

A hidden gem, full of New England's rural past

BY JACK CORAGGIO
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

When getting down to the precise details, the history of the Darius Gray House in Sharon is a little spotty. But that's only when getting down to the precise details. If you're painting with a broad brush, seeing the home as a collection of stories and memories, not just hinges and floorboards, the history of the Darius Gray House is bold and colorful. The sturdy eight-room farmhouse, an antique structure tucked away deep in the country, is one that has seen, over multiple generations, the many changes of rural New England. And in all that time, it has stayed well out of sight, surrounded by Hamlin Pond and thousands of woodland acres of Jackson Peck land. When it comes to determining its age, the picture is again uncertain, but the home is probably as old as the United States of America.



The Darius Gray House was built circa 1776, and is one of the oldest homes in Sharon.

"Although local tradition has it that the house was built in 1776, the limits probably lie between 1772 and 1783," said Frank Spencer of the Sharon Historical Society. Regardless of when it was built, it still stands as one of the oldest homes in Sharon. But that isn't all that sets it apart. "Darius' house followed the same general pattern as most early farmsteads," stated Spencer. "It had two distinctions: One was a separate cellar accessible only through a trap door from inside the house — whether this was used to hide from prowling Indi-

ans, or for the more mundane purpose of storage, is not known. The other feature, perhaps not unusual, was an expertly constructed brick and firestone fireplace with Dutch oven." An Indian raid panic room or a regular storage closet, who knows? But the use of an oven made the home the communal bakery in Sharon. The mere thought of neighbors coming by the home with dough that needed to be baked, made listing agent Sherie Berk of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty laugh. Still, the home is a hidden gem, and she marvels at

how much of the original material was retained, even when it was renovated almost 90 years ago. "So when you walk in, you feel like you've been transported back in time," said Berk. "You leave the 21st century at the door."

Do you have a home with a story on the market? We'd love to tell it. Share with Alec Johnson at ajohnson@repam.com.

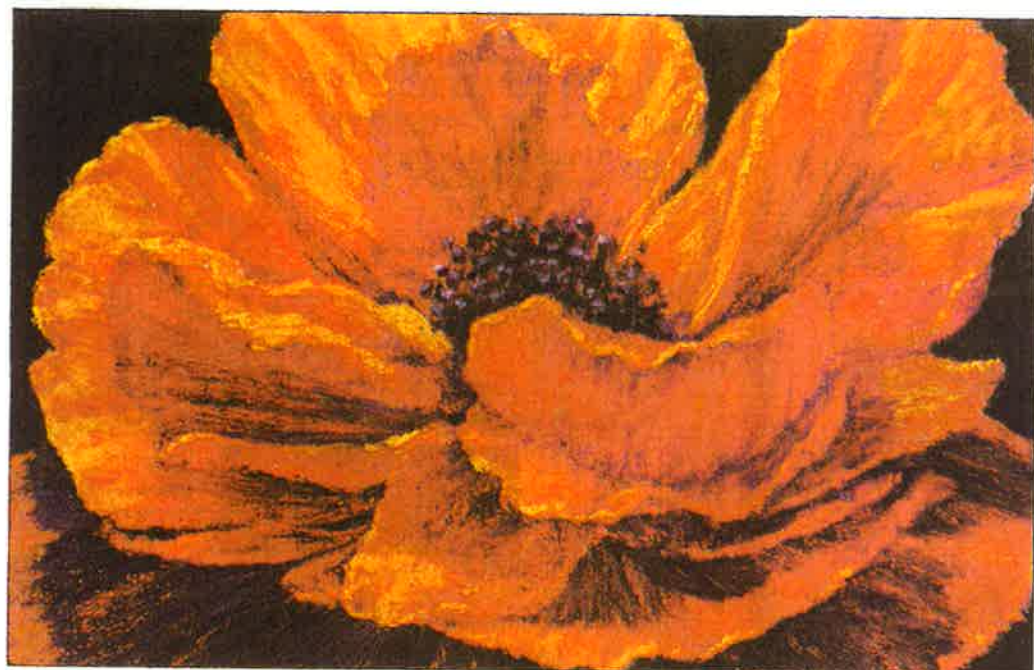
February offers warm winter reads for the young set

February children's programming at Southbury Public Library includes Lunch Bunch indoor picnic and movies

Thursday Feb. 11, at noon; and the Movies & Munchies showing of the sequel to "Hotel Transylvania" on Friday Feb. 19, at 6 p.m. Wii Have Fun grades 1 to 5 will

be held on Tuesday Feb. 16; and Lego to the Library, also for grades 1-5, takes place on Friday Feb. 26. The KinderClub book-talk for children going into kindergarten will be held on Monday Feb. 22;

Page Turners for grades 1 and 2 on Wednesday Feb. 17, Snacks Stories for girls in grades 4 and up on Thursday Feb. 18, and Book Buddies BookTalk on Monday Feb. 22. Dates for these programs are at 4:15 p.m. For these and other story time events for babies and toddlers: 203-266-0626 ext. 3; or at the library.



CONTRIBUTED

The art of the valentine

Woodbury's Fine Line Art Gallery will present its annual

work and the creative process. Fine Line Art Gallery was founded in 1994,

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