



The Thompson Historical Society Newsletter



Fall 2020

PO Box 47, Thompson CT 06277

www.thompsonhistorical.com

Time is Running Out!

The William Mason House has partnered with the Thompson Historical Society, Inc. to raise funds to repair the Congregational Church in Thompson, Connecticut.

Don't forget to purchase your raffle ticket with your \$10 donation before December 12, 2020.

The prize is an exclusive WMH vintage wedding/event experience, a value of up to \$25,000.

<https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/save-our-church-thompson>



(William Mason house before restoration)

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(William Mason House after the first snow of 2020)

From The President's Quill - By: Joseph Iamartino



A working replica of a siege engine based on a historical design from the 1200s is located today at Fort Hill Farm, once the site of a Native American hill top fort. The siege engine was used to send rocks over castle walls mainly in Europe and further east but eventually fell out of use following the development of gunpowder.

Demonstrations were held at Fort Hill to show visitors the throwing engine's operation. Pumpkins were used in place of stones and the throwing distances ranged from 100 to 300 feet. Funds raised will benefit the Congregational Church restoration project.

Thank you Kristin Orr and the many volunteers, especially Bob Tremblay and Paul Provost, who provided technical support for the effort. In the photo above, the demonstration crew from left to right: Paul Provost, Christian Iamartino, Joe Iamartino and Evan Finanne.



Congregational Church Bells are Ringing Again!



In November, the State Historic Preservation Office awarded a \$20,000 matching grant to the Thompson Congregational Church for the purposes of selecting an architect to draw up the plans for the church's restoration. Bruce Hall, Moderator, told SHPO that "the state's unwavering support for the restoration of this building has given us the confidence that this restoration can be managed for the benefit of the congregation and all of Thompson."

The Thompson Congregational Church partnered with the Thompson Historical Society to attempt to get the chimes ringing once again after an almost four-year absence. Paul Provost, a board member of the Thompson Historical Society and a retired power engineer from the computing industry, successfully restored the chimes and bells at the Congregational Church. He said that having an opportunity to climb up into the bell tower, which is above the clock section, was a once in a lifetime experience and the view was awesome. He also shared this photo of the bell. A longtime resident of Thompson said 'hearing the bells playing again and ringing the hours made me realize just how much I really missed hearing them.'



The William Mason House restoration project is proceeding nicely and many stop to see the progress. The owners of the Mason House are donating the first event at the restored venue to support the church's restoration. To participate in the raffle which ends December 12th, please see:

<https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/save-our-church-thompson>



(100 years of Suffrage celebrated on the Thompson Common in October plus the 1921 Dodge Truck donated to THS by the Rawson Family. The truck was once used to carry groceries door to door to Thompson residents. Visitors were greeted by the chimes and bells from the Congregational Church. THS board member Paul Provost successfully restored the chimes programming. State Senator Mae Flexer recognized the 2020 Suffragettes and spoke on the 100th year of women's voting rights.)



East Thompson Train Wreck Site & Model



The National Park Service, Thompson Trails, the Thompson Historical Society and the Last Green Valley collaborated on a wonderful program on November 10, 2020 on a proposed Airline Trail park on the site of East Thompson Train Station and the Great 1891 Four Engine Wreck site.

The plan is to create enhancements to the existing popular hiking site, perhaps one of the most visited outdoor sites in the Northeast Corner of CT. The public presentation of 11/10/20 was to explain the new park plan and to solicit ideas from interested parties.



(Model of the East Thompson Wreck Site being built by Stan Swanson to be located at the Ramsdell Room at TMHS. Work continues on the project.)



Due to the COVID, our Christmas Shop will not be physically open this year but items will be available for purchase.

You can go to our Facebook page to see the historical items we will be offering for sale.

Item pick up will be at the stone museum building facing the Thompson Common between 9-noon on Sundays after Thanksgiving through December and also including Christmas Eve.

If you want to participate in the TEEG Christmas tags you may call their office at (860) 923-3458 and ask for Chelsea.

Any questions, please call Ginny (860) 933-5239 or Sue (508) 847-9092

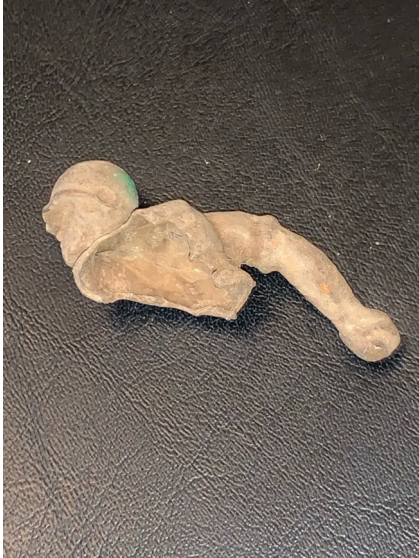
A few samples from our shop that are available for sale.



Do You Have a Question?

Contact us on Facebook or send us an Email

Q. A lead figurine was found by the mother of THS Director Abe Gustavson on Quaddick Road land, land owned by Rob and Sue Vincent. What is it?



A. This property at one time had a horse track, sulky track or racing ring. The figurine probably was connected to this track.

Viewer assistance requested to research more details.

Members who love to shop on line could help us raise money for maintenance of our two historical buildings by using **AMAZON SMILE**. It is the same as your Amazon account but donates .05% of your purchases to the Thompson Historical Society when you designate us as your choice. There is no cost. If you have questions about joining call Sue Vincent 508-847-9092. Thank you.

A Letter from a THS Member

October 13, 2020

Thompson Historical Society
PO Box 47
Thompson, CT 06277

Dear Members,

I just received the recent newsletter and enjoy reading the history of my home town. It brings back many memories.

I was especially happy to see the work being done to refurbish the William H. Mason House. I knew it as the place where Lloyd and Mrs. Seaver lived. It was in very good condition then—I know, because at age 14, I became her house cleaner, working Tuesday and Thursday afternoons after school and Saturday mornings. I was paid \$.50 an hour. She was a stickler and everything had to be done just so. As a Christmas gift she gave me a gift box of thread from Belding Hemingway, where Lloyd was a VP I believe. I still have that box of thread. I was sure upset when we rode by and saw it falling to pieces. Lloyd's mother and father lived in the small house in the back.

I also was the babysitter for many of the Thompson Hill families, as was my sister. The Ryscavages always asked me to stay with Jerry and Paul. Paul was not in school and my mother took care of him— early day care. I was so pleased to see them at the TMHS reunion.

Thank you for your work and time on the Thompson Historical Society.

Jean French Kestigan
Class of 1949

Membership Information:

- \$10.00 Individual Membership
- \$15.00 Family Membership
- \$25.00 Contributing Membership
- \$5.00 Student Membership

Memberships are due by July 1 of each calendar year

Make checks payable to:

Thompson Historical Society
Po Box 47
Thompson, CT 06277

Anyone interested in joining the Thompson Historical Society can contact us at:

Phone Number: 860-928-5527

Web Site: www.thompsonhistorical.org



Museum Hours

Typically Open
 Sundays 9:00 a.m.—Noon
 Call Joe before you come
 (603) 657-6205

Officers and Contact Information:

Joseph Iamartino - President
 Mark Snay - Vice President (pro tempore),
 Secretary, Senior Archivist
 Sue Vincent - Treasurer
 John Rice - Building Committee Chair
 Abe Gustavson - Director
 Ginny Flood - Director
 Burt Rhodes - Director
 Dr. Chris Wagner - Director
 Kathy Welch - Director
 Kathleen Herbert - Director
 Jon Brynga - Director
 Roberta Baublitz - Director
 Lisa Berg - Director
 Charlie Obert - Director
 William Steglitz - Director
 David Laabs - Director
 Paul Provost—Director
 Mark Savolis—Director

Ellen Larned Memorial Building THS Museum

339 Thompson Road
 Thompson, CT 06277
 (Opened Sundays 9:00 am to noon)

Old Thompson Town Hall

1 Chase Road
 Thompson, CT 06277
 (Open by appointment)

Tourtellotte Memorial Room

785 Riverside Drive

Thompson Historical Society

PO Box 47
 Thompson, CT 06277



Preserving Thompson, Connecticut's History Since 1968