



Hamden Revisited (Images of America)

Hamden Historical Society

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At the turn of the 20th century, the town of Hamden, Connecticut, "the Land of the Sleeping Giant," was a patchwork of small hamlets, largely rural and agricultural. During the next 100 years, it would undergo a dramatic transformation; as orchards and fields gave way to factories and subdivisions, Hamden's population grew from only a few thousand at the beginning of the century to over 60,000. In the time of war needs, local industries like the Web Shop factory and High Standard Manufacturing retooled to meet demands. The middle of the century saw the appearance of some of the first shopping malls in the state, including Hamden Plaza. Major universities attracted workers, families, intellectuals, and authors. Hamden was the childhood home of poet laureate Donald Hall, the residence of playwright Thornton Wilder, and the birthplace of Ernest Borgnine. As the town's diversity grew, the community faced the challenges and opportunities of each generation and, inevitably, its identity evolved.

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