Greetings Redding Historical Society (RHS) Members

As with all organizations, we have had a rough year and had to cancel our regular events from March, 2020 due to the pandemic. On a positive note, we were able to accommodate a couple who wanted to get married at the Farm last summer. We were able to make the Farmhouse available as an outdoor venue for the couple while following the COVID rules. Of course, the wedding was small and consisted of the bride and groom, parents and the officiant.

You may have noticed the blue tarp covering part of the Farmhouse’s porch, on the left side facing the house. Unfortunately, storm damage found its way into the house and this was noticed by the influx of water into the crawl space. Through efforts of Shawn Donnelly’s crew, the roof has been repaired and fresh shingles applied. Job looks great, Thanks, Guys!!!!

Speaking of the outside repairs on the Farmhouse, as part of the Town’s finance budget, funds were designated to fix the outside of the Farmhouse, which is urgently needed, even without the porch damage. This work would include, repairing and re-staining the shingles and trim work, as well as repairs on both the front and side porches. We are currently working to get a schedule set up to begin these repairs.

With the support of our members, and our Town, we are continuing to work on restoration of the Lonetown Farmhouse and in organizing our historic collections. We would like to thank the efforts of several dedicated RHS members, Tegan Conlon, Helen Gore, Pam Reese and Dan Conlon replaced the garden fence and re-planted the garden as shown in the top picture. Also, Janice Dimon and Mike McKee are in the process of cataloging our old and new acquisitions. We are so grateful to all these people for their help and work efforts on these projects.

If you are interested in volunteering to help in any of the RHS projects, we’ll be happy to hear from you, so please let us know. The RHS contact information is in the back of this newsletter.
The Redding Historical Society
“TO EDUCATE, TO PRESERVE & TO PROMOTE REDDING’S RICH HISTORIC HERITAGE”

A BRIEF HISTORY
in celebration of our 60th anniversary

Executive Summary:
• 1940 First organized as The History Club of Redding Town (“the Club”)
• 1942 Members voted to curtail formal activities due to War priorities
• 1961 Reorganized as The Redding Historical Society
• 1962 Articles of Incorporation and Official Seal Adopted

The History Club of Redding Town was founded in 1940-to foster continued interest in the preservation of Redding’s rich historical heritage dating back to 1711. Mr. Philip Dillon, a journalist and authority on American History, hosted and articulated the mission of the 40 founding members, “the study of Redding history...” At the Club’s initial meeting, the original annual meeting was set on the 3rd Monday of June to commemorate the holding of the first Town Meeting under the General Assembly Act for Making and Forming the Parish of Redding into a Distinct Town (June 15, 1767). The first President was Earle Balch of the publishing firm of G.P. Putnam & Sons.

Due to World War II-on June 18, 1942, the Club voted to curtail future formal meetings. The resolution: “in view of the fact that war activities of diverse sorts and kinds are preoccupying nearly every member of the community...that gasoline is being rationed and tires are being conserved...not to be construed as a dissolution of the Club.” Informal meetings occurred among members and friends until 1961.

Reorganized in July 1961 as The Redding Historical Society, ("RHS"). Formal meetings resumed, and a new name was adopted by Mr. Gerald Ewing and 35 town citizens for, “the purpose of gathering together historic material and preserving it for future generations....” The Redding Historical Society was incorporated in 1962, and an official seal was adopted in February.

RHS Mission. The mission of the Redding Historical Society is simply stated: “to educate, to preserve and to promote Redding’s rich historic heritage”. RHS is a 501c(3) non-profit corporation.

The Emblem/Seal. The emblem/seal was designed by Mr. Clayton Knight, a renowned American writer and illustrator and a founding member of RHS. The center is that of the old Historical Elm, with John Read, his children, and Chief Chickens standing beneath the tree; the emblem also contains a copy of John Read’s signature and Chief Chickens’ mark. The Society’s name encircles the drawing.

Resources:
Founding and Organizing the History Club of Redding Town, excerpts from The Newtown Bee, September 20 & 27, 1940 and October 4, 1940

Property of the Redding Historical Society – 2014
We now want to provide you with the following to bring you up to date on some past and future activities at the Society and Lonetown Farm.

**Recent and Upcoming Events:**

**May 8th—Annual Garden Club Plant Sale**
A Redding tradition, the Redding Garden Club held its Spring Plant Sale on the Saturday before Mother’s Day at Lonetown Farm. Since COVID prevented the sale being held in 2020, we all looked forward to this year’s event. Shoppers found a wide variety of annuals, perennials, vegetables and herbs, at excellent prices. The biggest attractions were the selection of plants donated from the Club members’ gardens, many of which are deer resistant. Their master gardeners were also on hand to answer customers’ gardening questions.

The Plant Sale is a community event. Representatives of various groups showcased Redding’s non-profit groups, and included Norwalk River Valley Trail Association, Redding Land Trust, Neighbors and Newcomers, New Pond Farm and RHS.

**June 26th**, a Yoga class was held behind the Barn to take advantage of the serene surroundings of the Farm.

**June 26th**, The Redding Running Club held 5k and 9k runs which started at the Farm.

**August 5th, Professional and Women’s Business Owners Meeting**
Meeting will take place at the RHS Lonetown Farm.

**October 3rd, Sunday, Georgetown Day**
RHS will be at the Georgetown Day event which is a fun-filled day to meet people who are interested in Redding history. We will be selling historic maps, prints, books as well as RHS tee shirts, hats and tote bags.

**Existing calendar of RHS events**
- September 19th: RHS Annual Meeting
- November 7th: Umpawaug Schoolhouse Open House
- December 5th: Holiday Open House at Lonetown Farm

**In the News and In the Movies**
The RHS President, Joe Bonomo, was quoted in a May 22nd Danbury News-times article about the Gilbert and Bennett Stone Church. The article discussed the history of the Church and indicated the Town is considering purchasing the property and building with plans to host Town cultural events.

You may have noticed quite a gathering at the Farm during the week of June 28th, including a local police presence to direct traffic. This was because, our Farm made the movies!! The Town was asked if scenes could be filmed at the Farm for a Netflix’s Holiday movie. Its funny that the film was shot during a particular hot period for a snowy holiday scene, but we were thrilled that the Farm was chosen as a site for the movie, giving viewers a chance to admire the scenery in our area. The crew filming was enormous, but they were considerate to the property and polite to RHS members who were helping them with information. We can’t wait to see the movie with a planned release in 2022.

**Did You Know??**

**Information materials on Redding historical homes**—The RHS has frequently been contacted by home owners, potential home owners and/or realtors concerning historical house provenances. We have even received calls about a ghost and a possible basement grave!! But did you know the Mark Twain Library has reference materials related to some of Redding’s historical homes? If you want to do some research of your house, stop by the Library to peruse these reference materials. You might find something newsworthy (or family worthy) about your home.
Anna Hyatt Huntington—Last May 5th, the Mark Twain Library had a virtual presentation about Anna Hyatt Huntington, the foremost woman sculptor, whose work is in major museums and parks and also around the Town of Redding. Did you know that RHS is honored to have some items owned by Anna Huntington? They include a partially completed clay lion and some of Anna’s sculpture tools. We also have photographs of some of her works around the world. Let us know if you would like more information on these items.

The Farm is also available for rental, May through June, for other important events too, such as memorial services and informative lectures and meetings.

If you have any questions and/or are interested in scheduling your event at the Farm, call or email us using our contact information below.

Society Contact Information

You can contact us via our Voicemail Number 203-938-9095 or by our email address: rhistoricalso@optimum.net.

Visit us at our WEBSITE. The address is: www.reddinghistoricalsociety.org

We’re also on Facebook. Search for our page, The Redding Historical Society

Legacy and Estate Giving

Information is available on Legacy and Estate Giving to the Redding Historical Society. Legacy giving includes trusts, one-time gifts, stock or other long, medium or short term programs of giving. Please write to us to request information at:

The Redding Historical Society, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1023, Redding Center, CT 06875