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PO Box 125, Lincoln RI, 02865

E-mail: bvhs58@gmail.com

Affiliate Associations

Preservation Society of Pawtucket ♦ Great Road Historical District

Explore Blackstone Valley history through the “ephemera” of Dan Bethel’s Town of Smithfield collection Sunday, April 22nd at Blackstone Valley Historical Society North Gate Toll House

By Francine Jackson

And, Dan Bethel knows how to collect. He has taken it upon himself to collect memorabilia from much of the Blackstone Valley. On Sunday, April, 22nd, at 2:00 P.M., you will be able to see his “ephemera” of the Town of Smithfield. His collection includes:

A diary belonging to a teen-aged girl who often traveled to Woonsocket and Uxbridge – long distances for a single girl in the 19th century;

Rare photos of such landmarks as the Sayles Bleachery, the Greenville Finishing Company, O.A. Tobey’s store, and the Union Chapel;

A 1730 document signed by one of Smithfield’s founding fathers, creating the town;

Maps of old time Smithfield, which included the Town of Lincoln, not established as a separate town until 1871.

Dan Bethel loves collecting. He has been finding and collating memorabilia of the Blackstone Valley for decades. In addition to Smithfield, he has been able to obtain substantial ephemera of Lincoln, and Cumberland, which he has placed on display at North Gate. He also has begun to collect materials from Central Falls.

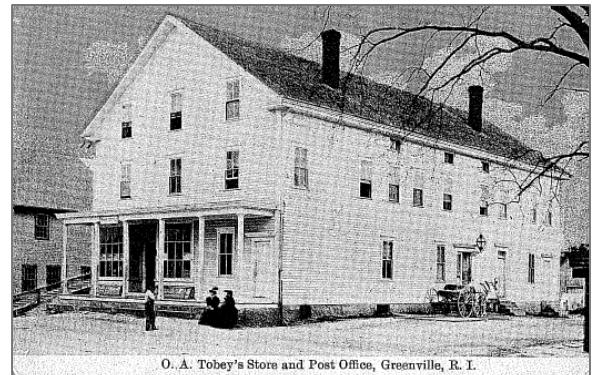
Come to North Gate, 1873 Louisquiset Pike, Sunday, April 22nd, at 2:00 P.M., to walk down Smithfield’s memory lane.

By Glenn Laxton

Until I sat with collector Dan Bethel I did not know what ephemera meant. Now I know all about it and why it is a fascinating subject to talk about.

“Ephemera is post cards, documents, a will, a marriage certificate. If you had a piece of paper that was collectible, that’s ephemera,” explains Bethel who has been presenting and answering questions about his collections for several years to audiences who become fascinated by the “I didn’t know that” syndrome.

In simple terms, that even I can grasp, ephemera is collectible paper. Collectible paper that has to be seen to be believed. “I love to talk about how I became a collector. I will show a will from one of the Steere family and an early marriage certificate.



The reason I picked Smithfield is because its Lincoln - Smithfield is Lincoln and Lincoln is Smithfield.” Lincoln was established as a separate town when Smithfield was divided up into smaller municipalities in 1871. “For example, if I wanted to show stuff from Hearthside now in Lincoln I could include it in Smithfield because Hearthside was from 1804 before there was a Lincoln,” he explains.

Bethel has a huge collection of postcards and naturally many are from the Smithfield area. “The three main areas are Greenville, Slatersville and Esmond.” Of particular interest at his presentations are maps of old Smithfield. The girl who wrote a diary lived in the Union Village area. She went often to Woonsocket and Uxbridge not an easy ride for anyone is those days especially a teenage girl.

Bethel’s collections which are extensive and a historian’s dream include

(Bethel Cont’d on Page 2)

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It is that time again. The annual meeting and election will take place on May 20, 2012 in the downstairs hall of North Gate.

All positions are open, but nominations for the positions of president, treasurer are particularly needed.

The president is a facilitator, runs the meetings, keeping items on the agenda flowing smoothly, reminding people of when the tasks that they have to do are to be completed.

The treasurer should be a meticulous record keeper; keeping the finances in order, paying the bills, keeping spending in line, filing necessary paperwork; knowledge of financial software, i.e., Quicken, Money Books, etc. would be a plus.

If you would be willing to serve the Society, please contact Al Klyberg at: aklyberg@msn.com or 401-333-4484 as soon as possible.

There will also be committee slots open once the election takes place; these could be for one time events or ongoing service.

Thank you in advance for helping out BVHS.

Save This Date

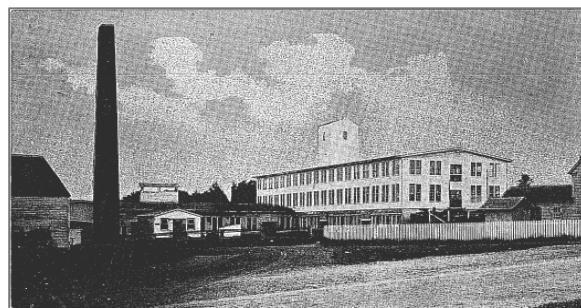
Sunday Afternoon, May 20 ~ 1:30 PM
Annual Meeting and Elections
Francine Jackson, astronomer on
A Rare Historic Event: Last Time this
Century to View the Transit of Venus in the
Blackstone Valley

(Bethel Con't from page 1)

Smithfield, Lincoln, Cumberland and some of Central Falls which was also once part of Smithfield. There will be books from the 1880's and a document signed by one of the founding fathers in 1730 when Smithfield became a town.

The first town meeting was held in the house of Valentine Whittman although town meetings

were subsequently conducted at other locations throughout the town to cut down on travel time.



show you will travel with his collectible time capsule that has given him a lifetime of pleasure while providing a fascinating lesson in our local history.

Photos from the collections of Dan Bethel

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

On February 12, 1908, at a meeting at Hearthside, the Stephen Smith family of Franklin, MA, sold 71 acres for \$3,000.00 to begin the Lincoln Woods State Reservation. Since that time, the Park has expanded to 627 acres, which includes the pond, changing rooms, playing fields, an eating area, bridle and hiking trails, and maintenance and administrative buildings.

The name Quinsnickit is mentioned in the history of Lincoln Woods. Further searches indicate that this is a hill within the Park; also, it seems the pond was also originally referred to as Quinsnickit Pond. There doesn't appear to be any information as to where this name originated, except that it is assumed American Indian. The word is even the name of an H. P. Lovecraft poem. **Do you have any knowledge of Quinsnickit?** It would be great to learn the history behind the name. If anyone knows about this, please let us know.

All Programs & Events take place at North Gate Toll House 1873 Old Louisquisset Pike (Rte 246) Lincoln, RI