



“OVER 55 YEARS OF PRESERVING LOCAL HISTORY”

The Courier

SEPTEMBER 2022

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“Women of the Cheney Family” Exhibit Room

Pete Millett, Cheney Homestead Museum

Please come and see another exhibit room taking shape at the Cheney Homestead Museum. Many of the stories that we share with Homestead visitors are about interesting women who inspired, supported and encouraged the family and others, and whose lives represent a diversity of characters and contributions.

As we further develop the permanent exhibit, visitors will learn more about the lives of individuals such as Electa and her cousin Lovisa who cared for the Cheney boys through their childhood; artist Seth Cheney’s wife Ednah who championed women’s rights; their daughter Margaret Swan Cheney who was one of the founding members of the Appalachian Mountain Club; the philanthropist Mary Cheney who endowed the namesake library in town; Mary Bushnell Cheney and her fascinating correspondence with her husband Frank Woodbridge Cheney, who traveled extensively for the silk business; and finally, the twins and last residents of the Homestead, Dorothy & Marjorie Cheney,



who donated the Homestead and family artifacts to become the first property of the Manchester Historical Society.

We are also discussing how to recognize and represent more contemporary women of the family as we develop the exhibit. Come and see the new exhibit, and also the transformed dormitory room and Electa’s bedroom.

SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, September 25
1-3
Membership Meeting
History Center

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The Courier

A newsletter of the
Manchester Historical Society

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Dave Smith
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Quilt Exhibit at Old Manchester Museum

Currently on display at the museum are several quilts from our collection. They include a Bow Tie quilt, a Log Cabin quilt, a Postage Stamp quilt and a Grandmother's Flower Garden quilt. All were made by Manchester folks including at least one man between the late 1800's to about the 1930's. The museum is open the first Saturday of the month from May through December.



Summer Volunteer Archivist

For the past several months we have had a Manchester High School graduate volunteering with us, learning the ropes of our cataloging system and recording donations of items to the society. Gwyneth Smith is hoping to get into the museum field and working with objects, textiles and archives. She graduated from Manchester High School in June and is preparing to further her education at the University of Connecticut beginning this fall. We are grateful for her assistance to us and wish her well in the future.



Bill Whitaker's Cartoons

Bill Whitaker was born in 1931 and graduated from East Hartford High School in 1949. He was an avid sportsman and Navy veteran and was a firefighter for the Town of Manchester for many years until he retired in 1997. He was perhaps best known for his cartoons as he was the editorial cartoonist for the Manchester Herald for many years. His artistic flare and witty commentary provided timely commentary on the events of the day, not only local but also national.

Recently, Bill's son Trey donated to the society a large collection of his father's original cartoons, for which we are truly grateful. You can look for samples of them in future issues of our Courier newsletter.



ANCESTORS ROAD SHOW at Manchester Town Hall

How do I start my family history research? How do I find probate records? What does this document mean?

Local family historians can get help on Saturday, September 24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., when the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council once again brings their popular Ancestors Road Show to Manchester Town Hall. In addition, the records vault will be open for tours allowing visitors to see some of the old records of the town.

Six professional genealogists are volunteering their time to provide free 25-minute one-on-one consultations on any genealogical question. The consultants have wide experience in a variety of specialties as well as general

research procedures. Family historians can sign up at the Town Clerk's Office for the opportunity to bring their questions and problems to the event. Participants will complete a questionnaire so they can be assigned to the most appropriate consultant for their problem.

Advanced registration is required. Please stop by the Town Clerk's office or call (860) 647-3037. The sponsor's fee goes to the Donna Holt Siemiatkoski Acquisition Fund, a 501(c)(3) arm of CPGC, which supports Connecticut's libraries and societies holding genealogical collections. More information at www.ctprofgn.org.

Seasons at the Woodbridge Farmstead A Hot and Dry Summer

By Peggy Newton, Woodbridge Farmstead Museum

It's good to be back at the farm after the pandemic caused us to cancel so many activities. There is much to report for this season – a wonderful "crop" of new volunteers have been giving informative house tours, thanks to Kris Miller, our publicity chair. She has unearthed many new Woodbridge family facts! Our Woodbridge committee has grown to eleven members, all pitching in to preserve Woodbridge history and maintain the farm buildings and grounds. Open house events already held this year include: the grand opening of our new Visitor Center with Mayor Jay Moran cutting the ribbon, the Town Historian's talk on the history of the Green and accompanied by the Town Troubadour on the banjo, Aussakita Farms visit bringing three friendly alpacas, a book swapping (bring a book/take a book) event in honor of Thelma Woodbridge's 110th birthday and her teaching so many Manchester children to read, and finally we celebrated our new barn "resident"



The alpacas enjoying a meal at the farm.



Volunteer Bob Kanehl explaining Manchester Green history.

Meadow, the cow, who was given her name by a lucky visitor who won a \$10 Shady Glen certificate.

Our only fly in the ointment was a forced Open House cancellation due to extreme heat in July. The heat and drought have impacted the level of water in our Bigelow Brook which runs through the back yard. With some decent rain we hope to be able to hold our annual Duck Race. Future events will include a visit from our antique tool expert Bruce Perry and apple and pumpkin events in the fall.

The farm house has undergone some major improvements this year including a new roof and gutters, concrete floors in the basement, and electrical wiring upgrades. This work has been carried out to help reduce the humidity issue inside the house and increase safety.

All these events would not be possible without our trusty volunteers. If you are interested in helping out please call the History Center or Peggy Newton (860-305-7310) or email Peggy at peggynewton47@att.net. If you want to have fun, meet new people and learn more about Manchester history, come join us. We are open the second and fourth Sunday each month from May through October (noon – 2:00 p.m.)

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. On display are a number of products made in Manchester, Cheney Brothers textiles, Pitkin Glass Works bottles and inkwells, Spencer rifles, and a tribute to local World War II servicemen and women. A new quilt exhibit shows locally made quilts from the late 1800's to about 1930.

History Center Office, Museum Store and exhibits at 175 Pine St., open Wednesday to Friday from 10:00 to 2:00 and Saturday noon to 4:00 p.m. (phone 860-647-9983), located in the former Cheney Machine Shop building. Our newest exhibit is "**Manchester Then & Now**" The Manchester Historical Society received a grant from Connecticut Humanities to create the exhibit, which showcases the history of Manchester from pre-Colonial times to the present, and illustrates Manchester's contributions to the arts and industry. The exhibit tells the story of how people from around the globe and from diverse backgrounds came to call Manchester home. This exhibit illustrates how Manchester's past relates to the present day. Visitors are invited to consider how today's choices can shape the

future. The Society is grateful to the CTH and our private donors for supporting this professionally designed and installed exhibit. In addition, there is a new exhibit of trade signs from a variety of Manchester businesses.

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 period art and furniture, a new gallery honoring Cheney family artists and a new exhibit of Cheney women and their influences. The schoolhouse is a recreation/restoration of one of Manchester's earliest one room schools.

Woodbridge Farmstead at 495 Middle Turnpike East, open the second and fourth Sundays of the month from 12 noon until 2:00 p.m. An 1830 house, Visitor Center and late 1700's barn on the site of the former Meadowbrook Dairy. Early farm equipment on display along with a one-horse open sleigh and pony wagon. The new Visitor Center has displays of the history of Manchester Green. Visitors can park at the municipal lot behind the Senior Center, along the side street to the east of the farmstead or in the grass lot behind the barn.

Sunday, September 11 from noon to 2:00 p.m., Woodbridge Farmstead Open House

Sunday, September 11, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Cheney Homestead Open House

Saturday, September 17, Archaeology exploration at Pitkin Glass Works, corner of Parker and Putnam Streets, sponsored by Pitkin Glass Works, Inc. Scott Brady, an avocational archaeologist with the Friends of the State Archeologist, will discuss the process and goals of archaeology, as well as the history of the Pitkin Glass Works. Guests will then have some supervised "hands on" archeological experience on the site. There will be two sessions: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., with a maximum per session of 15 individuals aged 13 and above. The fee is \$25 per person. See related article

Saturday, September 17, a visit to our Civil War monument in Center Memorial Park, hosted by the Cheney Brothers National Historic District Commission, 1:00 p.m. The statue of a young soldier, by Carl Conrads, will be the focus of this event, on the 145th anniversary of its unveiling. The original unveiling itself took place on the 15th anniversary of the Battle of Antietam, which took place on September 17, 1862. In describing the monument, The Hartford Courant reported that it "...consists of a bronze statue eight feet in height, standing upon a granite pedestal of about the same elevation...The pedestal is of rough cut Westerly granite, from the Batterson quarries, and is of just the right height to properly display the excellence of the surmounting statue." We will also visit other memorials in the park. Meet at the front steps of Town Hall (plenty of parking in the lot behind the building)

Sunday, September 25, Woodbridge Farm Open House cancelled so that we can attend the Annual Meeting.

Sunday, September 25, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., Membership Meeting at the History Center.

Saturday, October 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Old Manchester Museum Open

Saturday, October 8, the 47th annual walking tour of the Cheney Historic District, 1:00 p.m. with commentary by Dr. Christopher Paulin of Manchester Community College. Popular history walk starting at Fuss & O'Neill, 146 Hartford Road (plenty of parking in the lots west and south of the building). Find out about those huge brick buildings that remain from the days of the world-famous silk mills. Who worked there? Who owned the mills? Where did workers and owners live? This event is co-sponsored by Manchester Community College and the Cheney Brothers National Historic District Commission. We'll see Cheney Hall, the former silk mills, the location of the former South Manchester Railroad, the former Cheney machine shop, neighborhoods of worker housing, and Washington School. The walk takes about two hours with a distance of a mile or so. No rain date, so bring an umbrella if weather is iffy. Extreme weather cancels. The walk is free.

Sunday, October 9, from noon to 2:00 p.m., Woodbridge Farmstead Open House

Sunday, October 9, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Cheney Homestead Open House

Saturday, October 15, house tour of six historic homes, a fundraiser for The Sculpture Project. Three of the houses are Cheney mansions on the Great Lawn, not usually open to the public. More information coming. There will be a silent auction of special items. Our first house tour, in October 2018, was a popular event and a great opportunity to find out more about these vintage Manchester houses.

Sunday, October 23, at 1:00 p.m., "Culture and Anarchy in Ireland -- and the Three Literary Giants who Helped to Forge Modern Ireland," a lecture on Irish writers and their perspectives on the culture of Ireland and its people by former State Senator Mary Ann Handley. A retired Manchester Community College history professor, Mary Ann will establish a foundation for understanding the influence of James Joyce and of Nobel laureates W. B. Yeats and George Bernard Shaw. She'll touch on this year's 100th anniversary of the publication of James Joyce's "Ulysses," and on Manchester's large Irish population. Local musicians will present music from 100 years ago. 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.

Sunday, October 23, from noon to 2:00 p.m., Woodbridge Farmstead Open House

Sunday, October 30 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. History Center Bob Kanehl presents a program about the Manchester Green

Saturday, November 5 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Old Manchester Museum Open

Sunday, November 6 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., History Center Bob Kanehl presents a program on "Famous People from Manchester"

Sunday, November 13 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., History Center Bob Kanehl will host an open conversation about Manchester history

Sunday, November 20 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm., History Center Dave Smith will present a program about Manchester inventors and their inventions. Some of them had national significance and some went nowhere.

Saturday, December 3 Holiday Open houses at the Cheney Homestead 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and the Old Manchester Museum 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.



President Message

As we all know the past few years have been challenging for all of us. We are entering a phase where we are feeling comfortable about being out and about, going to stores, movies and other gatherings. We are also looking to expand our events throughout this coming year.

Hopefully, you have seen our “Manchester Then and Now” exhibit at the History Center. It is a great walk down memory lane and presents facts of Manchester you may not know. The response to it has been wonderful and we have had visitors from other states, not just our own. People who never knew we existed have stopped by to visit and have said it is a high caliber exhibit worthy of top museums of the country. If you haven’t seen it, I encourage you to do so.

We want to continue to expand the events now that we are more comfortable being around people. To that means, we are looking at providing music at the mills, more Sunday lectures, bringing back Thursday night movies that will include some of the top silent movies from earlier day. There is an artist show and sale being planned for late fall as well. Then in the spring if all goes well, we will be displaying All at the History Center. For the spring of 2023, we are calling all artists re-image Cheney silk pattern into art. Either use a pattern in the background or show your inspiration pattern with the more modern version of it side by side. Work in any medium that inspires you. We will display them during a town wide big celebration set for the 2nd Saturday of May – 5/13/23. We will continue to display it through the month at the History Center

Manchester has always been a diverse community with the help of the Cheney Brothers recruiting workers throughout the world. With that in mind, we are in the process of putting together an exhibit of traditional native attire from around the world along with games from around the world that you may have played or have heard about and looking to learn it. This is being scheduled for the spring as well.

However, this cannot be accomplished without volunteers. Now that the pandemic is behind us, I am reaching out to you to help the society in the various events planned above. We cannot do it without you. If any of these ideas tickle your fancy please reach out to the office and let them know which event you want to help with. However, if you also have an event you would like to see presented at the History Center, Woodbridge Farmstead or the Cheney Homestead, let us know that as well.

Finally, we will be having a fundraising drive this fall. The lack of events for the past two years and donations have slowed down and we need seed money to build exhibits and ground work for events. We are also custodians of our properties which continually need maintaining which by your donations we will preserve. With your donations, we can continue to build a Historical Society that looks and respects our past while celebrating the people that make up the great town of Manchester today.

Our Annual Membership Meeting will be held Sunday September 25 at the History Center, beginning at 1:00 p.m. You may wear a mask if you are more comfortable.

CHENEY HOMESTEAD ARTS

Autumn Art Classes & Workshops



“Classical Drawing” (Ongoing: Saturday Mornings)

“Aspects of the Figure” (9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10)

“Tea & Calligraphy: The Decorated Initial” (9/25)

“Drawing Drapery” (10/15)

“Painting Drapery” (10/28-30)

“Creating an Heirloom Braided Rug” (10/20-21)

“Sculpting with Mr. K.” (11/6)

“Limited Palette” (11/19-20)

CHENEY HOMESTEAD ARTS Autumn 2022 Classes and Workshops

All classes and workshops are offered at the Cheney Homestead Arts studio located at 199 Forest St. in Manchester. The upcoming class on November 6 will offer an opportunity to sculpt holiday-themed objects. Visit our website www.cheneyhomesteadarts.org for details.

Exploring Archaeology



Pitkin Glass Works Inc. will sponsor Exploring Archaeology on Saturday September 17, 2022 at the Pitkin Glass Works site on the corner of Parker and Putnam Streets in Manchester, CT. Scott Brady, an avocational archaeologist with the Friends of the State Archeologist (FOSA) will discuss archaeology (process, goals, etc) and the history of the Pitkin Glass Works. Attendees will then be given the opportunity to have some supervised “hands on” archeological experience on the site.

There will be two 2 hour sessions, 10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm with a maximum of 15 individuals aged 13 and above per session. The fee is \$25 per person, registration is required. Registration forms are available at the Manchester Historical Society, 175 Pine Street, Manchester or can be emailed upon request (email request to info@manchesterhistory.org). Call the Manchester Historical Society for a registration form or additional information, 860-647-9983.



Pitkin Glass Works, Inc.
Exploring Archaeology
Registration Form

Saturday September 17, 2022
Pitkin Glass Works Site
Junction of Parker and Putnam Streets, Manchester, CT

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Emergency Contact Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number: _____

Check one:

AM Session (10-12) _____

PM Session (1-3) _____

Return completed form with a \$25 check payable to Pitkin Glass Works, Inc.

Pitkin Glass Works Inc.
c/o Manchester Historical Society
175 Pine Street
Manchester, CT 06040
860-647-9983

Pitkin Glass Works, Inc. reserves the right to retain any artifact found.

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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 Endowment Fund | \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Keeney Schoolhouse Fund | \$ _____ |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> I have enclosed a matching gift form | | | |

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