

THE

CAMBRIDGE HARKENER

CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE OF CAMBRIDGE, VERMONT

Vol. VI, No. 1

Winter 2008

Current Officers & Directors

President: Ron Little
Vice President: Joel Page
Secretary: Geana Little
Treasurer: Bill Putnam

Directors: Ron Bechard, Diancy Boyden,
Julie Brown, Clark Dodge,
Roberta Marsh, Bill Sander, Jane Shaw

Advisory Board Member: Harold Putnam

CHS's New Location? Read on....



and come to the March meeting to learn more and
voice your opinion!

The Cambridge Historical Society has been the beneficiary of a marvelous gift from the late Arlen Sweet. Mr. Sweet has bequeathed his home as well as his personal property, to the Cambridge Historical Society. The home, located at 208 Main Street in the historic village of Jeffersonville, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The historical society was first approached about this gift in 2005. At a meeting of the society, the membership was asked if they would accept the property were it to be offered. The answer was in the affirmative and Marc Mallett and Jane Shaw were appointed to follow up on the offer.

Mr. Sweet had requested that his donation not be made public but, this being a small town, the word of his generosity was soon out.

Although everyone wished Mr. Sweet a long life, the Board of Directors, in 2007, met to discuss the possible inheritance. The hope was that some preliminary planning could take place before the property was deeded to us.

In December 2007 Mr. Sweet died and the possibility of the inheritance became more of a reality. Rumors began to circulate about what the will actually said and what the historical society would be inheriting.

On December 28, 2007 the wait was finally over. A call from the lawyer handling Mr. Sweet's estate to Ron Little, President of the Cambridge Historical Society, invited Mr. Little to come to the office to sign legal papers. The only legal papers signed by CHS President Little were formalities, allowing the will to continue through probate and accepting the appointed executors. These papers did not commit CHS in any way to either accept or decline the bequest. At that time, we first saw the actual will and knew that Mr. Sweet had, indeed, bequeathed his real and personal property to the Cambridge Historical Society.

The applicable part of the will reads:

Unto the Cambridge Historical Society, in my memory and in the memory of Irma Sweet, I give and devise my home property located at 208 Main Street in the Village of Jeffersonville, Town of Cambridge, Vermont for use as a museum and related uses such as a bookstore/gift shop and for educational expositions and other uses in support of maintaining the property for so long as it is used for such purposes. Should such use cease I devise any reversion interest to the Cambridge Elementary School of Cambridge, Vermont. I also give and bequeath to said Cambridge Historical Society, without restriction, all personal property located in or about said lands

and premises, including motor vehicles, not to include, however, my safe and all its contents and the painting by Della Tracy.

It should be emphasized that the building is not yet the property of the historical society. The will needs to be probated and all interested parties need to be contacted and agree to the provisions of the will. We have been told this could take four to six months. In the meantime, responsibility for the building and contents rests with the executors. We have been told that Mr. Sweet's extensive gun collection has already been removed and placed in a safer location.

Although we will not be able to sell the building, we are allowed to sell the contents. It will be necessary to evaluate the contents and decide what should be kept and what sold - a daunting undertaking. It was Mr. Sweet's hope that sufficient monies will be raised by the sale of the personal property to provide an endowment for upkeep of the building in the future.

Shortly after receiving copies of the will, a Board of Director's meeting was held to discuss the ramifications of accepting the Sweet property. Although the Board was almost unanimously positive in its discussions about Mr. Sweet's generous bequest, a number of questions were raised that need to be discussed more fully:

Can we afford to keep two buildings?
If not, and we cannot sell the Sweet property, what are the provisions for selling the Masonic building?

What are the provisions of the grants we received for renovating the Masonic building?

Would the Sweet house be large enough for our monthly meetings?

What is the condition of the property? How much renovation would be necessary?

What are the property tax issues involved in owning two properties in the town?

What legal filings would be necessary upon acceptance of this gift?

More questions will undoubtedly arise as we go forward. To answer the ones raised, several Board members offered to investigate and report to the membership at the March meeting, our next. A committee will be formed at that time to handle the nuts and bolts involved.

2008 Membership Application/Renewal

Please complete this form and mail to: Cambridge Historical Society
P.O. Box 16
Jeffersonville, Vt 05464

New

Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

Number

Street

Town

State

Zip

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Membership Category

Individual \$10.00

Family \$15.00

Business \$25.00

Individual Life \$100.00

Please consider becoming a:

Patron \$500.00

Benefactor \$1000.00+

If you are a lifetime member you do not need to renew your membership.
However, if you wish to make a donation it would be much appreciated.

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If you have suggestions about program topics or have some great ideas for fundraisers,
please let us know by listing your ideas below.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

Cambridge Historical Society
P. O. Box 16
Jeffersonville, VT 05464



The new year is here and it is time again to renew your membership in the Cambridge Historical Society. We've had a great year with many interesting programs and wonderful events. This was accomplished through the physical and financial support of our many members and friends of the Society.

This newsletter and membership form is being sent to all members—lifetime and regular—plus other people who we feel might be interested. If you are a lifetime member, you do not need to renew your membership. However, if you wish to make a donation, it would be much appreciated.

We encourage and welcome all of you to join us as we embark on an exciting new year.

—Diancy Boyden, *Membership Chairman*

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!