

ROTARY TALK ON PRESERVATION

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GOOD AFTERNOON AND THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME HERE TO SPEAK WITH YOU TODAY ABOUT PRESERVATION. I'M CAROLYN IVANOFF AND I'M A HOUSEMASTER AT SHELTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL AND ACTIVE IN SEVERAL OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND LOCAL AND NATIONAL PRESERVATIONS ISSUES. I KNOW THAT FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MEETINGS, ROTARY WILL BE HOSTING SEVERAL OF US INVOLVED IN THE CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL COMMITTEE IN SHELTON, INCLUDING JIM CONNERY AS COL. WOOSTER IN AN INFORMATIONAL SERIES ON PRESERVATION AND OUR CIVIL WAR HISTORY. BUT THE PRESERVATION MESSAGE NEEDS TO BE MUCH BROADER THAN SIMPLY THE CIVIL WAR ALTHOUGH THIS TALK IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES FOR YOU ON THAT GENRE. BEFORE I REALLY GET STARTED I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THIS PRESERVATION TALK IS NOT ABOUT HUGGING EVERY TREE AND SAVING EVERY BUILDING, THAT WOULD BE A DILUTION OF THE PRESERVATION MISSION THAT I WOULD LIKE EVERYONE TO THINK ABOUT TODAY. LOCALLY, OUR VALLEY HAS BEEN WITNESS TO A RICH HISTORY OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND OFTEN WE REMAIN EITHER UNAWARE OF THIS, OR INDIFFERENT TO IT. IT IS INDIFFERENCE ESPECIALLY THAT IS THE TRUE ENEMY OF PRESERVATION. PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION, OR EDUCATION AND PRESERVATION, ARE THE TWIN PILLARS OF A STRONG AND FORWARD LOOKING COMMUNITY. IRONICALLY WHEN WE TALK ABOUT PRESERVATION WE ARE TALKING ABOUT OUR PAST, BUT WE USE OUR PAST TO LOOK FORWARD TO A STRONG AND BRIGHT FUTURE. SO TODAY I'LL BE SPEAKING TO YOU ABOUT NOT ONLY PRESERVATION, BUT EDUCATION, HONOR AND MEMORY.

I SPEAK TO YOU TODAY NOT AS A PERSON FROM SHELTON, OR SEYMOUR OR THE VALLEY, NOT AS A PERSON FROM CONNECTICUT, NOT AS A NORTHERNER, NOT AS A SOUTHERNER, BUT AS AN AMERICAN. I SPEAK TODAY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OUR HISTORY. HEAR ME FOR MY CAUSE.

IF YOU REMEMBER THOSE WORDS PARAPHRASE ONE OF THE GREATEST SPEECHES IN ALL U.S. HISTORY YOU'RE RIGHT. DANIEL WEBSTER'S WORDS CHALLENGING THE NATION TO PRESERVE THE UNION ARE AMONG THE GREATEST AND MOST POIGNANT IN THE SPEECHES OF OUR COUNTRY. WEBSTER'S GREATEST SPEECH WRECKED HIS POLITICAL CAREER, BUT HE SPOKE OUT FOR WHAT HE BELIEVED AND LOVED, THE PRESERVATION OF OUR NATION. WHAT'S RIGHT IS NOT ALWAYS POPULAR AND WHAT IS POPULAR IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT. IT TAKES GUTS AND VISION TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, EVEN IN THE FACE OF GREAT PERSONAL OR FINANCIAL COST.

I'D LIKE TO CHALLENGE ALL OF YOU HERE TODAY TO DO AS THE CWPT SLOGAN GOES....MAKE HISTORY BY SAVING HISTORY. LINCOLN SAID, "MY FELLOW CITIZENS, WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY." NO WE CANNOT, BUT MY MESSAGE HERE TODAY IS THAT WE SURE CAN MESS IT UP! BY DISREGARDING IT, BY NEGLECTING TO EDUCATE OUR NATION'S YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES AS TO ITS IMPORTANCE IN OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY, BY RECKLESS DEVELOPMENT AND RANDOM DISREGARD FOR OUR NATIONAL AND LOCAL HISTORICAL RESOURCES AND HALLOWED GROUNDS. THE PRESERVATION MESSAGE TO OUR NATION AND OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS TO BE THAT WE MUST SAVE THE IRREPLACEABLE

HALLOWED GROUNDS AND HISTORIC SITES OF OUR HERITAGE, AND ENSURE THEY DO NOT FACE DESTRUCTION AND ARE AVAILABLE TO FUTURE AMERICAN GENERATIONS.

BEING A FORMER HISTORY TEACHER, I THINK ABOUT HISTORY QUITE OFTEN. FOR ME AS AN AMERICAN THERE IS NO HISTORY MORE RELEVANT AND COMPELLING THAN THAT OF THE CIVIL WAR THAT PRESERVED OUR NATION. I LOVE CIVIL WAR HISTORY, BUT I ALSO LOVE OUR LOCAL VALLEY HISTORY. OUR HISTORY IS UNDER SEIGE, BOTH LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY. IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF THE CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION TRUST, A CONSERVATION INITIATIVE, A LOCAL LAND TRUST, A LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, I CHALLENGE YOU TO BECOME ONE. FOR YEARS I HAVE DRIVEN ALL OVER THE LANDSCAPE OF THIS CONTINENT. I VISIT NUMEROUS HISTORICAL SITES AND NATIONAL PARKS, SOME SUMMERS WE HAVE DRIVEN 10,000 MILES OR MORE. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT BOTHERS ME DEEPLY AS WE TRAVEL, AND COMMITS ME MORE AND MORE DEEPLY TO THE PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION MISSION, IS THE SPRAWLING DEVELOPMENT EVERYWHERE THAT MAKES EVERY PLACE LOOK THE SAME. EVERY PLACE IS BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE THE POST ROAD. IN MANY AREAS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESCAPE THE RECKLESS DEVELOPMENT THAT IS ENCROACHING ON, OR DESTROYING THE IMPORTANT PLACES OF OUR NATIONAL AND LOCAL HERITAGE. THIS DANGER IS NOT CONTAINED TO DISTANT PLACES ALONE, OR CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS, IT IS HAPPENING RIGHT HERE IN OUR OWN VALLEY. AGAIN THIS IS NOT A MESSAGE ABOUT HUGGING EVERY TREE AND SAVING EVERY OLD WRECK OF A BUILDING.

I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT HISTORY AND TEACHERS FOR A MINUTE. THE FOREMOST LIVING CIVIL WAR HISTORIAN, DR. JAMES I. ROBERTSON REITERATES THIS THEME EVERY TIME HE SPEAKS WITH TEACHERS AT A NATIONAL CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION CONFERENCE. HISTORY TEACHERS ARE A CRUCIAL AND PRIVILEGED LINK IN OUR NATION. WE HAVE THE GLUE THAT BINDS THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT AND MAKES US STRONG. BUD ROBERTSON SAYS THAT NO NATION OR COMMUNITY THAT HAS BROKEN FAITH WITH ITS PAST HAS EVER SUCCEEDED. WITHOUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF OUR HISTORY OUR NATION HAS NO FUTURE.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY WILL NOT GIVE OUR CHILDREN CULTURE AND TOLERANCE. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE AND MATH ARE INDEED CRUCIAL TO OUR SURVIVAL, BUT WITHOUT LEARNING ABOUT WHO WE ARE, WITHOUT TRANSMITTING TO OUR CHILDREN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN, HOW WE BECAME AMERICANS, AND WHY ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF OUR HISTORY IS AS MUCH ABOUT BECOMING WHO WE ARE AS ABOUT BEING WHO WE ARE, WITH OUT THIS KNOWLEDGE, WE ARE ADRIFT. OUR HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE IS THE SOUL OF OUR NATION AND IT IS OUR MISSION TO HELP OUR STUDENTS AND CITIZENS UNDERSTAND IT. IT IS A COMPELLING STORY THAT TOLD CORRECTLY NO STUDENT OR CITIZEN CAN TURN AWAY FROM. TOLD CORRECTLY OUR NATIONAL STORY IS TRULY EDUCATION IN A WORLD WHERE SO MUCH THAT WE TERM EDUCATION IS SIMPLY TRAINING. WE CAN TRAIN OUR FAMILY PETS, WE WANT OUR CITIZENS AND STUDENTS TO BE EDUCATED. TEACHING HISTORY, PRESERVING THAT HISTORY, IS TRULY PLANTING THE SEEDS OF A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE.

I BELIEVE THAT SOCIAL STUDIES AND HISTORY TEACHERS HAVE UNIQUE ADVANTAGES AND UNIQUE PRESSURES. THIS IS AN ERA OF INTENSE CRITICAL SCRUTINY ON ALL OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS. SOMETIMES IT SEEMS ALL WE GARNER IS CONTEMPT AND WE ARE OFTEN TOLD WE DO NOTHING RIGHT. EVERY POLITICIAN AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP HAS AN AGENDA THEY WANT US TO PERPETRATE ON OUR STUDENTS. IN ADDITION, WE ARE TOLD TO PERFORM TEST SCORE MIRACLES WITH LIMITED RESOURCES, DIFFICULT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT OUR STUDENTS FAR MORE DEEPLY THAN THE HOURS THEY SPEND IN SCHOOL. I BELIEVE HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES (OFTEN CONSIDERED A THROW AWAY OR EXTRA NICE TO DO BUT NOT ALWAYS NECESSARY CURRICULUM BECAUSE HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES ARE NOT TESTED IN THE HIGH STAKES GAME) I BELIEVE HISTORY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT WE CAN TEACH. IN A WORLD OF FORMULAIC TEACHING, AND CONCEPTS OF EDUCATION THAT HAVE MORE TO DO WITH TRAINING THAN TRUE EDUCATION, WITH HISTORY WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH A SUBJECT THAT ALLOWS US TO BE THE PRESERVERS AND PURVEYORS OF OUR GREAT REPUBLIC'S IDENTITY. TEACHING HISTORY TO OUR STUDENTS PRESENTS THEM WITH THE MOST ENGAGING, COMPELLING, INTERDISCIPLINARY, CROSS-CURRICULAR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THEY WILL EVER HAVE. IT IS ABSOLUTELY FASCINATING AND ALLOWS US TO ASK OUR STUDENTS ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS THAT WILL LEAD THEM TO ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY. PRESERVATION OF TANGIBLE SITES, CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES IS CRUCIAL TO THIS HERITAGE.

WE CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE UNITED STATES HISTORY WAS, BOTH ON A LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL. ONE OF THE THINGS I'M ALWAYS SENSITIVE TO ARE THE ERA'S OF U.S. HISTORY WHERE 17 & 18 YEAR OLDS WERE NOT COMPELLED TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL, AND THERE WAS NO COMPULSORY EDUCATION MANDATE, BUT THESE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WERE CALLED IN CERTAIN GENERATIONS TO MAKE MONUMENTAL DECISIONS LITTLE ASSOCIATED WITH THE DESKS AND CHAIRS AND TEXTBOOKS OF A CLASSROOM. MANY WERE CALLED TO MEET THEIR DESTINIES IN LITTLE KNOWN PLACES WITH NAMES THAT RESOUND IN U.S. HISTORY: LEXINGTON, CONCORD, GUIFORD COURT HOUSE, NEW ORLEANS, SHARPSBURG, SHILOH, PERRYVILLE, SPOTSLVANIA COURT HOUSE, SAN JUAN HILL, CHATEAU-THEIRRY, OMAHA BEACH, THE ARDENNES, BATAN, IWO JIMA, SAIPAN, TINIAN, INCHON, CHOSEN RESERVOIR, TET, IRA DRANG, BERIUT, OKLAHOMA CITY, THE WORLD TRADE CENTER, IRAQ AND AFGANISTAN. EVERY ONE OF THESE GENERATIONS WHO CAME FORWARD AND PARTICIPATE IN THESE EVENTS MADE THEIR DECISIONS ON WHAT THEY LEARNED AND BELIEVED ABOUT OUR HISTORY AND OUR NATION. MANY WERE GENERATIONS THAT "KNEW US NOT AND THAT WE KNOW NOT OF" BUT GENERATIONS THAT WE MUST REMEMBER AND THAT WE MUST TEACH OUR STUDENTS AND CITIZENS NEVER TO FORGET. FDR WOULD SAY TO SOME GENERATIONS MUCH IS GIVEN, FOR SOME GENERATIONS MUCH IS EXPECTED. WE NEED TO HONOR AND REMEMBER.

WE MUST REMEMBER THE PAST GENERATIONS FOR THEIR FATEFUL DECISIONS, THEIR HONOR IN FIGHTING FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVED IN, FOR THEIR SACRIFICE AND COURAGE ON BATTLEFIELDS AND THE HOMEFRONT. WE MUST REMEMBER PAST GENERATIONS FOR WHAT

THEY ULTIMATELY MADE OF OUR NATION FOR US. AND WE HAD BETTER BE MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS NOW FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. PRESERVING BATTLEFIELDS, HISTORIC SITES, LAND AND STRUCTURES ALLOWS US TO VISIT AND WITNESS OUR PAST. IT'S ABOUT REMEMBERING AND HONORING. IT'S ABOUT OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY. IT'S ABOUT MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN OURSELVES AND GENERATIONS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE AND NOT BREAKING THAT LINK. IT'S ABOUT PRESERVING AND UNDERSTANDING THOSE CONNECTIONS SO THAT OUR HERITAGE CAN BE PASSED ON TO OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY. WE MUST NOT BETRAY IT. WE MUST PRESERVE IT, AND WE MUST EDUCATE, SO WE CAN TRANSMIT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES AND BLESSINGS THAT THE SACRIFICES OF EARLIER AMERICAN GENERATIONS FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT AND ALL THE GENERATIONS THAT CAME BEFORE HAVE BESTOWED UPON US.

MANY TIMES PRESERVATION RECEIVES PUBLIC ATTENTION AND SUPPORT ONLY IN THE CASE OF THE LARGE BATTLES, BIG MONEY, SELECTED INTERESTS THAT DETERMINE IMPORTANCE. I ASK YOU; HOWEVER, WHAT IS THE VALUE OF ALL OF THE LAND WHERE AMERICANS PAID FOR THEIR BELIEFS WITH THEIR LIVES? WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE LOCAL SITES, OUR CEMETERIES, OUR FARMS, OUR OPEN SPACES, OUR HISTORIC BUILDINGS? WHAT IS THEIR VALUE? I BELIEVE OUR HISTORY IS PRICELESS AND IT DESERVES OUR PROTECTION.

ANYONE WHO CARES ABOUT AND UNDERSTANDS THE HISTORY OF OUR NATION CARES ABOUT THE CIVIL WAR. ANYONE WHO CARES ABOUT CIVIL WAR HISTORY UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PRESERVATION OF THE

LAND WHERE GREAT STRUGGLES FORGED OUR NATION IS CENTRAL TO OUR ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND THAT HISTORY. CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS ARE THE OPEN AIR CLASSROOMS OF OUR NATION. PRESERVATION OF THESE NATIONAL TREASURES WILL BE OUR GENERATION'S GIFT TO OUR CHILDREN AND THE FUTURE GENERATIONS OF OUR GREAT COUNTRY. WE CANNOT ACCEPT FAILURE IN THIS GREAT TASK. AGAIN, FOR US HERE IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CIVIL WAR, THERE ARE NO CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS IN CONNECTICUT, BUT IT'S ALSO ABOUT OUR PRECIOUS LOCAL LANDMARKS, OUR FARMS, AND CEMETERIES, IMPORTANT BUILDINGS. ONE ASIDE HERE, OUR VALLEY HAS A RICH AND NOBLE CIVIL WAR HISTORY THAT OFTEN IS NOT REMEMBERED OR CELEBRATED. THAT'S WHY WHAT JIM DOES FOR COL. WOOSTER AND WHY THE SHELTON CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL COMMITTEE MAKES SUCH AN IMPORTANT CIVIC CONTRIBUTION. I KNOW YOU'LL BE HEARING MORE ABOUT THE WORK OF THE MONUMENT COMMITTEE IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS. PRESERVATION TAKES MANY FORMS.

THAT THE PRESERVATION COMMUNITY STANDS ON THE BRINK OF ETERNITY IN THE PRESERVATION STRUGGLE IS APPARENT TO ANYONE WHO VISITS VALLEY FORGE IN PA WHERE YOU CAN SEE HIGH RISE DEVELOPMENT SURROUNDING THE NATIONAL PARK WHEN YOU LOOK IN ANY DIRECTION. VISIT THE OAK GROVE IN SHARPSBURG WHERE ROBERT E. LEE MADE HIS HEADQUARTERS DURING THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM. ALONG SIDE THAT BEAUTIFUL, QUIET SHRINKING STAND OF OAK TREES MARKED AS LEE'S HEADQUARTERS BY A GRANITE TABLET, ONE TURNS TO SEE DIRECTLY ALONG SIDE A STRIP OF BRAND NEW, COOKIE CUTTER MODERN HOUSES WITH THEIR FOUNDATIONS ALMOST ADJACENT TO THE GROVE ALONG THE BOONSBOROUGH PIKE. TRY TO CROSS THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE OLD STONE HOUSE ON MANASSAS

BATTLEFIELD, WITHOUT BEING HIT AT THE BUSY CORNER OF THE WARRENTON TURNPIKE AND MANASSAS SUDLEY ROAD. STAND IN THE BACK YARD OF THE BELLE GROVE PLANTATION AT THE HEART OF THE CEDAR CREEK BATTLEFIELD AND HEAR AND SEE THE HUGE TRUCKS POURING IN AND OUT OF THE HUGE QUARRY THAT RIPS THROUGH THE LAND NEXT TO THE BATTLEFIELD. CLOSER TO HOME, WALK THE CANAL LOCKS IN SHELTON, LOOK OVER THE VALLEY FROM THE RIVER WALK, THE GREENWAY, ALONG THE RIVERS AND TRACKS. THEN LOOK AT THE NEW STEEPLE ON STERLING OPERA HOUSE. LOOK AT THE IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE THE GREENWAYS ARE CREATING ALONG OUR RIVERS. ROAM THROUGH OUR HISTORIC CEMETERIES, AND DRIVE ALONG THE ROADS WHERE THE FARMS OF THE VALLEY REMAIN, OR MAY BE LONG GONE. WE HAVE SOME CAUSE FOR CELEBRATING NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRESERVATION VICTORIES, BUT WE HAVE MORE CAUSE FOR WORRY THAT MANY OF THE HERITAGE SITES OF OUR NATION, AND THE OLD VALLEY, WILL SHORTLY BE GONE FOREVER.

EVERYONE DEDICATED TO PRESERVATION KNOWS THAT WE STAND AT THE ABYSS. WE WILL EITHER PRESERVE AND PROTECT OUR HALLOWED GROUND AND IMPORTANT LOCAL SITES NOW FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, OR WE WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIND THEM AGAIN. THEY WILL BE DEMOLITIONED, OR PAVED OVER, OR FOREVER BURRIED UNDER THE STRIP MALLS, ASPHALT, MC MANSIONS, AND TRACT HOUSES THAT WILL DESTROY THEM WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. OUR HISTORY IS UNDER SEIGE. HISTORIC SITES IN FAST GROWING AREAS ARE OFTEN SLATED FOR DESTRUCTION IN THE NAME OF PROFIT AND PROGRESS. NO PLACE IS IMMUNE OR SACRED IN THE FAST PACED, HIGH FINANCE WORLD OF DEVELOPMENT. GET INVOLVED IN PRESERVATION, MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE BATTLE FOR PRESERVATION; RALLY

AROUND THE CAUSE. SUPPORT EDUCATION, SUPPORT THE CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION TRUST, YOUR LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, OPEN SPACES, LOCAL LAND TRUSTS AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEES. IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER JOIN. IF YOU ARE ALREADY A MEMBER, PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT. GOD BLESS AMERICA, OUR UNION, AND OUR GREAT REPUBLIC. LOOK FORWARD FROM THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE SO WE KNOW WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND WHERE WE WILL GO. THANK YOU.