

CHEQUAQUET LOG

The Newsletter of the **CENTERVILLE**
HISTORICAL MUSEUM www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org



Annual Holiday Silent Auction

**Tues to Sat, Dec. 5 - 9 open regular hours 12 to 4PM
and
Sunday, Dec. 10 from 2 to 6PM
during the Centerville Christmas Stroll**

Up to eighty retail and service donated items will be on display and ready for the Christmas season. This is a great place to holiday shop.

Come in and place a bid.

winning bidder can pick up items on Dec 10 after 6PM or Tues to Fri Dec 12 to 15 only



P A S T E V E N T

Murder Mystery Dinner Evening Event

October 13 and 14 was the night the museum became the Florella Kelly Sanitarium for Healthy Living in 1920 Centerville. Patients came to be cured of their illnesses by the astute, Dr. Cohog, his underlings Drs. Plover and Hall and a host of other characters who kept the audience in stitches throughout the dinner and performance.

Sold out both nights, visitors enjoyed the culinary delights provided by Bonnie Wenger and the Fig Tree Cafe, back ground music by Steve Gregory, and a hilarious play written by Jane Hattemer-Stringer. As this 'who dunnit' unfolds the audience gathers clues, learns about suspects and is guided down rabbit trails by conversing with suspects. Once you've settled on the culprit, a spanner is thrown in to the works when the person you thought was your server all evening is actually the Countess Romanoff hiding at the F. Kelly Sanitarium from the Bolsheviks. The show takes us through the perils of the Blue Bog Mud Bug found in the bog mud baths, colander hats to protect the brain from radio waves, and the 'Chew' song guarantee to help you eat right.

Special thanks go to our event sponsors Bob and Bonnie Wenger and Fig Tree Cafe, and to playwright Jane Hattemer-Stringer and the cast Mary Chris Kenney, Corrine Minshall, Rob Minshall, Laura Opie, Sherrie Scudder, Sarah Sharkey and Gary Vacon.



V O L U N T E E R P R O F I L E

JEANINE DUQUETTE has Always had a Fashion Sense.

On Wednesday afternoons, a group of women gather to select and work on a long list of sewing projects needed in the museum's clothing and hat collections. There are tiny tears that call for refined stitching. And there are more challenging sewing problems that require a variety of extensive skills.

Jeanine Duquette is one of the Wednesday volunteer sewers, who, along with her colleagues, mends, patches, repairs and finishes the delicate antique clothing collection belonging to the museum, which can include anything from a newborn baby's tiny bonnet to an 1880's woman's bustled gown.



A true New Englander, with a mother who was born on Nantucket, Jeanine was born in Bath, Maine, attended the University of Maine and graduated from there with a degree in Fashion Merchandizing. She has chosen to live on the Cape or The Islands for much of her life. After college, she moved to Nantucket and worked for a woman whose specialty was Nantucket Whaling Shirts, most of which were made from canvas with long full sleeves and cuffs. With several moves and locations, she opened retail shops, some of which featured Nantucket Hand Baskets and her own hand sewing specialties, including finish work.

In between, Jeanine has added more sewing experience to her already strong skills. She went to the Fashion Institute in New York and worked in fashion there.

She traveled to Paris for a six-week sewing course. At one point, Jeanine and her sister drove to Healdsburg, California and both invested in a clothing alteration shop called Classic Lines. Another sewing change was working with a woman who designed dresses for women over the age of fifty.

The Cape called her back east where she commuted to Fall River for a time for more work in the clothing and fashion world.

Jeanine is now retired from her long and varied career. Her love of working in her specialties has been interesting and strong. However, she has found that the clothing industry in the United States is not supported nearly as much as other countries' whose products are imported stateside and sold more cheaply.

She continues to sew and do alterations, but she has widened her interest in the arts by taking painting lessons. "My whole family is kind of crafty," she says. Her Wednesdays at the museum working with its antique clothing collection has been a pleasure. Jeanine's current project is replacing, by hand, both a velvet coat's disintegrating threads and its lining. "When I've done everything in alterations and sewing, I can tackle anything" she states confidently.

She has found the museum a delightful place to volunteer her skills and to view its exhibits. To her, fashion tells us what is going on in the world today. She gives the example of a display from the 1940's that featured narrower skirts and sleeves in women's suits plus the absence of silk in fashion then, due to shortages of both cloth and silk in war times. Jeanine Duquette is a delightful addition to the museum's talented volunteers. Thanks to her for her skills and time spent helping make The Centerville Historical Museum that much better.

NEW EXHIBIT

GREETING CARDS

By the 1850s, greeting cards started changing in style and distributions toward something more familiar to us today. Prior to the mid 19th century greeting cards were expensive. They were handmade and hand delivered one of a kind and more like a gift. As advances in color printing, mass production, introduction of the postal stamp and more affordable postal rates grew, so did the popularity of the greeting card.

Louis Prang, Kate Greenaway, and Walter Crane were well known 19th century illustrators and greeting card designers. Since 1988, the Greeting Card Association has held an annual award ceremony for the best greeting cards published that year. The awards are called “Louies” in recognition of Louis Prang, known as the Father of the American Christmas Card.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Louis Prang of Boston is called “the father of the American Christmas Card. In 1875 there was no Christmas image, usually a flower, animals, or nature scenes in October or February. The modern Christmas Card industry began in 1915 when a post card printing company started by Joyce Hall and her brothers published its first holiday card. The Hall brothers company later changed their name to Hallmark.



EASTER CARDS

The tradition of sending Easter greeting cards dates to the 15th century, when hand painted eggs were exchanged as a symbol of new life and rebirth. Easter postcards were sent at Easter during the end of the 19th century. In 1910 the cards were sometimes colored with children, lambs, poultry, and eggs. Young girls were a symbol of luck and hope. The Easter bunny was a symbol of fruitfulness and portrayed with eggs. After the first World War, Jesus, surrounded by sheep was popular, as well as flowers.



VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS

Valentine's Day originated as a Christian feast day honoring a martyr named Valentine. It has become a cultural, religious, and commercial worldwide celebration of romance. The first American publisher of paper lace valentines was printer and artist Esther Howland (1828–1904). A daughter of a prominent Worcester, Massachusetts bookseller and stationer, she began her business shortly after receiving her first English lace valentine in 1847. Hallmark first offered Valentine's Day cards in 1913 and began mass producing them in 1916. A hand-fed press would produce 500 - 700 cards per hour. They were hand painted by artists. The United States Greeting Card Association estimates that 190 million valentines are sent each year. When a valentine exchange was popular in elementary schools, numbers increased to 1 billion.



BIRTHDAY CARDS

Romans began the custom of celebrating the birth of ordinary men. Mass-produced birthday cards made its first appearance in the mid-19th century Britain, shortly after the production of the first Christmas cards. Birthday cards are the most popular greeting cards to send and are an important part of different cultures.



THOUGHTS FROM OUR WRITER

CHRISTENING OUTFITS AND ACCESSORIES CREATED A LOVELY DISPLAY AT THE MUSEUM

The Centerville Historical Museum tries to present a variety of historical presentations. Especially nice was an exhibit of christening gowns and their accessories, dating from the 1800's to the 1940's, all located in the Ayling Room.

White was the color of the gowns. Some had been hand sewn. All feature lace or crocheting. Dresses made after the invention of the sewing machine were difficult to distinguish from earlier ones due to both having fine workmanship. There were also bonnets, blankets, bibs, shoes and bunting in the cases which completed the entire look of the special day for that son or daughter's baptism.

Many christening dresses were worn by all children born into a family. Many had been passed down from generation to generation in families to continue the religious tradition of baptism as one of the first important acts of faith in the Christian church.

Surprisingly, the christening gown is a relatively new addition to baptismal custom. Before the 19th century, babies were christened as quickly as possible after birth, as many died in infancy. At the church's traditionally round baptismal font, family and friends gathered with the clergyman who held the newborn wrapped in bands of unadorned and undecorated cloth made of cotton or linen. These swaddling clothes were removed from the baby and he or she was immersed in the font's holy water. Once blessed, the baby was rewrapped in its swaddling clothes.

Swaddling clothes had been used since the beginning of Christianity. From the beginning, swaddling bands were also tied around the right hands of the bride and the groom during the marriage ceremony, hence the expression still used today, "Tie the knot."

Fashion changed baptismal outfits and full immersion eventually became frowned upon, largely due to health reasons. A specially designed gown with strings down the back allowed the infant to be partially unclothed while the clergyman, holding the infant, blessed the child with holy water sprinkled on its head. By the middle of the Victorian era, the long gown was the acceptable style of christening clothing. It was made of silk or satin and had several petticoats underneath. It featured a high short bodice, a low scooped boatneck and the back's adjustable string closures. By the 20th century, cotton or linen became the preferred material in christening gowns and "broderie anglaise", an elegant English style of sewing that included embroidery, cutwork and needle lace, adorned these beautiful newer styles. Some boys nowadays are clad in white short pants, shirt and perhaps a jacket for the ceremony.

In one of the four glass cases, a child's brown coat was featured. The coat's front was enhanced with smocking, a stitch begun in the 1500's to keep boys' and men's shirts, all collarless, from slipping off shoulders. Handsome stitches lessened the neck openings, while still allowing room for the head to pass through. These stitches were later adapted for little girls' dresses. The fashion world has been part of history for a long, long time. Part of that fashion was needle and thread and the amazingly beautiful sewing techniques still popular today.

From the desk of newsletter writer Lois Lane
Volunteer



PHILANTHROPY

2023 ANNUAL APPEAL

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement over the past year. You told us how much you enjoyed our events, including the Antique Car Show, Murder Mystery Evening and Silent Auction. We were happy to see and talk with so many of you at this year's car show. Last year the waiting list for the Murder Mystery Evening was so long we added an additional night this year! And the 2023 Holiday Stroll Silent Auction will offer even more alluring items.

This year our membership ranks have grown slightly, as has the number of visitors to our ever-changing exhibits. Unfortunately, it is not enough. As slowly as visitor numbers and membership ranks rose, our expenses rose much faster, subject to the same inflationary pressures yours are.

We need your help. Please support our annual appeal. Your donation, no matter the amount, will help us continue to preserve and to share the rich history of Centerville and surrounding communities. Every dollar you donate will be spent on our events, programs, and exhibits. Because we are a non-profit organization, your donation is tax deductible.

Thank you for having an interest in this museum.

Sincerely,



Randall Hoel
Executive Director

Centerville Historical Museum Annual Appeal 2023

History makes a difference for us all.

_____ \$250 _____ \$125 _____ \$100

_____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ Other

_____ or online at www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org (donate)

or make check payable to: Centerville Historical Museum
513 Main Street, Centerville, MA 02632

_____ Charge my gift in the amount of \$_____ to
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S U P P O R T E R S

Centerville Historical Museum BUSINESS MEMBERS

**We wish to acknowledge our current business members and business sponsors
and ask you, our members, to support these businesses that support us.**

1856 Country Store, Centerville

BK Real Estate Inc., Centerville

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See what we are doing: On You Tube, Pinterest Facebook and on Instagram.

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