



The School, the Museum and the Sesquicentennial

The 150th Anniversary of the start of the Civil War occurs this year. In 1861 Naugatuck had a population of 2400 and the town sent 237 men to serve in the Union Army. Many families sent more than one member to the cause. The Coen Family for example sent the father and two sons. And only one son returned. In commemoration of this anniversary we've begun a project with the Social Studies Department at Naugatuck High School that will prove a mutually beneficial opportunity. Social Studies teacher Matthew Laplaca contacted us to discuss how this project will be beneficial to the museum and to the students. The students will have the opportunity to participate in

preserving local and national history by working as historians and archivists. The Society will have the opportunity to have further documentation and research done on the plethora of original correspondence, memoirs and other documents from the era, that, in some cases, have never been read.

One such student, Steven Fairbrother, is working on the mystery of the Civil War Saber. This artifact has languished in our collection for 55 years without much data to prove its origin. We know that two elderly sisters living in Fall Village in 1966 donated the saber to the museum. The family history said that their grandfather used it in the Civil War. As part of a project between Naugatuck High School Social Studies Department and the museum, Steven is now researching this artifact to date its origin and confirm that it was indeed used in the Civil War.

Regarding the many letters from the 1860's in our collection, students will work with volunteers from the Society to transcribe the content of these letters, catalog each resource, and photo-document the originals. Students may also help to catalog and photo-document other artifacts from Naugatuck's involvement in the Civil War.

The project will result in an ongoing virtual web-museum for the Naugatuck Historical Society. Student involvement in this project will also be video-documented to produce a record of the creation of this online archive. The documentary will be shown at Central Connecticut State University's April Civil War Event and will find a permanent home at the Naugatuck Historical Society.

Central Connecticut State University is sponsoring a sesquicentennial anniversary between April 12 and April 16, recognizing the role Connecticut played in one of the bloodiest events in American history. The date coincides exactly with the firing on Fort Sumter in South Carolina, 150 years ago, signaling the start of combat. To learn more about the events planned refer to the Central Connecticut State University website and follow to link to the Civil War Sesquicentennial. www.ccsu.edu.

Participation in this project is open to all our volunteers, there is so much in our collection that can stand to be studied further, if you are interested in becoming involved in this project please let us know. You can contact the museum at 203-729-9039.