

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Sunday November 2nd 5-8pm
TAVERN NIGHT
at the 1772 Darling House.
(Reservations ONLY)
Members: \$25 call Lisa at 314-2979



In the 21st Century

The Historical Society's web site is getting regular updates. Have you checked it lately? You'll find upcoming events and photos of past events in 2008. Also, we're now accepting donations using Paypal; one of the most secure methods possible. Coming in 2009 we plan to accept membership renewals and Tavern Night payments using this method.

In November we will have an interactive 1868 Woodbridge town map. Using technology offered by Google maps we will have homes, schools, and town buildings marked. By clicking on them you will get the name of the owner in 1868 and links to historic details.

Then, in December, look for the book "Woodbridge Hills" to be online. It will be an exact reproduction of the original 1911 printing, page for page. Browse the book to see if you can spot your house in one of the old photos.

We're always looking for ways to improve our web site. If you have any ideas, requests, or stories please let us know. With your input we hope to build a comprehensive living history of our town.

Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society, Inc.

1907 Litchfield Turnpike
Woodbridge, CT 06525



www.woodbridgehistory.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL ENCLOSED



18th Century Printer's Device

Woodbridge, Conn: Printed and Sold by Jason Morrill & Don Menzies,
Printers to the Society. MMVIII



AMITY & WOODBRIDGE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
JOURNAL

Fall Newsletter

October 2008 No. 10



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Tavern Night opening on November 2nd

Tom and Abby Darling are pleased to announce to the membership that their 10th biennial Tavern Night will be held at the Darling House on Sunday, November 2nd, 2008. The event will run from 5pm until 8pm, and we hope will contain the usual "cast of characters". Chef Darren Zaldo will be serving a spiced maple glazed Turkey, and his famous Yankee Pot Roast. We have heard that patrons at the Tavern this evening might have a taste of a Beef Wellington. Members of the Orange Historical Society, under the direction of President Ginny Reinhard will be serving (at the open hearth) a fine chowder of clams and potatoes, with more than a hint of lovage. They will also be serving their Fall signature dish of apples and raisins cooked in sugar pumpkins. Our favorite Brewmaster, Rob Leonard and his exceptionally talented associate Eric Dickerson from Woodbridge's own New England Brewing Company, will be serving some of the finest cask conditioned ales, and crisp lagers that can be found anywhere. Members of the Board of Directors will be providing an array of seasonal desserts. No one goes away hungry here. The entire evening is bathed with melodies for flute, fiddle and drum performed by Jim and Willow Sirch, strolling from room to room. If you are lucky, you will catch a glimpse of the 18th century. Cost for members is \$25.00 and non-members is \$30.00 per person, by reservation only. Please call Lisa at 314-2979 to reserve your table now

The Massaro Farm

If you're a resident of Woodbridge you might have heard about the Massaro Farm. In August 2007 the last Massaro brother passed away leaving what remains of the family farm to the town of Woodbridge. In the first half of 2008 the Conservation Commission worked hard to gain approval from the Board of Selectman to restore the farm into working condition. In an effort to support the Conservation Commission's efforts the Historical Society began historical research on the Massaro's and their farm. These findings were presented at the May meeting. The highlights of the farm's history are recounted here.



This is the Wisconsin style barn circa 1950 on the Massaro Farm property.

In 1916 John Massaro and his wife Mary, two Italian immigrants, bought 103 acres of farmland with several structures on Ford Rd. in Woodbridge. They began farming and started a family. In 1947 John, the father, died in a tragic car accident on Christmas Eve on Ford Road. Of their three sons only John and Tony remained on the farm. They ran the dairy and poultry operations with their mother. In 1971 their mother, Mary, passed away. Tony kept the business running and took care of his brother John. In 1989 Tony had an accident on the farm and was unable to return to its operations before he died in 1991. John and an appointed caretaker were left to run the business and care for the property. To help John pay the bills pieces of the property were sold off. When John died in 2007 only 53 acres remained of the original 103.

The Historical Society continues to research the history of the land and buildings. So far we have recorded several video interviews, did a title search, and heard from neighbors to the farm who remember

Society welcomes TWO new Board members!

We are pleased to announce the addition of two new members to the Board of Directors over the past year.

Jason Morrill and his wife Sheri moved into their 1800's house on Racebrook Rd. in February of 2005, and Jason joined our ranks shortly after. He has helped us make great strides with our website, in terms of improvements and keeping it current. He has some wonderful ideas in the works for an on-line interactive map of historic Woodbridge structures, and other ways of expanding the usefulness of our website. Jason has also been very involved with the Massaro Farm Project, and represented us very well.

Dr. Marvin Arons is certainly no newcomer to Woodridge, having moved here about 40 years ago! Marvin has long been involved with the New Haven Museum and Historical Society, having served as President for a full term. He has put that wealth of knowledge and "connectedness" to work and is actively involved in helping us locate and apply for several Grants that will be used for the development of our Archives Program, and for the conservation and preservation of our extensive collections.

We have always had a wonderful group of people serving on our Board, and these two guys are no exception! Welcome!

the brothers. If you have or know somebody who has information related to the history of this farm please contact us. Ultimately we'd like to have a complete history which can be on display at the farm once it resumes operation.

Right now the Massaro Community Farm is forming. It will lease the property from the town and be responsible for the future of the land and buildings. The Historical Society continues to support the efforts of this group and will make all efforts to ensure the restoration is done to preserve the historical aspects of the land and buildings. For more information about the Massaro Farm you can visit their web site www.MassaroFarm.org.



South School yard Comes Alive Again!

I'm sure at least some of you have seen the wonderful transformation that has come over the Old South Schoolyard this summer. As you pass by, you can almost hear the sounds of children playing games in the cool green grass, or climbing the split-rail fence, or practicing their "times tables" on the front porch. This Town property on Johnson Rd. was given a new lease on life by Woodbridge resident Rich Jeynes, who worked tirelessly for weeks to bring it to a level of rural beauty that is a joy to behold. Rich designed and installed the split-rail fence entirely on his own! Lowe's Home Improvement of Orange very graciously donated a portion of the fence materials. Thank you Lowe's! The great staff of the Town of Woodbridge Public Works Department helped in the acquisition, delivery, and spreading of topsoil and grass-seed. They did some necessary road repairs as well, and the combined effort has produced a nearly finished exterior! The South School Restoration Committee has ordered 6 pairs of accurately reproduced wooden shutters, which Rich is anxiously waiting to paint and install. That should just about do it, for the outside. Rich also has donated two healthy lilac trees, and located them on either side of the front porch. He has kept the grass trimmed and neat all summer long. Rich – Thank you!

The interior work is scheduled to start up again in November. The main project will be to determine paint history, so that we can accurately reproduce the earliest finishes on walls and doors. We are trying to locate a specialist. Much of the interior restoration is complete already. Many period desks have been bought or donated. We really are getting close to the end, but we are not sure if the money we have left will be enough to get us there. In these uncertain economic times, we would never think of asking for donations. But when we figure a way out of this international quandary, your Society might need your help to make one more financial *push* to get us to the finish line.