



The Town of Harwinton's Historic Districts and Historic Properties Commission is dedicated to encouraging the preservation of sites and buildings within the town and contributing to the educational, architectural and aesthetic values that make Harwinton unique.

It's with great pride that we feature, through this public display, a home in our town that we recognize as one that has undergone a labor of love and truly has been preserved as a historic place for all of us, and our future generations of Harwintonians to enjoy.



Picture circa 1900

As a property that is part of our towns Historic District and Historic Properties, this well maintained home is a step into the Interesting and historic past of Harwinton. According to our town land records, Abijah Catlin Jr. built this house in 1795 for his son Abijah Catlin III.

This beautiful old home, currently co-owned by Frank Chiaramonte and Girvice Archer Jr., sits atop the hill at the intersection of Locust Road and Route 4.

It has undergone an evolution of changes with some portions dating back to before 1739.

We are proud to share a small portion of its story and congratulate Frank and Girvice for their successful preservation and maintenance of a special place in the hearts of all who live in Harwinton.



It is a center chimney house with a traditional floor plan for this type of house. The ceilings on the first floor are high and the fireplaces have rather decorative mantels. Six of the seven original fireplaces are still in use as well as the bake oven. There are four fireplaces off the main chimney.

In 1805, ten years after the house was built, the Catlin homestead, located a little ways down Locust Road, was moved and attached to the house. This was a farmhouse and was built around 1770. It also had a center chimney with three fireplaces off the one chimney. One has since been removed to make room for a wood burning stove.





Following the attachment of the Catlin Homestead, an ell (summer kitchen) was moved from across Locust Road and attached to the rear of the “Catlin Homestead” portion of the house. Being built before 1739, this is the oldest part of the house. The fireplace in the summer kitchen was removed when the ell was moved.

Sometime in the 1920's, what are now the garages was moved from Torrington and attached to the back ell.





In the 1930's a dormer and sun porch was added to the back of the main house. The dormer provides more space for the rooms on the second floor and provides access from the main house to the 1770 portion of the house. The sun porch has views down the sloping back yard and has a perfect southern exposure.

The house was originally on 26 acres of land. The property included a large chestnut post and beam barn and an apple orchard. In 1963 the property was subdivided. The barn and 24 1/2 acres were sold as a separate property.





Restoration work began shortly after the house was purchased in 1975. The first project was to restore the second floor of the 1770 Catlin Homestead addition, which had been gutted by fire several years earlier. One window was completely replaced. Walls and the original doors were placed in their original position. The adjacent picture is of the first floor.

The Kitchen had been updated in years past but was deemed too small for the size of the house. There was neither an eat-in facility nor adequate counter space and work area. The mudroom behind the kitchen was incorporated into the kitchen providing the much needed added space.



The ell was unfinished at the time of the 1975 purchase. In 1995 that part of the house was converted into living space. This is the eat-in facility, now part of the kitchen area.



A Palladian window was installed in the room over the garages, which is a replica of the one on the front of the house. Eighteenth century doors, shutters, flooring, fireplace mantel and paneling were used in the conversion.



An early 19th century, hand-hewn, chestnut post and beam barn was constructed on the property to replace the one that was once part of the property but split off when the property was subdivided. This barn was originally located in Danbury but was dismantled piece-by-piece, numbered and moved here in 1992.

Other work that has been performed includes rebuilding the sun porch, added new heating systems, asbestos removal, stonewall repairs, a new well added and new roofs over the entire structure. The entire property is an on-going labor of love.

