



The Courier

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Save America's Treasures Grant Will Help Put a Roof Over Our Heads

Last month, the Society received the largest grant in its forty-year history, the federally-funded *Save America's Treasures* grant.

One of only three organizations awarded in Connecticut, the Society will receive \$200,000 towards the replacement of the roof of the Manchester History Center, on Pine Street. Over the years, the roof has come to resemble a patchwork quilt of stop-gap repairs to prevent internal leaks and curtail numerous other problems.

Society Executive Director Mary Dunne and Development Director Carolyn Kaufman can pat themselves on the backs for submitting the successful proposal—only 60 out of 390 applications were funded.

"We are thrilled to have received this very competitive grant," said Mary Dunne. "But the roof replacement is just a single element in a comprehensive capital-improvement plan. It's a great start, and we hope this recognition will spur additional support from our local and regional community."

The current roof has long passed its useful life, having been last replaced over thirty years ago. In recent years, since even before the Society purchased the building in 1999, problems in the roof have resulted in mortar deterioration in the external brick walls, rotting in many of the gutters and downspouts, and damage to the sealing around most of the 150 windows in the building. Repair of these many windows is another major goal in renovating the building, which cannot take place until the roof problem is addressed.

The mission of the Save America's Treasures program is to fund "the preservation of irreplaceable and endangered buildings"; the multi-million dollar grants program is composed of an amalgam of mostly federal agencies, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Arts. ~



We'll Miss You!

In September, the Society honored former Manchester municipal historian and long-time Society volunteer Herb Bengtson. Herb recently retired as town historian, and he and his wife Louise moved to Rhode Island to be closer to his family. Herb had been the unfailing "go-to" resource for all things related to Manchester's history and played an instrumental role in keeping the Society running during some rough times. For his many years of service, the Society granted him an honorary life membership. Although we will dearly miss him, he has promised to remain that "go-to" person for hard-to-find answers about Manchester's history. Pictured are Louise and Herb Bengtson, Dave Smith, Mrs. Betty Thibeau, and John Fletcher. ~

CHENEY HOMESTEAD NEWS

Annual Report of the Homestead Committee

by Mark Sutcliffe, Chairman

We are very fortunate to have been able to complete most of the projects we had planned for the year, and undertake some small new ones as well.

The major work was the complete replacement of the Homestead roof with top-quality Western Red Cedar shingles. All of the flashing was replaced and new copper valleys, flashing, gutters, and downspouts were installed. One chimney was completely rebuilt from the roof line up, one was re-pointed, and a replica of the chimney that Seth Cheney had built for his mother's bedchamber in 1844 was erected where the original had been removed in an earlier renovation. In addition, all of the dormers were re-sided and many areas of trim and deteriorated

clapboard were replaced. In total, the work came in \$1,040.14 over budget, for a total cost of \$51,790.14. We are extremely grateful to the Cheney Family Fund of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for contributing \$35,000 toward the project cost.

A \$1,000 grant from the Mr. and Mrs. William Foulds Family Foundation enabled us to conserve and restore a rare early nineteenth-century Baker flintlock rifle inscribed in commemoration of Captain Timothy Cheney's Revolutionary War service. The Beauregard Corp. of Vernon generously provided a custom-made display case to house the gun that is back on display at the Homestead. The remainder of the grant is being used to archivally mount and frame a cradle quilt dated July 4, 1852, that came down to us through the Learned family. That work is in process.

We were also the beneficiary of the time and talents of Valen O. Prendergast of Webster Bank who donated his services to create a new sign for the Homestead and Keeney Schoolhouse.

A \$3,500 matching Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant (HPTAG) was awarded jointly by the Connecticut Fund for Historic Preservation and the Connecticut Humanities Council to help study the needs for a Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system. Our next major project will be to decide how to preserve our valuable collections from extremes of temperature and humidity while providing for human comfort and preserving the historic building. That is our challenge for the upcoming year.

We were deeply saddened by the sudden death of a dedicated committee member and docent, Althea Sorensen. Our Treasurer, Alan Igdalsky, resigned to pursue other opportunities and was replaced by Carol Sutcliffe. We welcome Melissa Godbout as a new addition to the Homestead Committee and plan to enter the next year with a revised mission, a strong, clear vision for the future, and an active committee dedicated to the care and interpretation of the Cheney Homestead and its collections.

The Cheney Homestead Committee:
Mark S. Sutcliffe, Chairman; Carol S. Sutcliffe, Treasurer; Melissa Godbout, Marianne Hamstra, Dorothy Olcott, Carol Zapadka, members. Cheney Homestead Caretaker: Arlyne Meek. ~

From the Director

Fall Foliage and the Society's Third Annual Appeal

by Mary Dunne

When most people think about the rituals of autumn, they have in mind apple picking, pumpkin carving, leaf raking, watching or running in the Manchester Road Race, and sitting down with friends and family for Thanksgiving. But for the Society, this is the time of year that we celebrate another successful year as an organization, close our books on the old fiscal year, and look forward to continued success for the upcoming year.

As we begin our fortieth year, we want to continue laying the groundwork for an amazing golden anniversary. By then we will have our new Manchester History Center up and running, have twice the membership than we have today, and have more staff to offer educational and inspiring programs for Manchester's diverse population.

But we can't do any of this alone. We need the continued support of our faithful members as well as new members. We need you to respond generously to our annual appeal. And we need you to attend our lectures and programs.

Help us celebrate our fortieth year by coming out to our events—it's a great opportunity to see old friends and meet new ones. We have an especially festive Holiday Open House planned this year on Sunday, December 12 from 1-4 p.m.. We are also planning more history-oriented walking tours, and we will be bringing lectures and programs to new venues in an effort to partner with various community groups. Ask a friend or family member to join the Historical Society, and think about our future as you make your donation to the annual appeal this year. ~

The Courier

A newsletter for members of the Manchester Historical Society

Web page: manchesterhistory.org
E-mail: manchesterhistory@juno.com

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HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZAS!

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE: A Parade of Wreaths!

The Society is holding its annual Holiday Open House on Sunday, December 12, from 1-4 p.m.. There will be holiday-related festivities at the Old Manchester Museum, the Cheney Homestead, and the Manchester History Center at 175 Pine Street.

The Old Manchester Museum will have on display holiday and winter images taken from postcards and photos in its collection. In addition, the Society will hold its traditional bake sale accompanied by the sound of vintage Christmas carols wafting through the air, courtesy of a former Shady Glen juke box.

The Homestead will once again be decorated festively and elegantly by the Manchester Garden Club, and the Christmas tree will be decorated by *mystery elves*...stay tuned!

At the Manchester History Center we will have our inaugural "Parade of Wreaths" decorated by Manchester businesses, civic groups, individuals, and non-profit organizations. The wreaths will be on display two weeks prior to our Holiday Open House and will be available for sale through a silent auction, which will take place from 1-3:30 p.m. during the open house. Along with the wreaths, you will hear a wassail concert from the Celtic musical group Rosen the Bow. This will be a terrific way of generating community involvement as well as a little fun competition to see who decorates the most festive wreaths.

Our open house promises to offer fun and entertainment for everyone. Please make plans to visit all of our properties on Sunday, December 12. All properties and events are free and open to the public.

Don't Know What to Give for the Holidays?

CHECK OUT OUR MUSEUM SHOP FOR IDEAS!

In addition to our maps, postcards, reprints, and other Manchester memorabilia, the Society would like to highlight a few other items that would make for great holiday gifts.

Manchester Cooks! is a new cookbook published by the Society that is hot off the press and ready for sale at the Society's Open House. With over 100 recipes submitted by the diverse body of our membership, the book will surely appeal to everyone's appetite.

Old Manchester III: The Manchester Green, which was recently revised and updated, would also be a fine addition to your home, as it provides innumerable personal anecdotes and photographs of this historical part of town.

The Pathway from the Door, which is a history of Northern Ireland's county Armagh, with a chapter on the emigration of thousands of its citizens to Manchester in the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, is another recent addition to the Museum Shop.

In addition to books, the Museum Shop also has available videocassettes of the many programs produced by the Society for cable television, as well as everything from vintage-inspired toys to Bon Ami products. Come on down with your shopping lists in hand!



Hiking Through The North End's History



(Photo by Cynthia M. Barlow)

In October, about 30 hikers participated in the Society's history hike around Union Pond. Hikers walked the loop trail at the pond, enjoying peak fall foliage and comments on the history of the villages and mills in the town's North End. Free pamphlets are available for self-guided walks at Union Pond, as well as other Hockanum River linear park trails, at Manchester's customer service center, located at Town Hall.

A LIFETIME GIFT: LEAVING A LEGACY— You Too Can Leave a Legacy and Make a Difference

LEAVE A LEGACY Connecticut is a statewide public awareness effort to promote charitable giving through wills and estate plans. We are grateful to all of our donors; your financial support tells us that you think our mission is important and our work is valuable.



LEAVE A LEGACY™

If you are considering making a planned contribution to the Manchester Historical Society, there is a way to achieve your financial goals while helping to ensure that the work of the Historical Society continues well into the future. A **Charitable Remainder Trust** is a gift arrangement defined by federal tax law that enables donors to provide income for themselves or others, avoid estate and capital gains taxes, reduce income taxes, protect the financial security of their heirs, AND make a lasting impression by giving to a favorite charity or charities.

The Society is undergoing a major expansion that will make it an enduring and prominent historical and cultural resource in eastern Connecticut. Are you interested in making a gift that will stay with us well into that bright future? Then consider naming the Society in your will, as a beneficiary of your life insurance plan, or through a charitable remainder trust. Bequests will help ensure that the Society continues to carry out its mission of preserving the town's history and educating the public, all while acknowledging the generosity and support of your legacy. If you want to learn more, we are prepared to talk to you and your financial advisor about this planned giving vehicle. Contact Mary Dunne, at 860-647-9983.

NewsNotes

UPCOMING EVENTS

On Sunday, **November 14 at 1 p.m.**, **Mary Dunne**, Executive Director of the Society, will give a slide lecture on the **History of Manchester Green**. The lecture will take place at the newly open *Seasons at the Green* specialty store, located in the former Books and Birds bookstore, at 519 East Middle Turnpike. The lecture will cover the history and architecture of the area from its early days as a major east-coast hub for travelers between New York and Boston, to the early twentieth-century subdivision of farmland which made way for Manchester's earliest suburbs. Copies of the book *Old Manchester III: The Manchester Green* will be available for sale after the lecture.

On **Sunday, November 21, at 2 p.m.**, the Society will present a slide lecture by **Tom Beardsley** on the history of Willimantic, particularly its role in silk manufacturing, which created a rivalry between that town and Manchester after the Civil War. Tom Beardsley is the former Windham municipal historian and currently teaches history at Manchester Community College.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

At the Society's annual meeting in October, **Carol Sutcliffe** and **Carole Walden** were honored as the organization's Volunteers of the Year, for their invaluable work in coordinating and advancing the accounting functions of the Society at a critical point in its history. Long-time member and volunteer **Gertrude Sweeney** was honored for her meritorious service as the Society's Treasurer in guiding and facilitating our complex financial systems for many years.

Volunteers of the Year Carole Walden (left) and Carol Sutcliffe with Society



President Dave Smith and Executive Director Mary Dunne.

SOCIETY BENEFITS FROM GLOBAL VOLUNTEER DAY

Employees of Prudential Financial in Hartford teamed up with the Society last month for some necessary fall clean-up work. After spending the morning at the Cheney Homestead performing landscape work, the team moved on to the Society's History Center to help with indoor sprucing up.

The volunteers from Prudential, led by team leader **Marcy Boilard**, were there as part of the company's 10th annual Global Volunteer Day. In addition to Marcy were her husband **Paul Boilard**, **Carol Ebersold**, **Karen Helinski**, **Tonya Jones** and her daughter **Cassidy**, **Jeanne Kostuk**, and **Brad Melius**. Thanks again, guys!

TAKE A "JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM"!

Concordia Lutheran Church, one of the Society's community partners who co-sponsored a benefit concert with us earlier this year, will have "A Journey to Bethlehem" open and free to the public at the height of the holiday season, Saturday, December 11, from 3 to 6 p.m. and with a live nativity at 4 p.m. The event will showcase the largest display of nativity sets in the area—many gathered from around the world. There will also be animals involved in the live nativity, as well as music. The church is located at 40 Pitkin Street. For more information, call 649-5311. The event is free, but any donations will be used to benefit homeless women and children.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Society currently has two specific needs for volunteers:

If you are handy with a hammer or like general hands-on work, we have instituted a Thursday evening work group which performs building improvement-related jobs at the History Center at 175 Pine Street. This small group of volunteers, led by Society President Dave Smith and Board member John Dormer, has been meeting for a couple of months now, but they need more able bodies. Please call Mary Dunne at 647-9983 if you are interested in helping out Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m.. You do not have to come every single week, but the more people involved, the better.

We are also looking for additional members for the Cheney Homestead Committee. This is an especially exciting time for the committee as it begins to move forward with new interpretive plans for the Homestead and face the challenge of major capital improvements. If you would like to help plan events and programs for the Homestead, or do hands-on work inside or on the grounds, please consider joining the committee and contact Mary Dunne at 647-9983. The committee is also in need of a recording secretary .

Welcome Aboard, New Members!

We would like to welcome the following fifty-five new individual or family members who have joined the Society between May 1 and October 1 of this year:

John and Eileen Able, Manchester
Brenda Acelin, Manchester
David Beal, Manchester
Steven Blanchard, Coventry
Helene Buker, Manchester
Heather Burford, Manchester
Evelyn Bush, Silver Spring, MD
Dennis and Marta Dailey, Manchester
Ann Deegan, Manchester
Prudence and Ernest Dorazio, Noank
Jason and Heather Doucette, Manchester
Patricia Forbes, Manchester
Leslie Frey, Manchester
Irene Grinavich, Manchester
Patricia Hale, Glastonbury
Marcia Harrington, Manchester
Catherine Hastings, Manchester
Ann Hirth, Manchester
Alessandra Humpstone, Brooklyn, NY
Maria Hurst, Manchester
Frank Jenkins, Manchester
Theresa Jones, Manchester
Bruce Kohler, Manchester
Kelly LeBlanc, Manchester
Jason Littleton, Manchester
Wynona and William Lopes, Manchester
Frances and Gerald Lynch, Manchester
James Mahoney, Manchester
Douglas Marti, Manchester
Mary McLean, Manchester
Mark McPartland, Vernon
Todd Metcalf, Manchester
Joy Millard, Manchester
Glenn and Jackie Mirtl, Manchester
Michael Mistretta, Manchester
Katherine Morey, Santa Barbara, CA
Jerome and Louise Nathan, Manchester
Ashley Odell, Manchester
Carmel Patrizzi, Manchester
Leslie Pember, Manchester
Dorothy Pethybridge, Manchester
Samuel Pierson, Manchester
Donald and Jane Richter, Manchester
David Rohrbach, Manchester
Joan Ruddell, Manchester
Thomas Rufini, Manchester
Claire Schamback, Marietta, GA
Carol and Robert Smith, Port Orange, FL
Herbert and Miriam Snyder, Manchester
Blanche Strater, Coventry
Thomas Till, Enfield
Arthur Tinsz, Manchester
Janice Torneo, Manchester
Kevin and Kathleen Weekes, Manchester
Terry and Linda Wilsinski, Manchester

LET'S GET COOKING!

Manchester's Own Cookbook Now Available

Manchester Cooks!, the first cookbook to be published by the Manchester Historical Society commemorating our first 40 years as an organization, is available just in time for the holidays. The book contains 125 recipes that range from appetizers to desserts. *Manchester Cooks!* will be for sale at the Holiday Open House on December 12 and at the museum during regular business hours. They sell for \$10 each. We will also ship them to you for an additional postage fee. Just call us at 860-647-9983. Cookbooks make wonderful gifts! And all proceeds from the sale will benefit the Manchester Historical Society. (See illustration, page 4.)

ROAD RACE MEMORABILIA NEEDED

The Manchester Road Race Committee is seeking personal articles and other memorabilia related to the annual Road Race, from 1927 to present. Donations will be added to a collection to be used in a Road Race exhibit at the Society's History Center.

The committee desires items related to any kind of personal participation in the Road Race—whether as runners, volunteers, or viewers; such items might include photographs, home movies, audio excerpts, sportswear, race participant numbers, and printed programs from related events (such as the spaghetti dinner, press conferences). Race fans wishing to donate items can e-mail the Society at manchesterhistory@juno.com.



A SIGN OF THE TIMES: Board member John Dormer makes adjustments to the new sign on the Society's History Center, at the corner of Pine and Forest Streets.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Fall/Winter 2004–2005

November 14 *History of Manchester Green* (see *Upcoming Events*, page 5)

Sunday Speaker: Mary Dunne

1 p.m. Location: Seasons at the Green, 519 East Middle Tpke.

FREE to the public

November 21 *Thread City History* (see *Upcoming Events*, page 5)

Sunday Speaker: Tom Beardsley

2 p.m. Location: Old Manchester Museum



December 12 *Holiday Open House* (see *related story*, page 3)

Sunday Locations: Old Manchester Museum, Cheney Homestead and

1–4 p.m. Manchester History Center

January 21 *“Name That House Style”* – interactive slide lecture.

Sunday Bring photos of your house to determine its architectural style.

2 p.m. Speaker: Mary Dunne

Location: Old Manchester Museum



February 5 *Old House Fair* – A day of lectures/workshops for owners of old houses

Saturday Keynote speaker: Bob Yaap

9 a.m.–3 p.m. Location: Manchester History Center

Admission: \$3/members; \$7/non-members or \$10/2 adults

March 20 *A History of Center Park*

Sunday Speaker: Susan Barlow

2 p.m. Location: Old Manchester Museum

Subjects of Upcoming Events for 2005:

- Manchester in the 1960s
- Society’s 40th Anniversary
- Depot Square
- Modern Manchester

Stay tuned for more information.

Unless otherwise stated above, all lectures and walking tours are free to Society members and only \$2 to non-members



The Manchester Historical Society
106 Hartford Road
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

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