
Charlton Historical Society Newsletter

Spring, 2005

Volume 30, Number 1

News for Charlton Historical Society Members

History Will Be Featured During Charlton's Celebration

By Don Weinhardt

In the Fall 2004 issue of this newsletter, Bill Hultgren wrote the lead story. He called it "Time Line for the Establishment of the Town of Charlton". This year, we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of that event. A series of events are planned by the Town's own 250th Anniversary Committee for this year.

The Charlton Historical Society will offer a series of seven slide show/lectures at the Rider Tavern as a backwards glance into various aspects of early life in Charlton. The impetus for this was the result of many members of our Board of Directors working as a committee to relocate and reorganize the library and archive holdings of the Historical Society.

Don Weinhardt volunteered to do a program on the "Oldest Surviving Buildings in the Town Charlton." He created a database in his computer and set about generating a list and gathering photos to represent each building. As is sometimes the case, the scope of the job was severely underestimated. As a result, he had to limit himself to buildings built prior to 1831 and



Oldest House in Charlton

the slide show will be two programs instead of one. The definition for "surviving buildings" will be those that are still standing (even if greatly altered) plus those that are represented by a photo even if they are gone.

The third program will be presented by Cindy Cooper and Kevinetta O'Brien and is titled,

"History of Education in the Town of Charlton." This became a real challenge due to all the changes that occurred in the 250 years since formal education started in Town and the total volume of material that has survived as official or unofficial records. The program will be supplemented by a display of school artifacts.

Fourth on the list will be a presentation called "Following Fashion: Clothing Style in Early 1800s Charlton" presented by Aimee Newell. Aimee is not only one of our BOD members, she is the Curator of Collections at Old Sturbridge Village. This program explores the clothing that our ancestors wore 200 years ago, using evidence from letters, receipts, probate inventories, portraits and the clothes themselves.

Ruth Schwendeman will present our fifth program in the series titled "Early Taverns in Charlton and its Environs." The focus here will be the necessary service provided by taverns and inns to travelers in early New England. She will look at the various taverns within Charlton as well as some of those in surrounding areas. The refreshments served at this program may represent those offered to the weary traveler years ago.

Next up, Joyce Stewart will present the sixth program titled "Patterns on the Wall - Early Charlton Interior Decoration". This project has located samples of stenciling, murals, grain painting etc. as a means of decorating early homes. We have very limited examples to draw from in our Town, and the documentation as to who did the work is virtually nonexistent. Joyce has done a nice job locating similar art work in other communities, and will use that work for comparison.

Last, but surely not least, Bill Hultgren will present the seventh program titled "Gen. Lafayette's Visit Through Charlton in September 1824". In his later years, Lafayette made a couple of visits to the United States in order to tour various parts of our country. He was a legitimate hero to many Americans and they turned out in great numbers to show their appreciation.

Our appreciation and thanks to the entire team that worked together on the archive project and helped and supported each in order to make these programs a reality.

Threads of Thyme Tea

Join us at the Rider Tavern for our annual tea on Sunday June 12, 2005 at 12:00 noon. This year our menu will focus on the mighty mints.

Menu -

Fresh strawberry soup

Tea sandwiches with fresh mint

Fudge brownie with mint whipped cream

Rider Tavern blend herbal tea and black tea

Ice limeade with mint

Following the Tea, Aimee Newell, Curator of Textiles and Fine Arts at Old Sturbridge Village, will present an illustrated lecture, titled "Guide me in truth": Needlework Samplers in Charlton and New England. Using slides of samplers in the collection of Old Sturbridge Village, she will provide an overview of New England samplers from the late 1700s and early 1800s and then trace the history of several samplers that were made right here in Charlton.

For reservations call Don Weinhardt at 508-248-1632. The cost of the Tea and program is \$12.00. Your support goes to the continued restoration of the Rider Tavern.

Yard Sale

The annual yard sale is a harbinger of Spring. Save plenty of time on Saturday, May 7th starting at 8:30 a.m. to visit the Rider Tavern to check out the tools, antique bottles, collectables, vintage decorations, household goods, books, and many other items waiting for you, just in time for Mother's Day. All proceeds benefit the Historical Society's programs and the maintenance of the Rider Tavern. If you would like to donate items for this important fundraising event please contact Don Weinhardt at 508-248-1632.

Our Autumn yard sale was held on Saturday November 6th. We appreciate the following donors for our timeless merchandise: Kevinetta C. O'Brien, Claudia Lacerte, Carol & Don Weinhardt, Cindy Cheever, Cindy and Peter Cooper, Joyce & Freddie Stewart, Armand Bessette, Peg O'Connor and Jim Hipkiss (New England Graphics and Framers Gallery), Cathy & Charlie Peterson, Ruth and Erik Schwendeman, Aimee Newell, Jim Collins, Judith A. Sessler, Pat Lavin and Harry Howard. Thank you all, and anyone I may have inadvertently omitted.

Annual Appeal Achieves Success

By Aimee E. Newell

Thank you!

To everyone who generously contributed to our 2004 annual appeal. The Charlton Historical Society members listed below contributed almost \$2500 and twelve renewed their memberships, offering support for our 2005 activities.

The money raised through the annual appeal will be used to continue restoration work on the historic Rider Tavern. These funds will allow us to reconstruct the taproom fireplace and to erect our new tavern sign, which will welcome visitors during the 250th anniversary of Charlton's incorporation in 2005 and continue to remind our community of its fascinating history.

It's not too late to join the members below; tax-deductible contributions can be sent to the Charlton Historical Society at P.O. Box 252, Charlton, MA 01507.

Please join us in thanking all of our members who contributed. We truly could not do this restoration work without you:

Shirley S. Baer

Nancy D. Berube and John Stevens

Janet and Bill Blasius

Michelle Bohacs

Jim Collins

Steven and Linda Ann Coy Jr.

Glenn and Patricia Ellis

Joseph M. and Lois S. Fay

Mrs. Robertine Fountain

Jayna L. Glemby

Brian and Sandy Graeff

William and Janice B. Habicht

R. Patricia Harrison

Warren and Priscilla Harthan

Harry Howard

John S. and Susan P. Howland

Caroline G. Iandoli

Carol E. Jones

Esther Krueger

Mrs. Frederick Lane

Audrey McCarthy

John C. Miller

Patricia Miller

Frank Morrill

Aimee E. Newell

Thank You!

Decorating Committee Report

By Joyce Stewart

Our major focus this past season was to complete the stenciling and freehand painting of the Southeast Bedchamber...and it was truly a learning experience! Dedicated enthusiastic volunteers such as Ruth Schwendemann "the S woman" painstakingly hand painted the scroll S's on the wall to begin the layout. Cindy Cheever and Joyce Stewart literally hit the walls and Claudia LaCerte added the delicate detail painting of the connecting vines and variegated leafing. The completed stenciled borders and one completed wall totaled 200 woman hours. Our efforts to date have produced a fine replication of a design similar to the wallpaper of the 1790's, without the cost (note: our hourly wage could not be considered – yet a seasoned artist such as Rufus Porter circa 1840's reports painting simple murals on 4 walls of a similar sized room in less than five hours at a total cost of ten dollars!) Where are you Rufus when we need you! Well one wall done, 3 more to go...

The contents of the Archives Room have officially moved to the first floor dedicated space. This has created a new space on the second floor for public use. Harry Howard, Carol and Don Weinhardt tackled the removal of wallpaper and fresh coats of paint for Claudia to open shoppe for History Day. Continued work in this space this year will bring color to the woodwork and walls multiplying the use for displays and the Widow's Third Shoppe.

The color selection of the Southeast Bedchamber walls and decoration are replicated from the original early 1800's found in the McIntire/Bond home which compliment the donated quilt circa 1845's flying geese pattern from Cindy & Peter Cooper. The serendipitous connection of donations matching the decor of the rooms is an ongoing pleasure. The Lafayette Dining Room will serve its roasted pig on the large white English pearl ware with blue edged rim platter donated by Pat Lavin. The platter has a blue scalloped edge rim with embossed details of leaves and vines revealing the age of the dish to the 1830's. Thank you to all donors for your kindred spirit.

We traveled to the studio of Heidi Howard in Eastford, CT to finalize the commission of the tavern sign and an informational sign for the

outside of the Rider Tavern. We were treated to a tour of her 1780's home and carriage barn studio. Heidi's home has affectionately influenced her work. The sign project is partially funded by a grant from the Charlton Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Their continued support of the Rider Tavern and local artists helps keep alive the awareness of these important historical arts. Along the traveled road we visited a successful restoration of the Richmond House in Ashford, CT. This is a private residence and antique shoppe owned by the Oberg's (open by chance or appointment, call 860-429-2495). Dedication to detail did reward their Finds! The Obergs are an inspiration to us. After careful investigation they uncovered a small barroom behind a wall thought to be a closet space. Evidence of shelving and pieces of the bars were found. This one person barroom space has been restored and creates a tavern room in the front part of their home.

One never knows what surprises are still awaiting to be found at the Rider Tavern. Preliminary investigation by fireplace restoration experts reveals the potential for the uncovering of the fireplace in our tavern barroom. This process could reveal one or more layers of prior existing brick. We will follow the clues to the earliest version for our barroom.

Preparing for the Town of Charlton's 250th celebrations, Shirley Baer is creating note cards to highlight the Rider Tavern. One of kind Charlton folk art replicated by Inez Gornall will feature the 1830's lion fireboard. Friend of the tavern Donna Kaplan captured the 1800's lifestyle through select photographic views from the interior of the Rider Tavern for those that have never visited Charlton. These special editions of note cards will be available through the 2005 year.

On the Web

Charlton's history is now merged with current technology at our new website. A huge thank you goes to Westwell's Webworks for getting www.charltonhistoricalsociety.org up and running! This is the place to check out a brief history of the Rider Tavern, view a list of CHS events, and read past newsletters.

Property Committee Report

By Don Weinhardt

This is a summary of just some of the artifact and archival items donated to the Charlton Historical Society since our last newsletter in October 2004.

Cindy Cheever, Paxton - Book, "The Art of Theorem Painting", by Lefko and Knickerbocker plus 12 Booklets related to New England history and life; **Richard Green**, Spencer - Two volume set of books titled "New England Journeys - Ford Times Special Edition", numbers 1 through 6, plus two books on the subject of early American wall stencils, also 30 issues of the magazine, "Old-Time New England", The Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, most of these issues are from the 1920's.

Cynthia and Peter Cooper, Charlton - A collection of family heirloom crafted items, six in all consisting of two quilts, two quilt tops and two comforters. The earliest quilt dates back to c. 1845 while the latest is c. 1880. The six items were most likely made in Massachusetts by Sylvia Ford, born in 1788 in Abington, Mass. and died in 1861 in Windsor, Mass. and her daughter Rosina Packard Whitman born 1818 and died in 1889. The oldest quilt, dated to 1845 and is the Wild Geese pattern, has found a home on the rope bed in the newly decorated bed chamber. The remaining five items are stored in appropriate cartons and are available for inspection by those with a serious interest in quilting.

Heritage String Band Productions, Ed Quigley, manager - Compact disk, "Campfire Songs and Letters...From Long, Long Ago", vol. 2, 2004; **Evelyn Sullivan** (this item was purchased by her at auction and donated to CHS many years ago but was not accessioned at the time), Engraved print, "Men of Progress", original picture by C. Schussele, Phila., 1861, engraving 1863, two of the featured men are Dr. William T. G. Morton of Charlton and Elias Howe of Spencer. The print was archivally matted, glazed and framed by **Peg O'Connor** and **Jim Hipkiss**, owners of New England Graphics in Sturbridge and Framers Gallery in Auburn; **Susan A. Vassarro**, M. D., Massachusetts General Hospital - Photo, sepia tone, 8" by 10", "The First Operation Under Ether".

Patricia Lavin, Holliston - Platter, oval, English pearl-ware, blue shell-edged rim, scallop with embossed curved lines and decoration, 16" long, circa 1830, for use in the Lafayette Dining Room; **Elizabeth Lennihan**, Charlton - Photo postcards, early views of the trolley station at Charlton Center and a steam driven train at the Charlton Depot station; **John and Marci Rix**, Dudley - Four photos of their house, this salt box house was built in 1765 on H. Putnam Road, was disassembled, moved and reconstructed and restored on Dudley-Southbridge Road, Dudley; **William O. Hultgren**, Charlton - Wall map, oil cloth, 44" by 34", "Map of Worcester County" published by Miller and Lord, Boston, Mass., it is copyrighted but not dated, it is circa 1935 also 5 different 35mm slides showing moving the old rectory building from Charlton City to its new location on Baypath Road; **Peter Cooper Jr.**, Charlton - Half pint, clear glass, orange silk screen labeled milk bottle from "Dresser Hill Farm", circa 1957; **Albert L. Thibaudeau**, Dudley - one carton of Town of Charlton Annual Reports and a carton of school related material, not yet sorted.

Thank you all for helping to preserve Charlton's past.

Also note, the archive and library re-organization is moving forward, and very good progress has been made. If you have, or know someone who has, any locally significant historical material and is looking for a good permanent home for it, please contact me at 248-1632.

Genealogy Workshop a Success

By Cindy Cooper

Sandy Goodwin shared techniques for recording a family tree with a rapt audience on March 19, 2005 in the Charlton Public Library. She shared the joys and pitfalls she encountered along the path she took to discover her family heritage, as examples of the process for starting a personal genealogy. Beginners from the tri-community were treated to a lively presentation that explained how to develop an ancestral chart, what to include in a research calendar, and sources to search for evidence of the relationship to famous relatives.

Gardening Committee Report

By Ruth Schwnedeman

Ann Leighton, in her book "American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century," lists daffodils as one of the most frequently grown plants during that time period. And with some good weather (and good luck), you'll soon see more than 200 of those blooms nodding their heads around our 1790s Rider Tavern. Like many town organizations last fall, the Historical Society purchased and planted scores of the bulbs in honor of Charlton's 250th anniversary. With spring finally just around the corner, we're waiting impatiently to see the results of our handiwork. Drive by in late April or early May to check them out.

On other gardening notes, we continue to upgrade and maintain the established "widow's third" fenced garden, as well as the small herb garden at the back of the tavern. We're also clearing out overgrown shrubs and replanting the rock-enclosed plots, both on the eastern and western ends of the building. New perennials like daylily and geranium have been added, and we'll supplement these with charming historical annuals like nasturtium ("Indian cress"), 4 o'clock, and love-in-a-mist.

Thanks to all those members and trustees who've donated plants, funds, and plain hard work to forward these projects. Anyone interested in further supporting these efforts, please contact Don Weinhardt at 508-248-1632 for more information.



Wanted: Slide Carousel

The summer series of historic programs relies on slide presentations. The carousels for 80 or 140 slides would ease interchanging the materials.

Calendar of Events

Spring Yard Sale Sat. May 7, Rider Tavern, 8:30am

Annual Meeting with Elections Mon. June 6, Rider Tavern, 7:00pm - program to be announced.

Threads of Thyme Tea Sun. June 12, Rider Tavern, 12noon - - Includes program "Guide me in truth: Needlework Samplers in Charlton and New England" presented by Aimee Newell, Curator of Textiles and Fine Arts at Old Sturbridge Village.

"Old Home Day" Mon. Sept. 5, Grange Hall, 9:00am Display and Sales.

Charlton History Day Sun. Oct. 16 at 12noon, Rider Tavern, Militia Lot, No. 2 Schoolhouse.

Slide Show and Lecture Series

In recognition of Charlton's 250th anniversary, CHS is proud to present a series of presentations. All are at the Rider Tavern at 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. The schedule:

"Oldest Surviving Buildings in Town of Charlton" Part One, presented by Don Weinhardt
Wed. June 22

"Oldest Surviving Buildings in Town of Charlton" Part Two presented by Don Weinhardt
Mon., July 11

"History of Education in Town of Charlton"
presented by Cindy Cooper and Kevinetta O'Brien
Wed. July 27

"Patterns on the Wall - Early Charlton Interior Decoration" presented by Joyce Stewart
Wed. Aug 8

"Following Fashion: Clothing Style in Early 1800s Charlton" presented by Aimee Newell
Mon. Aug. 24

"Early Taverns in Charlton and it's Environs"
presented by Ruth Schwendeman
Mon. Sept. 12

"Gen. Lafayette's Visit Through Charlton in 1824" presented by Bill Hultgren
Wed. Sept. 28

Charlton Historical Society
P. O. Box 252
Charlton, MA 01507

Membership Form

Charlton Historical Society
P. O. Box 252
Charlton, MA 01507

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Type of Membership:

___ **Individual \$5.00**

___ **Family \$10.00**

___ **Life \$50.00**

___ **Renewal**

___ **New Member**

I would like to volunteer at an event or be a member of the board of directors. Phone _____

___ **Enclosed is a donation of \$** _____

Comments: _____