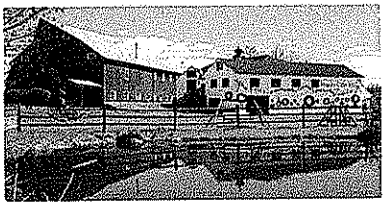


Hogans Cider Mill
Since 1912
Burlington, CT

Hogans Cider Mill was established by Morris and Richard Hogan on the Hogan Family farm in 1912. We have come to you today to ask for your support to help us take the step into the twenty first century by allowing us to sell our Hard Cider and Apple Wine on the internet as proposed in The Bill HB 5116 and SB 00312 as presented by Representative John Piscopo and Senator Jonathan Harris. We who hold the four hard cider licenses in this state are asking for the same rights and privileges which this body has already granted to the twenty eight licensed farm wineries in the state of Connecticut.

We are small family owned businesses who produce less then one percent of the state's alcohol products. We are asking for a level playing field with those who produce similar products within our state. We need to reach out and expand our retail market beyond those who can find their way to our doors in order to keep those doors open. We need to service those visitors who only visit our area, but want to have a taste of Connecticut when they return home. Safeguards have been placed into the existing bill to limit the volume of sales to no more then five gallons in a 60 day period to any one person; we are attempting to expand our retail market only.

In the 97 years since this farm has been producing cider much has changed in the State of Connecticut but these beautiful barns retain the rural charm that is treasured by both residents and visitors to our state. Each year thousands make their yearly pilgrimage to our doors. Generations of families share this familiar journey and introduce their newest members to the ritual that epitomizes autumn in New England. Guests from all over the world find their way to us, and enjoy joining in the experience of partaking of apple cider, the oldest beverage in Connecticut.

This small business has a big impact on the quality of life in our state and we need your support to continue to move toward the future while preserving the treasures of our past.

February 5, 2009

Theresa Clifford Dunlop

Hogans Cider Mill

522 Spielman Highway

Burlington, CT 06013

860-675-7320

Website: hogansciderm ill.com --- email: info@burlingtongolfcenter.com

"MR. BURLINGTON" DEAD AT 87
80 YEARS OF MEMORIES REMAIN

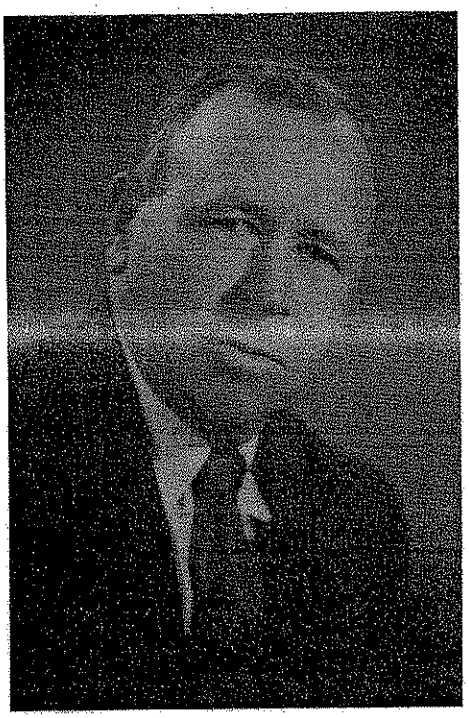
by **Tom Hebert**, Burlington Times

I first met Morris Hogan in 1974 when I stopped at his cider mill after a long drive and quenched a terrible thirst with the finest cider I'd ever tasted. I met the man in sauce-splashed overalls many times but I never really knew him. After researching this story, I wish I'd known him better.

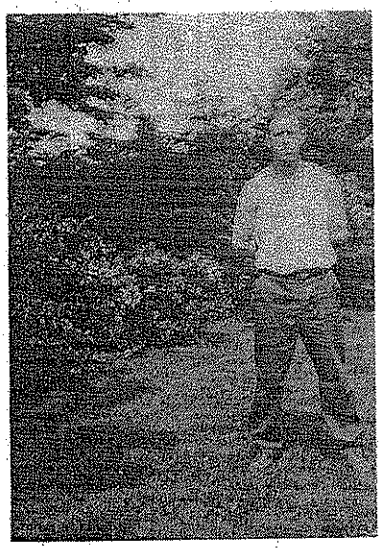
I'd like to thank Alice and Dot Szczesniak, Marj Grelo and Helen and James Mullen for sharing their memories of Morris with me.

Morris Hogan was born on February 22, 1902 and died 87 plus years later on September 27, 1989. He saw most of what the twentieth century had to offer and he had a lot to offer in return. He was a farmer first, but much of his life was spent in public service to Burlington and surrounding communities. He was also a philanthropist.

He became a farmer at the age of 15 after his father died and he and his older brother Richard were left to run the farm. Morris was born in Harwinton and moved to Burlington in 1909 when his father sold his Torrington store to buy the farm. The cider mill itself was opened in 1912. Morris "graduated" from a one-room schoolhouse in Burlington at the age of 12 (far left, back row in photo above) and chose farming over high school. The fact that he was self-educated makes his accomplishments all that more impressive. He summed it up simply - "I didn't have a lot of schooling but I had a lot of common sense."



He got his start in town government in 1923, and running as a Republican, he was elected in 1936 to the General Assembly as Burlington's state representative. He lost in 1940 to a Democrat but decided to run again in 1954. In his words, "It took me a while to recover." He won that election and returned every year until 1972 when he retired -- a total of 22 years service during which he was best known as "a champion of small town causes." He was also noted for his satire and wit and never prepared speeches in advance.

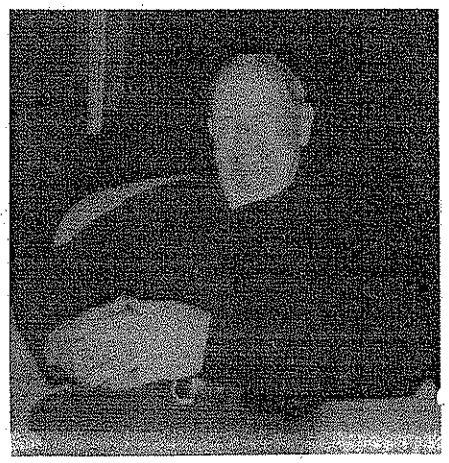


In 1932 he took over as the chairman of the town Republican party, a post he held onto until 1973, when he was asked to serve on the state's Central Committee which he did until 1979. He was also a member of Burlington's Board of Selectmen for eight years and the town's first selectman from 1951-1955. In 1973, more than 400 friends gathered at the Burlington Inn for a testimonial to honor his accomplishments.

All the while he was devoting himself to public service, he showed himself to be a successful businessman as well. His annual cider mill production was more than 50,000 gallons at one point. His land ownings grew to 480 acres.

His sense of humor was legendary. In one newspaper story, at the age of 82, he is quoted as saying he raises "strawberries, silo corn, pumpkins, hay, hell and wood." Pictures of him in his younger days testify to the fact that he was quite capable of the one non-farm product mentioned.

Though he and his wife Mabel, who died in 1984, had no children, he wasn't lacking for "children". Nobody knows just how many Burlington and Harwinton youths worked on the farm over the years, but everyone agrees it was a very large number. He took a keen interest in these kids and they learned from him. All three of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Mullen spent time there and feel that "their values could have been so different" had they not had the experience.



He especially liked to attend the Lewis Mills girls basketball games because so many of the team members had worked for him. Before one particular game, about five years ago, he told the team he'd take them all out to dinner if they won. They did and Morris had rewarded the team with a post-season dinner every season since -- win or lose.

The man, who his friends also called "Mr. Republican", was generous in other ways as well. Two years ago, he donated $10,000 to Lewis Mills for scholarships. When the Burlington Fire Department needed some land for a new firehouse, he sold them some prime property on George Washington Turnpike for a third of its market value. When he died, he left $20,000 each to eleven realtives, friends and employees. He also left $20,000 and 1/8 of his estate to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.

Cider mill bottles vintage beverage

Hogans adds hard cider

By PAM LONGWELL
Register Citizen Staff

BURLINGTON – A local cider mill is bottling a traditional, colonial beverage – hard cider.

Hogans Cider Mill, a Burlington fixture for many years, has just introduced its own hard cider. Although the cider has been in production for two years, this is the first year Theresa Clifford Dunlop and Chet Dunlop have bottled it and offered it to the public. "Next year I have hope to do apple-raspberry, apple-cherry and apple-peach (hard) cider," said Dunlop. To celebrate the new millennium, the Dunlops are working on a sparkling cider. And, for Christmas, they will offer a mulled hard cider.

Dunlop said that about three years ago, people started to inquire whether they made hard cider. She said, "The more I found out about it, the more interesting it was to me." She did some research and learned that at one time, hard cider was the most popular beverage in New England. And, according to some accounts, colonists brought apple tree seedlings to North America for the purposes of harvesting apples to make hard cider. Dunlop's reading reveals that in Massachusetts in 1786, the average per capita consumption of hard cider was 50 gallons per year.

Hard cider was considered a healthful drink. And, its relative, apple cider vinegar, was used to treat a variety of ailments, including acne, headaches, hives, nosebleeds, sore throats and warts.

Dunlop explained that typically, every family kept a barrel of hard cider in the cellar. But, as farms started to diminish and when Prohibition took hold, hard cider fell out of fashion.

Today, Chet Dunlop said, hard cider is the smallest but the fastest growing segment of the beverage market. It is a very popular drink in Europe. Here, many people aren't very familiar with it, said the Dunlops, but they do have a curiosity about it.

To start production, the Dunlops read many books and visited the only other hard-cider winery in the state, which is located in Mystic. Dunlop said that Annette Minor at Clydes Cider Mill has been a great resource for her.

SONJA A. BLASS/ Staff Photographer

Theresa Clifford Dunlop of Hogans Cider Mill in Burlington with bottles of Hogans new hard cider.

This year, Chet Dunlop estimates Hogans Cider Mill has bottled about 7,500 standard wine bottles of cider. So far, they have sold about 1,000. And, they say customers are returning to buy more of the golden beverage. The alcohol content of the brew is about 10.5 percent by volume.

> **"The more I found out about it, the more interesting it was to me."**
> **Theresa Clifford Dunlop,** Owner

Hogans Cider Mill has operated since 1908. The Dunlops press sweet cider in addition to operating a bonded winery for the production of the hard cider. Brothers Morris and Richard Hogan ran the mill for years before the Dunlops purchased the property in 1992. Originally, the Dunlops bought the Hogan property to use the land for a golf school (Chet Dunlop is also a golf pro). But, Dunlop said, they just fell in love with the mill, and continued its operation.

Hogans Cider Mill is housed in a white barn, which is decorated with an array of brightly colored wooden flowers. Theresa Dunlop, who has a background as a florist, has turned the rustic barn into a cheerful, country-style retail outlet. Customers will find cider – hard or sweet, pies, pastries, locally produced honey and maple syrup, wreathes, country crafts by local artists and the artwork of a Senegalese family that Dunlop and her daughter sponsor.

The barn is filled with interesting antiques, like an old, enamel stove, a wooden phone booth from the offices of the The Evening Sentinel in Ansonia, an organ donated by the local historical society, and a number of family photos from the Hogan and the Clifford families. Climbing the stairs to the upper loft, which historically was the site of Saturday night dances, one will spy an old straw hat sporting the message "Re-elect Hogan" hanging from the rafters.

Hogans Cider Mill is located at 522 Spielman Highway (Route 4), just a short distance from the Harwinton border. Dunlop says the mill's busy season is underway – running from Labor Day through Thanksgiving.

THE HARD SELL

Burlington mill has old-time cider with lots of kick

BURLINGTON

The sweet sap, made of a blend of apples squeezed through cloth and mingled with pears, earns its time-honored flavor as the late summer and autumn nectar — cider.

Set it aside and the sugar will bubble slowly into alcohol as the carbonation of fermentation begins. Six months to a year later, coaxed with sweet additives and yeast, filtered of its brown sediments and siphoned off from barrels into glass bottles, the souring seizer ripens to a clear liquid.

Fire, they called it in the last century, and minister's brew.

Hard cider earned its reputation as the moonshine of New England villages, where the ingredients were plentiful and the excuse of making vinegar an easy tall tale during Prohibition. Instead of stills, farmers secreted kegs in cellar holes where time did the work of making alcohol.

In Torrington, the legendary birthplace of John Brown, the Rev. Samuel Orcutt supposed in the 1800s that uprisings both for and against slavery would not have been so feisty but for the cider that fueled men's ire.

County Chronicles

Brigitte Ruthman

The brew, once as common as beer, is really not so sinister, say contemporary aficionados who are working to revive the old recipes.

Wendell Gunn remembers them, he says smiling, not quite looking you in the eye. His glance is just enough to judge whether you're part of a hurry-up generation. No one rushes the man in suspenders and green work pants.

At 84, Gunn isn't in a hurry to push the cash register keys at Hogan's Cider Mill, where he has worked since 1943. He's been a fixture and a resource ever since. So Gunn's experience proved crucial when the heirs of master cider pressman Morris Hogan sold the mill and 17 acres in 1992 to Theresa Clifford Dunlop and Chet Dunlop Jr.

It isn't cider farming, though, that saved the scenic hillsides along Route 4 across from Johnnycake Airport from development into ten house lots.

It was golf. That's right, putting greens.

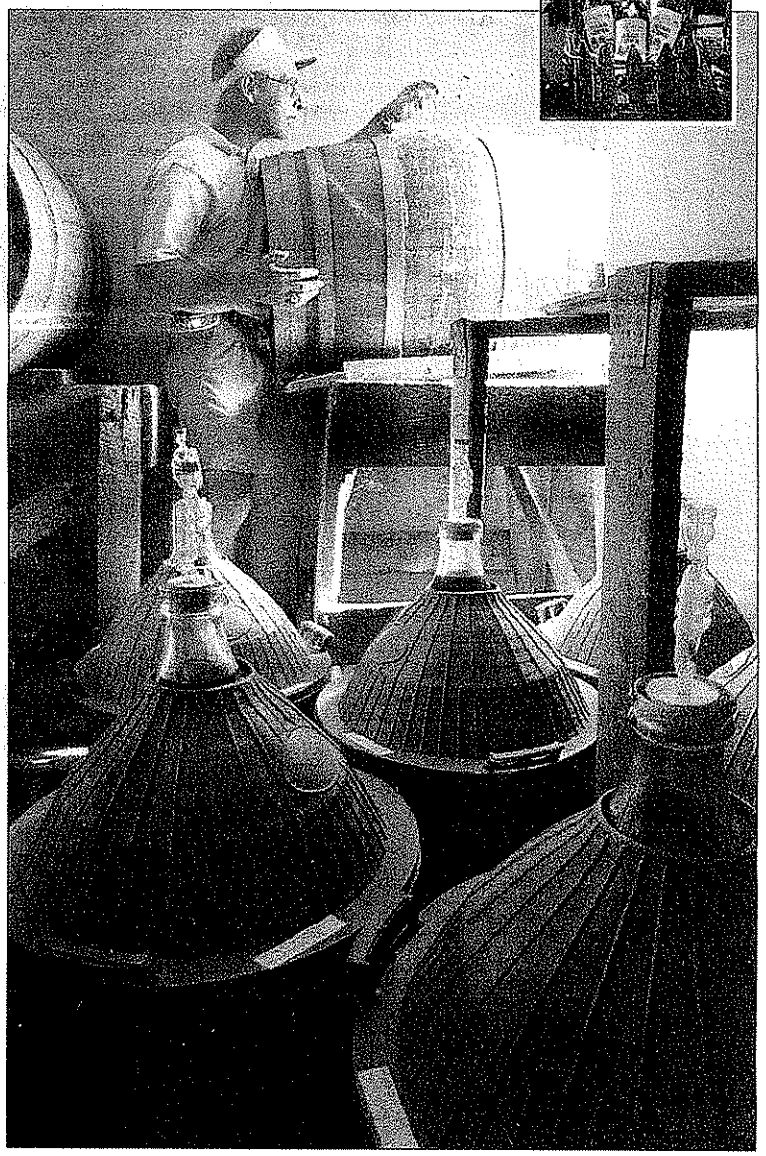
When he isn't waxing poetic about homemade brew, Chet — a PGA golf professional named one of the top three teachers in the state by Golf Magazine — is giving lessons. Hogan's Cider Mill remains a quaint retail store which also offers up for sale home-grown squashes and pumpkins, locally made crafts as wells as Theresa's floral designs. But barns painted with colorful golfing scenes portray the farm's more profitable if dual identity as the Burlington Golf Center, home of the New England School of Golf.

The Dunlops' decision last year to restore hard cider to the shelves recently produced some of the first batch of 3,200 gallons for sale. Hogan's is one of only two cider mills in the state to secure proper state and federal Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms permits in make and sell the hard stuff. The Clyde Cider Mill in Mystic is the only other one, started by Annette Miner's great grandfather in the last century.

The process begins with the consignment of apples, not the shiny red but mealy tasting sorts found in supermarket bins but the spicier Pearmains, Spitzenburgs, Pippins and sweet Russetts which once hung from crooked branches along even the craggiest New England slopes. Baldwins are treasured for cider, Wendell says.

The apples arrive from a handful of selected local growers like Peter Hayward and from New York State. Morris had a saying — farm the farmers not the farm, so he never planted an orchard, Theresa said.

Old cider recipes favor the addition of hard, tart apples and a balance of supersweet varieties such as the rare and homely Golden Russett. Pears serve the same purpose as a sweetness elixir, though no one here will say just what the secret recipe includes.



Casey Keil/*Republican-American*

Chet Dunlop of Hogan's Cider Mill in Burlington checks an air valve on a barrel of fermenting cider.

The mixture is ground to a pulp called pomace and pressed in layered racks separated by cloth. A bushel of apples produces three gallons of liquid, which turns quickly from a milky amber to brown as it is exposed to air.

The process of aging is stopped by sulfites.

The uncorked taste is oh so sublime, a combination of the complex flavors of a dry Beaujolais or eau de vin with a hint of vinegar that old timers say you stop noticing once you get used to it.

Once, Gunn said, every farmer stashed a barrel or two in the cellar. Apples and kegs were delivered regularly every fall to the mill. There was a time, Torrington Historical Society Director Mark McEachern said, that drinking got out of hand. In the late 1700s, the average per capita consumption of hard cider was 50 gallons, Theresa said reading from a cider making book, The American Cider Book, by Vrest Orton. And per capita it was, from slaves to presidents.

The pendulum of temperance swing back earlier this century. A general intolerance for drunkards, who took up adding rum to the inexpensive drink, helped bring about a prohibition for alcohol. Drinking was removed to shrouded back rooms and from personal stashes defended more than once by shotguns.

Gunn said Hogan, who learned from his father and older brother how to press apples in 1912, reached that point on

Please turn to 4A², RUTHMAN

RUTHMAN: Hard cider makes a comeback

Continued from 1A²

his own much later. Hogan died 10 years ago at the age of 89, a fan of both hard and soft ciders but not alcohol for sale.

"A man came in, bought a gallon and sat down to drink it," Gunn recalled. "He made some unseemly remarks to everyone about what it would do to you, it is a laxative you know. He stopped selling it that day but always kept a barrel in the cellar."

It actually doesn't deserve its reputation for upsetting digestion. It is improperly fermented brew that can sour a stomach.

Production was greatest around 1830 when one farmer made 300 barrels in Torrington, Orcutt wrote.

There were dozens of mills throughout Burlington and Torrington, including one at Brandy Hill which produced apple brandy.

In the trend of microbreweries, cider mills are reclaiming a market niche lost to Prohibition. Hard cider still represents less than one percent of the total sales of alcohol, but demand has skyrocketed since 1990 and is the fastest growing alcoholic drink, according to experts who publish the Wine Spectator.

In Burlington, there are plans to create a bubbly champagne cider, not quite in time for the millennium.

Brigitte Ruthman is chief of the Republican-American's Litchfield County bureau in Torrington