

# The Courier

MAY 2011

VOL. 46, NO. 3

A quarterly publication of the Manchester Historical Society, Inc. / 175 Pine Street / Manchester, Connecticut 06040 / (860) 647-9985

## HISTORIC MANCHESTER: It's A Walk in the Park

The recent focus on **Mary Cheney Library's** present function and future purpose has generated renewed appreciation for **Center Memorial Park**, the refreshing natural landscape that surrounds the Colonial Revival-style building. In recent weeks, increasing numbers have gathered at the Park at noontime most Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays to walk along the curving pathways framed by period homes, verandas, and gardens. Establish a new tradition with a healthy open-air stroll with friends, or meet new ones at Manchester's unofficial town green. Soak-up sunny weather or renew your spirit on an overcast day amidst the gently-rolling landscape, and stately shade trees. While you are there, be a "tourist in your own town." Take a fresh look at local landmarks, public sculpture, and memorial monuments that grace the Park and are recognized by visitors as community treasures.



1910 postcard showing the elaborate landscaping of the northeast corner of the park

## Third Grade School Tours Underway Annual Event Continues Through May



Third graders operating a braiding machine in the History Center Loom Room during the Annual May school tours.

The annual **Third Grade Tours** of the museums are being held through the month of May. This year 13 schools and about 600 students are scheduled to tour the **Old Manchester Museum, Cheney Homestead, Keeney Schoolhouse, History Center Loom Room** and the **Fire Museum**.

As part of the third grade curriculum which covers local history, the students see firsthand many artifacts and pictures pertaining to people, events and items that played a significant part in the history of Manchester. This year the Loom Room has been rearranged to better show off the looms and other apparatus associated with the silk mills. The children see and hear a loom operating (video recording) and are impressed with the noise made by a single loom. They also have a chance to try their hands at a braiding machine which makes cord. Working conditions of 100 years ago and the long work day are also described.

See **TOURS** page 2

TOURS from page 1

At the Old Manchester Museum the children get a chance to lift a Civil War era rifle to test its weight and use a stereo viewer to see 3D images from 100 years ago. At the Keeney one room Schoolhouse they learn of the punishments handed out to misbehaving pupils and how school children 6 to 12 years of age studied in a single classroom. At the Cheney Homestead the history of the Cheney family and its importance to the town is explained. Being able to walk through the 225 year old house leaves an impression of when life was simpler. The Fire Museum lets the children form a bucket brigade and operate a hand fire pump.

---

## New Contact Info

We have recently changed our mailing address and email address. Please use these new addresses—it will speed up our communications and make it easier to reply to incoming mail.

**info@manchesterhistory.org**  
175 Pine Street, Manchester, CT 06040

## The Courier

A newsletter of the  
Manchester Historical Society  
Online at [www.manchesterhistory.org](http://www.manchesterhistory.org)  
E-mail: [info@manchesterhistory.org](mailto:info@manchesterhistory.org)

### OFFICERS

John Dormer, President  
George Beauregard, Vice President  
Marsha Gunther, Secretary  
Joseph Lawler, Treasurer

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Susan Barlow  
Anne Beechler  
Mary Dunne  
Vivian Ferguson  
Theresa Parla  
Jason Scappaticci  
David Smith

### DIRECTORS EMERITI

Marian Camp  
Douglas Edwards

### DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Eileen Jacobs Sweeney

Design & Printing: Grames Printing, Inc.

# Old Manchester Museum Reopens for the Season

For 2011, the museum features three new exhibits in addition to an ongoing developing display about Manchester's participation in the Civil War.



*John Knoll, Manchester's most prolific photographer.*

**John Knoll**, who operated his own small store School Street, was an avid photographer on the side. Judging from the large quantity of pictures he took during the period from about 1910 to 1935, one could easily think that he did not spend a lot of time attending to his store. Now we have made some of his pictures available for this exhibit. His favorite subjects seem to have been people in a variety of seemingly everyday activities. There are photos of deliveries being made to his store by horse drawn wagons and early trucks, pictures of boys playing in nearby dumping grounds on discarded carriages and automobiles, and scenes of areas of town not usually seen in photographs.

### Getting Around Town 100 Years

**Ago** shows the wide variety of methods of transportation used in Manchester between 1900 and the 1930's. In addition to the expected horses and carriages there are pictures showing autos, motorcycles, bicycles, trains, trolleys, and buses.

**Made in Manchester** presents some of the lesser known products made here from 1850 to 2005. Glastenbury Knitting Co. woolen union suits (long underwear), Ka-Klar stuffed toys, Iona appliances for the home, locally hand-made cigars, Tober baseball and bat, and Olcott Corn Slicer and Creamer are just some of the items shown. Manchester has had a rich history of manufacturing beyond textiles and paper products and the artifacts in this exhibit show only a small part of that history.



LEAVE A LEGACY™

June is Leave A Legacy month. Leave A Legacy Connecticut assists organizations such as the Manchester Historical Society by encouraging individuals to include contributions to their favorite charities in their wills. You can make an impact on future generations in Manchester and ensure that the Society's important work will continue by leaving a legacy to the Manchester Historical Society. For more information, please contact us at the Society at 860-647-9983, or the Leave A Legacy Foundation at 860-525-6052.

---

Contributors to this issue:  
Dave Smith, Eileen Sweeney

## Manchester Enters the Civil War

At the request of President Abraham Lincoln each state was directed to raise a certain number of men to serve in the war for three months. It was thought that the South would not be able to resist any longer than that.

At a special town meeting held in Manchester in pursuance of the foregoing notice, James Campbell, Esq. was chosen Moderator of said meeting.

The warning for the meeting was read and on motion it was—

### Voted

That to every man without a family and now a resident of this town, who may enlist as a volunteer into the service of the U. States under the late call of the President, this Town does hereby guaranty the sum of twelve dollars per month for the term of 3 months from the date of his final acceptance into said service, and to every man having a family and thus enlisting the sum

of eighteen dollars per month as aforesaid, the said sums being in addition to the pay received from Government. Provided that whatever sums may be appropriated by this State for the pay of those so enlisting shall be deemed a part payment of the sums so guaranteed by the town – and further provided, such guaranty shall not extend to any longer period than such volunteers shall continue in said service.

### Voted

That the Selectmen are hereby authorized to borrow on account of the Town such amount as may be necessary to carry the above appropriation into effect and the Selectmen are directed to draw orders on the Treasurer for the monthly payment of the same.

### Voted

To appropriate \$700 dollars from the Town Treasury to equip each volunteer with a Revolver, Blanket, shirts, stockings, shoes, etc.

### Voted

Ward Cheney, William Scott and A. M. Stone a committee to provide the above named articles for the volunteers, and all other necessarys

### Voted

That the committee be authorized to draw orders on the Town Treasurer for the sum necessary to equip the volunteers not exceeding the sum of seven hundred dollars

### Voted

That the T. Clerk index all deeds and other records not indexed in the Town Clerk's office and the Selectmen are hereby authorized to draw an order on the Treas. for the payment of same

### Voted

That our Representative be requested to secure the ratification of the doings of this meeting in the General Assembly now in session Attest

D. Wadsworth Town Clerk

## 150 Years Ago...

### CIVIL WAR EVENTS

- **Apr. 1861** Lincoln's call for 75,000 militiamen is for three months only. 3 month period ends in July.
- **Apr. 30, 1861** Manchester holds a special Town Meeting to support the men who sign up as volunteers for the three month enlistment. (see above story).
- **July 1861** Congress authorized a call for 500,000 men to enlist for a period of 3 years.
- **July 1861** Battle of Bull Run (only 25 mi. from Washington D.C.) results in a Union defeat in the first major battle of the Civil War.
- **Aug. 1861** The Manchester Cadets, a group of about 75 men under Major Frank Cheney, were part of the celebration at the return of the Third Conn. Volunteer Regiment to Hartford. The Third had just returned from the disastrous Battle of Bull Run, and its three-month enlistment was up.

## 90 Years Ago...

### DAR FOUNTAIN DEDICATED JULY 9, 1921

The Revolutionary War fountain, designed by Charles A. Platt, was the idea of Mrs. Charles E. House, regent of the Orford Parish Chapter of the DAR. It cost about \$3,500 and was located in the middle of the East Center Street median, across from Center Congregational Church. After an accident in which an automobile knocked the fountain down, it was moved to a spot between Washington School and the West Side Rec building. (Now located in Center Memorial Park between the Probate Court and Linden Street.)

## We Will Miss...

**LOUISE BENGTON** Louise Keish grew up in Manchester and married Herbert Bengtson. The Bengtsons lived for years on Gardner Street and in 2004 moved to Rhode Island to be near their son David. Herb was for many years the Town Historian.

**CAROL LENIHAN** Carol was a Charter Member and also Life Member. She was very active as a volunteer for many years. She served as chairman of the Cheney Homestead Committee from 1986 through 1989.

**ARLYNE MEEK** Arlyne lived at the Cheney Homestead for many years with her husband Philip as caretaker of that special property. After Phil passed away in 1996 Arlyne continued to look after the Homestead and enjoyed giving tours to the many visitors who appreciated her knowledge of the Cheney family and their family home.

**MAUREEN MURRAY** Maureen was a long time member of the Society and volunteer. Her grandfather was a blacksmith in Manchester and Maureen organized his tools that had been donated to the society years before.

**C. SUMNER ROBERTS** Sumner was a longtime member of the Society and last year helped us celebrate the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouts of America. Sumner joined the Boy Scouts in 1930 as a member of Troop 3, now known as Troop 25.

## Boy Scout Project Helps Improve Loom Room

Jordan Caiola of Manchester Boy Scout Troop 25 at Center Congregational Church recently completed a painting project in the front section of the Loom Room of the History Center as his project for attaining his Eagle Scout award. Jordan, along with a number of other scouts, prepared the walls and columns in the future museum space and then painted two final color coats. The color combination of cream above and dark green below matches the typical mill color scheme. The boys put in over 50 hours working several weekends and after school to complete the job. Paint was donated by FMI Paint & Chemical Co. A big thanks to Jordan and his fellow scouts for a job well done. Thanks also go out to FMI Paint & Chemical Co. for their donation.

---

## Welcome, New Members!

*We would like to welcome the following  
new members to the Society:*

### FROM MANCHESTER

Christine Bailey  
Timothy Becker  
Ann Linda Dustin Bray  
Raymond A. Comeau  
Joan Czapowski  
John J. Deeb  
Marilyn Eastwood  
Ann Lucente  
Mr. & Mrs. Selwyn Smith  
Jan Toper

### FROM ELSEWHERE

Sandra Aho and  
Gerard DeCormier . . . . . Coventry  
Carolyn Bellingham . . . . . Vernon  
Ron Case. . . . . Superior, WI  
Edie Kelley . . . . . Glastonbury

*The following members have recently  
upgraded their membership to Life  
Member:*

Claire Olds . . . . . Saratoga Springs, NY  
Kathryn Wilson . . . . . Manchester

## Saluting More of Our Volunteers

In the last issue of the Courier several of our valued volunteers during 2010 were inadvertently omitted. We apologize to them and recognize their contributions here.

Marc Bassos	Tom Ferguson	Brian Murphy
Karen Beauregard	George Hakkila	Steve Penny
Jennifer Bussa	Jim Hall	Jason Scappaticci
Olivia Chirico	Dick Jenkins	

---

## Cane Away

A CHAIR CANING WORKSHOP was held earlier this year at the History Center, over several Saturday mornings. The teacher was K. C. Parkinson of Cane & Reed on Hilliard St., who supplied the materials and tools for the project. Attendees could either bring their own chairs or work on one of ours from the Woodbridge House. Over a dozen signed up and all 6 of the Woodbridge chairs were repaired and the seats recaned.



*Participants recaning the seat of one of the Woodbridge chairs.*

Participants were happy to learn a new craft, although a few of us lagged behind the rest in completing our chairs. We are grateful to those who repaired a Woodbridge chair and hope all enjoyed the experience. A big thank you is due K. C.

---

## Tool Chest Donation

Two tool chests were recently donated to the Manchester Historical Society by Miller Haugh, a former resident of Manchester who resided here for over 75 years.

Miller attended Manchester schools and for 37 years was employed at Mal Tool & Engineering Co., where he started in the small tools department. Prior to working at Mal Tool, he had served as a machine tool apprentice at Pratt & Whitney Co. in Hartford. Miller became vice president of manufacturing at Mal Tool, retiring from there at the age of 69. For the past 11 years he has resided in South Carolina.

The tool chests contain numerous machine tools, many of which were precision made and signed by Miller. The chests were made by Gerstner & Sons, a company which has been making such quality chests for over 100 years. One of the chests can be seen at the History Center offices.

# 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All lectures are at the History Center at 175 Pine St. at 1:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Parking is available along the Forest Street side of the building and in the small lot on Pine Street. Handicap parking is also in the small lot. Admission \$3 for nonmembers, \$1 for Society members and free for children under age 16. For the latest information on events please check online at [www.manchesterhistory.org](http://www.manchesterhistory.org).

---

**May 28, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.**

**Meet at Farr's Sporting Goods at north end of Main Street  
CHENEY RAILROAD HISTORY WALK**

Walk along the right of way of the former railroad, built in 1869. About 1¼ hours round trip. Park in Eighth District office lot or nearby plaza—please do not park in Farr's parking lot.

---

**June 4, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.**

**WALKING TOUR AT CENTER SPRINGS PARK**

Come for a 1¼ hour walk on the loop trail and explore this 55-acre urban park with its hills, brook and gorge right in the center of Manchester. (Starts at the parking lot at 39 Lodge Drive.) Children and their parents are especially welcome on this approximately one-mile hike, with commentary on the history of the park. The terrain is difficult and wet in spots, and participants should wear sturdy shoes. Reservations are not necessary. This history walk is part of the CT Forest and Park Association's Trails Day program. Rain date, same time the following day (June 5) at 1 p.m. **TRAFFIC ALERT:** Please note that as of this writing, Edgerton St. is closed to through-traffic. Use the Main-Street-to-Bigelow-Street approach to the park. After the loop trail, there will be an optional additional walk to the Cheney rail trail, for an added 45 to 60 minutes, for those interested.

---

**June 4–June 12, EVERY DAY, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Manchester History Center

**GIGANTIC WEEK-LONG TAG SALE—Free Admission**

**Exclusive Early Bird Sale Friday, June 3 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m., \$5 admission.** Parking available along Pleasant St. and along the Forest St. side of the building (no on-street parking on Pine and Forest Streets). *(Related story on back pg.)*

---

**June 6, Monday, 5:30 p.m.** Meet at East Cemetery office

**EAST CEMETERY WALKING TOUR**

Interesting and historic gravestones which will be described and their symbolism explained. No rain date.

---

**June 11, Saturday**

**HERITAGE DAY**

All of our museums will be open and free to the public. Also open will be the Fire Museum, Cheney Hall and the Lutz Children's Museum. A free trolley will be shuttling passengers among all the venues. You can park at any of them and take the trolley to all of the others.

---

**June 26, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.** History Center

**A CELEBRATION OF EMILY SMITH AND  
MANCHESTER'S GIRL SCOUTS**

A free reception for author Claire Olds, whose new book describes Emily Smith and her contributions to Manchester's youth as a Girl Scout troop leader and organizer of trips abroad. Claire, now retired as Dean of Students at Skidmore College, grew up in Manchester and now lives in Saratoga Springs, NY.

---

**July 30, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.** Highland Park

**HIGHLAND PARK HISTORY WALK**

Explores the Case Brothers Historic District and includes a 3 mile hike to the top of Case Mountain. About 2 hours, the walk begins at the Spring Street trailhead.

---

**September 17, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.** Downtown

**HISTORIC DOWNTOWN STROLL**

Downtown stroll of about 1 ½ hours. Begins in front of the old high school building (now the Bennet Apartments) \$1 for members and \$3 for nonmembers.

---

**September 18, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.** History Center

**"FIFTY YEARS ON THE GREAT LAWN"**

Vivian and Tom Ferguson will describe living in a Cheney mansion beginning in 1958 when members of the Cheney family still lived in neighboring mansions.

---

**October 23, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.**

**HISTORY CENTER ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held for the membership. Business will include a review of the past year, business matters, and election of officers and board members.




The Manchester Historical Society  
175 Pine Street  
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Manchester, CT  
Permit No. 212

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Manchester Historical Society*




**Book &  
Tag Sale**

**June 4 to 12, 2011**

**9 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day ❖ Free admission**  
At the Manchester History Center  
**175 Pine St., Manchester, CT, corner of Forest St.**

**10,000 square feet of items!** Come shop and socialize in our vintage brick building, the former Cheney Machine Shop. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. Items include: Mint proof sets, 3 wedding gowns, thousands of books for adults and children, rare books, household items, antiques, Christmas items, furniture, rugs, china, silver, glassware, jewelry, electronics, toys, puzzles, games.



**"If we don't have it, you don't need it!"**  
– Terry Parla, tag sale manager, 860-643-1823.  
Museum Store also open – with books and DVDs about local history, vintage maps of Manchester, etc.

**Special Preview & Early Sales**  
Friday, June 3 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. \$5 admission fee.

**Parking in the lot north of the building and off Forest St. next to our building.**  
More about the Historical Society at [www.manchesterhistory.org](http://www.manchesterhistory.org).