

February 2025

HHS is excited to share what's happening and let you know about upcoming events! We hope you will join us soon and often!

***HHS Annual Meeting Highlighted a Busy 2024**

HHS members enjoyed celebrating and sharing thoughts at the January 26, 2025 meeting. Highlights of the year were shared by Officers and Committee Chairpersons. HHS offered educational in-person programs monthly and weekly on-line presentations of CT history (July- December); organized and gathered for cemetery restoration workshops; researched residents of our community's past and planned/organized/hosted a cemetery walk; have a self-guided walk at South Cemetery; rented space at the Harwinton Fair to share history with the public and earned funds through *Take-a-Chance* (Thanks to many supportive local businesses); were awarded a grant from the Thomaston Savings Bank; approved a 2025 budget (Thanks to Marilyn Mitchell for conducting the 2024 financial audit.); currently are conducting our Annual Appeal; and are exploring the opportunity of preserving the Catlin Inn and barn. It has been a year of involvement!

Honored at the meeting was retiring curator, Bonnie Andrews. Bonnie's involvement in HHS over the years has been extensive. We all loved the monthly newsletter that she coordinated during past years. Bonnie served as President of HHS from 1976-1978 and 2016-2022. Thank you, Bonnie! We look forward to Bonnie's continuing contributions to HHS.

2025 Officers/Directors:

<i>Officers</i>	President- Martha (Marti) Lecko; Vice President- Elaine Sederquist; Secretary- Nancy Lyons; Treasurer- Harry Schuh; Curator- Ann Harrington; Building Supervisor- Dennis Andrews; Past President- Susan McClen
<i>Directors</i>	Carol Kearns, Robert Lecko- <i>Terms end 2027 (elected for 3-year terms)</i> ; Bruce Burnett- <i>Term ends 2025</i> ; Kevin Smail- <i>Term ends 2026</i>

Catlin Inn and Barn Preservation- We are exploring the dream opportunity to preserve one of the most significantly historic homes in Harwinton. We seek to open the property to the public and provide a learning/activity center for the community. It will allow us to display our paper and additional accessions that are currently in storage. The Catlin Inn was built in 1760 by Abijah Catlin II. Abijah served as a Revolutionary Patriot. Generals Washington and Knox, and Marquis de Lafayette visited the Catlin Inn. The 3.58-acre property is located at 1 Harmony Hill Road. The house and barn are on the Historic Register. A membership meeting/vote will be held once details are confirmed.

Cemetery Restoration and Recording of Epitaphs: HHS organized and composed/sent out weekly updates/invitations resulting in well-attended and extremely productive cemetery restoration workshops (mainly at South Cemetery) from June to October 2024. Many thanks to our HHS member (who is also active in Litchfield Patriots) for her vision for the restoration project, encouragement, and sharing her cemetery restoration expertise! Kudos to dedicated HHS members/friends (including a Girl Scout working for her Gold Award) who cleaned memorials and removed branches; and another group (including volunteer masons) who reset/repaired memorials and removed invasives at the cemetery. Volunteers worked together to make this project a huge success! During the last several workshops some of us became intrigued by the epitaphs, and recorded ~20. A map of Center Cemetery was completed by a member. The honor brought to the resting places of Harwinton's past residents made during restoration workshops is heartwarming!

By popular request, when warmer weather returns HHS plans to continue cemetery restorations and verifying/recording additional epitaphs at South Cemetery. Keep an eye out for the invitation!

ENJOY BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS of the October 12, 2024 Cemetery Walk organized by HHS at:

<https://grinergenealogy.com/hhs>. Thanks to an HHS member who photographed and posted the memories for us!

After having a self-guided walk available for several years, a Cemetery Walk with live portrayals was once again planned by the Harwinton Historical Society Program Committee. HHS members researched 8/9 of the residents portrayed, and Program Committee members wrote 7/9 of the scripts; and thank the Girl Scout for researching a portrayal and writing 2 scripts. After verifying information and compiling the scripts, the HHS Program Committee recruited 5 community adults for portrayals, and the Girl Scout recruited 4 Region 10 student actresses. Many thanks to our actors/actresses for engaging and informative portrayals of Harwinton's residents of the past! HHS wrote a request letter to Dunkin which resulted in a much-appreciated donation of 6 dozen donuts and 200 Munchkins. Thanks to BJs (\$50) and Market 32 (\$25) for gift certificates (attained by the Girl Scout) used for cider and miscellaneous supplies. Over 100 attendees enjoyed the day! (Scripts of the 9 residents portrayed are available in the mailbox at the entrance of South Cemetery for a self-guided walk, as is a fun Icon Scavenger Hunt (prepared by the Girl Scout in conjunction with the HHS Program Committee). Enjoy from sunrise to sunset!

- **Grant Writers/ Explorers:** Might you be able to assist with grant writing? Tremendous appreciation to the couple of members who have written grants. We would love additional assistance in exploring grant opportunities and completing grant applications. Please e-mail harwhistsoc@gmail.com. *Thank you for considering helping with this important task.*
- **Revolutionary Patriot Researchers:** As we prepare for celebrating America250, we are looking to research Harwinton residents who served and their families. Let us know if you would be interested in assisting in this project (harwhistsoc@gmail.com). Research can be done from home or at a library. (See February 21 workshop- details below.)
- **AMERICA250-** How should we celebrate? (See workshop on February 26- details below.)
- **HHS Projects/Community Events/Projects HHS can Support/Programs/ Fundraisers-** Ideas/thoughts?

Thank you for your thoughts and becoming involved! We look forward to seeing/hearing from you soon. Please let us know for which activities/projects you are available/interested in volunteering (harwhistsoc@gmail.com). Please let us know if you would like to serve on the Board of Directors or on an HHS Committee.

***GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:**

Honoring Harwinton's Revolutionary Patriots and Families

When: Friday, February 21 from 10-12

Where: Harwinton Library Activity Room

What: Learn about the best online sources and books available. Tips on navigating sites will be shared.

As we prepare for celebrating America250, we are looking to research Harwinton's Revolutionary Patriots and Families. On February 21 HHS Member and Harwinton Town Historian Susan McClen will share sources/ tips on searching for information on Harwinton's Revolutionary Patriots and Families. Learn about the best online sources and books available. Tips on navigating sites will be shared! The projection screen will be utilized to facilitate attendees' visualization of searching.

Susan is a member of DAR and has taken their classes on lineage research. Susan has been a volunteer genealogist for CTDAR, and is currently state registrar for Colonial Dames 17th Century and state registrar for Daughters of Colonial Wars. She has been a member of Connecticut Society of Genealogists for over 30 years, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society for over 10 years, and New England Historical and Genealogical Society for 5 years. In addition, Susan is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

*We welcome you to share your tips/thoughts. Bring your tablet/ laptop if you would like. Free and open to the public.

***HHS UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

Free and open to the public. Held at Harwinton Town Hall Assembly Room.

***Thank you to Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation for granting \$2,500 which is supporting a portion of our programs and funded the purchase of engaging colonial-era toys.*

18th Century Chocolate Making- Pewter Pot Chocolates- Sunday, February 23 @2

Explore the fascinating history of chocolate in the 1700s and learn how it was made. Dressed in period attire, our presenter will showcase the art of crafting 18th-century chocolate using authentic tools and techniques of the era. Attendees will have the opportunity to sample delicious chocolate and hot cocoa. Additionally, chocolate bars and cocoa will be available for purchase following the program. Don't miss this unique experience! (co-sponsored by Harwinton Public Library)

All Honor to the Ladies- Litchfield County Women and the Coming of the Civil War- Pete Vermilyea- Sunday, March 23 @2

The Civil War posed unprecedented challenges for Northern society. The federal government had no experience and little authority to meet the logistical demands of sending armies to war. Consequently, much of this task fell to local communities. This talk will explore how ladies provided for Union soldiers while also providing women with opportunities to exercise political agency and gain leadership and organizational experience that would prove instrumental in post-war reform movements.

Over a Wyoming Campfire- the Beginnings of the National Park Service- Hamish Lutris- Sunday, April 27 @2

Today there are more than 450 national parks in the US and 1200 worldwide. This talk will focus on the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, a radical move for its time, to intervene in the health of the nation's lands. The talk will discuss the history of conservation and how the American wilderness plays an important role in the identity of the American people, as well as outlining the personalities and events that created this, one of the most successful and popular government agencies ever conceived. Local conservation areas will be incorporated.

Antique Tools/Gadgets Identification- Sue Ryan- Sunday, May 18 @2

HHS member Sue Ryan will bring items from her Burlington Road Antique Shop and we will have fun identifying/ puzzling out the uses! Curious about an item you own? Please, bring it! Informative and entertaining!

***HHS DUES DUE**

Thank you to all members for supporting the preservation and sharing of Harwinton history. Annual dues (for those not LIFE MEMBERS) are payable. Please bring dues (\$15 per person) to the February 21 workshop or February 23 HHS program or mail to HHS; P.O. Box 84; Harwinton 06791.

If you or you know someone who might be interested in preserving history, please invite them to access a membership form on the HHS website (harwintonhistory.org) or to send an e-mail/note including contact information (e-mail, address, phone number) to HHS. We'd love to have more folks join HHS to help us with our mission/community service.

***ANNUAL APPEAL 2024- 2025**

Mailings for the Annual Appeal occurred on Saturday, November 30, 2024. Response by the following Tuesday was a wonderful 44 donors! Support allows the preservation and sharing of history while maintaining our expenses including rent, curator supplies, and insurance. We are so grateful for your participation in activities and monetary support.

A ton of appreciation to those who have sent contributions- you have helped make this one the most successful campaigns (+\$771.01 to exceed the past record)! Donations can be made in honor or memory of someone; the donation is acknowledged and then noted on the list of donors included with the next annual appeal canvas. Donation levels are honored: Platinum- \$500+; Gold- \$200-499; Silver- \$100-199; Bronze- \$50-99; and Pewter- up to \$49. Thank you notes are sent.

Your contribution makes a difference!

***America250 EVENTS PLANNING WORKSHOP**

When: February 26 from 5-6PM

Where: Litchfield Community Center

What: Litchfield America250 Committee invites all! Join HHS members in attending! This "workshop will help anyone planning an event or considering planning an event as part of the town's multi-year celebration of America's 250th Anniversary.

- Learn about resources available.
- Hear what is going on and how your project might align (or overlap?)
- Meet with natural partners if needed or get paired up with planning coach if desired.
- Even if you don't have a clear project in mind, this might help you come up with one!

(Registration is not required but it will help plan to have enough copies and treats so please use this link to let us know you are coming: <https://forms.gle/A37eRPBHjxmCqeE8>)" (Litchfield America250 e-mail)

***TORRINGTON NEWSPAPERS 1874-2023 NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE**

Thank you, Torrington Library! The online Torrington Newspapers collection is open to both members and non-members of the Torrington Library. What a wonderful asset!

The link: <https://www.torringtonlibrary.org/torrington-newspapers.html>

"Newspaper Titles & Publication Dates:

Weekly Publications

- Wolcottville Register 08/08/1874 thru 04/09/1881
- Torrington Register 04/16/1881 thru 11/30/1906
- The Evening Register 12/06/1906 thru 03/19/1914
- The Torrington Register 03/26/1914 thru 12/27/1922

Daily Publications (Monday - Saturday)

- Evening Register 08/01/1898 thru 03/20/1914
- The Torrington Register 03/21/1914 thru 12/31/1968
- Torrington Register 01/02/1969 thru 03/16/1973
- The Register 03/17/1973 thru 12/31/1983

Daily Publications (Monday - Saturday)

- Register Citizen* 01/03/1984 thru 01/18/1988
- The Register Citizen 01/19/1988 thru 03/18/1994

Daily Publication (7 Days/Week)

- The Register Citizen 03/19/1994 thru 12/31/2023

**The Torrington Register merges with the Winsted Citizen"*

(Torrington Library website.)

Everyone's involvement will make for a strong and impactful organization. Your part in preserving and sharing history is much appreciated.

Please reach out (harwhistsoc@gmail.com) if we can help in any way.