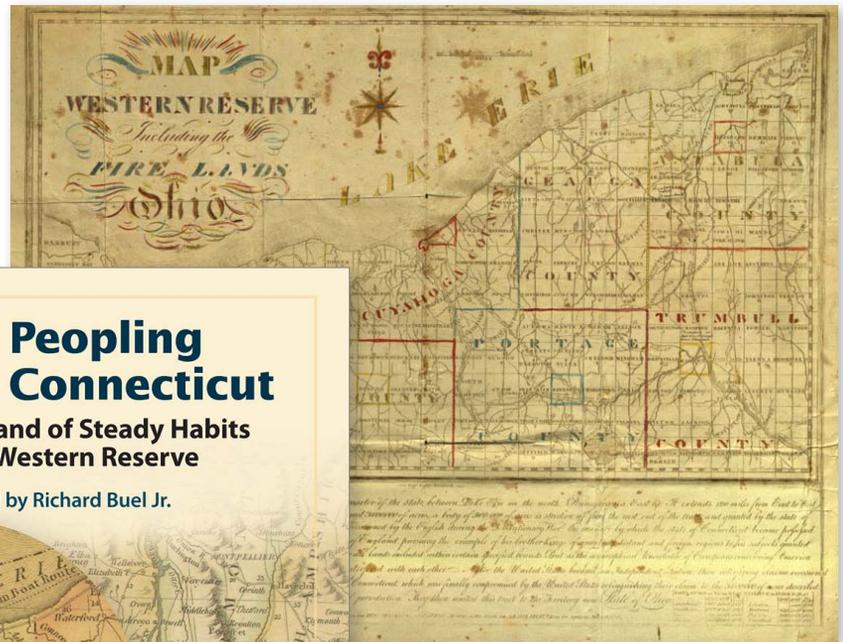


How the West was won ... by Connecticut

Look at a map of northern Ohio and you will see towns by the name of New Middletown, Middlefield, Saybrook, Windsor, Montville, Andover, Vernon, Hartford, Norwalk, Kent, Salem, Manchester, Clinton, and Litchfield. There are two towns named after men from Middletown—Stow (after Joshua Stow) and Shalersville, (after Nathaniel Shaler). This is not a coincidence. Soon after the Revolutionary War, people from Middletown and from other towns throughout Connecticut headed over the mountains to the Western Reserve of Connecticut to seek new opportunities. The Western Reserve eventually became part of the current state of Ohio.

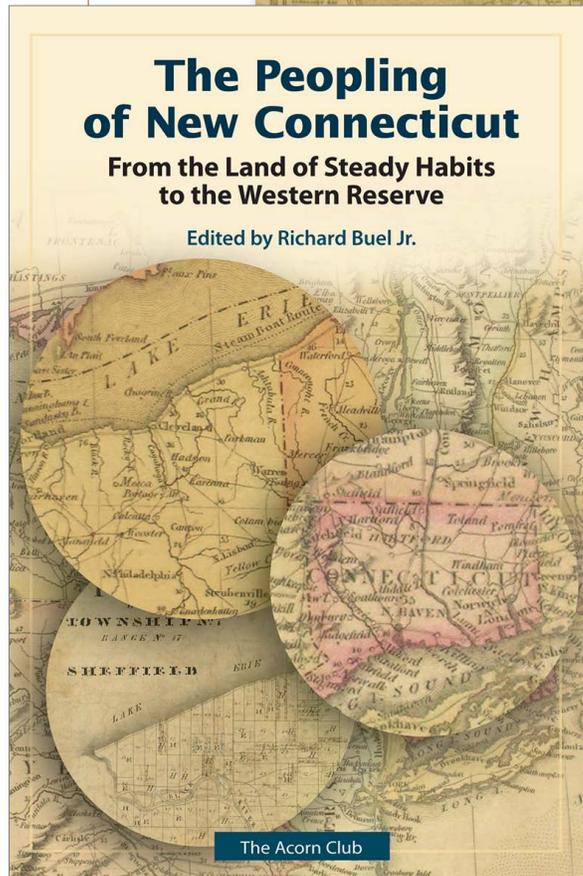
Richard Buel, Professor of History Emeritus at Wesleyan University, will tell us about the impetus and events that led to the settling of the Western Reserve, or New Connecticut, when he discusses his new book, *The Peopling of New Connecticut* at the annual meeting of the Society on Tuesday, April 26. He will outline the findings in his book and conclude with a sketch of what it teaches us about the western

movement in the nineteenth century. The business portion of the meeting will begin at 6:30 pm with the Arthur M Schultz Memorial Lecture by Professor Buel to follow at 7:00 pm in



The Peopling of New Connecticut From the Land of Steady Habits to the Western Reserve

Edited by Richard Buel Jr.



the Hubbard Room of the Russell Library. (There is also a Hubbard, Ohio!)

Professor Buel is a graduate of Amherst College and received his PhD. in History from Harvard University. He taught at Wesleyan from 1962 to 2002, during which time he published five books, the best known of which was co-authored with Joy Buel and is entitled "The Way of Duty." Since retirement he has worked on five books, the last of which is the subject of his remarks.

The program is free and open to the public and the Hubbard Room is handicapped accessible. ♿

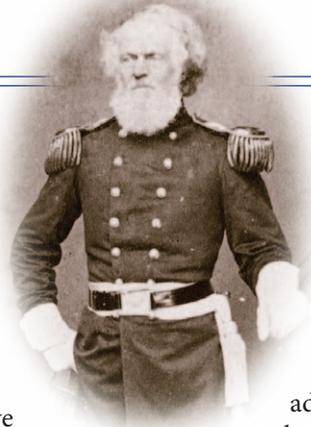
What's Inside:

SOCIETY NEWS

President's Message

Busy, busy, busy! The Society has had some wonderful programs this winter with more on the way this spring and summer. On March 10 Bill Ryczek, Past President of the Society, took us on a psychedelic journey to 1970 and the happening that was the Powder Ridge Rock Festival. The turnout was wonderful even though (we found out later) we were competing with a performance by Pete Seeger that same night at the Cross Street AME Zion Church! We had beautiful weather on March 20 for the Women's History walking tour. Di Longley, former Executive Director of the Society, kept the 65 participants riveted with moving, funny stories about the trials and triumphs of the women of Middletown.

In addition to the many programs and events we have scheduled for the next several months, we are working



on a number of projects. Buck Zaidel, a long-time member of the Board, is heading a committee to update the *Hard & Stirring Times: Middletown & the Civil War* exhibit with an emphasis on soldiers' artifacts and the stories they tell. The Society is also developing its Web presence, with a blog, Twitter feed, and Facebook page in addition to our website. In doing this, we hope to bring Middletown's history alive for a whole new generation!

If you have a suggestion or would like to become more active in the Historical Society, we would love to talk to you. Please contact Debby Shapiro at mchs@wesleyan.edu or 860-346-0746, or me at pres@middlesexhistory.org or 860-632-8618 for more information.

Pat Tully
Pat Tully, President

From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

Spring is at last upon us and most welcome indeed! Unlike many of our own homes, the Mansfield House did not suffer any weather related damage. We do, however, have to repoint and seal our chimneys to prevent possible interior leakage, and our Chairman of Buildings and Grounds, Joe Samolis, will be obtaining bids for this work. It takes quite a bit of effort to care for this wonderful house that has been placed in our guardianship for future generations. Joe would welcome more members to be on his committee to help with exterior grounds work as well as interior repairs. Please give me a call if you can help out.

Beginning in January, Sarah-Anne Tanner, the Meigs Studentship recipient from Wesleyan University, began cataloging the recent donation of World War II letters and other documents of Middletown resident, Craig Pearson. Craig's son, Jonathan, donated this collection on behalf of his family in memory of his father. The collection even includes Craig's uniform and knapsack. The letters contain a wealth of information of what life was like for a soldier on the European front. There are even a few paragraphs neatly cut out from some of the letters indicating that Craig was writing more than the censors thought should be revealed. These letters will be very useful for students of World War II and Sarah-Anne feels

as if she knows Private Pearson from his vivid descriptions of his experiences.

Richard Kamins has graciously volunteered to be the chairman of the program committee. If you have any ideas for future programs, please give me a call and I will pass your ideas along. We have tried to present more diversified programming and have seen a wonderful rise in attendance, but we always welcome suggestions.

I have been working with the directors and volunteers of 5 other historical societies in the county on a joint project that will produce a brochure highlighting the treasures of the societies. It will be placed at tourist spots such as hotels, highway information booths, and our own societies with a goal of increasing visitation to our museums. It has been a pleasure getting to know the many wonderful people in our county who are also trying to preserve history for future generations and to share ideas.

Don't forget to check out our website and its links to all the events sponsored by many groups throughout Connecticut in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

Happy Spring

Debby Shapiro

Debby Shapiro, Executive Director
Executive Director



Gardens and grounds at the Mansfield House. Come visit us and enjoy a quiet get-away right in downtown Middletown.

🌿 Gardening Tips 🌿

Rarely has spring been as eagerly awaited as this year. Now that you can finally identify your shed from just another pile of snow you raked off your roof, it is time to shake off the winter blues—maybe a few pounds, as well—get outside and start gardening!

Our own war hero, General Mansfield recommends, “As soon as the frost is out of the ground,” put hog manure “all around your trees & among the raspberries.” He suggests, “Lay it round the trees first and at a suitable time it can be dug in.” (Mansfield Collection, Letter from JFK Mansfield to Louisa Mansfield 1859 Feb 3)

Nathan Starr, Jr., winner of the Middlesex County Agricultural Society Best Floral and Ornamental Gardens for 1844, believes in keeping a record of planting information, including the origins of the seeds. One of his more unusual, but successful, plants was a sweet corn-like

variety that he grew from a kernel taken from “the body of an Egyptian mummy at the Tomb of Thebes” that he received from a friend “whose veracity and truth I cannot doubt.” His planting journal is an excellent source for a list of heritage and unusual fruits, vegetables and flowers. (Frank F. Starr Collection, Box 4, Folder 10)

For those of you who are novices or just need a new idea, Helene Bliss Warner, one of the first women Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects, has detailed plans that include drawings and plant lists that you can browse through. There is something for every style of house and all skill levels. You might even find one done specifically for your own house! 🌱

(Helene Bliss Warner Collection)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Museum at the Mansfield House	OPEN Tuesdays – Thursdays Fridays	10:00 to 3:00 10:00 to 12:00
Civil War Commemoration Kickoff Event Central Connecticut State University	Saturday and Sunday, April 16 and 17 See our website for details of events and times	
Annual Meeting, Arthur M. Schultz Memorial	Tuesday, April 26 Business meeting, 6:30 pm	Lecture, 7:00 pm
Lecture, Professor Richard Buel, “The Peopling of New Connecticut” Hubbard Room, Russell Library		
Traveling Exhibit, “Held on the Homefront: German POWs in the United States, 1943-46” Bus parked in front of the Mansfield House	Wednesday, May 4	1:00 to 7:00

visit us on the web at www.middlesexhistory.org

Membership News

We are pleased to welcome new members, Lindsay Fralick Perry, John Bolles, Max Miller, Barry and Luisa Jones, Steven and Sylvia Lecky, Nancy Winship, Carole Clew, and Bill Kehoe. Several are local researchers and others have attended our events. Membership renewals are in the mail so we hope that all of our current members will renew and help us promote the mission of the Society. As a cost savings, we will not be sending out membership cards, but will always have a current list of members available at events so members will receive their discounted fees when applicable. We do appreciate, however, all of your renewals. Many thanks go to Kathie Green who has served as membership chairman for many years. She did a great job keeping our membership rolls up to date. Janet Silver has volunteered to assume this responsibility. Thanks, Janet! 🍀

Website is WOW!

We may be historically-inclined, but check out the new look of our website and our leap into the modern world of social networking! President Pat Tully is now continually updating the Society's site, www.middlesexhistory.org, with news of events to come, summaries and pictures of programs already held, and interesting local happenings (take a look at the comparison of photos from the Blizzard of 1888 and this winter's heavy snowstorms). She has even started our blog and posts news of "150 years ago this week," using the Constitution, Middletown's newspaper of the day, as her source. The paper was full of news of the impending Civil War, preparations here in Middletown for it, local events in Middletown and the State, and the most interesting advertisements (it seems C. Dyer at 308 Main Street was selling various restoratives at the time including Burnett's Cocaine,

a popular hair preparation made from coconut oil, but whose name capitalized on the popularity of products containing cocaine). There is a link on the homepage of our website to the blog, where you can then re-post articles to your Facebook and Twitter Accounts! Our socializing will never be the same! 🍀



Traveling Exhibit on German POWs to visit the Mansfield House

A little known fact of World War II is that 380,000 German POWs were held in U.S. Army-operated camps in almost all of the 48 states during World War II. They were sent out to harvest or process crops, build roads and waterways, fell trees, roof barns, erect silos, work in light non-military industry, lay city sewers and construct tract housing, wash U.S. Army laundry, and do other practical wartime tasks. Some secretly dated local girls and even took correspondence courses for which they would gain credit. Some of these POWs chose to stay in the United States after the war.

The Society and Russell Library will host the traveling exhibit *Held on the Homefront: German POWs in the United States, 1943-46* by the non-profit group TRACES on Wednesday, May 4. The *BUS-eum*, which will be parked in front of the Mansfield House will be open from 1 to 7 pm for the public to view the exhibit. The exhibit consists of 15 narrative display panels illustrated with photographs and documents, audio and DVD documentaries, artifacts and more inside a 40 foot long converted bus.

Held on the Homefront explores the human context of the POW experiences. Five major areas are covered in the exhibit: the treatment of the POWs and how that has affected the standing of the United States both in Europe and the world at large; in what contexts and settings the German POWs encountered Americans and whether the encounters were positive or negative; the role of art in the POW's experience; the changing perceptions of the United States by the POWs; and the affect of the POW experience on German-American relations.

TRACES is a non-profit educational organization created to gather, preserve and present stories of people from the Midwest and Germany or Austria who encountered each other during World War II. The *BUS-eum* has been touring the United States since 2009. This program is free and open to the public. For more information contact the Society at 860-346-0746.



Agenda Items for the Annual Meeting

A number of items are on the agenda for the annual meeting on Tuesday, April 26, at 6:30 pm in the Hubbard Room at the Russell Library. The business portion of the meeting will be followed by the Arthur M. Schultz Memorial Lecture at 7:00.

1. According to the current by-laws of the Society, a nominating committee is to be elected at the annual meeting in odd numbered years. The Board of Directors is proposing the following committee: Ron Schatz, Chairman, Richard Kamins and Peter (Buck) Zaidel, members.
2. The annual treasurer's report and proposed annual budget will be presented by Treasurer, Richard Adelstein.
3. A by-law revision committee consisting of Richard Adelstein, George Camp, Bill Ryczek, John Shaw, and Pat Tully have been meeting for a year to update the operating document of the Society. Highlights of the changes proposed by the Board of Directors are printed below. The full text of the by-laws and the proposed changes can be accessed on our website. Go to the home page and click on the link within the section about the annual meeting. If you do not have access to the web, please call the Society at 860-346-0746 and we will be happy to send you a copy.

Most of the changes were made to streamline the by-laws, allow the Board to use technology in communicating with the membership, and to comply with the current provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes. The one substantial change is that the office of the Second Vice-President has been eliminated as unnecessary, and the title of the First Vice-President changed to Vice-President.

Section 2. Members—Meetings and Voting

Section 2.4. Regular meetings: Moved to a policy document.

Section 2.6. Notice of Meetings (renumbered to 2.5 in proposed revision):

- Deleted "postage prepaid"
- Changed notice time to: "... not less than ten or more than fifty days before the date of the meeting."
- Combined subsections (a) and (b)

Section 2.7. Postponement, Quorum, and Manner of Acting (renumbered to 2.6 in proposed revision):

- Changed subsection (b) to read: "A quorum consists of eleven or more members of the Society present at a meeting of the membership."
- Changed subsection(c) to read: "... the affirmative vote of a majority of those present shall be the act of the members, ..."

Section 3. Board of Directors.

- Changed section 1. Number and Election, to read: "The Board of Directors (the Board) shall consist of the fifteen Directors. The Directors shall be elected for two year terms, at the Annual Meeting of the Society. The paid Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Board without vote."
- Changed the last sentence of subsection (a) of section 3. Duties, to read: "When the Board member has accumulated a total of three (3) absences during his/her two-year term, his/her membership may be terminated at the discretion of the majority of the Board."
- Changed subsection (a) of section 4 to read: "The Board shall meet at least six times a year and more often if the Board shall so determine."

Section 4. Committees.

- Changed subsection (a) of section 1. Executive Committee, to read: “The Executive Committee shall consist of the four Officers plus the immediate Past President of the Board.”
- Moved sections 4.2. Nominating Committee; 4.3. Finance Committee; 4.4. Buildings and Grounds Committee; and 4.5. Museum Committee, to a policy document. Standing committees shall be defined in a policy document.
- Combined sections 4.6. Standing Committees, and 4.7. Special Committees, into a single section, reading: “(a) Committees. The Board may create standing and special/task force committees as they are deemed advisable. (b) Appointment of Chairpersons. The Board shall appoint the Chairpersons of the committees, at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting in even-numbered years. The Chairpersons of standing committees shall serve for terms of two years each; the Chairpersons of special/task force committees shall serve a term determined by the Board. (c) Members. The Chairperson of each committee shall select no more fewer than two members to serve on said committee.”

Section 5. Officers.

- Changed section 5.1. Name and Number, to read: “The Officers of the Society shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Board may create other officers as it deems advisable.”
- Changed section 5.2. Duties and Powers, subsection (b) to change the title ‘First Vice-President’ to ‘Vice-President’ whenever it appears.
- Deleted section 5.2. Duties and Powers, subsection (c), because the office of the Second Vice-President has been eliminated.
- Changed the last sentence of section 5.3. Election, Qualification, Term to read: “No Officer shall hold the same office for more than two successive terms, except for the Secretary.”

Section 6. General Provisions.

- Moved section 6.2. Bonds, to a policy document.
- Changed section 6.6. Indemnification, to read: “Indemnification of Officers and directors shall be as provided in the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended from time to time.”
- Moved section 6.7. Order of Business, to a policy document.

For more information questions or concerns about these changes, contact Pat Tully, President of the Board, at pres@middlesexhistory.org, or call 860-685-3887.

How much does it cost to maintain an historic house?

Several members have inquired about how much it costs to maintain the General Mansfield House in a year. A breakdown from this fiscal year, ending March 31, 2011, shows that heating oil cost \$5787.17 (and most of the house is kept at a temperature of 63°), electricity cost

\$2764.60, maintenance, which includes basic repairs, city water and sewer and sanitation bills, and security system monitoring cost \$3867.70, the telephone bills cost \$1119.27 (this includes internet service), and insurance cost \$7466.

Keep those donations coming!