

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018



Update on the Dickerman House and Cider Mill



Residents of this area will never forget how, on May 15, 2018, a tornado cut a destructive swath through southern Connecticut, beginning in the Danbury area and heading east. When it hit upper Hamden, the funnel was massive, ripping through Sleeping Giant State Park and the immediate area. Many homes were damaged or destroyed, power was out for days, even weeks, and thousands upon thousands of trees were ripped out by their roots or split in half like kindling.

Across from Sleeping Giant, which is still closed, and neighboring Quinnipiac University, is the property owned and maintained by the Hamden Historical Society at 105 Mount Carmel Avenue. The site contains the Jonathan Dickerman House, built in 1792 and listed on the state registry, and the Talmadge Cider Mill, the frame of which dates to the eighteenth century. The Dickerman House was moved from the north side of the avenue to the south side in the late 1960s, while the mill was moved from western hills of Hamden in the early 2000s.

Both structures were struck by huge toppled trees. The Dickerman House had the top half of an old white pine land on its front roof, its branches punching holes in it, the trunk causing the deep eave on the front of the house to collapse in the middle, and literally blowing the double front doors off their hinges. The Cider Mill too had a tree fall right in the middle of the roof, caving in the ridge beam and bowing out the walls precariously. Five large trees in the front yard had to be completely taken down, a dangerous “leaner” between the house and mill had to be

removed, and any number of large limbs taken away as well. Many wind-felled trees still lie prostrate on the ground in the back part of the property.

In quick order, Shutts Tree Removal Service came out with a crane to free up the roofs, following which our ever-faithful Bob Zoni, a member of the Hamden Historical Society's board and a known local restoration expert, put temporary coverings on the affected parts of the Dickerman House's roof and front. He also oversaw the bracing of the side walls of the Cider Mill so that they would not entirely collapse. Two rounds of further tree and brush removal followed.

Passers-by will notice that there is now a scaffold on the front of the Dickerman House, which augurs well, but we must be prepared for a long restoration phase. The house's front roof, including sheathing and cedar shakes will have to be entirely replaced, and the eave and supporting collar beams and roof joists repaired or put back in place; the moisture-damaged front will need to be stabilized; and there are various areas of lesser damage to the exterior clapboards and interior plaster. The Cider Mill will most likely have to be completely dismantled, damaged frame members repaired or replaced using period-specific methods, and the entire structure re-clad with milled boards and cedar shakes, as it was when reconstructed on site. It is possible, too, that the floor of the Cider Mill has been damaged by the severe rains this area experienced through the summer and early fall.

Our calls for support through our website and with the generous help of WQUN radio, which has been broadcasting appeals, have been answered by many, and we are so thankful for your donations and words of encouragement. If you have not yet contributed to this effort, please visit our website at hamdenhistoricalsociety.org, and help us realize our commitment to restore these beloved landmarks to their original beauty and charm, so that they can be sites of memory, education and culture for generations to come.




The **57th Annual Antiques Show and Sale** will be held November 3 and 4 at the Miller Memorial Library Center. While the number of attendees was smaller than in the past the variety and quality of antiques was excellent as always. The activity at our popular kitchen, which is open throughout the show, was brisk and profitable for the Society. Our fresh food and donated homemade baked goods are always popular and while the prices are kept quite low, considerable money is made during the weekend. This money is used throughout the year to maintain our wonderful Jonathan Dickerman House Museum. As the cost of insurance in particular rises, our need for funding is strong.

**56TH ANNUAL
GIANT VALLEY ANTIQUES SHOW**

November 4th and 5th, 2017

Saturday 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.
Sunday 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.



MILLER LIBRARY - CULTURAL CENTER
2901 Dixwell Avenue Hamden, CT

Admission \$6.50 \$.50 Off Admission with this card (good for 2 people)

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 • www.GVAAD.org

Hamden Historical Society has a
wonderful **NEW WEBSITE!**

CHECK IT OUT!

<http://www.hamdenhistoricalsociety.org>

NEWSLETTER
Hamden Historical Society
P.O. Box 5512
Hamden, CT 06518