

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER FALL EDITION 2007

WHO WE ARE

Board of Directors

Al Gorman
President

Ken Minkema
Vice-president

Barbara Hogan
Recording Secretary

Joe Pepe
Treasurer

Sam Becker
Asst. Treasurer

Martha Becker
Historian

Committee Chairs

Louise Brundage

Lois Casey

Bill Doheny

Betsy Gorman

Stella Johnson

Joe Pepe

Virginia Zukunft

The above list does not do justice to the Board members who wear more than one hat serving on many committees, making our Society an active and responsible community organization. Help us, help Hamden.

Dear Members,

I wish to thank each Society member who renewed their annual membership with special recognition to those who sent an additional donation with their dues. All members are encouraged to consider giving a Society membership to a friend as a gift for some special occasion. We welcome our new members and want all to know that your joining has made our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer very happy. Thank you!

LOOKING BACK: The annual membership meeting of the Society took place last May at the Miller Memorial Library Senior Social Hall. A program dealing with Connecticut Glass and Bottles was presented; information about the Museum of CT Glass in Coventry, CT, was shared by its president. Members of the Southern Connecticut Antique Bottle and Glass Club which meets in Shelton displayed examples of the work of early glassmakers. The election of officers was also held. The elected were: Al Gorman, President; Ken Minkema, Vice-president; Barbara Hogan, Recording Secretary; Joe Pepe, Treasurer. Congratulations. A "thank you" to our nomination committee and a great "THANK YOU" to our refreshment committee: Ginny Zukunft and Betty Osgood.

WHAT A SHOW! The Spring Glen Garden Club presented "A Wake Up Call...A Small Standard Flower Show" in May. The Dickerman House and Cider Mill Barn were used for the floral displays. This was a juried show featuring numerous categories including: floral arrangements, horticultural, and challenge competition. The show was only open to Club and Society members.

IN JUNE, a team of volunteer Dickerman house/grounds cleaners spent a Saturday morning dusting, washing, polishing, and vacuuming the house's interior. Meanwhile, tree cutting, brush trimming, and raking were going on outside to prepare for the July 1st public opening. The team consisted of left to right: Al Gorman, Bill "treeman" Dohney, Ginny "chainsaw" Zukunft, Bob "great roofer" Zoni, and Betsy Gorman, photographer.



THE “CURIOUS OLD DOCTOR”

From the archives in the Society’s History Library, a photograph was included in our publication, *Hamden: Images of America*, on page 31. It shows Dr. Daniel Hurd outside his home at 207 Arch Street in the Highwood section of Hamden. The photo, taken in the 1870’s, captures a sign on the house which reads, “I can cure all kinds sore throat and no questions asked. Can handle @ case in 80 minutes. Give me @ trial if your baby is sick. Also rheumatism cured...” Hurd’s 12x15 foot home also served as his office and laboratory.

This black leader, a former slave born in Virginia, could be seen traveling the New Haven area dressed in a Prince Albert coat, striped trousers, high gum boots, and silk top hat. “Doctor Hurd” would hand out slips of paper on which was written, “Notice! I will guarantee to cure any case of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria in two hours unless the person is too far gone.” His “medicine” kit was carried inside his overcoat in a baking powder can. The “doctor” would rub a little of the all-healing remedy on the ailment. The greasy mixture may have been lard and gunpowder, which was a southern folk cure for many ills. All diseases, it seems, received the same medicine. For treating scarlet fever, he would give the patient a bath in it. Another hand painted sign on the “doctor’s” home proclaims, “I can cure breast disease, spinal disease, diphtheria, soarlet[sic] fever, membrance, croup, rheumatism and if you have lost your voice[sic] can bring it back again. \$5 in advance.”

Dr. Daniel Hurd claimed that he only lost two patients, but they had been treated by other doctors and he was called too late. Unfortunately he was not able to cure his wife who also died. He stated that it was “in strawberry time” and “he was very busy and somehow the old lady died.” (*New Haven Register*, July 13, 1893.) At the time of the newspaper article, Hurd was still practicing in Hamden; estimated to be in his sixties, he was vigorously walking the New Haven area handing out his little paper advertisement.

Our photograph of Dr. Hurd has come to the attention of a UCLA scholar working on a book entitled *Conjurers, Healers, and Hoodoo Doctors: Readings on African-American Magic and Folk Medicine* to be published by The University of Illinois Press. Our Hamden History Library is a great research asset, and its reputation is due to the work of our archivist, Joe Pepe.



UPDATES

ANTIQUÉ SHOW Our annual event will be held in **NOVEMBER** on the 17th & 18th. Presented by the Giant Valley Association of Antique Dealers for the last 26 years, it is our major fund-raiser. Please mark your calendar. Your support is welcome; join us in the “gourmet” kitchen, help booth sit, contribute some baked goods, come enjoy the show and spread the word. It’s the best little show in Connecticut and Texas, too.

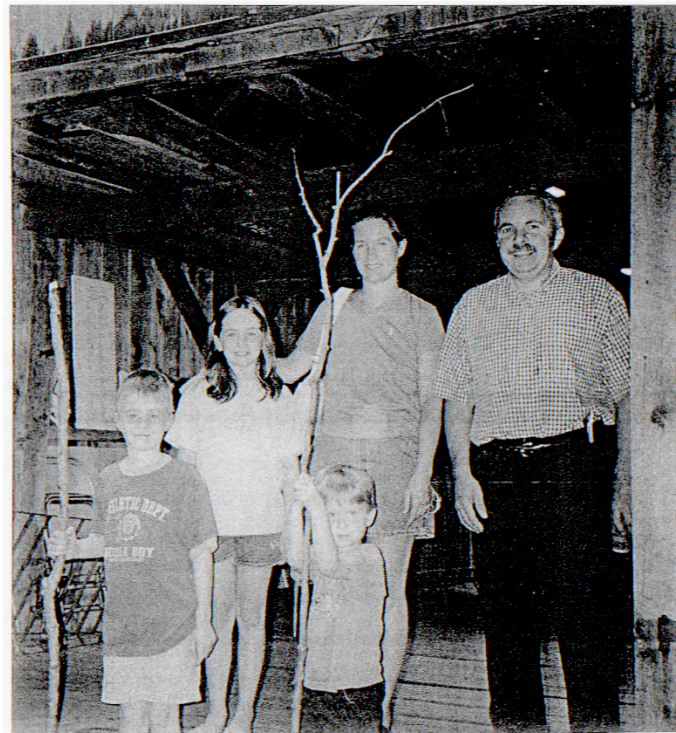
ELAM IVES HOUSE In June, 2007, the Town of Hamden and the Regional Water Authority entered into a license agreement whereby the town has the right to use the property through 2021 with extensions. The @1790 house will need restoration before it can be used for nonprofit office space and educational displays. The Society can be proud of its role as preservation advocate for the house to remain on its original site. Finally, we got the R.W.A. to agree with the Town and Society not to remove it from the site or sell its parts. Saved from certain demolition, the Ives house has a future as part of Hamden’s heritage.

With a grant from the CT Trust, James Sexton, Ph.D., an architectural historian, is preparing a nomination to place the Ives house on the CT State and National Registry of Historic Places. The Society has partnered with the Town to obtain the grant.

RECTORY SCHOOL BARN Now located on town property at the proposed Town Center Park at Meadowbrook, the barn, not only will serve as a landmark near the park’s entrance, but may become the home of P.L.A.C.E., Partners in Learning and Creative Exploration. The concept is to use the barn for a multicultural children’s museum and creative arts center.

SUMMER DOCENTS

Our gratitude to the following members who volunteered their time to welcome the public at the Dickerman House this summer season. As the only house museum in the area, it is fortunate that we are able to open it to the community on weekends. A special thanks to Ginny Zukunft who arranged for the docent schedule. Docents included: Connie Griggs, Lois Casey, Pam Rendeiro, Lorraine Velardi, Barbara Hogan, Connie Whalen, Al Gorman, Ginny and Werner Zukunft, John and Marlene Carolla, Fran Griffin, Stella Johnson, Ken Minkema, Nancy Faughnan, and Linda and Roger Rovero. Roger is pictured at right giving a family a tour of the Cider Mill.



One of our summer visitors took up residency by digging a burro in the dirt near the foundation at the front of the house. Our thanks to John Carolla who finally evicted our furry intruder, circled in the photo.



**46TH ANNUAL
GIANT VALLEY ANTIQUES SHOW**

November 17th and 18th, 2007

Saturday 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Sunday 11 A.M. to 4 .M.



MILLER LIBRARY - CULTURAL CENTER

2901 Dixwell Avenue Hamden, CT

Admission \$4.50 Admission with this card \$4.00

Directions:

From I-91 North or South, take exit 10 to end (Rte. 40/Mount Carmel Connector). At traffic light take a left onto Whitney Avenue and go six traffic lights. At the sixth light (Dixwell Avenue) take a right. The Miller Library-Cultural Center is a short distance on the left.

From Route 15 North take Exit 61 and from **Route 15 South** take Exit 62. Turn right onto Whitney Avenue and at the second traffic light (Dixwell Avenue) take a left. The Miller Library-Cultural Center is a short distance on the left.

A BENEFIT FOR THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sponsored by the Giant Valley Association of Antiques Dealers

The Antique Show is the Society's major fundraiser. Gate proceeds and kitchen sales go directly to support our Society. Bring this card for a reduced admission. Please plan to attend. Bring a friend. Stop by and enjoy lunch. Support the Society.

NEWSLETTER

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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