



# Kent Historical Society Newsletter



Volume 12, Number 3

Kent, Connecticut

December 2011

## TOY STORIES

### DOLL HOUSES

Lincoln Logs

Wooden Blocks

*Hula Hoop*

*Rocking Horse*

PAPER DOLLS

*Barbie & Ken*

...A.n.t...F.a.r.m.s....



### Train Sets

Teddy Bears

**Rattles**

*Play Doh*

G.I. Joe

TINKER TOYS

*Gumby*

It has been two and a half years since we have had an exhibit at Seven Hearths, and many of you are asking “what’s next?” One of you suggested doll houses. We liked that idea, began to poke around to see if we could borrow a few and started to plan a doll house exhibit. But wait a minute—something was wrong. Just doll houses? That’s discrimination, or almost. At the least it’s a missed opportunity. It leaves out the boys and their toys. Their wonderful toys—the Lionel trains sets, the Lincoln Logs, the lead soldiers, and of course G.I. Joe. Unless Joe comes home from war and moves into the doll house with Barbie and Ken.....

SO, we’ve thrown it wide open. We want to have an exhibit about the story of toys. Our toys, any toys, but especially your favorite toys. If you still have them (c’mon—we know many of you still have stuff squirreled away), we’d like to borrow them to exhibit along side our amazing collection, some pictured above. If you don’t still have yours, how about pictures of you playing with them, or just your memories of them. How do you describe the feeling of utter contentment you felt when you snuggled up with your favorite teddy bear? Or the sensation of triumph when you put into place the last piece of a huge wooden block tower and the whole thing stayed up? Why did they make you feel so happy? Just what is it about toys that has made them universal to all cultures throughout the ages??? We’ll take a whimsical look at toys and how they make us smile.

Please let us know if you would like to help out with the summer exhibit in any way!

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## THE 2012 CALENDAR IS NOW AVAILABLE



The Naboriny Barns on Cobble Road, watercolor by G. Laurence Nelson

The annual Kent Historical Society calendar is finally here! It is a special full color edition, featuring the beautiful artwork of George Laurence Nelson: a combination of portraits, local landscapes and his own personal favorites - the lovely floral compositions. The calendars are available for \$12 at The Fife 'n' Drum Gift Shop, the Heron gallery, the House of Books, the Kent Town Hall, Richard Lindsey Bookseller and the Kent Historical Society office. This is the perfect holiday gift for Society members, families and friends of the Kent community, We will be happy to ship your calendars for an additional \$3 per calendar. For further information, please contact Lisby Ritchie at 860-927-4587 or [kenthistorical@att.net](mailto:kenthistorical@att.net)

## MOVIN' ON UP!

We still have not made the **Big Move to Tallman House**, and could use some help. No date has been set yet, but we're very close. The entire house has been painted by Charlie Webster, and Gleason Electric has updated the wiring system. Various other little quirks have been ironed out by Susi Williams and the Buildings Committee. The floor plans have been laid out and a tightly choreographed moving sequence has been developed. Because it is a tight fit, the move will take several separate days, with breaks in between to organize what is moved in before bringing in the next part of our large collection. But we know we can make it work.

**If you have a truck, van or station wagon, or just a pair of helping hands, please let us know. We'll be ready to get moving very soon. Thank you!**

# The Kent Historical Society GIFT SHOP

<b>2012 Kent Calendar</b> . . . . .	<b>\$12 each</b>
One Small Town In World War II . . . . .	\$25
Kent Tales . . . . .	\$10 each
Iron Fever	
Barzillai Slosson's History of Kent & Other Bits of History	
Sherm Chase Remembers: A Kent Life 1900 to 1982	
Rufus Fuller and the South Kent Ore Bed	
The Pratts of Macedonia	
Kent Tales (John Adam Journal) . . . . .	\$40 each (By special order only)
New Life For Old Timber* . . . . .	\$6 each
Artists of the Litchfield Hills. . . . .	\$32 each
A Register of Some Kent Families. . . . .	\$30 each (genealogy of Kent)
Farm Life series, by Phil Camp . . . . .	\$12 each
Ornament/medallion . . . . .	\$10 each
G.L. Nelson Note Cards*. . . . .	\$6 for a packet of 8, or \$1 apiece
*These note cards and "New Life" are done by George Laurence Nelson, noted Kent artist, and previous owner of Seven Hearths	
Photo cards of Seven Hearths . . . . .	\$1 each
Color Copy of 1874 Map of Kent . . . . .	\$10 each
DVD – Photographic history of Kent. . . . .	\$10 each

To Order from the Gift Shop:  
Write to: Bookstore  
    Kent Historical Society  
    PO Box 651  
    Kent, CT 06757 or Call: 860-927-4587

*For mail orders, please include \$5 S&H for One Small Town and \$3 S&H for all others*

**Welcome New Members!**

**Doug & Tracey Finch, Mark & Aija Gibson,  
Valerie LaRobardier, Laurie Nussdofer,  
Ellen Ravens-Seger,  
Nancy Schaefer & Bernie Epstein  
Lynn Werner & Kevin Honan**

**We are happy to have you with us!**

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## KHS Board News

As the board of directors of the Kent Historical Society continues to expand towards our goal of 12 members, we are pleased to announce the addition of two more wonderful people—Pam Crawford and Roger Gonzales.

After spending most of her adult life elsewhere, **Pam Crawford** has come to her senses and come home. Her father Bill owned Crawford's Market on Main Street (predecessor to the Davis IGA). He was also active in the Kent Volunteer Fire Department. Her mother, Geal Crawford, was involved in Kent politics and the Kent Congregational Church. As a child in the 1950s, Pam remembers going to help her father look for planes at the spotting post. Her extended family grew to include her brother Jon (Sonny), step-brothers David and Ron MacFarlane and step-sister Laurie MacFarlane. She has two children of her own—April and Luc—and a grandson, Sebastian. She is engaged to Walter Irving, brother of KHS board member Charlotte Lindsey.

After graduating from Kent Center School, Northfield School and Northeastern University, Pam began her career in the hospitality field. During that time she owned her own restaurant and worked at other restaurants and resorts, most recently at the Ringling Museum in Sarasota, Florida. Along the way she learned to bake—really well! We've been treated to some savory pastries at a recent fundraiser and are looking forward to sampling her famous Key Lime Pie. Pam is very happy to be back in the area and is looking forward to working with the Kent Historical Society.

The trustees are hard at work at board development as we move forward into the 21st century and up to Tallman House on Studio Hill. It is an exciting time for the Kent Historical Society, and we are grateful to our new board members for joining in our busy life!

The next issue of the KHS newsletter will be a special town-wide volume on the results of our Historic Structure Report at Seven Hearths. Because **Roger Gonzales'** primary area of interest and expertise centers around 7H and its era, we will introduce him to you in that issue.

### OUR OTHER VALUABLE VOLUNTEERS

It takes a great many people to keep the Kent Historical Society going, and, while our hardworking board members put in time on almost a daily basis, there are many more people who pitch in and help whenever we call. In this issue, we would like to thank a very special young volunteer, **Rebecca Dubray**, a recent graduate of Kent Center School, who helped out with the kids summer art program at Seven Hearths this past summer. We give a huge, hearty thank you to **Kevin Capobianco** who has put in a tremendous amount of time cleaning up the trees and shrubs at 7H and Tallman House this fall. Just as he was close to finished, the October storm struck. Like everyone else, we suffered great damage at 7H. Kevin arrived as soon as he could with his chainsaw and cheerful attitude, and quickly got things cleaned up and looking even better. We are greatly in his debt. Kevin—thank you so very much! And as this newsletter was almost ready to go to press, **Debby Bennett** arrived from the **Kent Greenhouse** with some lovely fresh greens to decorate the outside of the Swift House for the holidays. Thanks, Deb!!!!

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## Growing up in Kent, by Susi Casey Williams

*Earlier this year, The Kent Informal Club invited life long Kent resident Susi Williams to speak at their monthly meeting about her memories of her life in the middle of downtown Kent. Because she was speaking to the IN-formal Club, most members of which are her friends, her remarks are informal, colorful and chatty, and we are delighted to share them here with you.*

When Mary Brash asked me to come speak to you about growing up in Kent, I was a bit taken aback. “Am I that old,” I wondered, “that folks would be interested in my childhood?” Well, I guess so. I have all the aging signs. So it goes, and here I am.

I was born in 1939, to Harry and Margaret Casey, the last of three children. My Casey grandparents emigrated separately from Ireland in their teens, in the mid 1800s, as relatives of the Tobin family who were already here. Gramp worked for the Hopson family, first in the Iron Works (the furnace which stands at Sloane-Stanley Museum), and then as overseer and general factotem for all of the many Hopson Farms. [Cousin Gordon Casey delighted in the fact that Kent Green, which he developed, is built on land where our grandfather grew potatoes!] My grandmother worked as a housekeeper for the Morehouse family, forebears of Barbara Morehouse Prisch, who now lives at Geer. They brought up their family of two boys and three girls at 19 Lane Street, where Maggie Wells lives now, and which has always remained in the family.

My uncle, J. Edward Casey, for whom young John E. Casey II is named, bought N.M. Watson & Co. (that’s Nelson Morehouse Watson, by the way) in 1929, the same year he bought the house I live in at 28 Lane Street. The store was located where the Kent Town Center and the defunct Cyberian building are now. My father bought a half-interest in the store soon after. They kept the Watson name, because there was still some “Irish need not apply” sentiment. My mother’s parents were like that – had a fit when my mother, a Protestant, married an Irish Catholic merchant! But they got over it in time.

The Store (capital T, capital S) was the center of my family’s universe. It was a real general store, with everything from soup to nuts and then some: Groceries (where one of my jobs was to pour coffee beans into a huge funnel, whack at the sides to get all the beans down, and bag the results); a butcher shop (where I learned to bone meats and chickens); dry goods (bolts of cloth, notions, household goods – if we were out of purple thread for Dora Parsons, mother would take the train to New Milford to get it at Hart’s); hardware of every description (I weighed ten-penny nails), sports equipment (including hockey pucks, tennis balls, and baseball bats), beer and ale (everyone who bought a quart of Ballantine Ale got a free copper opener – I still have one). We had clothes, too – mostly items for farmers – bib overalls, jackets, jeans and the like. Upstairs were the farming implements – manure rakes, shovels, potato hooks, etc. Near the back stoop was the kerosene pump that always stank.



*On that definitive note, we will take a pause in Susi’s narrative, to be continued in our next regular issue.....*

Ed and Harry Casey in front of The Store

## Kent Historical Society

10 Maple Street, PO Box 651, Kent, CT 06757  
860-927-4587      kenthistorical@att.net  
www.kenthistoricalsociety.org

### Officers

Beth Dooley, Vice President   Dick Lindsey, Treasurer  
Nancy Hamilton, Secretary

### Trustees

Fr. Tom Berberich, Pam Crawford, Roger Gonzales,  
Charlotte Lindsey, Jeffrey Morgan, Jennie Rehnberg  
Bruce Whipple, Susi Williams

**Executive Director** ~ Marge Smith

**Assistant Director** ~ Lisby Ritchie

### Hours at the Swift House

Tuesdays 9 AM to Noon, Fridays 1 to 4 PM,  
Saturdays by appointment

This newsletter was designed by Lynne Hicks,  
and is compiled by Marge Smith

## Kent Quiz

**Buffie Barton** was well known as Kent's constable, taxi and livery driver and security guard at the new Kent Girls School. In addition to all this, he also had another very important position. What was it?

**Answer to the last quiz:** Cattle marks, or *ear marks*, were notches cut into the ears of livestock as a brand to identify a particular farmer's animals. Barnabus Hatch's cattle marks were registered as follows in the Kent Town Hall, on May 6, 1741: *Barnabus Hatch his mark is a slit at the side of the right ear and a half penny at under side of left ear.*

## Kent Historical Society

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\_\_\_ Sponsor \$250   \_\_\_ Proprietor \$500   \_\_\_ Leadership \$1000 and up   Other \$ \_\_\_

*Here's a little extra for the Seven Hearths roof* \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Make Checks payable to: **The Kent Historical Society**, PO Box 651, Kent, CT 06757

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOCIETY ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Volunteer interest (please circle): Archives   Host/Hostess   Programs   Other \_\_\_\_\_