



THE JONATHAN DICKERMAN HOUSE

## The Hamden Historical Society Newsletter Spring 2001

Dickerman House Clean-up:  
**June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:00 A.M.**  
Members Welcomed

## TIME TO GET TOGETHER

Our ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Wednesday night, **May 16th** beginning at **7:00** in the Social Hall of the Miller Library Complex located at 2901 Dixwell Avenue. The Entrance is at the rear of the building through the Senior Center. The hallway door connecting the front main entrance to the Senior Center is locked in the evenings. **Please plan to attend.** There will be a brief report, election of officers, refreshments and a short discussion on Mark Twain's, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Professor Scott McLean of Quinnipiac University is invited to speak on this interesting topic. Dr. McLean is a professor of political science and a political analyst at the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. We hope to see all of you there.

### Funding for the Dickerman House Approved

It was officially announced that funding of the \$12,500 grant for improvements to the Jonathan Dickerman House chimney and fireplace project restoration is in place. The Historic Restoration Grant was approved by the State Bond Commission in February. Many thanks to Bill Doheny, the late Brian Poirier and Al Gorman for all their work in compiling data, completing applications, running bids and deliberating with state officials in order to get this project rolling. The matching grant money will help pay for stabilizing the chimney and repairing the beehive oven. The restoration should start in the fall and once completed, demonstrations of brick oven cooking may begin.

### Members Alert. . . Hamden Reminiscences

Want to put your memories into writing? Your newsletter is looking for personal perspectives concerning Hamden--memories of people, places or events, childhood or family--that you would be willing to share in the Society's newsletter. The fabric of our heritage represents the people whose lives make up the community. Each of us has a story to weave into our community's tapestry. We would like to publish your words and we request that your submission be about 200 words. If you are willing, write down your memories and send them along to us at: P. O. Box 06512, Hamden, CT 06518. We reserve the right to edit for content and length.

# The Hamden History Room Review

The Hamden Historical Society History Room on the third floor of the Miller Memorial Library has been quite busy these past few months. Since its annual opening in September, dozens of patrons have used this room for private and public research. People of all ages have found material for reports, public studies, family histories and public review. High school students and university undergraduates have found material on the “cottages” of Sleeping Giant, and traces of puritanical beliefs in the early practices of the Mount Carmel Congregation Church; State Department of Environment personnel have found material on the ‘dump’ at Hamden Middle School and Rochford Field; family members have found material on the Bradley houses, Dickerman houses and the Italian Highwood neighborhoods; business people have found photographs of old neighborhoods, buildings and farms which they used for display galleries; theatre groups have found material for Thornton Wilder revivals. The list goes on and on.

In addition to these requests, the History Room was fortunate to receive Nancy Davis Sachse’s papers and letters. Nancy is the author of the much-requested text on Sleeping Giant entitled, *Born Among The Hills*, and a study which she wrote with her husband, William L. Sachse, *Pinocchio in U.S.A.* We are honored by her contribution. We also received photographs by Leeland Robinson and archive correspondence from Ann Reddington and family documents from Kay Jefts.

The History Room benefits from the many gifts of family papers and documents for they often serve as supportive or secondary references in published works and occasionally, they are our only source. The Rochford Papers, for instance, were an enormous help to several of our recent patrons. They offered photographs and long lost newspaper articles clarifying relevant facts about contemporary events and issues. First person narratives and autobiographies donated to the History Room serve to fill our research on neighborhood development and family histories. If members have materials they wish to donate, please contact Al Gorman who will arrange for this to be done.

The History Room also has an e-mail address which patrons and members can use to address their research requests. The address is: [hhs@hamden/library.org](mailto:hhs@hamden/library.org), please address inquiries to Joe Pepe and he will respond as soon as he is able. If members would like special arrangements to open the History Room for research, please contact Joe at 203-281-6426 and leave a message.

## Notes from “Ivesville”

The once proposed Historic District of Ivesville is making news these days. The State Department of Transportation decided to construct a new bridge on Rte. 22 (otherwise known as upper Ives St.) According to the state engineers, the 1935 bridge is both weakened by age and too narrow. Preliminary work on the bridge project has already begun and the construction will take more than a year to finish. Neighborhood residents met with officials from the D.O.T. and successfully persuaded them to soften the appearance of the much wider bridge. It will have open rail sidewalks with stone capped concrete buttresses and wider walkways.

In addition, residents of "Ivesville" gathered at a 'Cease and Desist Order' of the Planning and Zoning Commission Appeals Board, Thursday April 19<sup>th</sup>, to protest Quinnipiac University's policy to house students in residential homes on New Road and Lucian Drive. Homeowners complained that students often parked on the front lawns, left litter strewn on the streets, were unruly and noisy late into the night. Some residents feared that the once bucolic and historic setting of their neighborhood would be ruined if the University were allowed to continue housing students in the 9 homes it recently purchased. The P & Z sustained their complaints and ordered the University to remove students from these homes at the end of the semester. Needless to say, the residents of historic "Ivesville" were elated with the decision

### FINANCIAL MATTERS FOR YEAR 2000

From the desk of our treasurer, Mr. Sam Becker, this is a summary of the basic costs to your Society in order to maintain the Jonathan Dickerman House and property during last year.

Electricity	\$ 487.34
Telephone	258.67
Lawn Service	1100.00
Security	406.80
Water	130.17
Insurance	<u>1053.00</u>
	\$ 3435.98

This cost does not include last year's additional expenses for painting the exterior of the house, some repairs, purchasing and installing the memorial bench for Brian Poirier and having some necessary tree work done. As with any home, our 1792 "J.D. House and property can be an expensive asset which continually requires maintenance and care, restoration and improvement. Remember the "J.D." House is a Hamden landmark reflecting the early 1800's agricultural lifestyle of our community's founding fathers and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Come and visit. In 2000, 436 people did.

Last year the Society's Dues generated \$1805. The generous donation from the Giant Valley Antiques Dealers Association was \$3600 (the antique show being our only fund raiser). Normal organization disbursements (postage, printing, membership, etc.) cost over \$1200 a year.

A note of thanks to our membership for dues renewal and especially to those who made an extra donation. As you know, the Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all volunteer local community organization. A special round of applause is in order for our Treasurer, Mr. Sam Becker. His record keeping, financial advice, monthly and annual reports and watchful "bottom-line" eye, keep your Society informed, secure and honest. More than a Treasurer, he is a treasure!

## *1901 Project. . .Artifacts Wanted*

The International Festival of Arts & Ideas will be held in New Haven, June 14-30, 2001. As part of that celebration, the New Haven Colony Historical Society's museum is mounting an exhibit entitled "New Haven in 1901" Its curator, Frank Mitchell, is searching for artifacts, pictures, appliances, tools and documents that date to 1900-1910. If you have something that might be loaned, please call Kym Olsen at 946-3834. Also the Festival will have a Hamden theme exhibit, designed and created by resident Peter Haller on the Green June 16-19. This exhibit is part of the 2001 Donation element of Project 1901, linking the city's neighborhoods with festival events. Any questions?, call Al Gorman at 248-0017.

**JUST A REMINDER: May 16<sup>th</sup> *Annual Meeting* and  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> *J. D. House Clean-up***

**NEWSLETTER**

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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