

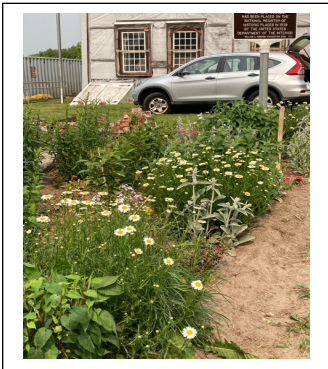


Fall 2023 Newsletter

Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum

"To protect, maintain, and preserve the Stanton-Davis Homestead and artifacts with the purpose of creating museum and educational center open to the public, dedicated to the memory of the Thomas Stanton and the Davis family, Native Americans, and African American slaves, associated with history of the Homestead-all of whom were instrumental, In the founding of Connecticut"

Fall is upon the museum, the surrounding fields have been cut for hay, for the third time, and the porcelain berry is turning yellow. It grew back and over the exposed stone walls, cleared by volunteers Helen Peterle, Kent Fawcett, and Merry Bliss back in April. The garden was planted in May, alongside our recently installed National Historic Register sign. Burgeoning with a load of chicken manure delivered by Larry Davis, the garden was abloom with zinnias, daisies, garden phlox, and a terrific display of fall asters. It was dug and installed, by Helen Peterle, and Merry Bliss.



Cheese Room News

Gil Bliss has laid all the new sills and joists. Through stronger evaluation of the east and west plates, and the north face posts, he found hidden evidence of both powder post beetle, and termite damage. This discovery will affect the integrity of wood, so new wood will need to replace it. The sill on the north side had rotted away, years before, so the north and the east wall had been sitting on the ground for a long while. Gil cut through the granite ledge on the north wall to even the new sill. The new sill has been laid and the wall raised. There was evidence that this wall had had work done on it, as there was a section of mill cut lumber around one window. According to Larry Davis, this work was done in the early 1960's by his grandfather, John Lawrence. They had installed a newer window too, which is now, pretty much rotted. Early pictures of the north side show only one window, so it was decided to eliminate it. We are waiting on replacement lumber to be cut, to replace the east plate, and raise this wall as well. The original 60's lumber was cut at the Miner Sawmill (Randy Miner's dad), on North Anguila Rd. The floor joists are in for the whole ground floor. Thaler Hefel, of Hefel Masonry, has replaced the foundation stones. We will be milling replacement lumber soon with Larry Davis at the Homestead.



Chimney Prep

This past May we tackled the three piles of brick. We sorted usable-versus broken and cleaned off old mortar and cement. We wound up with 1400 brick to be used in the new chimney. Thanks to our volunteers Brian McCormick, Andy Meek, Helen Peterle, Stevie Williams, Gil and Merry Bliss and Heather, we managed to have a pile ready for our mason Chris Post. The initial reconstruction involved him building an inner core of new brick to wed to the original stack. He then used our old brick, to continue the stack. It was finished the week before our Open House. It looks fantastic and will allow us, at some future point, to use the keeping room and west parlor fireplaces, with the placement of two damper hatches. All was done within budget. The finished product looks like an original old chimney. Please visit our online site www.stanton-davishomestead.org, for lots of progress pictures!



Prep for Eversource

On April 19th, excavation was started by Tim Coon and his crew. They excavated under Osbrook Pt Rd, across-our shared parking, and up to the first level of the hill. We had heavy rain that night, which slowed work, until it all could

be pumped out! Tim was a sweetheart, and after two days the trench was dug, piping laid, (thanks to Viking Supply) and the road put back to order. We shared some of our paving material, to make the largest pot holes on Osbrook disappear. Thanks to our electrician Jason Zelek of Connected Systems, we now have a proper meter socket, on our OWN property, looking like a direct descendent of Space Odyssey. We now wait for Eversource to connect our feed to the pole. A big thank you is due to all involved in this project, especially Gil Bliss, for his great orchestrations between subs and Eversource.

Looking For a Few Good Volunteers

We have had some wonderful volunteers. Some of you are retired, some still actively working, and some-supporting your families. We would like to thank you all, who have stepped in with either a skill to help us along on our journey, or simply act as an extra pair of hands. Believe us when we say it all matters. The excitement is shared, with every task that brings us closer to our restoration goal. Our next event will be in November, (DTBT) at the Homestead. We will mill new lumber for the cheese Room. Check in with our website.



Main Roof Progress

Jacob and Bob, of Architectural Preservation Group, are back at the Homestead replacing roof trim where needed. Thanks go to Rex Lumber, who accessed some beautiful Sepele (mahogany) for us. Glen Baller, of Glen Baller Co., donated his shop time, and milled trim-according to architectural specifications, rendered by Robert Leach, our Architect of Record. Jenn Michaels, of Michaels Painting, has been priming the pieces. She is donating her labor charges to the museum as well. After the four corners of the roof are repaired and trim work is finished, the old roofing material will be stripped, repairs made to roofing boards, and a new red cedar shake roof will go on. We thank Riverhead Supply Co, of Westerly for helping us to find this material, at an incredible savings. Again, thank you to all persons involved for their donations of time and labor!

News on Grants

The Capital Improvement Grant that was approved by the Town of Stonington, for \$10,000, was received this past September. We are so thankful to the town, for their continued support in our restoration efforts.

SHPO (State Historical Preservation Office) approved our \$77,000 HRF Grant for the cheese room roof, and the main roof replacements. This is a one-to-one matching grant. We are grateful for their decision to approve our efforts in the restoration of the Homestead.

The Art of Stone Laying

We all find them, in this area. Every hole dug for building or planting, manufactures them. Our local farmers, used them for their house foundations, chimneys, and miles of walls. You may be lucky to have some on your property. They are an historical marker for colonial boundaries, countless hours



of early slave labor, and a testament to our early roots in animal husbandry. Perhaps you would like to repair your tumbled walls? Join us on Saturday, October 28th, when Thaler Hefel, of Hefel Masonry, will teach us how to lay the foundation, and rebuild our stone walls. Workshop will be held 9am to 12pm, coffee and snack included in our \$10 fee. Wear warm outside clothing, bring leather work gloves, and a crow bar if you have one. Class is filling up! Go to www.stanton-davishomestead.org, to sign up, or meet us at the Homestead.



Our Open House 10/14/23

Many thanks to our volunteers and members who gave countless hours of furniture shuffling and house cleaning, for our fall open house. Gil Bliss, and Brian McCormick split up three, hour tours, from the top down, so to speak. We were able to show our public, structural work done in our attic, as well as more rooms on the second floor. Special thanks for the wonderful apples, pumpkins and flowers donated to our day, by Robert Leach, who lives on an antique farm in Greenville RI. Also thanks go for the hot cider and cookies donated by Merry Bliss. It was a chilly, then wet day, but all who visited were enthusiastic about the house, and the history it holds.



Fall Change

We say goodbye to Gil Bliss as our board president, at the end of December of this year. Gil took the reins from Bill Langman, who left his term early in 2017. He helped the board navigate our position with the state SHPO office, as well as establish a firm repore with Robert Leach, the architect of record, since the beginning of the project., and with Myron Stachiw, who researched public records to date the growth of the house.

Gil's company was hired in the beginning phase of structural work done on the Homestead, many years before he became a board member. He oversaw, and was hands on, in the foundation repair and repointing, sill replacement, and numerous post repairs.

For those of you who know him, Gil comes across as a reserved diplomat- a demeanor honed by years of owning his own building company that restored as well as built new.

He helped in collating the numerous pricing costs, that the state wished to see. He called upon numerous friends in his trade, to help in donations of their time, and/or materials.

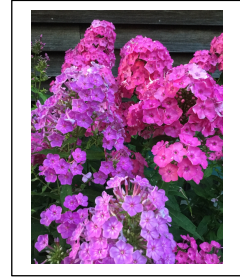
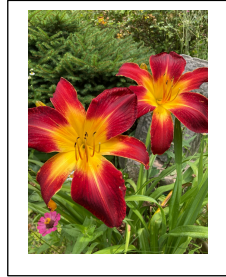
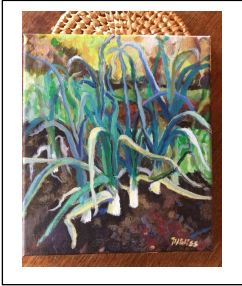
His background in post and beam construction enabled him a thorough understanding of the project, that he could translate to the public in terms they could understand and appreciate. He has made us see light IN the tunnel of this project, and we couldn't have advanced to where we are now, without his help!

He will stay on as our board Project manager to oversee the work by Steve Tyson (APG) for the Main House, and will continue in his role as project manager/worker of the Cheese Room.

The board would back me, in saying he drove the project like a steady Capitan, thru storm and rough seas, into gentler waters.

His passion for the Homestead started a full 30 years ago. Gil and his Partner Gene Anderson were called upon by Whit Davis to see if "They could repair a couple of shingle" on the roof. Whit gave them a tour- and that was it! This house always was in the top 10 of his career. He

has given it a real gift of his time and knowledge. The continuing board thanks him for his service and wishes him well!



Program Announcement Spring 2024

We are planning for an early open house with a plant and tool sale on May 1st. Merry Bliss and Helen Peterle, have potted up some of the early flowering narcissus and daffodils, from the Homestead, as well as Fritillaria, grape hyacinth and spring crocus. There will be a selection of shade and sun perennials, and 1 to 5 gallon trees, offered as well.

We are looking for donations of garden tools in good shape for a sale swap. Have any interesting garden pots, or garden furniture, that you would like to donate? We will happily receive donations all winter long, and will do pick up.

Do you have an agricultural, or old house bent, and wish to have a booth at our fair? We also could use volunteers to help with the sales, and docents for the house. We are hoping for good spring weather but could use an extra outdoor tent or two. We need your help.

Contact us: merrybliss@sbcglobal.net
or: www.membershipstanton-davishomestead@gmail.com

Membership News

Our membership is growing! Have you considered joining us? We also now offer you the option to give as a sustaining member, online. Go to our website to sign up via Pay Pal. You choose the monthly amount you wish to give. Pay Pal sends you the accounting info at tax time. Your membership support helped us in our position to apply for grant applications, with both private, state, and federal resources. We plan for our future projects with your support. Thank you to all who have joined in our efforts.

Want to Join NOW?

Membership (circle one)

Student \$25, Individual. \$35, Family \$45, Corporate \$100, Friend. \$500, Lifetime. \$1,000

Sustaining: You decide your monthly amount via Pay Pal. Visit us at: www.stanton-davishomestead.org, to sign up.

Contact Info

Name: _____

Street/Apt # _____

Town/City: _____

State/Zip: _____ Email: _____

Thank You

Mail check, or cash, or pay online with Pay Pal : www.stanton-davis-homestead.org

Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum
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