



PAST AND PRESENT

The Newsletter of The Haddam Historical Society

Volume 47 No.4, Spring 2009

Museum Joins Connecticut's Historic Gardens



The Haddam Historical Society has been invited to join Connecticut Historic Gardens, a consortium of distinctive historic sites and gardens throughout Connecticut. Membership is by invitation only and just three sites were asked to join in 2008 including the Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart Garden at the Thankful Arnold House. The site joins other distinguished and nationally known gardens including the Florence Griswold Museum, Harkness Memorial State Park and Hill-Stead Museum.

Named after a direct descendent of Joseph and Thankful Arnold, the original garden was designed and dedicated in 1973. The garden was given in memory of Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart by her father Isaac Arnold, the benefactor of

the Thankful Arnold House. The original garden design was created by Sally Marvin of Bloomfield, Connecticut and featured an orchard, berry beds and bench garden.

The gardens were redesigned in the late 1980's in the Colonial Revival style with granite-edged beds and gravel paths. In 2000 the Connecticut Herb Study Group conducted extensive research to select plants commonly grown in household gardens in the lower Connecticut River Valley in the 1800s. The planting plan was prepared by landscape historian and designer Sheila Wertheimer of Old Lyme. Pam Quayle, Haddam's Herb Gatherer, directed the installation of the historically appropriate herbs for culinary, medicinal, dyeing, strewing and other household purposes. There is also a small bed featuring vegetables common in gardens in the early 1800s and a few heirloom annuals. Over 50 varieties of herbs are planted in the garden, including many that Thankful Arnold would have used.

The garden at the Arnold House is overseen by a handful of dedicated volunteers, who maintain it from early spring to late fall. The garden crew has scheduled the spring clean up and will be joined this year by students of the Master Gardeners Program at the UCONN Extension Center in maintaining the herb garden and addressing the border beds. The garden is open daily during daylight hours. A guided tour of the garden is available during museum hours and by appointment. **Sunday, June 21, 2009** is Connecticut Historic Garden Day and the Society will offer free tours, demonstrations and refreshments from 1 to 5 pm. The House and Garden will also be free to visitors on Connecticut Open House Day on **Saturday, June 13, 2009** from 1 to 5 pm. If you are interested in volunteering for the garden please call Deb Rutter at 345-2813 or Lisa Malloy at the office 345-2400.

Garden Marker Donation

The Society is very grateful to **David and Sue Costa** for their generous donation of new garden markers to the Wilhelmina Ann Arnold Barnhart Garden. The markers, based on the garden markers found at Hancock Shaker Village, will improve the visitor experience and clearly identify the plants in our garden. Garden chairwoman Deb Rutter has successfully assembled the markers which will be installed shortly.



Officers

Joy Anderson- President
Susann Costa- Vice President
Helen Deag-Secretary
Carl Conrad- Finance Chair

Directors

Melissa Gibson
Pat Hartman
Robert Reynolds
Steve Rocco
Deborah Rutter
Bill Schnieder
Leslie Starr
Jan Sweet

Committee Chairs

Antiques Show- Mary Bird &
Rusty Clowes

Barn Building-Leslie Starr

Collections-Jan Sweet

Events-Deb Rutter

Major Gifts- Leslie Starr

Membership-Pat Hartman & Steve
Rocco

Gardens- Deb Rutter

Genealogy-Al & Helen Deag

House Maintenance-Robert Reynolds

Office Support-Carol Smith

Programs-Lynn MacLennan

Social-Carol Smith

Volunteers- Amy Roper

Newsletter-Elizabeth Malloy &
Barbara Glista

Executive Director

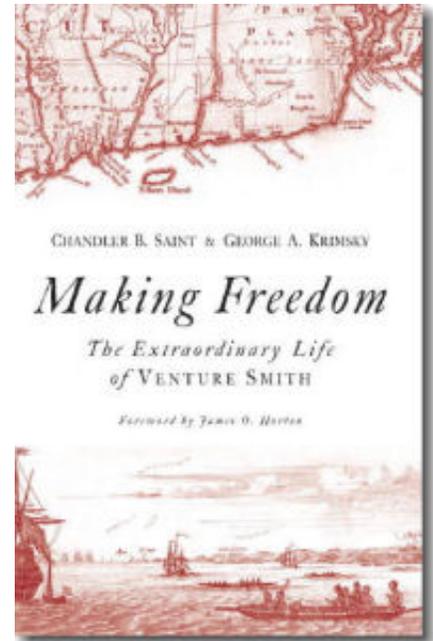
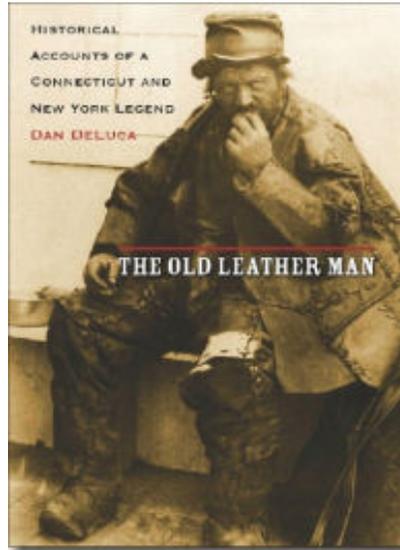
Elizabeth Hart Malloy

Education Coordinator

Sarah Neal

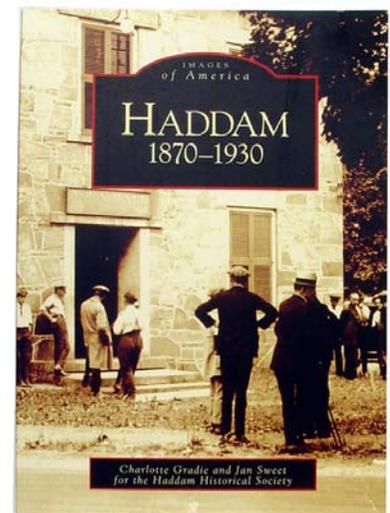
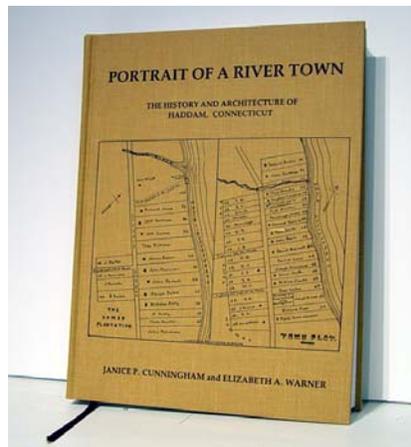


New Publications Available



The Haddam Historical Society is thrilled to offer two new publications, *Making Freedom, The Extraordinary Life of Venture Smith* by Chandler B. Saint and George A. Krimsky and *The Old Leather Man* by Dan W. DeLuca. Both books are published by Wesleyan Press and are available at the Thankful Arnold House or our online store. Great gift for Mother's Day or Father's Day! The Old Leather Man is \$35 and Making Freedom is \$18.95. Visit our online store at www.haddamhistory.org.

Other Publications Available



Portrait of A River Town: \$50

Haddam 1870-1930: \$20

Haddam Historical Society Annual Meeting

May 21, 2009, Thursday

7:00 pm

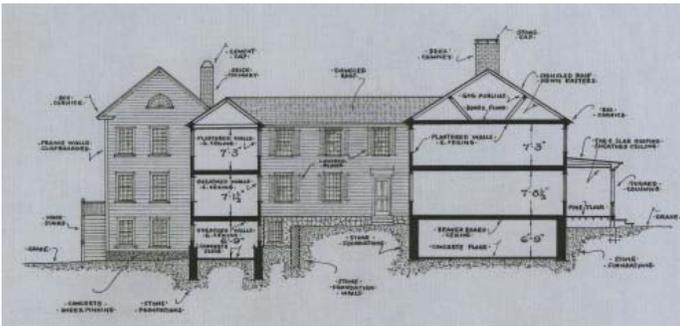
Location: Higganum Firehouse, 439 Saybrook Road



Reflections on Collections

A Show- and-Tell with a panel of Collections Committee members

Join us to review and discuss items recently donated to the Haddam Historical Society and learn the stories behind the artifacts. We will present a fascinating array of items and learn about the “who, what, where and how” these objects are significant to our community’s history. We encourage residents to contribute to the discussion and share their knowledge. Jan Sweet, Town Historian and Collections Committee Chairwoman will lead the panel presentation. A short business meeting will precede the discussion which will be followed by light refreshments. Free for members of the Haddam Historical Society and community.



Latshaw Homestead – “Nestledown”

One example of a recent accession is a set of architectural drawings donated by Michael Martino of Rocky Hill which depict “the property of Mr. Edwin

Latshaw in Haddam” rendered by the firm of Frederick Bliss & Clinton L. Cole in 1924. Mr. Martino an active member of the Rocky Hill Historical Society found the drawings at a transfer station/landfill about to be discarded and lost forever.

Edwin Latshaw and his wife, Ida Johnson Latshaw came to Haddam in 1913 and purchased the “Dickinson Tavern” along Walkley Hill Road and surrounding acreage. The Latshaw’s relocated from Wausau, Wisconsin where Edwin ran a successful lumber and wooden box company. Their only son, Stanley Riddle Latshaw was living in New York City where he was advertising director for Butterick Publishing, makers of the well known Butterick Patterns. He later became the CEO of Butterick and inherited the house from his parents.

Mr. Edwin Latshaw, who had retired from business, was a “gentleman farmer which is defined as *a person of wealth who has no economic imperative to make a profit from farming, but runs a farm out of interest.* Gentleman farmers had the ability to farm for pleasure and often experimented with new scientific theories, although long time farmers found “book-farming” suspect. Haddam had a number of early 20th century “gentleman farmers”, the most well known being Edward Hazen. Mr. Latshaw operated a successful apple orchard and the Historical Society has a number of artifacts relating to the Latshaw Apple Farm including apple crates, a large apple sign and other family memorabilia. We will have the architectural drawings on display along with other items. Please join us for an evening of discovery.

Hidden Lake, Hidden Jewel

*A brief history
by Elizabeth Malloy*

“Why not join the crowds at Hidden Lake” reads the advertisement from June 1929. Billed as one of Connecticut’s finest lake developments, Hidden Lake offered city dwellers from Hartford, Meriden and New Britain a seasonal summer or weekend retreat in the late 1920s. Today the buildings surrounding the lake are primarily year round residences and the area is under the jurisdiction of the Hidden Lake Association, a private non-profit group responsible for road maintenance and lake upkeep.

How did this unique Higganum neighborhood evolve from rural farm land to a community of seasonal cottages occupied by city dwellers to year round homes of young families, working couples and retirees?

Long time residents Dudley Root, John Church and Bill Carson sat down with me and reminisced about the early days of Hidden Lake. All are current board members of the Hidden Lake Association and some of their families have been residents for three generations.

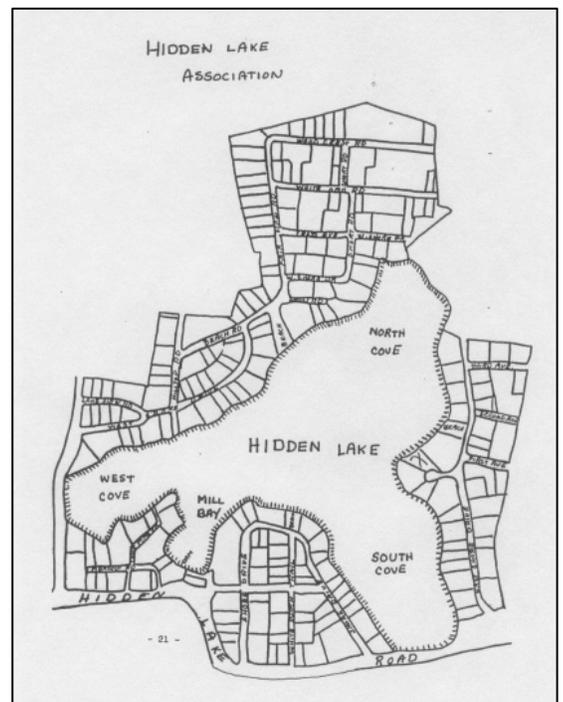
History

In 1929 Wilbur Lewis of West Haven purchased property from farmers and local residents including the Wilcox and Brooks families, just north of the Killingworth border along what is now Route 81. His original plan was to have a boys’ camp but that idea was soon replaced with the Hidden Lake development which consisted of 140 lots surrounding the man-made lake. The Hidden Lake Realty Co., Inc advertised that all lots were 50 X 100 feet or larger and that with a \$20 down payment and \$5 per month you could purchase a “Cottage Site” within 300 feet of the shore. Waterfront lots were sold for \$700. The development attracted families from nearby urban areas who could motor to the “country” for the weekend or summer.

It is said that Mr. Lewis named all the streets including Shore Drive, East Shore Drive and West Shore Drive. There is a First, Second and Third Avenue along with Lakeview Road, Beach Road and Lake Point Road. Mr. Lewis erected a log cabin home for himself in the development.

The Hidden Lake Association was incorporated in 1937 to “provide for the improvements of the land in said territory and for the health, comfort, protection and convenience of the inhabitants.” Mr. Lewis deeded all the streets, beaches and lake to the organization. Original deeds noted that residents had the right to use Hidden Lake for boating, bathing, fishing and recreational purposes, but had strict building regulations in terms of location, roof and siding material and clearly stated that “no fences shall be erected on said premises other than live hedges which shall not exceed five feet in height.” Association dues were originally \$5 for a house and \$2 for a lot annually. Those days are long gone as the residents pay taxes to the Lake Association and to the Town of Haddam.

The Association is a non-profit corporation with elected officials responsible for paving, maintenance and plowing of the roads, up keep and protection of the lake. The board is made up of volunteers who live in the Association. The lake is fed from a stream from the north and is dammed at the south side and feeds



into the cranberry bogs in Killingworth. The 40 acre Hidden Lake was created in 1929 by Mr. Lewis from a small mill pond which featured an underground spring and is said to be nine feet deep in areas. There is a North Cove, South Cove, West Cove and Mill Bay. No motor boats are allowed on the lake and no fertilizers are to be used in the area. The lake features bass and pickerel which can be caught in a catch-and-release program as well as ducks, osprey and Canada geese.

Mr. Church recalls how his father rewired the Lewis House and was paid with an empty lot. The family still owns a cottage on the lot today.

Seasonal Cottages

The area had no power company electricity until 1939-40 and prior to that a number of homes had low voltage electricity from car storage batteries that were charged by car generators or wind chargers. Families came for the summer season with the wife and children staying for the week and the husband coming on weekends or commuting directly from work. There was a Club House where dances, bingo and card games were played and any money earned helped support the Association. Country music star Slim Cox used to play at square dances. The gentlemen fondly remember strawberry socials and other fundraisers, but those days are long past. There

was once a Hidden Lake Fish and Game Club. One of the dwellings near the dam was once a store which served the community and prior to that was a button factory and the club house was replaced with a private home.

Similar lake communities popped up all over the state in the late 1920's and early 1930's when automobile travel exploded and city dwellers were able to easily "retire" to the country for weekends and the summer. These included Lake Beseck in Middlefield, Lake Hayward in Colchester and Candlewood Lake in the western part of the state.

Year Round Homes

After World War II many of the cottages were converted to year round residences. Today fewer than 5% of the dwellings are seasonal homes. Residents range from young families to retirees who still enjoy ice skating and ice fishing in the winter and swimming and boating in the summer. Hidden Lake is just one of many early 20th century summer communities found in the state when city dwellers were looking for a nice, peaceful place to relax and although it is primarily a year round neighborhood residents still enjoy the neighborhood as a place to unwind and take it easy.

Why Not Join the Crowds

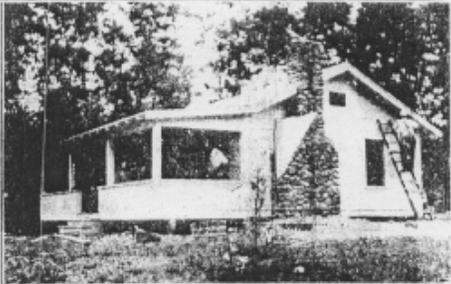
AT

HIDDEN LAKE

and see for yourself why over one-quarter of Connecticut's Finest Lake Development has been sold in four weeks. And four cottages are already under construction.

The Reason Why

Not only does this remarkable development meet every requirement, but as an investment it is no high. Many lots have already been resold at a handsome profit.



How To Reach Hidden Lake

Take River road to Higganum. Turn right onto Route 60, leading to Clinton and Hammon. At Beach, Entrance to property 6 miles south of Higganum.

Model Cottage Sold to William Hultz, Hartford

We Have No 25x100 foot Lots. All Lots At HIDDEN LAKE ARE

50 x 100 FEET or LARGER

\$20.00 Down Payment and **\$5.00** Per Month will purchase a Cottage Site within 300 feet of the shore

WHY NOT SPEND JULY 4th WITH US?

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New Members

Welcome:

Daniel Hunt, Venice, FL

Kevin and Tracy LaComb,
Higganum, CT

Sylvia and Steven Lecky,
Middletown, CT

Rocco Architects, Haddam, CT

Robin and Phil Schonberger,
Lyme, CT

Dick and Cindy Tillson,
Haddam, CT

Thank You to Al and Helen
Deag for their generous
donation in memory of Mary
Wright.

The Society would also like to
acknowledge Mary Wright's
most generous donation to the
summer camp program of
reproduction tin cups for
campers to use during their time
in 19th century Haddam.

**OPEN
HOUSE
DAY SAT JUNE 13
CONNECTICUT**

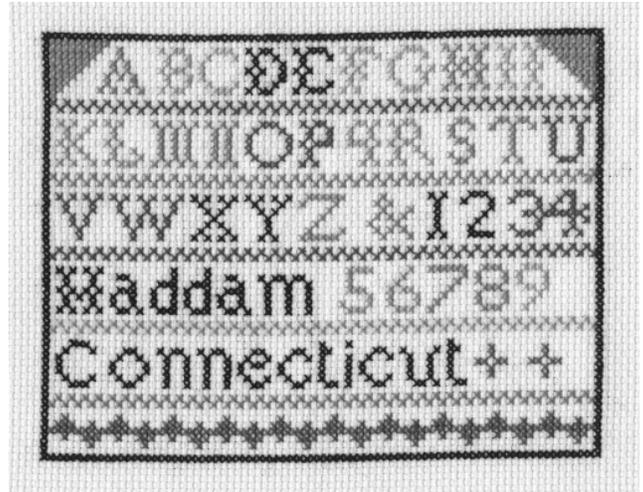
Thankful Arnold House
Open 1 to 5 pm
Free Admission

Summer Sampler Workshop

In July, the Haddam
Historical Society
will offer a
workshop on
creating a simple
cross-stitch sampler
similar to that
pictured.

Executive Director,
Elizabeth Malloy
and volunteers will
instruct participants
in creating a

reproduction embroidery with alphabet and name using counted cross
stitch. Appropriate for ages 10 and above. The first session will be
Sunday, July 12 from 1 to 4 pm followed by a second Sunday on July
19 from 1 to 4 pm. If a third Sunday is necessary to complete the
project we will meet on Sunday July 26. Cost is \$25 for members and
\$35 for non-members. Space is limited so call early for reservations.



Middlesex County Community Foundation Grant used to prepare Jail Drawings and Report

In April of 2008 the Haddam Historical Society received a generous
\$3500 grant from the Middlesex County Community Foundation to be
used toward preparing plans for the adaptive reuse of the historic
Middlesex County Jail. One of the first steps in the process was to
document the building with a historic structures report and identify
potential sustainable uses for the building and immediate grounds. The
town jail committee engaged the services of architect William Cowan of
Architectural Workshop who prepared existing conditions drawings and
a report which coupled with research compiled by the Haddam
Historical Society, completed the historic structures assessment. The
report provides documentary, graphic and physical information about
the property's history and existing condition. This material will assist
the committee in preparing its final plans.

The town Jail Committee continues to meet and discuss a space usage
plan, grant research and funding, business plan and budget
development. Recent activity has focused on obtaining money to
replace the roof. For further information please feel free to contact
Joanne Nesti at joanne.nesti@uconn.edu.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUMMER PROGRAM FOR AGES 8 TO 12

June 29 to July 2, 2009

The Haddam Historical Society announces its fourth annual “*Week in the Life of an Early American Child.*” The program will run Monday, June 29th to Thursday, July 2nd, 2009. Students will travel back in time to the year 1830 and spend the week with Mrs. Thankful Arnold. All activities take place at the Thankful Arnold House museum in Haddam and will include caring for farm animals; sewing a copy book; carding, spinning and weaving wool; making butter; baking bread; playing games, and even dancing! This program is for girls and boys ages 8-12. The fee is \$130 for five half-day sessions. For more information see www.haddamhistory.org where you can find a brochure and application. For questions, contact Sarah Neal, Education Coordinator, at education@haddamhistory.org or call The Haddam Historical Society at 345-2400.

The Historical Society will participate in the Higganum Village Market

June 26, 2009

Join us on June 26, 2009 from 3 pm to 7 pm at our booth at the Higganum Village Market on the Higganum Green. The society will have a display focusing on the Wilhelmina Arnold Barnhart Garden and how herbs and other plants were used in the early 19th century by families like the Arnolds. We are always looking for volunteers to help out, so if you are interested in promoting the organization and meeting new and interesting people, please give Lisa Malloy a call at 345-2400 or email her at director@haddamhistory.org

36th Annual Connecticut Spring Antiques Show a Success!

In spite of these tough economic times, our largest fundraiser, the Connecticut Spring Antiques Show on March 14 and 15 at the CT Expo Center in Hartford was a great success. The gate was up and the dealers were happy with their sales. The Antiques and Arts Weekly wrote that “the show continues to be one of the country’s most important venues of authentic early American furniture and that the show was well run and rich in fine dealers and desirable merchandise.” Thank you to all our hardworking volunteers and generous contributors.

Claude and Nancy Albert	Al and Helen Deag	Ron and Mary Alice	Linda and Tony Rigono
Mark and Jane Aldieri	Marge DeBold	Matulevich	Steve Rocco
Judy Babcock	Don DiMungo	Tim and Ann McCann	Amy and Doug Roper
Esther Beierle	Emily Duffy	Vivienne and Bob McGarry	Deborah Rutter
Mark and Linda Birch	Mel Ellis	Dianne and Annie	Bill Schneider
Mary Bird	Anne Farrow	McHutchison	Belle Seggerman
Paul and Carol Bischoff	Melissa Gibson	Dr. Donald Miller	Willi Sirles
Marcia Bliven	Barbara Glista	Jill Muennich	Carol and Terry Smith
Stanford and Wendy	Cynthia Goetz	Ed and Judy Munster	Leslie Starr
Brainerd	Linda Gorin	Sarah and David Neal	Barbara and John Stellenwerf
Jeanne and Jack Calhoun	Pat Hartman	Joanne Nesti	Elaine Stephens
Louise Carlson	Debbie Karpf	Cynthia O’Neill	Gail Christie and Mark Stephens
Ron Chamber	Hazel Kurlansky	Sue Oehl	Charlotte Stetson
Rusty and Diane Clowes	Dee Link	Laurel Patt	Kathy Sullivan
Annamae Cole	Marcia and James McNally	Rich and Sue Pedemonti	Jan Sweet
Carl and Marijean Conrad	Elizabeth Malloy	Russ Pekrul and Lynn Cooper	Stephen Taylor
Sue and Dave Costa	David Malloy	Honora Peterson	Donna Torza
Flo Courtright	Dick and Carol Matregrano	Gail Reynolds	Liz Yorke
Bill Cowan	Gerry Matthews	Robert and Marcia Reynolds	

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