

Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum

Fall Newsletter

October 14, 2020

“To protect, maintain and preserve the Stanton-Davis Homestead and artifacts with the purpose of creating a museum and educational center open to the public, and dedicated to the memory of the Thomas Stanton, and Davis families, Native Americans, and African American slaves, associated with the history of the homestead-all of whom were instrumental, in the founding of Ct”

Greetings to Our Membership

We hope this note finds you and your families well, and coping with new “social distancing” measures. It’s the year of Covid 19, and a lot of shifts for museums, and non-profits have been made. The board has been holding its meetings on line, for most of the year. All our small workshops were cancelled, along with the first and biggest fundraiser, “Raise the Roof” that we were planning in August, 2020. We had no visit from the Stanton Society in the last weekend of June.

We have been working on some other directions, while we all wait this pandemic out.

Goings On

In June, Donna Brandelli, a new member, and recently retired professional photographer for the LA PD, donated her expertise and skills, in helping us preserve the chalk markings in the attic. We are hopeful of using this information, as a published record, to be made available to the public, in the future. Many thanks go to Donna, in helping us preserve an important, unexplained history, of the Stanton-Davis.

Dig It

On August 27th, Sara Sportman, State Archeologist of Ct., arrived with two volunteers of the “Friends of Archeology”, to dig test pits in the area to be trenched, for an underground cable for electricity. They dug three test pits, one in the lower parking field, another on the first tier (looking up), and another in the middle tier. Lots of animal bones and teeth were found, along with shards of pottery including dates of late 17th century to the late 19th century. Apparently, dump sites were made all over properties! Sarah will give us a full report, with the information she gleans, from their finds.

As we speak, our lawyer is drawing up an easement letter, to the Davis family. Our new power source will cross under Osbrook Pt Rd. Work hopefully will proceed-before snow flies. Our contractors, whom you may remember from our last newsletter, are still ready and willing, to donate their time and materials. Many thanks to: Viking Plumbing Supply Co.-for electrical conduit, Connected Systems for their donation of pedestal, meter socket, and installation, William Coon and Son, for trenching and excavation, French Paving for road patch, and Haywood and Holbrook, for survey work. We thank them all, for their donations to make our electric hook-up a reality!

New Ideas

In the stark lack of any donation towards Phase 3- for the finish of the structural work of the Homestead, we've turned our attention to projects with smaller bites. We realize that in order to better serve the public, we really need to address our lack of wheelchair access. Our wish list, also includes an office space, that could be heated, and have electrical hookup. The cheese room/milk room addition on the back of the Homestead could serve this purpose. Understanding that it was not part of the original survey, several board members attempted to see the inside-in order to get an idea of what we face. The support structure is in a very poor state, with more rot, than sound wood. The floor in one part, laid directly on the ground, is totally rotted away. It does however afford the space to put a covered entrance for wheelchair access, as well as office, with a visitor's desk. Board member Leslie Driscoll, is donating her time, to draw up design plans, that we can work from.

It may mean a partial rebuild for support- definitely for a completely new roof, Corner posts and floor need a replacement, as does wall support framing. The rebuild/restoration would be keeping it all in the same footprint-with all windows and doors staying. All outside sheathing, and shingling, needs repair. We are working up figures as to the cost of such a project, and hope to have a professional survey done soon, to fill our paper trail needs with the state. This will cost several thousand dollars, unless we have a donor for this integral part of the planning progress. Myron Stachiew of Ct Historic Preservation, was kind enough to look at it with us, this past March.

The board wants to help increase our membership. We discussed the possibility of working on one room, and returning it to its original date, and glory, to act as "eye candy" We all agreed that the East parlor on the ground floor, is really a fine example of the 1750 expansion of the house, one of the jewels in the crown, so to speak.

Currently, we are researching how to make this possible, and formulating a plan. The first concern-keep the outside elements-OUT! This means, any

shingling/clapboarding around this side will need to be done up to the second floor. Before this takes place, however, windows must be made sound again.

In 2014, the board paid for a survey done of the windows of the whole house by the Historic Restoration, Inc., out of Providence RI, a company highly recommended by Richard Ventrone, the architect, who was working on the project, at the time. They presented a breakdown of the job along with a grand total of \$170,000 to do 24 out of the 41 windows-that's including trim, inside and out. Each window had roughly, a \$7,000 price tag. Obviously, that contract could not be signed, and those prices are six years old.

Using appropriate data, and research, we wish to explore doing some of this work ourselves. One board member is in the process of one window restoration, following Secretary of Interior Standards for archiving, repair, and preservation. We wish to work up our own estimate, hiring an outside contractor, who will do the outside repairs, to trim and eventually, the outside sheathing of the structure. It may mean a huge difference in cost, and one that would be within our means. It certainly will enable us to go forward, with presenting this room in a much, improved fashion. It also will be a positive sign that work; as such on the needs of the house, is continuing. The next newsletter will keep you updated on our progress.

Tribute

The board is sad to say goodbye, and offer our heartfelt thanks, to our vice president Mark Bancroft. Mark was a great participant in all areas. He helped prep the house for our last open house in 2019, and act as a guide all that day. He secured a nice donation from the Ocean Community Foundation, for our archival needs. He applied to local government for community grants, secured a shared donation program with a local bank, Norwich Saving Society,(now Berkshire Bank). After that, he conducted several private tours. His energy and enthusiasm will be hard to replace. Mark currently lives in the area, and wants to keep ties open to the museum.

CONTRIBUTE to Our Wish List

As you well know, every part of the Homestead needs work. It's just not about preservation, but at this point, more like stabilization, so that there's something left, to preserve. Museums, especially old wooden ones, continually need work. Finding competent companies, schooled in preservation, is a search. Real craft, and a compassion for it, has a hefty price tag. Won't you consider a donation towards our two upcoming wish list items?

Cheese room/milkroom-

We need your support for our architectural/history survey on the cheese room/milkroom. To even start the ball rolling, we are required to have an approved survey, of the architectural significance of the structure.

East Parlor

As you well know, you have to pay for any "eye candy" Your donation will be put towards the window trim work, inside and exterior, and restoration of the corner cupboard, restoring the 1750's paint scheme, and replastering the east wall of the east parlor room.

Final costs are being worked on now, for these projects.

Any amount you can share is appreciated. We will accept a Personal check. Please allocate the words of "cheese room, or "eye candy parlor", on the check, so we know which you support. Thank you, for your support.

MEMBERSHIP

Our calendar year is drawing to a close on December 31, 2020. Is time to renew your membership for January 2021.

As of 2020 we currently have a membership of 52. We value your support.

Your membership pays the following; insurance for the house, rent for housing our collection at the **Mashantucket Pequot Museum of Research and Preservation**, for our state license as a nonprofit, for monthly electricity, seasonal portosan, and dumpster charges. Our museum membership charges have remained the same, since incorporation, in 2004.

Thank you for supporting us. How about a **gift membership** for a friend? You are people, who are saving an important part of local, state, and national history. Your membership support helps pay the bills. Thank you to our renewing members, and to our new members as well. It all counts.

RENEW Or GIFT

Please send this form with a check payable to:
Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum
576A Greenhaven Rd
Pawcatuck, Ct 06379

Name: _____
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Town/City: _____ Phone: _____
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Circle one:

**Student \$20, Individual \$35, Family \$45, Corporate \$100, Friend \$500,
Lifetime \$1,000**

Gift a Friend

Name: _____
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Circle One:

**Student \$20, Individual \$35, Family \$45, Corporate \$100, Friend \$500,
Lifetime \$1,000**

Please mail form and check to:

**Stanton-Davis Homestead Museum
576A Greenhaven Rd.
Pawcatuck, Ct. 0637**

**SDHM is a recognized 501©3 with the IRS, and is registered in the State of Ct
to solicit donations. As such, your donation may be tax deductible. Thankyou.**

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