



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Editorial Contact:

Andres A. Verzosa  
(860) 677-9222 ext. 305  
[averzosa@stanleywhitman.org](mailto:averzosa@stanleywhitman.org)

### **Stanley-Whitman House Offers Play About CT's Witch Panic and Trials**

FARMINGTON, Conn. – The Mary Barnes Society at Stanley-Whitman House, a ca. 1720 National Historic Landmark located in the historic village of Farmington, is pleased to announce a newly commissioned play, *The Last Night*, in a live staged reading to be offered on Saturday, January 21st, to mark the 360th anniversary of the end of the accusations, persecution, and hanging for witchcraft in the Connecticut Colony.

Written by actors Debra Walsh and Virginia Wolf, the play tells the compelling story of the witch panics and trials of 17th-century Connecticut Colony through the portrayal of the accused Mary Barnes and Rebecca Greensmith. It is based on both historical research and informed conjecture, revealing a dramatization about their last night together before being hanged.

Scant information was available, but Walsh and Wolf have been fully immersed in this particular subject as actors for some time. Walsh recently authored and staged a reading of a play about the accused Rebecca Greensmith last summer, *The Hanging of Rebecca*, for The Noah Webster House and West Hartford Historical Society. Wolf was originally inspired by her initial theatrical portrayal of Mary Barnes at Stanley-Whitman House. Later, through her theater company, aptly called Herstory Theater, she produced and presented, *Panic in Connecticut: Accused Witches Have Their Say*, bringing to life five women, including Barnes, accused of witchcraft in Connecticut thirty years before the infamous Salem trials.

Tickets for the live staged reading of *The Last Night* are available through the museum website at <https://s-wh.org/mary-barnes-day>. Tickets \$20 for members and \$25 for non members. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Performance starts at 7:00 pm. A talkback session to follow immediately afterward.

On Wednesday January 25th at 7:00 pm, there will be a video premiere of the play, *The Last Night*, which will be free and online. Immediately after the screening a theater talkback will follow with the actors and director. FMI: <https://s-wh.org/mary-barnes-day>.

The Mary Barnes Society at Stanley-Whitman House is dedicated to supporting the study of the Connecticut Witch Trials, with the goal of a deeper understanding of the people and cultures of this seminal time in history. Named for Mary Barnes, a Farmington woman who was executed for witchcraft on January 25, 1663, the Society endeavors to mark the anniversary of her hanging with scholarly and humanities based projects and works. FMI: <https://s-wh.org/the-mary-barnes-society> or [averzosa@stanleywhitman.org](mailto:averzosa@stanleywhitman.org).

Stanley-Whitman House, a National Historic Landmark, is a living history center and Museum that teaches through the collection, preservation, research, and dynamic interpretation of the history and culture of 17th- to 19th-Century Farmington, CT. Hours of operation are Wednesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and by appointment with the last tour leaving at 3:00 pm. FMI: <https://s-wh.org/>.