



# THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER WINTER EDITION 2014

Dear Members:

The 51<sup>st</sup> Giant Valley Antiques Show and Sale for the benefit of the Hamden Historical Society was a success on many levels. The space was filled with antique dealers and enthusiastic shoppers who enjoyed the wide variety of items offered for sale. Our bake table had donations aplenty.

All outstanding, only to be topped by our team of Kitchen Volunteers: John and Marlene Carolla, Craig Reynolds, Lois Casey, Joan Remy, Nancy Faughnan, Ken Minkema, Eric Lehman, Amy Nawocki, Joe Pepe, Al and Betsy Gorman, Barbara and Bill Doheny, and Julie Hulten. Fresh food was served by smiling volunteers throughout the weekend.

Don Werner did a fine job tending the booths of dealers taking lunch breaks, Joe Pepe, Bob Zoni, and John Carolla helped to get the space set up for the show on Friday. Much appreciation to all.

As this is the Society's only fundraising event, a profit is critical. The Kitchen brought in a \$589 profit. The Giant Valley Antique Dealers Association donated the gate receipts of \$2,000. This fun, successful event will help sustain us for another year.

Photos: "On the job" John, Al, Ken, Joan, and Marlene.

Working the Bake Table: Barb, Bill, and Bob.



## FOR THE RECORD:

The town of Hamden has a 90-day demolition ordinance, which was adopted a few years ago at the urging of our Society. It provides a period of time when business owners, homeowners, or developers can investigate an alternative to bulldozing a structure.

Many towns lacking this type of ordinance lose their architectural heritage without any discussion of restoration, preservation, adaptive reuse, available tax credits or even relocation of historically significant buildings.

## THE MASSELLI BARN:

The barn at 390 Gilbert Avenue will get a new roof thanks to a matching grant from the CT Trust for Historic Preservation. Thus, this unique gambrel roofed, bank barn will be preserved for future use. Although other work is needed, the new roof will protect the interior of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century structure from the weather, improve its appearance, and perhaps lead to more restoration and a positive future.

SPRING NOTES: 1. **EARTH DAY** April 12 10:00-3:00 Hamden Middle School  
2. **HISTORICAL SOCIETY LECTURE** by Eric Lehman, author of a new book about Tom Thumb April 17, 7:00pm Miller Memorial Cultural Center. Refreshments to be served.  
3. **Hamden** will be "revisited" by Arcadia Press' publication of a new edition in the Images of Hamden series.

## THE MOUNT CARMEL DICKERMANS:

The Dickerman brothers, Samuel and Jonathan, were young married men in their twenties when they came from New Haven in the 1740's to establish homesteads in Mount Carmel, where their father owned a considerable amount of land. At that time, there were already several dozen families living in the area (now the northern part of Hamden), and a grist and sawmill was in operation on Mill River by the mountain.

Families of Dickerman Ancestry suggests that the brothers and their families shared one house for ten years or so. Careful examination of land and probate records has not confirmed this. Samuel's homestead was north of the mountain, in the vicinity of River Road near Mill River and Jonathan's first house was just north of his second one, which is still standing at 3217 Whitney Avenue.

The brothers were active in the affairs of the new community. Both were signers of the petition, which led to the establishment of the Mount Carmel Ecclesiastical Society in 1757 and played leading roles in its operations. Before the meetinghouse was completed in 1761, the Society often met in Jonathan's house. *—From the notes of Martha Becker*

## CONGRATULATIONS

**Al Gorman** President of the Hamden Historical Society was feted along with Mimsie-Coleman, Barbara Mansilla, and Mary Varrone for their contributions to P.L.A.C.E. Multicultural Children's Museum at Cascade Fine Catering on November 14, 2013. Al was singled out for his efforts to ensure the preservation of architecturally significant properties in Hamden, and for his contributions to the Hamden Historical Society. A well deserved recognition.

## HAMDEN HISTORY ROOM WELCOMES NEW ARCHIVIST

After fourteen years of service, our archivist, Joe Pepe is retiring from the position to spend more time with his family and to travel. He will, however, volunteer his time in the History Library. A job well done, Joe. Thank You!

Our incoming archivist is Beth Shutts. A Hamden resident since 1982 with a career in library services until her retirement in 2012, Beth holds a Master of Library Science degree and operates a freelance indexing business.

Our archivist is paid from an endowment, The Bradley Trust Fund, which is administered by the New Haven Community Foundation. The Hamden Historical Society supports the operating budget, and all cataloguers are volunteers, as well as society members.

The Hamden History Library Room is open September – June.

Tuesdays: 5PM-8PM      Wednesdays: 10AM – Noon

Otherwise by appointment. Call 203-387-2680 at the library.



### NEW LIFE THROUGH RE-PURPOSE

The former Newhall Street School building at 496 Newhall Street has been listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The former school was built in 1917 and later used as a community activity center, then later abandoned.

Now it will get a new life as the home of a Hamden Business incubator, hosting as many as twenty new small businesses at a time

The building is significant as an example of the educational architecture of the early twentieth century and as an example of Hamden's historical development.

Progress does not necessitate destruction or demolition. This building is architecturally beautiful and is a perfect candidate for the intended use. The historic features of the building will be improved, and with a new purpose it will continue to serve the Hamden community for decades.

# NEWSLETTER

THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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A winter blanket of solitude and silence embraces the Dickerman House and its grounds as it quietly awaits the warmth of spring. (Pen and ink by Judy Davies)