

RAISE THE RAFTERS

# It's Brunch at the Barn at Dudley Farm Museum

By Lisa Reisman

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GUILFORD — Consider Susan Willis' three-fruit marmalade. An otherworldly blend of organic grapefruits, oranges and lemons, it has enough pungency to flavor an entire batch of scones.

That's according to newly installed Dudley Farm market master Martha Haeseler, who has been preparing for the Saturday, May 19, opening of the Dudley Farm Museum farmers market.

The farm museum will also host the fourth annual Brunch at the Barn on Sun-

day, May 20, to raise funds for the Big Barn Project, an effort to restore the physical integrity of the unique multipurpose structure that is the Dudley barn complex and to reinvent it as a place to enable visitors to experience 19th-century agrarian life.

But first there are breads and fruit bars baked fresh by Sweet Sage Bakery's Kathy Duffy at Saturday's farmers market. "People line up all morning for them," Haeseler said. And cage-free eggs from Half Mile Acres Farm, as well as a veritable cornucopia of farm-fed meat, natural body products, hand-

*See Dudley on A12*



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**A sheep looks out from a restored section of the barn complex at Dudley Farm in Guilford.**



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**Martha Haeseler at the barn complex at Dudley Farm in Guilford. At left is the last section that awaits restoration.**

## DUDLEY

*From page A1*

made crafts and home-grown produce from Gabe Russo's Forest City Farms in Middletown, among other area farms.

Russo is among the vendors offering flower and vegetable seedlings and plants for Planting Day, a Haeseler initiative, to mark the beginning of planting season. It's an opportunity, she said, "to get your seedlings directly from farmers."

Then there's the Children's Corner, which will have kids painting flower pots and planting in them petunias donated by Van Wilgen's Garden Center in potting soil from North Guilford Nurseries. Not to mention storytelling by Guilford's Barbara Kiesel and music with guitarist Susan Peak, as well as nature- and farm-based crafts.

"The activities are a way to get kids engaged

and excited about making art relating to farm life," said Haeseler, formerly an art therapist at the VA.

One of those projects, making dolls out of clothes pins, is in keeping with the kind of ingenuity that distinguishes the extraordinary structure that is the barn complex.

Five barns in one, it originated in 1844 and developed as the farm

developed and the needs of the farmers changed, with every part built for a purpose: a sleigh shed tacked on for getting around in winter, for example; and an additional barn to house farm equipment on top and a lower stay with stalls for sheep, cows, and horses.

According to author Bill Black, assistant treasurer of the Dudley Farm Foundation, the artisans

*See Dudley on A13*



**The front porch at Dudley Farm Museum.**



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The parlor at Dudley Farm Museum in Guilford. At right is a portrait of William I. Koheres, a relative of the Dudleys, from the Spanish-American War.

## DUDLEY

From page A12

involved in the Big Barn Project have shown themselves as similarly resourceful.

"Whatever they could find, they used," the amiable Dudley Farm fixture said on a recent morning, pointing out the original 1860 beams incorporated in the renovated sleigh shed, as barn swallows swooped in the sepia light amid the sweet smell of hay.

That inventiveness aside, there's been no shortage of contributions, both from neighbors seeking a home for their antique tools and farm implements, and in the steady influx of grants, as well as matching and individual donations, over the past five years.

"Barns are a tangible link to our shared past," Black said. "And they're

fast becoming an endangered species. People around here get that. They get how unique this structure is, how vital it is to preserve it, how much we can still learn from it."

Which is why this Sunday's Brunch at the Barn, which features catering by The Marketplace at Guilford Food Center, entertainment by the Stony Creek Fife & Drum Corps, and a silent auction, is, more than anything, a celebration of what's already been accomplished.

Not just the brunch, perhaps. The whole weekend. It's a reflection of the reincarnation of the Dudley Farm into a vibrant place where the works and craft that kept a farm going have been instilled with renewed spirit, at once animating and perpetuating North Guilford's past.

Not least that three-

fruit marmalade.

▶ The opening of the Dudley Farm Museum's Summer Farmers Market is on Saturday, May 19, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 2351 Durham Road, North Guilford.

▶ Children's Corner, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

▶ The Dudley Farm Museum's fourth annual Brunch at the Bar" is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 20, at the Munger Barn, 2351 Durham Road, North Guilford. Tickets are \$45 and available at the Dudley Farm Museum by calling 203-457-0770 or emailing [director@dudleyfarm.com](mailto:director@dudleyfarm.com).

▶ For information on raffle tickets to win a midnight diamond queen-sized quilt to benefit the Big Barn Project, call Jerri Guadagno at 203-457-0047.

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