

**THE FARMINGTON VALLEY CT HERITAGE NETWORK  
PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 18, 2024

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## **“Bad Boys and Wicked Women of Farmington”**

### ***Betty Coykendall Presents Tales of Lesser Known but Undeniably Fascinating Characters***

The Farmington Valley CT Heritage Network (<https://www.farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org/>) is pleased to offer a presentation with **Betty Coykendall**, Town of Farmington Historian twice over, on **Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm** at the **Stanley-Whitman House**, 37 High Street, Farmington (<https://s-wh.org/>). Betty will transport attendees back in time with stories of individuals who left an indelible mark on Farmington’s lore. In addition to providing a rousing Thursday night activity for the community, her talk will set the stage for the group’s April 27<sup>th</sup> bus tour, the final in its “*Lively Lore & Legend: Fact or Fiction?*” series exploring the Valley’s long-standing legends, with a focus this year on Farmington itself. Admission to Betty’s presentation is \$5 per person for those not also joining the bus tour. Anyone interested in learning more about the bus tour can visit <https://www.farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org/>, email [nancy@farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org](mailto:nancy@farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org), or call 860.680.5298. (The \$50 bus tour fee includes tour, lunch, and the pre-tour lecture.) Parking for the lecture is available at the museum, on the street opposite the museum, and at the nearby Barney Library.

From murderers to deserters, staid old Farmington had its share of scoundrels. Betty’s lecture will captivate attendees with stories of the intriguing lives and misdeeds of these historical figures. She will also challenge participants to question the authenticity of the legends, prompting discussion on whether these tales are grounded in fact or simply products of imagination. In addition, Betty elaborates, “We will discuss the fun and frustration of historical research when we are trying to discover the truth. How do we do that, and lacking it should we start a new legend?” Through interactive discussions, attendees will gain insights into the methods employed in historical inquiry and the challenges inherent in separating fact from fiction. This compelling exploration of Farmington’s colorful history is not to be missed!

**Betty Coykendall** came to Farmington in 1972. She became a West End Library volunteer, and her interest in local history was spurred by an open house whose theme was the old houses of Unionville. Research for that led her to the Town Hall, where she learned of the historical richness of old documents preserved there. Betty joined the board of the Farmington Historical Society, eventually becoming its President. She was named Town Historian 1990-1993; in 2014, she took on the job once again and served for five more years. She started as a volunteer at the Stanley-Whitman House in 2010 and was soon assigned to the project of creating an inventory of their archives, a task never before done. She was joined by Paul Kramer (1942-2019) in this effort, and they found a historically rich collection that had previously been rarely used or researched. Her research expertise is mining factual information from documents. Her fun with these projects is to put facts together, interpret them in a sensible way, and then share that knowledge with the public.

Proceeds from the tour benefit **The Farmington Valley CT Heritage Network**, whose mission is to enhance appreciation of the rich history of Connecticut's Farmington Valley by promoting collaboration and communication among heritage groups and raising cultural awareness through programming and tours. Learn more at <https://www.farmingtonvalleyctheritage.org/>.

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**Photo caption:** Betty Coykendall presents a lecture Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm at The Stanley-Whitman House in Farmington on "Bad Boys and Wicked Women of Farmington." The lecture and its related bus tour the following Saturday are offered by the Farmington Valley CT Heritage Network.