



The Courier

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The Winds Blew, The Trees Flew:

Pitkin Family Wagon at East Granby Rally

The horse-drawn express wagon in our collection was displayed at the East Granby horse-drawn vehicle rally in October. The weather was perfect and a large number of wagons, carriages, sleighs and even a real Concord stage coach were present. Our wagon was originally owned by the **William Pitkin family** of Pitkin Street in the early 1930s. Society member **Mary Jane Pitkin Cooper** remembers when her father brought it home for the first time. Her brothers and sisters and the neighborhood children really enjoyed riding in it and even putting it to work on the family farm (where Concordia Lutheran Church now stands). The family had a pony named "Billy" who provided the one "horse" power for the wagon.



John Hovey's grandson Andrew Pryce sitting in the driver's seat of the Pitkin wagon.

New Wheelchair Ramp Installed at Entrance to Loom Room

Project Completed by Manchester Eagle Scout



Chris Kopytko (standing) works with fellow scouts Joseph and Andre.

Chris Kopytko of Manchester Boy Scout Troop 25 recently constructed a wheelchair ramp at the entrance to the Loom Room on the ground floor of the History Center building for his Eagle Scout project. He also rebuilt the stairway leading to the rear door of the Loom Room. Chris, working with several other scouts designed the project and obtained the required materials. The exterior ramp and platform are constructed of pressure treated wood, for longevity. This makes the Loom Room wheelchair accessible for visitors, who previously had to enter through the inconvenient double doors at the large canopy.

President's Report

by John Dormer

[Delivered at the Society's Annual Meeting on October 23, 2011]

Welcome to the Annual Meeting of the Manchester Historical Society. During the year since our last Annual Meeting, the Society has shown progress in many segments of its operation. The Board of Directors has worked with two separate advisors from the Peer Advisor Network (PAN) which is a program operated under the auspices of the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism and is administered by the Greater Hartford Arts Council in the Hartford area. The first of these two sessions was to help the Board evaluate its functions as a board and to create a plan to bring about the changes that were agreed upon. The second session was to provide assistance to the Board in the creation of an up-to-date Strategic Plan. The details of the first year have just been completed by the committee working with the PAN advisor and provided to the Board for review.

Lighting and new wiring has been installed in the Loom Exhibit area by

students from the Howell Cheney Technical School as a work project. This fall, they will be installing the necessary wiring to power the looms that will eventually be operational.

Preliminary work for the painting and replacement of damaged/rotted wood at the Cheney Homestead has been accomplished. This involved obtaining quotations for the work, requesting grants, and awarding of a contract. The work is scheduled to start in October 2011. The Cheney Family Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has contributed \$17,500 toward the project and the SBM Charitable Foundation has been asked for a \$15,000 grant to help cover the balance of the anticipated \$33,000 project cost.

The older of the two barns at the Woodbridge Farmstead is in need of some emergency stabilization work to prevent its collapse. The Society has obtained a \$5,000 grant from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and a matching donation from a Society member that will cover most of the anticipated cost of \$14,510. A \$10,000 grant has been requested from the Rockville Bank Foundation to cover the remaining costs of the emergency stabilization work and to begin landscaping work that will prevent the surface water from flowing toward the barn as it presently does. Once this re-grading is completed, work on the replacement of sill beams can be done. In the spring of 2011, it became necessary to move forward the planned removal of the vinyl-asbestos flooring Rooms #4 and #5 at the History Center. Originally scheduled for 2013, the work is now planned to occur in the fall of 2011. A grant from the Manchester Road Race Committee of \$15,000 payable over a three year period starting in 2011 will help fund this project. The Timken Foundation has just awarded a \$20,000 grant to the Society to help cover the cost of this \$40,000 project. Work is expected to be completed by the end of 2011.

One of the items that came out of the Strategic Plan activity was the need for an Executive Director for the Society. A grant award notification was received from the

Greater Hartford Arts Council to provide a \$10,000 grant when the Society hires a part-time Executive Director, \$9,500 when the person is hired and the remaining \$500 at the end of the first year assuming certain goals have been met. Some Society members have also donated significant amounts to a restricted fund that will be used to help cover the cost of the part-time Executive Director until the person hired can establish a funding stream to cover the salary cost. The job position was advertised during the summer of 2011 and interviews of the potential executive directors were started in October of 2011. The part-time Executive Director will work 20 hours per week.

Significant effort has been made by **Joe Lawler**, Society Treasurer, and Society member **Don LaPlante** during the past year to upgrade the financial reporting system of the Society. Working with the Society auditors, Pue, Chick, Leibowitz, & Blezard LLC, they have brought the Society financial system in line with generally accepted accounting practices. Financial data is now reviewed by them on a monthly basis to insure correctness of the records and evaluate the status of expenditures vs. budget to ensure that the Society is "living with its budget."

The storage shed behind the History Center had its roof removed and a new, structurally correct assembly installed as well as the replacement of the south wall installed. All work was accomplished by **John Parla**, his two sons, **John Jr.** and **Jamie**, and by Sposito Construction. Some materials were donated by the **Andrew Ansaldi Co.** and others provided at a significantly reduced cost by **Sanford and Hawley, Inc.** The Society is very grateful to these individuals and companies for their work and support on our behalf.

It is very evident that the Society could not exist or function without the many volunteers that are involved with the

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A newsletter of the
Manchester Historical Society

Online at www.manchesterhistory.org
E-mail: info@manchesterhistory.org

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Marsha Gunther, Secretary
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Old Manchester Museum Reopens for the Season

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

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 baseballs and bats, and Olcott Corn Slicers and Creamers 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.

New Road Race History Book Now Available

A new book detailing the history of the Manchester Road Race is now available in time for the 75th anniversary of Manchester's premier sporting event. This book covers the race from many different angles and is loaded with photos of the event and its many runners, some well known and others not so well known. There are stories of famous individuals such as Joe McCluskey, Charlie Robbins, Julia Chase, Amby Burfoot, and both John Kellys. Others who made an impact on the race or who showed an indomitable spirit include Amos Kujala (affectionately known for finishing last for many years) and Frank Haraburda (who ran in the first race and later supplied turkeys from his farm to the first local finishers).

The book was written by Road Race historian Rick Dyer, Jerry O'Connor and photographer John Long. The book would make a wonderful Christmas present for anyone who has run in the race or who has wished he had. It is available at both of our museum stores for the price of \$29.

Historic Preservation is Personal

by Eileen Sweeney, Development Director

While historic landmarks are national treasures that illustrate and interpret the American story, towns and cities across our country take pains to maintain visible proof of our common past in a more intimate framework. At the local level these visual remnants reflect our cultural heritage and define our unique "sense of place." According to Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Trust "...recognizes the connection to place as one of the great forces of the human experience. Nothing compares with the experience of a sacred landscape protected, a favorite building restored, a childhood neighborhood revived" (*Preservation* November/December 2011).

Manchester residents have witnessed the loss of special places in our community with lingering regret. In turn, they continue to rejoice in those that remain. As citizen concern grows for threatened, irreplaceable assets in our town that are disappearing at an alarming rate, the Manchester Historical Society invites readers to voice their opinions about how the preservation of Manchester's historic houses, public buildings, parks, farms/barns, monuments, landscapes, trees, and neighborhoods personally benefits them. Is your quality of life enriched, your environment healthier, your economy more vital, and/or your town more appealing? The Society also welcomes stories from your family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors that express their thoughts, feelings, and memories about preserving the very essence of our City of Village Charm.

Loom Room Progress Report



Work continues in the future Loom Room exhibit area as electrical connections are made to the looms. This fall senior electrical students from Howell Cheney Technical School have been working to install wiring to three of the four looms and to the quill winding machine, under the direction of instructor Roger Rougeot. During previous semesters Cheney Tech students have installed period lighting and electrical outlets.

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organization. Major events like the Book and Tag Sale, the Holiday Gala, the Members Dinner, the Manchester schools third grade historic property tours in May, Heritage Day, and Open Houses could not be held without the support and efforts of the many volunteers. The docents at the Old Manchester Museum and the museum store volunteers at the History Center are also very important to the operation of the Society. who come in to input data on donations and membership and create and mail membership renewal requests are invaluable to the operation of the Society. I would like to say Thank You to everyone who has helped the Society in any way during this past year and ask that you continue to help and if possible, recruit some additional volunteers.

In September, several employees of the Manchester facility of the Timken Aerospace Transmission, LLC volunteered their time, energy, and equipment to perform a major clean-up of the grounds at the Woodbridge Farmstead at Manchester Green. Their efforts to remove brush and overgrowth along the brook and from the cellar holes of two long gone farm buildings resulted in a much improved back yard landscape at the Farmstead.

The Society is also a member of the South Manchester History, Arts, Recreation, and Education (S.H.A.R.E.) group whose primary function is to promote knowledge of and activities in the Main Street/South Manchester area. The free trolley rides on Heritage Day and the Holiday Celebration in December have been provided by S.H.A.R.E. as a service to those attending the events.

The year ahead will be busy and exciting for the Society. With a new, part-time Executive Director on board, I am looking forward to progress on organization of our volunteers to increase their numbers and to include all those wishing to volunteer. It will also be necessary to increase the income of the Society to meet the ever increasing costs of operation and maintaining the Woodbridge Farmstead, The Cheney Homestead, the Keeney Schoolhouse, the Old Manchester Museum, and the History Center.

I thank everyone for attending today's meeting and look forward to working with you in the coming year.



The Manchester Historical Society

Cordially invites you to the

**8th ANNUAL
HOLIDAY GALA**

An evening of fun, socializing, and shopping for all ages.

Friday, December 2, 2011, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

At the History Center, 175 Pine St. (corner of Forest St.) Manchester, CT

\$15 for members, \$20 for non-members

Wine, hors d'oeuvres, coffee and dessert. Music, live and silent auctions with gift baskets, wreaths, restaurant gift certificates, and services such as gardening consultation. The museum store will be open to purchase local-history gifts.

WE STILL NEED DONATIONS OF EXCITING AUCTION ITEMS SUCH AS ANTIQUES, ARTWORK, GIFT BASKETS, BASKETBALL OR CONCERT TICKETS, ETC. Can you help? Call us at 860-647-9983.

Purchase tickets at the History Center, Monday through Friday from 10 to 2 up to November 29 or mail in the form below. You can reserve tickets by calling Terry at 860-643-1823.

TICKETS: Please complete form, make check payable to Manchester Historical Society, mail to 175 Pine Street, Manchester, CT 06040

Name (s) or organization contact	
Street address, town, state, zip code	
Phone & e-mail address; guest names	
Number of tickets at \$15 per member, \$20 non-members. We prefer to sell all tickets in advance, so we can estimate need for refreshments.	
I am unable to attend, but please accept my donation. <i>All donations are very much appreciated.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Any amount is welcome _____

Annual Meeting Election Results

The Society's Annual Meeting was held Sunday, October 23 at the History Center. The venue this year was in the Loom Room area, which was a pleasant surprise to many attendees. The business meeting included the reports of the Treasurer, Curator, and the President (see above). The election of officers and directors was held with the following results:

OFFICERS ELECTED

President – John Dormer

Vice-President – George Beauregard

Secretary – Marsha Gunther

Treasurer – Joe Lawler

DIRECTORS ELECTED

Mary Dunne, Vivian Ferguson, Theresa Parla, Jason Scappaticci, David Smith

Fergusons' Present Illustrated Talk at Manchester Historical Society



About 70 guests attended a presentation by **Tom and Vivian Ferguson** (pictured above) at the Manchester Historical Society on Sunday, September 25 at the History Center. Their illustrated lecture described life in a mansion on the Great Lawn beginning in 1958, when the Fergusons moved in and when members of the Cheney family still lived in neighboring mansions. Today, this mansion, the Horace Bushnell Cheney house, is in the Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District as well as in the mansion zoning district. The Ferguson family owned The Manchester Evening Herald, a former daily newspaper in town, which was published from 1881 to 1991. Vivian Ferguson is Manchester's Town Historian. For upcoming events, see the listing on our web site, www.manchesterhistory.org.

150 Years Ago...

CIVIL WAR EVENTS

- **Nov. 1, 1861** – President Lincoln appoints George B. McClellan as general-in-chief of the armies of the United States, replacing Winfield Scott, who was 75 years old. Scott was a strict disciplinarian with the nickname “Old Fuss and Feathers.”
- **Nov. 8, 1861** – Two Confederate officials sailing for England are seized by the U. S. Navy. England demands their release and threatens war. Lincoln orders their release remarking “One war at a time.”

SOMANHIS Yearbooks Wanted

The Society often gets calls from people wishing to purchase an old high school yearbook. We currently offer a few, but are always looking for the years not in our inventory. If you have an old SOMANHIS which you no longer want, please keep us in mind. You could help someone rekindle memories of their high school years by making your copy available to someone else.

2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All lectures are at the History Center at 175 Pine Street 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. Please check online at www.manchesterhistory.org for the latest information on upcoming events.

November 26, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.

CHENEY RAILROAD HISTORY WALK

Hike along the former railroad, which connected the Cheney Silk Mills to the main rail line in North Manchester. Built in 1869, the railroad was the shortest freight and passenger railroad in the United States. Meet at the north end of Main St. beside Farr's. Please do not park in Farr's parking lot..

December 2, Friday, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., History Center

HOLIDAY GIFT GALA

COME ONE, COME ALL! Our eighth annual holiday gala, a popular event for members and non-members alike. The History Center will glow in its festive decor, and guests can bid on auction items that include services, art work, antiques, and restaurant gift certificates.

December 3, Saturday

ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

The Cheney Homestead, Manchester History Center, and Old Manchester Museum will be open. Details to be announced.

December 11, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m., 106 Htfd. Rd.

(and 2nd Sunday of Each Month Year-Round)

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 donations, for which we are very grateful.

December 12 through April 30

OLD MANCHESTER MUSEUM AND THE MANCHESTER SPORTS HALL OF FAME WILL BE CLOSED.

The research facilities will be available throughout the winter by calling 860-647-9742 to schedule an appointment.

February 12, Sunday, 1:00 p.m., History Center

CONNECTICUT'S JEWISH FARMERS

Author and architectural historian Mary Donohue will present an illustrated lecture on the Jewish farmers of Connecticut and their effects on the state's agricultural community.



The Manchester Historical Society
175 Pine Street
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

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MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY WANTS YOU!

Volunteers are the backbone of the Manchester Historical Society. Volunteering is fun and gives you a great sense of accomplishment. You frequently learn something new, and meet new people. We need volunteer workers for tag sales, the spring tours for schoolchildren, the holiday gala in December, museum store workers, work crews indoors and outdoors, and docents for the Old Manchester Museum on Saturdays and Sundays—there really is something for everyone! For more about volunteering at the Historical Society, call us at (860) 647-9983.