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Ellington Historical Society

P.O. Box 73

Ellington, Conn. 06029

January 2011 Newsletter

January Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, January 27, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. Following the business meeting, the program will be: *The Story of the Ellington Congregational Church - 1733—2008*, a presentation of the history of the church by Mildred Dimock and Deborah Wallace.

The script for this presentation was originally written by Mildred C. McKnight and presented with slides in 1983 for the 250th Anniversary Celebration, with credit also to historian Nellie E McKnight. The script was updated by Deborah and Mildred and pictures were added by photographer Fred Bird and others.



The third meeting house
of the Ellington Congregational Church,
built in 1867 and 1868.

The public is invited and new members are welcome to join. Refreshments will follow the program.

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

News from the Curator-Nancy Long

Open House/Winterfest



A clear day and seasonable temperatures made December 4 a good day to attend town activities, the Winterfest parade and visit our museum. As 2:00 p.m. arrived, our first guests appeared and we had a steady stream of visitors through the afternoon and early evening. This was the first viewing of the ice harvesting exhibit and video in the front parlor. The exhibit will move to Hall Memorial Library in January and will be presented by Nancy Long at the February historical society meeting. Karen Hayes demonstrated weaving on Nellie's loom upstairs. Children visiting the museum were given gingerbread men.

Many thanks to our volunteers who cleaned, decorated and acted as docents for the afternoon. A special thank you to Tim Fahy for his support whenever and wherever needed! After the event, Tim helped take down the decorations and then drained the pipes and winterized the museum for the long cold winter.

Volunteers: Mary Temple, Tina Fiore, Hilary Brady, Don and Lennie Ellis, Mildred Dimock, Dave Lehmann, Shirley Hayden, Tim and Lynn Fahy, Karen Hayes, Patricia Bowen, Jim and Nancy Long.

Gingerbread Men Bakers: Tim Fahy and Mildred Dimock

News from the President-Tim Fahy

Our Winterfest open house was one of the most successful events we've had for some time. We had some very interested, and interesting, people visit Nellie's house. A couple came from Hampton because they saw our advertising in the paper. At least two people that I know of, came because they saw our "Open" flag. Some people who have lived in town for many years came for the first time. A woman told me that the Christmas season doesn't start for her until she has seen the museum decorated for the holidays. Many folks showed up specifically to see the Ice Harvesting exhibit. The children got to see that popcorn wasn't always made in a microwave. Visitors were also treated to a weaving demonstration done on Nellie's loom.

Out thanks go to Nancy Long, our curator, who produced the Ice Harvesting exhibit and coordinated all things pertaining to the open house. Great job. [top](#)

February 2011 Newsletter

February Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, February 24, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. Following the business meeting, there will be a program on *Ice Harvesting* presented by Nancy Long. A video, photographs, and tools will show how labor intensive the ice business really was and how refrigeration has changed our lives.



Ice harvesting, ca. 1903
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division,
Detroit Publishing Company Collection, [LC-D4-9193]

The public is invited and new members are welcome to join. Refreshments will follow the program. The bakers for our February meeting are Sharon Cxyz and Lennie Ellis.

Cancelled meeting

The January meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. The program: *The Story of the Ellington Congregational Church - 1733—2008*, by Mildred Dimock and Deborah Wallace will be re-scheduled.

In the event of a snowstorm on the date of our February meeting, watch WFSB Channel 3 for cancellation information, or, call Tim Fahy.

Nellie McKnight Museum Open House Photos, Winterfest 2010

Be sure to look at all of the photos of the December Open House at:
<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/PastEvents/Past%20Events.htm>

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March 2011 Newsletter

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

March Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, March 24, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., Hall Memorial Library, 93 Main Street. Following the business meeting, the program will be: *The Story of the Ellington Congregational Church - 1733—2008*, a presentation of the history of the church by Mildred Dimock and Deborah Wallace.

The script for this presentation was written by Mildred C. McKnight, with credit also to historian Nellie E McKnight. It was originally presented in 1983 for the church's 250th Anniversary Celebration. The script was updated by Deborah and Mildred and pictures were added by photographer Fred Bird and others.



This drawing by John Warner Barber is the view from the west looking toward the eastern hills of Ellington in 1836. The second church building of the Ellington Congregational Church, completed in 1806, stands in Church Park, opposite the present church.

This program was originally scheduled for January, but was re-scheduled because of inclement weather. The public is invited and new members are welcome to join. Refreshments will follow the program.

News from the Curator—Nancy Long

Ice Harvesting Exhibit

The ice harvesting exhibit, shown at the holiday open house at the Nellie McKnight Museum, has moved to Hall Memorial Library. Ice harvesting tools, pictures and a binder of additional research information can be found with the exhibit on the main floor. The donation of a horse drawn ice cutter, horse shoes and ice tongs by Ellington Historical Society member L. James McKnight are a wonderful addition to the display. This exhibit will remain at Hall Memorial Library until the end of April when it will move back to the Nellie McKnight Museum and be on display until the end of September.



Photograph taken at the February meeting at the Hall Memorial Library. The program about ice harvesting was presented by Museum Curator Nancy Long.

Flea Market

The Fair on the Green will be held on Saturday, May 7 and the Ellington Historical Society will once again have a bake sale and flea market on the museum grounds. Several of our steadfast volunteers will be out of town for this event, so your help is really needed. We will need four volunteers for each of the two shifts of the bake sale. Two volunteers will be needed for each of the two shifts in the museum. We also need people to bake for the bake sale. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and we hope you will be there to support our effort. Sign-up sheets for volunteers will be available at the March 24 meeting or you can contact Nancy Long.

200 Years and Counting

The year 2012 marks the 200th anniversary of the building of Nellie McKnight's home which houses our museum. Plans are underway to research the history of the home, the people who resided there and the changes in Ellington over this period of time. This information will be developed into a display for the 2011 Holiday Open House and thus begin the celebration. As part of this effort, we will be reallocating space on the second floor of the museum and plan to restore Nellie's bedroom to be part of the museum area open to the public.



This photograph of the McKnight house and the third building of the Ellington Congregational Church was taken sometime after trolley service from Rockville began in 1906 and before the church burned in 1914.

This anniversary highlights the need for exterior paint and repairs at the museum. We are presently hoping to accomplish these jobs with the help of our members either donating time or money. The museum also needs a new sign, and we could use member help with this also. We are the caretakers of this wonderful and historic old house. Let's work to make this a proud 200th birthday of the house!

News from the Archivist--Lynn Kloter Fahy

More copies of *Ellington, Chronicles of Change*, the 1987 book by Dorothy Cohen, have been reprinted by Ellington Printery and are available for sale at the Hall Memorial Library. The cost is \$20 each. Proceeds benefit the historical society.

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April 2011 Newsletter

April Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, April 28, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., Hall Memorial Library, 93 Main Street. The program will be a member discussion of the current improvement projects underway at the Nellie McKnight Museum and preparations for the 200th anniversary of the McKnight House in 2012. Refreshments will follow the program. The bakers are Tina Fiore and Mary Temple.

News from the Curator—Nancy Long

The Nellie McKnight Museum will be open for the season on Thursday, May 12, 2011 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. We will be open on Thursdays through the end of September. The Ice Harvesting exhibit, currently at Hall Memorial Library, will return to the front parlor of the museum for May 7.

Fair on the Green/Historical Society Flea Market and Bake Sale

On May 7, 2011 the historical society will hold a flea market on the Nellie McKnight Museum grounds from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The rain date is May 14. Spaces are 10' x 20' for a donation of \$20 for non-members and \$15 for members. Exhibitors of typical flea market/tag sale items are welcome. Craft and food exhibitors cannot be accepted.



Flea Market 2010

The historical society bake sale will also be held on May 7 in the Nellie McKnight Museum from 9:00-2:00. Members will be contacted to bake and help staff this bake sale. In keeping with the guidelines given by North Central District Health, we are asking our bakers to package their baked goods so they are ready for sale. We do not want to handle or repackage the baked items and it really speeds up the bake sale set up if all we only have to price the item. We thank you for your observance of these guidelines-the rules protect us all!



Update on Projects

Work is continuing on the second floor of the museum. Nellie's bedroom, formerly the archive room, has been emptied and the wallpaper stripped. Patching and painting will continue as the weather warms. On the south wall near the ceiling a notation in pencil was found: April 1952, 12 rolls (of wallpaper). Almost sixty years is a long time between redecorating!

As part of the spruce up of the building and grounds for 200th birthday of the building, we are in the process of pricing new sign options for the front lawn. It is likely we will keep the same post but will replace our sign.

As we work on the building inside and out, we are compiling a "wish list" of items we need:

- Full size mattress and box spring for Nellie's bedroom
- Painting supplies (brushes, drop cloths, mineral spirits, spackling compound, etc.)
- Repairs to the front porch (some boards to be replaced, scraping, caulking and repainting)
- Re-glazing all windows (as part of the larger project of painting the museum)



Photograph of the McKnight House from the Connecticut State Library's Digital Collection: "The WPA House Survey." The *Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, 1934-1937* was a Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) project.

This anniversary highlights the need for exterior paint and repairs at the museum. We are presently hoping to accomplish these jobs with the help of our members either donating time or money. We are the caretakers of this wonderful and historic old house. Let's work to make this a proud 200th birthday of the house!

News from the Archivist--Lynn Kloter Fahy

The historical society's archives have moved to the west side in the upstairs of the Nellie McKnight Museum. My goal is to get the archives organized in time for the house's 200th birthday. After a 3-month retirement from my day job as a librarian at Trinity College, I was offered a part-time job as an archives consultant. So I welcomed the offers of help from historical society members Shirley Hayden and Hilary Brady. I look forward to getting them started soon.

We are happy to have a local business, Ellington Printery, as the new printer of our newsletter.

News from the President--Tim Fahy

As was previously stated, this month's meeting is a business only meeting. The Executive Board has had some discussions about the upcoming 200th anniversary of the McKnight house, but we wanted to hear ideas from all interested members. This is an opportunity to discuss ideas and try to determine which ideas are practical given the number of active members. This is also an opportunity for members to volunteer to help with this celebration so that we may attract more people to the museum.

I hope many of you will choose to attend this meeting. In subsequent newsletters, I will keep you informed of which ideas we feel we can pursue.

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

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June 2011 Newsletter

June Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will hold its annual meeting and potluck supper on Thursday, June 23, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room at Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. Those with last names beginning with A-J are asked to bring a main dish. Those with last names beginning with K-Z are asked to bring a salad. (Note that we changed the division of names this year to A-J and K-Z. This is because the previous dividing line resulted in too many salads last year.) Beverages will be provided. Our traditional strawberry shortcake will be served for dessert.

Following the supper, we will hold our annual meeting during which we will elect officers for 2011/2012. A slate of officers will be presented and nominations can also be made from the floor.

News from the Curator-Nancy Long

Flea Market/Bake Sale

Saturday May 7 dawned sunny and pleasant. A perfect day for our event and the Fair on the Green! Just about the 2:00 closing time clouds and showers came and we all scurried for home after a very successful day. The bake sale was well attended and featured a wonderful variety of cookies, bars, candies, breads and pies.

Thank you to all who baked for the sale as well as our volunteers who worked the bake sale: Connie Nichols, Pat Szemplinski, Pat Clapp, Lynn Lettieri, Mary Temple, Ann Berak and Hilary Brady. Thanks also to Mildred Dimock for making phone calls to recruit bakers. We had many visitors tour the first floor of the museum and even a guest who remembered having piano lessons taught by Nellie McKnight in what is now the dining room. Thank you to our museum volunteers: David Danforth, Hilary Brady, Matt Mullin and Shirley Hayden. Dave Lehmann and Jim Long helped out in the museum after they checked in our flea market participants so a special thank you to them for their help.

School Tours

School tours are scheduled for Monday, June 6 at Windermere School, Wednesday, June 8 at Center School and Friday, June 10 at Crystal Lake School. Items from the museum collection are brought for discussion with the children emphasizing how different our lives would be if we lived a hundred years ago or even fifty years ago. A rug beater, wash board, iron, foot warmer and bottle capper are among the items shown to the classes. This year we will focus a little more on ice harvesting tools and will bring framed pictures of ice harvesting from our current exhibit to show to the children. The students are invited to visit the museum this summer while on summer vacation. Tim Fahy, Lynn Fahy and Nancy Long will be doing the school presentations.

Herb Garden

The herb garden on the museum grounds has been planted and mulched. Thank you to the Tussie Mussies from the Ellington Women's Club for their efforts getting the garden ready and maintaining it through the summer season.

News from the President-Tim Fahy

We are planning to have a booth at the Ellington Farmer's Market two Saturdays this summer. Activities will include participation by children and adults. *Images of America: Ellington, Images of America: Crystal Lake, Tolland County* by Lynn Kloter Fahy, and copies of the reprint of Dorothy Cohen's 1987 book *Ellington: Chronicles of Change* will be for sale. The dates haven't been determined as this newsletter goes to press, but stop by the market at Arbor Park on Saturdays from 9:00 to 12:30 through October and look for us.

We mourn the passing of two longtime members of our society this year. Katherine "Kay" Peckham, wife of Homer Peckham, passed away in October, 2010. Robert "Bob" Hyde, husband of Charlyne "Goldie" Carson-Hyde, passed away this March. We are grateful for their efforts on behalf of the society over the years and extend our sympathy to their spouses and families. A book in each of their names will be donated to Hall Memorial Library in their memory.

We have begun some of the repair work necessary to get the museum in shape for the 200th anniversary celebration next year. We thank members Jim McKnight, Denise Archibald, and Sue Krowchenko for their generous contributions toward this effort. I encourage all those who can to contribute to this cause. We receive no money from any outside source and keeping the museum open is increasingly difficult.

News from the Archivist- Lynn Kloter Fahy

Shirley Hayden and Hilary Brady have begun helping in the museum archives. Their help is very much appreciated! More archival supplies have been purchased and the PastPerfect Museum software that I have been using has been upgraded.

Be sure to check out our website at <http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

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September 2011 Newsletter

September Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, September 22, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. After a brief business meeting, there will be a program about Hiram Bingham, a Yale University graduate and U.S. Senator from Connecticut, who discovered the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu, in 1911. The 100th anniversary of his famous discovery is being celebrated this year and was marked by the return of artifacts collected by Bingham to Peru. Tim and Lynn Fahy will show slides of their May trip to the mountaintop ruins of Machu Picchu and other Peruvian sites. The program is free, and the public is invited. New members are always welcome. Refreshments will be provided by Nancy Long and Tim Fahy. A sign-up sheet for doing refreshments this year will be circulated at the meeting.



Photo of Machu Picchu taken by Tim Fahy, May 2011

News from the Curator-Nancy Long



We had fewer than average number of visitors this summer in spite of repeated press releases in the Journal Inquirer and our new sign. We relocated our old white sign to face directly on Main Street and this brought in a few new guests. The lesson here is to keep changing things so people stop and take notice! We were pleased to have one of the Windermere third graders come to the museum with her family and visiting grandparents.

It was a busy summer working on the grounds and the redecorating of Nellie's bedroom. Some of the things we tackled this summer:

New sign-Jake Sadler; installed and landscaped by Nancy and Jim Long

Scraping of front porch; installation of replacement trim above front steps--Tim Fahy and Rick Ameika

West side of museum re-landscaped with two butterfly bushes--Nancy and Jim Long

Sandstone sink moved to shed--Peter Pagani and his construction crew and Tim Fahy

Shed cleaned and reorganized--Nancy and Tim Fahy

Painting in Nellie's bedroom--Mary Temple and Nancy Long

Removal of a large hornet's nest on the east side of the museum--Tim Fahy

Repair and painting of picnic table—Tim Fahy

Stone floor completed in east side of barn—Tim Fahy

News from the Archivist-Lynn Kloter Fahy

Shirley Hayden, Hilary Brady and I were busy in the archives this summer. Hilary has been working on the Ellington Grange records. Shirley worked on the Aborn collection and scanned some of the diaries from the museum collection, the Kibbe ones in particular. She found one in which the writer was unidentified and played "History Detective" to solve the mystery.



Annie Neelans' diary has a sewing needle in it!

Shirley wrote, "The author describes sewing for various people, some in Ellington, some in Enfield, and some in Longmeadow. She sewed for someone or other virtually every day ... I have now come up with a candidate for who wrote this diary: Annie Neelans of Enfield. She was a seamstress ... her sister Martha married an Ellington man, Frank Nangle. In the 1900 census, Frank and Martha Nangle lived in Enfield, and Annie Neelans lived with them." The Nangles later lived on a farm in Ellington at the corner of Pinney and Middle Rd.

Mildred Dimock donated a collection of obituaries of Ellington residents from the 1980s to the present, as well as funeral programs and cards. They are a good source of genealogical information, and I am photocopying the newspaper clippings for preservation. Everything will be stored in an acid-free document box and the names entered in PastPerfect Museum software, so that we can locate and retrieve the items when we need them.

News from the President-Tim Fahy

2011-2012 EHS Officers--At our annual meeting and potluck supper on June 23th at the Hall Memorial Library, members accepted the slate of officers as presented: President, Tim Fahy; Vice-President, Denise Archibald; Treasurer, Mary Temple; Recording Secretary, Santina Fiore. The Executive Board includes current officers as well as members Dave Lehmann, Jim Stoughton, Karyn Kloter, Hilary Brady, Curator Nancy Long, and Archivist Lynn Kloter Fahy.

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

Membership dues are due in September and we have enclosed a form to fill out and include with your dues payment.

Ellington Historical Society Membership Dues

Class of Membership	_____	Individual \$10.00
	_____	Senior Individual \$8.00 (Over 62)
	_____	Family \$20.00
	_____	Senior Family \$15.00 (Over 62)
(Check one)	_____	Patron \$25.00
	_____	Business \$50.00

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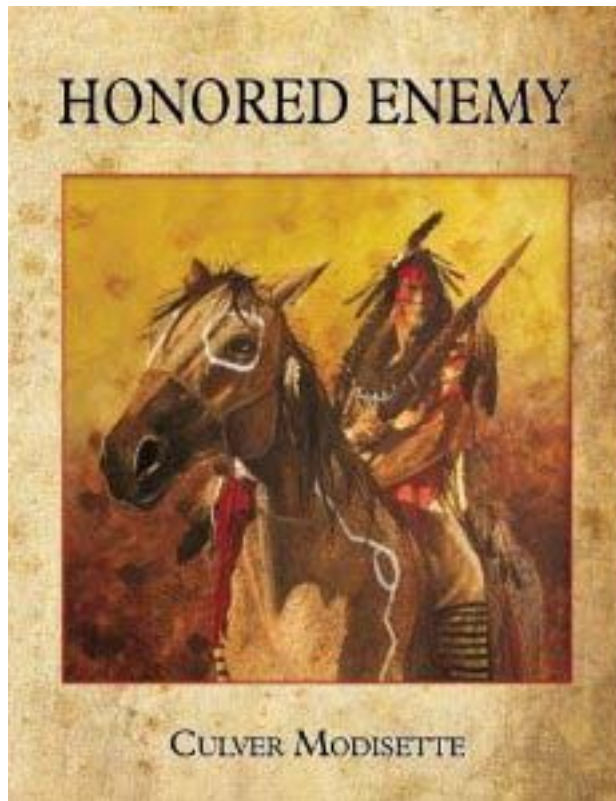
* If you would like to receive your EHS newsletter by e-mail as a Microsoft Word file instead of "snail mail," please include your e-mail address.

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October 2011 Newsletter

October Meeting Notice

The Ellington Historical Society will meet on Thursday, October 27, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hall Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. After a brief business meeting, Culver Modisette of Stafford, president of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust, will present a program about his just released historical novel, *Honored Enemy*. He will be speaking about the Native American tribes and the U.S. Cavalry in the Great Southwest in the late 1800s, as well as his research methods. The program is free, and the public is invited. New members are always welcome. Bakers for the meeting will be Connie Nichols and Bev Nichols.



“This historical novel adheres to the history of the Great Southwest in the late 1800s, a past shared by the Comanche, Kiowa and Cheyenne tribes, as well as their adversaries, the United States Cavalry. Colonel Ranald Mackenzie’s Fourth Cavalry was pitted against Comanche war chief, Quanah Parker, and his Indian allies in a struggle for dominance in Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma, as the whites recklessly squandered the vast buffalo herds.

Written after extensive research, the book sheds light on little-known events of the era, culminating in Parker’s friendship with President Theodore Roosevelt. As the saying goes, ‘Truth is stranger than fiction.’ Liberally illustrated by historic photographs, the book appeals to readers for enjoyment, as well as those who seek little-known history of the Southwest. The plight of the tribes, the loss of their mainstay food source, the buffalo, and the usurpation of their lands, will give pause to all Americans young and old.”—amazon.com

New Member: Bev Nichols

News from the Curator-Nancy Long

The museum has closed for the season and our work continues to complete Nellie’s bedroom. The furniture has been placed and we are now working on the finishing touches. The public will be directed into Nellie’s bedroom and through the walk through closet into the front bedroom, which has been rearranged to accommodate the traffic. Lots of surprises for all!



The museum will be open for *Winterfest* on Saturday, December 3, from 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. We will be contacting our members for volunteers in the museum that day. The showcasing of Nellie's bedroom will be the big item for the open house but we will also have a display in the front parlor about the house itself, which will celebrate its 200th birthday in 2012.

The following items have been donated to the museum in 2011 (some donations may not all be listed in order to conserve newsletter space).

L. James McKnight: horse drawn ice cutter, ice tongs, studded horse shoes

Deborah Wallace: Vintage ladies petticoats, shawl, collar insert

Elizabeth McCarthy: Victorian beaded cape

Leo & Mary Miller: Copy of Proprietor's map of Ellington Period 1728-1752

Mildred Dimock: Wedding gown, hat boxes, top hats, baptism dress of Hazel Dimock Bedard, wedding dress of Hazel Dimock Bedard, clipped obituaries, class photo from Rockville High 1928

Herman Dahl: Hand carved taps for maple sugaring, mounted display of skeleton keys

News from the Archivist-Lynn Kloter Fahy

In my 2009 book, *Crystal Lake, Tolland County*, there is a photograph of a house which was built on a hill to the west of the lake in 1832 by Warren Richardson, who married Luna Dimock. I read in her son Merrick's autobiography, *Looking Back*, that Luna earned money to furnish the house by braiding palm leaf hats for the slaves of Southern planters. This summer, in the Nellie McKnight Museum, I found a hand-written reference to sacks of palm leaves being shipped to Ellington, and further research revealed that many New England housewives earned extra money by braiding palm leaf hats.

<http://www.ellingtonhistsoc.org/>

Membership dues were due in September and we have enclosed a form to fill out and include with your dues payment, *if you have not paid them yet.*

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* If you would like to receive your EHS newsletter by e-mail as a Microsoft Word file instead of "snail mail," please include your e-mail address.

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