



"50 YEARS OF PRESERVING LOCAL HISTORY"

The Courier

NOVEMBER 2016

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President's Corner

by Jack Prior

It is an honor to be sending you this message as the newly elected president of the Manchester Historical Society. I would like to begin by thanking Dennis Gleeson for his many years of dedicated service to the Historical Society, most recently as our president. We cannot thank him enough for his tireless effort in maintaining our properties and taking care of all the day-to-day items that arose. The countless hours Dennis gave were numerous and his personal monetary donations most generous. Also, let us not forget the past and current board members for giving us their time and energy to help make the Historical Society what it is today.

You, as members of the Manchester Historical Society, are to be thanked for your contributions and support, for you are the ambassadors of the Society. As ambassadors of the Society your role comes with some responsibilities. First and foremost is supporting the organization through your annual membership. Second and third are to recruit more members into the society and to remember the Manchester Historical Society when leaving a legacy. Through your gifts we can become a stronger Society and a destination for current members, members of the community, and future generations. Without your donations and gifts, we cannot continue to do the good work you have engendered.

I would like to take a moment to provide you with an update of happenings within the organization. We are in the process of finalizing the Design/Bid documentation for the History Center HVAC system. The Society is able to upgrade our system thanks to past board members and presidents who secured a grant from the state of Connecticut. While this grant will not pay for the entire History Center to be upgraded, it is a good start. We plan to update the Center in phases, stretching our dollars to ensure that the base system we install will accommodate future expansions. Further information will be provided as the the upgrade progresses.

We have said, and we will say it again, volunteers are always needed. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our Society. The volunteers are the reason why we continue to

be a successful organization in the community. With you, we can and do connect with the community, our schools, and town businesses. To sustain our organization, we are in need of more volunteers who are willing to donate their time, skills, and expertise. Through volunteering, I have learned more about Manchester and its rich history, as well as experienced increased connectedness to my community. Besides the benefit of learning about our town history, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with a wonderful and dedicated team of volunteers.

We have many different types of volunteer opportunities. Needed are docents, to act as a guides at our museum properties, and office volunteers to help with tasks such as greeting the public, assisting reception, scheduling volunteers, and cataloging artifacts. Perhaps you like to work with your hands and can join our Thursday night work crew or you are a tradesman willing to donate your time to our more intensive projects. We need masons to help point the brickwork on the History Center, carpenters to repair doors and windows, and painters to help transform the windows not part of the "No Pane, No Gain" campaign, as well as electricians, plumbers, artists, and other craftspeople to assist with other projects that arise. We welcome all walks of life to our volunteer community: professionals and retirees, high school students looking for community service, college students in need of internships, and civic groups such as scout troops, youth groups, etc. Your time, from as little as an hour to several hours, is greatly appreciated. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please have them contact the History Center.

In closing, I would like to tell you a little about myself. I was born and raised in Manchester having lived here all but five years. My early education was spent at the former Lincoln School, St. James School, Bennet Jr. High, and Manchester High School. During this time, I participated in track and field, as well as soccer. While in high school I worked at Reed's Books, Cards, and Office supply store in the Parkade shopping plaza. I attended Manchester Community College and went on to earn a degree in Business from Western New England College. At present, I work for Travelers Insurance Company as a Director in Business Insurance. I lead a team that supports our databases in the Business Intelligence division. I have been with Travelers for 37 years.

continued on page 3



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.

Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.
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Lofts at the Mills

Christmas Shopping at the Museum

For anyone interested in history, our museum stores offer a wide range of items that would make wonderful Christmas gifts, and which you cannot find anywhere else. This year we have several new offerings including the new tree ornament featuring our Keeney School House, which is the fifth in the series of Society properties.



Missing Volunteer

In a previous issue of the Courier we inadvertently omitted the name of one of our most active volunteers during last year, Tom Schuetz. Thank you Tom for your continuing help.

We Will Miss

Marie Miller, member and frequent visitor to the Manchester Historical Society accompanying her daughter Kris who serves on our Board of Directors. Marie grew up in Glastonbury but moved to Manchester when she married her husband, Howard Miller. They lived on the Miller farm on Spencer St., now the location of MacDonalds. She was a gracious person and enjoyed making new friends at the Historical Society and in South Windsor where she lived with her daughter Kris.

Dinner Plates

The Gala Committee is looking to borrow some "real" dinner plates and cutlery for the buffet dinner at this year's Gala. If you can help, please contact us at the History Center at 860-647-9983 or email executivedirector@manchesterhistory.org. Your help is appreciated.

House Committee Volunteers Needed

We are looking for a few interested volunteers to serve on the Woodbridge Farmstead sub-committee. The committee is tasked with overseeing the property and providing guidance in its operation and maintenance. The committee generally meets every other month at the convenience of the members.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Eileen Sweeney at 860-647-9983 or by email to info@manchesterhistory.org.

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 is participating in a sculpture project for Manchester, commissioning life-size bronze sculptures of individuals who have made significant contributions to our community in the areas of athletics, education, the arts, invention, etc.

Communities across the nation and around the world use public art to educate residents and visitors alike. This will be an on-going project, with the initial statues completed one per year for the next three years. Fundraising efforts are already in progress!

About the sculpture subjects: The Sculpture Project Committee has chosen three Manchester luminaries for the first sculptures:

- Joe McCluskey, outstanding runner, track-and-field star, Olympian, and coach, who was instrumental in reviving the Manchester Road Race after World War II.
- Emily Cheney Neville, Newbery Medal winner and author of books for young adults, including “Traveler from a Small Kingdom,” about growing up in Manchester.
- Elisabeth Bennet, teacher, principal, mentor; instrumental in saving 1,100 children during the disastrous school fire of October 1913, in which no children were harmed.

About the sculptor: Michael Keropian of Carmel, NY, grew up in Manchester. In 2000, Michael received a commission to create nine heroic-size tigers for the new baseball stadium of the Detroit Tigers, Comerica Park. Since 2000, Michael has been commissioned to create a variety of sculptural projects, including:

Memorial bronze plaques for the Mayor of Brewster, NY and radio personality Bob Steele; medallions for the Jacksonville Jaguars and Archbishop Brunett; full figures of Frank Zappa, Vic Morrow, John Cooper Fitch, and RIT President Dr. Albert Simone

He has won numerous awards including the Hudson Valley Art Association’s Gold Medal. His works can be found in private collections around the world. Michael is a Fellow of the National Sculpture Society, and is the Sculpture Chairperson for the Hudson Valley Art Association.

The committee: Inspired by the public support for the October 2015 visit of The Wall That Heals, and by ongoing interest in Imagine Main Street activities, the committee has begun the process of organizing and fundraising to honor Manchester’s historic figures with sculptures. The committee consists of Manchester residents Lynn Sottile, Joyce Hodgson, Tana Parsiliti, Eileen Sweeney, Michele O’Neil, and Susan Barlow.

Pat’s Garden at Woodbridge Farmstead

In memory of Pat Matrick, a dedicated and active member of the Society and Woodbridge Committee and who loved to work in the gardens at the Farmstead, a stone marking “Pat’s Garden” was erected. Thanks to the efforts of Robert Giola and his son Bob Giola, a suitable stone was located and transported to Manchester Monument on Harrison St. There the stone was engraved with Pat’s name and Giola then installed the stone in the garden behind the Woodbridge house. The Society is grateful to Giola Corporation and Kevin Keena of Manchester Monument Co., both of whom donated their services, for making this remembrance of Pat possible.

President’s Corner

continued from Page 1

Volunteering in the community is near and dear to my heart. Over the years, I have volunteered my time as both a Cub Scout and Boy Scout Leader, provided support for the C.A.S.T. children’s theater, the Girl Scouts, conducted a middle school computer club, and helped build sets for the Manchester High School drama club. Recently, I acted as mentor to a high school student through the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education New Beginnings program. More personally, while in high school I met my future wife. We are the proud parents of two wonderful

and talented children. Our daughter holds a Doctorate in Education from Rutgers University and works at Sacred Heart University as the Executive Director of the Office of Global Affairs & the English Language Institute. Our son graduated from Ithaca College with a dual degree in Music Education and Vocal Performance. He is a professional actor.

I see an exciting future for the Historical Society and I look forward to working with everyone as we work to achieve our goals.

Annual Dinner

This year's annual dinner was attended by over 100 people. Bob Gorman shared his memories of growing up in Manchester and his family's experiences. The photo below shows Bob with Pat Christie, Dianne Lenti, Marianne Cornish, and Jan Mahoney (seated left to right) and Grady Brooks, Bob, and Victoria Trison (standing left to right). All are members of the Senior Center writing group, which inspired Bob to write down his memories of Manchester.



SAVE THE DATE

**Annual Holiday Gala on Friday, December 9
at the History Center**

Where did That Street Name Come From?

There are four streets in the southwest part of town between Horace St. and I-384, which first appear in the city directory in 1922. These streets were named after prominent motorcars of the time: Chalmers, Maxwell, Overland and Packard. None of these cars are made today, as the last of them, Packard, was made in 1956, (the name was used for a few years after it was merged with Studebaker).

The other three have a common thread in that Walter Chrysler either worked for them (Willys-Overland) or acquired them (Maxwell in 1924 and Chalmers, which had merged with Maxwell in 1922). Overland was renamed Willys-Overland in 1912, famous even now for its Willys Jeep.

We do not know why the streets were given those names, perhaps the developer of that area owned those cars, or wished to own them. Packard was a very classy and sought after auto of the time and commanded high prices. Their slogan: Ask The Man Who Owns One.

Interestingly, there are over 30 other streets in town that bear names in common with autos made over the years since 1900, but we doubt that they were named for those autos. More on those streets in another issue of the Courier.

Veterans Program "447 Tango Down"

The premier of "447 Tango Down," a one-act play by Marine Corps veteran Walt Scadden, was performed on Sunday, November 6 at the History Center to an audience of over 50 people. The play, a work in progress, describes the turmoil in a pilot's mind as he waits for help after his plane is shot down, not knowing whether he will live or die. In writing the play, the author interviewed dozens of veterans who had survived harrowing experiences during their military service. Mr. Scadden, a retired Manchester firefighter, metal artist, and researcher, also wrote "Murder in Manchester," about the attempted 1919 silk heist and murder of town resident Bill Madden. For the occasion, Marine Corps veteran Billy Johnson wrote and performed two songs: Lady Liberty and Silk Town. Following the play, there was a discussion of the play and an opportunity for veterans to share their experiences and reminiscences. WWII veteran Burt Sweet, age 95, of East Hartford, spoke about landing in France on July 4, 1944; his unit, of 15,000 men, had a 150 percent replacement rate in the ten months he was there. After the program, audience members met and greeted old friends and new acquaintances, and enjoyed a cake provided by ShopRite, "Honoring Our Veterans," and refreshments provided by volunteers.

*Author
Walter
Scadden
and editor/
narrator
David
Garnes
during a
rehearsal.*



Calendar of Events

- **The Old Manchester Museum and Research Facility** at 126 Cedar Street, open by appointment -- phone 860-647-9983.
- **The History Center and Museum Store** at 175 Pine St. are generally open weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. where you can purchase local-history items such as books, copies of vintage maps, high school yearbooks, vintage business directories, mugs, notecards, and limited-edition tree ornaments with images of Cheney Homestead, Woodbridge house, Woodbridge barn, the History Center and the Keeney Schoolhouse. Please check to make sure the building is open before coming! 860-647-9983.
- **"The Mystique of Silk"** exhibit at the History Center, open during regular hours. This exhibit was created by the Cheney Cemetery Association's President, Carol Cheney, who describes the exhibit as commemorating "the 100th anniversary of the Cheney Cemetery Association in 2016. Much can be learned about the Cheney Brothers brand from their advertisements in high-end magazines of the day. These ads emphasized life style and corporate image over product details." The framed ads were donated by Carol Cheney from her personal collection.
- **Tuesday, November 8 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group** -- a meeting for both amateur and more experienced genealogists. The topic for discussion will be "Organizing Your Family Research." Do you use paper or electronic files or a combination of the two? Do you use a software program? How do you organize your photographs? Members are encouraged to bring samples showing their strategy. Meet at the Manchester History Center. The Genealogy Group consists of Historical Society members, but nonmembers are also welcome, \$3.00 fee. The group usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month. There will not be a meeting in December.
- **Saturday, December 3 from 11:00 to 3:00 p.m., Open House:** throughout the historic district -All are invited to visit the Cheney Homestead, decorated for the holidays by the Manchester Garden Club; the Manchester History Center, and the Old Manchester Museum. 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 limited-edition ceramic tree ornaments with our historic properties, featuring our newest ornament, the Keeney One Room Schoolhouse. The open houses are free.
- **Saturday, December 3, 11:00 to 3:00 p.m. AND Sunday, December 4, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m., Holiday Tea and Tour at the Charles Cheney mansion** on the Great Lawn. A very special event, by reservation only, with tea and a tour of the elegant and historic mansion, now owned by the Reichelt family. The house is becoming Manchester's newest Bed-and-Breakfast inn. Tickets limited. \$30 per person. This event coordinates with the Historical Society's open house on Saturday. Bring a friend and enjoy the holiday decor in an old-fashioned motif. Capture the spirit of the holiday season. Proceeds go to the Manchester Historical Society. The Charles Cheney house was built c. 1864 and remodeled to its current Tudor half-timbered style.
- **Friday, December 9 The Society's 13th ANNUAL GALA** -- a fundraiser for the Society and its programs. 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the History Center, with dinner, entertainment, gifts, good fellowship, wine, and dessert. Live and silent auctions, music, holiday festivities, and some surprises. \$55.00 per person. The museum store will be open. A very popular event! The building is accessible, with a ramp at the Pine Street door.
- **Sunday, January 1, 2017 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. \$10 for non-members, \$7 for members, and free for children under age 16.
- **Tuesday, January 10 at 10:00 a.m., the Historical Society's Genealogy Group** -- a meeting for both amateur and more experienced genealogists. Members are encouraged to bring samples showing their strategy. Meet at the History Center. The Genealogy Group consists of Historical Society members, but nonmembers are also welcome, \$3.00 fee.

A Gift Membership for Christmas

A gift membership in the Society makes a great gift for someone who is interested in history.



You can use the form on the back of this newsletter to submit the gift membership. We will do the rest and send the membership card either to you or to the recipient of your gift. The new membership comes with the colorful reproduction booklet *The Miracle Workers* describing working for Cheney Brothers and living in Manchester during the 1920's.

Annual Fund Campaign

October marks the start of the Annual Fund Campaign for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Once again we are asking for your help to keep the lights and heat on, the maintenance of our old buildings on track and accessible for our members, the public and schoolchildren, and our artifacts and archives safe and secure.

The proceeds from the annual fund campaign are very important and provide critical revenue which we cannot obtain from admissions and grants. Watch your mail for the campaign flyer.

Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the membership was held October 14, 2016 at the Manchester Country Club. President Dennis Gleeson presented a review of the past year's activities and accomplishments. In addition, the financial position of the Society was reviewed and a summary of the auditor's report for 2014-2015 was presented. The slate of officers and board members was presented and approved.

The officers and board members elected for 2016-2017 are:

President	Jack Prior
Vice President	Diane Sheehan-Burns
Secretary	Kristine Miller
Treasurer	Dennis Gleeson
Board Members	Richard Borden Mya Bowen John Cooney Edward Firestone Patricia Hetzel Peter Millet Theresa Parla David Smith

Meet New Director Diane Sheehan-Burns



Diane Sheehan-Burns, Director of Teaching & Learning – Humanities, works for the Manchester Public School System as Director of Humanities. She graduated with degrees in Education from Eastern Connecticut State University, Sacred Heart University and Walden University. She has been a teacher in the Manchester Public School system since 1994. Among her current duties she facilitates the engagement in thoughtful consideration of the educational function and relevance of the subjects which comprise the humanities. She supports the curriculum development of Literacy, Social Studies and World Language. Diane lives in Manchester with her husband Daniel Burns and their daughter Dylan Marie, who is currently studying at Manhattan College.

Meet New Director Peter Millett



Pete Millett is self-employed as a renovator and home improvement specialist. He is a regular volunteer with the Hartford Artisan Weaving Center and with the Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, MA. He reproduces Shaker furniture and his work is for sale at the Hancock Shaker Village museum store. Pete is a lifelong student of history, culture and craftsmanship, studying many crafts and giving public talks on Shaker craftsmanship and faith. He was employed for over 25 years at Aetna and Cigna as a project manager, and is a former trustee and treasurer of Trinity Covenant Church. Being the ninth generation born in Maine and with a childhood spent near Istanbul, Turkey, has fostered an outlook on life that is both practical and inquisitive.



The Manchester Historical Society

Cordially invites you to a fundraiser

Home for the Holidays ❄️ 13th Annual ❄️

Holiday Gala



**BUFFET DINNER, ENTERTAINMENT, SOCIALIZING,
SEASONAL SHOPPING, AND SOME SURPRISES!**

Friday, December 9, 2016

6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

175 Pine St., Manchester CT • 860-647-9983

\$55 per person

A festive evening with a buffet dinner, wine, coffee, dessert, music, live and silent auctions. Museum store open for unique holiday gifts related to local history.

Make Reservations (Cash, Check, or Charge) Monday to Friday 10-2 in-person or via mail with this form

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

Print name of guest	Town

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

Number of Guests ___ @ \$55.00 per person = \$ _____ Total enclosed (Check # _____)

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

Check payable to **Manchester Historical Society** must be received by **December 1**. 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