



The Courier

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A Look Back: Wyllys Falls

by Mark Sutcliffe

(Editor's Note: Long-time volunteer and Society Board Director Mark Sutcliffe passed away suddenly last October. His mother, Carol, recently discovered the following essay, which Mark wrote in 1999, and sent it to the Society. Invoking memories of Thoreau's love of solitude and nature, this piece provides a thoughtful reflection of the little-seen Wyllys Falls, in Manchester.)

While many people have heard of Wyllys Falls, most do not know where it is. Most people believe it is the waterfall that spills through the stone arch bridge at the top of Spring Street and tumbles over slippery gray rocks before disappearing under the one-lane stone bridge below. That, however, is Case Falls.

Wyllys Falls is the tallest natural cataract in Connecticut. It plunges into a deep gorge behind the old Case Brothers Mills on Glen Road and is nearly inaccessible because of the steepness of the terrain. Case Falls is more pedestrian in size and scale and is easily reached by the old stone stairs left over from the Tonica Springs Bottling Works.

Case Falls is a popular spot for people of all sorts, from children to photographers, lovers to partiers. In olden times it supplied water power to the Case Brothers Mills. In the 1960s, hippies and flower children danced on the slippery stones and splashed in the pools. Until a few years ago, it was shrouded in hemlocks that hung like heavy green draperies in summer, and in winter were edged with ice. Now that the hemlocks are dead, the sunlight makes the rivulets dance and sparkle as they trickle down the mossy face of the dam. The water rushes around the rocks and babbles like a thousand tongues in prayer.

Wyllys Falls is virtually unseen by all but the most determined explorer. It is necessary to be part mountain goat to access the deep green chasm. One wonders how the proprietors of the Wyllys Copper Mine planned to get their ore up to the road. Although its hemlocks are also dying, only small shafts and slivers of light illuminate the cascade in the summer. The depth of the gorge is so great that the tops of the deciduous trees, some



Postcard, c. 1920, of Wyllys Falls, here referred to as Bridal Veil Falls.

over 100 feet tall, barely reach halfway up the canyon walls, and block out nearly all direct light. A long ribbon of water drops to the cascade's bottom, creating a solid white noise that surrounds one's head like cotton batting. To feel the cool of Wyllys Falls, which pervades the very marrow of one's bones, is to experience one of the few truly isolated spots in town.

I am content to let most people believe they have been to Wyllys Falls.

2008 Annual Fund Drive

by John Dormer

Shortly after you receive this edition of *The Courier*, you will receive a mailing requesting a donation to the 2008 Annual Fund Drive. Each year, the Annual Fund Drive runs from October 1 to September 15. This fundraising effort is necessary to pay the operating expenses of the Society.

Last year, the cost of operating the Society—utilities, insurance, salaries, taxes, snow removal, grass cutting, normal maintenance, printing, and postage—was approximately \$153,000, or \$420 per day. The cost of utilities can be further delineated as follows: electricity \$7,200; natural gas \$10,500; #2 heating oil \$8,900; telephone/internet \$3,800; and water/sewer

\$1,100. Furthermore, the cost of insurance on our buildings, collections, and activities was approximately \$15,600. In addition, taxes on the History Center for the areas of the building not used by the Society were over \$5,100. The cost of publishing and distributing *The Courier* was almost \$2,900 for the four quarterly issues.

That's how easily \$153,000 can be spent.

The Society does receive income from membership dues, unsolicited donations, bequests, rents collected from tenants and organizations using our meeting spaces, fundraising activities, and, of course, the Annual Fund Drive. During the fiscal year 2007 (October '06 through September '07), the following sums were collected: membership dues, about \$14,100; rents received, almost \$26,900; unrestricted donations (those that can be used for general operations, such as the Annual Fund Drive), just under \$29,400; and fundraising activities, about \$11,000 (but over \$8,000 of which was restricted to

non-operational projects). This income totaled \$73,400. Other income from grants, savings-account interest, and investment accounts was used to meet the rest of our expenses.

Our budget for fiscal year 2008 has been reduced considerably, but the need for a very successful 2008 Annual Fund Drive cannot be overstated. We're hoping to receive at least \$40,000 through donations to this year's drive. Some of you have already contributed to this year's campaign. When you receive the fund drive letter requesting your support for the Society, please consider increasing the amount of your previous year's donation and possibly contribute more than once to this year's drive. I encourage those of you who have not participated in past years to do so this year so that the Society can continue to provide programs of interest for our members and the community. I hope that you will help the Society in "*Preserving the Best of Times.*"

The Courier

*A newsletter of the
Manchester Historical Society*

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Spring + Spring Cleaning = TAG SALE!

The Society is gearing up for another gigantic book and tag sale, to take place on Saturday, April 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the History Center.

Just in time for spring cleaning, we will be accepting donations from March 18 through April 15, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We welcome donations of good and saleable books, household items, kitchenware, sports items, gardening tools, videos, DVDs, children's puzzles, games, etc.—but no clothing, please.

There will be a preview and early sales available on Friday, April 18, from 4 to 6 p.m. with a \$5 admission fee. The public and dealers are welcome.

For more information, call 860-647-9983. The History Center is located at 175 Pine Street.

NewsNotes

In Search of: Korean War Artifacts

The Society is seeking out the loan of items and artifacts from Korean War veterans to include in a display at the Old Manchester Museum. At present, we have very little in our own collections from the Korean War period and need outside help in order to do justice to this theme. Contact Society Curator Dave Smith, at 860-647-9742.

A Newsletter for the 21st Century

In our efforts to combat the threats of global warming (and to save a few dollars on printing and mailing costs), the Society would like to hear from members who would prefer receiving their newsletter by email attachment. If you're interested, email us at <manchesterhistory@juno.com>. The newsletter is also accessible on the Society website: www.manchesterhistory.org.

Attention All Boy Scouts!

The Boy Scouts have been a part of Manchester since 1911. The Society is working on a history of the Scouts in our town, and we would like to hear from former Scouts as far back as possible. If you're a veteran member of this organization, please contact Dave Smith, at 860-647-9742.

A "Reminder" about a Painting's Origins

A folk-art rendering of old Manchester, "Historic Manchester Green," has graced the cover of the new "Reminder Gold Pages" business directory that's been distributed recently. What you may not know is that the Society commissioned artist Tom Menard to create the painting several years ago. To see the original work up close, come visit the Old Manchester Museum (when it re-opens this spring), where it is on permanent display.

Another Reminder: Old Manchester Museum Closed until End of April

The hard work of volunteers preparing new exhibits at the Old Manchester Museum necessitates that the museum, located at 26 Cedar Street, be closed to the public until the end of April. Research facilities are still available, but by appointment, by calling Curator Dave Smith at 860-647-9742. Keep checking in for more details about the new exhibits!

We Will Miss...

The Society regrets the passing of several valuable members. **Frank E. Johnson**, a native of Manchester, passed away in November in West Palm Beach, FL. **Allan F. Turner**, who passed away in January, was a Life Member and regular docent for the Society as well as a resident of Manchester for more than 50 years. Manchester native **John H. Bowen** also passed on in January; he was an occasional docent.

WE WANT YOU!

As a related story in this issue illustrates, the Society has been blessed by the dedicated work of so many volunteers—but there's always room for more help! On Saturday, March 1, at 9:30 a.m., we are hosting a volunteer meeting for those interested in learning about the myriad volunteer opportunities at the Society. We have tasks of interest to workers of all ages and skills, including working at the Tag Sale or Heritage Day open houses, building display shelves, being docents, and mowing lawns. Our volunteers tell us that they enjoy their work here. If interested, please RSVP to Brenda Paullo at 860-643-2413. The meeting will be held at the History Center. Light refreshments will be available



John Dormer and Don Paine tend to lawn-mowing duties during a Thursday night cleanup at the History Center.

Welcome New Members!

The Society welcomes the following new members, who joined between December 1 and January 11.

FROM MANCHESTER

Milton Aninger
George Beauregard
Willy DeCormier
Rose Ann Fehling
Kimberly Harrison
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Kieft
Ernest Marquez and Lynne Flanagan
John Narkon
Rob Pendell
Michael Selissen and Janet Stone
Mr. and Mrs. Vic Vincze

FROM ELSEWHERE

Derek Pasterick (Tolland)

A Great THANK YOU to Our Volunteers of 2007

None of the countless activities of the Society—such as special programs, exhibits, lectures, archiving of materials, walking tours, tag sales, even producing this newsletter that you’re reading now—would be possible without the dedicated service of our many volunteers. We are deeply grateful to the nearly 150 volunteers who helped us in 2007. *Note: We apologize if we have omitted anyone’s name—please notify us if we have done so, and we’ll be sure to mention you in the next issue.*

Ezequiel Alejandro	Kay Faulds	Lillian Legier	David Shapiro
Chris Ambrose	Vivian Ferguson	Aurianna Lajaunie	Suzanne Shorts
Cynthia Barlow	Lynne Flanagan	Sophia Lajaunie	Kathy Sinnamon
Emily Barlow	Francis Forde	Geri Lemelin	Kate Sinnamon
Malcolm Barlow	Bernice Frattarolli	Sean Lindsay	David Smith
Susan Barlow	Mary Frink	John Long	Frances Smith
Lynn Beaulieu	Barbara Furst	Tanyss Ludescher	Betty Spaulding
Anne Beechler	Linda Gates	Gerry Lupacchino	John Spaulding
Dawn Black	Matthew Giangreco	Roberta Lusa	Robin Starkel
Lee Bogli	Beth Gorman	Jill Mack	Susan Stepanski
Terry Bogli	Eileen Griffin	Beverly Malone	Carol Sutcliffe
Peter Bonzani	Evelyn Gryk-Frolich	John Malone	Mark Sutcliffe
Emily Bourque	Marsha Gunther	Manchester Garden Club	John Sutherland
Barbara Boutot	Sue Hadge	Faith McCann	Eileen Sweeney
Arlyne Brainard	Brendan Hanrahan	Tim McCann	Jacqueline Sweeney
Robert Brindamour	Harold Harmon	Virginia Narkon	Betty Thibeau
Jackie Britton	Lois Harmon	Mike Nimirowski	Dave Thorstenson
James Britton	Elizabeth Healy	Dorothy Olcott	Betty Thurber
Ruth Shapleigh-Brown	Matt Heinrich	James Olcott	Milt Turkington
Sandra Bursey	Ken Herbele	James Orfitelli	Michelle Vadenais
Joe Camposeo	Ruth Herbele	Don Paine	Anthony Viscogliosi
John Carter	Susan Holmes	Jan Parla	Paula Viscogliosi
Mary Jane Carter	Gordon Howard	John Parla	Ed Wait
Diane Castagna	Florence Johnson	Terry Parla	Carole Walden
Elaine Charendoff	Monica Katkavich	Brenda Paullo	Connie Walker
Rich Ciralli	Jean Kocsis	Winthrop Porter	Christine Wallen
John Cooney	Lou Kocsis	Ashley Reichelt	Jim Wallin
Mary Jane Cooper	Peggy Koehler	Laura Reichelt	Dick Whitehouse
Ted Cummings	Mildred Kos	Jon Reichelt	Kathryn Wilson
Kimberly Dietrichson	Lillian Krukus	Ed Richardson	Richard Witham
Matthew Dietrichson	Joe Krukus	John Robotto	Christine Witkowski
John Dormer	Martha LaFranchise	Ed Rowe	Thelma Woodbridge
Harriet Duff	Jean Lamenzo	Bob Samuelson	Jane Zadnik
Larry Duff	Marshall Lamenzo	Audrey Schaefer	Rudy Zadnik
Tom Duff	Robert Laughlin	Earl Schaefer	Kevin Zingler
Mary Dunne	Joe Lawler	Gregg Schuyler	
Robert Dunne	Mary Ann Lawler	Robert Shanbaum	
John Faulds	Pat LeGeyt	Susan Shanbaum	

Celebrating Manchester's Women

A coalition of organizations has formed to create an exhibit for the History Center called "Celebrating Manchester's Women." Initiated by the Manchester Republican Women's Club, the non-partisan project is seeking to encompass all local clubs and organizations where women have been involved. The purpose of the exhibit is to highlight notable women who enhanced the quality of life in Manchester. Some notable characteristics include but are not limited to:

- Leadership positions in local clubs, business and organizations;
- Election or appointment to public office or commissions;
- Membership in the Armed Forces;
- First to join a traditional male organization, be hired for a "male" job, register to vote, etc;
- Engagement in local philanthropic activities;
- Involvement in a major event in Manchester or that affected Manchester;
- Involvement in suffrage movement or other political activism;
- Founding member of a local organization such as Manchester Memorial Hospital, Manchester Community College;
- Production of artistic, literary, or historical works.

The focus will be on women whose contributions have endured beyond their lifetimes. We welcome recommendations of notable women and we especially would appreciate support in researching the history of each woman.

The exhibit should be finalized and in place by early June. Susan Holmes is chairing the committee. Please contact her at 860-643-7629 with recommendations or to volunteer. Donations to the Historical Society for the purpose of the "Celebrating Manchester's Women" project would be most welcome; such donations may be sent to Manchester Historical Society, 106 Hartford Road, Manchester, CT 06040.

History on Your Television

by Susan Barlow, Producer

Did you see the geology television show during December? We had a lot of positive comments on the show. Manchester is geologically significant, with distinct differences in terrain and rock, and also in its famous dinosaur bones.

In January, we were pleased to broadcast John Long's presentation of photographs of the historic Manchester Road Race.

In our February show, we'll hear Tom Lewis, Professor Emeritus of Manchester Community College, talk about the old Cheney railroad, built in 1869. Tom "wrote the book," literally, about the South Manchester Railroad: *Silk Along Steel*, a few copies of which are available in our gift shop. Tom volunteered his time during 2006 to speak to an enthusiastic crowd that had hiked along the railroad from the North End. He talked about his interest in railroads, and how he came to write the book. The show includes a picture of the model that Tom built of one of the Cheney locomotives. This show was filmed by Malcolm Barlow, and edited by Kathryn Wilson and me.

Our Society's TV shows air on channel 15 at 8 p.m.; running time varies from less than an hour to two hours. Each show runs for a month, so if you miss it on the first Saturday of the month, you can catch it on subsequent Saturdays. Cox public access, Channel 15, broadcasts in Manchester, South Windsor, Glastonbury, Wethersfield, Rocky Hill, and Newington.

Some of our programs are available at Mary Cheney Library and some are for sale at the museum gift shops.

Your comments on the shows are welcome. Call the Society at 860-647-9983, or call me directly at 860-643-9776.

Circus Fire and the Library's One-Book Project

For its one-book reading event, the Manchester Public Library has chosen the 2000 book *The Circus Fire*, by local author Stewart O'Nan. The Society has previously collaborated with the library on several oral histories of the tragic events of the July 6, 1944 fire in Hartford.

Manchester Community College, the Friends of the Library, and Manchester High School are also participating in the project. On Wednesday, April 30, O'Nan will speak at the auditorium at MCC about his book. Also planned is a trip to the Circus Memorial in Hartford for the fire survivors.

Those who want to participate in the reading program and its activities will find more information at the town library web site: <http://library.ci.manchester.ct.us/HartfordCircusFire.htm> and in local newspapers.



The Manchester Historical Society
106 Hartford Road
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

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WINTER/SRPING '08 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, admission to all lectures and walking tours is \$1 for Manchester Historical Society members and \$3 for non-members. All lectures and events will take place at the Manchester History Center, 175 Pine Street, unless otherwise noted.

February 17 Sunday	1 p.m.	Pitkin Glass Slide Show and Lecture Led by Rick Ciralli, with Tom Duff, Noel Thomas, & John Spaulding
March 8 Saturday	1 p.m.	Midtown Walking Tour Led by Joe Camposeo Meet at old Hollister School, 57 Hollister St. <i>(Snow date: Sun., Mar. 9, 1 p.m.)</i>
March 16 Sunday	1 p.m.	Cheney Mills Slide Lecture Led by Dave Smith
March 29 Saturday	1 p.m.	Cheney Railroad Family Hike Sponsored by Connecticut Forest and Park Association Meet behind Farr Sporting Goods, 2 Main St. <i>Free! (Rain date: Sun., Mar. 30, 1 p.m.)</i>
April 19 Saturday	9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Book and Tag Sale Fundraiser. <i>Free!</i> (See related story, pg. 2.) <i>(Preview-early sales Fri., Apr. 18, from 4-6 p.m. The public and dealers are welcome.)</i>
April 26 Friday	6 p.m.	Society Annual Dinner Includes entertainment by "Mr. Mommers" Manchester Country Club, details to follow
May 31 Saturday	1 p.m.	Highland Park Family Hike Sponsored by Connecticut Forest and Park Association Meet at parking lot on Birch Mountain Rd., near Camp Meeting Rd. intersection