

MORE MHS NEWS

NEW PLAQUES FOR OLD HOUSES

According to the update of the Historical Resource Inventory of Madison completed in 2006, there are over 400 antique structures located in Madison. Since its revival in mid-2006 the MHS Historical Plaque program has now awarded plaques to twenty-five of those homes. The newest are:

835 Boston Post Road, Abraham J. Meyers House, c. 1822, Jack Davis

845 Boston Post Road, Dr. Daniel M. Webb House, c. 1844, Jack Davis

164 Horse Pond, Jedediah Coe House, c. 1751, William and Louise Canady

22 Lee Way, Henry Lee

House, c. 1835, Drs. Michele Barry and Mark Cullen

137 Liberty Street, William T. Graves House, c. 1874, Rick and Amy Jablonski

45 Wall Street, Phineas Meigs House, c. 1733, Peter and Barbara Gulick

HELP WANTED BEHIND THE SCENES

MHS curators are seeking volunteers to help on a Tuesday or Thursday to update MHS' collections records with a careful inspection of boxes now in storage.

No special skills are necessary. Please call Beverly Montgomery at 245-4567.

SPECIAL THANKS

We are grateful to those who have generously supported MHS with grants, gifts or services throughout the year:

To the Society

The Erwin C. Bauer Charitable Trust Fund

Jack Davis

Estate of Teresa H. Johnson

The Garden Club of Madison

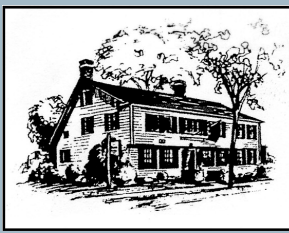
Michael Johnson

To Lee Academy Exhibit

Valerie Alberti

Kay Kudlinski

And to all those who have made donations to the Madison Historical Society in the name of Jane R. Kuhl.



The Allis-Bushnell House ca. 1785 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Open Wednesdays to Saturdays 1-4 pm from June to August.

Madison Historical Society
Founded 1917
853 Boston Post Road
P.O. Box 17
Madison, CT 06443
(203) 245-4567
www.madisonhistoricalct.org

The newsletter is published quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, February 14 MHS MEMBER - GUEST VALENTINE'S DAY TEA

Bring a guest or sweetheart for tea, sandwiches — and for old-fashioned cake. Learn about the history of cake making and baking tools.

**RSVP by Feb 11 to
MHS at 245-4567
11:00 am — 1:00 pm /
Allis-Bushnell House**

Fridays

January 11 — June 13 HISTORY BITES

Informal talks and discussions over a bag lunch. For a full list of talks see p. 3.

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH

Desserts and beverages provided by MHS

FREE ADMISSION

12 — 1 pm / Lee Academy on the Green

Sundays

January — March LECTURES AT THE LEE

Explore the history of Madison and Connecticut with Sunday afternoon lectures.

January 27: *Small Pox Cemetery: Hidden MHS Property*, Joel Helander, Guilford Historian (see this page)

March 16: A Tour of Connecticut Barns, Todd Levine, Architectural Historian (see page 3 for more information)

FREE ADMISSION

4 pm / Lee Academy on the Green

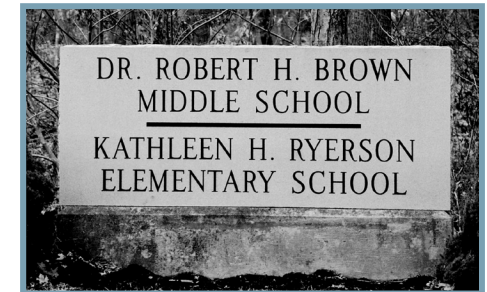
MHS GOES TO SCHOOL

This month the Madison Historical Society became the recipient of a very generous bequest from the Estate of Teresa H. Johnson, which the Board of Directors of MHS has voted to name the Teresa H. Johnson Education Fund.

The arrival of this donation was particularly timely, coming on the heels of the Society's renewed dedication and commitment to its Children's Education Program.

Before the bequest MHS' newly reorganized Education Committee had already begun a study of ways to improve the Society's outreach program to Madison's Public Schools. Peter Bizier, Fifth Grade Social Studies teacher at the Brown School, has recently become the Committee's Chairman.

Plans that were already underway include funding and developing a living history



program for fourth-graders around the life of Chloe Bushnell, feminist, abolitionist and mother of Cornelius S. Bushnell, developer of the *USS Monitor*. A thematic study of the Civil War for fifth-graders is also being considered.

The Johnson bequest will now enable MHS to expand its efforts and to work with educators in more schools throughout the system.

Teresa H. Johnson was the widow of Dr. Harry J. Johnson, an expert in preventive medicine. For many years the

Johnsons lived in Madison in the c. 1745 Ensign Nathaniel Stevens House on Summer Hill Road.

Over the years, Dr. and Mrs. Johnson have been generous to many educational institutions in New York and in Madison. Each year, two graduating seniors at Daniel Hand High School receive full four-year college scholarships through the New York Community Trust and the Dr. Harry J. and Teresa H. Johnson Scholarship Fund.

MADISON'S POCK LOT WHERE WARRIORS WENT TO DIE

As a teenager Joel Helander lived near Guilford's Clapboard Hill where he became curious about a small, all but forgotten cemetery. Now, Helander is Judge of the Probate District of Guilford as well as Guilford's Municipal Historian with a special interest in historical land use and the origin of buildings.

At the Lee Academy on Sunday, January 27, Helander will tell the story of one spe-

cial piece of land, the Pock Lot, which he later learned was the name of the cemetery and that it was the final resting place for Ichabod Scranton and his troops who returned from the last of the French and Indian Wars in December 1760, all deathly ill with smallpox.

Helander's talk focuses on 1760, when the Connecticut militia troops were winding down the war and when

epidemics were little understood, particularly smallpox which was fatal to 20-25% of all who contracted it.

The dramatic story of Capt. Scranton and his fellow soldiers, the cemetery's salvation in 1912 and 1949 and the discovery in the 1970's of the only extant 18th century pest house, an early type of public health instruction, are all part of Madison's rich history.

SHM
Preserving Madison's History for the Next Generation

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LECTURES AT THE LEE

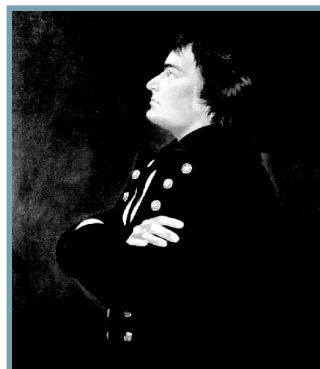
On November 11, MHS launched the first of an inaugural series of three lectures at the Lee Academy on the Green. Through "Lectures at the Lee," MHS is revitalizing the Lee Academy's original purpose as an education center.

Fittingly, the first lecture, *Capt. Frederick Lee: Mariner, War Hero, Benefactor*, given by Edward W. Sloan and Bruce Clark Adams, painted a more nuanced portrait of the man to whom the nascent United States and Madison owe a lot — the Academy being one reason for Madison.

Ted Sloan, retired professor of History, Trinity College, and Mystic Seaport Historian,

along with Chip Adams, owner of the Capt. Frederick Lee House, drew upon a great deal more background material about Capt. Lee, derived from their extensive research into historical archives around the country.

Sloan and Adams described the time in which Lee lived — during the country's recovery from the Revolutionary War, sea merchants' vulnerability to other nation's navies and the lead up to the United States' entry into the War of 1812. That war secured Lee's fame after he and his crew dragged his revenue cutter's guns up a Long Island bluff to defend against a British man-of-war.



(US Coast Guard Museum Collection)

Sloan and Adams are continuing to explore archival material as it comes to light, interested in all that they can learn about Lee's relationship to President Madison, a diplomatic mission he made to England in 1797 as captain of the *Adriana*, as well as his friendship to General Thaddeus Kosciuszko.

KEEP UP WITH MHS EVENTS

Renew Your Membership Now

NEW DATE FOR AN OLD PLAQUE

Over the years the red saltbox house at 45 Wall Street has been home to a variety of businesses, but it always carried a historical plaque attesting to its origins in 1690 as the Bishop-Meigs house.

In 2006, when the MHS Historical Plaque program was re-launched, there was an opportunity to reconsider

the date and to do more rigorous research on the house.

When James Sexton, Architectural Historian, visited the house, he was presented with a kitchen, or hall, that was trimmed in the rustic manner and a parlor, or best room, dressed in a higher style that was coming into vogue about the time the rustic manner was in full de-

cline — a transitional period that can be fixed at c. 1725. Simultaneously a more thorough search of deeds and other records corroborated Sexton's analysis and dating.

The conclusion: the house was built c. 1733 by Nathan Dudley, who sold the house about a year later to Phineas Meigs, whose descendants lived there until 1846.

BAUER TRUST GRANT TO MHS

A grant request to fund important upgrades to the Lee Academy was approved by The Erwin C. Bauer Charitable Trust Fund in December 2007. The MHS requested \$5,393 to cover the cost of replacing four doors and the necessary hardware at the historic Lee Academy. The completion of these critical repairs will help preserve a primary historic building that

has continued to serve the children and public of Madison since it was built in 1821.

The Erwin C. Bauer Charitable Trust Fund is a private foundation that supports a range of public and charitable projects and organizations created for the benefit of residents of Madison. The Bauer Trust operates as a general purpose foundation with few restrictions on the type of

proposals considered for grants. However, the mission of the Bauer Trust must always be focused in those areas designated by Mr. Bauer in his will, including education, conservation, agricultural programs, medical care, public health and housing.

The project is scheduled to begin March 1, 2008 and be completed by mid-April.

FREE PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Lee Academy on the Madison Green has once again become a learning center with MHS' new series of free talks and discussions through Spring 2008. For more information call (203) 245-4567.

LECTURES AT THE LEE

On Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm, the history of Madison and Connecticut will be brought to life in the following talks:

January 27: *Small Pox Cemetery: Hidden MHS Property*, Joel Helander, Guilford Historian (see p. 1)

March 16: *A Tour of Connecticut Barns*, Todd Levine, Architectural Historian. Stunning visual highlights of the Barn Survey conducted by

the CT Trust for Historic Preservation.

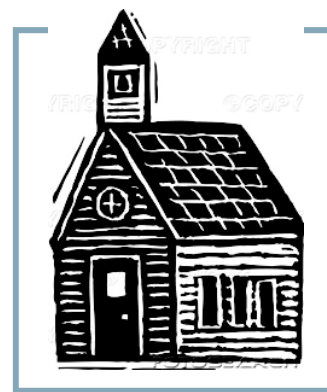
HISTORY BITES

Take a lunch break on the second Friday of each month, bring a bagged lunch and enjoy a short presentation and group discussion.

February 8: *In the Good Old Summertime: Madison's Resort Years*, MHS Exhibit Team. A peek at the first summer residents — their beach communities, homes and pastimes.

March 14: *Good, Better, Best*, Lew Scranton of Lewis Scranton Antiques. What makes one antique chair, or table, etc. more valuable than another.

April 11: *Discovering Connecticut History on the Road*,

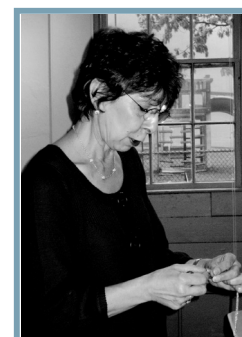


Doe Boyle, author. A review of the best historic sites to visit with kids and grandkids.

May 9: *Madison's Sons at War*, Warner Lord. Newly discovered Civil War letters and diaries tell a family's story.

June 13: *Spring in the Herb Garden*, Garden Club of Madison. Tour of plants used in early cooking, healing, weaving and decorating.

HISTORY BITES: JEWELRY



For January's History Bite, *Don't Be Fooled! Collecting Antique Jewelry*, Rose Schroeder, Manager of Paul Lirot Jewelry (left), shared her passion for antique jewelry to an enthusiastic, full house.

Schroeder outlined the many historic periods of antique jewelry, focusing primarily on Victorian items, such as seed pearl pieces handcrafted by Victorian women.

NEW TO THE MHS BOARD

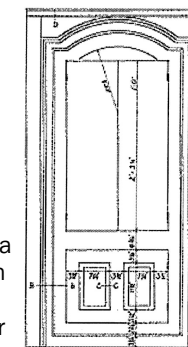
Peter G. Bizier is currently a fifth grade social studies teacher at Brown Middle School in Madison. Peter moved to Madison two years ago after teaching for five years in New Canaan. His wife Sandra is a Media Specialist at Island Avenue School. He has two children, Sophia, 7, and Jonas, 5.

FIELD TRIP NO. 1

History trumped a wet and windy northeaster when the ca. 1720 David Field house on Green Hill Road was open for history and architectural buffs and preservationists on November 3rd.

Nearly 100 people took advantage of the unique opportunity to tour the Field house before renovations began, led by the architectural historian, James Sexton, Ph.D.

Sexton pointed out the various stages of construction and remodeling over several periods. Originally built as a two-over-two room post-and-beam house, it was later converted to a salt box. Over time the chamfered beams with lamb's tongue carvings, a decorative sign of



the relative wealth of the original owner, were covered up by boards. With all the many changes the dirt basement remained small, following its original use as a root cellar.

After the renovations are completed, another public tour will be offered to see what other architectural secrets the house has revealed.

MHS' NEW WEBSITE JUST LAUNCHED!

GO TO

www.madisonhistoricalct.org

Madison Historical Society
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