



Derrin House c. 1810  
249 West Avon Road



Pine Grove Schoolhouse c. 1865  
3 Harris Road



1st Company Horse Guards Barn c. 1880  
232 West Avon Road



Schoolhouse No. 3, 8 E. Main Street  
Headquarters Avon Historical Society

## The Avon Historical Society Newsletter Spring 2016

It is time again to welcome Spring and all its beauty. We at the Society have been busy over the winter planning new and exciting events for you. Please check them out in the Upcoming Events below. Inside the newsletter, we hope you enjoy reading about all the efforts by the Society to continue its mission to 'promote the history and heritage of Avon.'

### HEAR YE, HEAR YE! UPCOMING EVENTS

Now through April 30th — ***ON MY HONOR...A History of Girl Scouting in the Farmington Valley*** - an exhibit is on display outside the Local History Room at the AFPL through a collaboration of former and current Avon Girl Scouts. Lots of photos, artifacts and memories for all! And exhibit perfect for the whole family.

Saturday, April 30th—***Native Americans & The Farmington River***—a bus tour and presentation sponsored by the Historic Sites Committee of the Farmington Valley Visitors Bureau from 9:30am to 3:00pm. Cost is \$45 per person which includes bus tour, lunch and pre-lecture tour. For details and tickets, call 860-676-8878.

Saturday, April 30th—***Barn Dance and Dinner*** at the First Co. Governor's Horse Guards, 280 Arch Road, from 5:00—10:00pm. Joint fundraiser with the Friends of the Horse Guard. Enjoy good food and beverages, live music and country dancing. Tickets are \$40 per person and can be reserved at 860-212-8340 or purchased directly at Miller's Foods, 308 Arch Road, Avon during normal business hours.

May 2nd—31st— ***Follow the Books: The History of the Northington Library***— an exhibit at the Avon Free Public Library display area outside the Local History Room. Curated by the Special Projects Committee, it will include photographs, library memorabilia, books, and a historical timeline of the library's evolution since 1798.

Saturday, June 4th - ***Here Lie the Derrins***—presentation by Diana Ross McCain at 1:00 p.m. at Avon Free Public Library, 280 Country Club Road. Mrs. McCain is the former director of the Waterman Research Center at Connecticut Historical Society. She will share stories about the Derrin family and locations of their burials. This lecture is sponsored by [Connecticut Humanities](#).

Sunday, June 5th— ***Summer opening*** of the 1865 Pine Grove School House, corner of Harris and West Avon Roads. It is open on Sundays from 2:00-4:00pm June through September.

Sunday, June 12th—***Grand Celebration at the Derrin Farmhouse***, 249 West Avon Road from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Come join us as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the deed signing of the property. We will be premiering our new Visitor Welcome Center and providing tours of the house and property. View the newly discovered well inside and receive a complementary booklet on the Derrin Family and their neighbors. Free event for the family. The Derrin Farmhouse is open for tours on Sundays from 2:00-4:00pm June through September.

June-August— ***The Derrins of West Avon-A Heritage Quilt***—an exhibit at the Avon Free Public Library outside the Local History Room. Curated by the Special Projects Committee, this exhibit will be presented in two, six week segments. The first will focus on the Derrin family and its genealogy. The second segment will focus on the three former Derrin farms and houses. The exhibits will feature photographs, actual Derrin handwritten letters, genealogy, family tree and period artifacts as props.

## **SOCIETY HAPPENINGS...**

The Society wishes to announce that a second installment from the Bill Yandow Estate Trust has been given, unrestricted, for the mission of the organization. The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees has a list of recommended uses and will make recommendations to the Trustees at their May and June meetings. To date, some of the funding will be used to upgrade the electrical needs of the Derrin Farmhouse, especially for lighting over the exhibits in the new Welcome Center and for lighting the newly discovered well in the original room. As well some structural upgrades to those two rooms will be made in time for the June 12 opening. The three trustees of the Yandow Estate Trust have been thanked for this second installment and full report will be made to them this summer about how it will be used for our mission.

Jordan Lazinsk, Boy Scout with Avon Troop 274, is working in his Eagle Scout project to research and display the history of the Avon Little League at Sperry Park. He will be using some information in the History Room and photograph archival material in the Society's collection as part of his research. He intends to display the information in large frames mounted to one of the buildings at Sperry Park. He expects to complete this project over the summer.

Due to the Society running low on hard copies of the 1989 book entitled *Avon, Connecticut...an historical story* written by M. Frances MacKie, a committee has been formed to explore several reprint options. Board Trustee Eric Thronson, who works in publishing, offered to chair the committee to research those options. Thanks to local media reports on this project, nine residents of the Valley stepped forward to be on this committee! They will focus on 'print on demand' which allows a buyer to purchase the book (paperback) from various sources. There are a variety of websites that specialize in working with small non-profits to do this. Each book sold pays the Society a few dollars, depending on the contract signed with them. The Society can also buy some copies to keep on hand and sell at Avon Day or other locations. The Society website will have a link to the online store we choose to work with and each gets a percentage of the sale. Some online services allow books to be sold on Amazon or Barnes and Noble websites as well. The committee will prepare the book by scanning it, editing the errors that it makes, identifying all photos/maps/graphs/illustrations and seek permission, if privately owned, for re-print, then make the selling decisions and set it up in the proper format for reprinting. The Avon Historical Society will contract with the CT Urban Legal Initiative, part of the UConn Law School, for assistance with any legal issues that arise. It is hoped this project will be completed in 6-9 months.

At a recent Board of Trustees meeting, it was agreed the white picket fence located by the road outside School House No. 3 on E. Main Street should be removed. Attempts to have it scraped and painted have not been successful and it was decided that removal is the best option allowing it to open up the view to the building. Later this year the Society intends, with the Town of Avon, to apply to the CT Trust for Historic Preservation for a matching grant to scrape and paint the exterior of the School House which was originally built in 1845 on what is now Country Club Road on the land that is now the Avon Free Public Library.

All members in good standing of the Avon Historical Society are invited to attend the Society's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 19 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. inside the History Room of the Avon Free Public Library. Announcements, review of the year's events and elections of Officers and Trustees will be held. Special thanks to Liz Neff who has served for 10 years on the Board of Trustees. She will be missed!

## **CT**humanities

The Avon Historical Society thanks CT Humanities for once again providing a quick grant of \$1,194.00 for two speakers and an educational booklet for the "One Square in Avon's Heritage Quilt History" spring events. The grant covers the expenses of speakers Robert Thorson whose topic "From Bedrock to Bedroom Community-The Evolution of Avon" was held on March 5th and Diana Ross McCain whose topic "Here Lie the Derrins" will be held on June 4th. Included in the grant was printing of 150 booklets on the history of the Derrin Family, other families in West Avon and farming during the 19th century. The booklets will be distributed at the remainder of the events, during the June 12 Celebration event at the Derrin Farmhouse and to visitors who tour the house in the summer months.

## HAPPENINGS CONTINUED...

This winter there has been two very good events for the "One Square" series that began last Fall as a lead up to the June 12, 2016 celebration at the Derrin Farmhouse.

On Saturday, March 5th, over 40 people were entertained and educated on the evolution of the land beneath us. **Robert Thorson**, Professor of Geology at UConn and author of several books about stone walls, as well as a columnist for the *Hartford Courant*, presented a talk entitled "From Bedrock to Bedroom Community-The Evolution of Avon." He began by talking about the walk he did a few hours earlier around and inside the Derrin Farmhouse. He identified the very large boulders in the cellar foundation as common and from the surrounding area and pointed out how each part of the house's foundations tied together from what is thought to be from the 18th century to present. Then he proceeded to tell the story of how the land we have beneath us here in Avon is rich in minerals and the groundwater leading to the rivers were a wonderful source of life for vegetation and animals of all kinds. While we know dinosaurs roamed this land, we also know many groups of Native Americans lived along the Farmington River and some farmed the rich soils which brought the Dutch and English settlers to this area. He explained the we are on Arkose, a rough sandstone with hematite which makes it red in color. He also pointed out the topography of this area from aerial views that show the immense amount of stonewalls in this region. He read several pages from some of his books on how authors felt about the land and its riches beneath us.

On Saturday, April 2nd, Society member **Janet Conner** gave a presentation on her over 4-year research on the Derrin Family. She has been piecing together their story from their first ancestor's arrival in the New World, settling in Guilford, CT, to how the wife of a Derrin came to own the land in Northington on what is now West Avon Road in 1766. Included was the list of over 8 different spellings she encountered in primary sources of the name "Derrin." She took the audience through a timeline of events, as she discovered them, with some assumptions and known facts of how they lived, what they owned (taken from will inventories) and how they lived with their neighbors whose farms were north and south of them on the road. She also distributed the CT Humanities grant funded booklet on the Derrins as reference should someone want to research further. The Derrin family story has been a passion of Janet's for many years and her presentation was rich with details and facts.

The Avon Historical Society manages the calendar of exhibits outside the Marian Hunter History Room of the Avon Free Public Library. Since the re-opening of the Library in 2012, there have been over 25 exhibits on everything from the Civil War to vintage valentines to the current Girl Scouting in Avon exhibits. Thanks to the wide acceptance of having 1-2 month exhibits on local history, the Society is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibits:

### 2016:

May—"Follow the Books: The History of Northington Library" an exhibit on the Library's early history.

June through August—Two exhibits (1.5 months each) relative to the history of the Derrin family and West Avon.

September through October—The First Co. Governor's Horse Guards will mount an exhibit on their 228-year history.

November through December—The Library will mount an exhibit as part of their ONE BOOK event.

### 2017:

January through February—Commemoration of the U.S. entry in WWI 100 years ago—Avon residents are invited to share their family stories, artifacts, photos, etc. for what is planned to be a robust exhibit. Please contact the Society with Avon-specific WWI information by July 1, 2016. (contact information on the last page of this newsletter)

March through April—Avon Old Farms School will mount an exhibit for their 90th anniversary.

May through June—The Prince Thomas of Savoy Italian Club will mount an exhibit for their 100th anniversary.

November through December—Society member Liz Neff will mount a vintage holiday display.

There are openings available in 2017 and 2018. If any local organization or family wishes to share their history this way, please contact Terri Wilson, President, at: [ahs.mail.1830@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ahs.mail.1830@sbcglobal.net) or leave a message at 860-678-7621.

## THE HISTORY CORNER...

### A Different Kind of Love Story

By Janet M. Conner



This isn't going to be your typical romance story between two people. This is the story of two people's romance with the restoration and beautification of their historic home. It is quite literally a work of art both inside and outside.

Recently I had the pleasure of sitting down with John and Chrissie D'Esopo of West Avon for a conversation about their home. Most locals know of their home at 289 West Avon Road that is famous in these parts for the fabulous grounds and gardens. Chrissie has been featured in newspaper and magazine articles for her horticultural talent. And anyone who has had the good fortune to have a guided tour of the home's interior, I'm sure they will agree when I say the word 'unique', does not carry enough descriptive weight. What many people may not know, is that this home was originally owned by the former Derrin family back in the early 1800s and perhaps earlier. What I was interested in learning was the story of the house when the D'Esopos took it over...what led the D'Esopos to choose this particular home (when they acquired it, it was in a deplorable condition inside and out.) Then I wanted to know how both Chrissie and John transformed this diamond in the rough and they graciously obliged me with the story of the house's rebirth.

The story begins when the D'Esopos, newly married 33 years ago, were living in Simsbury. They didn't have much money at that time and were living in an old barn. As they were about to start their family, the need for additional space spurred them to start looking around the area. They both knew they wanted a historic home to bring back to life. And when they saw the dilapidated house on West Avon Road, they had found their challenge.

John, now retired, was a building contractor who specialized in historic restoration. And boy oh boy, did this house need a lot of restoration! But before it could be restored, it had to be gutted right down to its skivvies. Most of the old plaster walls were removed, as was old plumbing, old electrical...clear down to the wood slat walls and roof beams. There was no insulation in the walls, which I found interesting as the neighboring Derrin Farmhouse (249 West Avon Road) had horsehair mixed in with the plaster to fill in between the slats.

John and Chrissie had a vision for the home which included retaining as much of the original woodwork as possible, historic features, and charm of the home. John told me that when he removed wood to salvage, he carefully numbered each piece so he knew where to replace it. Chrissie mentioned that the old windows were removed, the old glass saved, and the windows re-glazed. Retaining the home's historic integrity was key.

This former Derrin house, was a part of a farmstead, and the styling of their house is completely different than the neighboring Derrin Farmhouse. The D'Esopo house's architectural styling is known as Greek Revival whereas the other house is considered a gable-to-end, vernacular farmhouse with a few elements of stylistic design.

John brought in two carpenters to help with all of the woodworking that needed to be done. When one looks past the incredible artistic touches that are Chrissie's personalization of the interior, one realizes just how much woodworking there was to be done! First of all, the wide plank floors are beautifully fitted and the choice of clear-coat varnish shows off the subtle wood grain and knots on the first floor. The ceiling detail work in the sitting room has trim wood accents in two concentric, elongated octagons that add an interest feature to the ivory painted ceiling. Next to the fireplace mantle in the adjoining room, Chrissie added an understated Greek key motif, a nod to the home's stylistic classification.

There are wide baseboards painted a soft ivory in the kitchen and throughout the house and wooden, handmade kitchen cabinets in a shade of green that is somewhere between evergreen and forest. Chrissie told me she loves Nature and that is self-evident everywhere one looks. There are hundreds and hundreds of white finger starfish affixed to the upper cabinets here and elsewhere, and seashells too. I won't even get started on the two framed fish 'paintings' that are on the upper and lower oven doors!

## THE HISTORY CORNER (cont'd)...

In the kitchen, the oldest part of the home thought to date about 1760, still has its original hearth. This would put it in line with the oldest section of the neighboring Farmhouse whose oldest section is thought to date to the Revolutionary War era. The D'Esopo's say there was nothing there in that room so they had to design and construct the storage units, appliance surrounds, countertops, and window casings. John even built a small corner cabinet from salvaged wood from elsewhere in the house. It sits near the open hearth and looks like it has always been there.

If one proceeds toward the back of the house to the next room, according to history room files at the Avon Free Public Library, this section of the house was moved from the corner of Country Club Road and West Avon Road. It was a part of a private school known as "The Academy". This section became the ell of the house. Further west, the next room used to be a horse stable and is now the family room! This room has brick flooring and an open loft ceiling with a purlin beam across the center. In this room the D'Esopo's have a variety of taxidermy animal specimens that contribute to the natural theme of the home décor.

Heading back toward the front of the home, through the kitchen and sitting room, one enters the dining room which has a lot of natural light creating an ethereal glow off the walls. The walls have been done in a rich, but muted, gold-tone Venetian plaster technique that adds elegance and subtle texture. The mantel surrounding this fireplace is a honey-toned wood and is elegant in its simplicity. John said he didn't have to take this mantle apart. As you pass through the wood trimmed doorway, you note the front entry door of the house to your left which opens out onto West Avon Road. It is painted boards of wood with original cast iron hardware. You are now in the entry foyer of the house and note the staircase leading to the second floor. The newel post at the bottom has a round wood sphere and the spindles are square...an unassuming stairway railing with dark amber tone finish. But a fancy, turned wood stairway would be out of place here. Its simplistic design makes a quiet statement and is in character with what a former farming family's modest interior would have been. The wood plank stairs are painted with an oil-based paint with clear coat glossy shine. The steps and the second level floor are a restful fern green.

Upstairs on the landing, one notices the intricate stencil-work done to add some country charm. There is one tiny bedroom, a master bedroom, a smaller bedroom with stunning gold leaf paint in a fan pattern painted on the ceiling that casts a bronze glow to the room, and a bathroom. When you cross through a low doorway, you enter another bedroom which is actually what used to be the attic space above the original kitchen. A bed is tucked against the windows under a slanted roofline with a glorious view of the garden. This room has exposed darker wood roof support beams that are original tree trunks peeking out of the plastered, peaked ceiling that contrast against the bright white painted ceiling.

Continuing past this room, you step down, cocking your head to the side if you are tall, (there is a stairwell to the attic, stenciled nicely of course) into a loft room that is over the family room. There is a wood burning stove in the family room with the vent pipe leading up to the second story and outside. The upstairs loft office room has exposed barn wood walls with antique woodworker's tools such as a two-man saw, planes, and a large vise grip as 'tools of the trade' décor. There are dried birdhouse gourds hanging on the guardrail, and small antique farm hand tools line another wall.

A narrow staircase, hand built by John, of rough sawed wood leads back downstairs. But we opted to retrace our steps and go back down the front entry staircase. Turning left, one comes back into the homey kitchen where we sat down at the table to continue our conversation. I have to say that it is very difficult to maintain eye contact with your hosts as seemingly every square inch of the kitchen has some touch of whimsy, object d'art, or curiosity to distract one's gaze!

As one leaves the house, the garden in winter's sleep is not devoid of color with a myriad of exotic evergreens and ornament trees. The carriage house-style garage was also built by John but it was Chrissie who spotted the model from which it would be created. She told me that when she was driving in Suffield, Connecticut, she happened upon the Hathaway House that is a part of the Suffield Historical Society and she knew at once, this was the style she envisioned to complement their home. I asked John how he constructed the beautiful archways with a keystone over each bay. He told me that there were many pieces glued together to form the curves and when I went up close, there were at least ten pieces of material forming the graceful arch.

I'm trying to decide what the most striking aspect of the home is. One possibility is 'Emmett the Elk' whose head is mounted low on the wall directly behind a sofa and he makes an imposing conversation starter for sure in the sitting room. Another might be the fact that John told me that he and his carpenters were able to work on the whole house concurrently and finished the renovation in four months, sans finishing flair that I expect has been a labor of love for this couple from day one!

I think the most amazing aspect about this home site is what John created for Chrissie...a blank canvas for her to utilize her artistic eye and talents. For what was the Sistene Chapel's ceiling before Michelangelo? What John and Chrissie have created together, is nothing short of an original masterpiece.

## THE HISTORY CORNER...



### Maud Ely Gibbons-Benefactor of the Avon Public Library

Mrs. Maud Ely Gibbons achieved a place in Avon's history by her initiative and financial support of Avon's first public library building. It was Mrs. Gibbons who proposed locating the library building on Main Street. She held fundraising parties and events at her home and Arthur A. Woodford donated \$1,000 for the building site. The new library, at 17 Main Street, opened in 1932.

Maud Ely was born February 29, 1896 in New York, the daughter of Richard Ely who owned 'Deercliff Farm' on Avon Mountain. Locals will remember two bronze deer (stag) statues on stone pedestals marking the entrance to Deercliff Road. According to local lore, "at least one slave stopped at Deercliff" \* in the days of the Underground Railroad.

Maud Ely married Lieutenant Commander John H. Gibbons in 1906 in Washington, D.C. He was the United States attaché to the Court of St. James. The photograph herein was taken during a formal affair in 1906 while he was in this capacity. He then became Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland from 1911-1914.

With her husband away at sea, Maud had time to devote to philanthropic endeavors. She became a member of the Garden Club of Hartford. It was she who created a flower arranging medal in 1934 for the Garden Club of America. A newspaper article dated August 1944 mentions that Mrs. Gibbons wanted to start an Avon garden club/village improvement group for the purpose of town beautification.

Mrs. Gibbons was a strong proponent of reading and education. She became the Library Director and held annual Christmas children's parties at the library. Each child was given a book (chosen from a list ahead of time) and some hard candy as a gift. Inside the book cover was a book tag that read: This book belongs to: \_\_\_\_, From Maud Ely Gibbons. This tradition was much anticipated by local children each year.

Mrs. Gibbon's brother, Richard Fenwick Ely, wrote a book of poetry including a poem inspired while living at Deercliff. This book recently donated to the Society, is now in the collection of the History Room at the Avon Free Public Library. The title of the poem is 'Autumn at Dusk' penned in 1911. Fenwick died in 1920 and Mrs. Gibbons inherited 'Deercliff' in 1930.

Mrs. Gibbons continued to support the library by purchasing books and magazine subscriptions. She died June 1, 1953 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C. next to her husband. In her will, she bequeathed \$6,000 to the library and this money contributed to a new addition to the building, the Joseph W. Alsop wing. According to a quotation in 'Avon, Connecticut-An Historical Story' by Frances L. Mackie, she attributed to Mrs. Gibbons, her "heart and soul were in the building." It is therefore quite fitting that after her death, the original main room of the library became a children's reading room was dedicated to Mrs. Gibbons memory in 1955.

Photo credit: Findagrave by Graham Jones 2012

\*1997 Town of Avon Architectural Survey

## DID YOU KNOW?

Behind the scenes, what the public does not see about the Avon Historical Society, is the dedication of the 'working parts' of the Society. These include our Board of Trustees who meet regularly to make the big decisions about the Society's direction and finances. In addition, many of these Trustees donate additional time at AHS events, projects and exhibits. Their names are listed on the last page. Another component of the Society are our Greeter volunteers who give their time at the Derrin Farmhouse and the Pine Grove School House by enlightening visitors about these Avon historical properties during the summer on Sundays from 2:00-4:00pm. The school house is overseen by Ben Isaacson and the farmhouse by Len Tolisano and John Forster.

Beyond this, out of public view, is the hard work that has been on-going in the restoration of the Derrin farmhouse. Credit here goes to Len Tolisano, John Forster, and others like Diane & Marcel Robaczynski who have given their time and talents in painting, gardening, plastering, cleaning and restoration of this Avon relic of the past. We also thank Ben Isaacson and Jeannie Parker who maintain the Pine Grove School House preserving this cherished antiquity.

The Special Projects committee could not function without the help of many support staff. These include 'the crew,' of Karen Volinski and Michael Go (see photo) who help install and remove the multiple school and library exhibits and projects we do each year. In addition, a new member Debbie Elcock, has been an invaluable addition helping on research projects. There are other folks that contribute their vast knowledge to help bring the public accurate historical information for our newsletters and projects including Nora Howard, Town Historian and Jeannie Parker, long-time resident and AHS member and many others who always find answers to many questions. All of these people are the cogs in the wheel that keep the SPC in motion. Lastly, our Hospitality Committee that take time out of their busy lives to make homemade baked goods for our public events that add a special touch.

The work of the Avon Historical Society is important to preserving the Town's heritage and educating the public about its' history. Your membership dollars support these efforts and we invite new folks to join any of the 'moving parts' of the Society that may be of interest. The Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and what we do, we do for the love of the town and history!

## SPOTLIGHT ON...

A lovely lady by the name of Jennie Boswell, former History Room volunteer for the Society at the Avon Free Public Library, has a very special talent for cooking. She and others prepare the First Friday dinners at the Avon Congregational Church. These dinners benefit the community and a portion of the proceeds go to area charities. Main dishes have included spinach and mushroom lasagna, baked ham with fruit glaze, and elegant beef bourguignon.



In a recent conversation with Jennie, I asked where she got her love of cooking. Jennie told me of growing up in New York State in an extended family household. Her grandparents lived in the upstairs apartment and her own family had seven children. So there was a big family to feed. Jennie told about the vegetable and flower gardens at their residence. There were fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, and that basil and parsley were grown in tubs, readily available for cooking. The family also used to preserve the vegetables by canning for use over the winter. Jennie said there was a grape arbor and that her grandfather pressed the grapes to make 'vino', which is Italian for wine. She recalled how fresh pasta was made by first taking out a very large, wooden cutting board. Pasta was made on this board and then hung to dry.

Jennie's own family came to Avon in 1960. She began cooking at the Church in the 1980s for the 'Couples Club.' This is where she learned to cook recipes for larger numbers of people. She has been a part of the First Friday dinners for the past six years. It takes a team to shop, prep, cook and clean up the kitchen after serving the community. But Jennie and her colleagues are up to the challenge. Jennie brings three generations of cooking experience to the table!

I was moved by a story Jennie related to me about what her grandfather did to allay the fears of the younger family members during the WWII air raid drills-he would roast chestnuts and orange rinds on the stove to create a pleasant aroma. Food does have a calming effect. Jennie Boswell's church cooking is literally 'food for the soul.'

Interview by Janet Conner



The 'crew', Karen Volinski and Michael Go who help with exhibits for the Special Projects Committee of AHS.

## DERRIN HOUSE GRAND CELEBRATION!

2016 marks an important year in the history of the Derrin Farmhouse, located at 249 West Avon Road. This year marks the 250th year since the signing of the deed conveying the property and 'house and barn thereon standing' from John Page of Branford, Connecticut to his daughter Lucy Page who was married to Stephen Darrin (Derrin). The deed was actually signed on September 24, 1766. As June marks the official opening of the Summer visitor season at the Derrin Farmhouse (and the Pine Grove School House), we are hosting a special celebration on **Sunday, June 12th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** We are excited to be premiering a new Visitor Welcome Center in the Derrin Farmhouse. This will provide a jumping off point for house tours. The newly discovered well in the oldest part of the house is an exciting new feature.



The celebration will include an anniversary cake and punch. On display in the Visitor Welcome Center will be some of the actual artifacts found over twenty years ago during an archaeological dig by then-State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni with Avon High School students. Also on display will be authentic, handwritten letters by Derrin family members recently obtained by the Society.

We also plan to have items on display from the Historical Society collection that are period appropriate for a farming family, such as the Derrins. This is a great opportunity to teach your children about Avon's history.

We hope to see you at this family fun event!

Image: Clip Art Panda



The Mission of the Avon Historical Society, founded in 1974, is to identify, collect, preserve, utilize, publish, display and promote the history and heritage of Avon.

[www.avonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.avonhistoricalsociety.org)

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