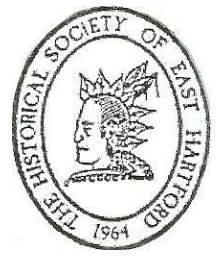


Historical Society of East Hartford

Newsletter, January 2022



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Friends and members....

Happy New Year 2022.

The Holiday Social and Open House at the Brewer House was very successful. The house was beautifully decorated, the refreshments were excellent, and the visitors were impressed. Kudos to those who made it so successful. Mayor Walsh stopped by, and expressed how pleased he was with the decorations and our plans for the house and the Hockanum School.

We are now starting to decorate the Brewer House with furniture and furniture pieces from our collection. If you can offer some suggestions, please let us know.

The HSEH Hockanum School Committee will be meeting with Town Hall officials to discuss a plan for the building. I have already sent Mayor Walsh a plan for public use of the building. (We are meeting on January 5, 2022),

We will be meeting with the chairperson of the Fine Arts and Culture Commission to discuss an art show in the garden of the Brewer House; the show will be the first Saturday in June....at least that is the plan. Our meeting is planned for January 27, 2022.

The Christmas tree will be left up at the Brewer House; the holiday decorations have been removed, and we would like it to be a tree for all seasons, with decorations made by school children. I have spoken with Cathy Potter, Director of the Children's Section at Raymond Library. We will meet, the pandemic permitting, to set up a program for the children to participate. Input from the HSEH membership is most welcome.

It is very difficult for a society such as ours to offer and sponsor activities without membership volunteers and interest. We hope that this current new year will encourage more participation. The survival and future of the HSEH depend on active members, not on the participation of a few.

Please make sure that you have paid your dues for the fiscal year 2021-2022. September 1 begins the new fiscal year, and payment for the fiscal year should be received as soon as possible after September 1 of each year.

Again, happy new year, and we are looking forward to a productive year with the participation of more members.

Steven Strange, President

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMS

With the recent surge in COVID 19 infections and the high transmissibility rate, it should come as no surprise the Historical Society will not be offering any events, meetings or programs for our membership during the winter season. The fast-spreading variants such as omicron and delta love to thrive in the cold weather months so we can only hope things will improve when the Spring arrives. The New Year's Day observance has always been used to promote hope. Although still true, we all must be more diligent in a changed world. Vaccinate and stay safe.

On the plus side, we have been approved for a Cultural Fund Operating Support grant from Connecticut Humanities in the amount of \$5,500. During the new year, when it's feasible, this grant will assist us on our collections, exhibitions and public programs.

Craig Johnson, Vice President, Program Chair

HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOLIDAY OPENING AT THE SELDEN BREWER HOUSE

With Comments on One Visitor's Special Interest in the Old Round House

During the first two weekends in December when we greeted visitors to the Selden Brewer House holiday exhibits, it was a pleasure not only greeting fellow members of the Historical Society but also non-members who saw our notice in the *Gazette* or on social media. Two couples who visited on the first Saturday were welcomed just as we were closing. One guest who lives close to the town railroad yard near Park Avenue offered to send us some before and after pictures of the 1888 Roundhouse that burned in a fire on April 16, 1997. Those photos are included. The railroad yard was once the largest employer in East Hartford. The old east of the river line out of Hartford now ends at School Street, no longer extending to Manchester with the closing of the Central Conn. Co-op in 2016. The only active line now in East Hartford runs along route 5 into South Windsor. Thanks to Carl Weber for these pictures and others that will be a part of our folder on the railroad roundhouse.

Craig Johnson, Vice President

ROUND HOUSE PHOTOS & MORE COMMENTS



Here are a couple of "then and later" photos of the roundhouse off Park Ave. These are both views taken from the rail yard looking north

The photo taken of it before the fire (left) was taken on May 8, 1983, and the other, after the fire (below) was taken the morning of the fire, April 16, 1997.

Note that the south wall of the roundhouse had completely collapsed in the fire.

Carl Weber, Jr



RUTH SHAPLEIGH-BROWN IS LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ON ALBERT RAYMOND AND HIS FINANCES

Ruthie has been recently contacted by an old AGS colleague from Michigan (Association for Gravestone Studies) .. regarding a book he's working on about old cemetery family vaults. Seems he heard about the Raymond Family vault at Center Cemetery. Ruthie has been trying to do some research to get him more information about "how Mr. Albert C. Raymond" came about his wealth, but so far has only found a reference that he was a farmer and GOOD businessman. He owned the land that is now the Central Ave. area, of East Hartford, and generously gave to help establish and improve the area, in most respects to preserve it as a parklike area. The Raymond family was from Montville area previously, and the Raymond Library Company; which established what is now our Raymond Library on Main and Central streets in 1885. He also established the same in the town of Montville where they were previously lived. Ruthie has more to learn but is familiar with the family surname in that area and has worked with some family descendants in the past. One of the most extensive records of the history of the Montville area was done by a Mrs. Raymond. Ruthie found information in Paquette's East Hartford History.

... "In 1877 under the impetus of Albert C. Raymond the Village Improvement Society had formed, with 128 original members. Its objectives included improving and ornamenting streets and public grounds, planting and caring for trees and shrubs, cleaning and repairing sidewalks and crosswalks, and any other projects to beautify the town. Henry R. Hayden was president, George H. Goodwin, first vice-president, and Mr. Raymond, treasurer."

You can read more about this "Improvement" time in the book Only More So - The History of East Hartford 1783-1976, by Lee Paquette, copies are available at the Raymond Library or can purchased at the Historical Society for \$10.00.

To contact Ruthie with any information, email shapbrown@cox.net.

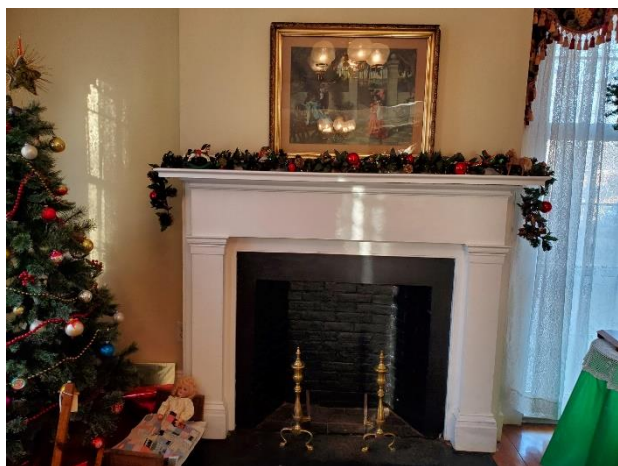


Raymond Family Vault in Center Cemetery, East Hartford



DECORATIONS PG 1 OF 2

Seasonal decorations from the December 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 2021 Open House of the HSEH at the Brewer House. On display were 19th century items from the HSEH collections and the recent Dowd donation (mid to later 19th century items). Photos are from Facebook, Dec 10, 2021, posted by Gary-anne Roy.





DECORATIONS PG 2 OF 2

Below left is one item from the Dowd donation, a flyer from the case, right. It advertises a Centennial Tea on July 4, 1876 at Dowd's Grove in East Hartford. Ladies & Gentlemen will be in 'antique costumes'; there will be an old-fashioned kitchen with, among other foods, clam chowder; Ladies will provide the food. Gentlemen's tickets cost 50 cents.



MANY THANKS TO THE HSEH'S INVALUABLE VOLUNTEERS who decorated the Brewer House beautifully and made these weekends memorable: Steven Strange, Karen Johnson, Ruthie S. Brown, Victoria Hart, Allen Brewer, Susan Kies, Shirley Finney, Eileen Driscoll.

Historical Society of East Hartford

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indiv \$20, 1 address \$25, student \$10,

patron \$50, lifetime \$250

mail check, name, addr, email to PO Box above

Deadline Mar Newsletter – *Feb 26, 2022*