

## **Dramatic Changes at Hale Schoolhouse in New London**

Just a few short years ago, this historic building had to be closed due to structural problems. When it was last moved in 1988, the foundation was placed on top of loose building rubble without proper footings. So for safety reasons, it had to be kept on mothballs.

The back corner of the building had settled so far that the entire chimney dropped 4 inches and there was a crack in the foundation wall that was about 5 inches wide.

The CTSSAR has owned the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse since the 1890's, but we don't own the land. The city owns the foundation and the land it sits upon.



During the last year Ted Nelson, our Real Property Steward who is also a building contractor in New London, had discussions with the right people

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## **The National Shell Game: We lost and it's our own fault**

Since last fall, we have been concerned about a proposed increase in the application fees for primary and supplemental applications. First the national trustees tried to jam it down our throats with no discussion or decision before the National Congress, when all delegates could speak and decide.

Then the trustees backed off when members started quoting the bylaws and saying that they didn't have the power to do so. Therefore, it had to be brought up at the National Congress that was held in Nashville in July.

Back at the state societies, we got our members worked up enough to stop the increase. The E-mails were flying back and forth. Everyone agreed that we shouldn't punish new members with even more fees than they already have. And doubling the fee for the supplemental applications, could hurt our objective of identifying as many patriots as possible.

Before the Congress even started, we were told by our National Trustee, Richard Anderson, that the fee increase was going to be withdrawn so all of us relaxed.

### **Now for the political play of the day**

It's been said that the executive committee never wanted the application fee raised in the first place. They really wanted to increase the annual dues by \$5 per member. So at the last minute, a proposal was submitted to increase the dues and it was passed without much opposition. Some attendees of the Congress felt that since the original proposal was turned down that they should give them something that they asked for.

An application fee increase of \$20 would have resulted in an increase of \$96,000 towards the annual budget. This is based on about 4800 primary and supplemental applications per year. While a \$5 increase in dues for 26,000 members will result in an additional \$130,000 per year to the budget.

If you are a national life member, there will be no change. For the rest of us, the annual dues increase will be effective this fall, when the dues bills go out for 2003.

New applications must be received before 10/31/02 at headquarters to remain at the current price. The total application fee including dues, for new members from 11/1/02 and in the future will be \$78 and

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## The Connecticut Line August 2002

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### Submissions

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### Deadlines

Jan. 1st	Mar. 1st
Aug. 1st	Oct. 1st

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## SNET's Free Money

The CTSSAR is participating in the SNET Community Connections program. Now, when you sign up with SNET for all your long-distance calling - or confirm that you're already using SNET All Distance The Connecticut SAR will get 5% of your monthly long distance bill.

Our last quarterly check was for \$38.59 which brings our total to \$144.45 in less than a year. That may not seem like a lot, but it will add up over time. Only 17 members have signed up so far. Since we have 480 members who live in CT, it should go much higher.

I'd rather see members sign up for this, which doesn't cost them anything extra, instead of having to raise dues to add to our income.

Signing up is easy. Just call SNET at 1-800-635-7638, or sign up on the web at [www.snet.com/community](http://www.snet.com/community). Our organization code is # 3585.

## President's Corner

The summer months are generally regarded as slower times for the branches but after witnessing the flurry of significant activity since taking office in late April, we may no longer be able to make that statement. Branches all up and down the line have been participating in and conducting a wonderful mix of events. Special recognition goes to Todd Gerlander and his incredibly dedicated group of re-enactors who have been out in the field weekend after weekend all summer long. My sense is that state wide our Society has taken on a new level of energy. Our membership numbers and extensive branch programs reflect this. Through both newspaper and television coverage, the profile of the CTSSAR is rising. My hope is that we can build on this in the upcoming fall/winter season. Input from you on how the Society can become more meaningful to both its members and the community at large is important. Our Planning Committee now includes long range planning as part of its mission. You can pass along suggestions and/or constructive criticism to its members or to me directly.

In addition to our September 21 Board of Managers meeting more fully detailed elsewhere in this issue, we are the host state for this year's New England Regional Meeting. The date is October 5 at the Seamen's Inne in Mystic. The price will be \$30/person and reservations should be forwarded to Jeff Hessler with your payment by September 30.

Lastly, the country will be honoring those who were killed in last year's September attacks. Living so close to New York has made those events especially hard hitting. I ask all of you to say a prayer for those who lost their lives on 9/11 and those who are on the front lines defending our freedoms and way of life. We owe so much to all of them. God bless America.



Dean H. Gaugler - President, CTSSAR

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## CTSSAR Starts Flexing Its Grassroots Muscle

Recently the CTSSAR received word that the CT state budget was going to cut \$538,000 from the CT Historical Commission's (CHC) funding. This budget proposal would have cut their budget in half and forced the closing of the Sloane-Stanley Museum and Kent Furnace in Kent, the Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine in East Granby, the Prudence Crandall Museum in Canterbury and the Henry Whitfield State Museum in Guilford. This cut would have affected more than just these locations. It would have had an impact on historic preservation in general within the state, which is a shared objective of the SAR.

We immediately forwarded E-mails to our 200 members who have given us their E-mail address and urged them to contact their local representative. It paid off. Our members sent out E-mails, letters, and made phone calls, which helped to restore \$350,000 back to CHC's budget. They are still left with a cut of \$188,000, but they won't need to close any of their museums.

This is one more reason that we ask to have your E-mail address. Please send it to [info@ctssar.org](mailto:info@ctssar.org). We will not give your address to anyone who doesn't have specific CTSSAR business. So it will not result in any junk E-mail.

# Upcoming Events

## 9/11 Observances

Sep 11 - 4 - 9pm

Lebanon Green

Lebanon, CT

Contact: Stephen Shaw

All historic buildings on the green will be open including the War Office with a ceremony afterwards.

## Memorial Service

Sep 11 - 6pm

Upper Havemeyer Field

Greenwich, CT

Contact: Charles Reigle

## Application/Genealogy Workshop

Sep 14 - 10am - 2 pm

Connecticut Historical Society

1 Elizabeth St, Hartford, CT

Contact: Stephen Shaw

Members are encouraged to attend to help non-members with their research and/or to work on new supplemental patriot ancestors.

## CTSSAR Meeting

Sep 21 - 10am

New London, CT

Contact: Ben Thomas

## National Trustee's Meeting

Sep 27-28

National Headquarters

Louisville, KY

Contact: Richard Anderson

## New England Regional Meeting

Oct 5

Seaman's Inne

Mystic, CT

Contact: Ben Thomas

## Massing of the Colors

Nov 3

Church of Christ Congregational

Newington, CT

Contact: Ben Thomas

## CTSSAR Meeting - Tentative

Nov 16 - 10am

Stamford, CT

Contact: Ben Thomas

Continued from page 1 in city hall. The city agreed to budget the \$25,000 to repair the foundation and the CTSSAR Property Committee put in \$15,000 to make repairs to the building.

This may sound like a lot from the SAR, but it really isn't since we haven't spent a lot of money on the New London Schoolhouse in a number of years, due to the foundation issues. We kept our focus on the other two buildings until something could be worked out with the city.

Besides the major structural work that has been completed, some of our local compatriots have given a lot of time and effort.

Jack Townsend, continuing the work he began a year or two ago, is the man to thank for our having a revived Nathan Hale Schoolhouse in New London today. This year - now that he has some help - Jack is, in essence, the personnel manager. He maintains the schedule of attendants so that the Schoolhouse can be open and watched during our regular and published hours of operation. A large portion of this work involves liaison and communication with the Five Rivers Consortium which has a "pool" of volunteers from which we draw, especially for coverage of our Sunday hours. Jack can also be credited as our Master of Ambiance. He donated the MP3 player and selected the near-magical background music that does so very much to make the space inside the schoolhouse inviting, restful, and comforting. In what is seen as a central task to the successful future of the Schoolhouse, Jack has been the key man in getting local school kids and teachers to visit our place on field trips, and in getting program activities like costumed re-enactors and fife and drum corps groups to visit and perform at the Schoolhouse.

Burt Chapman - our in-house

engineer, carpenter, and all-around handy-man - has completely refinished the Schoolhouse classroom. Walls, ceiling, floor - even the meticulously scraped and Windexed window panes - and the quality of the work speaks for itself in detail. Within a month of spare time, and single-handedly, Burt took a space that resembled something akin to a garage and transformed it into an appealing room so fresh, alive, and attractive that one would be proud to adopt it as the living room in one's own home. I can think of no other single project that has been more successful this year in promoting a favorable public image and impression of the Schoolhouse itself and the Society's stewardship thereof. Further, Burt has designed and fabricated several useful items for us, like the brochure racks that now foil the mischief of those notorious Schoolhouse zephyrs to spread the tourist literature all over the place.

Stephen Brown is our collection administration and museum practices expert. He has done a great deal of work in sorting out all the stuff we found in the upper room and attic last spring, and in guiding our storage or disposal of it all. His expertise will be essential as we develop our exhibits.

Ralph Thayer is the cheerleader and caretaker. The nearest neighbor to the Schoolhouse, living on the east end of the block where the Union School originally stood, he is always available to stand the schoolhouse watch. He has managed to get some free publicity for our efforts on the Letter to the Editors page of The Day newspaper, and is striving to "network" with other museum and gallery people in the neighborhood. With his interest in history, graphics, and writing he will likely contribute much to the exhibits and displays that we develop.

Thanks also to all the docents who have kept it open for the public.

Continued from page 1 \$60.50 for each additional application when multiple family members join at the same time. There are lower fees available for relatives of members who are under 25 years old.

So why is this our own fault? We in Connecticut participate so little at the national level that major things such as dues increases happen without much of any argument from CTSSAR members.

We were eligible to have 15 delegates represent us at this years Congress and only two CTSSAR members went, Russ Wirtalla and Richard Anderson.

Granted, very few state societies ever have their full quota of delegates, except for the host society of the Congress. But only 2 out of 15 is pretty poor.

Now with over 600 members, we are in the large society grouping and we

rank as the 16th largest state society out of 56.

Here are the state rankings by number of members as of 8/1/02.

Texas	2539
Pennsylvania	1945
Florida	1666
Virginia	1531
California	1413
Ohio	1390
Georgia	1297
New York	978
Illinois	854
Maryland	744
Alabama	731
Kentucky	713
North Carolina	650
Louisiana	632
South Carolina	614
Connecticut	595

So what do we have to show for it? The first President General was from Connecticut back in 1889, since it all started here for SAR. We've had a few more since. But the last

President General from Connecticut was Howard Coe back in 1965-66.

Usually we only have one or two members at any of the national trustees meetings which are twice a year.

Little, quiet Connecticut needs to have a loud strong voice and participate at the National level or decisions are going to continue to be made without us.

There are many national committees to serve on, so that we can be helpful and further the objectives of the SAR and the CTSSAR.

If you want to participate more, contact any of our CTSSAR officers or your Branch President, who are listed in our Annual Directory.

Hanging a membership certificate on your wall is only the beginning.

[www.ctssar.org](http://www.ctssar.org)



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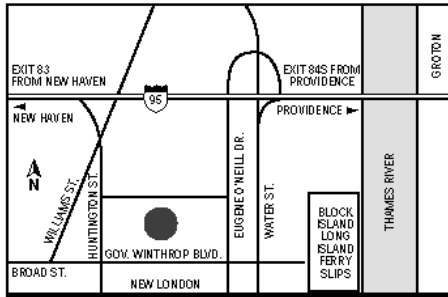
The Connecticut Society of the  
Sons of the American Revolution  
PO Box 411  
East Haddam CT 06423-0411

CTSSAR MEETING  
Saturday, September 21  
Radisson Hotel  
35 Governor Winthrop Blvd  
New London, CT  
860-443-7000

Join us in the city of New London. An area that was so strong during the Revolutionary War that Benedict Arnold wanted it burned after he turned traitor.

A Board of Managers meeting will be followed by a buffet lunch. Then we will be off to explore some of the local historic sites, such as the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse, Fort Trumbull, Fort Griswold or the Shaw Mansion.

The fee for lunch is \$25 and will consist of:  
Soup Du Jour | Fresh Fruit Display | Grilled Chicken, Fajita Style | Tuna Salad | Assorted Deli Meats & Cheeses | Corn Tortilla Chips | Wild Green Salad with Zinfandel Vinaigrette & Honey Mustard Dressing | Red Skin Dill Potato Salad | Assorted Cakes and Pies



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number in your party \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: Jeffrey Hessler  
25 Mallard Lane  
Clinton, CT 06413