

## MHS THANKS THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTERS

**Erwin C. Bauer**  
CHARITABLE TRUST FUND

  
**NewAlliance Foundation**

  
**Connecticut  
Humanities  
Council**

The Madison Historical Society is proud to be the beneficiary of financial support provided by several state and local sources.

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge this important financial support and to thank each of these groups for their generosity.

The following projects and programs could not have gone forward without them:

A successful grant proposal to The Connecticut Humanities Council underwrote the costs to bring four scholars together for a charrette to discuss and formulate plans for the Allis-Bushnell House project "Five Days in Madison" which will articulate how national historical events unfolded in Madison.

The Erwin C. Bauer Charitable Trust has been a generous advocate for our exhibitions at Lee's Academy, and this past year supported the installation of our exhibition "Lee's Academy: Madison's First High School," which provides an important look back at the history of the building and of education in Madison and Connecticut.

The New Alliance Foundation has demonstrated the value of preserving the 1821 Lee's Academy by supporting our capital campaign for the school house's vital renovation.



**Madison Historical Society**  
Founded 1917  
P.O. Box 17  
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(203) 245-4567  
www.madisoncthistorical.org

MHS offices are open in the ca. 1821 Lee Academy at 14 Meetinghouse Lane on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9am—1 pm

For a tour of MHS' ca. 1785 National Historic Register Property, the Allis-Bushnell House, call (203) 245-4567

The MHS newsletter is published quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall  
Editor: Paulette C. Kaufmann

Madison Historical Society

Fall 2010

# HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

## FIRST ANNUAL PUMPKIN BLAZE & GHOST WALK

The enthusiastic response, and demand for a repeat of MHS 2008 cemetery tour, has spawned a new annual event on the Madison Town Green in which all can participate — MHS' First Annual Pumpkin Blaze and Ghost Tour.

On October 23, beginning at 4:00 pm, the event combines a contest and display of carved pumpkins with a ghost walk featuring Madison witches, murders and mysteries. There will also be some old-fashioned games to play and crafts to make while waiting for the magical time when dusk falls. Popcorn and cider will be available as snacks.

And at 6:30 pm, in a grand finale, all the carved pumpkin entries will be

lighted to create a magnificent blaze of Halloween light.

During the late afternoon five ghosts, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, will tell their tales of witchcraft trials, an accident at Ninevah Falls, a British invasion at East Wharf, an unsolved murder, and a woman's wait for the return of her long-lost lover.

At 6:15 the contest winners will be announced for four separate entry categories: children between 5 and 10 (painted or carved);



young adults, ages 11-18 (carved); adults over 18 (carved) or families (carved or painted). The illuminated pumpkins, carved or painted at home, should keep the Green aglow well into the early evening and make a great spectacle.

### OCTOBER 23 PUMPKIN BLAZE SCHEDULE

**4:00-5:00 pm: Contest entries**  
**4:00-6:30 pm: Continuous Ghost Walk Tours**  
**4:00-6:00 pm: Family Crafts and Old Fashioned Games**  
**6:30 pm: Lighting of Pumpkins and Illuminaries**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday  
October 23  
(Rain Date October 30)  
1st ANNUAL PUMPKIN BLAZE & GHOST WALK**  
See page 1.  
**4 pm—6:30 pm**  
Madison Town Green

**Saturday  
October 16  
BAUER FARM HARVEST FESTIVAL**  
See page 1.  
**11 am—3 pm**  
Bauer Park  
261 Copse Road

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH MHS AT BAUER FARM FESTIVAL

MHS' re-enactors will be in the kitchen at the Bauer Farm on October 16 during this year's popular Bauer Farm Harvest Festival. One re-enactor, portraying Louise Bauer, will tell the story about her journey from Germany to New York to Madison where she met and married Constantine Bauer.

In Madison, Constantine made the transition from stone carver to farmer when he purchased the 64-acre farm and ca. 1840s house on Copse

Road 100 years ago. There the Bauers lived and raised their two sons, Erwin and Anthony, to whom the farm was passed when their parents died.



At the house Louise will explain her experience as a recent immigrant adjusting to a new language and a new way of life to which she brought many German traditions for raising and preparing food. Some of her recipes for cabbage, like cole slaw, would have been unfamiliar to the local New England Yankee cooks, as were many other items that she grew in her German kitchen garden.

FALL 2010  
HAPPENINGS  
HISTORICAL



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## A VERY FAIR DAY ON THE GREEN FOR MHS' 39<sup>TH</sup> ANTIQUES FAIR

One year after being drowned out by Tropical Storm Danny, the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Madison Historical Society's Antiques Fair opened under bright, sunny skies – a perfect day and the perfect destination for the visitors who came to browse and buy antiques on Madison's Town Green.

And once again, the Fair earned its reputation as one of the best local antiques fairs in the state. For visitors from surrounding towns as well as from overseas, there was a wide variety of antiques offered by the ninety dealers from which to make selections. Dealers offered a stunning array of choices from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century furniture, vintage textiles, garden antiques, Native American baskets, bronzes and Americana.

Ten-minute booth chats gave visitors an opportunity to listen and learn more about the weaponry that helped Washington and the American



Ann Marsh displays items that can be used creatively to decorate home and garden.

colonists win the Revolutionary War, decorating home and garden with unique antiques, and how to evaluate vintage handbags.

In addition Fair visitors were offered free visits to the

Madison Historical Society's exhibit, *Lee's Academy: Madison's First High School*, on its last day before closing for the year.

One popular stopping place to quench thirst and hunger, was the Sidewalk Café where Chef Paul Staley of Splash and Madison Chocolates served pastries, gelato and sandwiches to hungry and thirsty visitors.

The annual Fair is MHS' major fund-raiser which supports the work of the MHS and the preservation of its three historic properties: the Allis-Bushnell House, Lee's Academy, and the Small Pox Cemetery.

The Antiques Fair committee is grateful to all the volunteers who so generously gave of their time to make the 2010 Fair such a success – from the those who set up the Green the night before to those who staffed the Country Store and the entry gates.

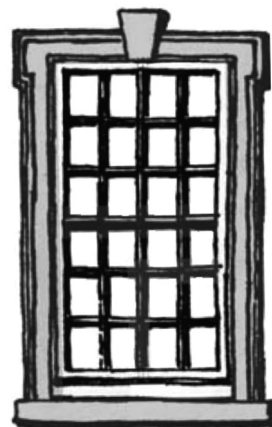
### JOIN

### MHS' WINDOW DRIVE

### AND HELP PRESERVE

### LEE'S ACADEMY

## WINDOW DRIVE FOR RESTORATION OF LEE'S ACADEMY LAUNCHED



Lee's Academy's restoration efforts received a jump start during this year's Antiques Fair when the MHS booth became the roll-out point for MHS' capital campaign to repair and restore the ca. 1821 Lee's Academy.

Generous Fair attendees responded to MHS initial appeal for either a \$600 contribution for one reproduction 12-over-12 window, \$300 for half of a window or \$25 each for one of the 24 panes in a window.

Removing and replacing twenty-four windows in the

building is the second phase of a complete exterior restoration that will include the repair and repainting of the exterior.

The first phase, which included the replacement of the cedar shake roof and the repair and stabilization of the cupola, was completed in January by Wm. Plunkett & Associates LLC with assistance and donations from Liberty Cedar, Keith Howard Roofing, Think Green Waste Removal and Joshua Weiss Professional Painting.

## MADISON'S SECOND GRADERS TAKE TO THE TOWN GREEN FOR A DAY

For the first time all of Madison's second graders will be able to participate in an annual program that until this year was accessible only to Island Avenue School students.

In a major change in the social studies curriculum for second grade classes, the students will participate in their study of the town in which they live. MHS is especially proud to be cooperating and sharing its resources with teachers and students.

A tour of the Madison Green will take the students to Lee's Academy established in 1821, the ca. 1838 Congregational Church where the basement served as the town hall until Memorial Town Hall was built (also a stop on the tour) and the Charlotte L. Evarts Archives (CLEMA) in the lower level of ca. 1897 Memorial Town Hall. At the church students will hear a description of the early churches' role in the growth and development of the colony. At Lee's Academy where



ca. 1838 Barber rendering from Collection of Connecticut Historical Society

part of a mid-19th century common school classroom has been recreated, students can practice group reading lessons or math lessons on slates led by a 19th century teacher.

The visit to the Memorial Town Hall will include a mock town meeting where students will try to solve a town problem. Afterwards a visit to CLEMA to see a pictorial presentation of Madison "before"

and "after" launches a study of changes in buildings, transportation and clothing.

As the students tour the Green itself, once a swampy common populated by geese, livestock and warming huts as respite from long sermons in the unheated nearby church, they will visit the offspring of Connecticut's Charter Oak which was planted in 1976 on the Green at the location of Madison's first church.

## HAVE YOU SEEN ONE OF THESE?

This dark oak Windsor chair is one of three that have been donated by Michel Duques for use in the "Five Days of Madison" display that is currently under construction at the Allis-Bushnell House.

The chairs will be used in a Colonial Revival tea room ca. 1920 which will represent the year in which women won the right to vote after a long struggle.

The donated chairs were part of the dining room furniture belonging to Mr. Duques' maternal grandparents, Clinton and Adele Theis, who lived in Madison for many years. The chairs were possibly in



One of the three Windsor chairs donated by Michel Duques.

use in the library at Yale University.

Now MHS is looking for nine more sturdy chairs, similar in design to these, to fully re-create the tea room that was once operated by Susan J. Hart, an officer in the founding period of the Madison Historical Society. It is hoped that the tea room can be used for gatherings of small community groups.

Please contact Tricia Royston, MHS curator, if you have or know of some appropriate chairs available for donation. Call 203-245-4567 or email troyston@snet.net.

### Madison Historical Society

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# HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS HISTORY PAGES

## THE REVEREND HART'S CHEST

In 1929, Sarah Josephine Hart, bequeathed a precious family heirloom to the Madison Historical Society. The gift was a two-and-a-half foot tall chest owned by her ancestor, Rev. John Hart, the first minister in East Guilford in 1707. Although various former owners slightly altered the piece over time, it is still in remarkably original condition. A simple piece, it is a good example of Connecticut's early Puritan heritage.

To understand more about the chest, we invited Lewis Scranton of Killingworth, an expert in Early American antiques, to study the heirloom. Scranton concluded that the chest was constructed in England between 1685 and 1700. It is made entirely of original oak, which is a mark of an English piece of furniture; American craftsmen were using the abundant pine found in the local forests to construct their furniture, especially the lids of chests.

Scranton describes the 26 1/2" H x 50" W x 22 1/2"D chest as constructed with mortis and tenon pegged joints. The three panels on the lid match the three panels on the front of the chest. The front panels are surrounded with stiles, top and bottom rails which are carved with a simple leaf pattern; the panels are not carved. A look at the underside confirmed to Scranton that the undulating carving below the bottom rail was actually a part of the rail and not an added decoration. Scranton also pointed out that there is early evidence of the original "flat snipe hinges" which proves that the lid and base of the piece were made together.

The use of chests in early American homes was a tradition brought from England by the first colonists. In Europe, the use of chests as a storage piece in homes became widespread in late medieval time period and gradually evolved from a simple box without legs to the paneled chest used in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The first American craftsmen copied the English style of chest, and then later developed their own designs. For instance, instead of a paneled top (such as the Rev. John Hart chest) the American chests had a flat top, perhaps allowing the chest to also be used for seating although throughout the New England colonies, chests were used primarily for storage of blankets, linens, clothing and valuable items.

How the chest came into Rev. Hart's possession has not been determined although it was made in England long after the Hart family left Braintree, Essex, England in 1632 on the "Lyon" to settle first in Cambridge. Deacon

Stephen Hart, Rev. John Hart's grandfather, and a lifelong friend of Thomas Hooker. The Hart family was one of the 100 families to follow Hooker into the wilderness to establish a colony in Connecticut in 1636. Not long after the Harts had settled in Hartford, they once again moved to an area now known as Farmington. The Hart family was one of the wealthiest families in the area, with a large home and many acres of farmland. One of Deacon

Stephen Hart's children was Captain Thomas Hart, known as a man of "wealth, activity and usefulness" and the father of Rev. John Hart, born in Farmington in 1682.

John Hart was the right age, with the right family and the right education to be one of the first candidates for the newly established Collegiate School of Connecticut (later re-named Yale College.) In 1701, John

Hart moved to Killingworth (present-day Clinton) where he was able to study with Rev. Abraham Pierson, the first Rector of the school which was temporarily established in the minister's home. In 1703, Hart was the first to receive a bachelor's degree from the Collegiate School where, after graduation, he remained until 1707 when he accepted a call from East Guilford to become the first pastor of the first church in the newly established parish.

East Guilford's first meeting house was located on the south-eastern section of the present Green. For his services Rev. Hart received a salary of 90 pounds paid in wheat, rye, peas, pork and Indian corn, as well as 20 loads of firewood. In the same year that John Hart was hired as minister, he purchased eight acres of land near the present day Green where he built his house. Presumably Rev. Hart paid for the land and building of his own home which he later bequeathed to his sons. The town must have been very satisfied with their new minister as a few years after Hart took the position, a majority of the town's proprietors gave eight and 1/4 acres of land to "their worthy friend, John Hart on account of his having taken or undertaken in the great work of the ministry of this place."

Rev. Hart was beloved by his East Guilford community, so it must have come as a surprise when in the summer of 1722, Hart and six of his other local Yale trained minister friends began a movement toward the Anglican Church. The trustees of Yale were shocked and dismayed as perhaps were his parishioners. Governor Saltonstall was called upon to bring the dissidents back into the fold. Three of the ministers did convert to the Anglican religion

while the other four, including Rev. Hart, remained Congregationalists. It was said at the time that "Mr. Hart is said to have been a man of the greatest integrity and learning of all the seven."

In 1712, at the age of thirty, Rev. Hart was married for the first time, to Rebecca Hubbard of Boston. She was the granddaughter of Rev. William Hubbard, one of the first graduates of Harvard and a well-known minister. Rebecca most likely died in 1715, giving birth to their second child. Two years later, in 1717, Hart married for the second time, to Sarah Bull, daughter of Captain Jonathan Bull and Sarah Whiting of Hartford, Connecticut. Sarah, too, died from the birth of her only child on 4 February 1719 at the age of 32 years. Hart's third marriage was to Mary Hooker in 1720. Mary was the daughter of Hon. James Hooker and granddaughter of Rev. Samuel Hooker. However, it is doubtful that the chest descended from the families of the wives of Rev. Hart or even his own family as their families had been in America since the Connecticut Colony was established.

At the age of 49, Rev. John Hart died on 24 March 1732. In his will he left his land to his sons and his "moveables," furniture and other household items, to his daughters, Rebecca and Sarah. His wife was given the

usual 1/3 widow's dower to use for her life which included Hart's "negro woman, Fillis."

No information was provided with the gift of the chest to explain how Sarah Josephine Hart, a fourth generation descendant of Rev. John Hart, came into possession of the chest. As in most families it was probably given to the person who most needed or cared about the piece; possibly

*Detail of Chest*

handed from aunts or cousins and finally to Sarah Josephine Hart.

It will probably never be known how the chest came into the Hart family. Chests, such as the Rev. Hart chest, were often brought to a marriage by the bride either as part of her dowry or as a wedding gift.

Today, because of Sarah Josephine Hart's generosity and faith in the then twelve-year-old Madison Historical Society, the chest has been carefully preserved and is on display at the Allis-Bushnell House as one of our most prized possessions.

*With special thanks to Lewis W. Scranton of Killingworth whose knowledge, gathered from his forty-two years of experience as a dealer and consultant in Early American antiques, was invaluable.*

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