



THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER WINTER EDITION 2005

Christian Rendeiro, 1913 – 2004

In December, the Society lost a longtime member with the passing of Chris Rendeiro. Along with his wife Pamela, he was a very active supporter of our Society helping each year at the Antique Show and at the Dickerman House every summer. Chris participated in our meetings, events, and projects. He was generous with his time, encouragement, and dedication to the Society's mission; he will be missed. A testament to his involvement in our Hamden community are his photographs which appear in our publication, *Images of Hamden*, at least three times.

“So long as we live, he too shall live, for he is now a part of us as we remember him.”

Leatherman Cave Hike

On a sunny, yet cool October thirty-first, the Society sponsored a hike to the Leatherman's Cave in West Woods. The guided trek was led by Society member and historian for the Sleeping Giant Park Association, Gil Spenser, and Society Board member and former president, Bill Doheny. The cave, located on property now owned by the Society, was one of the stopping places for Jules Bourglay, commonly referred to as the Leatherman, because he dressed all in leather except for the wooden soles of his shoes. From 1857 until his death in 1889, he walked a regular route of 366 miles from western New York to eastern Connecticut.

We thank the thirty-seven hikers who climbed to the cave, which is 800 feet above sea level. What a view! All were invited back to the J. D. House for refreshments.



Annual Antique Show...Another Opening: And Not Just Another Show.

It started on a gray, rainy Friday as John Carolla and I drove to Joyce Gilbert's house to pick up her classic Coca-Cola cooler and transport it to the Miller Library Complex for use in the Society's kitchen for the Giant Valley Antique Show.

Actually the preparation began long before that Friday with list making, shopping, loading and unloading, sorting and counting, faxing and calling, putting up posters and leaving promotion cards. Of course there was also cooking and baking, more list making, and always... "Did we miss anything?"

Saturday 10 AM was show time and the first volunteers arrived: Ginny Zukunft, Mary Embler, Betsy Gorman, John and Marlene Carolla. This annual show, in its 43rd year, twenty-three years at the Miller Library/Cultural Center, is like a homecoming for dealers, Society members, the great kitchen staff, and the people who have it on their "not to miss" list. Before noon, Lois Casey, Joyce Gilbert, Cathy and Kinberly Casolino, and Louise Brundage arrived to help along with Connie Griggs and Liz Smith, who both sat and worked the gate table. It was noted that the number of visitors was less than the previous year, but that could have been a result of the snow.

Sunday opened one hour later with sunshine brightening the day. Linda Rover, Ken Minkema, and George Sweeney arrived to assist in the kitchen; Martha and Sam Becker took control of the entrance table. Baked goods kept coming including another of Tom Whalen's "famous" Key Lime pies. Marianne Quinn, Roger Rovero and Nancy Faughnan reported for duty. Without a great team of volunteers, we would not be able to provide the kitchen treats for a profit of almost nine hundred dollars, nor be the beneficiary of the Giant Valley Association of Antique Dealers' generosity. This year's gate gained the Society three thousand dollars.

We greatly appreciate all the help: kitchen staff, booth sitters, gate keepers, bakers, and donors.

Thank you.

A special "thank you" to Bob Zoni who arrived, as usual, Sunday afternoon to help break down and move the rented tables. Bob stayed until the lights went out at closing.

Images of America; Hamden

Available at: Town Clerk's Office,
Gallery 4, Hamden Chamber of
Commerce, the Hamden History
Library Room, or by calling
203-288-0017.



"Service with a smile"
Mary Embler and Ginny Zukunft

Just A Memory

Another piece of Hamden's visual landscape disappeared this summer.

Lost to the bulldozer of a contractor who needed an access road to an interior development of new houses, the red barn located next to 484 Shepard Avenue was demolished. When the property was sold, the owners knew it would be destroyed. No one spoke in its defense at the Planning and Zoning public hearing. The contractor did not care, and a "white knight" did not ride to the rescue.

Possibly built by Minor Warner, a farmer of modest means in the 1850's, the barn stood next to his simple Greek revival home. The barn itself was not of historical value nor architecturally distinguished, but visibly it complimented the main white house. The scene could trigger the viewer's imagination of how rural Hamden may have appeared in the later 1800's and early 1900's. The red barn's presence made for a nice image, a frozen moment in time.

Maybe the barn could have been incorporated into the design of the new development; maybe not. Someone did investigate the cost of moving it, but it proved to be prohibitive. Unfortunately, the red barn stood in the path of progress; now, it is just a memory.

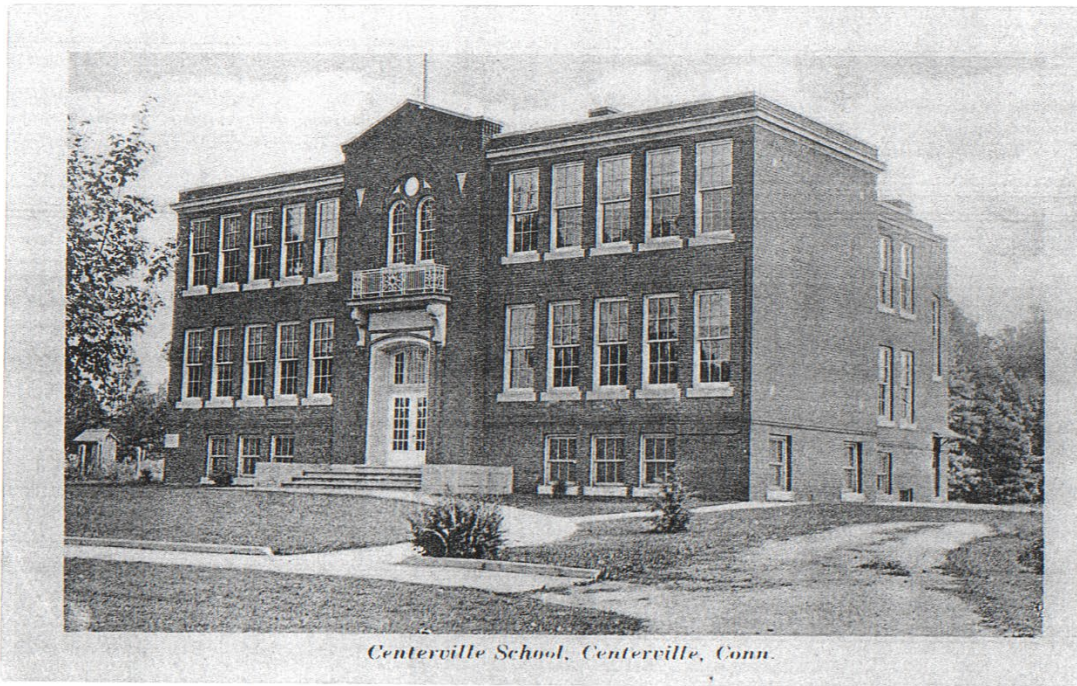


Ives House Update

Last October, the Town of Hamden entered into a lease agreement and bill of sale with the Regional Water Authority for the Elam Ives House. Thus, this historic 1790 structure is being saved from demolition and from the threat of being removed to another site. The Society and the Hamden Historic Properties Commission (Town of Hamden) are applying to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for a grant to use to list the Ives house on the National Register of Historic Places.

NEWSLETTER

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 5512, HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT 06518



Postcard of Centerville School on Dixwell Avenue, site of the current Miller Memorial Library and Cultural Center, is from a collection of postcards recently donated by Alton Eliason to the Hamden History Library.