



"OVER 55 YEARS OF PRESERVING LOCAL HISTORY"

The Courier

DECEMBER 2021

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A quarterly publication of the Manchester Historical Society, Inc. • 175 Pine Street • Manchester, Connecticut 06040 • 860-647-9983

President's Message

By Jack Prior

Happy Holidays to all! I hope you and your family are well. We have had some trying times to say the least. For all our sakes, I hope we are going to be seeing more positive things in our lives. Even during these times, our historical society has not been idle.

We have opened our properties to visitors under the CDC and State health guidelines. We held our annual membership meeting via Zoom. Our board of directors has seen some changes. Several members moved on and others joined our board. The new board elected the officers for the next year. I was elected again President, Dr. Rae Strickland was elected Vice President, Gerhard Vogel was elected Treasurer and Carol Caffazo was again elected Secretary. Both Rae and Gerhard add a new depth to the board and have jumped feet first into their duties. As with other boards, this board continues to focus on ensuring that the Society is active and strong.

The exciting news is that we are near the completion of our new exhibit "Manchester Then & Now" at the History Center. This exhibit reflects its name, as it compares what transpired earlier in the town's history to its more recent history. The exhibit is divided into eight sections: 1 Welcome, 2 Create, Build & Craft, 3 Gather Together, 4 Work & Innovation, 5 Advocate & Push for Change, 6 Shop & Eat, 7 Learn, and 8 Play & Exercise. The opening day for the public will be Saturday, January 15, 2022. Besides the opening day, the exhibit will be open Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We look forward seeing your comments about the exhibit which will be posted on our comment wall.



Holiday Shopping

This holiday season we have a number of items in our Museum Store at the History Center (175 Pine St.) which will make any history buff happy, as well as items for decorating.

The store is open Tuesday- Friday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.



Christmas Ornaments featuring our various properties. \$13/each OR 5 for \$60

VNA Christmas Ornaments - ornament of Hope. \$10/each

Key Chains - various prices

T-shirts - various designs

Coffee Mugs featuring our museums. \$13/each

Pitkin Necklaces - featuring glass from Pitkin glassworks. \$20 - \$35

Samples of Cheney Silk. \$4/each

Postcards - various prices

Books that are great gifts.

1. Old Manchester...a Picture Book
2. Old Manchester II - The Storytellers
3. Old Manchester III - Manchester Green...a Picture Book
4. Connecticut 169 Club - Your passport and guide to exploring Connecticut
5. A New England Pattern, by Dr. William Buckley
6. World War II History of Manchester Connecticut



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A newsletter of the
Manchester Historical Society

Online at: www.manchesterhistory.org

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To Our Readers

If there is something you would like us to write about, please contact Dave at 860-647-9742 or at info@manchesterhistory.org.



Genealogy Group Meetings

The Genealogy Group is currently looking for someone who would be interested in planning and organizing our monthly meetings. In the past meetings have been held on the second Tuesday of the month from 10:00 am to noon during the months of February through June and September through November. No meetings are held July, August, December and January. If you are interested or would like more information please contact Debby Bailey at debbyhannahbailey@gmail.com.

Amazon Smile

You can make a difference when you shop on Amazon.com. Manchester Historical Society is a registered charity with Amazon's foundation, Amazon Smile.

For qualified purchases, a portion of your purchase (0.5%) will be donated to the Manchester Historical Society.

You can register for this program at www.smile.amazon.com.

smile.amazon.com

We Will Miss

Faye Manning Ferris, one of our long time members attended many of our events. Faye was descended from the Ferris family, who owned Ferris Brothers, a prominent store on Main St. in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Faye's parents instilled in her a deep appreciation of family and town history. Her father, Knight Ferris, wrote the "Old Codger's Cogitations" weekly column in the Manchester Herald for many years. Faye and her siblings donated the "Manning" tract of land on Bush Hill Road to the Manchester Land Trust.



100 Years Ago in Manchester

From the Hartford Courant

None Mourns Loss of Old Town Hall:

Manchester's old town hall, admired by none of the residents of the town and long anything but an attraction to the town and with little in the way of historical sentiment to keep it intact, almost went up in smoke this morning. Even though the outward walls are still standing, the usefulness of the place is no longer evident.

All of the records were saved. These records consist of maps of streets, building and curb lines, the instruments used by the engineering department and the survey notes.

They had been locked in the vault in the building the night before, as is the usual

custom, but the desks, tables and bookcases in the engineer's office were all badly soaked. The town's voting machines were also stored in the building, but they were all moved out into the large lawn and later were removed to the basement of the Manchester Trust Company.



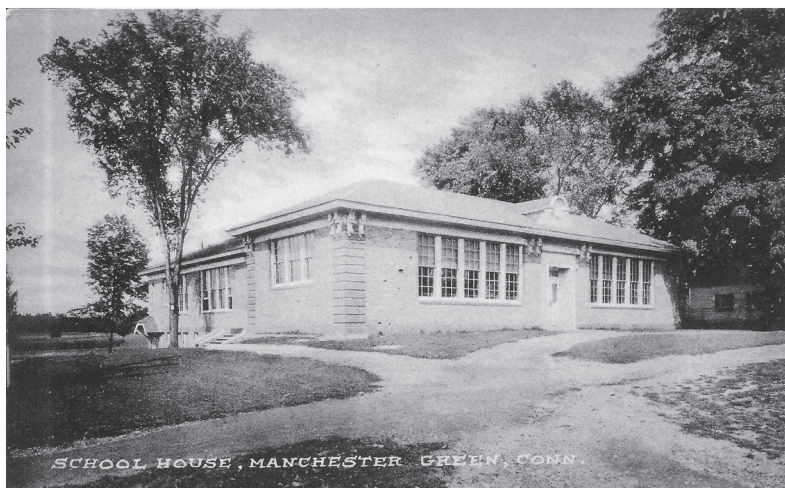
TOWN HALL, SOUTH MANCHESTER, CONN.



The loss, which will be hard to estimate, is fully covered by insurance. Two years ago all insurance on buildings in town, owned by the town, were revalued and additional insurance written in each case.

Suffers Burns in Gasoline Fire: William Greene, who conducts a tire repair shop on Spruce Street, was badly burned about the face yesterday in some mysterious manner, when a can of gasoline caught fire. Greene attempted to hurl the blazing can into the street and the flames enveloped him. Pedestrians rushed in from the street and put out the fire.

Many Attend School Opening: The community idea which was mentioned in The Courant earlier this week has a new advocate in the Manchester Green section. The housewarming held in the school building last night was such a success and gave the residents of the district an opportunity for the first time in many years to get to know each other, that it is to be made a regular event. When plans for the housewarming were first considered, it was the opinion that the number would be about 200 in attendance, but instead of that there were about 500 present.



SCHOOL HOUSE, MANCHESTER GREEN, CONN.

Calendar of Events

Old Manchester Museum at 126 Cedar Street, is open the first Saturday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. May through December. It is also open by appointment and for research. Please phone 860-647-9983. Please note that masks and social distancing are required until further notice.

History Center and Museum Store at 175 Pine St., open Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 to 2:00 (phone 860-647-9983), are located in the former Cheney Machine Shop. Only the office and store are open. Watch for opening of our new exhibits coming soon. Tours are not yet available.

Cheney Homestead and Keeney Schoolhouse at 106 Hartford Rd. are open the second Sunday of the month from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. An early American home (ca. 1785) with art and furniture. Please note that masks and social distancing are required until further notice.

Woodbridge Farmstead at 495 Middle Turnpike East, open the second and fourth Sundays of the month, May through October, from 12 noon until 2:00 p.m. An 1830 house and late 1700's barn on the site of the former Meadowbrook Dairy. Early farm equipment on display along with a sleigh and pony wagon. Visitors can park at the municipal lot behind the Senior Center or along Middle Tpke. East. Please note that masks and social distancing required until further notice. The Woodbridge Farmstead is now closed for the winter season and will reopen in May.

Weekdays through December 22, "CBT memories," an exhibit at the History Center about the former Connecticut Bank and Trust Company, open during our regular weekday hours: Tuesdays through Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. At its peak, CBT had 8,000 employees. Maybe you or a family member worked there. Enjoy the exhibit!

Saturday, December 4 from 11:00 to 3:00 p.m., Homestead Holiday Open House, decorated for the holidays by the Manchester Garden Club in both traditional and creative interpretations of seasonal decor. Tour this early American home, including the Homestead Art Gallery. Be inspired by Manchester's rich art history.

Sunday, December 5 at 1:00 p.m., "Remembering Pearl Harbor" -- a lecture on the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and Manchester's reaction to the U.S. entrance into World War II. Former State Senator Mary Ann Handley will present this informative talk. A retired Manchester Community College history professor, Mary Ann has conducted research on this topic, and at the lecture will establish a foundation for understanding the conflicts and issues of this period in American and local history. Musicians Sandy Johnson and Dan Thompson will present music from the World War II era. At the History Center, 175 Pine Street. The public is invited. Parking for the lecture is available along Pleasant Street, off Forest Street (no on-street parking) as well as in a small lot next to the History Center. \$5 for non-members, \$3 for Society members, and free for children under age 16.

Friday, December 10 at 6:00 p.m., fireside reading of Dickens's 1842 "A Christmas Carol" at the Cheney Homestead, with holiday decor by the Manchester Garden Club. We will read an abridged version used by Dickens in his public readings. Because of the intimate nature of this special event, it is requested that visitors be vaccinated and wear masks.



Sunday, December 12 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Open House at the Cheney Homestead, Tour this early American home and historic property, including grounds and gardens, and the Homestead Art Gallery.

Sunday, December 12 from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m., Mead Workshop at the Cheney Homestead, A special holiday Mead Workshop fundraiser (\$35) -- our own brewmaster, Anita Hawkins, will provide materials and ingredients and guide you through the process. You will take home a bottle of the honey wine to improve with age. Cooking will take place outside over an open fire, with other preparations inside. Masks and warm clothing are both needed. Limited to 8 participants, so register soon with Pete Millett at peter.m.millett@gmail.com. (Checks should be made out to Manchester Historical Society, memo - Mead)

Saturday, January 15, New Exhibit Opening at the History Center

The first day our new exhibit "Then and Now" will be open to the public. It will be open to the public every day the History Center is open, Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.

Art classes at the History Center enter at 199 Forest Street. Following the artistic traditions of the Cheney family, classes for children and adults began in July 2019. For class descriptions and registration: www.manchesterhistory.org/Arts_Registration_Form.pdf

The Year in Review at Woodbridge Farmstead

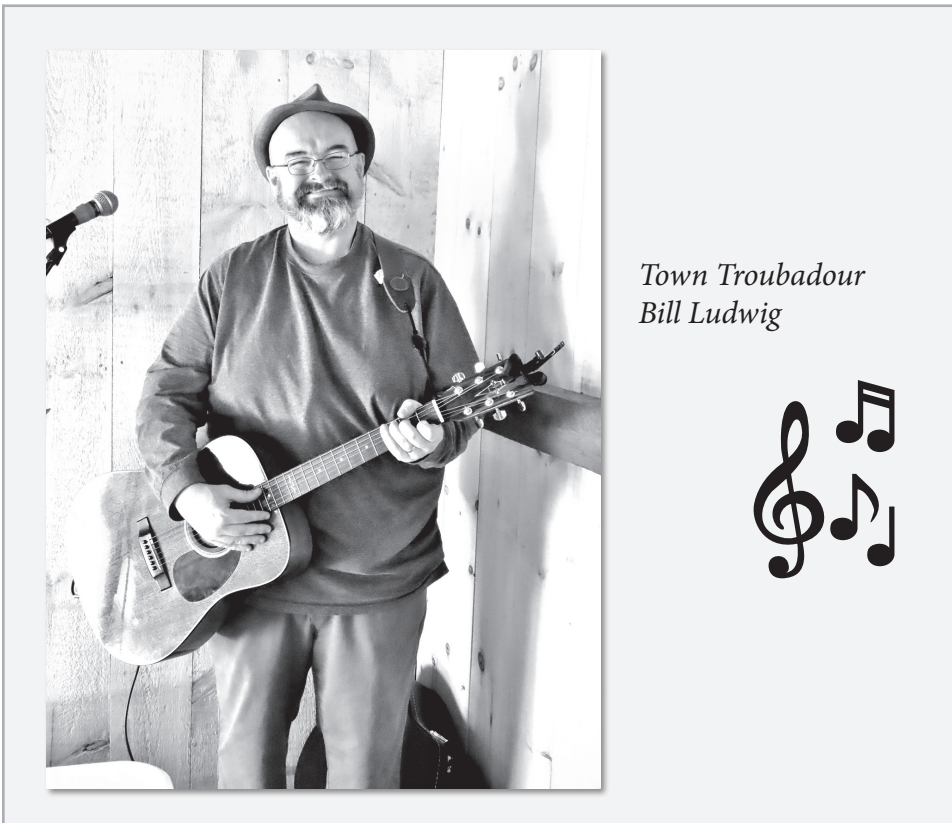
By Kris Miller

During the year we've hosted over 260 visitors at all twelve of our open houses that were held from May through October. A big crowd showed up for our final Sunday open house on October 24, 2021. Our new Welcome Center had just been built but it was a beautiful fall day, so we all sat outside to listen to our Town Historian, Susan Barlow, speak about the history of the East side of town and we sang along with our Town Troubadour, Bill Ludwig, as he played some old timey tunes.



It's been a momentous year for us at Woodbridge Farm. We've gotten a lot of work done. The roof on our upper barn has been replaced and we've rebuilt an old barn from Edward Street in Manchester that we'll use as our Welcome Center. There will be some museum displays inside, some storage, and a handicap accessible bathroom. Since our last open house, we have painted the Welcome Center a gorgeous barn red. There are still a few things that need to be done before we open our new Welcome Center in May of 2022.

If you would like to volunteer to help us out with hosting our many visitors at the open houses next year or to help maintain our extensive lawns and gardens, then just email Peg Newton at peggynewton47@att.net. We'll be open the second and fourth Sundays each month from May through October. If you can help us out only one Sunday a month or even just one or two days for the year, please let us know! We'll be glad for the help!



If you find yourself walking by the Woodbridge Farmstead some evening after December second then look for our decorated and lighted tree in our front window.

*Happy
Holidays
to all!*



The Manchester Historical Society
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The Manchester Historical Society, 175 Pine Street, Manchester, CT 06040

Name: (Mr.) (Mrs.) (Miss) _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Email: _____

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Type of Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing Individual | \$60 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Individual (65+) | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Couple | \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing Family | \$100 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Student (under age 18) | \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Couple | \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$500 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Individual | \$500 | | | | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Manchester Historical Society Building Fund | \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodbridge Farmstead Endowment | \$ _____ |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheney Homestead Endowment | \$ _____ | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Appeal | \$ _____ | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have enclosed a matching gift form | | | |

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