Summer 2019

Madison Historical Society

Historical Happenings

UPCOMING EVENTS

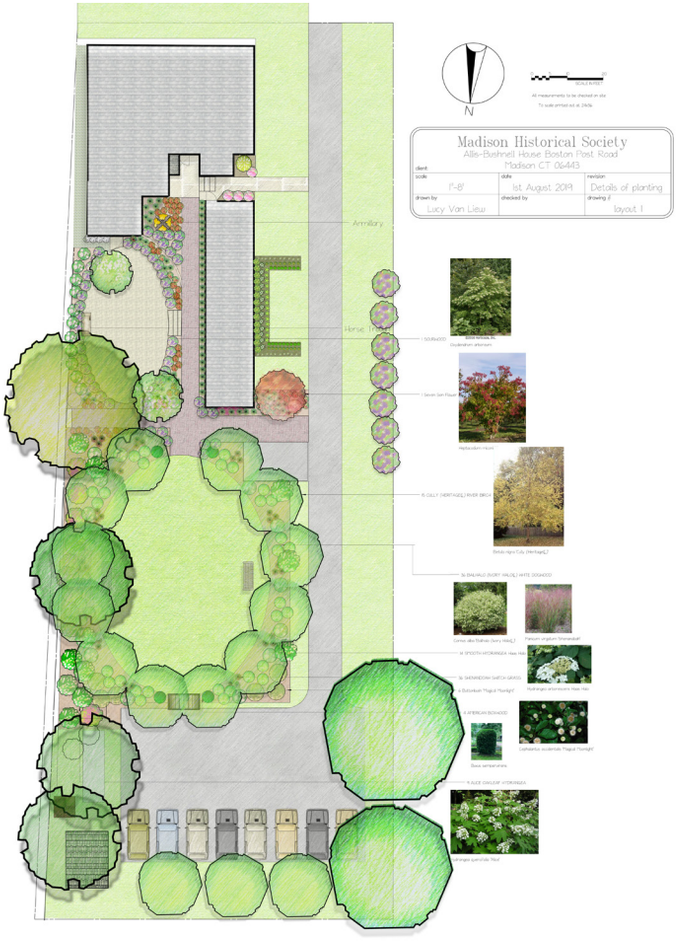
48TH ANNUAL
ANTIQUES FAIR
Saturday, August 24
Madison Green
9 am to 4 pm

Are you a lover of antiques? Searching for the perfect piece to tie your room design together? Look no further than the Madison Historical Society's annual antiques fair on the green. This highly anticipated end-of-summer event, now in its forty-eighth year, will be held on Saturday, August 24, from 9am to 4pm. More than sixty vendors of fine antiques and collectibles will set up carefully edited booths at the largest continuously operating outdoor fair on the shoreline.

A trove of one-of-a-kind objects and treasures for any style or budget, the fair will feature antiques, furnishings, accessories, paintings, rugs, porcelain, collectibles, repurposed goods, and much more! All are invited to browse the wares of notable exhibitors from across the region. The cost is $5 per person or $4 with discount coupon.

Allis-Bushnell House Landscape Improvement Project

The Allis-Bushnell House boasts a collection of more than 6,000 artifacts. The house also features a lovely herb garden incorporated into its back lawn. Planned, planted, and generously maintained by the Garden Club of Madison, the garden was designed to represent what might have been planted by a typical homeowner during colonial times.



Recently the Society has reimagined how the grounds can be revitalized, not only as a fitting complement to the House, but also as an outstanding venue for gatherings of Madison residents and visitors. The MHS will launch a major fundraising campaign this fall to redesign the entire landscape at the Allis-Bushnell House—with particular attention to the herb garden and the backyard. A cocktail party for supporters will be held in September to kick off the fundraising effort. Creating a downtown public garden space for all to enjoy is a primary goal of the campaign. The MHS further envisions developing an outdoor educational area as a companion to the learning opportunities in the house and its Annex. Another aim is to to create an attractive and functional outside space that may be used to host weddings, small gatherings, and corporate functions.

Garden designer Lucy Van Liew and landscape architect Roger Engle will work with the MHS garden committee to develop a plan that best utilizes the available space. The idea is to use hardy native plants and natural and organic lawn and garden care products on the landscapes of all MHS properties as a matter of policy and for public education. Such a program will ensure that our outdoor environments are sustainable and safe for human and animal use and enjoyment throughout the year.

As they were long ago, the House and grounds will once again be a living center of activity, educating the community about domestic life long ago—both indoors and out—and hosting weddings, parties and receptions, the revenue from which will provide continuing support for our mission to collect, preserve, and interpret artifacts and information that illustrate Madison's rich cultural history.

2018 ANNUAL APPEAL DONORS

The MHS wishes to thank all annual appeal donors. These funds support the general operation of the society, our educational programs, and the events and entertainments we sponsor throughout the year. We exceeded our fundraising goal of $15,000. THANK YOU!

VISIONARY *($5,000 AND ABOVE)*
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SCRANTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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FRIEND *($100 - $249)*
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FILLMORE AND JOAN MCPHERSON

TOUR OF REMARKABLE HOMES CAPTIVATES VISITORS

The seventh annual Tour of Remarkable Homes featured three historic homes and two contemporary homes. One landmark property once served as a local gas station, and another was the backdrop for summer plays and legendary Halloween parties. One of the two contemporary homes hugs the banks of the East River, and the other lies just steps from Long Island Sound. This highly anticipated annual event offered nearly 300 visitors the rare opportunity to peek inside some of Madison's most intriguing private residences. THANK YOU!

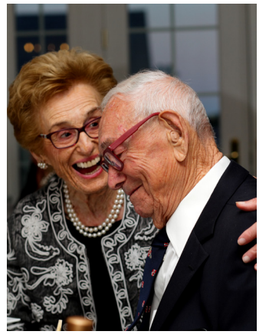
The Madison Historical Society is deeply grateful for the corporate sponsorship of Coldwell Banker, Page Taft/Christie's, William Raveis, and WIlliam Pitt Sothebys. Without their support and guidance, the tour would not be possible.

MHS SEEKS DONATIONS TO ENHANCE COLLECTION

As detailed in previous installments of this publication, MHS trustee Bob Gundersen has been a powerhouse since he became collections chair more than two years ago. His contributions to the society are immeasurable. More than four years ago, Bob singlehandedly began to create our digital archive on Flickr, which features XXXX photographs of important items from the collection as well as documentation of our events. A few short years later, he tackled the seemingly insurmountable task of further curating our extensive collection. This effort involves sorting, organizing, labeling, packing, accessioning, and cataloguing hundreds of treasured objects. The distinct needs of our collection have been revealed through this important work.

"We have a fairly robust collection of objects from the Civil War-era to the early 1900s, but we have few items representing the last one hundred years," says Gundersen. "Our mission is to preserve the past to protect the future, so if we don't start to collect items from the end of World War I onward, we may lose the opportunity all together."

Can you help the MHS fill this void in our collection? If you have objects from the 1920s or newer that you feel might be appropriate for the Society's collection, please contact us at contact@madisonhistory.org or visit our office at Lee's Academy, open Wednesday through Friday from 9am to 1pm. You can also drop off items at the MHS Antiques Fair on August 24. We will set up bins by the entrances where donors can leave items. All donations must be labeled with the donor's contact information, including a phone number and email address, as well as a description of the item and its provenance. The MHS reserves the right to return any items that do not meet our accession criteria.
Thank you for your help!



MADISON PHILANTHROPISTS, CIVIC LEADERS HONORED AT SPRING GALA

On Thursday, May 16, at a gala event at the Madison Beach Hotel, more than one hundred friends, family, and members of the community gathered to honor philanthropists and civic leaders Jack and Helen Davis for their legacy of supporting the arts and culture of Madison. This festive evening celebrated the many achievements of Jack and Helen, who have shaped the town like few others.

The Davises moved to Madison in 1956 to transform the Grove School into a world-renowned residential education and therapy center that helps challenged adolescents. The pair were also founding members of Temple Beth Tikvah—a Reform Jewish congregation that serves as the focus of Jewish community on the shoreline. The temple's mission of enriching lives and improving the world through fostering a vibrant and inclusive community also describes the personal mission of Jack and Helen. Their commitment to preserving the character of the town, supporting the arts, and acting as civic leaders serves as an example for all to follow.

SCRANTON LIBRARY PRESERVATION LECTURE SERIES

The E. C. Scranton Library, in conjunction with the Madison Historical Society, will host a three-part lecture series entitled "Preserve and Protect." The lectures, to be held at the First Congregational Church, will celebrate Madison's architectural heritage and the importance of historic preservation. The first talk, at 4 pm on Sunday, August 18, will feature **Christopher Wigren, deputy director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation**. His presentation will focus on Madison's built environment, together with highlights from Wigren's new book, Connecticut Architecture: Stories of 100 Places.

Stephanie Lesnik of Field House Farm—a small, family-run Madison farm that practices sustainable agriculture—will lead the second lecture at 4 pm on Sunday, September 15. The Field House Farm consists of a large produce garden, chickens, turkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, a llama, and a donkey. Lesnik's presentation will focus on traditional farming practices, her mission of community education about food production, and the restoration and preservation of her 1720 farmhouse, once owned by the Field family.

The final lecture, at 4pm on October 20, will focus on the history of Hammonasset State Park and the preservation of its fragile natural resources. **Ranger Russ Miller** will discuss the park's modern history and the ongoing efforts to preserve the marshes, wetlands, and dunes that comprise the state beach. Working together at the **Meigs Point Nature Center**, Ranger Russ and volunteers from the Friends of Hammonasset believe that one of the best ways to protect and preserve the environment is through education. The more people know about the important and unique qualities of Connecticut's environments, the more they will want to preserve them.

The lectures are free and open to all. Refreshments will be provided by the Scranton Library Friends. Please register online at www.scrantonlibrary.org or by calling 203-245-7365.

MHS MONTHLY HISTORY BOOK GROUP

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Books are often available at the Scranton Library: call 203-245-7365 to inquire.

To register, please call 203-245-4567 or e-mail contact@madisonhistory.org. Walk-ins are always welcome!

Meetings occur every third Tuesday at 7:00 PM at the Allis-Bushnell House and are led by Lyle Cubberly, Ph.D. (1lachawk@att.net)

For more information about the books, please go to the Adult Education page at www.madisonhistory.org.

AUGUST 20
Titan
Ron Chernow

SEPTEMBER 17
The Last Stand
Nathaniel Philbrick

OCTOBER 15
The Path Between the Sease
Cavid McCullough

NOVEMBER 19
Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga
William F. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth Ward

DECEMBER 17
Empire's End
John Keay

MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

48Th ANNUAL ANTIQUES FAIR

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2019

From 9 AM to 4 PM

On the Historic Madison Green

QUALITY EXHIBITORS

Great Food • Live Entertainment • Family Fun

$5 ADMISSION/$4 MHS MEMBERS/CHILDREN FREE

$1 off admission with coupon

www.madisonhistory.org

the MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Madison Historical Society
Founded in 1917
P.O. Box 17
Madison, CT 06443
203-245-4567
www.madisonhistory.org

MHS offices are open in the c. 1821 Lee's Academy at 14 Meetinghouse Lane on Wednesday, Thursday & Friday from 9 AM to 1 PM.

For a tour of the MHS c. 1785 National Historic Register property, the Allis-Bushnell House, call 203-245-4567.

The MHS newsletter is published quarterly.

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