

# PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 98, Portland, CT 06480

PRESIDENT: Eleanor Crowther

VICE-PRESIDENT: Christine Sullivan

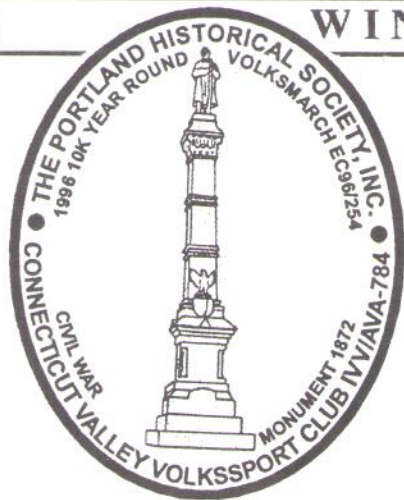
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FINANCE DIRECTORS: Daniel Crowther, James Elder, Donald Goodrich

## WINTER, 1996 NEWSLETTER



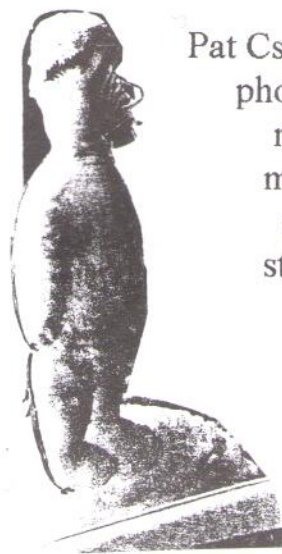
### 1996 Portland Volksmarch by Bob McDougall

The 1996 Portland Year-Round Volksmarch, co-sponsored with the Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club (CVVC), has been underway for nearly a month now, but has attracted few walkers due to the weather. For 1995 we attracted 135 walkers to town. There is a self registration point at the DUNKIN' DONUTS on Main Street where Trail Maps are available. The 10 kilometer (6.2 mile) trail includes Main Street, East Main Street, High Street and Indian Hill Avenue. The optional award for this year's event is a 2 1/2 inch pewter finish oval medallion featuring the historic brownstone Civil War Monument, as shown above. The monument was dedicated in 1872, and is currently the focus of conservation efforts to protect and preserve the porous stone from the elements. Call a friend and go for a walk! For more information about the Portland walk or other walks in the area, you may call me at 342-3062.

### CALLANDER HOUSE ENDOWMENT - *Eleanor Crowther*

*The Endowment Committee is pleased to report the continuing growth of the fund, both from the return on investment and from the thoughtful memorial gifts honoring former townspeople - most recently, from many friends of Thomas Barrows, a Charter Member and longtime supporter of the Society, and from a nephew of Mary Condren, who will be remembered as a popular teacher in Portland Schools some years ago.*

### BLIZZARD OF '96



*Some people had a little snowman peering in their window.*

Pat Csere would like some blizzard photos for our files. We have many flood pictures, but our members have been remiss in not recording unique Winter storms for the Society's files.

If you have photographed your house, family or street during or after the storm, send an extra copy to Pat at 21 Highland Avenue.

Just include a note identifying the subject and date.

**CENTRAL SCHOOL MEMORABILIA**  
**- E. Crowther**

At the Society's January 23 meeting, First Selectman Ed Kalinowski presented a handsomely refurbished hand bell from Central School to the Society. The following letter from Ed explains its provenance:

*Thomas Conroy was employed by the Board of Education for the Town of Portland from 1943 to 1962. The hand bell, used before the electrification of the Central School, which was the High School for many years, was used to call school into session. When a new high school was built on Main Street (now the Portland Middle School) the bell was kept in Principal Elson S. Herrick's office. On or about 1960/61 when the town built a new high school, Mr. Herrick was moving his office and asked Mr. Conroy to empty the trash. The bell was in the trash and he (Conroy) asked Mr. Herrick if he could have it. The bell was kept on the fireplace mantel at Mr. Conroy's residence, 167 Thompson Hill Road. In 1993, while campaigning and during a conversation, the bell was brought up. I asked if he was willing to donate the bell to the Historical Society. Mr. Conroy instead gave the bell to me to keep or to present to the Historical Society.*

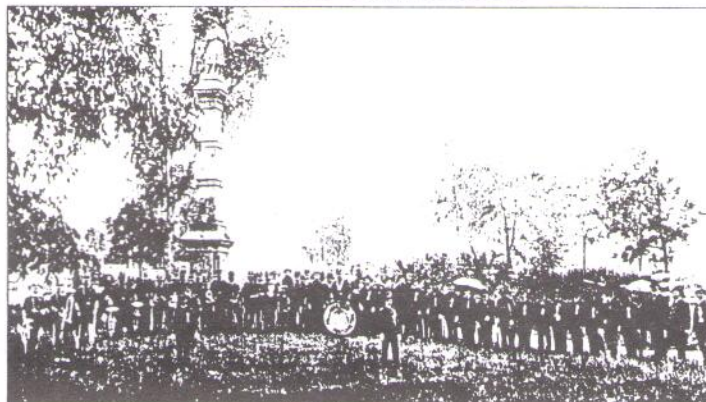
*As a footnote, Mr. Conroy's wife, Virginia Conroy, and her sisters, attended local schools. Mrs. Conroy vividly remembers the use of the hand bell at Central School prior to electric bells being installed.*

The bell, which has been identified as a Bevin Brothers of East Hampton product, will be displayed in Central School when the renovation is complete. If you know of other Central School artifacts that would be appropriate to display, please let us know.

**HERITAGE CALENDAR - Notes**

The November picture of Growers Grocery Store and Tavern was copied from a photo owned by Fran DiNatale. The man in the dark suit on the right is her late father, Chester Wichrowski. We are pleased to be allowed to copy family photos. If you have picture suggestions for the next calendar call Eleanor Crowther, 342-2907, or Pat Csere, 342-2168.

**Portland Historical Society, Inc.**  
**Portland, Connecticut**



G.A.R. Veterans in front of Portland Civil War Monument with the Freestone Band, 1885

**- 1996 Calendar -**  
 Bits & Pieces of our Past...

*The Calendar Committee, John and Jack Dillon, Chairmen; Bob McDougall, Computer Specialist; Walter Olsen, Photographer; Eleanor Crowther, Pat Csere, Christine Sullivan and Pat Crowther did a superb job bringing moments of Portland*

*history to life in the "1996 Calendar - Bits & Pieces of our Past". Our thanks to them for creating a work useful, informative and entertaining. There are some copies remaining, available at the Library and the Town Hall; or, mail your order to the Society at P.O. Box 98, Portland, CT.*

**COLLECTOR GIFT PLATES**

**- Eleanor Crowther, 342-2907**

*A very few of the 9-inch, blue-gray stoneware plates incised "Portland-1841" are still available.*

*However, the matching 8-inch deep-dish pie plates are in good supply for Washington birthday cherry pies. Both plates can be used in the microwave.*

**Special Society prices: Plate \$20, Pie plate \$25.**

## MEMBERSHIP - Sharon Bergman, 342-4065

Check for your name on this 1996 HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP LIST. *It's not too late to join!*

*Send your check to PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O.Box 98.*

*Individual \$10; Family \$20; Individual Lifetime \$250.*

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## COMING ATTRACTIONS - *Regina Woltmann, 342-3092*

FEBRUARY 27 - *Final arrangements for this program are incomplete at this time. Watch for newspaper announcement.*

MARCH 26 - **THE COLONIAL TAVERN: An Architectural and Cultural Perspective** - *Steve Bielitz of Glastonbury, Building Restoration Specialist will give a slide show and discuss taverns he has restored. Meeting at Senior Center.*

APRIL 23 - **Malcolm Stearns, recognized expert on Antique Silver and founder of Hobart House of Haddam.** *Members are encouraged to bring silver items for appraisal.*

MAY 28 - **PANORAMA - MAIN STREET, PORTLAND** - **Robert McDougall** has created two forty-two feet long views of Main Street. *See your Main Street through the camera's eye.*

*The Society meets every fourth Tuesday, (except in holiday months), in the Mary Flood Room of the Portland Library at 7:30 PM, unless otherwise indicated. The Museum Room at the Library is open Saturday mornings from 10 to noon, and by appointment, 342-2168.*

NEWSLETTER - *Phyllis and Bill Frisbie*

PORTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**NEWSLETTER!**