



"50 YEARS OF PRESERVING LOCAL HISTORY"

The Courier

NOVEMBER 2015

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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

Our properties are now looking quite different than just a month ago. At the History Center most of the trees have been removed, which will help prevent damage from branches falling on to the roof that was completely replaced several years ago. This is the first step in improving the landscape and the parking lot.

At the Old Manchester Museum, the town has engaged a contractor to repaint the exterior. The improved appearance has drawn many favorable comments. The landscaping around that building will also be redone next year. Our thanks go to the town staff for arranging the repainting of the building.

At the Woodbridge Farmstead, the restoration of the 18th century barn has begun. Some of the siding that was installed about 40 years ago has been removed, and the roof will be replaced before the end of the year.

Volunteers for events and building maintenance are needed. In addition, fundraising takes a lot of effort and we can always use more help. I want to thank those who already help by giving up their time for the benefit of the Society. With more help we can show off our properties and collections to a wider audience. Teaching the history of Manchester through what we know and can show with our properties and collections must be our goal.

When was the last time you toured our museums and history center? Please do stop by and see what is being done. Talk to me about your suggestions (or concerns). But please do visit your Society to find connections to your life.

Mark Your Calendars

Friday December 4 A GOLDEN GALA! 5:30 til 9:00 p.m. at the History Center

Saturday December 5 MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE 11 a.m. til 2:00 p.m. at the Old Manchester Museum and Cheney Homestead

Holiday Shopping at the Museum

Our museum stores at the History Center and at the Old Manchester Museum have a variety of items that would make great Holiday gifts! Books, maps, mugs, t-shirts, videos, Manchester Road Race memorabilia, and Holiday ornaments are among the many items available. This year a new ornament, the fourth in the series, is available featuring the Cheney Homestead.



Another Way to Help

Here is some useful information if you would like to donate stocks or other securities as part of your year-end giving. Donation of stocks has great tax benefits and is easy to do. You can call us to facilitate your stock transfer or if you have questions about making a gift of stock.

You can transfer stock to our brokerage account as detailed below.

Account at **Charles Schwab and Co.**

Account No. **5873-3074**

Our tax ID No. **23-7002464**

Please make sure your broker includes your name with the transfer and please let us know of any incoming stock gifts by contacting Eileen Sweeney at 860-647-9983, or at executivedirector@manchesterhistory.org.



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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We encourage our members to support the
Corporate Members of the 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 for years while others are just beginning. All are welcome. The group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am at the History Center, 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.

December The Genealogy Group does not meet in December.

January 12 The meeting will be at the History Center. The group will have a roundtable discussion on their own progress in genealogy research. People share their questions and problems. We learn from each other.

February 9 The meeting will be at the History Center. Susan Omilian will be the speaker. She will share her expertise on how to write your own family story. She gives classes on this subject to various Historical Societies and Senior Centers.

March 8 The meeting will be at the History Center. Dianne Bordeaux Lenti will be our speaker. Her topic will be on City Directories and Mug Books another way to find those elusive ancestors.

April 12 Subject and place to be determined.

We Will Miss

Robert Weiss was an Honorary Member of the Society for many years. He served as General Manager of the Town of Manchester from 1966 until his retirement in 1989. Bob volunteered as a docent at the Old Manchester Museum. During his career as General Manager, Manchester underwent many changes, including the development of the Buckland Hills Shopping Center and the J. C. Penney distribution center.

As a tribute to him, the former post office at the corner of Main and East Center Streets was named the Robert B. Weiss Center. It now houses several town offices as part of the local government campus in the center of town.

Annual Fund Campaign

The Annual Fund Campaign for 2016 has begun and this year we have set a goal of \$20,000. The Annual Appeal is very important as it helps us to cover the operating costs of the Society which cannot be funded by grants. It lets us keep the doors open to visitors.

Please consider making your contribution today.

WANTED! World War I items for display

Over the next few years we will be recognizing the 100th anniversary of the United States participation in World War I. We are seeking to display items pertaining to Manchester's contributions to the war, including photos, correspondence, memorabilia, artifacts and information related to Manchester's men and women in the military and on the homefront. If you have items you can loan to us please contact Dave Smith at 860-647-9742 or at info@manchesterhistory.org.



Meet Our New Directors

Ed Firestone recently joined our Board of Directors. He is a well-known businessman and a native of Manchester. He attended Manchester schools through High School, graduating in 1968. Ed is the owner of Pinewood Furniture on Main Street.

Maintaining ties to the community is very important to Ed. Along with being a member of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, he chaired the Downtown Manchester Special Services District for 14 years – which was created to promote the economic and general welfare of the citizens, property owners, and tenants of Manchester's downtown district. He is involved with the Rotary Club of Manchester, holding various board positions including President 2014-2015. He was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award from Manchester Community College in 2008.

In addition to his work in the furniture world, he has a deep interest in antique cars. He is a Life Member of the Hudson Essex Terraplane Historical Society and has served as President and Vice President of the Yankee Chapter Hudson Essex Terraplane Club. As a result of his love of old cars and service to the Downtown Manchester Special Services District, Ed was one of the founders of "Cruisin' On Main Street" which has grown to become one of Manchester's premier special events. It is a single day cruise and car show for antique and classic cars, trucks, sports cars, and street rods 25 years old and older and brings thousands of vintage vehicles and enthusiastic admirers to the streets of historic Downtown Manchester. In August of 2014, Ed was awarded the "Founder's Award" by the Cruisin' On Main Street Committee.

Ed lives in Glastonbury with his wife Lynn. They have three children.

Kris Miller joined our Board of Directors in May of 2015. She grew up on her grandparents' farm on the west side of Manchester. Some old timers might remember her Grandmother Miller's fruit and vegetable stand at 150 Spencer Street. Kris attended Manchester Schools through High School and graduated in 1972. She went on to get her Associates in Science degree from Manchester Community College specializing in Data Processing.

Joining Connecticut Mutual as a computer programmer she was eventually promoted to an Officer of the Company in 1981. She analyzed and designed computer business application systems on IBM mainframe computers there and at MassMutual.

Over the years, volunteering was always important to Kris and she has volunteered for many organizations in the Hartford area. She also sang with the Manchester Symphony and Chorale. She even travelled to Europe with the South United Methodist Church Choir for two summers.

In her retirement, she began her interest in history with documenting her family's genealogy and in 2012 created the Genealogy Group at the Historical Society. She also started volunteering with the Historical Society first as a museum store attendant and then working to keep the society's membership database updated every week.

Kris lives in South Windsor and her mom, Marie Miller, lives with her.

Welcome New Members

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

<i>From Manchester</i>	Marisa and Joshua Lewis	Mary Kathryn Sitarz	Patricia Loftus (Somers)
David Beaugard	Lofts at the Mills	Rosemary and Jeff Smith	Carol Loomis (Glastonbury)
George Brown	John Lombardo and Dianne	Erin and John Snyder	Robert McCloud (Glastonbury)
Patricia Ann Burke	Philopena	Jessica Sokol and Kevin Sullivan	Irene O'Connor (Rocky Hill)
Deacon Cecca	Jessica Loucks	Lynn Schultz Sottile	Matthew Opel (Mansfield Center)
Charlene Clifford family	Manchester Road Race	Sylvia Stechholz	Mike Schoeneberger (Vernon)
George Darby	Committee	Jeffrey Stevenson	Barbara and Morgan Steele (Andover)
Kate and Linus Deasy	Sandra Manzo	Norman Stevenson family	Kara Sundlun (Rocky Hill)
Sharon Desrosiers	Joy Mariano	Erica Walter	Janet and Charles Walstedt (Wilmington)
Robin Dickinson	Bruce May	Ralph Willing	Jean and Jeff Bullins (North Carolina)
Ellen Digan	Kristen and Peter Millett	Douglas Wright	Katherine Cheney Chappell (Maine)
Jessica Duval	Elaine Mistretta		Jean and Cyle Collins (Maine)
Theresa Ebenhoe	Debra Murray	<i>From Elsewhere</i>	Marion Fitch Connell (Washington DC)
Donna and Bruce Forde	Douglas Norwood	Joan Allan (East Hartford)	Corinne Gabriele (New York)
Ileane Fritz	Christiane O'Brien	Kenneth Anderson (South	Janet Holland (Florida)
Fuss & O'Neil, Inc.	Mark Oakman	Windsor)	David Klein (Alaska)
Mary Granato	Stan Ostrinski	Vickie Armstrong (Bolton)	Mark Elwell Moriarty (New York)
Mary Hartnett	Marcia Reiley	Paul Barrett (Ivoryton)	Donald Morrison family (Illinois)
Highland Park Market	Tanya and Gary Savilonis	Gary Danforth (Andover)	Julie and Thomas Myers (Vermont)
Maxine Jaffe	Ronald Schack family	Robert Dickinson (South Windsor)	Elizabeth Roseman family (Illinois)
Robert Jobin	Kent Schwendy	Ajoa Donkor (Ashford)	Phyllis and David Starr (Massachusetts)
Ellen and Robert Kanehl	Kathy Sherokow	Barbara Flaherty-Carchedi	Carole Gillis (Sweden)
Merrill Lefevre	Barbara Siegel	(Burlington)	Bruce Johanson (Sweden)



Marsha Gunther 1940-2015

“Let me have friends around me for that is my joy” from Marsha’s high school yearbook, was so appropriate, and she did have many friends. Marsha served our Society for many years in many capacities, including president, vice-president, secretary, and co-chair of last year’s Holiday Gala committee. Under her leadership, we achieved some major successes including the most successful gala to date.

Marsha served at several other organizations including the Rotary Club of Manchester, the New England Federal Family Credit Union, and the Retired Teachers Association. Marsha was a lifelong educator, teaching English at Bennet Middle School, where she later became Principal. She had a special connection to many of her students and mentored those who needed extra support. She remembered them long after they graduated.

In addition, she loved gardening, animals, and travel, having made several road trips with her sister Diane throughout the western United States.

Her legacy will long be remembered at our Historical Society where her dry sense of humor and willingness to help whenever needed was instrumental in helping us through many anxious moments.

The accompanying photos show Marsha’s high school yearbook picture and as an angel in her first grade Christmas show at Highland Park School.



*Highland Park School Christmas 1946
In this picture are several Society members who have served in various capacities in the organization: George Beauregard, John Dormer, Marsha Gunther, Dave Smith*

A Holiday Gift Suggestion

A membership in the Manchester Historical Society would make a wonderful gift for someone young or old, who is interested in our town. Our members are located all over the country and include school students, retirees, and all ages in between. Members receive the quarterly newsletter, The Courier, invitations and discounts to events, unlimited visits to our museums, a chance to volunteer with a group that promotes the history of our town, and the satisfaction of supporting an active and worthwhile organization. A membership form is available at the back of this newsletter.

Woodbridge Barn Restoration Update

Restoration work began on the 18th century barn at the Woodbridge Farmstead in September. The work will include correcting the serious lean that has developed over the years, replacing the asphalt shingle roof with a wood shingle roof, leveling the structure, and replacing rotted wood in columns, beams and sills. Windows, doors and wood floor will also be repaired (or replaced where necessary) and the ground around the barn regraded. A sign has been erected on the fence facing Woodbridge Street explaining the sources of grant money. It is expected the work will be substantially complete by the end of December, except for final painting.

There is still time to donate to the restoration project. We are still short of our goal of \$219,000.



Annual Meeting Report

The Annual Meeting of the Society was held on October 3, 2015 at the Manchester Country Club. President Dennis Gleeson reported on the achievements of the past year and plans for the upcoming year. Treasurer Mya Bowen gave a summary of the financial status of the Society. Executive director Eileen Sweeney reported on the work of our many volunteers and thanked them for their contributions.

The election of Directors and Officers was held and the following were elected:

- President - Dennis Gleeson
- Vice-President - Marsha Gunther
- Secretary - Rita McParland
- Treasurer - Mya Bowen
- Directors - John Cooney
- Edward Firestone
- Patricia Hetzel
- Kristine Miller
- Theresa Parla
- Kent Schwendy
- David Smith



Carol Cheney and her brother Dexter Cheney spoke at the Annual Dinner about the family enterprise and its huge impact on the Town of Manchester



Our Old Manchester Museum building and its newly painted exterior



Andrew Pryce (left) and his friends Andrew Fogarty and Alex Vetere recently spent a Saturday raking and cleaning the grounds at the Homestead

The Annual Dinner attracted many members including seated - Edith Kelley, Faye Ferris, Rudy Zadnik and standing - Carol Genovese, Jane Zadnik



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. Handicap parking is available in the small lot next to the History Center. The building is accessible. The cost for most lectures and walk tours is \$5 for members and \$7 for nonmembers. Free for children under 16.

The Cheney Homestead and the Old Manchester Museum are both open the second Sunday of the month from 1 to 4. The research facility is available by appointment. Please call 860-647-9742.

• **Friday, December 4 -- the Society's 12th Annual Gala** -- a fundraiser for the Society and its programs. 5:30 to 9:00 p.m., with glamour, gifts, good fellowship, entertainment, hors d'oeuvres, wine, and dessert and coffee. Live auction, music, holiday sweater contest, and some surprises. The museum store will be open. \$30 for members; \$35 for non-members. Auction items include gift cards to local restaurants and businesses, framed artwork and vintage items. All are welcome to this fun evening -- Parking at Silktown Roofing, 27 Pleasant Street, along Pleasant Street, off-street along the Forest Street side of the building, and at Elm Street extension. A parking attendant in the small lot north of the building will direct guests, including disabled people.

• **Saturday, December 5 from 11:00 to 2:00 p.m., Museum Open House:** throughout the historic district -- all are invited to visit the Cheney Homestead at 106 Hartford Road -- decorated for the holidays by the Manchester Garden Club -- the Manchester History Center at 175 Pine Street, and the Old Manchester Museum at 126 Cedar Street. The museum stores at the History Center and Old Manchester Museum will be open, with books on local history, copies of vintage maps, t-shirts with historic scenes of Manchester, mugs, notecards, and a limited-edition ceramic tree ornament in a Woodbridge Farmstead motif. The open houses are free -- donations accepted.

• **Sunday, December 13 and the second Sunday of each month**, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., *Cheney Homestead and Old Manchester Museum* open to visitors. Donations accepted.

• **Friday, January 1, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. History Walk featuring the "Great Lawn"** starting at the *Cheney Homestead*, 106 Hartford Road. Park at Fuss & O'Neill, 146 Hartford Road, Manchester. This one-and-a-quarter-hour walk will proceed along streets and lawn to view historic mansions, schools, and a church, with a visit to the nine acres purchased by the Town in 2005 for open space and historic preservation. Historical Society members Tom Ferguson and Susan Barlow will comment on the historic landscape and buildings. There is some steep and uneven ground, so participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots. Extreme weather cancels, but the walk will be held in light rain or snow flurries, so please bring an umbrella. \$7 for non-members, \$5 for members, and free for children under age 16.

• **Sunday, January 10, 2016, and the second Sunday of each month**, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., *Cheney Homestead* open to visitors. View this 1785 house at 106 Hartford Road, and hear commentary about the residence, which was donated to the Manchester Historical Society in 1968 for use as a house museum. Guided tours include history of the building and its contents, and of the family who lived there. The Keeney Schoolhouse is on the grounds of the Homestead, and is open when the weather is warm enough.

Please note that the Old Manchester Museum will close for the winter after December 13. However, the research facility will remain available by appointment.

Cheney Employee Records Now Online

The Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut houses many of the business records of Cheney Brothers. Among those records are the employee cards of Cheney employees from the late 1800's to 1955 when the company was purchased by J. P. Stevens.

The employee records from 1900 to 1920 have now been digitized and are available online. You can access them from your home computer by googling "CT Digital Archive" then search for "Cheney Employee Records"

These records are a wonderful resource for anyone researching a person who worked for Cheney Brothers. They contain information such as employee's date of birth, address, nationality, dates of employment, department where employed, previous employers, and names of relatives working for Cheney Brothers.

New Membership Dues Announced

After many years of maintaining the same level of dues, the Board of Directors recently announced that increases in the dues are finally necessary to help the Society meet its expenses. We regret that we can no longer maintain the same dues levels. Like your own, our costs have also increased over the years and this step could no longer be put off.

Effective October 1, 2015 the Membership Levels and Dues are as follow:

Individual	\$25
Senior Individual (age 65+)	\$20
Couple	\$40
Family.	\$50
Student (age 18 or under)	\$5
Contributing Individual	\$60
Contributing Family	\$100
Life Individual.	\$500
Life Couple	\$1,000
Corporate	\$500

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.



The Manchester Historical Society

Cordially invites you to



A Golden Gala

❄️ 12th Annual Holiday Gala ❄️

REFRESHMENTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SOCIALIZING, & SEASONAL SHOPPING!

Friday, December 4, 2015

5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., 175 Pine St.

Manchester, CT • 860-647-9983

A festive evening of wine, hors d'oeuvres, coffee, dessert, music, live and silent auctions with gift baskets, wreaths, gift certificates, and services. Museum store open for unique holiday gifts related to local history, including our *NEW* Cheney Homestead holiday ornament.

Holiday Sweater Contest



Wear your Most Creative, Most Festive, or Most Beautiful sweater. Optional, of course!

Make Reservations (Cash, Check, or Charge) Monday to Friday in-person or via mail with this form

❖ **IMPORTANT! PRINT EACH GUEST'S NAME** ❖

Print name of guest	Town	Member @ \$30	Non-member @ \$35

Please include your e-mail address _____ & phone number _____

Total Number of People _____ @ \$30.00/member = \$ _____ enclosed

Total Number of People _____ @ \$35.00/non-member = \$ _____ enclosed

Check # _____ Total enclosed _____

I can't attend – please accept my donation of \$ _____

Check payable to **Manchester Historical Society** must be received by **November 27**. Mail to:

Manchester History Center, 175 Pine Street, Manchester, CT 06040 (or bring in person)

Additional info and printable invitation on the events page of our web site www.manchesterhistory.org

Please write **GALA** on the outside of the envelope! Thank you.



The Manchester Historical Society
 175 Pine Street
 Manchester, Connecticut 06040

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Your Membership Expires on:

MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill out this form, and mail it with your check to:

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 | | | | |

I would like to make an additional contribution for

- | | | | |
|---|----------|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manchester Historical Society Building Fund | \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodbridge Farmstead Endowment | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manchester Historical Society Endowment Fund | \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodbridge Barn Restoration | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheney Homestead Endowment | \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Keeney Schoolhouse Fund | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted | \$ _____ | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have enclosed a matching gift form | | | |

Make checks payable to: Manchester Historical Society

Membership Dues and Donations to the Society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.