

Strong-Potter House
COVENTRY, CT



November 2009
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Sign Post

Brick School House
COVENTRY, CT



The Pond Hill School

By Jean Castagno



Pond Hill School, circa 1941

Jean Thibault is seated, third from the left. Other students identified in this photo include: Alan Olsen, seated on left end; Jim Keller, 2nd from left, seated; Mary Miller Wilson, 4th from the left, seated; Helen (?) Hicking, 5th from the left, seated; "Peeny" Smith, 2nd from right end, seated; Charlotte (?) Hicking, 3rd from right, seated; Charles "Cooney" (sp?) "Tunie" Hicking, right end, standing; Ray Hicking, 4th from right, standing; Steve Youngerman (?), 4th from left, standing. The teacher may be Mrs. Michalek, standing, center.

As I was born in August 1930 and had skipped a grade, in 1941 I would have been 10 during the school year and in 6th grade.

There were 11 children in grades 1-6 when I entered the Pond Hill School in September of 1939. I was age 9 in fifth grade, one of two students at that level. There was one student in sixth grade. Our teacher was Mrs. Michalek and, while she taught one grade, the others did seat work. We were mostly obedient and respectful of the teacher and each other.

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I have some fond memories of my brother, Bobby, and another boy named, Hick, who were restless and liked to create a little excitement now and then.

Bobby was born in January and so a late starter to begin with as one had to be 6 to enter first grade in those days. Hick had the same sort of birthday and so the two had a little more zip than some of the others. Keeping in mind that the three of us leaves only eight other children, it was a little tough to dream up excitement on a regular basis.

It was Bobby's job to bring in the wood from the pile outside the door as a wood stove kept us warm all winter. It was Hick's job to feed the stove. Now and then they would bring in a squirrel or some other creature and let it loose in the small classroom. Oh, what fun we all had chasing the little thing around the room.

Our mother made all our clothes and taught sewing in the 4 H - head, heart, hands, and health. If she could have made shoes, she would have done that too, as we were 5 children in 1941 - ages 11, 9, 8, 5 and 2, depending on the birthday.

A Heartfelt Thank-you

Submitted by Ginney Dilk

On the last two Fridays and Saturdays in October the Coventry Historical Society hosted *A Hauntingly Enchanted Evening* at the Strong-Porter House. This event was a combined effort between the historical society and the Ghouls of Graveside Manor. I would like to thank the many, many people who volunteered to make this event a success as well as our sponsors...the complete list is on the website: www.darkwalk.net. The primary people involved were: Jim Wieloch (woods walk), John Wilnaur (tavern keeper), Pat Natusch (head wench), Bob Visny (storytelling at the bonfire), Cindy Sposito (S'Mores), Jim Sposito (concessions), Mary Schweitzer (pumpkins), David Brown (sound), Kathy Lepak (music) Linda Peters (reservations), Jenny Wieloch and Courtney Zapadka (scripts) and Yvonne Filip (donations). I would especially like to thank Gary Dilk, and Mike and Andrea Ader for their support and sanity checks. Thanks again to all the volunteers who provided *A Hauntingly Enchanted Evening* for approximately 600 visitors. Proceeds from this event will be used for our barn renovation, currently in progress.

Strong-Porter Update

The blacksmith shop has been moved to the Museum grounds! In late September the long awaited move took place, organized and directed by member Bob Visny. The weight of the forge inside the building made the move particularly difficult, requiring several pieces of large machinery to complete the move. The building, which came from the Fife and Drum Corps grounds just up the road, was loaded onto a large flat bed truck and slowly inched along South Street until arriving at its new location.

It will take some work before the building is ready to open to the public, but you can come see the building itself now! Thanks to Bob, Ginney Dilk, and all the other people who worked on the project, for making it happen.

Work is also beginning on Phase 2 of the barn restoration. Work has already been completed on the barn foundation, footings, sills, and beams. The new project will extend to the attached shed, the stone foundation will be rebuilt, and additional sill work will take place. New siding will replace old clapboards currently in place.



Society Events

Saturday, December 5, 2009

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY HOME AND HEARTH TOUR

10:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT

FIVE HISTORIC HOMES/ONE HISTORIC CHURCH

\$15.00 IN ADVANCE/\$20.00 DAY OF TOUR

LUNCH BY RESERVATION ONLY
COMMUNITY HOUSE, SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ROUTE 44, COVENTRY
11:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.
\$7.00

TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED THE DAY OF THE TOUR
AT THE COMMUNITY HOUSE, SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
FROM 9:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.

FOR RESERVATIONS:
860.742.7474
pnatusch@earthlink.net

TICKETS WILL BE MAILED UNTIL NOVEMBER 28
RESERVED TICKETS CAN BE PICKED UP AT THE CHURCH

SNOWDATE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009

Society Members Christmas Party –Sunday, December 13th



COVENTRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPECIAL HOLIDAY SALE ITEM

The Coventry Historical Society is offering a holiday box with fresh assorted greens, pine cones and a red bow.

This item would make a beautiful remembrance for loved ones in cemeteries or as a home or business decoration. This item would be available for pickup at the Strong-Porter House, 2382 South Street, Coventry CT

from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. or at other times that may be scheduled. There are two sizes available: One is approximately 18" long, 6" deep and 6" high and the other is 12" long. Go to the web page listed on page four for submittal forms.

Coventry Historical Society

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E-Mail:

WriteToUs@coventrycthistoricalsociety.org

The Coventry Historical Society Web Site is located at:

www.coventrycthistoricalsociety.org

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Wanted: Articles for Publication in THE SIGN POST.

Send or email your article to the Society.
Articles in Word or PDF form send to:

Sign Post Editor

Jim Murphy
Irishbrit0471@att.net

Become a Member

If you aren't already a member of the Coventry Historical Society, please consider joining now!

Single Membership \$10.00

Family Membership \$15.00

Send us your name, address and contact information using one of the methods listed on the left of this page.

Telephone number and **email address** would be appreciated.

*Coventry Historical Society
P. O. Box 534
Coventry, CT 06238*