

Berlin Historical Society

July 24, 2007

The monthly meeting of the Berlin Historical Society opened at 7:00 PM on July 24 at the Berlin Town Office Building. Those in attendance were: Norbert Rhinerson, Lynn McManus, Mary Wells, Walter Wells, Pat McDonald, Bruce McDonald, Richard Turner, Anita Flannigan, Cheryl Poor, Edith Morse, Maudean Neil and Lewis Neil.

The minutes of the June meeting was approved as written and previously distributed to the members. The Treasurer's Report showing our total assets to be \$45,663.57 was given by Mary Wells and approved as reported.

Approval was given for spending \$200 for shelving to be purchased for book shelves on both sides of our four filing cabinets. This shelving is needed in order to display more of our book collection. Approval was also given to spend \$65 for a paper cutter.

Norb and I visited the site of the former "Cottage" at the top of Erhardt Hill on Crosstown Road. We think we were in the right location but there was no evidence of a foundation. We have talked to Jim Sumner, whose mother lived near the location during the 1930's and also to Sylvia Parker who lives in the vicinity now. They both have provided information and pictures to add to our knowledge of the building and its former owners. In addition to the Erhardts who owned the building during the early 1900's, we know the Dresser family owned it during the 1930's and Agatha Iles Fassett during the 1940's and 1950's. It was a beautiful building during the early years but deteriorated during the 1950's. We believe that it was burned down by the local fire department at the request of its last owner, Don Boyer. Boyer owned the house with the white picket fence just east of the Cottage and across the road from it. Don's house was run as a lodge during the 1930's and was known as Lotus Lodge.

On the way back from visiting the Cottage site, Norb and I visited the old granite quarry that is located off the south side of Crosstown Road. I once went swimming in the quarry hole and remembered it as cold clear water. It now has a thick green layer of algae on top of the water and certainly doesn't look like a pleasant place to take a dip.

Lynn McManis has visited the Glastonbury/Hebron/Wethersfield/Lebanon area of Connecticut and gave an excellent presentation of her findings there. A large number of our earliest Berlin settlers came from this area. Among them were Andrews, Buck, Bulkeley, Covell, Dewey, Ellis, Goff, Grant, Hills, Hollister, House, Hubbard, Ingham, Loveland, Nye, Perrin, Phelps, Smith, Strickland and Tryon. Lynn provided a current map of the area and old maps of Hebron (dated

1744) and Wethersfield. The old maps included individual house locations as well as the names of families living in them similar to our own Beers map of Berlin. She took pictures of many houses that are still standing that had connections to our early Berlin residents or to their families. Her pictures also included historical markers that have been erected depicting the early history of the area, an early church in which several later Berlin residents were married and a graveyard where many of the earliest settlers of Glastonbury are buried. She has also provided information on historical societies, libraries, museums and graveyards in the region.

Thanks go out to Lynn for her research on this area. The information she has provided will be of interest to researchers tracing family roots back prior to Berlin's existence or to anyone interested in visiting the area where many of our early settlers came from. It will be on file in the Nye/Woodbury Room in a file labeled Berlins Early Settlers in the Berlin General drawer.

The new corrected indexes for the Colby, East Road and Dewey-Wright cemeteries have been typed by Lynn McManis and are now on our town web site. The Black Cemetery will be included when it is finished.

We now have permission to take pictures of the old Cox Brook Schoolhouse that is owned by Mark Jenkinson. It has been turned around so it faces in a different direction but is otherwise the same building that once served as a school. We will attempt to acquire copies of it when it was a school if any are available from the owner.

The meeting adjourned about 8:30. Refreshments were provided by Richard Turner and Pat McDonald. They included a cake that was in honor of Vern Turner's birthday which is today, July 24. Vern wasn't here to share it but we sang happy birthday to him anyway and we all enjoyed the cake and other refreshments.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Turner, Secretary