

# Delanos share appreciation of family history, including roots in Fairhaven

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Editor

FAIRHAVEN — A Delano Kindred Reunion brought distant cousins from near and far last weekend to share an appreciation of their ancestors while exploring their roots in Fairhaven.

They visited the family homestead and graves and listened to speakers who've researched the exploits and achievements of Delanos from such far reaches as China and Chile.

On Friday afternoon in the Town Hall auditorium, Jorge Delano shared research on "Captain Paul Delano and the Chilean Line." Cynthia Owen Philip then talked about "The Delanos and their New England Friends in the Mid-Hudson Valley." And later that evening, following a dinner at the Century House, Frederic Delano Grant Jr., who is on the Riverside Cemetery board, spoke on the theme, "Enterprising Delanos and the China Trade."

Fairhaven's own Natalie Hemingway perhaps captured the essence of the gathering best when she talked about the importance of "keeping history alive." She hosted a tour of the Warren Delano II home, now a bed and breakfast at 39 Walnut St. Friday by impersonating Sara Delano Roosevelt and led a bus tour, including stops at gravesites, on Saturday.

Those interested in digging deeper into their roots were able to consult with Muriel Curtis Cushing, a genealogist who is publishing her latest research with a focus on Fairhaven families. Ms. Cushing is the group's president.

Ms. Phillips explained how connections with prominent families in New York led the Delanos to build estates in the Mid-Hudson Valley. The connections included a marriage into the Astor family.

But the Delanos kept the house in Fairhaven for many years until selling it in the 1940s. Some still own property in the South Coast and maintain strong ties here.

Ms. Phillips ended her talk by reading a letter from Sara Delano Roosevelt to Franklin upon the death of her father. "It seems very strange to be here without my dear father," she wrote, "... and it seems as if we needed him, but I see him vividly before me when I think of him united with my dear mother and the children they have lost and with his own father, mother, brother and sisters whom he never forgot and loved so dearly. It is a great deal for you dear Franklin to have known well and be intimately associated both at Fair Haven and Algonac with your grandparents. I do not feel that in the present day we can ever find quite such lives, but we may struggle to be worthy of them."

A president's message from Ms. Cushing says learning about their Delano ancestors can be an enlightening

experience.

"Learning of their lives, their problems and their accomplishments, gives us a better understanding of our own lives. We have a better understanding of why we think as we do and why we react in certain ways to our everyday problems and demands. We might also discover why we look as we do and what relative we most resemble.

"It has always amazed me when some people do not know the maiden name of their grandmother. I find that to be so sad that grandmother lived, laughed and cried, yet her descendants know so little about her. I think it is such an exciting adventure to discover our 'roots' and it should be our aim to make our ancestors lives memorable and unforgettable."

She signed it, "Relatively yours, Muriel."