

Program Announcement

History of Women in Medicine –Russell Library– June 24, 2008

American women have practiced medicine from the time of the first European settlements in the seventeenth century to the present day. On Tuesday June 24th, Rebecca Tannenbaum will discuss these practitioners, beginning with the midwives and “doctoresses” of the colonial period through the pioneering women physicians of the nineteenth century. Dr. Tannenbaum’s presentation will be funded by a donation from Aetna, which also provided support for “From Neighborhood to Nation: Women and Health Care in Middlesex County,” the exhibit that opened at the Mansfield House in December 2007.



A lecturer in the Department of History at Yale University since 2001, Dr. Tannenbaum is a graduate of Wesleyan University and holds a PhD in History from Yale. Her research has focused on the history of medical care, especially the roles of women as health care providers. Her book, *The Healer's Calling: Women and Medicine in Early New England*, was published by Cornell University Press in 2001. Dr. Tannenbaum has taught courses on women's history, the history of medicine, colonial America, and the American Revolution at Yale and the University of Chicago and spoken for a variety of organizations.

This event, cosponsored with the Russell Library, will take place in the Hubbard Room at the Library at 7:00pm. Admission is free. *Please join us!* 



Dr. Rebecca Tannenbaum



What's Inside:

Society News and Events

Calendar of Events

SOCIETY NEWS

Dear Members,
The Middlesex County Historical Society needs you!

Paying annual dues is the first step (a very important first step) in being a Historical Society member. Attending lectures, presentations, and other events is another way to be involved. But, have you ever wondered if there was more? For those members who have the time and interest, the Board and I can firmly answer, "Yes!"

As the Historical Society becomes more active, offering more programs and becoming more involved in the community, there is a need for volunteers to serve on a variety of committees. If you have a skill or an interest to share, there is undoubtedly a place for you. Current opportunities include:

• **Exhibit preparation and installation** – Next fall we will be installing "Hard & Stirring Times": Middletown & the Civil War, our long-anticipated permanent exhibit. Volunteers who would be willing to help prepare and paint gallery walls are welcome.



• **Bakers and cooks** – Perhaps, like me, you love to bake but do not have family close to home to eat what you make. The Historical Society likes to offer home-made refreshments as part of its events and would welcome your help once or twice a year.

• **Telephone tree** – Do you love to chat on the phone or would you like an occasional project you can do at home? Volunteer bakers and cooks need to know when the Society needs their help. A phone tree coordinator will call two or three volunteers for each event so we have enough refreshments.

If any of these opportunities appeals to you, please call me (860) 346-0746 or email me at mchs@wesleyan.edu. If you are interested in helping with marketing, the newsletter, program planning, or other aspects of historical society activities, let me know and I will forward your name to the appropriate committee chair person.

Your active participation is essential in building a better Historical Society. Please volunteer! 

Donna Baron

Donna Baron, Executive Director

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Two years ago, the Society had no Director, the Mansfield House was closed to the public, and we were faced with the job of rebuilding the organization. As of this date, I am pleased to report that we are well on the way to completing that task.

In the fall of 2006, we took the first step by hiring Donna Baron as Director, and since that time, she has orchestrated a multitude of events at the Mansfield House, including a new exhibit on Women in Medicine and December's upcoming Civil War exhibit. We have had more programs than ever before, and have been able to pay for much of the activity through grants. You have read about the events in recent newsletters and many of you have enjoyed the exhibits and programs.

The second part of the plan was to recruit an active board of directors supported by a cadre of volunteers. During the past several months, the Society has undergone an organizational review conducted by the National Executive Service Corps. NECS assisted us in re-working the governance of our Society, and enhancing the opportunities for volunteers and the general membership. This task is underway and the new structure should be fully operational by mid-summer.

With a Director in place, more activity at the Mansfield House, and a sound organizational framework, the final piece of the puzzle is placing the Society on sound financial footing. While Donna has been very successful in obtaining grants, these funds have been designated for specific purposes, such as exhibits, programs, and capital repairs. Income from members, donations, income from the endowment, and our other sources of funds have not been sufficient to cover operating expenses. The troublesome financial markets have exacerbated the situation, and our endowment is declining in value. In order to recoup funds expended on various capital projects at the Mansfield House, and to replenish the reserve, we will conduct a capital campaign, commencing later this year. It has been more than ten years since the Society has reached out to the membership, and I hope our increased activity has given you a good reason to generously support our efforts. I look forward to working with all of you to ensure the future of the Society and our mission of preserving our region's history and bringing it back to life. 

BR

Bill Ryczek, President



Annual meeting 2008

Forty-one members and friends joined us at First Baptist Church on April 29, 2008, as Carl Mazzotta led us on an imaginary tour of the north end. Carl recalled buildings and businesses that once enlivened this end of Main Street, but are now gone. Memories of daily life and noteworthy disasters delighted and intrigued the audience. Historical Society President Bill Ryczek led the discussion and encouraged Carl to talk about his personal experiences here in Middletown and far away in places like Greenland. Carl has collected these stories and memories in a volume printed for his family. For those who missed his talk and are interested, Carl has donated a copy of this book to the Historical Society.

Before Carl's talk, the Society approved minutes from the 2007 Annual Meeting, approved the 2008/09 budget, and elected members and officers for the Board of Directors. With all that the Historical Society will be doing for the next two years, special thanks are due to:

President – Bill Ryczek

1st Vice-president – Dave Wolfram

2nd Vice-president – Richard Adelstein

Secretary – Nancy Bauer

Treasurer – Cathy Branch Stebbins

Chair, Museum Committee – Buck Zaidel

Chair, Buildings & Grounds – Debby Shapiro

Members-at-large –

Lee Guilmartin

Richard Kamins

Jeffrey Rabuffo

Ronald Schatz

John Shaw

Rosemary Shea

Brian Warmsley

Have you renewed your membership? Please check your records. About 100 of our valued members have not yet submitted their renewals.

This year, the Historical Society is planning an ever-growing calendar of events, many of which will focus on Middletown & the Civil War. Society members receive advance notice of many events, invitations to special events, and registration discounts. Members also receive *The Historical Observer*, the Society's newsletter. Increased production and mailing costs mean that only members who are up-to-date with their dues will continue to receive their copies.

Please, continue to support your Historical Society and help preserve community memory and renew your subscription today. If you are not sure whether you have renewed, please call the Mansfield House, 860-346-0746, and I will be happy to check for you.

Thank you for your interest and support,

Donna Baron

Donna Baron, Executive Director

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Membership Levels

Student \$15 Business \$50

Individual \$25 Patron \$100

Family \$35 Life \$500

Please make checks payable to:
The Middlesex County Historical Society

Detach and send to:
General Mansfield House,
151 Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457

Middlesex County Historical Society Members 2007-2008

Life	Middletown Adult Education	Susanne Javorski	Individual	Chris Nichols
Nancy Bauer	Susan & William Wasch	Naomi and Richard Kamins	Janice Albert	Henry Otte
George & Camille Camp	Middlesex Fruiter	Joyce & Robert Kirkpatrick	David Arcidiacono	Olivia Patch
Eldon Crowell		Marcy & Ronald Klattenberg	John Bacon	Rhonda Romus
Arthur Director	Family	Emily & Edward Krieger	Reginald Bacon	Jennifer Rozmeski
Mrs. J.M. Flagg	Alexandra & Richie Adelstein	Evelyn & William Larson	Barbara Bartoli	James Rumberger
Kathie Green	Jennifer Alexander & Mark Masselli	Marc & Judith Levin	Alice Bauer	Daniel Ryan
Maria Holzberg	Susan, John, & Stephan Allison	Mark, Mardi & Malcolm Loman	David Bauer	Ronald Schatz
Judith Johnson	Dr. & Mrs. Mehadin Arafah	Lucky Lombardo	Ann Bauer-Lawson	Katherine Schoonover
The Magee Company	Michael & Kathleen Beal	Douglas R. Magee, Jr.	Joanne Blake	Muriel Schulman
Phyllis H. Redford	Edith & Marvin Betts	Geoffrey & Loretta Marion	Barbara Brainard	Rosemary Shea
Scott Shapiro	Mr. & Mrs. John Bickford	Bill & Janet Maune	Martha Brooks	Cynthia Sheehan
Ralph Shaw	Ned & Nanci Bixler	Carl & Joan Mazzotta	Lois Bukowiec	Doris Sherrow-Heidenis
John Spaeth	Kathryn Briggs	Ron & Lois McCutcheon	Loretta Cavanaugh	Janet Silver
Bernice Stierlen	Kenneth Brooks	Marcia & Arthur Meyers	William B. Cockrell	Peter Simmons
Donald Taylor	Kirsten Carlson & Anthony Kriwokulski	Sal & Joanne Misenti	Katherine Coley	Dan Sizer
Elizabeth Warner	Anne & Gabe Choquette	Ruth Montgomery	Richard Cotter	Carolee Sommers
James Webber	Henry Clew	Betsy & David Morgan	Ellen D'Oench	Brian Stewart
Barbara & Nelson Wetmore	Jack & Joyce Conklin	John & Diane Otterbein	Janet Daniels	Pete Sullivan
Eleanor Wooten	Hugh & Judy Cox	Jennifer Pinch	Harry Dickerson	Richard Tomc
Patron	Marge & Richard DeBold	Irma Prue	Sarah Downes	Jessie Trotta
John Coughlin	Augie & Claudia DeFrance	Elizabeth Rocco	Charlene Engelgaard	Patricia Tully
Michael & Liz Cubeta	Laurie & Rick Dickerson	Michael & Nancy Rogalsky	Helen Errede	Donna Vickers
Robert Cumming	Sue & Dick Dickerson	Edmund Rubacha	Margaret McCutcheon Faber	Mamie Vickers
David Williams	John Doolittle	Frank & Katherine Ryczek	Catherine Fiducia	Barbara Warner
Bruce Fraser	George & Edith Dubey	William & Susan Ryczek	Mary C. Flannery	Barbara Weiss
Laurie & Peter Frenzel	Bob & Suzy Dutcher	Robert & Elizabeth Santangelo	William Foye	H. Whitmore
Dona Goodman	Patricia Farrell & Peter Sipples	Karl & Wendy Scheibe	Guilio Giuffrida	Lizabeth Whittaker
Marnie Goodman & Gordon Hard	Trish Finnegan	Tom & Maryann Serra	Dr. Barbara A. Glista	Elma Wiacek
Welles & Lillian Guilmartin	Patricia & Robert Frederick	Carol & Stephen Shapiro	Evelyn Godwin	Eva Williams
May Bonee & Walsh	Barbara & Richard Gibbons	James & Nancy Shapiro	Estelle Goodman	Regina Woltmann
Jack & Diana McCain	Valerie Gillispie & Alex Bajuniemi	John Shaw	Erik Hanson	Student
Larry & Patty McHugh	Michael Giuliano	Sharon & William Sheedy	Henry Hanson	Mary Jane Dapkus
Margaret Merrill	Lloyd & Ellen Goldberg	Richard & Elizabeth Silocka	John Hennelly	
PCI Medical, Inc	Priscilla Harnesk	Catherine Smythe	Paula Higgins	
Deborah Shapiro	Jane Harris	Judith Stoughton	William Howe	
Catherine Branch Stebbins	Cheryl Hartwell	Suzy Taraba & Marie Clark	Frances Into	
Arthur E. Webster	Sallie Hayden & Jeff Bianco	Arthur Taylor	Charles Jarzabek	
Cindy & David Wolfram	Hintgen-O'Sullivan family	Arthur & Joan Upgren	Agnes Johnson	
Contributing/Business	William Howard	William & Kris Vasilou	Elizabeth Johnson	
Allen County Public Library	Regina Jacobson	Edbert & Elizabeth Wall	Rebecca Kraussmann	
Douglas Bennet		Carlton & Katherine Winslow	Jim Lamoureux	
Phil & Marie Cacciola		Peter Zaidel	Colleen Lawson	
CT Underwriters, Inc.			Marilee Lee	
Trevor Davis			Richard Lee	
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			Sonya Madoff	
			Andrea Malon	
			Frank Marsilli	
			Carol Matregrano	
			Arlene Mazzotta	
			Lin Meeker	

Benjamin Douglas (1816-1894)

– Businessman, Abolitionist, and Politician

In 1832, a sixteen-year-old farm boy moved to Middletown from Northford, CT to apprentice with a machinist. After training for six years, Benjamin Douglas joined his older brother William in running a Middletown foundry and machine shop. William was the creative machinist while Benjamin was the organized businessman. In 1842, William invented a revolving stand pump and the brothers built the largest and most successful pump-making business in the world.

Following William's death in 1859, Benjamin incorporated W&B Douglas, which occupied 3 to 4 acres at the corner of William and Broad Streets and produced 1500 different styles and sizes of household, farm, and factory pumps. During the second half of the 19th century, the company won many awards while representing the United States at international expositions in Paris, Vienna, Philadelphia, and Australia.

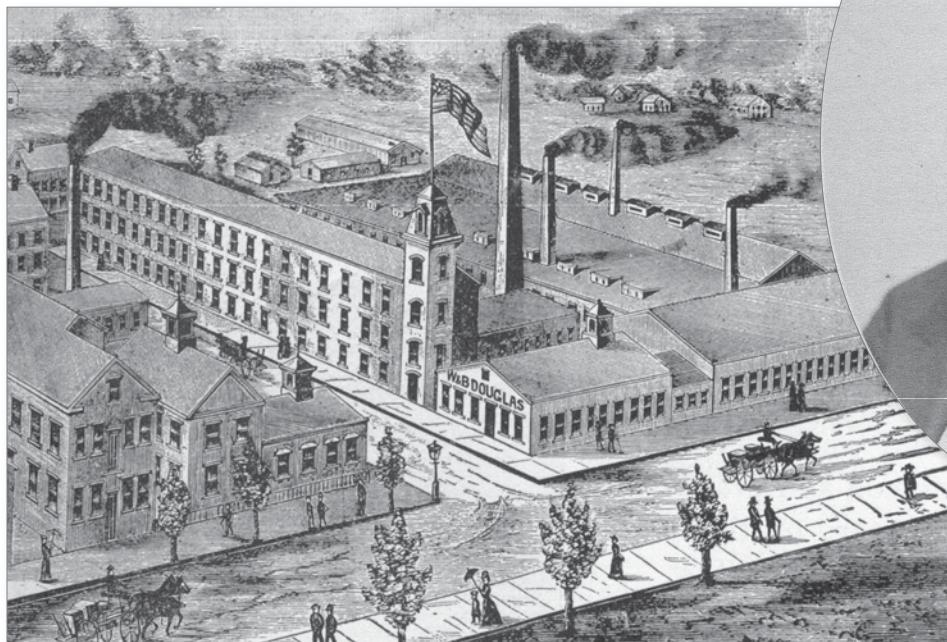
When he was twenty-two, Benjamin Douglas married Mary Adeline Parker, who was a niece of Colonel Joseph F.K. Mansfield. Both Benjamin and Mary were active members of the South Congregational Church as teenagers and their church remained a central part of their lives. Benjamin served in the Mansfield Guard, a local militia unit, and became involved in the growing anti-slavery movement in Middletown. During the 1840s and 1850s, Abolitionist Society meetings often took place on the pump company grounds. The earliest meetings ended in violent confrontation with Middletown anti-abolitionists. Tradition asserts that Benjamin Douglas

became an operator on the Underground Railroad and escaping slaves were hidden at his South Main Street home.

Benjamin was elected mayor of Middletown three times, serving from 1850 to 1856. He also served as Middletown's representative to the General Assembly in 1854 and 1872. A staunch Republican, Douglas served as a presidential elector in 1860 and cast his vote for Abraham Lincoln. From 1861-2, he served as Lieutenant Governor working with Governor William Buckingham to meet the demands of the Civil War.

As he encouraged his employees to enlist in the Union Army, Douglas promised that he would care for their families if they were injured or killed. While working tirelessly to provision Connecticut soldiers and provide support for their dependents during the Civil War, Douglas also led the effort to complete a new church building in 1868.

Both Benjamin and Mary served as Sunday school teachers at South Church. Mrs. Douglas also became a "Lady Visitor," supervising the care of students at the "Industrial School for Girls," and served as the first president of the Soldiers' Aid Society. Mary A. Douglas died in 1885 leaving behind six children and her much-bereaved husband. Benjamin continued as president of W&B Douglas and a leader in his church until his death in 1894. 





THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

151 Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457
(860) 346-0746
www.middlesexhistory.org

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Museum at the Mansfield House

OPEN Wednesdays
Thursdays & Fridays

1:00 to 5:00
11:00 to 5:00

Downtown Cruise Night

Mansfield House Museum open

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

4:00-8:00 p.m.

Rebecca Tannenbaum presentation "Housewives, Midwives, and Physicians: American Women in Medicine"

Hubbard Room, Russell Library 123 Broad Street Tuesday, June 24, 2008 7:00 p.m.

23rd Annual Middletown Antique/Classic Car & Truck Show and Flea Market

Pat Kidney Field, Middletown

Sunday, October 5, 2008 9:00-3:00

Rain date: Sunday, October 12, 2008

The 14th Connecticut Volunteers

Saturday, October 18, 2008

Civil War re-enactors return to the Mansfield House for an encampment and a day of living history demonstrations and activities. Come one! Come all! Step into the 1860s with Company G of the 14th Regiment, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry.

Watch for special announcements of Victorian Garden party events over the summer

*Note: All events will be held at General Mansfield House unless otherwise noted.



visit us on the web at www.middlesexhistory.org