



October 4th Chapel Celebration and Parade

Saturday October 4th is a BIG day in Griswoldville. On this day Griswoldville will celebrate the 125th anniversary of it's Chapel, and the Griswold Family will hold a reunion. The events of the day will include:

- 11:30AM - A parade from the lawn at the corner of Griswold Road and Prospect Street to the Chapel, with music provided by the Col. John Chester Fife and Drum Corps.
- 12:00 Noon - A cornerstone laying at the Chapel.
- Ice cream treats after the Chapel ceremony
- A public viewing in the Chapel of old photographs and memorabilia from Griswoldville

All are welcome to the events above. Please contact Peter Gardow (257-1925) or Damon Herring (563-6494) for details

A history of the Chapel is on Page 2.

DO YOU HAVE long-ago photographs of the Griswoldville Chapel? The 125th Anniversary Committee would like the loan of Chapel photographs - children, adults, events - for an exhibit. Please identify persons, scene, occasion, and date for each photograph if you can. Please contact Celia Goodale - 721-7052.

Autumn 1997 1997 to date:

Welcome To Griswoldville Part III:

A third new beautiful sign was erected by the Association at the corner of Thornbush and Highland Streets. The previous metal sign at the intersection has been relocated to the South-East gateway of Griswoldville on Hang Dog Lane at Maple Street.

The Second Annual Memorial Day picnic at Mill Woods Park was a lot of fun. Thanks to all that came and shared this beautiful day with their neighbors.

1997 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the GPA was held on April 15th. Guest speaker was Wethersfield's Town Planner Stuart Popper. He spoke of the "Neighborhood Discovery Program" that will be used as part of the town's updated Plan of Conservation and Development. Griswoldville is part of the South-West Wethersfield Neighborhood.

The Association also held elections for executive board members. The following individuals will be serving terms this year:

Executive Board Members 1997

Honorary Mayor: Dick Lasher - 529-6158

Chairman: Peter Gardow - 257-1925

Vice Chair: Damon Herring - 563-6494

Historian: Celia Goodale - 721-7052

Asst. Historian: Myron Baldwin - 529-0467

Secretary: Martha Mayer - 257-1705

Treasurer: Janet Zimmerman - 563-7853

Griswoldville Preservation Association - Autumn 1997

History of The Griswoldville Chapel 1872-1997

The Griswoldville Chapel was begun in 1860. Many residents of the area did not attend any Sunday services due to the distance to churches in the Center of Wethersfield. The consensus among the elders was that Griswoldville needed a Sunday School.

The first meeting of the Sunday School was held in the house of Thomas Griswold. It was organized as the Griswoldville Union Sunday School, because several Protestant denominations were represented.

During the first year meetings were held, with the average attendance of forty-one. Meetings were held at the school, which was located on the north end of Thomas Griswold's property. It was utilized as a school until the Griswoldville School was built in 1921. In 1872, average attendance was fifty-four, outgrowing the school.

At this time, there was a need for a place to meet, so the decision to build the Chapel was made. It was a community effort, with residents making many sacrifices to raise money. All the labor was done by men. The foundation stones were hauled from Cromwell by cattle. The women in the neighborhood sold butter and eggs, often not using them for their own families, so that there was more to sell. Another example of sacrifice was by Mrs. Franklin Griswold, who went without a wanted velvet cape to contribute money.

The building was dedicated on November 30, 1872, and included a bell donated by Miss Anne Griswold, the library case, made by Henry White and a lovely clock, given by Horace Wolcott.

The Mission Circle, consisting of a group of women from the community met for Christian fellowship, to socialize and to promote the best interests of the Chapel. They bought the chairs and the carpet. There were entertainment evenings as fund raisers. When the Chapel needs had been met, the group broadened its work. They sent contributions and barrels of clothing to various missionaries.

The Chapel was used actively until the 1890's. It is currently used by the 4H Club and Boy Scout Troop #50. The Griswoldville Ladies Aid (initially the Mission Circle), is still active and meets monthly. They currently sponsor different Christian activities, and also Chapel suppers. Suppers are held twice a year, in April and November, and are open to the public. There have been weddings, receptions and church services held in the Chapel since its decrease in service.

The Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department was chartered in 1803, and is the oldest volunteer fire department in the country still in continuous existence. In 1925, Company Two began its service to the town and, more specifically, Griswoldville. It was organized at a community meeting on March 31, 1925. Meetings were held monthly at the Griswoldville Chapel until the school was renovated to house Company Two. It was not until July 3, 1925 that the first meeting was held in the new fire house.