

CHEQUAQUET LOG

The Newsletter of the **CENTERVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM** www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org

RADIO PLAY “MURDER AT THE CENTERVILLE POST OFFICE” IS ANOTHER HIT

Jane Hattermer-Stringer, author, director and actor and her bevy of local thespians have scored another success at the museum. Held in the Ayling room on Saturday, September 17th, this was one ambitious project. For the first time, dinner, complete with appetizers, a choice between two main courses and dessert, plus wine, started off the evening for a room full of enthusiastic audience members. Note packets for the dinner guests, including information on the participants in what would be a radio play, featured the suspected characters’ backgrounds plus a local newspaper page gossip column. Miss Tweed, the famous detective, played by Hattermer-Stringer, was the presenter for the evening’s “WhoDunnit?” entertainment.



Also, as a 1940’s radio play, a ukulele player added musical spice to the program’s growing quirkiness for those in the audience who were supposed to be listening to their radios. Hosted by well-known real Cape Cod radio announcer, Dave Read, and advertisements thrown in for Vims Vitamins (an actual product in its day), the audience got right into it from the start. They even sang along with the Vims Vitamin ads jingle.

The story line evolved around the murder of visitor and world-famous band leader, Glen Gray, who was found dead in the Centerville Post Office lobby early one morning. Five suspects, band members Trombone Shorty, Bean Poopa and Carmen Zia were introduced along with town bakery proprietor and medium Margaret Hoag and Centerville Post Office mistress, Emilene Adams, who discovered the body. The radio play, broken into three parts for the Vims Vitamin ads, allowed time for the evening’s guests to discuss and make notes as to who they might consider the murderer. Miss Tweed, in her inimitable way, had the

suspects describe themselves and offer their alibis and reasons for not being the killer of a famous bandleader. Then, for clarification, Miss Tweed asked for questions from the audience. There were many good questions. The actors, totally unscripted, had to stay in character and had to further enhance their characters while possibly convincing the audience of their innocence. These answers were sometimes hilarious or absurd or helpful in further illuminating each actor’s role. Just before the killer was revealed by Miss Tweed and her detective skills and after each of the eight tables of guests had announced who in their



opinion was the killer, something surprising occurred. Of course, that surprise cannot and will not be revealed here. Fingers will have to be crossed and hopes will have to be raised to encourage yet another Miss Tweed led mystery on a future Centerville evening. Like they said in radio days, “Stay tuned.”

A round of applause and kudos to the Wenger Family our chefs for a delicious meal and to those who served the food and wine and helped make the evening so much more enjoyable. From the full participation of the audience as the crime solvers to the cast members whose parts convinced a lively audience or not, to Miss Tweed’s “Who Dunnit,” happy crowd, happy evening.



R E C E N T E V E N T

CENTERVILLE OLD HOME WEEK WENT OUT WITH A BANG

Well, it wasn't exactly a bang, but the vroom vroom blast as an antique car engine reverberated through the Recreation Center's parking lot at the end of the afternoon's show sure sounded like it.

Saturday, August 13, was the last day of the yearly event. The day dawned cloudy and breezy with a hint of rain. The early turnout of visitors during the morning, which began at eight, was a little sparse. Perhaps the crowds to come welcomed an extra hour of sleep at the hazy start of the day. However, Mother Nature beamed her smile and the sun appeared, leaving skies blue and pedestrians of all ages appearing, as if by magic. For the museum, this day was an important occasion. Members had put the antique car show together and those beauties were lined up in the Recreation Center's parking areas. On hand, too, was the museum sponsored lottery, raffle and 50-50 chance table with the winners' announcements set for the afternoon. Sales were brisk throughout the day.

On the front lawn of the museum were craft tables sporting handmade items, vintage treasures, books and locally handmade pottery. Inside, painters, tile makers and crafters showed off their many beautiful and artfully clever skills. Tours were also available at the museum. Docents guided paid visitors around the rooms filled with unique and varied displays. The numbers of people both to view the museum's treasures and to visit the crafts area were high. It was at times, awfully close to a full house. The museum's gift shop also had a good number of sales.



Those who took a tour were amazed at what our museum presented. First was the size of the museum, which is always a great surprise. Second was the number and variety of historically themed exhibits throughout the building. Third was the reaction of visitors to a restored gown rescued from a musty trunk or a wartime ration book with an individual name on it or the notion that during the 1920's Prohibition a real speakeasy existed on Centerville's Main Street.



At noontime, at the rec center, a grill offering hamburgers and hot dogs was fired up by museum members as the crowd, at its fullest, strolled the street's different venues.

The presentation of a variety of antique autos and trucks made the car show special. It was a delight to see a spiffy Thunderbird convertible next to a British Triumph parked near a vintage truck. One museum member and his son each had a vehicle on show. The father's entry was a 1967 Jeep Commander. Restoration, begun in 2009, was recently completed. It's green with a hint of gold paint gleamed. His son's car, a 1970 Chevy Blazer, had been found on Craigslist. After three years of restorative work, its condition was immaculate. The 1976 Triumph TR6, in that rich racing green color, brought back memories of British sports cars' popularity throughout the middle years of the last century. Centerville's Old Home Week, 2022, was a success. It also proved that the planning and prepping and hard work was a worthwhile endeavor for both Centerville and its awesome museum.



COMING EVENT

Holiday Silent Auction December 6 - 11

ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION 2022



It seems too soon, but it is time again for the Annual Holiday Silent Auction. The Ayling Gallery will be transformed into a room full of holiday fare offering eighty to over one hundred items to bid on. A variety of decorative arts, artworks, and uniquely crafted items by local artisans and enthusiasts, including seasonal gifts, table-decorated Christmas trees, collectibles, antiques, donated items, gift certificates plus gift baskets from dozens of regional businesses. It's time to think about holiday gift giving. So come in and place a bid.

Auction times:

Tuesday through Saturday

December 6 to 10, between 12 - 4PM

Sunday, December 11, 12 Noon - Christmas Centerville Stroll.

This yearly fundraiser requires a lot of helpers.

Are you interested in helping, donating an item, or picking up a solicited item?

Please let us know by contacting the museum and we'll pass it onto our event coordinators.



INTERESTING HISTORY

THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL CELEBRATES ITS ONE HUNDREDDTH BIRTHDAY

In May of 1922, Washington, D.C.'s Lincoln Memorial was dedicated at the west end of the National Mall. In that year, sixty lynchings took place across the nation. And on that historic day and as massive crowds stood in hushed respect to hear and see the ceremony in honor of The Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, blacks and whites were deliberately segregated. Several speakers had had their speeches stripped of any wording that would "inflamm the public" on orders of William Howard Taft, former president of the United States and current chairman of the Lincoln Memorial Commission.

It had taken decades for this moment to happen. Abraham Lincoln, born into a poor family, turned his love of books and language into the study of law and politics. He eventually rose to the presidency in 1860 as the north and the south showed imminent signs of splitting in two.

He spoke a plain language for plain folks. His Emancipation Proclamation was a brave decision. Elected to a second term, Lincoln was assassinated in April, 1865, just as the Civil War was ending.

In 1867, Congress voted to form a commission to build a monument in honor of the sixteenth president. A New York architect, Henry Bacon, was the selected designer. He chose a marble neoclassical style edifice inspired by the Parthenon in Athens, Greece. To symbolize the nation's contribution to this memorial, along with emphasis on the entire Union, all states were invited to enlist their various colored marble, artists, carvings, sculptures, stone masons, writers and laborers to the endeavor. The overall theme was "Emancipation and Unity."

Exquisitely carved, Abraham Lincoln is center stage, his nineteen-foot tall seated figure so imposing and true, that the viewer cannot help but stand in awe before it. There is a reason for this. Lincoln's face and form were meticulously rendered due to its sculptor's insistence on studying every aspect of Lincoln for accuracy and detail, even to Lincoln's hands, one closed in a fist, the other open and relaxed, emblematic of both turmoil and peace. The sculptor was the famed Daniel Chester French of Massachusetts, who created a masterpiece. Lincoln's serious face reflects somberness, intelligence and weariness as the leader and guide during a war that divided the nation. Reeds wrapped around his chair are a reminder to keep the country together.

All those who contributed to this project were talented and dedicated, as they chose sayings, mottoes and two of Lincoln's speeches, his Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural speech, to adorn the walls. One group, the Piccirilli brothers, went to extraordinary lengths to make sure that the blocks of marble were hewn so perfectly that the seams were barely noticeable. Today the Lincoln Memorial is a favorite to visit for the traveler, the statesman, the rich and the poor. Despite its segregated audience in 1922, it stands for democracy, equality and the betterment of all.

As to those portions of speeches that were deleted in 1922?

The originals of those speeches reside in the Library of Congress for all to see. They give proof that those speakers also knew what Abraham Lincoln and this sacred memorial represented and stood for.



T H O U G H T S F R O M O U R W R I T E R

FOR OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HAS SERVED THIS NATION

Probably no one two hundred years ago thought that America's library would become the largest in the world. Many believe Thomas Jefferson was the founder of this institution. He was the second founder. In 1800, Congress voted to establish a national library. Its efforts were puny, with a single building, 740 volumes and a \$5,000 budget for its upkeep. British soldiers in 1814, during The War of 1812, destroyed the building and its contents. By that time, Thomas Jefferson was broke and needed to pay off massive debts. Congress paid him \$24,000 for his 6,500 volumes in 1815, so Jefferson is the founder of the country's restored library.

The new library was not sufficient either, succumbing to chimney fires and cramped conditions until the end of the Civil War. The librarian of the institution at the time, Ainsworth Rand Spofford, decided to improve and make known that this was a place for everyone. He enlarged the book collection and opened a free public reading room. By 1897, at the end of Spofford's tenure, a new Library of Congress building, as it was then named, was in place. That formal name was changed in 1980 to the Thomas Jefferson Building, one of three buildings that comprise the Library of Congress currently.

The original expansive building was and still is an artistic gem. The main reading room, which is round, has marble columns and a domed ceiling that highlight plaster figures and murals representing history, art, poetry and law, the Age of Enlightenment ideals. Arched windows give natural light throughout the room. The floor features curved and lighted wooden reading areas encircling the central information desk. Many of the famous visited or spoke in this stunningly designed edifice, including Mark Twain, when in 1906 he testified there in favor of a copyright reform bill. It was the first time he was seen in his new look, a white suit.

By 1901, the Library of Congress became the first U.S. library to hold more than a million volumes. By 1950, the number was over three million. That number has greatly expanded since. Presently, there are more than 25 million books and close to 200 million items in more than 470 languages, including photos, maps, periodicals, manuscripts, speeches, sheet music and telephone directories. Pulitzer Prize winner and playwright Neil Simon's letters and manuscripts are here. In 1904, the library was given a wax cylinder of a speech by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany. Now audio recordings, including musical ones, number more than two and a half million. It is all so astounding.



Since 1990, digitalization has been a time saver. Books are scanned by hand. Once 600 scans are completed, and where once one book was digitized in a half hour, all 600 can now be digitized within thirty seconds.

"Educate and inform the mass of people," said Thomas Jefferson. Those words are inscribed in the Library of Congress's John Adams Building. From an idea of a library to serve the nation, this multi-purposed institution has dedicated itself to live up to the principles for which it was founded.

From the deck of newsletter writer Lois Lane



A r e y o u a n A m a z o n C u s t o m e r ?

If you shop Amazon are an Amazon or Amazon Prime customer here is a wonderful way to support this museum at no cost to you!

Amazon has a program to support nonprofits called AmazonSmile. With every purchase made through Amazon they will give .05% to this museum **at no cost to you**. It is quite simple. When you have made your selection and are ready to place your order click the AmazonSmile button. This takes you to a screen in which you can select the nonprofit of your choice (**Centerville Historical Museum**) and we receive .05% of your total purchase from Amazon. Proceed to check out and you're done.

AmazonSmile is a way customers can support their favorite charitable organization every time they shop with Amazon, at no additional cost.

When you shop using AmazonSmile, you'll find the same Amazon storefront you know, with the added bonus that AmazonSmile will donate a portion of the eligible purchase price to the charity of your choice, at no additional cost to you.

Below are the steps to get started on your desktop and mobile devices.

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1. Visit smile.amazon.com
2. Sign in with the same account you use for Amazon.com
3. Select your charity
4. Start shopping! Remember to checkout at smile.amazon.com to generate donations for your chosen charity.

Tip: Add a bookmark to make it easier to shop at smile.amazon.com.

S U P P O R T E R S

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and ask you, our members, to support these businesses that support us.**

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website: www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org
email: chsm@centervillehistoricalmuseum.org
address: 513 Main Street, Centerville, MA 02632
Phone: (508) 775- 0331