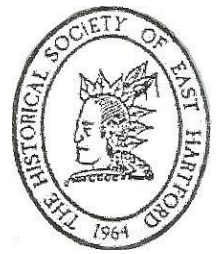


Historical Society of East Hartford

Newsletter, January 2017



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I trust that all Historical Society members and their families had a wonderful Holiday Season. We hosted a holiday-themed Meet and Greet at the Selden Brewer House on Sunday afternoon, December 11th. This was not part of the Town Holiday Fest, but something that we wanted to do in appreciation to our membership. A group of us met on December 2nd to plan for the event and we used Saturday afternoon, December 10th to set-up. Invitations were sent out to our membership by electronic mail and U.S mail for those who receive their newsletter via mailings. We also invited the public to attend by placing an announcement in the Gazette. We had a Christmas tree and two tables of very tasty light refreshments for those who visited. We brought downstairs some of our collections for viewing. Al Brewer stopped by to share his family's photo album that had many older views of the Selden Brewer House before it was moved to its present location. I want to thank everyone who visited and also give a special mention to all who helped set-up for the event and brought food: Karen Johnson, Sue Kies, Joyce Yoo, Vicki Hart, Betty Daraskevich, Bill & Betty Knose and especially Ruthie Brown who has worn the Event Organizer hat in other organizations and now we are so lucky to have her helping out the Historical Society in this role.

At the November Regular Meeting in the Raymond Library we were all mesmerized by Walter Scadden's talk on the "Murder in Manchester; The Great Cheney Silk Robbery." Having been raised in Manchester I had known about the murder of Security Officer Madden and I had a neighbor who was his nephew but I never knew the full story and the outcome of the crime until I saw this program. My first job was at the Mills as a security guard when velveteen was still being manufactured there. That was over 45 years ago and I still remember how those mill buildings looked before they were converted into apartments. Many old-time employees were still there at that time who recalled working at the Cheney Mills back in the 1920's and 1930's and I enjoyed listening to all their stories.

The Huguenot House is checked as frequently as possible for rain or snow melt leakage from the hole in the roof but so far, the temporary patchwork repairs made by the Town have held. I think we will get through the winter okay. Although a new roof is preferred, it is looking more likely that a partial roof replacement for the damaged area is the best affordable solution as suggested by the two contractors who visited the site to inspect it.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, Jeff Cummings submitted his resignation as the Historical Society Antiquarian – Historian but at the last Executive Board Meeting Jeff agreed to Chair a new Committee for the Review and Organization of our donated Collections. Jeff will assist in the training of volunteer members who might be interested in the computer cataloging of the collections and suggest ways to better organize the donations we have upstairs at the Selden Brewer House. Thank you again, Jeff!

Craig Johnson, President

HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT GLASSWORKS WITH NOËL THOMAS

January Program of the Historical Society

The Historical Society of East Hartford will kick off the 2017 New Year with a presentation and exhibit on the 'History of the Connecticut Glassworks' - held Wednesday, January 18th at the Raymond Library, Room 1, on Main Street (downstairs rear entry) beginning at 7:00 pm.

Noël Tomas, the President of the Museum of Connecticut Glass, revisits the Historical Society to educate us about the process and history of glass-making in Connecticut, one of our nation's earliest and most active, creative industries. Noël will speak to the membership about the Museum's development plans at their new location in Coventry and on Connecticut-produced glass - focusing on the East Hartford/Manchester glass companies of

the Pitkin's and the Mather's. For all of their existence, the Elisha Pitkin Glassworks and the John Mather Glassworks were located in the Town of East Hartford. The deserted buildings became part of Manchester in 1823 when it incorporated to become a separate town.

The Connecticut Glass Museum is housed in an original two-story residence, built for Capt. John Turner, one of several incorporators of the Coventry Glass Company Glass Company. It is located in Coventry at the intersection of Rt. 44 and North River Road. Opened for special events or by request, the John Turner house is one of several original houses still standing in the National Historic Glass Factory District.

Learn about the first glass-making enterprise in Connecticut after the Revolutionary War and how early commercial glassware was crafted around the state. Until we gained our independence, most commercially-crafted cloth, tin, china and glass was made in England and these articles were imported to the American colonies at a very high expense. Before 1783, no commercial industry was allowed to exist in the colonies.

The program is open to the public and attendees are welcome to bring any articles of antique glass they may have in their personal collections for review. The Historical Society will exhibit some of its antique glass from the Huguenot House Museum as well. There will be a short business meeting beginning at 7:00 pm, followed by refreshments and the presentation.

Bette Daraskevich, Vice President/Program Chair

COMMENTS ON DECEMBER'S 'MEET AND GREET' AT THE BREWER HOUSE

Sunday December 11th was the most activity the Brewer House has seen in sometime! Although organized on short notice members came together, decorated the old house for our social that was well attended by a number of people expressing an interest in East Hartford's history and all that we have to share. While I'm not from this area I was very intrigued to listen in on so much conversation involving families with connections to East Hartford's historic past. Member Allan Brewer came with a family album that enhanced the event immensely and made me feel as though the "spirits" of those who formerly had lived in this house were indeed among us. A highlight that warmed my heart the most was watching friend Wayne Bidwell, who is part of our Center Cemetery preservation group, while talking to Allan and realizing that the two were cousins, connected through a shared grandmother's line. How cool is that! Best Wishes to all for positive New Year! *Ruthie Brown*

I spent most of that afternoon in the left front room of the Brewer House due to walking difficulties. But I remember the decorations I did see as a bit of restrained elegance - from the antique, blue infant's sleigh filled with fir branches standing outside the Brewer House's front door, the large fir wreath with its gold ribbon on that door, the antique gold covered sofa on display in the front parlor, the double table across the hall covered with white lace tablecloths over a solid red one and laden with so many treats: egg salad sandwiches, cookies, cupcakes, and more from the Society's wonderful cooks/volunteers, the old Victrola in the corner with a bouquet of brilliant red amaryllis on top, the upright piano ready for playing, the lace curtains on all the windows, the season's Christmas tree, and more. This was a perfect holiday setting for the groups who gathered and pleasantly talked in these downstairs rooms - about one guest's collection of Staffordshire china and about his house whose picture sat on the mantle next to old Mr. Brewer's portrait, about another guest's questions on whether the French army really was paid on Silver Lane and when did Silver Lane get its name (it was originally, they say, Silver Street), a discussion about the old Victrola, and friends just sitting with friends and enjoying the day. It was altogether a delightful afternoon for members and guests and some history. Hopefully you will all join us again next year! *Betty Knose*



“The Pitkin Glassworks 1783-1830. Fine groupings of fine Pitkin-Type flasks and inkwells blown on the half-post method.” Photo and information are from the Museum of Connecticut Glass.

<http://www.glassmuseum.org/glassworks1.htm>

A SHORT HISTORY OF SAINT JOHN'S

Submitted by Shirley Finney

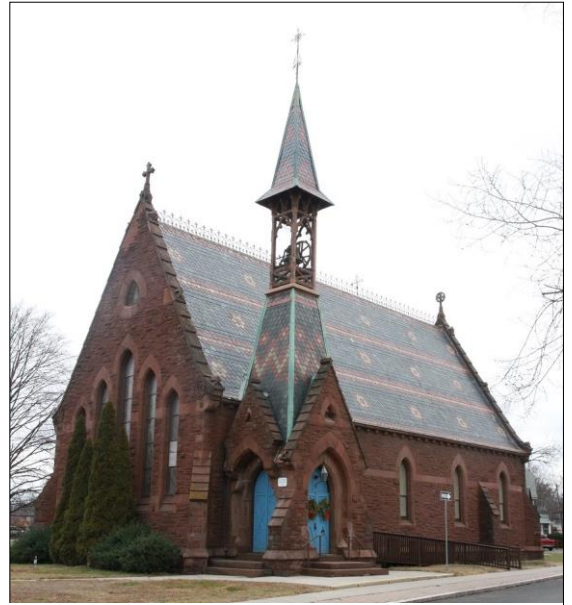
It is with a heavy heart that we confirm the permanent closing of St. John's Episcopal Church on the corner of Main Street and Burnside Avenue. Their last religious service was held on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2016.

The Parish of St. John's had its earliest beginnings as Grace Church in 1854, served by seminarians. In 1865, it was reorganized as St John's, when the Rev. Dr. James McCook became its first rector. The church building was consecrated on June 22, 1869.

In 1909 the Vestry voted to accept the offer of Miss Mary Corning to construct a building to be used for recreational and community purposes. Shortly thereafter Corning Hall was build. It is located at 12 Rector Street, behind the church building. No longer needed as a recreational building, it was remodeled in the 1970's to meet the needs as a parish hall and community meeting center.



Corning Hall (r) stands behind St. John's Church (l), January 2017. W Knose Photo.



St. John's Church, January 2017. W Knose Photo.

Dr. McCook was succeeded as Rector by the Rev. James W. Lord in 1927, who served until 1951. He was succeeded by the Rev. Sherman W. Andrews who served as rector until 1965. Under his leadership, All Saints' Mission was established on Hills Street in the South end of town. The Rev. John Hays Duff became rector in 1965, serving until 1972. The Rev. Alva G. Decker became rector in 1973 and served until 1982. During his tenure, the Parish struggled with its changing neighborhood and its ministry to those changed circumstances.

The Rev. William F. Loutrel became the sixth Rector of St. John's in March of 1984. Under his leadership, the Parish worked to strengthen its mission and ministry in the world through a process of parish development, improved stewardship, increased lay leadership, and pastoral care by both clergy and laity. Father Loutrel served until May 14, 1989.

On All Saints' Day, November 1, 1990 the Parish took a bold, creative step in a new direction. On that occasion the Greater Hartford Regional Ministry (GHRM) came into being when, in the presence of the Bishop, the Charter (Covenant) of this new ecclesial venture was signed by the wardens of the participating parishes. The Greater Hartford Regional Ministry brought together four Episcopal parishes (All Saints', East Hartford; St. George's, Bolton; St. James', Hartford; and St. John's, East Hartford) in an intentional and co-operative relationship, in which significant resources and talents were shared. Instead of the one-priest, one parish model of church, GHRM had a clergy team that rotated among the parishes. This team was guided by the Missioner, the Rev. Thomas C. Ely. All the major feast days of our Lord were celebrated as joint liturgies on the day they occurred. Adult education was done jointly. The focus and thrust of GHRM was on Total Common Ministry.

Ultimately, after 21 years of Total Common Ministry, the cluster was dissolved and the churches reverted to their individual status.

As of Sunday, January 1, 2017 St. John's Episcopal Church, East Hartford will join the Episcopal parish of St. John's Church, Vernon. We wish them God's speed as they continue to be faithful to the call of their Lord Jesus Christ. The heart of the Episcopal community is in its worship, as they gather week after week to be fed at the Lord's Table. Strengthened by the sacraments, informed by God's word, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, they continue to reach out in love and concern for others.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SAINT JOHN'S (continued)



St. John's church and parishioners await the start of their final service on Christmas Eve. W Knose Photo.



The Christmas crèche, made some 30 years ago by parishioner Olive VanOstrand, once again depicts the birth of Christ in front of the right side of the altar. W Knose Photo.

RECENT DONATIONS MADE TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We are grateful on two recent donations, one from a long-time town resident and one from a former resident of East Hartford. Mrs. Olga Reduker of East Hartford gave us an old wooden milk box that has been with her family for almost 100 years. The box, from Bryant & Chapman Co. of Hartford Conn., accepted fresh delivered milk bottles for many decades at her childhood home at 20 Latimer Street. A picture of the donated milk box is shown to the right.

Another donation was that of a picture scrapbook assembled by the old Square Dance Club of East Hartford and dates from the 1960's and 1970's timeframe. Paul Frinette who grew up in East Hartford said the scrapbook was found in the attic of a house in Manchester.

Craig Johnson, President



Milkbox donated by Mrs. Reduker.

Historical Society of East Hartford

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Web site: <http://www.hseh.org>

Membership: 860-568-7261

indiv \$15, 1 address \$20, student \$10,
patron \$50

Deadline Mar Newsletter – Feb 28, 2017

Image: Pitkin-Type flasks and inkwells,
Museum of Connecticut Glass,

<http://www.glassmuseum.org/glassworks1.htm>



Jan Program

Date: Wed, Jan 18, 2017

Time: 7:00pm

Program: Connecticut
Glassworks

Speaker: Noël Thomas

Where: Raymond Library Rm 1

Fee: No cost

Info: 860-568-5188