

# THE HAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2019



## UPDATE ON THE DICKERMAN HOUSE AND CIDER MILL

The devastating damage to the Jonathan Dickerman House and Cider Mill, wreaked by the tornado which tore through parts of Hamden last May, has been very thoughtfully assessed by members of the Hamden Historical Society as well as professional insurance adjusters. The news is good!

While a great deal of damage was done to both structures by falling trees, limbs and heavy winds, these antique treasures will not be lost to history. We are very fortunate to have a skilled, knowledgeable, thoughtful, generous member of our Society who has come to our rescue often when we have been in need. He has stepped forward once again to restore our treasured buildings.

An expert in so many "lost arts," Bob Zoni has been hard at work at 105 Mt. Carmel Avenue since the day of the storm. When made aware of the damage that day, he made a U-turn while on his way to Branford and got to work getting some weight off the house, and covering it to keep out the rain. He buttressed the cider mill to keep it from collapsing. He installed large fans to prevent dampness and mold in the house.

Since then, he has been working, with the help of local volunteers, to repair the house and mill. That work has included:

- Removing a great deal of debris from the attic
- Repairing the main timber in the attic (it had 3 severed points) upon which rested the roof rafters.
- Repaired 2 rafters that had snapped and a third with a lineal crack.
- The tie beam directly over the front entry door had been cracked but is now repaired.
- The graceful and unusual curved overhang in the front of the house has been rebuilt. He used framing boards which he salvaged and repaired.
- Then he added new roof boards where needed on the overhang.
- By making repairs, he was able to use original crown molding.

-The floor dryers are doing their job. The house is mold free.

**DON'T LET THE PLASTIC FOOL YOU! THE HOUSE IS COMPLETELY STABLE.**

In the near future, new roofing shingles will be installed, the rake board at the gable end of the house will be repaired and replaced, the front entry door and its trim will be re-installed, plaster work inside addressed, all while keeping mold at bay.

### The Cider Mill

Because of the severe damage, and the danger the structure posed, it was thought best to deconstruct the whole thing, with the use of an aerial lift, and store the parts in the basement, for eventual reconstruction. The frame will be braced and repaired. The siding will be saved and reused if possible.

See future newsletters and our website about when the Dickerman house will be open again to visitors. We are most grateful to the many members, friends and strangers alike, who have continued to contribute generously to make this amazing comeback possible. These include volunteer laborers who helped Bob, and individuals and foundations who have given funds toward repairs. One entity we would especially like to recognize is the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. Thank you!

### SLEEPING GIANTS ANTIQUE SHOW REPORT

The 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Antiques Show and Sale was held on November 3 and 4, 2018, at the Miller Memorial Library Center. 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 is an important fund-raiser for the Society, so we appreciate those who come out to support the show.

### A HAMDEN HISTORY MINUTE: THE LOOSE GOOSE PROBLEM

One of the early laws in Hamden responded to the problem of loose geese. It required geese to be kept in pens or on a leash at least 15 inches long. If your goose was found by a neighbor, in his or her yard, the neighbor was required to hold onto the goose until you came to claim it. You would then have to pay the neighbor 4 cents per day

along with the cost of any damages the goose might have caused. If you did not come to claim your goose in 4 days, the goose became the property of your neighbor. The lesson was: Don't lose your goose!

### RECENT DONATION TO ARCHIVES

Our archivist, Kathy Lindbeck, reports that Stan Troski of Watertown, Connecticut, recently donated some items to the Hamden Historical Society relating to our town's agricultural past. These items include a Whitneyville Creamery sign, a Clover Wreath Farm sign, and a Brock Hall Dairy glass bottle and delivery box. To have these tangible pieces of local businesses adds to the visual and material history of Hamden. Many thanks to Mr. Troski for his thoughtfulness. Those interested in viewing the items can come to the History Room at Miller Library.



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

**CHECK IT OUT!**

<http://www.hamdenhistoricalsociety.org>

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