



The Hebron Historical Society

March-April 2016

Mark Your Calendar:

Hebron Maple Fest - March 19-20, 10-4:00, Hebron Center & Sugar Houses, Free

“Wildlife in Connecticut: Where Are All The Critters Coming From?”
April 21, 7:00, Allen Petell, Master Wildlife Conservationist Volunteer.

“Naughty Knickers” - May 7th - A Formal Tea and Program about “Ladies Undies” through the ages. 12:00-2:30 Douglas Library Community Room.

Plant Sale - June 4th, OTH, 8:00-1:00

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**New and Renewal Members of  
The Hebron Historical Society:**

**Karen Bogue**  
**Peter & Louise Casarella**  
**Ron & Joan Churney**  
**Arlene Copeland**  
**June Danaher**  
**Paul & Cynthia Demers**  
**Brian Gonci**  
**Jeffrey Gonci**  
**Evelyn Griswold**  
**Warren Holbrook**  
**Maurice & Diane Kessler**  
**Geoff & Nancy Kirkham**  
**Peter & Katherine McConnell**  
**Mary Rose Meade**  
**John & Gail Richmond**  
**Dennis & Diane Saucier**  
**Tom & Linda Stevenson**  
**Dorothy Brehant Taggart**  
**Harold & Kathleen Waters**  
**MaryJo C. Martin**

**Look for Life Members next time!**



Watercolor by Diana W. Tyler

### Why Does Hebron's Old Town Hall Look Like a Church?

Believe it or not, it was the Methodists who played an active part in providing Hebron with a site for town meetings. Although the Methodists never retained any “home” in town, they held a lasting connection to Hebron's town meeting sites. In fewer than fifty years, the Methodist Society had four meeting locations here, and the town also used two of them.

The first Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1805 in the Burrows Hill/Hope Valley area, a thriving industrial section of town, where could be found many Mills on the Jeremy River. In 1828, however, the Methodists must have decided to hold services in the center of town. They chipped in \$100.00 while the Town of Hebron paid \$260.00 towards the construction of a second floor on the newly erected Hebron Center School. This upper portion of the building was to be used jointly by the church for religious meetings, and by the town as its town hall.

The shared building use plan worked for ten years until the Methodists built a new church, their third meeting space, just a few hundred feet to the east of Center School, the land having been acquired from Jonathan Page. The deed from Page in the Hebron Land Records was filed with the town on the first day of December in 1838.

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## Recent Donations

The Society is most grateful to all individuals who have thought to support us with either monetary gifts or items from Hebron's Heritage.

~~Edward B. Smith, has donated Hebron ephemera, historic documents, and over 100 family diaries dating back to 1850. The vast collection was preserved by the Smith/Coates family of Burrows Hill and Hope Valley. The Smiths have been in Hebron since the early 1700's. Ed has also donated a computer, a scanner printer and a new file cabinet for organizing all of it.

~~Coincidentally, Trinity Methodist Church of Hackettstown, New Jersey was given a dozen old books which had belonged to members of the Smith & Coates clan. The church asked if we wished the books, and promptly sent them to Hebron.

## Community Partners

**Ted's IGA** is the ultimate local partner. The folks there are always willing to help out. For this year's Maple Fest, Ted's provided both the beans for our new offering of Hebron Maple Beans, as well as storage for our Maple Milk.

Thanks to our friends at **Country Carpenters** for all of the help they so willingly provide. Check out our new Old Town Hall sign made by Freddy, and lettered by our own Annie Piggott.

For many years now, **The Farmers Cow** has provided the milk for The Society to mix with its additional secret ingredients to prepare our annual specialty: Maple Milk.



continued - Hebron's Old Town Hall...

In 1845, during a Town Meeting held at Center School, one side of the upper floor framing let go, and those in attendance came to rest in a heap on the first floor. (Perhaps \$360.00 wasn't sufficient to frame and floor the structure?) At this point, the Town was without any meeting space. Again, the Methodists offered the basement of their new 1838 building for town meetings.

The 1838 building was occupied as a church until that particular M-E Society broke up by, or around, 1850 since the Methodists had constructed another new meeting house in Hope Valley the previous year.

In 1859, for use as their Town Hall, the Selectmen of Hebron negotiated with the Methodist Society to buy the 1838 building for \$650.00. By 1863, possession of the deed finally secured the building for the Town. Somehow, the building was lowered from its original two-story to a story and a half in 1875. In 1928, when electricity arrived in Hebron Center, it was installed in the Town Hall. In 1942, we read in a newspaper clipping, the hall was undergoing repairs and redecoration in preparation for commencement exercises of Hebron's 8th graders.

In 1950, following the building of the consolidated Hebron Elementary School, the Town Hall ceased being used for Town Meetings. It was then used for other civic organization meetings. In 1956, shutters were added to the building. Within ten years, the Historical Society had been formed and the group started restoring & maintaining the old 1838 Methodist Church.

~~M.A.Foote