The Locke/Hamilton Farm has focused attention on Winchester’s vanishing agricultural roots. Another remnant, in the neighborhood of the Hamilton Farm at 195 High Street, is the Josiah Locke House, also part of Winchester’s agricultural history including the era when it was owned by the Vinson-Owen family.

Thomas Vinson is remembered today primarily as the father and grandfather of the champion skaters Maribel Vinson Owen and her daughters Maribel and Lawrence Owen. Though a lawyer, Thomas also engaged in farming. In 1911, he and his suffragette bride of one year, Gertrude Cliff, bought the Josiah Locke House, built by the brother of Asa Locke whose farmhouse is now part of Hamilton Farm. The High Street property then also included a barn, shed, and about 9.5 acres of land. Vinson also bought another lot of 40 acres which lay across the street and extended south to the Winchester Country (continued on page 2, Vinson Farm)
(continued from page 1, Vinson Farm)
Club. (The parcel is roughly described by Mayflower Road.)

The 1913 assessors’ records also note two henneries, suggesting what has been confirmed in records at the Archival Center, that the Vinsons farmed. Preserved in the Center’s Vinson-Owen Collection is a ledger in which Thomas Vinson kept records of his receipts and the expenses of running a small farm. The ledger begins with 1911, suggesting that the Boston-born Vinson may have chosen the Winchester property with the express intent of farming it. In that year he purchased grain and fertilizer, 175 hens and chickens, and other farm items. Ledger entries for egg sales begin in 1911. In 1912, records begin for fruits and vegetables, including corn, carrots, tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, and peas. His eventual fruit crops were also varied, including raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, currants, plums, peaches, wild grapes, and different varieties of apples.

One of Vinson’s important crops apparently was asparagus, for which he kept separate records for many years. One of his early customers for asparagus (among other crops) was the Country Club. He also sold his produce during the first several years to the Richardson Market (in Winchester), Boston Market, and Cambridge Market, though most of the lines in the ledger record names of individual customers or indicate produce was sold “at roadside” or “at door.” In 1925 and some later years, there are notations that it was Maribel, future ice-skating queen, who sold the products. For example, in the strawberries account for June 19, 1925, the entry reads “at door (Maribel) 22 boxes.” Maribel was then 13 years old.

The figures for 1914 detail the financial benefits of the Vinson farm. Receipts for eggs, fruits, and vegetables totaled $791.82. Expenses totaled $598.47. To the difference, Vinson added the “value of food used at home if bought,” figured to be $181.13 for milk, butter, cream, and eggs. He calculated the total profit at $374.48.

(continued on page 3, Vinson Farm)

(continued from page 1, President)
encourage organizations to articulate their strategies regularly, but especially when new opportunities arise. The renovation and use of the Sanborn property seems the perfect opportunity for the Board to tackle its first planning process. Look for more information on our progress in the upcoming issues of the Black Horse Bulletin.

To find out more about the committees or volunteer your time, please leave a message for the appropriate chair at 781-721-0135:

- Building Committee: David Stirling
- Development/Fundraising Committee: Gail Sjo, interim head
- Education/Program Committee: Tom Michalak
- Finance Committee: Nancy Schrock, interim head
- Outreach Committee: Carol Keller

Thanks for Your Generous Response
by Nancy Schrock

Thanks to the generosity of members, the Sanborn House now has 41 comfortable and elegant chairs in the downstairs rooms. We received enough money to purchase four bridge tables as well, which are on order.

(continued on page 3, Thank You)
We also want to thank Jill Anderson of Festive Floral & Design for her generous donation of floral arrangements for the Potluck Dinner and the Open House for town employees.

In addition, we have received contributions in memory of Mary F. Vitka from:

- Jean Twitchell
- Phyllis and Paul Gleason
- The Hakala Family
- Nancy and Richard Schrock

And, we want to thank Carol Watson-Phillips, whom we inadverently omitted from our list of donors to the annual appeal.

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**Sanborn Family History**

by Ellen Knight

The Sanborn House restoration project has drawn attention from multiple genealogists researching the Sanborn family name as well as Society members who often ask questions about the family and Sanborns living in Winchester today. The Historical Society would also like to know of any Sanborn descendants. Therefore, some Sanborn family history is being summarized here and will also be posted in more detail on the Society’s Web page (www.wincsterhistoricalsociety.org). This makes it readily available to new inquiries.

Oren Cheney Sanborn was descended from a long line of Sanborns who settled in Maine, while through his grandmother, Anne Daly Crossman, he also claimed descent from the Pilgrims Myles Standish, John and Priscilla Alden, and Mary Chilton. Much of this ancestry is already available on general genealogical Web sites. The Society has concentrated on the families of James Sanborn, the coffee king, and his son Oren, original owner of the Sanborn House.

The Society does not have any original family materials. The family information was pieced together from the local newspapers, censuses, Internet sources, and donated genealogy materials (thanks especially to Wendell Strout). The Society would welcome more information about or from descendants of the James and Oren Sanborn families, as well as information about the Sanborn House.

Are there James and Oren Sanborn family descendants? We believe there are, descended from Oren and his sister Georgie Sanborn Townsend. Oren Cheney Sanborn was one of four children of James Solomon Sanborn (1835-1903) and his wife Harriet N. Small (1834-1901). After the children were born in Maine, the James Sanborn family took up residence in Somerville in the 1870s. Oren Sanborn himself continued to live in Somerville through the births of his first three children. A few years after coming to Winchester in 1901, Oren Sanborn built his new house on High Street following the deaths of his parents and about the time their summer home in Poland Maine, Elmwood Farm, was sold.

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**Sanborn Genealogy**
Oren Cheney (1865-1928), who married Lorena Armstrong, who also hailed from Maine and, on moving to Winchester, became very involved with the hospital and other charitable endeavors.

Georgie (1867-1928), who, like Oren, married and had children and grandchildren.

Oren and Lorena Sanborn had four children, three born in Somerville but the last born in Winchester:

James Oren Sanborn (1891-1930), married (1) Florence Myer and (2) Ann Francis Dore

Helen Elizabeth (1897-1963), married (1) Robert Blount Ralls and (2) Edward Merritt Hamlin

Caleb Chase Sanborn (1899-1943), married Edna May Hatch

John Armstrong (1901-1955), married Edith.

Though they all married, only Helen had a child, a son named Sterling Hamlin.

Meanwhile, Oren’s sister Georgie married lawyer Edward Sands Townsend (b. 1897). They lived in Newton and Brookline and surely were visitors at the Sanborn house in Winchester. They also had four children:

Charles (b. 1898)

Newell Colby (abt. 1902)

Clara Gary (1905-1992)

Edith Helen (1907-1996), who married Leroy Allen Anderson (1907-1966) and had three children.

We believe that there are Anderson descendants, if not other Townsend descendants.

Do you or your friends have more information? Are you related to the James or Oren Sanborn families? The information here and on the Web, far from complete, may also not be completely accurate. Corrections and additions are welcome. Please remember to visit the Society’s Web site for additional information.

From the Archives: Exploring the Attic
by Nancy Schrock

Every home has a place where old things get tucked away. The Sanborn House is no exception. When the Archival Center was relocated from the Carriage House to Town Hall in the 1990s, there was no room for costumes, textiles, or artifacts. These items were boxed and stored on the third floor of the Sanborn House along with hand written and typed inventories and catalog cards. While the House was in use by the Recreation Department, Marcia Wood led an effort to move the costumes into archival storage boxes and provide more detailed records. At the same time, the Archival Center, now managed by volunteers instead of a professional archivist, began processing its collections of manuscripts and photographs using Past Perfect, a database developed by the American Association for State and Local History.

Recently the Society, led by Curator Nancy Schrock, opened the doors to see what can be done to bring the collection into the 21st century. Marcia Wood and Dinah Voorhies, our local experts, reviewed the costume collection and its new acquisitions. Nancy sent out a call for volunteers and was joined by Marcia, Jenn Swope, Sara Brook-Campbell, Lynne Champion, Susie Vrotsos, and Sylvana Emprin-Gilardini on September 15th. Together they crafted a plan to enter the records of the artifacts into a program installed on the Society’s computer in the Sanborn Center.

Future plans call for making the collections more widely available through the database, which can be accessed at the Library, Town Hall, and the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center. The Society is interested in document-
Telling Time
by Tom Michalak

On Tuesday, September 25th, Bob Frishman of Bell-Time Clocks (www.bell-time.com) in Andover, presented an entertaining lecture on the history of mechanical clocks, their styles, makers, values, collecting, repairing and cultural importance.

Following his talk, ala “The Antiques Roadshow,” Bob provided an “informal verbal appraisal” of timepieces the attendees brought to the meeting. A dozen clocks and watches, ranging in value from under $100 to over $1000, were evaluated and discussed in a lively session peppered with many questions from attendees.

The program was sponsored jointly with the Jenks Senior Center and held in the Pond Room at the Jenks.

In Memory of Mary

The Winchester Historical Society was saddened by the death of Mary Vitka on September 8th. Mary was a leader of the Society for many years, serving as board member, president, and member of the costume committee.

Perhaps her greatest contribution to the Society is the free Town Day trolley tours that she set up as a collaboration between the Society and the Winchester Savings Bank. Even when she and Joe lived in New Hampshire, she would return to Winchester to give out tickets and greet her many friends.

Mary worked in the Sanborn House when she was coordinator for Winchester Public Schools so we are especially sorry she will not be with us as the Society opens the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center for educational programs.

We extend our sympathy to her family and our thanks to those who have given donations to the Society in Mary’s memory.
Winchester Historical Society Publications

Please use this order form to purchase copies of Society publications. For descriptions and non-member pricing, see the Society web site (www.winchesterhistoricalsociety.org). Send the completed form, together with a check for the total amount, to the Winchester Historical Society, PO Box 127, Winchester, MA 01890-0127. Attention: Book Sales Department.

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<td><em>A Children’s History of Winchester, Massachusetts</em> by Mildred Allison; updated by Ellen Knight</td>
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<td><em>The Architects of Winchester, Massachusetts</em> (edited by Maureen Meister):</td>
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Volunteer Needed for Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center

The Historical Society is looking for an energetic person to head its Building and Grounds Operations Committee, which has responsibility for recommending and implementing Board policies and procedures for the day-to-day operations of the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center.

This committee has first-line responsibility for ensuring the Center and Grounds are ready for use by the Society for meetings, on-site committee work, exhibits/displays, events, rentals, and tours, which includes monitoring, and when necessary, initiating corrective action for property care, security, and safety for the building and grounds. This committee works with the Building Committee to ensure that renovation and maintenance projects are coordinated with programs; works with the Education and Program Committee to ensure that Society activities at the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center receive priority; coordinates activities and rentals with the Events Manager, including pre-event preparations and post-event cleaning.

If you would like to help but do not have the time to lead, there are discrete tasks to be done, such as setting up a scheduling system, researching and recommending AV equipment for our programs, participating in clean-up days, arranging signage, or working with the Post Office to select a mailbox. We will also need house monitors who will represent the society at rental events.

If you are interested, please contact the President at president@winchesterhistoricalsociety.org or 781-729-0135. We can use your help!

Correction

In the July - September issue of the Black Horse Bulletin, Dinah Voorhies’s article “An Evening With Sister Elizabeth,” cites “Forward! God Wills It” as the motto of Sister Elizabeth’s order. In fact, that motto was used by an order of medieval knights.

The correct motto of Religious of Christian Education is “Serve the Lord Joyfully and Wholeheartedly.”

We apologize for the error.
**Notices and Upcoming Events**

**Meetings**
Board Meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month (October 16, 2007, November 20, 2007, December 18, 2007), 7:30 P.M., in the Music Room, Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center.

**Programs**
October 14, 2007, 4:00 - 6:00 P.M.: Reception – *Architects of Winchester: Robert Coit, Houses and Public Buildings in an Age of Suburban Growth*, Ellen Spencer; First Congregational Church (Tucker Room).
December: No program.

**Plan ahead**
January 6, 2008, 3:00-5:00 P.M.: Annual Holiday Party (members and their guests only); location to be announced.
February: “Volunteer Thank You” Party; location and date to be announced (watch for the meeting notice).

**Help Wanted**
The Winchester Historical Society has many volunteer opportunities. For more information, see the Society Web site (www.winchesterhistoricalsociety.org) or call the Winchester Historical Society (tel: 781-721-0135).
Current opportunities include:
– Managing Editor, *Black Horse Bulletin*
– Editor(s) and Authors, *Black Horse Bulletin*
– Manager, Building and Grounds Operations Committee, Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center
– Program Managers, Education and Programs Committee

The Archival Center needs volunteers to scan and catalog collections, as well as transcribe tapes. For more information, contact the Society volunteers who operate the Center (email: archives@ci.winchester.ma.us; tel: 781-721-7146).