

CHESHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 30, No. 1

Spring 2007

Monday, March 26, 7:30 PM

"Dear Sarah...Words, Life and Love during the Civil War from the 20th Connecticut"

Carolyn Ivanoff

Carolyn Ivanoff, historian and assistant principal at Shelton High School, will talk about her experiences transcribing and researching letters written by Friend Smith, a Civil War soldier from Derby, at our March meeting. Using a PowerPoint presentation, she will show many pictures and visuals. Her talk also will focus on how to go about finding information and how to research your own Civil War soldier.

Like Cheshire's Titus Moss, Friend Smith also served in the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers. Smith, however, was in Company B, known as "the Derby Company." Titus Moss served with Company A, a largely Cheshire and Prospect company. Carolyn was named Civil War Preservationist Teacher of the Year in 2003 by the Civil War Preservation Trust.

Monday, April 23, 7:30 PM

Annual Meeting—Member Reception

Cheshire's Civil War Hero—Admiral Andrew Hull Foote" John White

At the annual meeting, local author, educator, and Cheshire Historical Society member John White will discuss the life of Cheshire's Civil War hero, Admiral Andrew Hull Foote. John has been interested in Admiral Foote since, as a high school student, he first saw the names "Lincoln" and "Foote" on the Civil War monument on the green. His interest was piqued further last spring when he portrayed the admiral in the "Walk Back in Time" historical reenactment sponsored by the Society and the Cheshire Historic District Commission.

Although the name Foote and the Foot House, corner South Main Street and Cornwall Avenue, are widely known in Cheshire, few Cheshire residents have more than superficial knowledge of the

(continued on next page)

Spring Calendar

Except for Easter Sunday, the Hitchcock-Phillips House will be open to the public every Sunday afternoon, 2-4 p.m., until the end of May. To visit at other times, call 203-272-8771.

March 26	Monday 7:30 p.m.	Membership Meeting & Speaker
April 16	Monday 7:30 p.m.	Board Meeting
April 23	Monday 7:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting & Speaker
May 21	Monday 7:30 p.m.	Board Meeting
June 16	Saturday 9 a.m.—3 p.m.	Antiques & Collectibles at Strawberry Festival

WEATHER PERMITTING, Antiques & Collectibles Sales also will be held on the Historical Society grounds on the last Saturday of the month in July, August and September.

Thank You!

Special thanks to the following Major Contributors, Supporting Members, and Other Contributors who made contributions to the Society in addition to their 2007 dues.

Major Contributors

Sally Bowman	Peg Boutwell
Jean McKee	Mary Hobler-Hyson
Dick and Diane Ulbrich	

Supporting Members

Dr. Thomas Anderson	Andrew & Brandi Martelli
Donald Baillie	Addie Marx
Robert & Ann Fennelly	Tim & Kristen Slocum
Larry & Eleanor Herrmann	James & Cynthia Vibert

Other Contributors

Ray & Karen Angelo, Jr.	Arthur & Joy Hostage
Apple Valley Bank	Valerie Joyce
David Baillie	Barbara Lee
Margaret Barth	Cara Luciani
Bristol Insurance	Ray & Mary Ellen Morgan
Gary & Denise Charette	Alfred Mitlehner

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Volunteers Needed To Serve As "Subject Specialists"

Do you have expertise in a particular subject? Would you be willing to volunteer your knowledge or talent to the Cheshire Historical Society if the need arises? At the February board meeting, board members discussed the many, untapped talents and interests that exist among our membership and suggested that the Society compile a list of "subject specialists." These would be folks whom the Society could call on from time to time for information or help in an area that requires special expertise.



Do you have an interest in period costumes, clocks and watches, dolls, dishes, furniture, jewelry, miniatures, Native Americans, toys, slavery, or other topic? Do you have experience in searching town land records or doing genealogical or other research? Do you collect old stamps, coins, bottles, guns, tools? Can you make a poster or set up a display? Whatever your interest or talent, we'd like to add your name to our "Subject Specialist" list. If you can help, please call Curator Mary Ellen Kania, 272-8771, or President Marshall Robinson, 271-2378.

...Admiral Foote

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admiral's life and what he actually did to become a national hero. John will give us the real story. It should prove to be a very interesting program! His talk will be preceded by the annual business meeting and election of officers. A member reception will follow in the dining room.

....THANK YOU

(continued from page 1)

Robert & Noreen Cawood
Robert & Jeanné Chesanow
Barbara Christoff
Patricia Dawes-Devlin
Inge Druckrey
Beverly Dunn
Robert & Ann Fennelly
Connie Field

Howard Oedel
Jane Richards
John Romanik
Lori Rusnack
Elizabeth Shaw
Paul & Arlla Simisky
Ingeborg Venus
Ray Verner

The Society also is very grateful to Paul Bowman, who donated \$1,000 in 2006 to establish a special Cheshire Historical Society Acquisition Fund.

Welcome, New Members!

The Society is very pleased to welcome the following new members:

Mrs. Carol K. Bryan, 106 East 81st St., #4-C, New York, NY 10028
Mrs. Patricia A. Dawes-Devin, PO Box 1361, Longview, WA 88632-76800
Ann L. Devin, 41 Crossroads Plaza, #225, West Hartford, CT 06117
Beverly Dunn, 546 Oak Ave., Cheshire
Robert Larkin, 370 Redwood Lane, Cheshire
Mrs. Clare Leake, 82 Jinny Hill Rd., Cheshire
Mr. and Mrs. Michael O'Donnell, PO Box 385, Cheshire
Jose and Aida Rodriguez, 89 Lanyon Dr., Cheshire

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

- Prescription Book No. 3 from John L. Foote & Co. Druggists, Cheshire. Contains 2,508 prescriptions written between June 24, 1882—July 12, 1886. Book is 14" x 4.25" with a hardcover. *Historical Society Acquisition Fund*
- Ball & Socket Manufacturing Co. 100th anniversary (1850-1950) souvenirs, assorted news clippings, and button scoop from the factory. *Gift from Bill Anthony, Cheshire, Ball & Socket president, 1979-1983*
- Little Black Sambo and Other Stories, ed. Watty Piper (Platt & Munk, 1925)
Gift from Ray Verner, Cheshire
- 1909 Connecticut Telephone Book (includes Cheshire section).
Gift from Jackie Wallace, Cheshire.

In Memoriam

Richard G. Copleston December 16, 2006

James C. Tabor, Sr. January 3, 2007

We were deeply saddened by the death of these two Life Members and extend our sincere sympathy to their families.

Development Plans for I-691 Interchange Zone Awaken New Interest in Canal's "Great Fill"

The current Planning & Zoning hearings on a possible change in town's Plan of Conservation and Development for the Interchange Zone in northern Cheshire have awakened widespread interest in what is known as the Farmington Canal's "Great Fill." In February, Lester Ruth, a former Milldale and Cheshire resident, e-mailed Historical Society President Marshall Robinson:

"A friend in CT has just sent me a picture of a proposal to building a mall and housing on the former Dickerman Farm property at the I-691 intersection on Rt. 10. My question: What is being done to protect the old Northampton Canal course through there, especially the culvert that takes the canal bed over the 10-Mile River, surely one of the most historic places not yet protected in Cheshire?"

For further information, Marshall contacted Carl E. Walter of North Granby, a member of the American Canal Society and a December visitor at the Society, who personally delivered an informative letter and historic pictures of the Great Fill to both the Planning & Zoning office and the Society. In part, Carl wrote:

"The land contains the 'Great Fill'; the last survivor of the four greatest engineering achievements of the Farmington Canal. Although this site is on the National Register of Historic Places and was spared by the Connecticut DOT during the construction of Route 691, it has been abandoned and overgrown for many years...

"The 'Great Fill' carried Section 59 of the Farmington Canal across the Ten Mile River Valley in northern Cheshire. This was accomplished by filling the valley with almost 40 feet of sandy soil atop an 18-foot arch culvert that conducted the river under the fill. Benton Harrison & Co. built the 1000-foot long fill in 1826 by moving approximately 200,000 cubic yards of earth without the use of power equipment. The 165-foot culvert was handmade by Alexander Holburn & Co. using local stone and hydraulic cement manufactured in Southington. The canal and tow path were located on top of the fill and allowed boats to be towed between Cheshire and Southington without changing the level of

Charles Rufus Harte
11515 5/7/33



THE GREAT FILL, photographed in 1933 by Charles Rufus Harte, shows the Ten Mile River as it flows under a huge, man-made embankment that was created to carry the Farmington Canal bed across the river. (Photo courtesy of Carl E. Walter)

the canal.

"The 'Great Fill' was one of the most important engineering features of the Farmington Canal and, at the same time, one of the most vulnerable. Although the engineering and construction were sound, it was a perfect site for vandalism as only a small hole in the canal bank would cause a disastrous washout. In 1834 and 1838, severe washouts were caused by a vandal bearing a grudge against Mr. Hitchcock, who lived at the base of the fill. In 1845, two washouts were caused by persons wishing to put the canal out of operation.

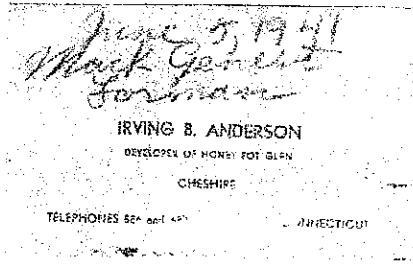
"The Farmington Canal was built to promote
(continued on page 4)

1941 Business Card Found Inside Wall

Steven and Nancy Feero, 4 Glenbrook Dr., have given the Society Irving B. Anderson's business card, which they found inside a wall of their home during renovations. The card was signed by Mack Genest, foreman, and dated June 5, 1941.

The Feero home is part of the original "Honey Pot Glen Colony," developed by Irving Anderson on his father's farm in 1941. Anderson (1905-1980) was a great uncle of Society member Eric Anderson, who says that the development was "fairly notable at the time for being such a modern concept in Cheshire."

The card will be displayed next to the current display of a blow-up copy of a *Waterbury Republican* ad from June 29, 1941 which advertises, "Just 45 Fortunate



Families May Enjoy a Delightful Country Home at Honey Pot Glen Colony." Prices began at \$7,700.

Foreman Mack Genest (1900-1972) was a well-know Cheshire carpenter. His son, Curtis Genest, also a master carpenter, grew up in Cheshire, but now lives in Hamden. He says he father often left his signature in the houses he built or restored. In 2003, Curtis found his father's signature while working on the Pliny-Hitchcock house at the entrance to Stonegate, South Main Street.

Canal's Great Fill

(continued from page 3)

the trade and commerce of another era. The challenge of today is that of preserving the heritage of that time while developing the valuable property associated with it. Several canal towns have solved this problem by requiring developers to preserve and maintain surviving sections of the canal as part of their site plans and ownership responsibilities. A good example of this practice may be seen at 'Canal Place', a group of apartments and condominiums in Simsbury."

More on Dorflinger Glass ...

When we discovered Society Member Mary Ellen Morgan grew up in "Dorflinger country" in Pennsylvania, CHS News asked her to update readers on the area today.

I was excited to read in the last newsletter about Connie Field's visits to White Mills, PA, and her lovely collection of Dorflinger glass on display at the Cheshire Historical Society. I grew up in Honesdale, which is a few miles from White Mills; and I, too, remember the little shop and museum she visited as a child. I believe it closed some time in the 1960s. It was the last vestige of a marvelous company that took on the characteristics of a legend in my childhood. At its peak, 600 people were employed at the Dorflinger Glass Works and related businesses. The majority of Christian Dorflinger's workers came from Germany, but some were Alsations, Swedes and English. Family names throughout Wayne County still reflect the names on the lists of Dorflinger employees. The glass industry, of course, generated supporting businesses. My grandfather, Thomas E. Charlesworth, had a machine shop that manufactured items used in glass making. In addition to Dorflinger, there were several other glass companies in Wayne County. I believe most of them used Dorflinger blanks, which they cut, engraved and decorated.

According to *American Brilliant Cut Glass, A Collector's Guide*, by Bill and Louise Boggs (Crown Publishers, NY, 1977), there were three periods of cut glass: Early, Brilliant, and Flower. The Brilliant period characterizes the Dorflinger glass that I am most familiar with, although the periods overlap. This deep cut glass always reminds me of cut diamonds in the way it catches the light. When I was growing up in Honesdale, there was cut glass in everyone's china cabinet. I certainly did not appreciate it until I inherited two bowls from a great aunt and began to realize how beautiful it was. My mother had a good deal of cut glass,

and we used it very freely.

To jump to more recent history, Mrs. Frederick Suydam, whose husband was a Dorflinger descendent, left her property on the ridge above White Mills, where there are ponds that were the source of water power in the mills, to be used as a wildlife sanctuary or similar use for the benefit of the public and the preservation of wildlife. Ultimately, the use of the property has more than fulfilled her wishes. It is now known as the Dorflinger-Suydam Sanctuary at White Mills. The old Dorflinger house is now a fine museum with hundreds of pieces of Dorflinger glass on display. Many pieces were donated to the present museum by Helen Barger, who, with John Dorflinger, ran the museum Connie Field visited.

The land has become the sanctuary that Mrs. Suydam hoped for, both for wildlife and for humans. It covers a substantial acreage, and has trails and walking paths. The Sanctuary also has become known for the Wildflower Theatre, an outdoor amphitheatre, that hosts a variety of distinguished musical performances every weekend during the summer - everything from folk to jazz to classical. My nephew, Thomas Dein, has managed the Sanctuary and has been part of its development for the past 25 years, and I would like to thank him for his advice in preparing this article.

Mary Ellen Morgan

GOOD NEWS! *Mary Ellen has agreed to loan us several of her Dorflinger pieces for temporary display in the exhibit case in the dining room. They will join the Dorflinger pieces loaned by Connie Field. Don't miss the chance to see this lovely glass!*

New Display of Cook Books, 1845—1962, in Exhibit Room

Assistant Curator Kathleen Connolly has created a delightful, new display, "Cook Books, 1845—1962" in the north display case in the Exhibit Room. Featured are 36 vintage cook books from her own collection and the Society archives including commercial recipe booklets and recipe clippings from old newspapers.

The oldest book, *The American FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE*, was published in New York in 1845. The author is identified only as "Mrs. Child." The frontispiece announces that the book is dedicated "TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT ASHAMED OF ECONOMY" and has the quotation:

*"Economy is a poor man's revenue;
extravagance, a rich man's ruin."*

Along with frugal recipes, the book is full of advice for housewives, much of it hard to imagine today—for example: "A few potatoes sliced, and boiling water poured over them, makes an excellent preparation for cleansing and stiffening old rusty black silk."

White House Cook Book, 1901, is dedicated to "Those Noble Women Who Have Graced The White House." There are recipes and lists of menus. This sample breakfast menu, p. 459, must have sent presidential cholesterol through the roof.

BREAKFAST
Fried Apples

Corn Meal Mush	Fried Pork Chops
Newport Waffles	Favorite Warmed Potatoes
Brown Bread	Coffee

Among the commercial cook books :

- *Mrs. Winslow's Domestic Receipt Book*, 1872. features recipes along with advertisements for Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children and Brown's Bronchial Troches for coughs and colds. The recipe for Soda Biscuits advises:

"To two quarts of flour take four teaspoonfuls cream tartar, two teaspoonfuls soda, one pint sweet milk, and half a teacupful of lard or butter."

Practical Cook Book, published by E. R. Durkee Co., 1875. A user has penciled "very nice" next to the following recipe for RAISED BISCUITS:

one quart of milk, three-fourths of a cup of lard or but-

ter, the same of yeast, one tea-spoonful of salt, flour enough to make a soft dough; warm the milk slightly and melt the lard or butter. Mix them at night; in the morning roll out into a sheet three-quarters of an inch in thickness; cut into round cakes, set these closely together in a pan, let them rise for twenty minutes, and bake twenty minutes."

- *The Enterprising Housekeeper (200 Tested Recipes)* - The Enterprise Mfg. Co.— Price 25 cents—has no date, but the Enterprize ads speak for themselves: rapid grinding and pulverizing mills for coffee; bone, shell and corn mills; sausage stuffers; lard and fruit presses; cold handle sad irons.

- *Picnic Time*, published by Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., mixes recipes with ads for their famous medicines for women.

Cheshire Cook Books

Cook books from Cheshire include:

- *The Spoon and The Dish* - For The Maid of Cookery by the Ladies of the Congregational Church, Cheshire, 1886

- *Cheshire Cook Book*, arranged and compiled by The Ladies' Aid Society of the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of Cheshire, Conn., 1917

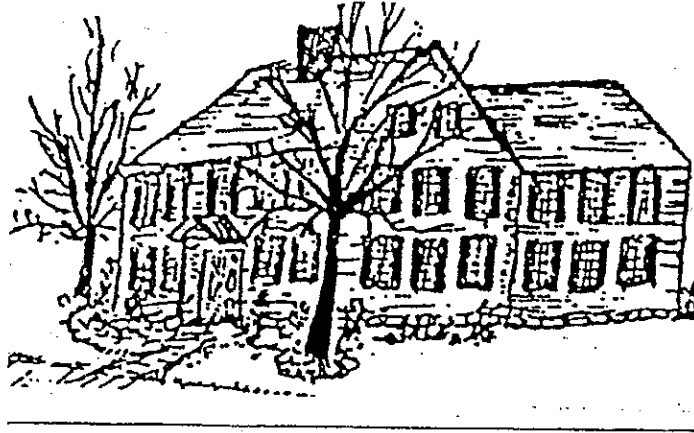
- *Recipes from Old Cheshire*, published by the Cheshire Women's Club, 1938. In addition to presenting "more modern" recipes, many are enlivened by amusing line drawings by club members. See below.

Right: Illustration for Royal Sauce by Helen Craig, *Recipes from Old Cheshire*, p. 143



Left: Illustration for Health Chop Suey by Marion E. Doucette, *Recipes from Old Cheshire*, p. 112

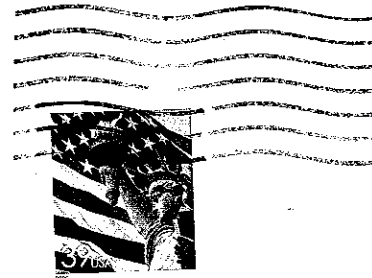
**CHESHIRE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWS**



A dues envelope is enclosed for any membership still unpaid for 2007. Please remit! We're counting on your support!

SPRING 2007

Cheshire Historical Society
PO Box 281, 39 Church Drive
Cheshire, CT 06410
www.cheshirehistory.org



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Mary Ellen Kania

Membership Meetings—Public Invited
20th Regiment CT Volunteers—March 26
Annual Meeting, Admr. Foote—April 23