Huguenot House, so we would not be alone. Many of the participants would be camping out on the back lot at the Park for the duration.

The Historical Society Executive Board has insisted that we retain the right to show our own buildings as determined by the amount of volunteers, the hours, etc. I'm hoping we can staff at least the schoolhouse and the Huguenot House with our own people. Should this become an annual event, this is a wonderful opportunity for raising funds. Because of the reality that the Martin Preservation Park can bring to the Rendezvous, rather than have us charge a separate fee to view the buildings, we have been promised some of the revenue. The Board will keep the membership apprised of the progress for the Rendezvous. If you are interested in participating, please speak to a member of the Board. Tentatively, the Podunk Rendezvous is scheduled for Thursday, September 8th through Sunday, the 11th.

We will begin our March 16th meeting at 7:00pm in the Raymond Library Community Room with a short business meeting followed by light refreshments. Our Guest Speaker, Robert Laughlin, will then present his program. Looking forward to seeing you there,

Bette Daraskevich, President, HSEH

MARCH 2011 MEETING ON 17TH CENTURY HARTFORD WITCH TRIALS

The Historical Society of East Hartford is honored to present Mr. Robert Laughlin of Manchester who will present "Death by Witchcraft: Witch Trials and Medicine in 17th Century Connecticut."

Robert Laughlin, an historical consultant, will take us back nearly 350 years in the past to investigate the first

recorded autopsy in Connecticut and before the infamous witch trials that took place in Salem, Massachusetts. The presentation will uncover the state of medicine in 1662 Connecticut and includes the mysterious illness, death and autopsy of a tormented 8-year-old Hartford girl named Elizabeth Kelly.

Mr. Laughlin has devoted over 13 years of research into local 17th century Connecticut history. This includes the witchcraft trials and the events that preceded the trials of those accused local inhabitants who were arrested, convicted and executed for supposedly practicing the Dark Arts. He wrote a graduate paper on the subject and presented it at the 17th Century Connecticut Symposium and the Connecticut State Library last year. He is currently completing an M.A. in American Studies at Trinity College.

The program will be held on Wednesday evening, March 16, 2011 in the Raymond Library Community Room, 840 Main Street, East Hartford. The Historical Society will begin the evening at 7:00pm with a short business meeting followed by light refreshments. Robert Laughlin will then present his program. The public is invited and there is no cost. Free parking is available in the back of the Library. For information call Craig Johnson at 860-568-2884.



Robert Laughlin

Craig Johnson

MEMBERSHIP

We are very pleased to announce that we had 3 new members join the Historical Society in January. **Michelle Brewer, Diane MacDonald** and **Fern Strong**, all of East Hartford, added their names to our roster of those who support our local history. Thank you, Ladies. If you know anyone with an interest in history, ask them to come to a meeting. We are a friendly and caring group and what more can you ask of any organization. See you at the March meeting.

Eileen Driscoll, Membership Chair, 860-568-7305, 860-291-7404

WHY A CIVIL WAR?

The reasons a nation goes to war are usually varied and complicated; the American Civil War being no exception. Many Northerners felt that the Civil War was about slavery. The South argued it was about State's Rights. The rights Southerners were concerned about were economical, and the economics of the South depended upon slavery.

Heavily dependent upon trade, the almost entirely agricultural and export-oriented South imported most of its manufactured needs from Europe or obtained them from the North. The North, by contrast, had a growing domestic industrial economy that viewed foreign trade as competition. This disparity between Industry and Agriculture had set up a major difference in economic attitudes. The Northern societies were evolving as people of different cultures and classes who had to work together to succeed. In a free society, servants, farm and factory workers were paid wages for their labor. In contrast, the South continued to hold onto a 200 year old, antiquated social order that benefited wealthy land owners. Many southern politicians were slave owners, while most Northerners were small farmers or tradesmen who had never seen a slave.

Surprisingly, 80% of the people fighting on the side of the Confederacy did not even own slaves. Buying and owning slaves required a LOT of money, that the majority of southerners did not possess. In fact, only about 2% of the population of the entire United States owned slaves prior to 1865. While slavery had already been abolished in many northern states, the economics of the South were dependent upon retaining the system.

Just as the original thirteen colonies fought for their independence almost 100 years earlier, the Southern states felt a growing need for freedom from the central Federal authority in Washington. Southerners believed that state laws carried more weight than Federal laws, and they should abide by the state regulations first. This issue was called State's Rights and became a very heated topic in congress.

The election of Abraham Lincoln as the President of the United States in 1860 was another major factor in the South's secession, as the defeat of the Southern candidate John C. Breckinridge, by a huge margin, came in as yet another major blow for the Southerners, who feared that Lincoln would abolish slavery. Even though his views

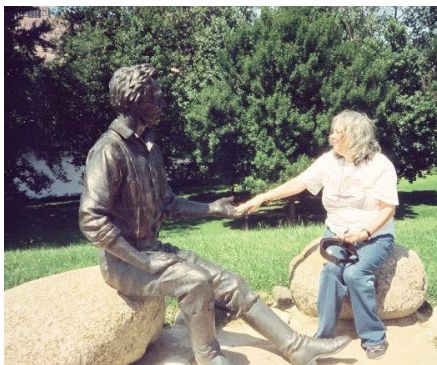
about slavery were considered moderate during the nominations and election, South Carolina had warned it would secede if he won.

Before the new administration took office on March 4, 1861, seven cotton states declared their secession and joined together to form the Confederate States of America. Both the outgoing administration of President James Buchanan and the incoming administration rejected the legality of secession, considering it rebellion. No country in the world ever recognized the Confederacy as a legitimate, independent government.

South Carolina demanded that the U.S. Army abandon its facilities in Charleston Harbor. On December 26, 1860, U.S. Major Robert Anderson surreptitiously moved his small command from the indefensible Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island to Fort Sumter, a substantial fortress controlling the entrance of Charleston Harbor. An attempt by U.S. President James Buchanan to reinforce and resupply Anderson using the unarmed merchant ship, 'Star of the West', failed when she was fired upon by shore batteries on January 9, 1861. South Carolina authorities then seized all Federal property in the Charleston area, except for Fort Sumter. The Confederacy sent envoys to Washington to negotiate a purchase of all the Army forts in the South, but the administration refused to acknowledge their right as a separate country to bargain for U.S. property.

On April 12, 1861 the Confederate States of America under Brig. Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard, attacked Fort Sumter. The fort sits at the entrance to Charleston Harbor and was manned by Union troops who flew the United States flag. The bombardment lasted many hours and the fort was heavily damaged, though no one was killed or injured. It was like 'shooting fish in a barrel'. Major Anderson surrendered the fort and its garrison to the Confederate commanders. Now that open conflict had started, President Lincoln responded with a call for volunteers from states still loyal to the Union, twenty-five in number, to enlist and put down this treacherous act of rebellion. The war that President Lincoln had tried to avoid began anyway.

Submitted by Bette Daraskevich



MEET MR. LINCOLN THIS SPRING

When this winter finally changes into spring, which it will, put on your walking shoes and take a walk along both shores of the CT River. There you'll see a long, beautiful, outdoor sculpture garden with 15 sculptures recalling the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. Our own Eileen Driscoll is shown seated and chatting with a young Lincoln and leaning on *Emancipation*. Visit www.riverfront.org/parks/lincoln/ for information.

FCC NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR CLEAN UP DAY & FALL LANTERN TOUR

Friends of Center Cemetery is in need of volunteers to help with our annual Spring Clean Up Day which will be held in May. FCC has also decided to put another Lantern Tour on the calendar for this fall. In the past they have only done tours every 2nd or 3rd year. FCC has now decided to respond to the majority that has asked to have it on a yearly basis. At the moment this would be FCC's biggest fund raiser. The older section of the cemetery is in need of repairs and this year will be a turning point as to whether we can turn things around or NOT.

For more information or any questions please contact FCC Vice President Ruth S. Brown at 860-643-5652 or email her at shapbrown@cox.net subject headings FCC help.

¹ The "Bombardment" image is copied from the NPS. These headlines were in the *Charleston Mercury's* April 13, 1861 edition describing the April 12 attack on Fort Sumter. See the article www.teachingushistory.org/lessons/Bombardmentofsumter.htm.

CIVIL WAR SNAPSHOT, NOV 1860 – FEB 1861

Information is from www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/29/opinion/20101029-civil-war.html; links to source readings.

- Nov 6, 1860 Abraham Lincoln is elected president by the north. Southern states didn't include his name on election ballots. The south fears that in time Lincoln will kill slavery.
- Dec 4, 1860 President Buchanan speaks to Congress for the last time. He says states do not have the right to secede; but neither does he have the power to force them to remain.
- Dec 20, 1860 South Carolina becomes the first state to secede. It believes its rights to slave property will no longer be protected by the incoming government.
- Jan 1-6, 1861 Southern states' militias occupy forts and arsenals, taking federal property. Fort Pickens off Florida and Fort Sumter off Charleston remain in federal hands.
- Jan 9-16, 1861 Mississippi secedes Jan 9; Florida, Jan 10; Alabama, Jan 11; Georgia, Jan 19; Louisiana, Jan 26.
- Jan 29, 1861 Kansas joins the Union as a free state.
- Feb 1, 1861 Texas secedes. There are now 27 states remaining in the Union; 7 states have seceded.
- Feb 4, 1861 Southerners meet to form a new nation
- Feb 11, 1861 Lincoln and his family leave Springfield, Illinois for his inauguration in Washington.
- Feb 18, 1861 Jefferson Davis is inaugurated in Montgomery as President of the Confederacy.
- Feb 23, 1861 Lincoln arrives secretly and separately from his family in Washington to avoid an assassination plot.



Connecticut Gravestone Network Annual Spring Symposium

Cosponsored this year by the Connecticut Society of Genealogists
And Friends of Center Cemetery Inc., East Hartford

On Saturday MARCH 19th 2011

9am to 4pm

Admission is \$10 a person: \$5 for CGN & FCC & CSG members

At the South Senior Center in East Hartford
70 Canterbury St., East Hartford

This program is well attended by area historians and all those interested in cemetery history, stories from the past, cemetery symbols and gravestone art or archaeology...
WE have it ALL.

Lectures

**9:30 am - Old Cemetery History 101
for Connecticut Genealogist.**

Just what are you *really* looking at when you visit an old graveyard? by Ruth Shapleigh-Brown

10:45 - The Betsy Wakeman mystery.

How, one orphaned gravestone took two Fairfield researchers on a quest of novel proportion. By Lisa Burghardt

Lunch Break 12:00 to 1:00 pm.

1:15 pm- "Thinking Outside the Fence: Redefining the Historic Cemetery".

John will share with you his professional work that is dedicated to creating a new national dialog and initiative to assist non profit and municipal owned historic cemeteries. By AGS member John Bry from Indiana

**2:30 pm - Descendants of Ephraim-2 Goodrich
(1663-1739): Founders of the Still Hill
Cemetery in South Glastonbury, CT.**

Still Hill Cemetery is located on land that once belonged to Stephen's 7-great-grandfather. His extensive research which includes Y-DNA testing, has revealed that the immigrants John and William Goodrich of Wethersfield and Thomas Goodrich of Rappahannock, Virginia were co-descendants of Thracian soldiers who assisted Roman legions in the conquests of Germania and Britannia (England) in the first century, AD.

By Stephen Goodrich from Colorado

20 plus vendors with displays and items to sell from Coffee cups and T-shirts with gravestone iconography, to one of a kind creative pieces, history and genealogy books and much more.

Come and try your hand at carving like the old time stone cutters would have.
Coffee Snacks & Lunch on site for a donation.

Directions and more info at www.ctgravestones.com events page.
Or call Ruthie Brown at 860-643-5652

OF INTEREST IN THIS CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL

Book Mary Chesnut's Civil War. Civil War journals written by Mary Chesnut and edited by John Woodard. Received the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1982. Intelligent, witty, and insightful recordings of doings in the highest circles of the Confederacy. As a note to "Why A Civil War?" Mary's husband James was one of the officers who went to Fort Sumter on April 11 to ask Anderson to surrender.

Book Abraham Lincoln, A History; 10 volume history of President Lincoln and the Civil War; written by his two Civil War secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay.

Internet: www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=2296; Connecticut Commemorates the Civil War.

Local GAR Museum in Rockville: www.vermonct.com/muse.htm; oldest, still used GAR Hall.

SEEKING INFORMATION ON LOCAL CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS AND GAR VETERANS

A number of area men entered military service in the Civil War. After the war the GAR Rodman Post was formed in town for local veterans. If you know anything about these men and would be willing to share it with us we would be delighted to hear from you. Our contacts information is on the last page of this newsletter. Thank you.

THE WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL (W3R-NHT), 2ND ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION

Two years ago on March 30, 2009 President Obama signed the Wilderness Protection / Omnibus Public Lands bill establishing a new national, historic trail. It is named the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (W3R-NHT) and extends approximately 600 miles from Newport and Boston to Yorktown. In 1780 French General Rochambeau and his French army landed in Newport to help us in our Revolution. In 1781 this army left Newport and crossed Connecticut (marching through East Hartford) to join General Washington and his American army near White Plains, New York. From there the two armies marched south together along this route, fought side by side at Yorktown, and with the help of Admiral DeGrasse's French fleet won the Battle of Yorktown. This victory effectively ended our Revolution and brought us independence. The following year the French army returned north on this route to Boston and then the Caribbean. The national recognition given this route commemorates the joint American and French efforts in winning our independence.

Today we can follow this national, historic route from Massachusetts and Rhode Island through Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington D.C., and into Virginia. It is a living reminder - with relevant, historic buildings and sites and people who tell its stories - of what was done and, in part, how we came to be who we are. The Rochambeau boulder on the green near the overpass on Silver Lane is an early 20th century East Hartford site. This boulder has had plaques placed on it over the years to remind passers-by of the French army which camped nearby in 1781 and 1782 and of the various celebrations over the years in memory of that army. The latest plaque, the W3R plaque, was placed on the boulder in June 2006 for the 225th anniversary of the French arrival in America in 1780. Its dedication was attended by the small group of re-enactors who became the first to walk in the footsteps of the French army from Rhode Island to Yorktown; they were the 2006 *America's March to Yorktown*. The marker in front of the Raymond Library is a new site. This marker, placed near the locations where Rochambeau's headquarters and his army hospital once stood, is one of twelve different W3R markers installed by Connecticut along its portion of the W3R in 2005-2006. They gratefully recall the French help we received. Follow them and read the local stories of the French army as it crossed our state to meet Washington's army. East Hartford's marker tells of the money carried in the wagons of the French army.

W3R-NHT Puzzle Contest - Prize 1 year's Membership in the Historical Society

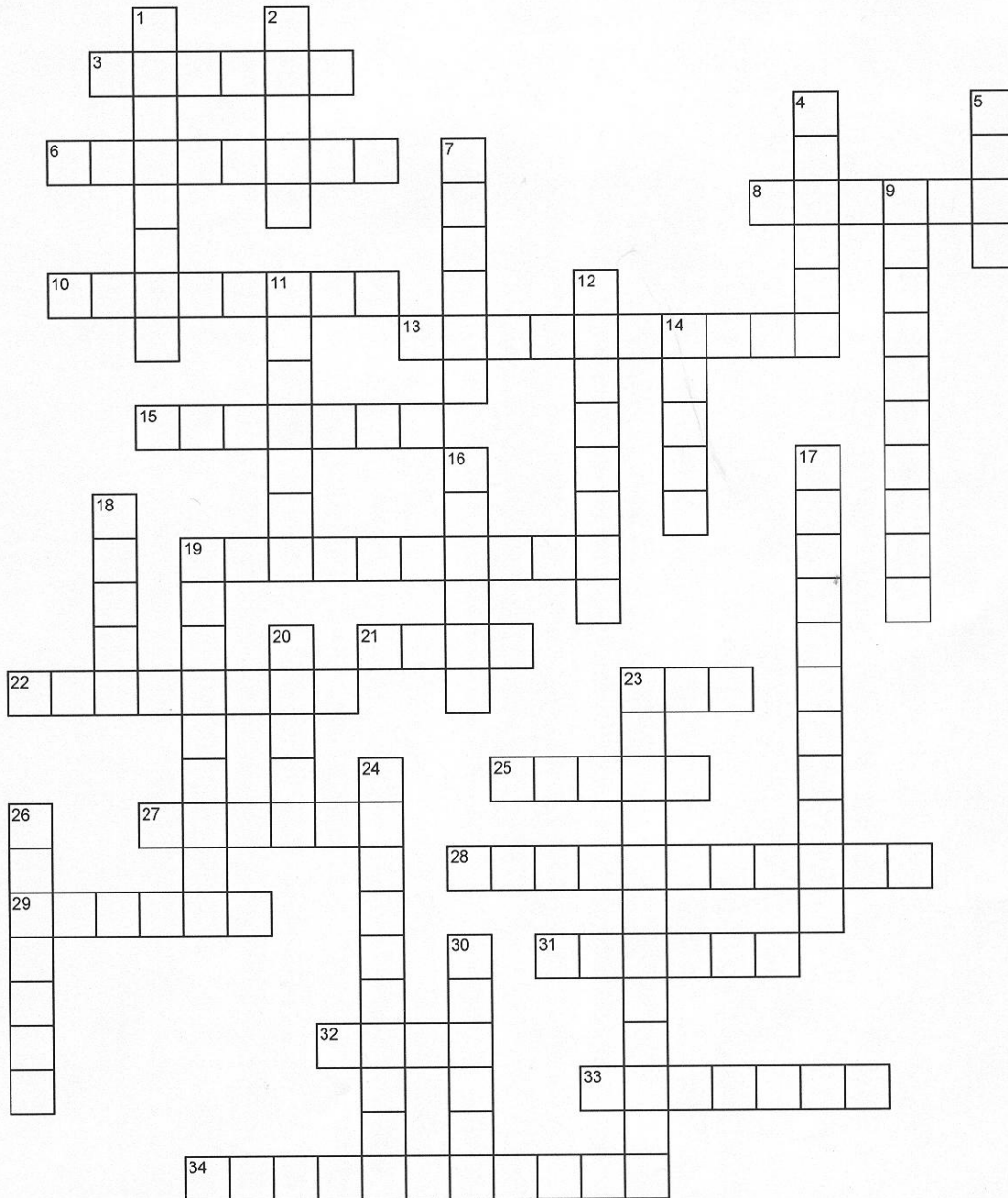
To commemorate the 2nd anniversary of this national historical route we wanted to do something special. We thought about it and we decided to offer the members of the Historical Society the following crossword puzzle contest. The prize is a one year's free membership in the Historical Society. But whether you win or not we hope you will enjoy working the puzzle and, while doing it, you will learn more about Rochambeau, his army, and its marches through East Hartford to and from Yorktown.

Many answers can be found in Betty Squires' work "When the French Army Came to East Hartford", originally printed in the Nov 2004 newsletter of the Historical Society of East Hartford and some in Betty Knose's brochure "French Army Monetary Support in the American Revolution". These writings can also be found in the Historical Society notebook in the Reference Room of the Raymond Library and in pdf format on the Society's website, www.hseh.org/programs.htm. Some clues may need further research. One answer does include a digit.

Carefully do the puzzle, write your name, email, and phone number on it, and mail your finished entry to the Historical Society's PO address on the outside of this newsletter. All entries should be received by April 30. There is a limit of one entry per household. From all correct entries one will be drawn for the free membership. The winner will be announced at the May meeting. The solution will be printed in the May newsletter. Good luck and enjoy!

W3R-NHT, 2ND ANNIVERSARY, MARCH 30, 2011

Rochambeau, the French Army & East Hartford



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

- 3** Local US Representative who, along with US Senator Lieberman, initialized the many year process of designating the route from Newport and Boston to Yorktown the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail
- 6** The French admiral who brought Rochambeau and his army from France; he died in Newport and is buried there

- 8 Legend says the French army was paid in East Hartford at this Silver Lane house
- 10 Washington's American army and Rochambeau's French army fought side by side and won this last major battle of the Revolution
- 13 The French army marched and camped on this long East Hartford street in 1781 and again in 1782
- 15 The French army hired Americans to drive their wagons and paid them well, 2 silver dollars a day; one of these men was ___ Forbes
- 19 British general defeated at Yorktown
- 21 French soldiers' coins were very welcome as payment for this food made and sold by the people in East Hartford
- 22 The Meeting House at Main and Pitkin Streets was used as a French army ___
- 23 An abbreviation for the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route, the national, historic route Rochambeau followed from Newport across Connecticut to Yorktown in 1781 and back to Boston in 1782
- 25 Because there were no bridges between East Hartford and Hartford these were used to transport the French army across the Connecticut River
- 27 Name of the British king during the Revolution
- 28 In 1781 the French army left Rhode Island and traveled across Connecticut to meet Washington's American army near this New York town; from here the armies traveled together to Yorktown
- 29 Carried French money across Connecticut
- 31 On December 24, 1782 the French army left America from this port
- 32 The French army consisted of ___ regiments with a total of about 5800 men
- 33 The French army camped along Silver Lane and on the East Hartford ___
- 34 A David Wagner painting depicts French General de Chastellux at the Connecticut River in 1782 escorted by a mounted black troop from this state

DOWN

- 1 Location of the 1st meeting of Rochambeau and Washington
- 2 French soldiers were paid with these
- 4 In January 1783 Rochambeau returned home to ___
- 5 When the French army came to East Hartford in 1781
- 7 Rochambeau's East Hartford headquarters were in the Squire Elisha ___ house
- 9 French general who came to America in 1780 with a French army
- 11 Month the French army returned to East Hartford in 1782
- 12 French admiral who blockaded the British at Yorktown
- 14 Name of the French king who sent an army from France to help Americans in the Revolution
- 16 An old East Hartford story says that French soldiers were paid with this type of coin in East Hartford giving Silver Lane its name
- 17 Name of one of the French regiments
- 18 French assistant quartermaster responsible for getting the French army across the Connecticut River
- 19 The destination of the French army when it sailed from America
- 20 This American money in the Revolution had almost no value
- 23 Washington and Rochambeau had meetings at this nearby town to discuss war strategy in 1781
- 24 The French called this Silver Lane apple ___ ; they said it was attractive and tasted good
- 26 In the summer of 1780 the French army arrived at this American port
- 30 East Hartford House in which French coins were stored

HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

The books below have recently been donated to the Historical Society. From top to bottom, left to right they are:



The 150th Anniversary of East Hartford, October 1933; from Marion Anderson.

The First Twenty Five Years with Troop One in East Hartford (Connecticut (1910 to 1935)), Crocker, Albert R, reprint 2005; from the Wm. Knoses.

Colonial Times from A to Z, from the Wm. Knoses to Craig Johnson for the historic houses.

Food for Thought; collection of recipes from members of St Mary's, East Hartford, 1987; from the Wm. Knoses.

God is Love God is Sharing, photos of members of St Mary's, 1984; from the Wm. Knoses.

St. Mary's Parish 1873-1998 125th Anniversary History; from the Wm. Knoses.

A One Room School, from the Wm. Knoses to Craig Johnson for the historic houses.

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PO Box 380166,
East Hartford, CT, 06138-0166

Phone: 860-568-2884

Email: hseh@hseh.org

Web site: <http://www.hseh.org>

Newsletter: Betty Knose, 148 Ridgewood Road,
E Htfd, CT, 06118
(eknose@aol.com, 860-569-7181)

January Program

Date, Time Wed, March 16, 2011, 7:00pm
Place Raymond Library
Program *Witch Trials & Medicine in 17th Century CT* with Robert Laughlin

May Newsletter Deadline, April 29, 2011