

CHESHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 38, No. 2

Keeping Cheshire's History Alive!

FALL 2015

SPEAKER PROGRAM

Monday, September 28, 7:30 p.m.

Greg Mills, Antique Bottle Collecting

Mr. Mills, a local antique bottle collector, will give a presentation on antique bottles. He has been collecting bottles and glass for more than forty years and will discuss their manufacturing techniques, and the development of the glass industry in the United States during the 19th century and early 20th centuries. The various areas of bottle collecting, including historical flasks, bitters, medicines, poisons, inks, sodas, fruit jars, and mineral waters will be explored. He will also discuss, how to determine a bottle's age, where to find antique bottles and how to clean them. Mr. Mills will be bringing items from his personal collection to exhibit and illustrate the various topics discussed. The presentation will be from 7:30-8:30 p.m. A question and answer period will follow the presentation. It should be an enjoyable and informative evening.

Monday, October 26, 7:30 p.m.

Stephen Darley, Revolutionary War History

Mr. Darley discusses his third book, *Call to Arms: The Patriot Militia in the 1777 British Raid on Danbury Conn.* Mr. Darley did some of his research at the Society. He includes personal accounts of participants (letters, memoirs, journals) as well as the lives of five unsung patriot officers, and the life and career of General David Wooster. A great book and a great speaker!

Monday, November 23, 7:30 p.m.

Maryalyce Lee, DAR 125th Anniversary

The National Daughters of the American Revolution is celebrating its 125th Anniversary this year. Maryalyce Lee, Regent of the local chapter (Lady Fenwick) will discuss the history of the DAR and Lady Fenwick Chapter in particular with Nettie C. Smith being the first Regent serving her first of many terms from 1910 until 1916. The talk will also include patriots buried in Hillside Cemetery.

CHS - HPH

The Cheshire Historical Society, Inc. (CHS) is incorporated under the laws of the State of Connecticut as a non-profit, educational institution. All contributions to CHS are tax-deductable for Federal Income Tax purposes. CHS operates the Hitchcock-Phillips House Museum (HPH) which is located in the center of Cheshire at 43 Church Drive, Cheshire Conn. 06410. Corporate headquarters for the organization is located at the HPH and can be reached by phone at (203) 272-2574. Visit our website at www.cheshirehistory.org.

Membership in CHS is open to anyone with an interest in history. Benefits include annual mailings, two newsletters a year, and voting privileges at organizational meetings. Dues payments are a significant part of our operating budget for the HPH. Members are also eligible for volunteer programs.

Our Mission

Keeping Cheshire's history alive through our museum's collections, exhibitions and programs.

Our Vision

The Cheshire Historical Society will be integrated in the life and interest of the community as an accessible source of historical information and knowledge.

FALL CALENDAR

Except for holiday weekends, the Cheshire Historical Society (CHS) Hitchcock-Phillips House (HPH) will be open to the public every Sunday, 2-4 p.m. now through December 27th. Check website for more information. We are also open by appointment on other days. Call (203) 272-2574 to schedule a visit for a private tour or for research purposes. CHS has WiFi for our researchers and guests.

SUNDAYS

Visitor Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. Tours are available.

Boutique-in-the-Shed Antique Shop is open 2 to 4 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

September 12 - See us at Chamber of Commerce Fall Festival!

September 19 - See us at the Cheshire Land Trust
"Ives Farm Day at the Farm"

September 21 - Board of Directors Meeting 7:30 p.m.

September 28 SPEAKER - Bottle Collecting 7:30 p.m.

OCTOBER

Boutique will close the middle of this month

October 4 South Brooksvale History Trolley Tour

October 16-17-18 Spirits Alive! Tour at Hillside Cemetery

October 19 - Board of Directors Meeting 7:30 p.m.

October 26 - SPEAKER - Revolutionary War 7:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER

November 8 - Ralph Zingarella Veterans Day SPEAKER 2:00

November 11 - Veterans Day

November 16 - Board of Directors Meeting 7:30 p.m.

November 23 - SPEAKER - DAR 7:30 p.m.

November 26 - Happy Thanksgiving! Society is closed.

November 29 - Gingerbread House Workshop 2:00

DECEMBER

December 20 - Christmas Party 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

December 25 - Merry Christmas! Society is closed.

December 27 - Last Visitor Sunday (reopen in April)

JANUARY 2016

January 17 - Board of Directors Meeting 1:00 p.m.

HPH is open by appointment for tours & research

January through March—call (203) 272-2574

IN THIS ISSUE

- What is an **Arithma**?
- Recalling the **White House Tower Restaurant** on Route 10
- **John Ostuno** Remembers Humiston School Days (1940s)
- Hidden Gem in Exhibit Room: **1912 Suffrage Postcard**
- Cheshire's Famous Artist: **John Frederick Kensett**
- Celebrating 150 Years: **Civil War Monument**
- Special Insert: **2015 Annual Meeting Report**

FROM THE PRESIDENT: Secrets!

Shhh! Not so loud! The theme of this newsletter is “Secrets.” I often joke that the HPH is the second home I never wanted, but the truth is that I very much enjoy spending time at our Society house museum. That’s my secret. Every room has shared a secret story with me. I’m lucky because I can spend as much time as I want in our museum rooms and research what stories these rooms have to tell. This is what I’ve asked our writers to consider: what secret have you found? what story can you tell? As my relationship with the CHS continues, I have many guilty pleasures: walking into the Parlor and stealing a glance at the Lydia Hall tea dress that started such a panic when our Northeast Paranormal Society spent the night, the pride I feel when I see the Eri Woodbury Medal of Honor in our Exhibit Room, the homey “memory smell” of fresh baked bread as I light the candle in our beehive oven, the familiar items that I recall as a child that most children today would have find completely foreign in our Kitchen & Gadget Room. My biggest secret: the vision I have that our house museum will be world class and become part of “Destination Cheshire” along with the Ball & Socket Arts project. Come to the Society and I’ll take you on my secrets tour. Shhh! Diane Calabro, CHS President

COMING SOON! What’s Being Planned at CHS

We will connect our collections more closely to our visitors to give everyone who visits a greater sense of place and appreciation for the incredible items we have that showcase Cheshire’s history. We are designing new exhibits, including our new Military Room, to better tell the stories behind our collections. We will be working to create a more hands-on, family-friendly experience. We have added a new conference room and additional office space with WiFi as we consider the future needs of the CHS and our surrounding community. We are improving the usability of our research area, our Robert Craig Library. We are organizing our collection of historic clothing. We are working on more community partnerships with local groups including ArtsPlace, Ball & Socket Arts, and Cheshire Academy.

43RD ANTIQUE & COLLECTIBLES SALE WAS HELD ON JUNE 20—It Was A Great Day

The Society would like to thank all the dealers that attended our event. Most every dealer reported that they did very well. We’re looking forward to next year’s event! Hoping to see all our dealers again next June!

BEQUESTS to Cheshire Historical Society

If you have included the Cheshire Historical Society in your will, thank you! We’d like to keep a record of your generous action. Kindly send a copy to: The Cheshire Historical Society Attn: Ed Kania, Treasurer, P.O. Box 281, Cheshire, CT 06410

@YOU! Do We Have Your Email?

Do you receive e-mails from the Society? If not, please contact Justin Navarro at members@che.necoxmail.com or at (203) 272-2574 to update all of your contact information. This will ensure that you not only continue to receive important Society e-mail alerts, but also the link to our newsletters.

WiFi! We have WiFi! Sunday afternoons are a great time to come by and use our WiFi, do research, or find a quiet spot to do your homework!

MEMBERS SHARE

Do you have an event that you’d like to list in our newsletter? Send to cheshirehistory@che.necoxmail.com for consideration.

BITE ROAD - Wiese Road was originally known as Bite Road. Looking for anyone who has an old map or documents to verify this. Leave a message at (203) 272-5937.

WHITE GLOVE PARTY - Call for volunteers to help with archiving. We now have the white gloves and sleeves! If you had phoned previously, can you do so again? (Our apologies! We changed phone systems as our old phone was losing messages!) We need help to carefully put historic documents in plastic sleeves. Call (203) 272-2574 to be part of our “White Glove Party!”

WRITERS NEEDED - The Society needs volunteer help with Publicity Releases. Can be done at home and can fit your schedule. If you want to describe our activities to the local media, please contact the Society.

MURPHY SPEAKEASY? Does anyone have information about the Murphy family of Cheshire, specifically James Murphy who ran a speakeasy? In 1910 census, he was running a tavern. In 1920, a hotel manager. In 1930, no occupation listed. In 1940, back to running a tavern. Can you phone the Society or e-mail cheshirehistory@che.necoxmail.com if you have more information. Reference “Lisa’s Request.”

LUCAS PAINTING This Robert Lucas painting is part of Dotty Druftva’s collection and she is interested in finding a buyer. The subject is a barn on Highland Avenue that is no longer standing. There are now several office buildings at this site as well as a view of the farmhouse that is still standing seen from Maple Avenue. In the painting, to the left, the back of the house is seen as it would have been viewed from Highland Avenue. Contact Ms. Druftva through CHS if you are interested and would like to learn more about this painting.

**CHESHIRE FIFTY YEARS AGO: 1960s 1970s 1980s Photographs of Route 10 Are Being Requested**

We’ve had a number of requests for photographs of commercial landscapes in Cheshire from the 1950s-1980s. Most of us take photos of family, friends, and special events. If you are that rare person who took photos of Cheshire businesses, the view of shops and businesses along Route 10 or other areas in town, or other commercial vistas pre-1985, could you please share these photos with the Society? We would like a copy of the photo, a scan of the photo, or a photocopy of what you have. *Please identify the photo!* Include your own name (or the name of the photographer), the year the photo was taken, and describe the location. If there is some special reason you took the photo or any narrative you might want to include with your submission, please do so. We’ll file these in our Society files for posterity. Photos can be e-mailed to cheshirehistory@chs.necoxmail.com. They can be mailed to Cheshire Historical Society, P.O. Box 281, Cheshire CT 06410. They can be brought to the Society (We have a black drop off box at our backdoor that can be used at any time).

CHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Officers:**

President	Diane Calabro
Vice President	Art Sides
Membership Secretary	Justin Navarro
Recording Secretary	Jaime McCormick
Corresponding Secretary	Shirley Brady
Treasurer	Ed Kania

Directors:

Colleen Fitzgerald	May 2015-April 2018
Bob Larkin	May 2013-April 2016
Clare Leake	May 2013-April 2016
Cara A. Luciani	May 2015-April 2018
Marshall Robinson	May 2013-April 2016
José Rodriguez	May 2014-April 2017
Diane Ulbrich	May 2015-April 2018
Lois Van Almkerk	May 2014-April 2017
Pat Vita	May 2014-April 2017

Curator Team:

Curator	To be appointed
Assistant Curators	Kathleen Connolly Ilona Somogyi - Clothing Historian

Facilities

House & Grounds Manager - David Calabro

Student Liaison

Thomas Mulholland, Class of 2017

ATTENTION SHOPPERS! BOUTIQUE IS OPEN!

The Boutique-in-the-Shed opened its doors for the season on June 20, 2015 to an eager bunch of shoppers waiting to get in and poke around at 6:30 a.m.!!!! By one o'clock, the Boutique was wiped out of merchandise. Business was brisk and we brought in close to \$1,000! This is all donated to the Society. And this is a record for one day for our little shop! ***So Members, please continue to donate your vintage items.*** People love the Boutique and we need merchandise. You can call or drop off your items at the Society anytime by calling Assistant Curator Kathleen Connolly at (860) 518-6156 or leave a message at the Society at (203) 272-2574. ***Thanks to all who donated this year!*** And while you are visiting the Boutique on Summer Sundays please note our new advertising signs created by artist and President Diane Calabro.



Harrison Dent (c), Troop 51, organizes his Eagle Project with Stephen Mulholland (l) and Bobby Geisler (r). Harrison will create a Healing Garden and improve CHS Shed exterior.

BOY SCOUT EAGLE PROJECT UPDATE**Troop 92:**

Quentin Arai - Creating Administrative Office From Old Assistant House Master Kitchenette project (Status: completed)

Troop 51:

Harrison Dent - Repairs to Shed project (Status: completed)

Robert Geisler - Refurbishing Kitchen project (Status: start up)

Thomas Mulholland - Third Floor Dormitory Room Project (Status: completed. Eagle Award given in May 2015)

Stephen Mulholland - Protective Film on Windows Project (Status: completed. Eagle Award given in June 2015)



New Eagle Scouts! Thomas Mulholland (l) and Stephen Mulholland (r) with CHS President Diane Calabro at Eagle Scout Court of Honor, May 30, 2015. Both did their Eagle Project at the HPH.

**A Tour Inside
The Cheshire Historical Society
Cheshire, Connecticut**



Published from the Fall 1995 to present Cheshire Historical Society News

By Mary Ellen Kania, Curator

Photographs by Morgan Dent

**SOCIETY PHOTO
BOOK is available for
\$150 Donation**

This outstanding picture book of the inside of the Hitchcock Phillips House (2013 photos, self-published) is available by contacting the Society at (203) 272-2574. All proceeds support Society projects and improvements. We hope you will consider making a donation to the Society.

In Memory Of:

Alfred Mitlehner

80 years old, passed away March 26, 2015

Doris Black

96 years old, passed away April 9, 2015

Richard "Dick" Miller

102 years old, passed away May 7, 2015

Helen Mertens

94 years old, passed away May 21, 2015

THANK YOU!

Major Contributors

Juline Beier
Margaret Boutwell
Sally Bowman
Bristol-Myers Squibb
Cheshire Academy
Reed Durand
Robert & Ann Fennelly
Mary Hobler-Hyson
George Adair & Cynthia McMillan
David & Sally Schrumm
Raymond & Eleanor Verner

Other Contributors

Mike & Shirley Brady
Barbara Christoff
Gerald & Adoria Corcoran
Kevin Meehan & Lisa Drazen
Beverly Dunn
Richard & Ruth Gleeton
John & Judy Knott
Dawn Marchand
Bob O'Brien
John Ostuno
Louis & Mary Ann Ricciuti
Jane Richards
Jill Rochford
Ralph Rowland
Marie Stapkowski
James & Cynthia Vibert, Sr.
Mathew Zajac

StEPs UPDATE: Working on “Audience” Segment

CHS continues in the StEPs-CT program—a two-year program created with the Connecticut League of History Organizations, and run in partnership with the Connecticut Historical Society, providing coursework that will guide us towards excellence in six areas of organizational practice.

StEPs-CT is based on the “Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations” (StEPs), a national model curriculum developed by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

CHS has completed the first segment, “Mission, Vision and Governance.” We were awarded the Bronze Certificate from AASLH. We are now working on the “Audience” segment. Pat Vita, Shirley Brady, Thomas Mulholland and Art Sides are attending a series of hands-on workshops and lectures. The most recent lectures were held at the Cornwall Historical Society (which has just opened their MOO Exhibit) and Kent Historical Society, giving CHS participants a unique look at the operations of other house museums. Our expert mentor, Kathy Craughwell-Varda, continues to provide one-to-one coaching. The StEPs-CT program is the first in the nation to implement the StEPs curriculum on a statewide level. CHS is proud to be part of this program.

AWARD OF MERIT FROM CLHO “Cheshire Town History Tour” App Receives Recognition at Annual Meeting

In the photo on right taken at the June 2015 CLHO Annual Meeting in Meriden, Conn.: The narrator of our App, Dr. Bob Chesanow, stands next to the App author and our Town Historian, Jeanné Chesanow. Liz Shapiro, the Executive Director of The Connecticut League of History Organizations, and Diane Calabro, CHS President, holding the framed Award of Merit. This award is on display at the Society.



Jim Vibert demonstrated colonial woodworking at our “Colonial Days” CT Open House Day event on Saturday, June 13

StEPs-CT

★	Year One	Mission, Vision and Governance	COMPLETED
→	Audience Management		Attending Now
			October 2015
	Year Two	Stewardship of Collections	March 2016
		Stewardship of Historic Structures & Landscapes Interpretation	

DOCENT VOLUNTEERS: Third Graders Rock!

Cheers to our volunteer docents who provided wonderful tours to the Third Graders from Chapman, Norton, and Doolittle schools.



Above in photo—Standing: Barbara Christoff, José Rodriguez, Aida Rodriguez, Pat Pfurr. Seated: Joy Irish, Jane Richards and Judy Knott. Absent from the picture are Marty Connolly, Ron Gagliardi, Ted Holtzman, Clare Leake, and Cindy McMillian. Many thanks to all of our Docent Tour Guides! And to Director Pat Vita who organized these tours!

Pat Vita shared: “Students always write us wonderful thank you letters. All of them are complimentary and usually include a long list of things they saw. After a long list of things one student saw, this young person said just what I might have said, ‘Things I learned were they had to dress fancy, how to toast bread and how to heat the bed.’ Another student added my favorite: ‘P.S. I want to come visit again.’”

WARREN VAN ALMKERK MEMORIAL HEALING GARDEN

By Lois Van Almkerk, Director

We are creating a Healing Garden at the Society and will dedicate this area in memory of my brother, Warren Van Almkerk. As many members know, Warren loved gardening and had an amazing green thumb. We have selected the bench that we'd like to use for the garden: a whimsical Butterfly Bench made by Cricket Forge. It is a spectacular piece and is described as "a functional piece of art made to stand the test of time." These benches are made of 1/4" Steel and Cricket Forge shot blasts these and then flame sprayed with zinc. They are painted with a high quality two-part epoxy base paint that is weather proof. I think my brother would have loved this bench. We have some donations towards the purchase of the bench in Warren's memory. If anyone else might care to contribute, please let me know. You can phone me at (203) 272-5937 or send your donation to "Cheshire Historical Society" P.O. Box 281, Cheshire CT 06410 with a note that this is for Warren's Bench. *Product photo above center: For the Warren Van Almkerk Healing Garden: handmade in USA, this medium-size Butterfly Bench (74"W x 53"H x 36"D) from Cricket Forge costs \$2,700. Donations would be gratefully received.*



THE JOHN FREDERICK KENSSETT BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION: ONE MORE IDEA!

By Robert Chesnow, CHS Member & Cheshirepedia

March 22, 2016 marks the 200th anniversary of Cheshire's own distinguished artist, John Frederick Kensett. A committee chaired by and including participants from the Cheshire Historical Society, Cheshirepedia, Inc, Arts Place, and members of Cheshire Town government - among others - has been formed to suggest and promote Kensett Bicentennial celebrations of varied sorts to be held throughout 2016. Now here comes a rather modest idea for these festivities: The creation and promotion of the Official Kensett Kocktail! Although scholarly research emanating from ArtsPlace indicates that Mr. Kensett was not only fond of a bit of gin from time to time, the research produced the names of two brands of gin he would have preferred! While always an option, we believe that the Kocktail should be based on ingredients indigenous to Cheshire and available to Mr. Kensett in his part of the 19th century. We refer to apple cider (hard variety) and cranberries. There was indeed a cranberry bog in Cheshire more than one hundred years ago. In order to construct the perfect Kensett Kocktail, considerable research into the different brands and styles of these ingredients is already underway. We are assured the assistance of two experienced mixologists to put possible finishing touches on the recipes in the competition. We had a preliminary tasting by a select panel in August. When appropriate finalists have been identified (could be from five to ten different recipes) we plan a Grand Salon - in the manner of a gallery show of new works of art - with a broad list of invitees who will vote in the winner. With the selection of THE Kensett Kocktail recipe, we shall endeavor to have that recipe on the menus of various establishments in Cheshire where such beverages are purveyed. Of course since the Kensett Bicentennial events will run throughout the year of 2016, the opportunities for the Kocktail to spread joy throughout and to all involved are manifold. Stay tuned!

"DRIVE THRU CHESHIRE HISTORY" PROPOSAL SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

By Breina Schain, CHS Member

I wanted to let all of you know about an exciting proposal for the Town of Cheshire entitled "Drive Thru Cheshire History." A few months ago, some of you may have attended the meeting at the CHS where I addressed the group who were gathering for the Preservation Award Ceremony and shared my proposal. I am earnestly excited about this idea to have an interesting compact disc (CD) narrated with a musical background accompanied by printed information to take in your car on a self-guided tour at your own time and pace. Hopefully, these will be available to borrow at the Cheshire Public Library and the CHS. On this tour, you could familiarize and educate yourselves about a wide variety of landmarks such as historic homes, the linear trail and the Lock 12 Museum, the prison, cemeteries, and a variety of other sites that are notable or played a role in our local history. It could be astonishing to see and learn all about what we have in this culturally rich town! These CDs could be part of a series that include a Patriotic tour, a general Historic Landmarks tour, a tour for kids (parent's driving, of course), and a geographic/natural history tour.

I could really benefit from having volunteers for this project in areas such as writing, editing, narrating, producing, marketing, fundraising, etc. I am hoping you share my vision and benefits of the "Drive Thru Cheshire History" tour with your friends and neighbors. If you are interested in joining me on this worthy project, please reach me through the Society by phoning (203) 272-2574 and leaving a message for Breina. As Hillary Clinton maintains, when we work together we can build our village!

A VERY MERRY KENSSETT CHRISTMAS: Suburban Garden Club Will Keep The Artist In Mind for Our December 20th Open House

In keeping with the town-wide celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of John Frederick Kensett, world-renowned Hudson River School artist born in Cheshire, the Suburban Garden Club is planning artist-themed decorations for the HPH for our December 20th Christmas Party. As they have done in the past, the entire house museum will be decorated for the holidays and the touch of the Suburban Garden Club will be seen in every festive nook and cranny. Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 20th. The doors open at one o'clock and will stay open until five o'clock enabling visitors to conveniently attend the Congregational Church for their annual service of lessons and carols that follows our party. We are looking forward to seeing the "artist's touch" through the House. Our many thanks go out to the Suburban Garden Club for their amazing creativity: come see and enjoy!

FACILITIES UPDATE

By David Calabro, House & Grounds Chairman

The HPH has had a challenging spring as we had a significant ice dam in March. The Town of Cheshire Public Works came through for us and did all the needed repairs. As always, we really appreciate their assistance! Our stretch goal is refurbishing our Meeting Room which also had water damage this winter and is due for upgrading. A fundraising mailing will be going out for this effort and we hope you can make a contribution of any size to help with this.

CURATOR'S REPORT

By Kathleen Connolly, Assistant Curator

This year our curator roles have seen a lot of changes. This is something none of the board members expected or anticipated. Mary Ellen Kania decided it was her time to retire. She has been our long time Curator, devoted friend and “master of everything” at the Society. We also lost our beloved Assistant Curator Warren Van Almkerk, whose special talent and knowledge of antiques and the workings of the HPH will also be impossible to replace. This leaves me, Kathleen Connolly as our Assistant Curator; and, Ilona Somogy as our new Textile Curator. You may know Ilona from her work with the Ball & Socket Arts project. Ilona and I are trying to fill some big shoes! We are hoping that a volunteer will come forward to be our Head Curator. This will have to be someone as dedicated, organized and detail-oriented as Mary Ellen, someone who really enjoys cataloging and archiving. We also hope to find a third Assistant Curator to help with our ongoing accession and inventory work, particularly our books and documents. I am just amazed when I think about the tremendous amount of work, time and dedication that Mary Ellen and Warren so unselfishly gave to the Cheshire Historical Society.

Center: Cheshire's Italian-American Heritage Display, Spring 2015

Exhibit Room

Our glass display cases reflect interesting speakers from our Spring 2015 program:

- Christine Pittsley's excellent historical lecture on “Italian Heritage in Cheshire;”
- Eric Nelson's popular talks on Ethnobotany (native plants) used by our ancestors in Cheshire.

We also had a Local Author Book Fair this spring. Several authors talked about their books, including Stephen Darley who will be back in October to speak about the Revolutionary War.

Acquisitions

We would like to extend our condolences to the Welch Family on the loss of their Uncle (and Great Uncle) Edgar: long-time Society Member, Edgar Johnson. Many of us have fine memories of Edgar “holding court” in the Society Parlor! The estate of Edgar Beadle Johnson generously donated three large boxes of Cheshire pamphlets, paper memorabilia, a rare Cheshire pinback button, historical Cheshire books, and miscellaneous sewing items. President Diane Calabro and Assistant Curator Kathleen Connolly were also invited to Edgar's interesting Victorian home to look over some of the items that perhaps would be of interest to us. Both Diane and I viewed and photographed an impressive reference library that Edgar had amassed over 50 years. We made a generous offer of \$1,500.00 to purchase the books for our Society Library. Unfortunately, we were outbid on this wonderful book collection. Regardless, we would like to give a special thanks to the Welch family for donating some of Edgars treasured books and offering us a chance to put in an offer.

An original World Trade Center Banner from the 1970s was donated by the family of one of the architects who designed the Trade Center buildings. Architect John Nelson, a former resident of Elim Park, passed away this past winter. His family

donated many of his furnishings and personal mementos to Elim Park's thrift shop “Treasures and Trifles.” Ruth and Paul Deerborn, Elim Park residents, volunteer to run the shop. The Deerborn's felt the banner, found in Mr. Nelson's back closet, was not an appropriate item to sell in the shop, so they graciously donated this unique item to the Society this spring. We are currently having this historic banner framed and it will be on display as a memorial to the WTC disaster.

Activities

Thomas Mulholland's Eagle Project has transformed the Third Floor of the Society by “rebooting” Dorm Room 10! We are happy to report that Thomas did receive his Eagle Scout for this effort. If you haven't yet made it up to the Third Floor, please try to! The room is “a blast from the past” from when Cheshire Academy had some of its student's dorms located here at the Hitchcock Phillips House. Thomas's Eagle Scout Project astounded all of us. The room is exactly what you would envision a private school in Connecticut circa 1950 to resemble. Donations of school dorm furniture came pouring in after a “shout out” on our Facebook page that Room 10 needed all kinds of school related memorabilia. That was after the Thomas did hours of research, painting, and prepping the old room with other Scouts, friends and family. Then the family did lots of shopping at New England antique shops to locate those hard to find treasures from the past. Where do you find a 1950's bedspread? One was found in some Grandma's cedar chest. An old iron bed?

From a chance encounter at a jam packed antique shop in Massachusetts. And a school desk circa Ozzie and Harriet? After traipsing all over, the desk was found in Miami Florida and brought up north by grandparents. Another school desk was loaned by a local Cheshire resident. For the finale, old timers who attended the Academy and lived in the dorms back in the day were given a special invitation and open house tour to view Thomas's outstanding job during the Cheshire Academy Alumni Weekend. Many of the men who attended the open house shared laughs and unknown quips and stories about happenings at the old Academy dorm rooms, and a few stories were quite hilarious! Our thanks to Thomas and the Mullholland family for their walk down memory lane! This wonderful contribution is now a permanent historical room and will be part of our house tour held on Sundays.

Our Archive Storage Room began leaking badly this past winter. An ice dam built up under the eaves of this room and we had significant water damage to that back part of the HPH wing. Several areas of the room received a soaking and we had some antique document damage. Luckily, yours truly found the mess only a few hours after the damage had started. Diane had the Town of Cheshire Public Works on the phone within the hour we had Keith over and he patched the leak, with help from Dave Calabro and Steve Mulholland. Then there were months of insurance claims, appraisal forms, and estimates for damages. Finally in early spring our resident handy man Ray Vissat and his son did the entire room over, right down to the studs. It looks beautiful; but will no longer be used as our archive room because of persistent moisture problems to that back area of the house. Right now it is a cheerful conference room that could hold about a dozen people. We are looking into how to best use this wonderful bright new space. *(Continues on the next page)*



BYGONE DAYS**By Diane Ulbrich, Director**

One of the many lost treasures of the early Twentieth Century in Cheshire was a popular restaurant located in the northern part of town and known as The White House Tower, located on Route 10 (then called the College Highway). It was owned by Mrs. Frank Stapleton, my grandmother, who lived on the premises in the Victorian house adjacent to the restaurant.

The White House Tower was originally a large barn that was converted first to a tea room and then into a full restaurant with a ballroom added later. It had an orchestra for your dancing and listening pleasure and was very popular among the football fans coming from Yale to Boston on a fall Saturday, raccoon coats and all!

There was a sign on top of the house next to the restaurant in very large letters that, said EAT which could easily be seen from three quarters of a mile away, surely the days before zoning regulations.

The menu consisted of the usual crowd-pleasing selections. Imagine the price of a Chicken Dinner was a dollar fifty and lobster or steak was two fifty. The early 1930s was during prohibition so no liquor could be served but I'll bet people improvised somehow.

Unfortunately, tragedy struck on November 12, 1935, when The White House Tower caught fire in the middle of the night and in spite of a valiant effort by the local Fire Department could not be saved due to lack of water in the area. What little water was left was directed to saving the house next to the restaurant, which still stands today.

Time marches on and I often wonder what would have happened had it survived, but my grandmother's dream of owning and running a restaurant that brought joy to so many was fulfilled.

We should all be so lucky.

CURATORS REPORT *(Continues from previous page)*

Our archives are now safely stored in the Robert Craig Library and on the Third Floor along with our new Warren Van Almerck Historic Clothing Room which is currently being assembled, sorted and displayed by assistant curators Kathleen Connolly and Ilona Somogyi.

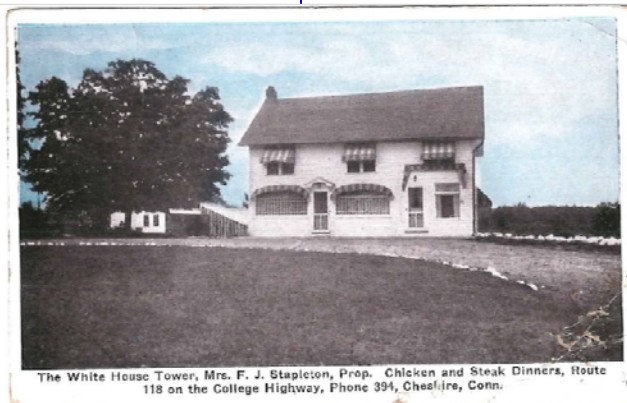
Three large oak antique display cases were donated to us by the Naugatuck Historical Society due to their downsizing from their former train depot location to the smaller Tuttle House. All these "new to us" cases are being put to good use. One rounded front case is now in the Robert Craig Library housing our journals and ledgers collection. The other two were painstakingly carried upstairs by Shane Cianci and Dave Calabro. We never knew what to do with "the exposed beam" room that we called the Panel Room. Director Marshall Robinson and Dave Calabro did a lot of carpentry preparation, sheet rocking, tearing out some unattractive 1970's paneling, and storage cabinets that were not useful. Marshall is planning on putting our military collection on display which will make for an attractive new space out of a room everyone just walked through.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS**By José L. Rodriguez, Director**

As a Director at the Cheshire Historical Society one is often encouraged to take on projects that improve the Society's collections and enhance the Society's overall mission. In that regard, I have undertaken to reorganize and catalog the Society's postcard collections so that they are conserved appropriately, gathered into archival quality albums and made available for public viewing and scholarly research.

In the process of gathering and organizing the postcards, one in particular drew my attention. It is a rare and perhaps unique "real photo" postcard produced by E. W. Hazard, a Southington photographer, that features the Suffragette Float at the July 4th, 1912 Parade in Cheshire. The Horse Drawn wagon is decorated with bunting and a large banner proclaiming "Women's Rights". Twelve women are seated in the wagon, most wearing top hats, with at least one holding a placard proclaiming "Vote For Women".

Every August 18th, the Anniversary of the 19th Amendment is remembered as that pivotal moment in 1920 when the nation adopted and ratified women's suffrage, the right of women to vote as equal citizens with men, in local and national elections. This year 2015 marks the 95th anniversary since that landmark amendment was ratified and soon the 100th Anniversary will be



The White House Tower, Mrs. F. J. Stapleton, Prop. Chicken and Steak Dinners, Route 118 on the College Highway, Phone 394, Cheshire, Conn.



upon us.

Above: E.W. Hazard "real photo" Postcard: Suffragette Float Cheshire CT July 4th 1912

The Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association (CWSA) was founded in 1869 in Hartford. The struggle for equal votes for women was a long and arduous one. By 1912, when our photo card was produced, the movement was in full vigor led by Katherine Hepburn (the mother of the actress) as its President. The proud Cheshire Suffragettes wanted their movement to be front and center in the Independence Day Celebrations and see their voice heard in the fight for women's rights.

This postcard is numbered 31 in a series of photo postcards that picture the various floats that participated in the 1912 parade and the patriotic gatherings on the Green that preceded and followed the parade. *(Continues on the next page)*

DING! DING! DING! GOES THE TROLLEY! NEW TOUR OF SOUTH BROOKSVALE!

By Pat Vita, Director

Plans for our Brooksvale Trolley Tour are well underway. We are pleased to be collaborating again with the Cheshire Historic District Commission. Wearing the cap of conductor/narrator is Jim Vibert, a member of both the Society and the Commission. Not only is he narrating, he is writing the script. Call Pat Vita, (203) 272-3963 to reserve your ticket and tour time. Tickets are \$25 each, payable to the Cheshire Historical Society. Tours leave at Noon, 2 p.m., and 4 p.m.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS (Continued from previous page)

Independence Day parades were the thing back in the early years of the 20th century. The Cheshire July 4th parade, in particular, was one of the key events in the social and political life of the town. Everyone dressed to the nines in the July heat and the festivities lasted all day.

Today the July 4th parade of yesteryear has been replaced by our annual Memorial Day parade. Like then, major participants include the firemen, the police, veterans, civic organizations, school groups, political parties and local businesses. The major difference is that today we also enjoy fife and drum units and the school bands. No evidence of such is found in the many photo cards of the July 4th parades we have dating from 1910 to 1913. Music was surely part of the festivities then but on a more modest scale.

Our little photographic postcard souvenir highlighted here could easily have been overlooked as just one more of many cards kept in file drawers. Yet, a revamping of the Historical Society's collection has provided us with a glimpse on a time when things taken for granted today were not yet reality. In fact, the culmination of the women's suffrage movement in the 19th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, proved to be only the starting point for further struggle, effort and progress toward equal rights for women in America.

References:

Nichols, Carole, Votes and More for Women: Suffrage and After in Connecticut, Haworth Press, 1983.

Connecticuthistory.org "Women Win the Right to Vote" by Jessica Jenkins, 2012.

Ken Florey, American Woman Suffrage Postcards, A Study and Catalog. Book forthcoming later this year.

Ron Gagliardi, Images of America: Cheshire, Arcadia Publishing, 2001. Book available for purchase at the Historical Society gift shop.

THE ARITHMA

By Shirley Brady, Director

The Hitchcock-Phillips House has a room on the second floor devoted to household items called the Kitchen and Gadget Room. Many of the items aren't in use anymore: the wash boards, the carpet beaters, butter churns, and the Arithma and the circular slide rule.



The Arithma is a mechanical adding machine that fits in your pocket. It was manufactured by Addiator Gesellschaft, in Berlin Germany from 1920 to 1982. It contained sheet metal sliders inside a metal envelope. A stylus was used to manipulate the

sliders. It could perform both addition and subtraction. It could handle figures up to 999,999, and according to an advertisement of the product, never make a mistake.

If more complicated computations needed to be done around the house a circular slide rule could be used. The Monitor slide rule is six inches in diameter and made of vinylite. It can do multiplication, division, find squares and square roots. The trigonometry scales give sines and tangents of numbers. I don't even know what that means but I'm glad there was a gadget for that.

Directions for operating the Arithma and the circular slide rule can be found on YouTube. All I can say is that I'm glad someone made me memorize the multiplication tables.

Above: Arithma Addiator. Digital image. CollectingME.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 July 2015. And below: Addiator. Advertisement. Popular Science January 1961: 41.

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 City

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Call to Arms
The Patriot Militia
in the 1777 British Raid
on Danbury, Connecticut



STEPHEN DARLEY

**Stephen Darley,
Author, Speaks at
CHS on October 26th
at 7:30 p.m. The
event is free and we
hope you can join us
for this interesting
presentation.**

Contributions of original articles, news items and/or photographs, in addition to suggestions for the improvement of our newsletter are solicited and welcomed. Contact Diane Calabro at CHS. E-mail: cheshirehistory@che.necoxmail.net

Design and layout of the newsletter is provided by the CHS Board of Directors.

JOHN OSTUNO GOES BACK TO HUMISTON SCHOOL EIGHTY YEARS LATER

We received an e-mail from John Ostuno's son, Ernie Ostuno, in March, 2015: *My father, John Ostuno, went to Humiston School back in the 1930s. He still lives in Cheshire and has a good memory of what going to school was like 80 years ago, including riding the trolley from Higgins Road on Route 10 to the school. I will be visiting Cheshire in April and thought it would be interesting to visit the school with him and record his recollections. If you are interested in helping set up and record such a trip let me know.* Well, of course we were and we did. The following is the story John told about his trip back to Humiston School, some eighty years following his graduation.

The CHS contacted Vincent Masciana at the Board of Education and John Ostuno had the opportunity to go back to his old school. John's first comment was, "It all looks smaller now! When you're a kid, everything looks bigger." He talked about coal furnaces being used when he was a boy, describing the fire that burned down the Norton Building at Cheshire Academy 1938. "I remember it was winter time. Maybe January or February. That was big news. The fire lasted about a week because the coal beds caught fire." He said that Mr. Yocher, the janitor, would give him his keys to go to the basement office. "Mr. Yocher had two children, Joy (Deegan) and Bill. Mr. Yocher kind of liked me. He'd give me his keys and told me to go down to the basement and get his boots and raincoat while he was directing traffic out front. Mr. Yocher lived on Spring Street and he would just walk over if anything was needed. He was also a volunteer fireman and he showed me how to crank the sirens to make them work." John said that his brother Joe "got a lot of strappings." This was a common remedy for unruly children in the 1930s. John said, "I didn't give anyone any trouble!"

BOB LARKIN, SOCIETY DIRECTOR, MAKES PIZZA AT BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPRECIATION DINNER IN JULY AT THE CALABRO FARM. Dave Calabro, (left) the evening's pizza baker, and Aida Rodriguez (center), help Bob make pizza dough. Photo by José Rodriguez



Many Thanks to Our
Hardworking Board
A Lot of Volunteer Time!



Photo above top: John Ostuno visits Humiston School

"It seemed a lot bigger when I was a kid!"

Photo above bottom: John and his son Ernie stand outside Humiston School where John went to school eighty years ago

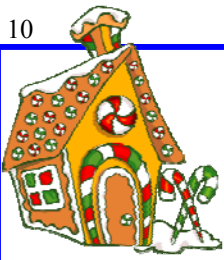
"Mr. Hines from the Hardware Store used to drive the buses." John told the story, "They were blue and white. I remember the new bus, a 1937 International, and it was so much better than the other buses! When my folks came to Cheshire, they were laborers. When the place came up for sale on Higgins Road, they purchased this and Mr. Hines also made the mortgage for them for that property. Ray Hine's father started the business. I don't remember him at all. But the old folks would talk about Mr. Hine's father. White from White Bowman, him and Johnny Drew a contractor in town, and his brother Fran drove the bus. One was a Democrat and one was a Republican. And whatever one's party lost in the election, the other one had to push him in a wheelbarrow from the Church Green to Hines store."

He talked about going home from school. He would ride the trolley and it would let him off at Higgins Road where he would walk the last mile. "My walk home was something. There were animals that would get you. The geese were vicious. Another family had guinea hens and they would come out in the street chasing you. There was an Italian bulldog and that would scare you. So for my mile walk home, I must have made three miles going back and forth to avoid these animals. It was a dirt road then. My phone number was 957. And it was a party line. The neighbor had three short rings. It was a good life on the farm."

John toured the whole building and said it hadn't changed all that much. "Just the sidewalks!" he said. John gave us an important glimpse back in time. The Society has the transcript of his visit on file as well as the history of the Ostuno family. Any family can start or add to a family file at CHS.

He recalled the principals while he attended Humiston School. Mr. Dodd was the principal and John said, "They named the school after him, Dodd Middle School." Mrs. Hitchcock, who lived down the road, was the principal after that.

John said, "I have a special story. We were studying about the bees. Not the birds and the bees. Just bees. That's what we were studying. I knew there was a bee hive in the cow patch at my house. There was a beehive on the farm and I got the clippers and clipped it off and I left it in the woodshed overnight. The next day I went to school with it. I carried this on the trolley. It was winter and it was cold. So I put it on the desk. And about ten or ten thirty, one bee came out. It buzzed up in to the air. They were still a bit sleepy. Then another one buzzed out. The teacher panicked. I think it was Miss Andrews. So we all went in the hall and Mr. Yocher came. He put on his raincoat. He got the nest and threw it out the window."



MAKE IT YOUR FAMILY TRADITION! Gingerbread House Workshop is Sunday Nov. 29th
By Cara Luciani, Director, and her sons, Connor & Colin

One holiday tradition that our family is now participating in is the gingerbread house decorating workshop at CHS. For the last five years, this has been held on the Sunday afternoon after Thanksgiving. This is a great way to start the Christmas holiday countdown.

Diane Calabro, the Historical Society President, makes all the gingerbread houses along with her husband Dave. The event is free and open to the public (reservations are needed and can be made by phoning 203-272-2574). For those who do participate, it's only asked that they bring a bag of candy to share. Dave and Diane demonstrate how the gingerbread is made and show once it is baked, how it is put together to make the house. After, each person participating gets their own, already made, gingerbread house to decorate. Everyone is free to decorate their house in any way that they would like to with the frosting and candy that is there. It's amazing how different each house ends up being. According to my son, it's very exciting because anything is possible and it's like being able to turn your dreams into something real. The kids love having a blank canvas in front of them and being able to do the work themselves with their own ideas. Also, by the end of the session, the kids have really made friends with one another because they end up talking with one another and sharing ideas.

It's a wonderful event and if you want something special to have as a decoration for the holidays, this is it. Your kids will proudly point it out to all visitors as something they made and even be able to enjoy eating it at the end. You might end up with a new holiday tradition, too.

The Gingerbread House Workshop is Sunday, November 29 from 2 to 4 p.m. Advance reservations only. Volunteer help is needed to assemble the houses for decorating the day before, Saturday afternoon, November 28. Call us to volunteer!

DELIGHTED TO ATTEND 2014 TROLLEY TOUR!

By Breina Schain, CHS Member

On the most ideal, lovely fall date, September 28, 2014, my friend and I had the good fortune to take a trolley tour in an authentic, stately trolley car. This well organized tour was co-organized by the Cheshire Historical Society and the Cheshire Historic District Commission and supported by several individuals and sponsors. The passengers of the trolley were given maps in color with a 42-page pictorial booklet including historical information to take home and enjoy. The majority of the trip was on Cheshire Street (the only part of Cheshire located East of the Quinnipiac River) where I was astonished to learn that many of the homes and sites were from the years 1700 and 1800s. Cheshire Street even had their own association of residents which was needed at the time to support one another since they were some distance from the town center. Dr. Robert Chesnow (husband of the town historian) narrated the tour and everyone on board peppered him with questions demonstrating the excitement about this historic area where we could learn so much about the lifestyle of our Cheshire ancestors.

For instance, one of the homes is where the mail carrier used to drop off everyone's mail on the porch and folks would go and pick up their own. We were able to see distinctive types of old architecture such as (*Continues on the next page*)

CREATING A NEW SPACE AT THE HPH: Administrative Office from the Old Assistant Master Kitchenette: Eagle Scout Project

Boy Scout Quentin Arai (Troop 92) is all about confidence and enthusiasm. His Eagle Project transformed one of the HPH's dingier corners into a bright office area that will be used as the Society's new Administrative Office. Converting the former Assistant House Master's bachelor kitchenette into useable space took some doing. Challenges included plumbing, electrical, demolition, and paint issues (due to the high amounts of 50 year old nicotine adhered to the wall surfaces). Quentin took each issue in stride. He initially presented us with sketch-up renderings to show what he envisioned the space would look like when the project was complete. He met with facilities managers at Bristol-Myers Squibb to seek office furniture donations. He spoke with R.W. Hines Hardware who donated paint products. He worked with a local architect* to be sure everything was done properly. Quentin outlined his project dates which took up most of the end of his sophomore school year and the better part of his summer. He managed his punch list, organized his work crews, and accomplished a really astounding result. The Society is so very pleased and thankful at the work Quentin did for us. Well done!

**The consulting architect for the project was historic architect David Arai, Maier Design Group, LLC.*



Above: The "Before" with peeling paint, old kitchen sink. This area was an embarrassing mess. Below: And now the AFTER! This is the same corner! Quentin worked very hard to create a perfect office for the Society!



The Cheshire Historical Society would also like to thank Bristol-Myers Squibb for their donation of office furniture.

SPIRITS ALIVE! TOUR—OCTOBER 16-17-18**By Thomas Mulholland, Student Liaison**

We enthusiastically present the **Spirits Alive Cemetery Tour 2015!** Follow a cloaked guide down a candle-lit path of over 600 candles in historic Hillside Cemetery and learn about past residents of Cheshire now laid to rest. You will hear *new* stories, such as a young man's perplexing disappearance at sea and of men so starved that they would do the unthinkable, spoken from the lips of a whole new cast of the resurrected residents of sleepy Cheshire Village. Join us October 16th, 17th, and 18th for an opportunity to listen and learn from our town's dearly departed as they share what transpired in their lives hundreds of years ago. Tickets are available by calling the Society at (203) 272-2574. Specify which day you'd like to take the tour and approximately what time between 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10, cash or check, and are on sale at the Society on Sundays from 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.



Above: The Mulholland's made this sign to display as they marched in the Memorial Day Parade. Walking are Stephen Mulholland, Nuala Hall, Phoebe Hall, Thomas Mulholland, & Dori Hall. Also with CHS on the truck (not in the photo): Marade Hall, Morgan Dent, Shane Cianci, Dave Calabro (driving) & Diane Calabro

Breina Schain's Trolley Story continues:

Capes, Victorian, Georgian-style and Federal style homes typical of the 1700s, stone walls, the Cheshire Street Cemetery, and an old schoolhouse. The Cheshire Street Cemetery with its hand-carved stones dates back to the mid 1700s and several Revolutionary War soldiers and other veterans are buried there. After a stop at the museum and grounds of the beautiful Riverbound Farm Sanctuary, we viewed the Cheshire Land Trust properties and farms where approximately one hundred and ninety acres were donated by three women: Betty Ives, Emma Pelz, and Esther Tappet Mortenson. I do not want to omit the beautiful Quinnipiac River Gorge Trail pointed out by Dr. Chesnow which leads to the Meriden walkway at the red bridge. We are so fortunate that these diverse properties can remain protected within our town for the indefinite future to enjoy.

It all combines to give me a better background as I serve on the Historic District Commission. I encourage residents to take advantage of our town's wide variety of enriching and rewarding activities in the future to better appreciate all Cheshire has to offer. Speaking of the future, I am pleased to share that the next trolley tour is planned for October 4, 2015 to explore the South Brooksvale neighborhood of Cheshire. Hope to see you there!

CIVIL WAR MONUMENT COMMEMORATION**July 9, 2016: Preparations and Support Needed****By Robert Larkin, Director**

Our Cheshire Civil War Monument will be 150 years old. The four plaques on the monument, listing 126 names of Cheshire soldiers who fought to "Save the Union," will be 100 years old.

The Cheshire Historical Society is planning a commemoration event to celebrate the monument's anniversary, along with support from representatives throughout town. The Town of Cheshire is planning monument improvements that include a walkway around the base and needed restoration of the plaques.

The Commemoration will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 9, 2016 at the monument, on the Cheshire Historical Society property, and the Church Green. Preliminary plans include:

- A Civil War encampment conducted by Company F of the 14th Connecticut with marching drills, rifle firings and artifacts displays, as well as separate tents for associated historians and authors.
- Speeches on the Church Green about the improvements made to the monument as well as highlights of the monument's history
- Re-enactor appearances by President Abraham Lincoln and Admiral Andrew Foote.
- Civil War music provided by Connecticut State Troubadour Tom Callinan is also under discussion.

Your support is needed.

Photographs, stories and research on the soldiers' lives are needed. The Cheshire Historical Society has a wealth of information to offer, however, additional work is needed to pay tribute to the men and their families who served.

So far we have portraits of only six of the soldiers whose names appear on the monument plaques:

First Lieutenant Edward Doolittle**Private James Fenton****Captain Timothy Guilford****Private Thomas Judd****Corporal John Peck****Corporal Titus Moss**

While photos of nearly 50 gravestones of the men have been identified, more are needed as well as a thorough review of the ones in hand. Your help is requested in adding to these as well as uncovering new detail on their lives here in Cheshire.

We need only to look at some of the soldiers' family names to think about their impact on Cheshire's history including some of the street names in town including Peck Lane, Moss Farms Road, Talmadge Rd, Ives Farm Rd, Lanyon Drive, Atwater Place, Preston Terrace, Allen Street, Higgins Road and Payne Drive. The names of schools including Cheshire's Doolittle School and the Foote School in New Haven and various GAR posts deserve some added research as well.

Help is also needed with finances. This includes any volunteer assistance with grant writing or contacts with families or businesses that might wish to contribute. We have received some commitments to date but more is needed to accomplish our goals. Your support is needed to make the Commemoration a success. Please contact robertolarkin@yahoo.com or (203) 272-6301.

Cheshire Historical Society
P.O. Box 281, 43 Church Drive
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

FALL 2015



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Visit our Website www.cheshirehistory.org
Telephone: (203) 272-2574

E-MAILS FOR HISTORY QUESTIONS

Town Historian: cheshirehistorian@cox.net
Historical Society: cheshirehistory@che.necoxmail.com
Cheshirepedia: cheshirepedia@gmail.com



Drawing by Warren Van Almerker

FALL 2015 EXHIBIT: ANTIQUe BOTTLES & MILK BOTTLES

We invite you to come to the Historical Society to see our new exhibit: *Collecting Antique Bottles*. Our two contributors, Art Sides and Marshall Robinson, offer their stories. We hope to see you on September 28th at 7:30 p.m. to hear Greg Mills talk about Antique Bottle Collecting.

Photo center is one of Greg's bottles.

FALL EXHIBIT—CHESHIRE MILK BOTTLES: My "Other Collection"

By Art Sides, Vice President

I'm not really a bottle collector, but a collector of antique toy soldiers and trains. That being said, I have acquired a small collection of Cheshire milk bottles.

Growing up in Wallingford near the Cheshire line, our milk was delivered by the Lassen's of Boulder Knoll Farm. I've always had fond memories of finding full bottles of milk on the back porch and so decided to acquire some examples to remind me of a happy memory.

My interest is both historical and nostalgic. My small collection is of 20th century Cheshire dairies. Accumulating bottles of dairies I didn't know existed has spread my interest in the history of Cheshire dairy farms. The size and color of the bottles doesn't really matter though the quart sized ones are impressive.

My bottles were acquired from numerous sources, antique shops, friends and E-Bay. My most expensive is a quart-sized Boulder Knoll bottles I paid nearly \$40 for. My bottles are displayed on a shelf in the kitchen (appropriately).

The Society has a couple of nice bottles from Fenn & Davison's Dairy. I'm trying to acquire examples for my collection. Ultimately I would like to have examples and a short history from all the various Cheshire dairies.

FALL EXHIBIT—COLLECTING BOTTLES

By Marshall Robinson, Director

I started collecting bottles as a teenager, right after they were invented. I'm sure I was influenced by my mother who was a part-time antique dealer.

Bottles from the 19th century interest me the most although there are some very collectible 20th century bottles. Size and color matter a lot, especially color. When a certain flask is usually found in pale blue and you find an amber one, you have an uncommon bottle. Bottles in the 1800s are either mold blown or free blown. Free blown bottles are shaped by the glass blower. Mold blown bottles are shaped by the mold that forms them. After being blown, the neck and mouth have to be formed. The mouth of the bottle is called the "finish."

When the finish is applied, some of the mold lines are wiped away and that is one feature that enables us to date the bottle. The pontil is a rod that is used by the glass blower to hold the bottle while the finish is applied. Once the finish is applied, the pontil rod is broken from the bottle sometimes leaving a sharp pontil mark on the bottom of the bottle. There are a few different types of pontils. Many bottles are marked by the glass house that made them. The identification of unmarked bottles is somewhat of an art. Certain shapes and colors have been attributed to certain glass houses. Bottles may be found in antique shops, online auctions,

estate sales, and personal sales.

I like most bottles, but prefer flasks, especially those from the 1860s into the 1900s. I prefer those that are embossed by a local store or liquor dealer. The most that I have paid for a single bottle is \$600. Time will tell if I paid too much. My collection is mainly flasks, but I have many other different and interesting bottles which I display in glass showcases, window sills, and a hutch in my dining room. Those that are not displayed are in cardboard boxes in the cellar or garage.

Here is an excellent web site for those who would like to learn more about old bottles. It was formerly on the web site of the US Bureau of Land Management.

<http://www.sha.org/bottle/index.htm>

