

WELLESPRINGS

A Publication from the WELLES FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE???



Answer: Too many of you are missing from it.

Dear Cousins;

I thought it would be fun to start this edition with a picture from the 2004 reunion in Farmington, CT. The banner in the background is not our usual banner (the one given us by Linda Welles several years ago) but the original Welles Family Banner from our earlier days. It was included with several pictures and other items presented to us by the Newington Historical Society. We are most appreciative of the Newington society for allowing us to add this item to our family collections. Special thanks to Dottie Abbott, the society's director, for always keeping us in mind when Welles family items appear. It was among Dr. Gid's possessions.

Also, in the last issue, I ran out of space to print the program from the special day that was held in Memory of Dr. Gideon Welles on October 3, 2004 at the Kelsey House in Newington. I shall correct that loss this edition and print the entire tale. Our president, Tom Welles, vice president, Karen Simpson and escort, Fred Fritz, attended in our name.

As I sit here pondering this edition, I want to thank all of you who have so graciously supported my newsletter efforts these past 19 years. I hope that you continue to enjoy receiving it as much as I enjoy putting it together for you. However, it would never happen if not for the wonderful stories many of you have shared throughout the years and especially the articles by our Genealogist, Barbara Mathews and the technical support and labors of our Registrar, Janet Lantowsky. Janet took over the printing and mailing of the newsletter a couple

of years ago to help lighten the labors of your editor, who also substitutes as your e-mail responder. It really is a "load off my back" when I put the original copy in the mail to Janet for publication. Speaking of "backs"... I do not plan to repeat what happened in completing the last edition. I sat down to work and by late afternoon was just finishing the 15th "bucket" when I felt a strain in my lower back. Well folks, what turned out to be a stress fracture has taken over four months to heal and still has a ways to go before reaching near perfection again. I have learned my lesson and shall work on this issue over a period of several days!! Never again, thank you.

I can finally pick up our youngest grandson again. Evan is now 9 months old and racing all over the house on his hands and toes, standing alone and soon (boo hoo!) will be walking and running. Fortunately, the family wants to give me another try at carrying infants, so Doug and Kim will present Russ and I with grandchild # 6 in September. Will it be our 6th grandson or will there be a change in gender this time? All we pray is for a healthy pregnancy, a healthy baby and maybe one who does not weigh over 11 pounds this time. We are also delighted to announce that our elder son Dave and his lovely Lisa Ann Rose were married on January 27th in St. Augustine, Fl (where they live). Both Dave and Doug, along with their sister, Cindy are Life Members of the Welles Family Association.

Now enough from me ...lets get on with the news and everything else that is fit to print. *Marty*

A Brief History of the "Dr. Gideon Wells Memorial Charter Oak Tree"

By G. Husmer

[and presented at the dedication ceremony on October 3, 2004]

"'From little acorns, mighty oak trees grow.' We sincerely hope this scion and grandson of the original Charter Oak tree will grow to great heights and be here hundreds of years from now. It certainly possesses the correct heritage and historical significance to claim its place in history as the "Dr. Gideon Wells Memorial Charter Oak Tree."

A committee of three, Esther Eddy, Flo Urbanowica and myself proposed a memorial tree be planted in Dr. Wells' memory in the Spring of 2002. A Mighty Charter Oak, descendant of *the* Charter Oak seemed appropriate; but where to find one?

After days of calling to nurseries and several state foresters, it was Mr. Glen Dryer, Director of the Arboretum at Connecticut College in New London, who referred me to other experts on the Charter Oak and ultimately, Mr. Martin Kibanski, forester and keeper of the Charter Oak scions at the Connecticut State Forest nursery in the Patchogue State Forest, Voluntown, Connecticut. In late August, I spoke to Mr. Kibanski who said it would be better to select a scion in the spring of next year.

In the spring of 2003, I traveled to Patchogue State forest and the Connecticut State Nursery to select a healthy looking 3 year old seedling that was about 4 feet in height and transported it back to Newington. The state nurseryman assured me that this was an authentic scion of the original Charter Oak (probably a grandson, third generation) of *the* Charter Oak. Its father (second generation) was still dropping acorns in Bushnell Park in Hartford. I was confident we had acquired a pedigreed original scion, very appropriate for our dedication program today.

As most of us Connecticut Yankees know from our early Connecticut history lessons, the original Charter Oak tree acquired its place in history as an ordinary American white oak, *Quercus alba*. For nearly half a century it was just another tree, until one of Connecticut's freedom loving colonists decided to use a hollow in the tree to hide the original Charter of Connecticut in 1687. After secreting it away from the English King James II, his brother Charles II, had second thoughts about our independence. He had provided the document to the General Court of Connecticut on October 9, 1662.

It was Captain Joseph Wadsworth who hid the document in the original Charter Oak tree on the Wyllys Estate, now near Charter Oak Avenue and Main Street in Hartford. The rest of the story is even greater history as most historians credit the saving of Connecticut's Charter as providing the model for the U.S. Constitution and the very freedoms that protect us to this day.

On April 27, 2003, this scion, now about 4½ to five years old, with a direct lineage to the original Charter Oak was gently placed in this spot for dedication to Dr. Gideon Wells on October 3, 2004."

[I want to thank Karen for sharing this article with us and it will be placed in our memory book for all to see. It was printed on lovely paper watermarked with white oak leaves. The tree was planted at the Kelsey House where many of you visited with us when we held our reunion in Newington several years ago. The site is on land adjoining the late Dr. Wells' home, on land he donated to the Newington society as a new home for the Kelsey house, which might otherwise have been destroyed. This home is famous for the paintings that were done on its interior walls and is now the home of several of Dr. Gid's personal property. When next you are in Newington....stop by on a Saturday for a visit to the house and the memorial tree.]

REUNION NEWS

Hank Hunt, chairman of the Reunion Committee, has announced that the 2005 Reunion of the Welles Family Association will take place on **Saturday, June 25, 2005** at the **Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center** in Mashantucket, Connecticut, near North Stonington, Connecticut, from **9:00A.M. to 5:00 P.M.**

Registration and social time will begin at 9:00 A.M.; The **Annual Meeting** will take place at 10:30 A.M.; **Lunch** will be at 12:00 Noon; and the **guest speaker** will present from 1:30 to 2:30 P.M. The topic of his/her presentation will be, "**Connecticut Indians during the American Colonial Period**".

Self-guided tours of the Musuem will be available after the meeting for \$10./person.

[I can tell you from experience that you will find the museum tour (with self guiding, hand held, individual speakers) very educational, interesting and enjoyable. I look forward to visiting it for the 4th time. Editor]

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION BY MAIL, FROM OUR PRESIDENT, TOM WELLES, JR., SOON

IN MEMORIAM

My heart is heavy as I report the loss by death of the following descendants of the governor, Thomas Welles and his wife, Alice Tomes:

Pamela Douglass Hutchins of Salisbury, NH passed away on August 15, 2001. Belated condolences are extended to her husband, **Mark Hutchins**.

Helen M. Alsworth at age 83, January 2004. Helen was the sister of members **Dave and Jeanette Welles**. Dave reported that Helen was the first of his siblings to go; his other two sisters still live in Arcade, NY.

Mary F. Woods of Kensington, CT. Mary's granddaughter **Diane Peloquin** wrote to inform us of her Grandmother's death but did not give us a date. Diane wrote that her Grandmother always enjoyed our newsletter. Mary was a Life member of the Welles Family.

Robert L. Wells, age 77, of Shelton, CT died April 11, 2004. Our cousin **Janet Lantowsky** sent this information to us. While not a member of the association, Bob was a descendant of the governor.

Via the CT Society of Genealogist's newsletter, I learned of the death of **Joyce (Mrs. Thomas) Bradbury** in the latter part of 2004. Joyce was a Life member of the Welles Family.

Rose C. Welles passed away on August 4, 2004 in Fairhaven, MA. at age 87 years. Since her husband **Edward C. Welles** died in 1999, Rose lived with their daughter **Jane Welles Babbitt** in Mattapoisett, MA. Daughter, **Catherine Welles Arnold** of Leander, TX sent a prayer card from her Mother's funeral and will send a copy of her obituary for our memory book. Many of the longtime reunion attendees will warmly remember Ed and Rose's faithful attendance at many annual reunions. Jane and Catherine are both members of our association.

[I personally send my condolences to Rose's family. I will always remember hers and Ed's warmth of welcome when my mom and I attended our first reunions. Editor]

Charles Pons Mathews, aged 81 years, of Medford, MA, formally of Ocala, FL died Sunday, December 19, 2004. A retired mechanical engineer, Charles' life was filled with accomplishment. Starting with his service in the U. S. Army Air Corps during WWII where he was a photographer in the 445th, America's first fighter jet squadron. After finishing his education he worked for Beech Aircraft, Sikorsky and General Electric before turning to a successful structural engineering career. Later, as a consulting engineer, Charles worked on the ESPN television station, Founder's Plaza tower in Hartford, CT, and the terminal at Bradley International Airport, to name a few. Charles also leaves behind a dear friend, Adella Grim of Ocala, FL.

[Charlie and his late wife, Barbara, brought daughters, Barbara Jean and Betsy Kristine Mathews to the Welles Family gatherings. His late brother Bill (and wife, Boots) attendance made it a Mathews family mini-reunion as well. Many members of their family became Welles members, among them, son John Albert and nephew Will. Barbara is our Genealogist and working diligently on the "Second Edition" of the governor's family genealogy. We cousins owe much to Charlie for bringing her to her first reunion.]

Barbara shared a few thoughts with me about her Dad and I thought she wouldn't mind my sharing this story. "When Dad retired in the summer of 1989, he announced at his August birthday party that he would never again spend another winter in New England. He then gave Kent (Barbara's husband) his snow blower and headed south. Well, the funny thing is, he didn't spend another winter in New England. He died two days before winter solstice. The day of his memorial service there was a snowstorm. I think he would have liked the irony."

In Memoriam

**It was the Father's will to call them Home,
Where they might rest and hear Him say, "Well Done."
Their work complete, another life awaits
Beyond the sunset, through the golden gates.**

**Then let them find eternal love and peace
Where all our worries, pain, and heartaches cease.
May light perpetual shine upon them, Lord;
And the joy of your Presence be their sure reward!**

Poem by Marion Phifer, a deceased member; reprinted with author's prior permission

MEMBERS MISSING DUE TO RETURNED / UNDELIVERABLE MAIL

Mrs. Margaret Leroy CHIPMAN	of Golden, Colorado
Mr. Bradford James KIDNEY	of Manchester, Connecticut
Mr. L. James HIGGINS, Jr.	of Sparks, Nevada
Mrs. Claude B. WHEELER	of Rohnert, California

If anyone has information or new addresses, please send information to your Editor (address on page one of this newsletter). Thanks.