

Voluntown Historical Society  
May 20, 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 Town's Bicentennial this evening by Maria Morell. Twenty Two people were in attendance, including 4 members of the Sterling Historical Society.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jen Panko made a motion to accept the minutes from the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, Doug Forrest seconded the motion, all were in favor.

**President's Comments:** Ty had everyone stand up and introduce themselves and welcomed all in attendance. He thanked the Sterling Historical Society members for coming.

**Announcements & Correspondence:** Ty has been looking for a letter from Pfizer about the grant for the new computer for the archives, which hasn't come in as of yet.

**Citizen's Comments:** Mr. Wingate from Studio Farm wanted to thank the Historical Society for the gift they received for their presentation last month on the Studio Farm.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mary Anne started out with a question on whether or not the Society would still like to give \$25 to the eighth grade graduating student who showed an interest in history. It was discussed that maybe the amount should be raised to \$50. Beth Taylor made a motion to continue to give the gift and raise the amount to \$50.00., Maria Morell seconded the motion, all were in favor. She also asked if there was anyone from the group that would like to present the gift to let her know. A donor has given a donation of \$340.00 to be earmarked for maintenance of Wylie School. Mary Anne will send her a thank you card. She received \$10.00 from the sale of books. There is \$463.99 in the checking account and \$5,000.00 in the CD. She reported that the Selectmen have put a line item of \$2,000.00 in the budget for maintenance and up keep of the Wylie Schoolhouse. She also mentioned that Karen Britt's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class will be taking her students to Wylie School on June 5<sup>th</sup>. They will have lunch there. She will let us know if she needs help cleaning up.

**Old Business:** Ty reported that the 501c3 annual filing fees are due next month and Troy and Mary Anne will take care of that. There is no further info on the Methodist Meeting House. We should be getting a grant from Pfizer for \$1,000.00 for the computer system. Maria talked a little about the cookbook. She has about 150 recipes so far and she has talked to a few printers. Beth will check to see how many historical books are left and whether or not more need to be printed up to sell at the Farmer's Market.

**New Business:**

**Committee Reports:** Ladonnah presented two forms for the membership. One was for the people already on the mailing list and the other was for signing up new members which will be available at the Farmer's Market. Ladonnah and Winona are waiting to see if there is enough interest in using pay pal before they go ahead and set it up. They are also looking into having mugs made up.

**Projects & Events:** Jen Panko had an idea to have an open house at the Wylie School during the summer, like sometime around July 5<sup>th</sup>, for an old fashioned ice cream and pie social with a patriotic

theme. There could be essays, drawings with prizes for the kids. It could be after the Farmer's Market. She is keeping an eye on Griswold's Bicentennial in order to get ideas for Voluntown's Tercentennial. She also reported that Ladonnah & Tracey have an approved walk for the Trails Weekend in June. One of the walks is around Green Falls and Jack Wesa reported that he and Pam Delaney had taken that hike and the terrain was very treacherous. He invited Ladonnah on another walk he and Pam were taking this Friday. For the June meeting, Jack Wesa & Linda Christianson will talk about the mills with emphasis on the mill workers. Julie Soto is going to do a genealogical talk sometime in the fall and Pam Delaney will do a presentation on Benedict Arnold. Jen has spoken with Glenn Bronson about the Robbins Cemetery and was interested in knowing who was in charge of the care and upkeep. She will look into it.

Maria mentioned that in doing her research for the Bicentennial, she found the incorporation date for the town. It was May 11, 1721. Maybe around that time we could have some sort of an event.

Julie Soto talked about the grant she was going to look into and she felt that we wouldn't be able to get it as there are only 6 in New England. There is a list of grant writers which needs to be looked at to see which one would be good for us. She had a pottery mug to show that could be used as a fundraiser. She told the group that once we have the computers we would need to purchase archival boxes which are a bit expensive.

### **Bicentennial Presentation**

Maria Morell gave a great talk on the Town's 250<sup>th</sup> celebration. She read the history of Voluntown and told us about the origin of the Town's Seal. She mentioned all of the events, the planning and the work that went into having such a wonderful celebration of our Town. There were parades, special auctions of coins, pancake breakfasts, chicken barbeques, a day just for the children, woodsmen's field day, open house at Wylie School, a Fireman's Muster, and at the end of it all a gala Anniversary Ball with all attending in formal wear. She talked about the countries' 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the wagon train that came through town. She passed around newspaper clippings of the events and pictures. She also had an itemized report on what each and every event cost, money spent, money the town gave, which she told was paid back at the end of the events. As she concluded her talk she told the group that it was not too soon to start planning for the 300<sup>th</sup>. It was a great presentation and all who attended enjoyed it. It also gave us ideas on what to expect when we plan the tercentennial.

The next meeting will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup> with a presentation from Jack Wesa and Linda Christianson on the mills.

Beth made a motion to adjourn, Mary Anne seconded it, all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

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