

Letter to Members

Dear Members,

As the winter season visits us again and our Dickerman House activities hibernate until Spring, your Society has remained active in its role as preservation agents in Hamden.

The former Liquor Land building at 2197 Dixwell Avenue (previously a roller skating rink and originally built by the W. I. Clark Company in 1941) will be demolished in order to clear the property for a Burger King restaurant. The Society has been in continuous contact with the new owner hoping to save an 8x3 feet cast concrete Art Deco tablet which is over the former main entrance. For a photo and description, refer to the *Hamden: Our Architectural Heritage* publication page 113. This unique style of architectural bas-relief detailing is rare in Hamden and thus, worth preserving. With careful removal and relocation, it can serve as a piece of public art for all to enjoy.

The Society also has been in communication with the Connecticut Historical Commission regarding the status of the historic Lock keeper's House at Lock #14 on 3904 Whitney Avenue. For the last few years, the restoration process has been at a standstill. We are encouraging a creative use of the structure which would benefit the community and users of the Farmington Canal trail as well as promote local history.

As we need to protect and preserve our visual heritage, we must also learn from it because it serves as a touchstone with the past. Thus, the Society is pleased to announce that our publication, *Hamden: Our Architectural Heritage*, has been reprinted in quantity. A note of gratitude is in order for our authors, Martha Becker and Nancy Sachse, and Leland Robinson, photographer extraordinaire who made this book such a popular resource. The book not only illustrates Hamden's architecture, but gives a snapshot history of our neighborhood and reminds us of the significant buildings which Hamden has lost. Publication chair, Ken Minkema deserves credit for overseeing this 3rd edition.

Preservation must begin at home. So this Spring we will begin the restoration of the chimney and first floor fireplaces in the Jonathan Dickerman House. The Society has also applied to the Connecticut Historical Restoration Fund for a matching grant to put a new roof on the "J.D." House museum.

The work of the Historical Society is a team effort; our volunteers contribute time and energy to preserve the symbols of our heritage and to promote Hamden's history so that our community can be sustained by meaningful memories. For it is those memories that give hope and shape to the future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you a healthy, rewarding and peaceful New Year.

Al Gorman, President