



# Lebanon Provisions

The Lebanon Historical Society Newsletter

Vol. 1 No. 2

Winter  
2009

## Calendar Of Events

*The public is welcome*

See page 4  
for program details

**Wed. - Fri.  
Feb. 18, 19 & 20,**

**2 to 4pm**  
Feb. School Vacation  
Genealogy &  
Archaeology  
Hands-On History  
Programs

**Sun., Feb. 22, 2pm**  
Fireside Chat  
St. Francis Church  
And Exhibit Opening

**Mon., March 16,  
7pm**  
Joint LHS & Garden  
Club Program

\$3.00 donation

**Wed., March 18,  
7pm**  
Lebanon Quiz Show

## Connecticut Humanities Council Grant to Enhance Lebanon as Revolutionary War Site

Alicia Wayland

There's a Freedom Trail that runs around the Lebanon Green, connecting the museum sites with the stories of Connecticut's role in the Revolutionary War.

There's a Freedom Trail that runs through a section of Boston, connecting heritage sites with the stories of Massachusetts's role in the Revolutionary War.

The Lebanon trail is little known. The Boston trail is a world-famous heritage tourism attraction.

Massachusetts certainly deserves the attention it gets because that state's radicalism was so important in shaping the beginnings of the Independence Movement.

But, Connecticut's contributions of men, armaments, and provisions that were central to the winning of the war are often overlooked.

Lebanon is uniquely positioned to tell this story. It was the home of Governor Jonathan Trumbull, who turned his former store into the War Office, his headquarters throughout the conflict, where over 500 meetings of the Council of Safety were held to plan the state's defense.

Lebanon was also the hometown of William Williams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Over 650 Lebanon men served in the American military forces. And the town hosted Lauzun's Legion, the cavalry unit of the French Army, for nearly eight months during 1780-1781 while American and French military leaders planned the British defeat.

To enhance Lebanon's position as the center for the study and interpretation of the Revolutionary War in Connecticut, the Lebanon Historical Society and the Connecticut Sons of the American Revolution obtained a joint grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council to hold a conference with museum professionals and history scholars to help determine how to proceed.

On November 18, two nationally known museum consultants, Margaret Piatt, Piatt Castles, West Liberty, Ohio, and Dale Jones, Making History Connections, Glenwood, Maryland, visited all the museum sites to become familiar with the programs and themes as they are now presented. They also visited the Trumbull Cemetery and toured the Green.

The next day Ms. Piatt and Mr. Jones facilitated a day-long conference with staff from all the museum sites, organizational volunteers, and historians Richard Buel, Wesleyan University; Bruce Clouette, Public Archaeology Survey Team; Bruce Stark, Connecticut State Library; and Katherine A. Hermes, Central Connecticut State University.

The lively and informative discussions brought out many new interpretative ideas and unexplored stories as a way to present the Revolutionary War history of both the town and the state.

On January 26, Ms. Piatt returned to Lebanon to work with LHS Museum staff on developing hands-on programs for school groups. The next

*Continued on page 7*

**The mission  
of the Lebanon  
Historical Society**

The mission of the Society is to preserve and to interpret all aspects of the history of Lebanon, Connecticut from its earliest inhabitants to the present day, with a special emphasis on the role of Lebanon in the American Revolution.

**Board of Trustees**

*President*

Ed Tollmann

*Vice President*

Glenn Pianka

*Treasurer*

Rob Slate

*Secretary*

Alicia Wayland

*Buildings & Grounds*

Brian Bartizek

*Community Events*

Keith LaPorte

*Collections*

Jill Adams

*Development*

Gisele Russo

*Education*

Sara Cross

*Exhibitions*

Margaret McCaw

*Finance*

Kurt Bender

*Membership*

Jan Grigas

*Publications*

Jacy Worth

*Nominating*

Al Vertefeuille

*Personnel*

Betty Forrest

*Ex-Officio*

Archibald Andrews III

*Interim Director*

Donna Baron

## From the President

Ed Tollmann

Our November 9 program "Stories of Men from Lebanon who served in the Revolutionary War" was presented by Sally Whipple. The program was very well



received. At the conclusion of the program a farewell reception was held for Sally. We presented her with a gift and thanked Sally for her years of service. Folks were coming and going all afternoon wishing her well.

Donna Baron has been hired as interim director. She has jumped in with both feet and is doing a great job. If you have a chance, stop in the museum and welcome her to Lebanon. Donna and her family reside in Hebron.

We have two new board members. I would like to welcome Gisele Russo as Development chairman and Jill Adams for Collections chair. We now have a full Board of Trustees. I don't believe a better team could be put together to serve the LHS and the Lebanon community at large.

The Lebanon Tree Lighting was held on a cold and windy evening. Most people came for the tree lighting and then went home to get warm. We did however have a good group at the museum. The new toy display was very well received and mulled cider and refreshments were enjoyed by all.

If you missed our LHS Christmas party December 10 you missed a great evening of fellowship. A good group of members met and shared good conversation and memories.

Our off and on again program on the Grand Canyon was held January 18. With snow in the morning the program was canceled. By afternoon the weather had changed and 40 or so folks showed up for the program. After putting out an all points bulletin for Charlie and Jimmy Bender, the program turned out to be a great success. John and Dawn Drum, Mary Lou Beckwith and Keith LaPorte, who have hiked the Grand Canyon with Charlie and Jimmy, were also on hand to add their experiences as well. My thanks to Charlie and Jimmy Bender for a job well done.



Don't forget our Fireside Chat on St. Francis of Assisi Church. This program will be held February 22 at 2pm. A display and panel of church members will tell the story of the origins and history to date of the wonderful Parish. Please join us for what promises to be a wonderful afternoon of fellowship and memories.

The Lyman Memorial High School music club held their second "open mic" night and it was a huge success with over 90 in attendance. What a great group of young people and what great Lebanon musical talent. The club is planning on holding two programs per year.

I'm looking forward to a great 2009. Our donations are coming in and new members joining. I'm confident that with a great Board of Trustees and our hard working staff that 2009 will prove to be the best ever.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year.

## Director's Message

Donna Baron

It's January, ice and snow cover the Lebanon Green. Each day however is getting a little longer. This is the season of new beginnings – a wonderful time for me to begin working at the Lebanon Historical Society. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of the Society members and to encourage you to get in touch with me. Please share your ideas, questions, recommendations, or, even complaints. I really do look forward to getting to know each of you.

For the last twenty-five years I have lived in Hebron with my husband and two sons on part of a farm his family bought in 1913. My own family is from the Mystic area where I grew up. I cannot remember a time when I did not love history. When I finally left Connecticut to go to college, I majored in American history and education, rather expecting that I would be a teacher. However, a teacher surplus led me to a job as an exhibit assistant at Old Sturbridge Village. History museums have been my career for more than thirty years now.



---

*At each of my positions I met wonderful people, learned a great deal, and had the fun of being a public historian. But, I often found myself wishing that I could combine my love for and interest in Eastern Connecticut with all the skills I had developed in other places.*

---

Revolution. Most recently, I served as executive director at the Middlesex County Historical Society in Middletown. At each of my positions I met wonderful people, learned a great deal, and had the fun of being a public historian. But, I often found myself wishing that I could combine my love for and interest in eastern Connecticut with all the skills I had developed in other places.

When Sally Whipple told me she was moving to an exciting new job at the Old State House in Hartford and asked if I might be interested in working in Lebanon, I felt challenged and excited. The Lebanon Historical Society is recognized as one of the best in the state. I am delighted to have this wonderful opportunity to combine my professional interests in the colonial and Revolutionary War periods and the history of agriculture in New England with a sense of place in eastern Connecticut. I hope to add my skills and experiences to those of the Board, our staff, and our members as the Lebanon Historical Society moves forward.

For much of that time I worked with collections as a registrar and curator. I learned how to keep records, use a computer, and install exhibits. I also had a chance to plan and undertake many kinds of research. Probate records, deeds, account books, old newspapers, census records, and diaries have provided me with hours of fun, hard work, and a historian's sneeze (the result of all the dusty documents). I have planned exhibits, written popular and scholarly articles, and presented programs for many audiences.

When I left Old Sturbridge Village after many years, I became curator at the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield and shifted my historical focus from 19th-century agricultural villages to Connecticut during the American

### **Welcome New Members**

~Family~

**Stephen &  
Cecelia Messier**  
*Mansfield Center, CT*

**Bill & Ingrid  
Treiss**  
*Lebanon, CT*

~Student~

**Krissy Krause**  
*Lebanon, CT*

**Welcome  
back  
to all  
of our  
renewing  
members.**

### **Contact Us:**

The Lebanon  
Historical Society  
856 Trumbull Hwy  
P.O. Box 151  
Lebanon, CT 06249  
**860-642-6579**  
museum@  
historyoflebanon.org  
www.  
historyoflebanon.org

### **Museum Hours:**

Wed. thru Sat.  
12pm to 4pm  
Library & Research  
Center  
Wed. and Sat. only  
or by appointment.



**February School  
Vacation Hands-On  
History Programs**  
Wed-Fri from 2-4pm

**Wed., Feb 18  
"Tracing your  
family tree"**

Create a decorative family tree and fill in your ancestors.

**Thurs., Feb 19  
"Archaeology—  
Do you dig it?"**

Introduction to archaeology techniques with a "shoe-box dig."

**Fri., Feb 20  
"Becoming a backyard  
Archaeologist"**

Use real archaeological artifacts to explore the lives of previous Lebanon residents.

**Sun., Feb. 22 •2pm  
St. Francis Church  
Fireside Chat and  
Exhibit Opening**

The interesting history of the Catholic church and its roots in Lebanon.

**Mon., March 16 •7pm  
Joint LHS & Garden Club  
Program.  
"Early New England  
Gardens and their  
English Connections"**  
\$3.00 donation

**Wed., March 18 • 7pm  
Lebanon Quiz Show**  
Test your knowledge of the people and places of Lebanon

**Neighbors Helping  
Neighbors**

**We have 2 requests for  
information on:  
1035 Trumbull Hwy  
and  
59 Taylor Bridge Rd**

**If you have any  
information on these  
houses or the people  
who lived there, please  
share it with us!**

## Snug as a Bug in a Bed Rug

Gisele Russo and Jacy Worth

Last year Jacy Worth had the opportunity to meet and converse with Jessie Armstead Marshall. She learned that Jessie and her husband Herman are a couple who spent much of their married lives devoted to preserving the past: Herman as a restoration contractor specializing in 18th- and 19th-century buildings and Jessie in the replication of period textiles for historic houses, antiques dealers, and private clients.

Jessie had been a reporter for the Hartford Courant for many years and during this time she began weaving as a hobby. She bought her first loom in upstate New York after taking a class and falling in love with the craft. After perfecting her talent she became a journeyman weaver in the 1970s. She taught classes in spinning and weaving in a converted barn turned studio and classroom on their property in Coventry.

Reproduction textiles became Jessie's specialty and she began to work by commission. Coverlets, blankets, rugs and stair runners were her most requested items. During their engaging conversation, Jacy learned that Jessie had written a book about bed rugs, which are believed to be the forerunners of hooked rugs.

Jessie and Herman's Coventry home was featured in the February 1991 issue of *Colonial Homes*. Her masterpiece, a looped-pile bed rug based on a 1740s original is depicted in this article. This amazing piece required 14,000 yards of yarn and took three years to make. The following is a summary of Jessie's book, *Bed Rugs, 18th and 19th Century Embroidered Bed Covers*, published 2001. With the

temperatures in the single digits lately we thought this article might provide you with some warm thoughts of colonial women working tirelessly on their beautiful wool creations

For those who appreciate early New England crafts this book provides an informative background of bed rugs defined as "embroidered coverlets whose backgrounds are completely covered with needlework." The American version "developed as a creative outlet for women colonists throughout the 18th century and continued for several decades in the 19th century."



The author divulges her background describing who she was when asked to repair a coverlet, which led to her own creation, the first known bed rug made since 1833. To do this, Jessie conducted research into the history of the household linens.

A great deal of information is gathered through the probate records of individuals of these times. The records of many notable families are discussed, including those of local interest from the towns of Hebron, Bolton and Coventry. Those mentioned

*Continued on pg 6*

# Jonathan Trumbull Junior House -A New Direction

Gisele Russo

This past November I was fortunate enough to be able to participate in a Knitting Workshop held at and provided by the Jonathan Trumbull Junior House Museum. Since the activity was run by their new Director Cynthia Dias- Reid, I had two motives to fulfill that day:participating in a knitting workshop (a craft I've been meaning to hone) and meeting the new Director. I was not disappointed on either count. As the

in telling the story of one of the town's most important historical figures, Jonathan Trumbull Junior. Previously she worked for 20 years at Old Sturbridge Village in the departments of Interpretation and Education.

Additionally, she illustrated some of the museum publications. Her training was in Studio Arts at Rhode Island College. She has also been employed by the Willard Clock Museum, Higgins Armory, and she was curator of the Clara Barton Birthplace Museum.

In addition to working at the museum, she lectures on "Women's History through 19th-Century Fashion" and "Early New England Gardens." She has an art studio at her home in Woodstock Valley where she is a handweaver and teaches watercolor classes. (dovecotestudio.com). Additionally, she works in the evening as an adult education teacher in Webster, MA. Lebanon is fortunate that she chose to be director here.

The museum has several exhibits planned for next season featuring theorem painting and woven period coverlets. Cynthia will be demonstrating theorem painting in June and floor loom weaving in August to coincide with planned exhibits. They are also planning more historically based workshops. Prior to the knitting workshop, she held an herbal wreath making workshop using traditional herbs and flowers, some from the garden maintained by the Lebanon Garden Club. There was also a very successful quilting workshop where participants made a patchwork project based on a traditional pattern called Mosaic or known today as "Grandmother's Flower Garden." They also were able to get a close look at fine handwork on quilts from the past, which were on loan from the Gov. Jonathan Trumbull Senior Museum, also located on the green.



Knitting Workshop

---

*Cindy began her position last  
May when the museum  
opened for the season.  
She was drawn to Lebanon  
because of its history ...*

---

participants sat around the dining room table following through on the instructions provided for a pair of muffatees (mittens that allow the fingers to be free), we were delightfully entertained by our host and instructor Director Cynthia Dias-Reid. She shared stories of previous experiences in her museum background and shared future plans and hopes for the Jonathan Trumbull Junior House. She concluded by giving us a tour of the museum, a special treat!

Cindy began her position last May when the museum opened for the season. She was drawn to Lebanon because of its history and wanted to become involved



Wreath making class

**For those of you  
who would  
like to stop in  
to the Jonathan  
Trumbull Junior  
House to say  
hello and  
obtain a very  
informative tour,  
the museum hours  
are from 12-4 pm  
every weekend  
from mid May to  
mid October.**

## Upcoming programs at the Jonathan Trumbull Junior House

**~ Sat., May 16 ~**

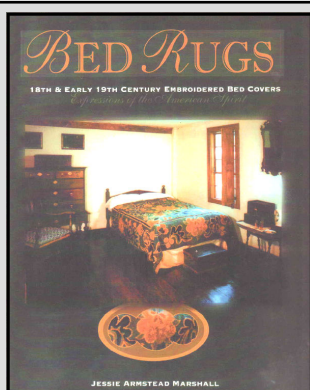
Museum opens for the  
season 12-4pm  
with a new exhibit titled  
"The Art of Theorem Painting"  
A reception for artist Judith  
Vertefeuille 2-4pm

**~ Sat., June 13 ~**

Demonstration on  
"The Technique of  
Theorem Painting" 1-3pm

**~ Sat., July 11 ~**

Exhibit opening  
"Antique New England  
Woven Coverlets"



If interested, a copy of *Bed Rugs* can be purchased through Amazon.com.

### A Good Read

Next time you're in, please browse through our selection of History Magazines—Some of the articles that we've found really interesting are:

**"Newgate Prison in 1825: A Nursery of Crime"**

in *Connecticut History*  
Spring 2008 Issue

or

**"The Colorful History of Connecticut's Blue Laws"**

in *Hog River Journal*  
Winter 2009 Issue

or

**"Family Heirlooms as Artifacts, Artifacts as Family History"**

in *New England Ancestors*

Spring 2002 Issue

Also

**"A Guide to Genealogical Research"**

in *New England Ancestors*

Summer 2002 Issue

## Bed Rugs

*Continued from page 4*

include the Hales of Coventry, Philena McCall of Lebanon, (thought to be a relative of the Hales), Hanna Baldwin of Coventry, Esther Lyman of Coventry (related to the Lymans of Lebanon), Sarah Woodward Waterman born in Mansfield, and Hannah Johnson of Bozrah. History buffs won't be disappointed as much is included about the backgrounds of these women.

The book also discusses design and their sources, presents diagrams of different stitch types, photos of actual rugs, material sources, dye recipes, patterns used, layouts through different times in history as well as actual probate records.

For those of you who wish to view preserved examples first hand Mrs. Marshall provides a list of current bed rug locations. Locally you can visit the Governor Jonathan Trumbull House, here in Lebanon, where there are two bed rugs owned by the Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution on display. One was created by Sally Kate (Hale) Clapp of Coventry, a niece of patriot Nathan Hale. The other bed rug is dated 1764 and may have been made by a member of the Geer family. It is initialed MG at the head of the cover near the date.

The bed rug made by Philena McCall (1783-1822) of Lebanon is now at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford. Philena married Deacon Eliphet Abell, also of Lebanon, in 1806.

Bed rug maker Eunice (Williams) Metcalf of Lebanon (b. 1775) was probably related to and knew bed rug maker Philena McCall. Eunice Metcalf's rug dates from 1790-1800. It too is now owned by the Wadsworth Atheneum.

Other nearby organizations with bed rugs in their collections are Connecticut Landmarks (formerly A&L Society of Connecticut) and the Connecticut Historical Society, both in Hartford; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; and the Faith Trumbull Chapter, CTDAR in Norwich, to name just a few.

If you have a craft you'd like to demonstrate for an adult or children's program, please give us a call 642-6579 or email us [museum@historyoflebanon.org](mailto:museum@historyoflebanon.org)

**Build the Newcomb Chest Fund**

**Goal \$15,000**

**\$14,000**

**\$13,000**

**\$12,000**

**\$11,000**

**\$10,000**

**\$9,000**

**\$8,000**

**\$7,000**

**\$6,000**

**\$5,000**

**\$4,000**

**\$3,000**

**\$2,000**

**\$1,000**

**Through your generosity we've raised \$3,025.00 so far!**



# People Projects

**There are some great projects underway at the Lebanon Historical Society thanks to diligent interns, students, and volunteers.**

**Lindy Brunkhorst Olewine**, is our Lebanon resident and genealogy volunteer extraordinaire! For many years Lindy has conducted genealogy searches for the numerous requests that come through the Historical Society office. Lindy spends hours upon hours searching documents and records in local town halls and cemeteries, then creates an easy-to-follow report that is passed on to the happy inquirer. Through her tireless work we have gained new members and donations. Thank you, Lindy!

**Rebecca Conelius**, a History major at ECSU just completed her internship with us. Rebecca worked on gathering information and photos for the new Web site and also worked with volunteer genealogist, Lindy Olewine, to make corrections on genealogy files. Rebecca recently graduated and returned home to Greenwich.

**Kasey Beckwith**, is a junior at Roger Williams University working on a degree in Architectural History and Historic Preservation. Working on a project that has taken on a life of its own, Kasey has created a spreadsheet on historic and old houses in Lebanon that will gather all the information we have on them in one central place in a user-friendly format. This will become an invaluable research tool. Kasey has

returned to school but will be back home in Franklin in the late spring and plans to continue working on this project. *If you have any interest in working on a project like this, please let us know.*

**Sarah Schultz**, a history major and art minor at ECSU, has been making use of her artistic talents to create templates/stencils for a family tree for a children's genealogy program. Sarah has also been a big help as we plan that program. Sarah is a Lebanon resident and has been volunteering and helping us with children's crafts programs for several years.

**Megan Postemski**, a Lyman High School Senior, is working on her Senior Project, which will be one of our vacation week programs. Megan has independently researched and planned a hands-on archaeology program using shoe-box archaeological digs. She will be presenting this program on Thursday, Feb 19 between 2 and 4 pm.

## CHC Grant

*Continued from page 1*

day a group of museum staff, community leaders, and business leaders, discussed the new interpretive initiatives.

As the next step, the LHS and the SAR submitted a Planning Grant application to CHC on February 1 to produce enriched interpretative programming and to create an educational Web site.

The Freedom Trail does not begin and end in Boston. With the support of CHC and the commitment of the LHSM and the SAR to new outreach, the Freedom Trail leads straight to the Lebanon Green, heartbeat of the American Revolution.

## Exhibit News

*A faith, a church,  
a community:*

**St. Francis of Assisi  
Church Exhibit  
will be installed  
just in time  
for our fireside chat  
on**

**Sunday, February 22.**

This exhibit features a  
brief but interesting  
history of the

Catholic Church in  
Lebanon beginning with  
St. Mary's Chapel to a  
converted house on the  
green, and finally to the  
construction of the  
St. Francis Church as it  
stands today.

This exhibit is the first in a  
series of exhibits and  
fireside chats on the  
churches of Lebanon.  
We plan to feature a  
different church  
every year.

## Museum Gift Shop

**A new and improved  
gift shop is on its  
way.**

If there is anything  
you'd like to see in  
our gift shop,  
please let us know.

*"I love work, it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours  
-Jerome K. Jerome*

*If you would be interested  
in sponsoring  
the next newsletter  
please call us at 642-6579*

**Thank you  
for sponsoring  
this newsletter  
Patron  
Marion Emmons  
&  
Donor  
Ruth A. Tipton**

**Lebanon Historical Society  
Museum & Visitor Center  
P.O. Box 151  
Lebanon, CT 06249**

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 1

### **Upcoming Events**

**Feb. 18, 19 & 20,  
Wed. - Fri. 2 to 4pm**  
Feb. School Vacation  
Genealogy & Archaeology  
Hands-On History  
Programs

**Sun., Feb. 22, 2pm**  
Fireside Chat  
St. Francis Church  
And Exhibit Opening

**Mon., March 16, 7pm**  
Joint LHS & Garden  
Club Program

\$3.00 donation

**Wed., March 18, 7pm**  
Lebanon Quiz Show

*LHS programs are free  
Donations are appreciated.*



Programs, exhibitions & services of the Lebanon Historical Society are made possible in part by a generous grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council.