

# NOTES and NEWS

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A Museum and Library  
of Connecticut History

Connecticut  
Historical  
Society

Spring / Summer 1990

1 Elizabeth Street at Asylum Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06105  
203 • 236•5621

Vol. 14 No. 1 ISBN 0734-8916

*EXHIBITION AND ARRAY OF ACTIVITIES CELEBRATE SPRING*

## Victorian Gardens Exhibition Explores Emergence of American Passion For Horticulture

**D**uring the second half of the nineteenth century Americans developed a passion for things green and flowering that had an impact on nearly every aspect of the nation's life, from recreational activities to the language of love to cemetery design. The emergence of that fascination for fauna is chronicled in the exhibition "Victorian Gardens: A Horticultural Extravaganza," on display from April 7 through June 24.

In conjunction with the "Victorian

Gardens" exhibition The Connecticut Historical Society will celebrate the arrival of spring with an assortment of activities that will provide unusual opportunities to experience

the essence of the Victorian fondness for nature's beauty. A lecture, bus trips, walking tours, a plant sale, and social events with a Victorian flavor have all been planned and are listed in flyers that have been sent to members and in the calendar in this issue of *Notes and News*.

The "Victorian Gardens" exhibition was  
(Continued on page 6)



Office of Horticulture, Smithsonian Institution

*CROQUET, played on carefully landscaped lawns such as this one illustrated in 1879 in Vick's Illustrated Monthly Magazine, became a popular recreation among Victorians eager to spend new-found leisure time amidst nature's beauty.*

# Docent Applies Teaching Experience To Guiding "Free Men" School Tours



CHS DOCENT BARBARA ALLEYNE studies the portrait of Cinque, the leader of the revolt aboard the slave ship Amistad, that she highlights when guiding school tours through the "Free Men" exhibition.

"Commitment, perseverance, pride, and courage" are the values Connecticut Historical Society docent Barbara Alleyne strives to impress upon the school children she takes on tours through the exhibition "Free Men: The Amistad Revolt and the American Anti-Slavery Movement."

Mrs. Alleyne is one of a dozen docents recruited and specially trained by the CHS Education Department to conduct tours of the "Free Men" exhibition, which opened on February 4 and will be on display through June 17. Mrs. Alleyne became involved in the special training program, made possible by funding from Loctite Corporation and the Connecticut Humanities Council, through Barbara Hudson, project coordinator for the "Free Men" exhibition, and Esther Harris, who took part in a summer teacher's institute at CHS on the *Amistad* incident.

Mrs. Alleyne is a museum educator's ideal of a docent. A history major in college, she taught second grade for 35 years at the Martin Luther King School in Hartford before retiring, and was familiar with the story that the "Free Men" exhibition recounts: the saga of 53 Africans who in 1839 seized control of the ship carrying them to slavery in Cuba, thereby touching off an important human rights case, most events of which occurred in Connecticut, that had a major impact on American history.

Mrs. Alleyne has seen children react with surprise, wonder, appreciation, and pride as she guides them through the exhibition, which will be seen by more than 10,000 students during its run at CHS. They are appalled by the section that depicts the barbarous conditions Africans endured on the voyage from Africa to slavery in North America that is known in history as the Middle Passage. The idea of being crammed together in the hold of a slave ship for weeks has such an impact on them because, Mrs. Alleyne thinks, in modern society "we're so used to not invading each other's space."

Mrs. Alleyne puts particular emphasis on the introductory section of the "Free Men" exhibition that explores the Mende culture in West Africa from which most of the *Amistad* Africans came. She believes it is important for the children to understand where the Mende lived, and that they were skilled artisans. Later in her tours she encourages the students to study closely the magnificent portrait of Cinque, the leader of the *Amistad* Africans, to read the courage and determination in his face.

In a way, Mrs. Alleyne's service as a docent at CHS brings the legacy of the *Amistad* full circle. She received her history degree from Fisk University, one of the black institutions of higher education founded after the Civil War

by the American Missionary Association, which grew out of the *Amistad* Committee formed to aid the *Amistad* Africans. Now, 150 years after the revolt, she is helping to teach a new generation of Connecticut children about that landmark event and its enduring influence on American history that included the establishment of her own alma mater. □

## Grant Will Fund Buses to "Free Men"

A grant of \$10,500 from the Ensworth Charitable Foundation to The Connecticut Historical Society will make it possible for additional thousands of students from the Hartford school system to visit the exhibition "Free Men: The *Amistad* Revolt and the American Anti-Slavery Movement" during the remainder of its run at CHS.

The grant will underwrite the cost of transporting the students to and from CHS headquarters. It will make it possible for 140 bus loads of children to come to the "Free Men" exhibition, where they will be taken on guided tours by specially trained docents.

It is anticipated that more than 8,000 students will be able to tour "Free Men" thanks to the Ensworth funding. Total visitation of the "Free Men" exhibition by school students is expected to exceed 10,000 by the time it closes on June 17. □

## "Free Men" Items Available for Sale

The Connecticut Historical Society has for sale a variety of items relating to the "Free Men" exhibition, including:

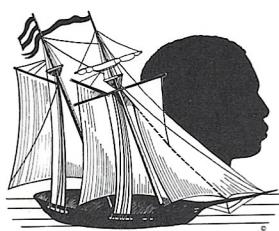
- Full-color poster of Nathaniel Jocelyn's 1840 portrait of Cinque. 28" x 22" \$10.00; CHS member's price \$8.00. Mail orders should include \$2.50 each for postage and handling. Connecticut residents should also include 8% state sales tax (80 cents for \$10.00, 64 cents for \$8.00).
- T-shirt featuring "Free Men" logo in black on deep turquoise background. \$10.00; CHS member's price \$8.00. Please specify size: S, M, L, XL. Mail orders should include \$2.00 each for postage and handling.
- *Free Men: The Amistad Revolt and the American Anti-Slavery Movement*, companion booklet to the exhibition. 8 1/2 x 11", 20 pages, black-and-white illustrations. \$1.00 (includes Connecticut state sales tax). No CHS member discount. Mail orders should include 75 cents postage and handling. □

# “Free Men” Events Draw Record Numbers

In the two months it has been on display, “Free Men: The Amistad Revolt and the American Anti-Slavery Movement” has been the most successful exhibition in The Connecticut Historical Society’s history. A preview reception on the night of February 2, attended by more than 350 people including Connecticut First Lady Mrs. William A. O’Neill and Hartford Mayor Carrie Saxon Perry, was a splendid debut for the exhibition, which is expected to be toured by more than 10,000 school children during its run at The Connecticut Historical Society. Several related programs have proven extremely popular, including the family program “Celebration of African-American Heritage and Culture.” The “Free Men” exhibition was the focus of a segment on the issue of teaching African-American history in schools that was broadcast nationally in February on World Monitor Television. The exhibition will be on display at The Connecticut Historical Society through June 17, 1990. □



Leslie Jacobs



CHS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Dr. Christopher Bickford greets Hartford Mayor Carrie Saxon Perry (center) and CHS Trustee Dr. Edythe Gaines at the “Free Men” preview reception.

DR. DONALD SPIVEY (right), one of the scholars in the field of African-American history who served as advisors to the “Free Men” exhibition, and his wife, Diane, chat with CHS Executive Director Dr. Christopher Bickford at the “Free Men” preview reception.



Leslie Jacobs



WEST AFRICAN MUSIC was provided for the “Free Men” preview reception by Wes Brown and Kalpana Devi.



DELIGHTED WITH THE PREVIEW RECEPTION for the “Free Men” exhibition were (left to right) CHS Executive Director Dr. Christopher Bickford; CHS Trustee Dr. Edythe Gaines; CHS President Robert Ewing; CHS Trustee and Connecticut First Lady Mrs. William A. O’Neill; Hartford Mayor Carrie Saxon Perry; Esther Bush, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Greater Hartford; and New Haven Colony Historical Society Executive Director Robert Egleston.



MASTER PERCUSSIONISTS Ra Atam (left) and Mor Thiam performed West African drumming for the “Celebration of African-American Heritage and Culture” February 18 family program.



CHS EDUCATION ASSOCIATE KATE SAWYER conducts a tour of the “Free Men” exhibition for one of the more than 200 school groups that had viewed the exhibition by the end of March.



## Calendar of Events April - June, 1990

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 7

##### “Victorian Gardens” Event

- 11:30 a.m. — Public opening of the exhibition “Victorian Gardens: A Horticultural Extravaganza.” Admission is free to the public.  
-5:00 p.m. — Spring plant sale. Admission is free to the public.  
11:30 a.m. — Victorian afternoon tea. Admission is \$3 for CHS members and \$6 for non-members. Reservations, including payment, must be received by CHS by Monday, April 2.

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 8

##### Family Program

- 1-4:00 p.m. — “Sixth Annual International Spring Festival.”

#### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

##### Monthly Meeting

- 8:00 p.m. — “Everything for the Garden: An Overview of Nineteenth-Century Gardening and Garden Style,” slide lecture by Patricia Tice, curator of furnishings, the Strong Museum, Rochester, N.Y.

#### MONDAY, APRIL 30

##### “Free Men” Event

- 7:30 p.m. — “The *Amistad* Africans in Farmington,” slide lecture by Connecticut Historical Society Executive Director Christopher Bickford, and “The *Amistad* Africans and the African Missions,” discussion by Vernon Phelps, at the Farmington Library, 6 Monteith Dr., Farmington. Co-sponsored by The Connecticut Historical Society and the Farmington Historical Society. Admission is free.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 1

##### Monthly Meeting

- 8:00 p.m. — “What Are They Doing to Connecticut’s Most Historic Building?” slide lecture by Wilson Faude, executive director of the Old State House.

**FAMILY PROGRAMS:** Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1 for children under 12, and free to CHS members. Reservations must be made prior to the day of the specific program by calling 236-5621.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 4 - SUNDAY, MAY 6

##### “Victorian Gardens” Event

Deluxe motorcoach trip to the Brandywine Valley of Pennsylvania and Delaware. Fee is \$299 per person twin or triple occupancy for CHS members and \$350 for non-members; \$359 per person single occupancy for CHS members and \$410 for non-members. Reservations and payment in full must be received by Wednesday, April 4, 1990. Reservation forms and more information may be obtained by calling 236-5621.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 6

##### “Free Men” Event

- 1:30 p.m. — “*Amistad* Walking Tour of Farmington” Co-sponsored by The Connecticut Historical Society and the Farmington Historical Society. Admission is free. Participants should meet at the Porter Memorial at the corner of Main and School streets in Farmington. (Rain date May 13)

#### SATURDAY, MAY 19

##### “Victorian Gardens” Event

- 1:00 p.m. — “Death of the Rich and Famous: A Walking Tour of Hartford’s Cedar Hill Cemetery,” conducted by Peter Grant. Admission is \$5 for CHS members, \$7.50 for non-members. Reservations must be made by Friday, May 18, by calling 236-5621. Rain date May 20.

#### SUNDAY, JUNE 3

- 3:00 p.m. — “If I Could Tell You,” nostalgic re-creation of 1930s radio show of Edwardian music, co-sponsored by The Connecticut Historical Society and Miratti-Ramsey Productions and funded by the Evelyn W. Preston Memorial Trust Foundation. Admission is free.

#### SATURDAY, JUNE 9

##### “Victorian Gardens” Event

Day trip to Connecticut’s northeastern “Quiet Corner.” Fee, which includes lunch at the Harvest at Bald Hill Restaurant, will be \$44 for CHS members and \$50 for non-members. Reservations and payment in full are due by Friday, May 25. Reservation forms and more information may be obtained by calling 236-5621.

#### SATURDAY, JUNE 23

##### “Victorian Gardens” Event

- 10:30 a.m. — CHS members’ tour of Hartford’s Elizabeth Park gardens conducted by Donna Fuss, rose garden consultant for the Friends of Elizabeth Park.  
12:30 p.m. — Buffet luncheon in the Elizabeth Park Pond House. Cost of rose garden tour and luncheon is \$7.50 for CHS members and \$12.50 for their guests. Reservations and payment must be received by CHS by Friday, June 8.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** Admission is free to CHS members, \$2 for non-members.

# CHS Trustee Includes Graveyard Tours Among His Myriad Activities

When Connecticut Historical Society Trustee Peter Grant isn't busy chairing the Society's Building Committee or Membership Subcommittee, working as an executive at Industrial Risk Insurers, serving on the boards of Hartford's Bushnell Park Foundation or one of more than half a dozen other community organizations, he guides groups through Cedar Hill Cemetery, the expansive Victorian-era "necropolis" in the city's South End. Grant will offer one of his highly popular Cedar Hill Cemetery walking tours, entitled "Death of the Rich and Famous: A Tour of Hartford's Cedar Hill Cemetery," under the auspices of CHS, on Saturday, May 19, at 1 p.m. Rain date will be Sunday, May 20.

Admission to the tour, which will be limited to 50 participants, will be \$5 for CHS members and \$7.50 for non-members. Reservations must be made by Friday, May 18, by calling 236-5621.

Grant, 40, who has been a member of The Connecticut Historical Society Board of Trustees since 1982, does not find cemeteries morbid. On the contrary, he considers them one of the prime sources for learning about a city's past life. He first developed his walking tour of Cedar Hill Cemetery in 1974 for the Greater Hartford Architecture Conservancy, and was pleasantly surprised at the tremendous interest it generated. The directors of Cedar Hill Cemetery were so impressed with Grant's interest and knowledge that they asked him to become a member of its board.

Cedar Hill is a splendid embodiment of the Victorian attitude toward nature and death. Opened in 1864, it was designed by landscape architect Jacob Weidenmann, who also laid out Bushnell Park. Cedar Hill reflects the Victorians' idea that a cemetery should be an attractive, park-like expanse in which individuals and even families could enjoy nature's beauty, view the impressive monuments and their uplifting messages, and contemplate the meaning of life and death.

Cedar Hill Cemetery retains to a remarkable degree its appearance as originally planned. It is, according to Grant, "the best designed and maintained Victorian landscape in the United States." Long-range plans for Cedar Hill's remaining acreage utilize Victorian design concepts in developing additional sections.

For his Cedar Hill walking tour, Grant combines background on the establishment and founding of the cemetery with commentary on the monuments, a number of which are in themselves of architectural



The Hartford Courant/Photograph by Rolando Otero

*CHS Trustee Peter Grant poses before the red Scottish granite monument for J.P. Morgan, one of the highlights of his walking tour of Cedar Hill Cemetery.*

significance. He also talks about the colorful personalities who lie beneath those monuments, among them wealthy international financier J.P. Morgan and flamboyant firearms magnate Samuel Colt.

Peter Grant resides in Hartford, where his family has lived for a dozen generations. Those extraordinarily deep roots, however, were not the primary inspiration for his involvement with such organizations as The Connecticut Historical Society or the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford. Instead, Grant traces his involvement to the activist spirit that prevailed during his years at Trinity College in the late 1960s and early

1970s, when, he says, "there was a cause of the month." He received his bachelor's degree in biology from Trinity, and later earned a master's degree from that institution in American studies. □

*Notes and News* is published periodically for the members and friends of The Connecticut Historical Society.

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# Victorian Gardens

(Continued from page 1)

organized by the Office of Horticulture, Smithsonian Institution, and has come to The Connecticut Historical Society under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. It consists of 25 display panels featuring text and illustrations, which include reproductions of period etchings, photographs, and drawings, and color images called chromolithographs. It was curated by James Buckler and Kathryn Meehan of the Office of Horticulture at the Smithsonian. Display of the exhibition in Connecticut has been made possible in part by funding from H.A. DeNunzio Co., Inc. and Comstock, Ferre & Co.

Up until 1840, gardening for pleasure was a luxurious pastime in which only the very wealthy had the time to indulge. But with the advent of the Industrial Revolution many Americans for the first time found themselves with both affluence and leisure time. They spent much of their new-found disposable income and free time on activities deemed educational and refined, particularly gardening and the study of horticulture.

People of all ages were encouraged to garden for their health and well-being, in the belief that contact with fresh air and nature's endless beauty had a beneficial effect on the human body and spirit. Fleeing crowded and polluted urban centers that were a by-product of the Industrial Revolution, many Americans joined the movement to develop private suburban estates with elaborate gardens known as "carpet beds," consisting of large numbers of colorful plants arranged closely together to form intricate patterns. Gardens might include such recreational facilities as croquet grounds, arbors, and summer houses.

Carefully landscaped spaces for the public to enjoy were developed during this era as well, including Central Park in New York City, Fairmont Park in Philadelphia, and Elizabeth Park in Hartford. Even the function of cemeteries was revolutionized. The idea of a graveyard as simply a resting place for the dead gave way to a new concept of a cemetery as a park-like expanse of tasteful greenery to which living visitors, particularly city dwellers escaping urban congestion, would come to pass leisure time enjoying nature and contemplating human mortality — death being a subject of compelling interest to Victorians. The famed Mount Auburn

Cemetery in Boston and Hartford's Cedar Hill Cemetery, resting place of Samuel Colt and J.P. Morgan, were opened during this era.

Gardening also was brought into the home, where plants could be found occupying every available space, as in stylish window gardens. Indoor conservatories known as "winter gardens" were also developed.

Horticultural societies sprang up in communities across the nation. The enthusiastic participation by communities in

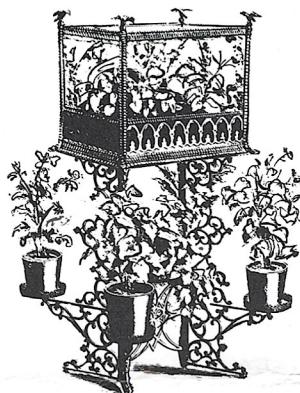
arrangements, sometimes leading to confusion.

A new genre of popular publications sprang up to supply the growing audience of horticulture enthusiasts with expert information and advice on how to satisfy their passion for gardening, landscaping, home decorating, and craftwork in harmony with the latest fashions. New businesses and even industries were established to supply the nation with the equipment, tools, plants, seeds, and accessories to fulfill their passion for planning, planting, and enjoying their gardens. Millions of colorful catalogs, often illustrated with idealistic Victorian images of rosy-cheeked cherubic children or elegant, wasp-waisted young women, offered plants, seeds, tools, and everything to fully equip the garden, from ornamental cast-iron furniture to statuary. A number of major seed companies still in business began operation during this period, including W. Atlee Burpee & Company and Wethersfield's Comstock, Ferre & Co. The florist industry expanded dramatically as well during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Horticulture was one of the highlights of an event that was one of the peak expressions of Victorian culture: the Centennial Exposition held in 1876 in Fairmont Park in Philadelphia to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The magnificent Horticulture Hall and its surrounding grounds featured displays of artful landscape design and up-to-date examples of products and plants by prominent manufacturers, seedsmen, nurserymen, and florists. More than eight million people visited the Centennial Exposition.

"With the invention of the 'horseless carriage,' American lifestyles and gardening priorities changed," says "Victorian Gardens" curator Meehan. "The former interest in high-maintenance gardening styles subsided. America was 'on the go,' and the Victorian dream of a spade and a plot of ground keeping people at home was in the past."

An 18-page illustrated companion booklet to the "Victorian Gardens" exhibition, including a glossary and annotated bibliography, is available for purchase from CHS at the price of \$3.50 for non-members and \$2.80 for CHS members. Mail orders should include \$1.00 for postage and handling. Connecticut residents should also include 8% state sales tax (28 cents on \$3.50, 22 cents on \$2.80). □



Smithsonian Institution, Office of Horticulture

*ORNATE PLANT STAND displayed at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, drawn by J.S. Ingram.*

their meetings and exhibitions were strong testimonials to the popularity of horticultural activities.

The passion for flowers infiltrated just about every aspect of Victorian life. Women carried hand bouquets as a fashionable costume accessory, and girls learned the art of flower arranging. Plant motifs were incorporated into designs for furniture and fabrics. Women engaged in handicrafts known as "fancy-work" to create ornaments to decorate their homes, while flowers, cones, pods, acorns, seeds, mosses, and ornamental grasses were often collected, dried, and arranged into winter bouquets, holiday souvenirs, or displays in glass domes.

Victorian romanticism inspired the development of an elaborate "language of flowers," in which specific emotions were ascribed to different plants. Ivy, for example, represented friendship, while the marigold symbolized grief. There was a danger in using this floral language to communicate discreet messages, since the "floral dictionaries" differed on the meaning of flowers and

# Living Legend Gives CHS Unique Collection of Memorabilia

Retired Hartford jeweler William Savitt, Connecticut's beloved living legend whose promise to customers of "Peace of Mind Guaranteed" earned him the nickname "Mr. P.O.M.G." has performed countless good deeds in the 70 years since he opened his establishment. On Friday, March 9, Mr. P.O.M.G. celebrated his 89th birthday with yet one more good turn for the people of Hartford and Connecticut, by giving his unique collection of memorabilia accumulated over the course of seven decades to The Connecticut Historical Society. A private ceremony to mark the formal presentation of the more than 25,000 items in the remarkable Savitt collection was held that day at The Connecticut Historical Society. Present were William Savitt and his wife, Helen, and their daughters, Mrs. Robert First of Weston, Massachusetts, and Mrs. Thomas Asher of Atlanta, Georgia. Connecticut Historical Society President Robert Ewing accepted the Savitt collection on behalf of the Society, and presented William Savitt with a life membership in The Connecticut Historical Society.

A special guest at the ceremony was radio personality Bob Steele, a friend of William Savitt for more than 50 years, whose career at Hartford station WTIC-AM has made him a living Connecticut legend as well. Also present for the ceremony was Old State House Executive Director Wilson Faude, who was instrumental in arranging for the Savitt collection to be given to The Connecticut Historical Society.

William Savitt, known familiarly as "Bill" to everyone within reach of a radio, television, or

newspaper in Connecticut, began selling jewelry in Hartford in 1919. He built that enterprise into a major retail fixture of downtown Hartford, using energetic, innovative advertising and promotional activities that in the process also made him a state-wide celebrity. He retired four years ago after nearly seven decades in business.

Bill Savitt has also been one of the city's most consistent and generous philanthropists. Just a few of his charitable acts have included leading blood drives for the American Red Cross, raising more than \$90,000 in war bonds, and making contributions to the United Negro College Fund.

The Savitt collection reflects the many facets of one of the most extraordinary lives and business careers in twentieth-century Hartford history. It includes photographs of the Savitt store, employees, charitable events, and visiting celebrities; letters to Bill Savitt from famous individuals; scrapbooks filled with clippings of advertisements for the store; tapes of Savitt television advertising; and a number of unusual items of memorabilia, such as a uniform from the Savitt Gems baseball team.

A display of selected highlights from the Savitt collection at the Old State House closed in late February, and those items, along with many materials from Savitt's office, have been transferred to The Connecticut Historical Society. They will be examined, cataloged, and then made available to the public for research. The first plans The Connecticut Historical Society has for the collection will involve a small exhibition to be mounted in the autumn of 1990. □

## Members Respond Generously To Year-End Appeal

CHS members have responded to President Robert Ewing's year-end appeal with record-setting generosity. By mid-March 262 donors had contributed unrestricted gifts, which represents a 58% increase over the 165 donors who had given to the 1988-89 annual appeal by this time last year. The \$37,346 received by mid-March is 27% more than the \$29,511 received by this point last year.

Contributions to the 1989-90 year-end appeal may be made through the end of the fiscal year on April 30, 1990. Annual appeal funds are used to support the Society's public programming and educational activities, both of which have been expanded greatly in recent years and have succeeded in reaching a much larger audience numbering thousands of adults and children. □



## Published Primary Sources Available for Purchase

A limited number of several publications of primary source materials of special interest to genealogists and historians are still available for purchase from CHS. These include:

- *Original Distribution of the Lands in Hartford Among the Settlers 1639.* Connecticut Historical Society Collection Vol. XIV. 716 pp., index. \$6.00
- *Records for the Particular Court of Connecticut, 1639-1663.* Connecticut Historical Society Collections Vol. XXII. 302 pp., index. \$6.00
- Manwaring, Charles, comp. *A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records*, vol. II, Hartford District, 1700-1729. 711 pp., index. \$15.00
- *Papers of the Connecticut State Society of the Cincinnati, 1783-1807.* 182 leaves. \$10.00
- *Records of the Connecticut State Society of the Cincinnati, 1783-1904.* 228 leaves. \$10.00

Mail orders should include \$2.50 per volume for postage and handling. Connecticut residents should also include 8% Connecticut state sales tax.

### Holiday closings through September of 1990 include:

Easter – Sunday, April 15

Memorial Day – Sunday, May 27; Monday, May 28

Independence Day – Wednesday, July 4

Labor Day – Saturday, September 1; Sunday, September 2; Monday, September 3

The library will also be closed on Saturday, April 28, so that staff members may assist with the Connecticut History Day contest.

The Society will observe the following special summer hours of operation from Memorial Day through Labor Day:

Library: Tuesdays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Museum: Tuesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 5 p.m.

# Bill Savitt Celebrates 89th Birthday With Gift to CHS



Arthur Koly

RETired HARTFORD JEWELER Bill Savitt (center) — known as "Mr. P.O.M.G." from his promise to customers of "Peace of Mind Guaranteed" — marked his 89th birthday on March 9 by donating his unique collection of more than 25,000 pieces of memorabilia to CHS. Joining Bill Savitt and his family on that special occasion were CHS President Robert Ewing (right) and renowned WTIC-AM radio personality Bob Steele (left), a long-time friend of Bill Savitt. (See story on page 7).



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