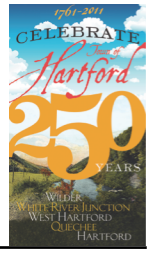




Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER



Volume 29, No. 5

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September-October 2016

Walter O. Morancy Becomes the First Recipient of the Hartford Cane

By Mary Nadeau

The Hartford Historical Society launched a new tradition this year in keeping with the spirit of the famous Boston Post Cane. In 1909, the publisher of the Boston Post (a newspaper) sent a gold-headed ebony cane to 700 towns in New England (Connecticut and Vermont were not included) with instructions that it was to be presented to the oldest male citizen of the town. Upon his death, it was to be presented to the next oldest resident, and so on. The cane was to remain the property of the town and not of the man who “received” it. In 1930, eligibility was extended to women as well.

Hartford’s former Fire Chief, Walter Morancy, became the first recipient of the Hartford Cane at a special outdoor ceremony held at the Garipay House on July 4, 2016 in recognition of his being Hartford’s oldest resident at the age of 96.

Over fifty people attended the presentation event. Chris Moloney, Walt’s grandson, began the program by reading a biography that he had composed.

Walt is a native Vermonter. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and found himself in the thick of battle in the European Theater. After the war, Walt returned to Vermont, fell in love and married Lorraine Coan of Johnson. Together they raised three children.



Society President Susanne Abetti presented Walt with the Hartford Cane, which will hang in the Garipay House alongside a plaque engraved with his name. She followed up with a keepsake framed certificate, proclaiming him as Hartford’s Oldest Citizen and the holder of the Hartford Cane.

Walt moved his family to Hartford in 1951 and became a part-time on-call firefighter for the Town of Hartford. Back then, it was primarily a volunteer force with two pumper trucks, a single ladder truck and a 1928 Cadillac. He became a full-time firefighter in 1955, in 1956 he was promoted to Assistant Chief, and in 1975 he was named as Hartford’s Fire Chief

Continued on page 3.



Arming America: Vermont Gunmakers and the Technology that Shaped America

By Carrie Brown, Ph.D.

Wednesday, September 14, 2016, 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ in Hartford Village. Free and open to the general public. Handicapped accessible.

From the Chair . . .



Everyone loves a mystery! One of the most intriguing ones in our town's history involves the greasing of the rails on Shallies Hill in Quechee some 83 years ago. (See the story, "Woodstock Train Makes Last Trip.") Surely there was more than one prankster involved, but, amazingly, to this day everyone with any knowledge of the incident has maintained a code of silence.

Does anyone know "who done it?" The probability is high that most or all of the principals involved are now deceased, so protecting the conspirators is no longer a sacred obligation. If you were the recipient of a whispered confidence about this infamous incident, please come forward and solve this nine-decade conundrum!



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The Mission Statement of the Hartford Historical Society

To acquire, identify and preserve information and artifacts related to Hartford's past and communicate knowledge of local history through programs, publications, and other interaction with the community.

When visiting this year's Glory Days of the Railroad celebration in downtown White River Junction on Saturday and Sunday, September 10-11, be sure to stop at the Historical Society's booth to say hello and to view the railroad-related displays from our extensive collection. There will be a variety of items for sale, such as old maps showing changes over the years to White River Junction, postcards, booklets on historical topics such as the Great Hartford Train Disaster of 1887, copies of historic photographs, CDs on railroad history and copies of the Hartford history books by John St. Croix and Jay Barrett. Be advised that our supply of St. Croix's "Historical Highlights of Hartford, Vermont," out of print for decades, is nearly exhausted.

Mary Nadeau, Chairman of the Board



Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

Note our new email address:

info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com

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WALTER MORANCY continued.



Chris pointed out that his grandfather was instrumental in modernizing and professionalizing the department, shepherding it through many

changes over more than three decades. Among the changes was the relocation of the fire department to the VA Cutoff Road. The hospital wanted the fire department as close by as possible, and in exchange, Walt was able to procure a new pumper truck. During his tenure, many other new vehicles and much equipment were acquired.

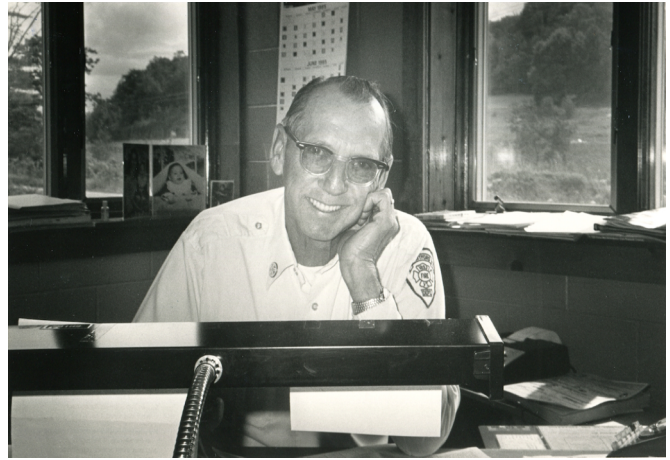
He also transformed the town's ambulance service. At the time of his arrival in Hartford, anyone looking for a ride to a local hospital, whether or not an emergency was involved, could call, get picked up and be transported. This informal half taxi/half ambulance was run by the local undertaker!

Walt called for a professionally trained and staffed ambulance service for the town, but many people had become accustomed to the status quo and criticized the change as unnecessary. However, his vision prevailed, and a new professional ambulance service was begun, putting an end to free rides for regular check-ups and limiting the ambulance service to actual life and death emergencies.

Chris pointed out, "Walt worked to professionalize the fire department through improved and more rigorous hiring standards and better training.

Despite having ended his own education at the eighth-grade level, Walt was a huge proponent of lifelong learning, which translated into continuing education and training requirements for the firefighters of the Hartford Fire Department.

"Walt was also an active teacher, serving as an instructor with the State Firefighters' Association and the Vermont Fire Service Training Academy." Among his other notable accomplishments were the smooth transition when the firefighters became unionized and the hiring of the first Hartford female firefighter.



Top left, the Hartford Cane and plaque were displayed with a collage of photos depicting Walt's distinguished career with the Hartford Fire Department. The brass-topped cane was crafted from locally-grown curly maple by a Hartford resident. Top right, Walt Morancy on the job in 1985. Above, the highlight of Walt's afternoon was a tour around town in a fire truck, courtesy of the Hartford Fire Department.

"In December of 1985, Chief Morancy retired after serving the town for 34 years but he continued serving the fire department and town for many years, helping out around the station and fighting fires. He explained his choice to remain 'on-call' matter-of-factly, saying, 'After so many years, you get a lifetime membership on the department.'"

We were delighted to find Walt still "sharp as a tack" and possessing a delightfully dry sense of humor. During the afternoon, you could feel the love going in both directions. Congratulations, Walt!

Native American Dancers Highlight Hartford Alumni Day

By Martha Knapp



Every year the Hartford Historical Society sets up a booth at Lyman Point Park and brings in assorted yearbooks, our newsletters and interesting historical displays and items that the returning alumni seem to enjoy viewing. Some are inspired to become Society members on the spot, and purchases are made from among the historical books and other items that we offer for sale. This is a very enjoyable way for us to meet Hartford Alumni.

This year we would like to tell about the class of 1975. I had been in touch with Consoni Hill, a member of this class who had attended Hartford High School through the ABC Program. The ABC Program was set up to invite Native Americans from all over the country to attend school here in order to obtain "A Better Chance." We have heard about many of these students from their former classmates through the years, and they often mention the value that bringing diversity to our school system gave to them. Consoni Hill came from Arizona and is an Apache.

He called the Society last winter, hoping to find contact information for his classmates, and we successfully connected him with several. Consoni had told me that he very much enjoyed his educational experience here and had many fond memories of the time he spent in Hartford. His purpose was to return to the Alumni Celebration and bring with him some of his culture to share with his classmates in appreciation of them and the Town of Hartford in general. He talked of his plans to bring the Sacred Crown Dancers to perform their traditional dance for us. He said that the dance would bring our town and its people many blessings and good luck for years to come.

I was very pleased and honored to experience this event. It was quite an accomplishment to bring eight Apache tribe members along with all their regalia and drums, and to find accommodations and venues for their ceremonies, but it all came to pass. So kudos to the Class of 1975 and to Consoni Hill for bringing us this unforgettable experience. *Photos by Greg Cook.*

Hartford's Kipling Connection?

By Fred Lerner, fred.lerner@dartmouth.edu

Many Vermonters are surprised to learn that Rudyard Kipling wrote his famous *Jungle Books*, not in India, but at Naulakha, the house he and his Brattleboro bride built in Dummerston. At least one of the stories that he wrote in Vermont may have a link to the Town of Hartford. I'm referring to ".007," first published in the August 1897 issue of *Scribner's* magazine and then in *The Day's Work* (New York: Doubleday & McClure, 1898).

The Kipling Society's *New Readers' Guide to the Works of Rudyard Kipling* (www.kiplingsociety.co.uk) describes the story as follows:

.007 is a new locomotive, "The red paint hardly dry on his spotless bumper-bar..." a newcomer in the engine-shed and goods-yard, painfully raw and shy, and the subject of much chaff from the other engines. But he is taken out in an emergency mission to recover a wreck; he acquits himself well, and is accepted as a newly-entered "Brother among Locomotives."

The story appears to be set in an imaginary railway locomotive shed, in the northeast of the USA, as it might be on the Boston and Maine Railroad which served Brattleboro. The time is the present, i.e., in the 1890s. However, despite its railway setting, the tale is essentially that of the new boy at school (or new subaltern), who feels out of place, but is befriended by a more experienced boy/sergeant, and goes on to prove himself in a match/skirmish, and so earns the respect of his peers and takes his place in the hierarchy of the school/regiment.

In his book *Rudyard Kipling in Vermont: Birthplace of the Jungle Books* (Bennington: Images from the Past, 1997; p. 39), John Murray describes one of Kipling's "eccentric mannerisms:" "There were times when Kipling would sit in the Brattleboro train station for hours, talking with stationmaster Dave Carey about the movements and mechanics of trains, or chatting with travelers coming and going." According to Judith Plotz, Emerita Professor of English Literature at



Engine 494, on display at White River Junction, was built in 1892 and may have been a model for Rudyard Kipling's story, ".007."

George Washington University, "Here he probably saw the prototype of his .007, Engine 494, an 8-wheeler like .007 built in July 1892 at the works at the Amoscoog Locomotive Works in Manchester, NH and today on view in the center of White River Junction." ("24/7 in the USA: Kipling and .007 as 'Engines That Could,'" *Kipling Journal* 88(355): 75-91, July 2014; p. 77)

Charles Bohi, in his factsheet "White River Junction's 494: An American Classic" written in 2003 for the New England Transportation Institute and Museum, says that the engine was "built 1892 at Manchester Locomotive Works." In response to my query he wrote, "I can't believe in its many years of service it did not pass through, and possibly spend some time, in Brattleboro. In any case, the B&M had enough similar engines that certainly some of them did." (email, 24 October 2013)

So while we cannot establish definitively that the steam locomotive in residence at the White River Junction train station is the original of Kipling's .007, I think we can safely claim that here in the Town of Hartford we have a relic of American railroading that also serves as a concrete illustration of one of Rudyard Kipling's more exotic protagonists.



Woodstock Train Makes Last Trip

From an article that appeared in the April 20, 1933, edition of The Landmark

Over 500 Excursionist Passengers

Over five hundred persons rode, for the last time, over the Woodstock Railroad last Saturday when the "H. H. Paine" locomotive made its last trip over that scenic steel road between this village and Woodstock. Fifteen of the passengers were among those to make the first trip over the route back in September 1875 when the wood-burning engine, the "A. G. Dewey" was at the head of the string of cars.

First Passengers to Ride

The first passengers were Mrs. Mary Morrill and daughter, Mrs. Lilla Mason, who was three months old on the first trip, O. A. Whitcomb, Fred B. Dutton, James Leonard, W. S. Eaton, Frank H. Knapp, Frederick Chapman, all of Woodstock, Charles Claflin, George Darling and A. J. Perkins of Quechee, R. E. Jaquith of South Woodstock, Lewis H. Spaulding of Briggs, Albert C. Fogg of this village and Harvey DeWolf of Concord, N. H.

Greased Rail Causes Delay

But one cloud of doom overshadowed the events of Saturday's big celebration. Somebody, either for the fun of it, or for the "deviltry" of it, greased one of the rails for a third of a mile on the Shallies Hill grade, and for the moment Engineer Harry H. Paine, who had been employed by the Woodstock Railroad Company for 41 years, and Fireman George H. Piper were sorely distressed as to why their engine should fail them on this day of all days. It was their belief that the sandpipe had plugged and their "pride and joy" had failed them. Examination disclosed the thick coating of cup grease. The engine was cut off and made two trips to the top of the hill which wore off the grease, then starting in the middle of the hill, pulled up and over and into White River Junction. Carl Smith, brother of Vice President Smith, who was celebrating his birthday, gathered a cigarette package of the grease as a souvenir and proceeded to make the trip over the Woodstock line.



Opposite, the J.G. Porter carried passengers and freight from White River Junction to Woodstock twice a day with stops in Dewey's Mills, Quechee, and Taftsville. The locomotive was named after one of the original officers of the Woodstock Railway. Above left, the bridge across Quechee Gorge was first completed in 1875. Wooden arches were added to support the bridge in 1906 and, in 1911, a steel framework was built around the original bridge. Top right, the Quechee station was on present day Route 4 near Quechee Village. Bottom right, a rail crew leaves Woodstock to inspect the tracks in 1920. Photos courtesy of the Woodstock Historical Society.

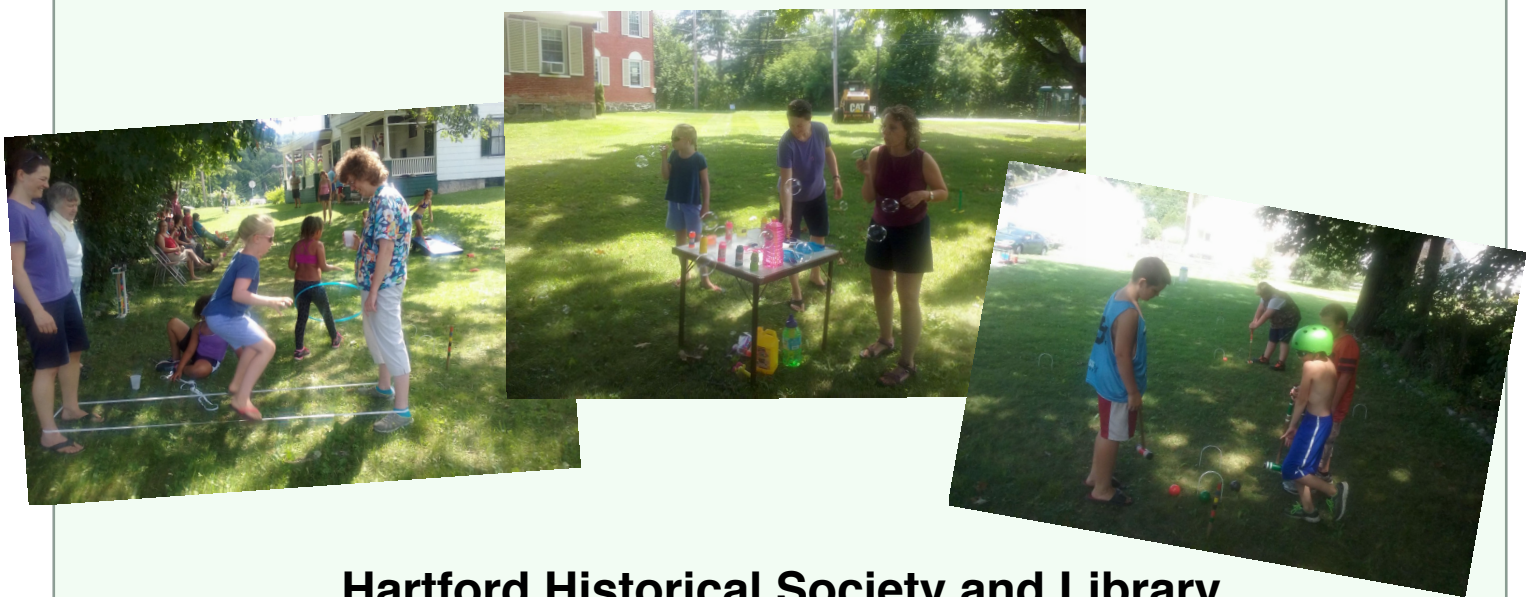
The Last Trip

The special pulled out of this station about 2:45 with 350 aboard. Robert P. Woods, citizen sponsor of the excursion, boarded the engine at Taftsville and blew the whistle from Joyce crossing into Woodstock station. Hundreds were on hand to greet the excursionists. Cameras snapped and many rushed to shake hands with officials, especially General Manager Furber, who acted as one of the conductors, a job he had first held more than 30 years ago. Others reached the cab and grasped the hand of Engineer Paine and Fireman Piper and shouted words of greeting to C. H. "Bert" Preston, the other conductor, and Brakeman W. A. "Bill" Graham.

Number 4, the last passenger train to be run, left the Woodstock station at 4:30 with nearly 100 passengers. As it rounded the engine house curve and picked up momentum on the straight-a-way, a silver-haired man on the platform with tears in his eyes remarked "the echo of that whistle we just heard will always remain in my memory as a sacred benediction."

Postscript

The former railroad bed became our present-day Route 4. Shallies Hill is located in the general area between the on/off Ramp for I-89 S and the intersection of Route 4 and Quechee Main Street.



Hartford Historical Society and Library Sponsor Ice Cream Social

By Martha Knapp

The Hartford Historical Society and the Hartford Library have been exploring new ways to join forces through shared events. Our Christmas celebration last year was very successful, and so librarian Nadine Hodgdon and I decided to celebrate the end of the Children's Summer Reading Program by holding an ice cream social with lawn game activities. Since we are blessed at the Garipay House with an extensive, well-shaded back lawn, we decided to set up the event here.

The Society came up with a croquet set and the popular Corn Hole game. Nadine provided the rest of the activities. We had badminton, hula hoops, bubble tag, Chinese jump-rope, a sack race and, to everyone's delight, many kinds of ice cream along with our special lemonade punch.

Of the more than forty people who came, most were children, and all of them had a wonderful time participating in the variety of activities offered. Our aim once again was to celebrate community with a multi-generational group of residents. If you missed it, we plan to hold another ice cream social next year. Many thanks go out to everyone who came, and especially to those who donated their time and energies into making it a success.

From left, Angela Krapovicky and Nadine Hodgdon hold the rope steady for the children to perform the Chinese Jump-rope activity. The bubble activity was enjoyed by all especially when the very giant ones went airborne and also when the wind helped with the blowing of the bubbles. Neighborhood boys playing a game of Croquet. Our set received much use that day.

Potash Found at Theron Boyd Homestead

In 1786, William Burch built what we now call the Theron Boyd Homestead in Quechee. Around 1800, Burch was a successful merchant who produced a variety of products including bricks, pottery and potash. Traces of potash can still be found in the cellar.

What is potash? It's an alkaline substance made by burning hardwood, leaching the ashes and boiling the residue to produce a powder rich in potassium. Potash production was common among colonial settlers who sold it to manufacturers of soap, glass and gunpowder. Before the Revolutionary War, the colonies were exporting 200 tons of potash to England each year. Today, potash is primarily used in fertilizer.

Louis Sheldon Newton Presentation Comes to the Garipay House

By Martha Knapp

I was very pleased to present the Louis Sheldon Newton Program at the Garipay House during our open house event on July 10. So many people came that we had to get more chairs! It was exciting for me to have a couple from Hanover come and show me their house. I will add it to my presentation for next time.

As a reminder, Louis Sheldon Newton was born in Hartford in 1871. He went to public school in Hartford, attended the St. Johnsbury Academy, and studied architecture in Boston. He designed many homes and public buildings in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Louis Sheldon Newton worked in the small brick building next to the Garipay House for many years before moving to Burlington. He renovated the Second Congregational Church of Hartford in memory of his mother and father.

I am booked in Enfield for next April as they have two beautiful homes there. Louis Sheldon



Martha Knapp speaking to a full house.

Newton is one of my favorite topics, and I'm always happy to tell this story and relate what I have uncovered in my ongoing research. I may also find more local venues, such as our local libraries, so if you missed it this time, there will be more opportunities.



Society Scores Another Successful Yard Sale

By Mary Nadeau

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's yard sale a smashing success—those who donated, who spent countless hours sorting and pricing (especially our new friend Mona Beckett!), set up the tables and chairs, artfully arranged the merchandise, baked for the food table, served as cashiers and lingered to clean up.

We are grateful to all those who shopped, and especially for all those kind people who told us to “keep the change.” After expenses (which were minimal), the net was a whopping \$2,506. This tidy sum will more than cover the expense of heating oil for the coming season, ensuring that the Garipay House will remain open Monday through Friday from 9 to 1 year round.

From left, Gaylord Newcity and Art Nadeau offer fresh lemonade and hot dogs grilled to order. John Sherman joins the throngs of enthusiastic shoppers. Dan George assists those browsing the book tables. Bridget Baker and daughter Emma patiently wait their turn to pay for their treasures. Pat Stark mans the register as Mary Nadeau schmoozes with customers.



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THANK YOU!

Theron Boyd Open House is Well Attended

By Mary Nadeau

Partnering with the Vermont Historic Preservation Commission, the Hartford Historical Society held an open house event at the Theron Boyd Homestead in Quechee on Saturday, July 23. One of Hartford's historical treasures, the house was constructed in the 1700s, using

The house was constructed in the 1700s, using materials harvested from the property.

materials harvested from the property and bricks made on site.

Glass for the windows was imported from England. Amazingly, although the house was constantly occupied into the 1980s, electricity, plumbing and central heat were never added, so the structure has changed little over time. Walking through its rooms evokes the sensation of stepping back in time.

Now in a state of disrepair, the Commission is working to stabilize the building and to prevent further deterioration until such time as funds are available from the state to undertake accurate restoration and to ensure its preservation.



Top, Two docents from the Vermont Historic Preservation Commission led guided tours, explaining the construction techniques used and pointing out unique features. Bottom, those visiting the house stopped by to register their names in our guest book and to drop a gift into our donations box. The booth was staffed by Dan George, Gwen Tuson, Roy Black and Mary Nadeau. Middle, Everyone was delighted to meet 10-year old Theron Hancock. Years ago his father had toured the Homestead and was later inspired to name his son after the house's last owner. Theron's mother told us that a picture of his namesake hangs in the boy's bedroom at their home.

Arming America, September 14 Program

Long before FDR called America "The Arsenal of Democracy," gun makers of the Connecticut River Valley were figuring out how to produce rifles and pistols in large quantities, using complex new machinery. The "high tech" workers of their day, these innovators developed the methods and tools that would ultimately lead to American military might, and also to mass production and the consumer culture that we know today.

In this illustrated lecture, historian and museum curator Carrie Brown Ph.D. explores the role of the Connecticut River Valley with an emphasis on Vermont, in developing technology that changed American life.

Join us on Wednesday, September 14, 7 p.m., at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ on Maple Street in Hartford Village.

Hartford Historical Society

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HHS Calendar

OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House

(excepting holidays) M-F 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. or by appointment. To be sure we are open, check for the flag outside the building or contact us at 296-3132 or at info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com. For an appointment, contact Pat Stark at 295-3077 M-F from 9 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Fourth Thursday of the month – **HHS Board of Directors Meeting** – at the Garipay House, 6:30 p.m. (Please check for exact date). For more information, call Mary Nadeau at 295-2123.

Saturday and Sunday, September 10-11, 2016 – Glory Days of the Railroad in White River Junction.

Wednesday, September 14, 2016 – Arming America: Vermont Gunmakers and the Technology that Shaped America by Carrie Brown Ph.D. (sponsored by the Vermont Speakers Bureau) 7:00 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

Wednesday, November 8, 2016 – Growing Up in Wilder by Roy Black, 7:00 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

Saturday, December 10, 2016 – Hartford Village Christmas Celebration.

Look for detailed information in the November-December newsletter.

The Genealogy Center in the Hartford Library is open Tuesday afternoons from 1-3. Carole Haehnel will be happy to assist you in exploring the resources we have and in accessing information from *The Landmark*, which we have on microfiche. Ray Fifield is returning, by appointment only, to assist researchers. Just call the library to set it up.

Notice: This could be your last newsletter! If you have a yellow streak surrounded by a red circle, around the date on your mailing label, this means you are receiving this newsletter for the 5th time this year without paying your dues. We really hate to lose you but we need to know you care.