

Voluntown Historical Society
April 15, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by President Ty Cool. Ty welcomed all who were present. There will be a presentation on the Studio Farm this evening. Twenty-two people were in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance, led by Troy Jones, was recited.

It was noted that April 15, 2015 was the 150th Anniversary of the death of Abraham Lincoln.

Jen Panko made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 18, 2015 meeting. Doug Forrest seconded it and all were in favor.

After everyone present introduced themselves, a sign-up sheet was passed around.

President's Comments: Ty passed around various pamphlets from the Connecticut Historical Society. Also present tonight was Janice Steinhagen from the Reminder News. Next month's presentation will be by Maria "Cookie" Morell on Voluntown Bicentennial and 250th Anniversary.

Citizens Comments: Jack Wesa asked everyone to take note on what Griswold was doing for their Bicentennial, since Voluntown Tercentennial was coming up.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Anne Nieminen stated that the checking account had \$463.99 in it and the CD was \$5000. \$60 had been deposited since the last meeting from the sale of historical books.

Studio Farm Presentation

Ty introduced Gail Caddell, who put together and read a history on the Studio Farm that will be published in the upcoming Library Newsletter. He then introduced Richard & Dorothy Wingate the owners of Studio Farm. Studio Farm was owned by Joseph Totten in the early 1900's, which was when Mr. Totten produced and starred in silent films on the property. The Wingate's purchased the property in 1963. They have found many interesting artifacts over the years. While Mr. Wingate was teaching woodworking at a local high school, Mrs. Wingate raised their four children and was in charge of raising thousands of chickens for Arbor Acres. They have always had gardens and grown organic vegetables that they currently sell at farmer's markets. It was a very interesting presentation that was enjoyed by all that attended.

New Business:

Ty Cool read two emails that he had received. The first pertained to a one room school in North Stonington and the Wylie School House. The other was about an old stone structure in the State Forest off Hodge Pond Road. After having input from members, he will be able to answer them.

Old Business:

501c3 is all set. Janet Cool had cleaned up the Wylie School over the weekend. Methodist Meeting House, no news. There will be an area in the Library for Voluntown history/genealogy. Cathy Rubin was present. She stated the Library has a professional video camera and a "Go Pro" available to be borrowed. Janet Cool reported that the Pfizer Grant for \$1000 had been submitted two weeks ago and

can take up to six weeks. This money would be earmarked for a new computer and software to catalog the archives. Mark Knudson "Voluntown Documentary" was not present.

Committee Reports:

Administration: LaDonna Cardin is working on Pay Pal with Winona Berdine to be used for dues, purchasing fundraising items, etc. If Pay Pal is use, there might have to be a small fee. LaDonnah will bring the membership letter next month that will be sent out for June renewals and a new member letter. Cookie Morell has received some recipes, needs more, and would like a couple hundred to create the cookbook. She would like to put old pictures and history of the town in the cookbook. She is checking into using a local printing company. Gail Caddell is taking care of putting things in the Library Newsletter and Karen Britt is putting information in the School Newsletter. Ty Cool stated he will continue to email members with the agenda and minutes.

Projects & Events: Jen Panko is still working on a "Walktober Walk". She will work with EDC. Jen will also take care of setting up a small Historical Society display at the Farmer's Market. Any member interested in doing a presentation at the monthly meetings, coordinate it with Jen Panko. It was discussed to have one day seasonal events at Wylie School House, since the Holiday Open House had been such a fun event. Also, possibly a tour of the Studio Farm could be set up.

Archive Preservation & Restoration: Julie Soto stated the need to get into the Historical room in the basement and look around. Fundraising was discussed to purchase the items needed for proper storage. Julie is also looking into grants. Ty brought up the old map being stored in the Town Clerk's vault, which needs restoration at some point. Jen Panko suggested that projects be prioritized. It was discussed that there is a need for money to start up some of these projects.

Mary Anne Nieminen wanted to point out, before Janice Steinhagen left, that she had written a very nice article on Ray Gravelin which was in last week's edition of the Reminder.

Ty Cool thanked Richard and Dorothy Wingate for a fine presentation. It was also nice to see new faces.

Jen Panko made a motion to adjourn the meeting. LaDonnah Cardin seconded it and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M. The next meeting will be held May 20, 2015 at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl A. Sadowski, Secretary