

Funding the Past to Preserve for the Future

Preserving the past for the future is the responsibility of each and every one of us. We already do this in many ways; voting to improve our schools and looking for ways to improve our environment for our children and grandchildren. The same holds true for the Stanton-Davis Homestead. The Homestead is currently at a pivotal point in its almost three hundred year life. If critical repairs and upgrades are not made within the next few years, we fear the house will reach the point of no return and the rich history will be lost to future generations. Why is the Stanton-Davis Homestead so important? It is a vital link for Stonington and all of Connecticut to our past. It was the first house built in Stonington and the farm is longest continuously operated in Connecticut. The house was erected by Thomas Stanton in 1650s, later additions were completed in the 1720s and 1750s. This house remains in its original construction showing the many different types of construction techniques, designs and native timbers. Thomas Stanton was a trader in the region, acting as the go between the Native Americans and the Englishmen. He was appointed as an Indian Interrupter by the English Crown to settle disputes between the two. He was a co-founder of both Stonington and Hartford. The Stanton and Davis families both recognized the importance of preserving their ancestor's artifacts and the Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum looks to preserve and display these for future generations. You may already know the rich history of the Homestead and you probably already have an idea of why I'm writing this column. We need desperately your financial support to move the project on to the next phase of restoration.

The next phase of the restoration is the repair of the roof, its supporting timbers and the attic floor joists. The roof has started to sag forcing the outer walls to push out and the floor joists to separate from their sockets. Timbers are starting to show signs of strain and we worry that it won't be long before it is damaged beyond repair/restoration of the original timbers. We had the chimney removed so the sagging roof would not impact its structural strength. We have received bids, reviewed them and selected the necessary vendors to complete the work. It is now up to all of us to provide the financial backing for the project. Below are the estimated costs; they are realistic in pricing and all vendors have agreed to hold the price through the end of 2020.

- Architectural/Project Management \$19,000
- Masonry Work \$12,000
- Roof Removal/Construction \$125,000
- New Roofing and eaves \$45,000

This is where you come in. As you can see, the next phase will be costly. However, this work will place the Homestead in a structurally sound condition for the remaining phases of construction. Please consider a donation to help fund these vital restoration projects. If you know of an organization/foundation that would consider making a donation/grant or has a matching grant program, please let me know. I would happy to meet and present to them. Please contact me at vicepresident@stanton-davishomestead.org

LET'S FUND THE PAST TO PRESERVE FOR THE FUTURE