



TOWN OF VERNON

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MAYOR CHAMPAGNE: COGSWELL MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN RESTORED TO DOWNTOWN ROCKVILLE



Photos Courtesy of the Vernon Mayor's Office

(Vernon, CT) – Mayor Daniel A. Champagne today announced that the replica of the Dr. Henry D. Cogswell Fountain has been fully restored and returned to the Town's Central Park Green.

Mrs. Rosetta Pitkat, a one hundred-two year old lifelong resident of Vernon whose generosity commissioned the replicated statue, attended the unveiling ceremony. *"The Town of Vernon is most grateful for the generosity of Mrs. Pitkat and her commitment to seeing the statue returned to the citizens of Vernon,"* said Mayor Champagne. About thirty guests attended the ceremony including friends of Mrs. Pitkat, Council members, the Superintendent of Schools, residents, and town employees.

"Mrs. Pitkat has a lengthy history of a charitable acts", said Champagne. *"In addition to her donation to restore the fountain, she has also given generously to our schools,"* he said. Pitkat, a teacher in the Vernon School system for thirty-five years, gave \$100,000 as scholarship funds for a Rockville High senior who is pursuing teaching. *"She has an enduring love and appreciation for Rockville, and it's only fitting we honor her request to see this statue stand again on the town green"* said Champagne.



MAYOR
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The iconic Cogswell sculpture had been removed for inspection in March of 2013, due several stress fractures. *"I would also like to thank Bundy Motors for their craftsmanship in repairing and restoring the Cogswell Statue, it looks remarkable,"* said Champagne. The sculpture had been re-installed in 2004, a part of the beautification of Central Park.

Originally cast in zinc alloy 1883, the first Cogswell fountain was topped with a life-sized statue of Cogswell holding a glass of water in one hand and a copy of the Temperance Pledge in the other. It was erected in honor of Dr. Henry Cogswell's cousin, William T. Cogswell, a local builder.

Dr. Henry Cogswell was a millionaire dentist, temperance crusader, and philanthropist. He pledged to erect a fountain for every 100 saloons across the country.

On July 4, 1885, the statue was stolen and dumped into Snipsic Lake. After its recovery, it disappeared a short time later. On July 4, 1908, the statue appeared again as part of the Town's Centennial Celebration. The statue was eventually donated and melted as part of the World War II scrap metal drive.

"Vernon is fortunate to have a rich and colorful history," said Champagne. *"Any time we can take a moment together, as a community, and celebrate our heritage, it's a good day,"* he said.

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