

The Courier

MAY 2013

VOL. 48, NO. 3

A quarterly publication of the Manchester Historical Society, Inc. / 175 Pine Street / Manchester, Connecticut 06040 / (860) 647-9983

Eileen Sweeney, Our New Executive Director

The Manchester Historical Society's Board of Directors, recently chose its Development Director Eileen Sweeney, a Manchester native and life-long resident, as its Executive Director.

Eileen brings a wealth of professional and volunteer leadership experience to the position, having worked with local historical societies and other nonprofit organizations, associations, educational institutions, and municipal-and-state-level governmental agencies. She has been our Development Director for the past eight years, and has helped us obtain a number of grants, sponsorships, donors, and members. Eileen has also worked closely with our volunteers—the greatest asset of the organization—to plan, execute, and raise awareness for a variety of programs, events, and initiatives.



*New Executive Director
Eileen Sweeney*

The new Executive Director will call upon her background in economic and community development, grants administration, organization management, marketing and sales, publications, events, legislative affairs, and community partnerships to achieve

the short-and-long-term goals of the Society—increased memberships and volunteers, funding, preservation and development of its historic museums, and the completion of the Manchester History Center as its primary exhibit and research facility.

You are invited to stop by the History Center, 175 Pine Street, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. weekdays to chat with Society volunteers about ways in which to explore local history. Bring family, friends, and neighbors along with you to learn about the many enjoyable and interesting ways in which you can contribute to the preservation of Manchester treasures. Please call (860) 647-9983 for more information.

Woodbridge Farmstead Heritage Day Tours and Sale

This year, for the first time, we will be offering tours of the grounds of the Woodbridge Farmstead, located at 495 East Middle Turnpike, near the intersection of Woodbridge Street, on Heritage Day, Saturday June 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The tours will showcase the historic barns that are part of this property, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Learn about the history of the farm and the plans for the future. Guide, Tim McCann, will describe the extent of the property and the various buildings and foundations behind the house. Although we will not be able to go inside any of the barns, some of the interiors will be visible, especially in the oldest barn in Manchester, dating from the last half of the 18th Century.

In addition, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. we will hold a small sale of collectibles and other items from the recent past and which are not significant to the history of the house and property. Proceeds will be used toward preservation of historic items in the house and barns. Street parking is limited, but parking is also available at the near-by Senior Center.

Eagle Scout Project Restores Outhouse

The old outhouse located behind the Keeney Schoolhouse was recently restored by Ryan Potterton and a crew of boy scouts from Troop 25 in Manchester. Ryan tackled the project as part of his requirements for obtaining Eagle Scout status. The wood roof shingles were replaced and rotted siding and floor boards were also replaced. The whole structure was painted and should now be good for another 50 years.

The outhouse originally came to us from a farm in Bolton, and reportedly was situated on a hillside with a pleasant view. During nice weather one could leave the door open and enjoy the view while seated on one of the four seats.



[Photo D. Smith]

Boy Scout Ryan Potterton (right) and his construction crew.

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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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Museum Reopens For 2013 Season

Our **Old Manchester Museum** on Cedar Street officially reopened for the season on Saturday, May 4. Several groups of school children got a sneak peak when they started arriving on May 1. (see story elsewhere in this issue). The newest exhibit is about the Civil War and Manchester's participation and the men who volunteered to serve.

Museum hours are Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The research facility is available by appointment, please call 860-647-9742.

Apologies to Our Life Members

by Kris Miller, Membership Committee Volunteer

To all Manchester Historical Society Life Members, I must apologize for neglecting you. The procedures that the historical society used to welcome new life members were done in the past by a much-valued volunteer, Florence Johnson. Florence went through a long illness in a nursing home and, unfortunately, died last spring. Believe me, we all miss her a lot. I made the mistake of waiting for her to recover from her illness and get back to her volunteer work to catch up on sending out the Life Member welcome kits. After her death, my membership coordination responsibilities expanded and I forgot about catching up on sending out life member welcome kits. Now, we are beginning to hear from some relatively new life members who are rightly feeling rather neglected. I am sorry for neglecting you! If you are a Life Member and have not received your life member certificate and your life membership card, please let me know by calling me at 860-528-3122 or write to me c/o the Manchester Historical Society, 175 Pine Street, Manchester, CT 06040, "Attn. Kris Miller".

Third Graders Enjoying Museum Tours

Annual Event Continues Through May



[Photo D. Smith]

During a school tour, Dennis Gleeson explains to a group of third grade students where silk comes from.

This is the time of year that all the third graders in Manchester get to learn first-hand about Manchester's rich history. During the month of May, the Cheney Historic District is alive with students visiting, walking between the museums and the other historic sites conveniently located in this National Historic Landmark District.

Before visiting the museums the students get a smattering of Manchester history as part of their curriculum. Many already know the names Cheney Brothers, Pitkin Glass and maybe even Bon Ami Soap. However, during their field trip they learn some more interesting stories connected with our history, such as the origins of the names of their schools, the Spencer Rifle, where silk comes from and how it is made into cloth.

After their visits, they send thank you notes describing what particularly interested them. Below are copies of two thank you letters received this year.

Dear Manchester Historical Society, I loved the waterfall thing you tout me. like you tout me about the cheney brothers and how they owned the mills. I love that you are teaching me about the school house and how they only had one room. I also liked the cheney home steady and how they lived 100 years ago and how the warmed there bed and put rock in a pot and put it in fire sincerely Dileen and then put in the bed.

4/2/13 May 2
Dear, Manchester Historical Society
Thank you for showing us the fire truck's and The Keeny School it WAS Amazing The place in side was very pretty. Cheeny home Stead was awesome there was a nurse They had a fire place and ropes under the bed and they wipe there face and hands just with a towel and That's it.

Genealogy Group News

The Genealogy Group is a small group of Historical Society members who have a common interest in doing genealogy research on our own families. All Society members are welcome to join us for free. The general public is welcome too, for a fee of \$3.00 per meeting. We meet at 10:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday of every month at the History Center at 175 Pine Street in Manchester unless otherwise specified. Check out our upcoming meeting places and agendas on the upcoming events page at www.manchester-history.org. If you have questions, call Kris Miller at 860-528-3122.

Our May 14th meeting was held at the Godfrey Memorial Library in Middletown, CT where we were given a tour of their genealogical research library.

The June 11 meeting will be held at Manchester Town Hall. Manchester's Town Clerk, Joe Camposeo, will be giving us a lesson on doing Manchester property research.

The July 9 meeting will be held at the Manchester History Center at 175 Pine Street in Manchester. Dianne Bordeaux Lenti, a retired genealogist and a member of the CT Professional Genealogists Council will present "Crossing the Canadian Border: European & Canadian Immigrants to New England 1895-1954".

On August 13 we are planning a field trip to the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. We will be given a tour of the research facilities and the different collections of information that are available there.

Our September 10 meeting will be held at the Probate Court Building in Manchester. Probate Judge, Mike Darby, will be giving us a talk on genealogical research information that is accessible to genealogists at the Probate Court.

Thanks to Our Donors

Among the many reasons for the Society to be thankful, not the least is for the financial support our donors provide. Without this help we would not be able to continue our efforts to educate and exhibit the rich history of our town. We wish to honor our donors by listing their names here. These donations were made as the result of the Annual Fund Drive, membership renewals and other individual interests. Thank you for your generosity.

Although we make every effort to create an accurate list, it sometimes happens that we unintentionally omit the name of a donor. If we did, please let us know so that we may recognize the person in our next issue.

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LOOM EXHIBIT

Malcolm Barlow

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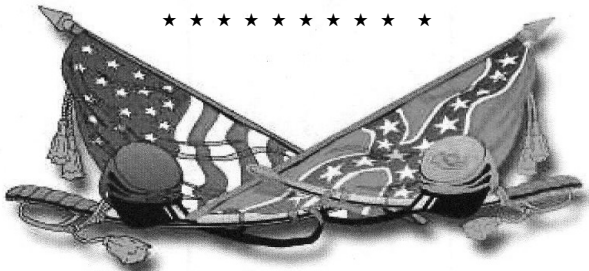
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★ ★ ★ ★ *The* ★ ★ ★ ★
CIVIL WAR
150th ANNIVERSARY
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Civil War Notes

by Ron Schack

MANCHESTER'S BATTLES AND CASUALTIES

May through July, 1863

MAY, 1863 - BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE, VIRGINIA

Major General Joseph Hooker's Army of the Potomac crossed the Rappahannock fords on April 30th, to position his army on General Robert E. Lee's vulnerable flank. Lee attacked Hooker while he was still in the thick of the wilderness. On May 1st and 2nd, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, with 30,000 Confederate soldiers, attacked the Union troops on their exposed flank. The attack ended when General Jackson was accidentally shot by friendly fire. His left arm was amputated, and he later died from pneumonia. On May 3rd, the Confederates resumed their attack and drove Hooker's army back to the fords, defeating the Federals near Salem's church. This battle was considered one of General Lee's greatest victories

Companies B and M, of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery Regiment; and the 5th, 14th, 17th, 20th, and 27th, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiments were all involved in the battle. Companies A, H, and L, of the 1st, which included men from Manchester, were assigned to Harrison's Landing, Virginia, the new base for the Army of the Potomac. Manchester did not have any men in the 17th, 20th or 27th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiments at the time of this battle.

MANCHESTER MEN IN THE 5TH

- **Frank Cowan** was born in Ireland. He enlisted at Manchester, with Co. B, Connecticut's 5th Volunteer Infantry Regiment on July 22, 1861, and was discharged on July 22, 1864. Frank died in 1886. He is interred at St. Bridget's Cemetery in Manchester.
- **Frank M. Winchester** enlisted in Manchester, with Co. D, Connecticut's 5th Volunteer Infantry Regiment on July 22, 1861, and was discharged on July 22, 1864. Frank received a Civil War pension.

MANCHESTER MEN IN THE 14TH

- **Hiram Blish** of Manchester, enlisted as a musician, with Company D, 1st Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment on April 18, 1861, and was mustered out on

July 31, 1861, at New Haven. He reenlisted with the 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Band on August 4, 1861, and received a disability discharge on March 13, 1864. He died on February 6, 1917.

- **Thomas Hannah** of Manchester, enlisted with Company K, Connecticut's 14th Volunteer Infantry Regiment on May 28, 1862, and was mustered out on May 31, 1865. He died on February 4, 1882, and is interred at Waterhole Cemetery, East Hampton, CT.
- **Nelson J. Hodge** was born about 1837, the son of Selden and Lucy Hodge. He enlisted in Manchester, with Company I, Connecticut's 14th Volunteer Infantry Regiment on August 29, 1862.

OTHER MAY, 1863 NEWS

- **Clarence L. Ingersoll (alias John B. Lewis)**, of Manchester, died in the service of his country, on May 27, 1863, at New Orleans, Louisiana. He entered military service on November 20, 1861, with Company A, 12th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment.
- **May through July, 1863. The Siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi.** Major General Joseph Hooker's Army of the Potomac crossed the Rappahannock fords on April 30th, to position his army on General Robert E. Lee's vulnerable flank. Lee attacked Hooker while he was still in the thick of the wilderness. On May 1st and 2nd, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, with 30,000 Confederate soldiers, attacked the Union troops on their exposed flank. The attack ended when General Jackson was accidentally shot by friendly fire. His left arm was amputated, and he later died from pneumonia. On May 3rd, the Confederates resumed their attack and drove Hooker's army back to the fords, defeating the Federals near Salem's church. This battle was considered one of General Lee's greatest victories.
- **June, 1863 Naval Operations.** The Confederate cruiser, CSS Tacony evaded Union blockades and seized five Federal fishing vessels off the coast of New England.
- **June 14, 1863. James B. Chapman** from Manchester, died of disease at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on June 18, 1863. James was born about 1842, the son of Nathaniel and Hannah P. Chapman. He joined Company A, 25th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment on August 30, 1862. He is interred at Moodus Cemetery, Moodus, Connecticut.
- **July 1-3, 1863. Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.** On July 1st, General Robert E. Lee's army was concentrated around Gettysburg. They drove the Union defenders back to Cemetery Hill. On the 2nd, there was severe fighting at Devil's Den, Little Round Top, and several other locations in the area. The Confederates were gaining ground, but on the morning of July 3rd, with fighting raging on Culp's Hill, the Union soldiers regained the ground it had lost. That afternoon, after a massive artillery bombardment, Lee's army attacked Cemetery Ridge in what is known as "Picket's Charge",

See CIVIL WAR, page 6

More Valued Society Volunteers...

As sometimes happens when making out a long list of people, we inadvertently leave out a few names. In our last newsletter, when we thanked the volunteers who helped us last year, we discovered several Valued Volunteers whose names were omitted. We wish to acknowledge them here: **Jim Hall, Dick Jenkins, Robert Laughlin, Alberta Parsons, Nicola Sinclair and Phyllis Wilson.** Please accept our apologies. We really appreciate your help.

Donations Help Our Collections Grow

During the past year a number of artifacts and archival materials have been donated to the Society. Some of the more interesting items are:

- A tobacco press from the Miller farm on Spencer Street, used to compress bundles of tobacco leaves in preparation for shipping.
- A copy of "Thunder Dragon Gate" by Talbot Mundy. Mundy lived on Pitkin Street for a number of years in the 1930's and authored many adventure books. He also wrote scripts for the radio show "Jack Armstrong, All American Boy"
- Norton family and Norton Electric Co. photographs, books, and house plans which survived a devastating fire in 2001 in the house built by Charles Norton in 1901 on Oakland Street
- Ski rescue sled used on the North View Ski Slope in Manchester in the 1960's
- Wall clock used at Lincoln School as the master clock to control the clocks in all the classrooms
- Large oil portrait of Knight Dexter Cheney, complete with family legend that the hands were modeled by two different members of the Cheney family
- Large collection of photographs taken by Reginald Pinto, a long time photographer for the Manchester Evening Herald
- Wall clock originally used at the Cheney offices. It was purchased from the company by one of their employees in the 1920's and was handed down in the family until it came to us.
- Over 50 photographs of Manchester High School baseball and football teams from the 1920's through the 1960's. These were in the family of coach Tom Kelley, who coached both sports for many years.
- Voter Registration cards prior to 1993. These cards show that women were registered to vote in Manchester prior to 1900. They also show when the applicant came to Manchester, which will interest genealogy researchers, as that information may not be available anywhere else.

CIVIL WAR, from page 5

but was repelled resulting in a Union victory. There were 51,000 casualties making Gettysburg the bloodiest battle in American history.

The 5th, 14th, 17th 20th and 27th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiments, as well as the 2nd Connecticut Light Battery, saw action. Manchester men from the 5th and 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiments, who were in the battle of Chancellorsville, also fought at Gettysburg.

Nelson Hodge was mortally wounded at Gettysburg when he was hit by a gunshot in the left knee, and died on July 23, 1863. Nelson is listed as one of 22 soldiers on Connecticut's Memorial Stone at Gettysburg National Cemetery, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and is interred at East Cemetery in Manchester.

Members of the 22nd Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment were mustered out of service on July 7, 1863. The regiment was organized at Hartford on September 20, 1862. The 22nd was assigned to defend of Washington, D.C., and also fought in the Siege of Suffolk, Virginia. Manchester soldiers in this regiment were: **Warren W. Bidwell, George F. Buell, Otto H. Campbell, Charles W. Fox, Henry D. House, George M. Keeney, and Thomas McCormack.**

Frederick T. Chapman of Company A, 7th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment, was transferred to the Invalid Corps on July 9, 1863.

July 13, 1863. Riots broke out in New York over the first drawing of names for the draft. Over a four day period there were more than 1,000 dead or injured. Federal troops had to be called in to restore order

Sources include: Manchester Historical Society Civil War enlistment data; Websites: Find a Grave, Wikipedia, The Hartford Courant archives.

Manchester Historical Society, Manchester, Connecticut

invites its VALUED VOLUNTEERS

to SURRENDER this COUPON for 20% OFF a ONE-TIME ENTIRE PURCHASE through 12/31/2013 at its

Museum Stores

Manchester History Center, 175 Pine Street

Old Manchester Museum, 126 Cedar Street

in appreciation for their time, efforts, and countless contributions to the preservation of local history

www.manchesterhistory.org (860) 647-9983

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All lectures are held at the History Center at 175 Pine Street at 1:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Parking is available in our lot along the Forest Street side of the building and in the small lot on Pine Street where handicap parking is available. Admission for events at the History Center and for walking tours is \$2 for Society members, \$4 for nonmembers and free for children under age 16. Check online at www.manchesterhistory.org for the latest information on upcoming events.

**Saturdays 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
and Sundays 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

OLD MANCHESTER MUSEUM OPEN TO VISITORS

The Old Manchester Museum at 126 Cedar Street has resumed regular hours for the season. A new exhibit features Manchester's participation in the Civil War. (See related article on page 2.)

June 9, Sunday, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

and second Sunday of every month year-round

CHENEY HOMESTEAD OPEN TO VISITORS

View the 1785 house at 106 Hartford Road and hear commentary about this interesting residence where the Cheney brothers were born and grew up.

**Weekdays, from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. , through June 30th
THERE'S A MAP FOR THAT**

History Center, 175 Pine Street

Explore how our state has been surveyed, charted, and pictured, at this exhibit organized by the Hartford History Center and "Connecticut Explored" magazine, in celebration of the magazine's 10th anniversary. View large-scale reproductions of historical Connecticut and United States maps including Manchester maps and materials.

June 1, Saturday, 1:00 p.m., FREE

CENTER SPRINGS PARK HISTORY WALK

Come explore this 55-acre urban park on Connecticut Trails Day. Hikers will have a fairly easy, but hilly, walk on the one-mile loop trail around the park, with an optional walk to the Cheney railroad, about an additional half-mile round trip. Meet at the parking lot at 39 Lodge Drive, off Hemlock Street. Trails Day is sponsored by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association in cooperation with local non-profits, such as our Historical Society. Open to all. Extreme weather cancels. No dogs, please.

June 3, Monday, 5:30 p.m., FREE

CEMETERY TOUR AND COMMENTARY

Come explore the Cheney Cemetery at this Pride-in-Manchester week event. The Cheney Cemetery is a three-acre parcel abutting the East Cemetery. Meet at the iron gate on East Center Street. Please park along Harrison Street. Extreme weather cancels. No dogs, please.

June 7, Friday, 5:00 p.m.

CENTER MEMORIAL PARK HISTORY WALK

As part of Pride-In-Manchester week, this walk will explore Center Memorial Park. We will visit the Civil War monument and hear the history of the Dancing Bear fountain. The walk will be led by Susan Barlow and will take about 50 to 60 minutes. Meet at the front steps of Town Hall, 41 Center Street, with ample parking behind the building. Extreme weather cancels. No dogs, please

June 8, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

HERITAGE DAY ACTIVITIES throughout Manchester

Check out the many free activities for families, history buffs,

artists, music-lovers, and everyone who wants to keep the Charm in Manchester! Our museums will be open free (donations accepted): Cheney Homestead at 106 Hartford Rd.; Old Manchester Museum, 126 Cedar St.; History Center, 175 Pine St. with children's activities and our Book Corner throughout the day, a free harp concert at 1:00 p.m. by Wilda Wyse, history walk at 12 noon (see separate listing below). The Loom exhibit will be open for tours—entrance is at 199 Forest St. Shuttle buses run from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. as you visit our museums in the Historic District, as well as the Fire Museum, Cheney Hall, the Lutz Children's Museum, Mary Cheney Library, and our historic Downtown.

June 8, Saturday, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

WOODBIDGE FARMSTEAD GROUNDS TOURS

(See related article on page 1.)

June 8, Saturday, 12:00 noon

GREAT LAWN WALKING TOUR

Led by Tom Ferguson and Susan Barlow. Meet at the Loom Room on the ground floor of the History Center on the Forest Street side.

June 11, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.

GENEALOGY GROUP

(See related article on page 3.)

June 29, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.

CHENEY RAILROAD HISTORY WALK

Easy, but bumpy, walk along the former railroad, built in 1869 to connect the Cheney silk mills to the main rail line in the North End. At 2.5 miles, it was the shortest private freight-and-passenger railroad in the United States. We will hike along the one-mile portion owned by the Manchester Land Conservation Trust and, depending on the weather, on to Center Springs Park, which will take about 1-3/4 hours round trip. Participants will hear about the history of the railroad and see maps and old pictures. Meet at the North End of Main St., on the north (right) side of Farr's Sporting Goods, 2 Main St. Park at the nearby shopping plaza or Eighth Utilities District office building (please do not park in Farr's parking lot). A special favor will be given to children who attend the hike, sponsored by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association's family hike program, but open to all, including singles. Extreme weather cancels. No dogs, please.

July 9, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.

GENEALOGY GROUP

(See related article on page 3.)

August 13, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.

GENEALOGY GROUP

Possible trip to Dodd Center, Storrs, CT. To be confirmed. (see related article on page 3.)

September 10, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.

GENEALOGY GROUP

(See related article on page 3.)

October 20, Sunday, 1:00 p.m.

Manchester History Center

ANNUAL MEETING



The Manchester Historical Society
175 Pine Street
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 10th ANNUAL
Historical Society Holiday Gala
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2013

Plans are already underway for the Historical Society's 10th Holiday Gala fundraiser. We are looking for some special items to help us make the evening a financial success as well as a fun-filled evening. Do you have a special antique, collectible, service, or artistic item that you can donate to the auction? Cottage rentals, timeshares, dinners, concert tickets, and gardening consultation are all popular auction items. We're also looking for sponsors, such as local businesses, and advertisers for our Gala program, and we would appreciate your help in soliciting them. We want the 10th annual gala to be our best ever, and it will be one of our biggest fundraisers. Please contact Gala Chairperson Terry Parla, 860-643-1823 or Ternardo@snet.net to let her know what you can donate or if you can solicit a business sponsor. And mark your calendar for the festive evening! Wine, hors d'oeuvres, coffee and dessert will be served. You'll enjoy music, live and silent auctions, a teacup auction, and a few surprises. The museum store will be open to purchase local-history gifts. More details—such as donations of decorated wreaths and baskets—will come in the early fall.