

“50 Years of Preserving Local History”

The Courier

FEBRUARY 2015

VOL. 50, NO. 2

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

A Message from the President

by Dennis Gleeson



Saving, displaying and researching Manchester's history requires people, understanding and money. We have been able to make good use of the resources that we have available and we continue to improve those resources so that we may be better able to do all the things necessary to fulfill our mission of educating, preserving, and exhibiting our town's history. The dollar cost of these efforts is significant, given that we operate and maintain several properties important to Manchester's heritage. Our budget approaches \$200,000. As part of our fundraising efforts, the Annual Appeal is very important. It provides us with unrestricted funds to help pay our operating and maintenance costs which cannot be covered by grants and other restricted donations. The Annual Appeal letter has been sent to you and we hope that you will respond.

The folks who help us with our daily operations and events are all dedicated volunteers who do a wonderful job. They help us save money by carrying out many tasks and we can't thank them enough. We are still looking for more help with fund raising, greeting visitors, membership development, light maintenance, and carrying out some everyday tasks. If we could staff the History Center twice a month on Saturdays and the museum twice a month on Sundays, we could give visitors more access to show what we and our town have to offer.

Let me know how you can help.

Did You Know?

EVERY ADDRESS LABEL TELLS A STORY. Just a reminder that by checking the address label on the back of the newsletter, you can easily see when your membership expires. The date that appears on the address label tells you when it is time for you to renew.

YOU CAN NOW FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK. The Historical Society is on Facebook and we currently have over 500 friends. You can follow us at: www.facebook.com/ManchesterHistoricalSociety.

*This issue of the Courier
is sponsored in part
by Manchester native
Eugene J. Riccio,
Attorney At Law,
Bridgport and Greenwich*

Now and Then...

By Eileen Sweeney, Executive Director

In my role as executive director for the Manchester Historical Society, thoughts of my childhood on the east side of Manchester frequently come to mind at the Manchester History Center on Pine Street – spurred while receiving visitors to the former Cheney machine shop and during phone conversations and in email correspondence. Memories are precious gifts that allow us to revisit and share life's joys, challenges, accomplishments, and losses whenever we choose. I am fortunate to witness family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and acquaintances, reconnecting in our historic industrial building. The nature of the work at the Society, carried out by a dedicated volunteer corps, enriches not only the lives of all involved in preserving our community's heritage but the community-at-large as well. The Society's current projects to provide real-life educational experiences for the public through the establishment of a museum of local history and research library at the former Cheney machine shop, and the restoration of the Woodbridge barn for use as a farm museum at Manchester Green, have made great strides but urgently need substantial financial support to reach completion. Our town's unique stories of its agricultural and industrial life, artifacts, and historic infrastructure provide a framework for understanding Manchester's past.

To continue its mission of educating the public through collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting artifacts, as well as advocating for the preservation of significant historic resources, the Society encourages your continued generous contributions of time, expertise, and dollars to maintain and preserve its largest artifacts, its historic buildings which are the venues for affordable and diverse cultural programs that engage audiences of all ages.

As the Manchester Historical Society celebrates its 50th Anniversary Year, we want to acknowledge the contributions made by countless volunteer workers and financial donors whose thoughtful planning, toil, and talent sustained Manchester's premier heritage institution as a resource for a half-century! We invite you to join the Society as stewards of our treasured local history to ensure it survives as a touchstone and to connect one generation to the next. I am truly grateful to those whose passion, respect, and drive to preserve Manchester's past has left tangible evidence and visual cues in historic neighborhoods, Main Street, schools, mills, and farms, that bind me to life with family, friends, and neighbors. Your ongoing support of the Society's work is a gift for future generations.





Drop Us A Line...

You can contact Society President
Dennis Gleeson at
president@manchesterhistory.org,
or our Executive Director
Eileen Sweeney at
executivedirector@manchesterhistory.org

The Courier

*A newsletter of the
Manchester Historical Society*

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Genealogy Group News

The Genealogy Group consists of Society members interested in researching their own family history. All Historical Society members may attend for free. An individual membership can be purchased for \$15.00. The general public is asked for a donation of \$3.00 per meeting. Some have been doing genealogy research for years and others are just beginning. All are welcome. The group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. the History Center, 175 Pine Street in Manchester unless otherwise specified. The group's Program Coordinator is Dianne Bordeaux Lenti who is a longtime member of the Connecticut Professional Genealogical Council. Upcoming meeting places and programs are listed on the upcoming events page at www.manchesterhistory.org. If you have questions, call Kris Miller at 860-528-3122.

February 10 The meeting will be at the History Center. The speaker will be Crawford Westbrook who will speak on the topic "Behind the Scenes," little known resources at the Connecticut State Library History and Genealogy Unit. He will reveal some special areas of research helpful to genealogists.

March 10 The meeting will be at the History Center. Tom Howard, a longtime professional genealogist, will speak on "Overcoming Roadblocks." All genealogists have their roadblocks, dead ends or brick walls. Howard is a former President of the East Granby Historical Society, East Granby Land Trust, Connecticut Professional Genealogical Council, Inc., and the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Inc.

April 14 The meeting will be at the History Center. The speaker will be Richard Spiess. His topic will be "Bureau of Land Management" or BLM. The BLM holds more than 5 million federal land records issued between 1820 and the present. Spiess is a descendant of Matthias Spiess who was one of Manchester's first historians.

May 12 The meeting will be at the History Center. The speaker will be Chris Heustis. His talk will be on "Organizing, Preserving, and Identifying your Photographs." Heustis is the owner of Photosynthesis-A Photographic Arts and Services Center located at 136 ½ Pine St. in Manchester.

Manchester Street Names



FINLEY STREET On the southeast corner of the 1869 map of Manchester is the farm of Charles H. Finley (1835-1906). His farm was bought by Cheney Brothers to make the reservoir that is there today.

CAMP MEETING ROAD Starting in the 1860's ten thousand Methodists would travel to Willimantic for a ten day religious event. The Willimantic camp ground had cottages and tents and the services were held outside. The Hartford, Fishkill and Providence

Railroad would leave Hartford at 6:15 a.m. to take 500 to 600 people on a seventeen car train, stopping at East Hartford, Burnside, Manchester, and Bolton before arriving at Willimantic. In addition, people would walk from Manchester. Camp Meeting Road is an extension of Highland Street and is in the Highland Park section of Manchester.

Donors Give Us Life

Our donors keep us alive and able to carry out the many functions of the Society. Without your financial support we would not be able to keep the lights and heat on, the insurance and utilities paid, the artifacts cataloged and cared for, and visitors and school tours welcomed to our museum, history center and Cheney Homestead. These donations during the year 2014 were made through the Annual Fund Drive, membership renewals, memorial gifts and individual interests. Thank you for your generosity.

Although we strive to compile an accurate list, it may happen that a donor was inadvertently not included in this list. If we left someone out, please let us know so that we can recognize the donor in our next issue.

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We Will Miss....

John Malone, MD, was a long time member of the Society and well known throughout Manchester as a pediatrician who helped bring many local people into the world and cared for them as they grew up. John was an avid and valued volunteer with the Society for many years. He also volunteered his time for many years with the Pitkin Glass Works, the Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District Commission and as a volunteer reader with local elementary schools. John will be greatly missed by his many friends and former patients.

★ ★ ★ ★ *The* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
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150th ANNIVERSARY
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Civil War Notes

by Ron Schack

MANCHESTER'S BATTLES AND CASUALTIES

February, 1865 through April, 1865

February 1865

The Electoral College met on February 12, 1865. Lincoln was declared president by a vote of 212 - 21.

The Richmond-Petersburg Campaign was a series of battles around Petersburg, Virginia. The campaign consisted of nine months of trench warfare. Although known as the **Siege of Petersburg**, battles were also fought in other locations from June 9, 1864 to March 25, 1865.

One such battle was fought at **Hatcher's Run**, Virginia from February 5 - 7, 1865, in which the Union was able to extend their siege work. **Connecticut's 10th and 14th Infantry Regiments** were in the battle.

Manchester soldiers in the 10th Infantry Regiment were: George Barrett, Henry W. Barrows, Charles I. Green, Henry C. Hill, Albert W. Keeney, Valette C. Keeney, William J. Lyman (listed as deserted after the war was over), Henry Potter, David Ross, George Schildge, Thomas Schofield, and 1st Lt. Arthur Slate. Thomas Hannah and Thomas Greer were with the 14th Infantry Regiment.

Connecticut's 1st and 2nd Heavy Artillery Regiments were also involved in the siege. Manchester soldiers in the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery Regiment in 1865 were: James C. Battersby, George Burnham, Loan A. Chapin, John Fagan, Samuel W. Grey, Hugh Johnson, John Kennedy, James M. Keough, Woodford Martin, William S. McLean, Gilbert B. Norton, Lewis Prella, George R. Risley, Theron Shepard, Frederick Welton and Thomas White.

George E. Clay, James May, John L. Morgan, and Paul Schoefler, were also in the siege. They were listed as deserters after the war was over.

Manchester soldiers in the 2nd Connecticut Heavy Artillery Regiment involved in the siege were: Elmer Hotchkiss, John Burns, and Johnson S. Dow.

March 1865

Union **General Philip Sheridan's** two cavalry divisions encountered the last remnants of Confederate General **Jubal Early's** army at Waynesboro, Virginia on March 2, 1865. Sheridan's advances scattered the rebels. More than 1,500 Confederates surrendered.

Connecticut's 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment took part in this battle. Manchester cavalymen in the battle included: Emulous Coleman, Dennis K. Griswold, Henry W. Robertson, Roger Sherman, and John Sullivan.

On March 4, 1865, President **Lincoln** was **inaugurated** for a second term.

Manchester resident **Deloss Bidwell** joined Company B, 10th Connecticut Infantry Regiment on October 1, 1861 and was mustered out on October 7, 1864. Deloss **died** on March 19, 1865, from **malaria**, which he contracted during the war.

The **Carolina Campaign** was the Union's final campaign in the Western Theater of the Civil War. In January 1865, Union General William T. Sherman advanced north from Savannah, Georgia, through the Carolinas, to link up with Union forces in Virginia. The defeat of Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's army at the **Battle of Bentonville**, North Carolina on March 21, 1865 ended in the loss of the final major army of the Confederacy.

Connecticut's 20th Infantry Regiment participated in the battle of Bentonville, which included Manchester men Thomas Farrell and Edward S.C. Granville.

April 1865

Early on April 9, 1865 General Lee's army formed a battle line at **Appomattox Court House**. At dawn they advanced against General Sheridan's cavalry, but were stopped in their tracks when the Union infantry arrived. When Lee realized his army was surrounded on three sides he surrendered to Grant.

Regiments from Connecticut that witnessed Lee's surrender included the 1st Connecticut Cavalry, and the 10th, 14th Connecticut Infantry Regiments. Soldiers from Manchester in these regiments who witnessed Lee's surrender are listed above in earlier battles.

On April 14, 1865, **President Lincoln** was **shot** by John Wilkes Booth while at Ford's Theater. Lincoln died at 7:22 a.m. on April 15. Vice President **Andrew Johnson** was sworn in as president at 11:00a.m. on April 15, 1865.

On April 26 Lincoln's assassin, **John Wilkes Booth** was killed near Bowling Green, Virginia. He had with him a Model 1860 Spencer carbine.

On April 27, 1865, the **SS Sultana**, a side-wheel steamboat caught fire and burned when three of its boilers exploded. It was traveling up the Mississippi River with over 2,400 passengers, mostly Union soldiers released from Confederate prison camps. An estimated 1,800 died in the worst disaster on the Mississippi.

The last holdout of the war, the **CSS Shenandoah**, a full rigged ship with auxiliary steam power, and which was one of the most feared commerce raiders in the Confederate Navy, surrendered on November 6, 1865 in Liverpool, England after having sailed more than three months and over 9,000 miles from the west coast of Mexico without stopping at any ports along the way.

Sources include: Manchester Historical Society Civil War data
The Civil War Day by Day, edited by John S. Bowman
CWSAC - Civil War Site Advisory Commission
Hartford Courant Archives
Wikipedia website

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lectures usually take place at the Manchester History Center at 175 Pine St. Parking is available along Pleasant St. and in the lot along the Forest St. side of the building. Parking for people with disabilities is available in the small lot next to the History Center. The building is accessible. The cost for most lectures and walking tours is \$3 for members and \$5 for nonmembers. Free for children under 16. Second Sunday of each month, from 1 to 4, Cheney Homestead open to visitors: View this 1785 house at 106 Hartford Road, and hear commentary about this interesting residence, which was donated to the Manchester Historical Society in 1968. Admission and guided tour by donation.

The Old Manchester Museum is closed for the winter and will reopen in early May. The research facility is available all year by appointment. Please call 860-647-9742.

Sunday, February 8, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., Book Talk by Emmy-award winning television journalist Kara Sundlun of WFSB, on "Finding Dad: From 'Love Child' To Daughter," a memoir of Kara's determination as a teenager to establish a relationship with her father, and their eventual reconciliation, and all that transpired afterward. Books will be available for sale and to be signed by the author. R.J. Julia Booksellers will donate a portion of book sales to the Society. The Historical Society hopes that Kara's experience and her book will inspire others to write down their memories! A follow-up writing workshop is planned in the spring.

Tuesday, February 10 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group will meet at the History Center. Crawford Westbrook will speak on the topic *Behind the Scenes*, little known resources at the Conn. State Library. The Genealogy Group consists of Society members, but nonmembers are also welcome (\$3 fee) The group usually meets the second Tuesday of the month at the History Center.

Tuesday, March 10 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group will meet at the History Center. Tom Howard, a professional genealogist and lecturer, will present *Overcoming Roadblocks*, a program for both amateur and more experienced genealogists. He has given talks on *Overcoming Roadblocks*, usefulness of WW I records, Personal Papers and Class Yearbooks as Great Sources for Genealogists. He is former President of the East Granby Historical Society, East Granby Land Trust, Connecticut Professional Genealogical Council, Inc., and the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Inc.

Tuesday, April 14 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group will meet. Richard Spiess will speak about the Bureau of Land Management, which holds millions of federal land records. Spiess is the grandson of Mathias Spiess, who co-wrote the "History of Manchester" in 1923.

Friday, April 24 our Annual Dinner at the Manchester Country Club, 5:30 p.m. Watch for details.

Saturday, May 2, Family History Day at Manchester's Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., free and helpful as you learn how to do genealogical research. Manchester Historical Society will have a booth, so please drop by! Optional -- register in advance (860-647-3037) for a free 30-minute private consultation with a professional genealogist or graphoanalyst. All are welcome -- beginners, advanced, non-residents and residents. The Town Clerk's office and vault will be open for records of birth, marriage, death, probate, land, and military service.

Sunday, May 3 at 2:00 p.m., a Festive Tea and Fashion Show at the Manchester History Center, celebrating our 50 years as a Historical Society.

Tuesday, May 12 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group hosts Organizing, Preserving, and Identifying your Photographs, presented by Chris Huestis of local business Photosynthesis -- a program for both amateur and more experienced genealogists.

Thursday, May 28 Creative Networking Mixer from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. an artistic evening at the History Center, 175 Pine Street, inviting all to get together and enjoy an artistic art display and musical program. Socialize with art patrons young and old.

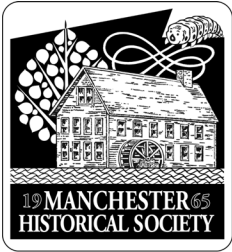
Saturday, June 6 to Sunday, June 13 Pride in Manchester Week, with activities for young and old throughout the Historic District in Manchester's South End, including the Concert in the Park, Imagine Main Street, a Senior Dance, and Heritage Day on June 13.

Volunteers are the Key to Our Success

Since we depend so much on our volunteers to make the Society work and for the events and tours to take place, we wish to acknowledge those who are the key to our success. They serve on committees, keep our properties maintained, plan events and programs, host the many school tours, receive and catalog artifacts, operate the museum stores and greet visitors to the museum and history center. Thank you for all you do. The following persons volunteered during the year 2014. Every one of you is a valued volunteer and we want to publically recognize all of you. We apologize if we have omitted anyone's name.

Please let us know if we did and we will recognize you in the next issue of the Courier.

Gail Adams	Fred Lea
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Membership Dues and Donations to the Society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.