

ASPINOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER

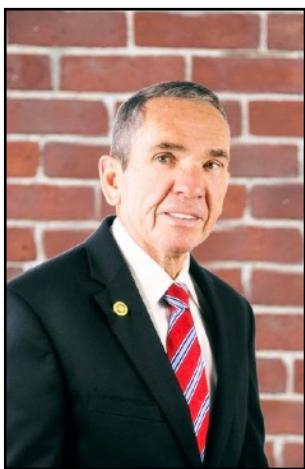


Celebrating Halloween In Style!

Aspinock president John Miller said he would make a donation to the historical society if the board of directors dressed up in costumes at the October meeting. Here you can see that the board members accepted the challenge. Thank you John for your \$200 donation!

Putnam History Makers Award Recipients Announced

Fred Hedenberg and Tom Borner were honored in a ceremony December 5 at the Putnam Lodge of Elks. The first to receive this annual award.



Tom Borner (photo far left) embodies a man who works quietly behind many scenes. Self-driven, focused and intent on giving back since early in his life, Tom's career as an attorney (a Partner with The Northeast Law Center) and long tenure as CEO of Putnam Bank has touched many lives. His involvement with the Putnam Business Association (PBA), Hale & Greater Hartford YMCA, Putnam Area Foundation, Community Foundation of Eastern CT, Make a Wish CT, Day Kimball Hospital, and Habitat for Humanity are just the tip of Tom's caring sense of community and family. His love for his community is rivaled only by the love for his family as a devoted father and grandfather.

Fred Hedenberg (photo at left) passed from this life in July, 2024 and left a legacy. From his early years serving in World War II with the Navy, to his newspaper and radio time (including WINY Radio talk-show host), involvement with Hospice of Northeast CT, Red Cross, NDDH, Cub Scouts, and as a Putnam town selectman, Fred was a good-deed-doer, looking beyond himself. While serving as president of the Aspinock Historical Society, Fred began renovation plans for Cady-Copp Cottage and established the Gertrude C. Warner Boxcar Children's Museum, visited by people from all over the world. Fred is an example of making history one deed at a time.

A Putnam History Maker honoree may be a "resident or non-resident of Putnam, living or deceased, who made or is still making honorable and positive direct or indirect major impact through works, deeds and service in Putnam and/or globally with ties to Putnam, whether done in the spotlight or quietly behind the scenes."

The Putnam History Makers committee is composed of members of the Aspinock Historical Society in collaboration with the Town of Putnam Parks and Recreation Department.

Did You Know?

Sandra Ames and Fab Cutler are contributing a new segment to the newsletter entitled **Did You Know?** This regular column will offer interesting tidbits of local history they have researched, or were contributed by others.

College Farm/ Yale University

Northwestern, western, and southern lines of College Farm. This is a tract of at least 600 acres that in 1701 was given by Major James Fitch to the trustees of the College School, present day Yale University. It was hoped that it would become the school's permanent home. It later became the Torrey Farm on 5 Mile River Rd. in East Putnam. In 1711, John Fisk and James Leavens obtained the land from the trustees of what was then Yale College. When they surveyed and divided the tract in 1742, it contained about 826 acres.

Researched by Fab Cutler

A surprise visitor to Putnam

Babe Ruth was in Putnam with his wife on Sunday, October 15, 1919. Manager McDermott of the Putnam Team said he had agreed to pay Babe Ruth \$300. Ruth said he had agreed to play for \$500 not \$300. So—Babe Ruth did not play!

Memories from the late Willie Zamagni

Added notes on Babe Ruth

Babe Ruth was a pitcher for The Red Sox and Yankees baseball teams. Babe Ruth barnstormed in Connecticut. Barnstorming was what Major League players did in the off season. They traveled around the country when their team wasn't playing. They would play against small local teams. These were called exhibition games. The players did this to make more money. Babe Ruth spent many off seasons barnstorming. From 1918 to 1920 Ruth played many exhibition games in Connecticut.



Photo courtesy of WINY Radio

Nearly 100 people gathered on December 5 at the Putnam Lodge of Elks 574 to honor the first recipients of the Putnam History Makers Award, Frederick Hedenberg and Thomas Borner. Pat Hedenberg accepted the award on behalf of her late husband Fred. Tom Borner accepted his award, and later surprised the Aspinock Historical Society with a donation of \$10,000 from the Putnam Area Foundation to be used for the renovation and restoration of the Cady Copp Cottage. AHS President John Miller was the emcee for the evening and Bill and Julie Reid entertained guests with music and a sing-a-long. Award plaques for the honorees are on display in the corridor outside the Aspinock Historical Museum.



Check out the life of Putnam icon Fred Hedenberg as told by his wife Pat.

[YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyfJyfJyfJy)

[The life of Fred Hedenberg](#)

Dear Friends of the Aspinock Historical Society,

If you have already made a donation to this year's Annual Appeal—thank you! Your generosity helps us preserve the rich history of Putnam and ensure that future generations can explore and learn from our shared heritage. If you haven't yet had a chance, please consider supporting the Aspinock Historical Society today.

Ryan Walker is spearheading a petition drive on [change.org](https://www.change.org/p/name-a-virginia-class-submarine-after-medal-of-honor-recipient-henry-breault) to have Henry Breault's name attached to a VIRGINIA Class submarine as the USS HENRY BREAULT. There has never been a naval vessel named after Breault and Walker believes strongly it is now time to change that. Find out more about his initiative by checking out the links to the right.

<https://www.change.org/p/name-a-virginia-class-submarine-after-medal-of-honor-recipient-henry-breault>



Share his petition in person or use the QR code for your own material.

[Download QR Code](#)

A Look Back at Thanksgiving 80 Years Ago - 1944

THE PUTNAM PATRIOT, PUTNAM, CONN., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1944

ON TO TOKYO!

On countless invasion fronts, thousands of your fighting men are taking up the battle cry: "On to Tokyo!" We've got to back them up with what it takes for complete victory. Remember, the supply lines in the Pacific are long and your fighting men will need more materiel than was required for the entire European invasion to crush the Jap foe.

Our boys won't quit until they've reached their goal. Let's not stop buying Bonds until we've reached ours! In this 6th War Loan Drive, the Nation's goal is \$14 billions . . . our individual job is to buy at least an extra \$100 Bond . . . another and then another . . . let's keep on going . . . let's keep on buying . . . let's keep on saying it with Bonds . . . "On to Tokyo!"

6th WAR LOAN

Nearly every family has felt the tragic hand of War in one way or another. But we all have much to be thankful for despite widespread worry and suspense over the well-being of loved ones still in the armed services far from home.

The War is going well. Final victory for the forces of Freedom is certain. This great land of ours has been spared the ravages of occupation or bombing.

Let's return thanks on Thanksgiving Day for the many blessings we are still able to enjoy in a world gone mad with global conflict.

The Cargill Trust Co.
Putnam, Connecticut
Member Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

Let's take a look back at Thanksgiving week in Putnam 80 years ago in 1944, as gleaned from the pages of local newspaper "The Putnam Patriot". Right away we notice that America's war effort was front and center in the local news. The United States was three years into WW II. Allied troops were advancing into Germany, but victory in the Pacific theater was still an elusive goal.

Local newspapers were full of ads and news about area men and women serving in the military: those reporting for induction, postings, promotions, awards, and sadly woundings and deaths. "The Putnam Patriot" ran a column entitled Letters of Thanks from the Local Yanks.

There were many personal notes published about residents traveling and spending the Thanksgiving holiday with loved ones near and far. Choir members of the Congregational Church of Putnam went to Day Kimball Hospital and sang Thanksgiving selections.

The Putnam Country Club advertised hosting a Thanksgiving dinner with all the fixings for \$1.75. For some comic relief you could go to the Bradley Theater and see zany Abbott and Costello in "Lost in a Harem" . . . "they're wolfs in sheik's clothing."

Grocery store ads did not feature turkeys for Thanksgiving dinners; only large fancy milk-fed fowl. A little research revealed that turkeys were difficult to acquire due to the government prioritizing large quantities of turkeys to send to soldiers overseas, making them scarce for civilian consumption, especially around Thanksgiving. As a result, broilers graced the Homefront holiday table.

(Continued on next page)

A&P SUPER MARKETS

FRESH the day you buy it!

No Need to be a BREAD SQUEEZER THIS DATE MEANS MARVEL IS . . .

A&P SELF SERVICE

LARGE FOWL LB 41¢

VEAL ROULETTES LB 34¢

VEAL LEGS LB 32¢

FRANKFORTS SKINLESS LB 37¢

COD FILLETS FANCY SKINLESS LB 29¢

EXTRA LARGE GREEN SHRIMP LB 45¢

FANCY CAPE MACKEREL LB 14¢

WE ARE PLEDGED TO KEEP PRICES DOWN

ORANGES SIZE 200's DOZ 39¢

TOOTSIE V-M 47¢

(A Look Back continued from previous page)

Front page news was of a missing Army pilot who may have bailed out from a plane which crashed and exploded November 29 in Putnam in the area of Upper School Street, in Little Dam Tavern Brook. The plane, a P-47 Thunderbolt fighter, was on a combat training mission.

The following information is from **The New England Aviation History** website:

On the morning of November 29, 1944, a flight of four P-47 fighter aircraft took off from Hillsgrove Army Air Field (now T.F. Green International Airport) in Warwick, Rhode Island, for a training flight. While flying in formation over northern Rhode Island and into eastern Connecticut the flight encountered some clouds at their altitude and briefly flew through them. When the flight emerged from the scud they discovered one aircraft was missing.

The missing P-47 was piloted by 1st Lt. Robert W. Anderson, 27. Lt. Anderson's plane was seen by people on the ground to come diving out of the clouds before it crashed and exploded into a brook next to a house on School Street in Putnam. (Nobody in the house was injured.)



When military personnel arrived on scene and began recovery operations they discovered the pilot's body missing. A search was undertaken, and the pilot's body was found in a wooded area on the Apley Farm in Putnam – his parachute unopened. I'm curious if anyone knows the exact location of the crash.

Ken A. Evans

In Other News

There is now a link on our website where electronic payments for membership dues and donations can be made. The website address is

<https://putnamaspinockhistsoc.com/>

In social media our Facebook page has 814 followers, Instagram has 222 followers, AHS has been Googled 365 times.

Pat Hedenberg has received a \$5000 donation from Spirol Foundation for the construction of the "Fred Hedenberg Boxcar Pavilion." A local contractor will complete the foundation before winter. It should be completed by April 19 to honor Gertrude Chandler Warner's Birthday. The Museum will open on April 26, 2025.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

<https://www.facebook.com/AspinockHistoricalSociety>

<https://www.instagram.com/aspinockhistorical>

<https://youtube.com/@AspinockHistoricalSociety?si=VZDkriZozo9zWCF5>



YouTube

Come Visit Us

The **Aspinock Historical Society Museum and Research Center** is located on the 2nd floor of the Putnam Municipal Complex at 200 School St., Putnam, CT. It is open Tue, Wed, Thur, 10 AM to 2 PM; and Saturdays by appointment. The **Gertrude Warner Boxcar Museum** is located on South Main St., Putnam, across the tracks from Union Square. It is open Saturdays and Sundays, May thru October.

Both museums are handicap accessible.

Visit us to learn about Putnam's history through our displays and archives.

Submitting News - Ken A. Evans, Newsletter Editor

I encourage Aspinock Historical Society members to submit news and information to be included in our quarterly newsletter. You can email me at kaevans1969@sbcglobal.net or leave material for me at the Aspinock Historical Society facility at 200 School St., Putnam.