

# CHEQUAQUET LOG

The Newsletter of the Centerville Historical Museum  
www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org



## Anthony Ambrogio Brings Back Those good Old Films of Yesteryear

Want to relive a sliver of the past? Want to really enjoy a nostalgic time? Come to the museum's Saturday movie matinees.

The first movie, *If I Had A Million* (1933), directed by Ernst Lubitsch, has been selected for September 15th. What a start to the 2018 fall movie season! And host Anthony Ambrogio will again lend his expertise in a discussion about this film and its director.

Other films scheduled are *The Searchers* (1956), a John Ford hit with John Wayne and Jeffrey Hunter and *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944) with Cary Grant (swoon), Raymond Massey and Peter Lorre, to name just enough to get your attention.



Behind all this is Randy Hoel, the museum's director, who assists in selecting the movie series, now in its third year. Film aficionado, Anthony Ambrogio, met Randy when Ambrogio's wife, Anca Vlasopolos, gave a lecture at the museum on her book, *New Bedford Samurai*.

Anthony Ambrogio loves films, all sorts, but it sounds as if he is truly enthralled with horror films. "In the past thirty or forty years," he notes, "more higher known actors have starred, but the older films with lesser known actors were just as good." One of his criticisms of today's version of horror is that the action seems influenced more by video games where the story moves too quickly and too much action goes on without enough good plots.

A native of Detroit, Ambrogio and his family had vacationed on Cape Cod for many years before moving here permanently a few years ago. He was a teaching assistant at Wayne State University when a fellow teacher who taught film courses asked him if he would teach a film course. An English major, Ambrogio was happy to oblige. From there, this film fancier has become a film expert, and through the years has contributed articles for such magazines as *Film Watchdog*, written film reviews and edited for books, and many freelance articles, such as one on Peter Lorre.

Today, films and books on films have become one man's passion. He goes to a yearly film convention in Columbus, Ohio, that views movies during the day, and then meets with fellow reviewers in the evening-to talk more about film.

Among Ambrogio's favorite films are these: *The Godfather*, *Seven Samurai*, *Duck Soup* (Marx Brothers), *Frankenstein* with Boris Karloff and the 1971 film *The Devils*, with Vanessa Redgrave and Oliver Reed, directed by Ken Russell. "Films have changed and are always evolving," Ambrogio says, which is a good thing. But there is still that thrill of the older films that lights up his eyes and allows him to share his experiences with audience or fellow film experts. Come see what he's talking about.

*See fall movie schedule on page 5*

# A N N U A L   Y A R D   S A L E

It was touch and go there for a while weather-wise on August 11 for the museum's annual yard sale. Was it about to pour? Were there thunder and lightning strikes on the horizon? Were those already dark clouds becoming darker and more menacing?

Remembrances of the Centerville Historical Museum's 2017 yard sale came to mind. Yes, some items were outside, under a protective tent and more or less dry. However, one had to dash from the museum through rain and inches of mud to check out what was on display.

Everything else was distributed throughout the museum itself, not spread out on tables, but still boxed, awaiting sifters to patiently find treasures hidden away.

This year, after a smidge of raindrops, ever-lowering clouds and high humidity, all finished well. The sale ended very successfully.

Due to Scott Peacock's generosity, his tent, set up on the back lawn, covered a dozen item-strewn tables. Diane Potter sat at her jewelry table and noted, "I think it's about an even split between silver and gold," as two young women looked over some lovely bracelets.

Gail Vincent commented on the brisk sales. "Things are going really well," she said. She pointed out that museum volunteers had helped place new plants in the area and landscaper Dan Dewey and crew had spruced up the grounds just a few days before.



This year, a 50/50 raffle made its debut and the winner was happy to walk away with his lucky draw. Browsers were also able to charge purchases for the first time, a well-liked convenience.

On the museum's front lawn, furniture was plentiful and sold well, as did lamps, of which there were a variety on display. "We have sold quite a few lamps," quipped Pam, one of the many volunteers on hand.

Both Deb, from Osterville, and Chris from Mashpee arrived ready to check out everything and planned a leisurely stroll to every table. "We look forward to this every year," she said, while Chris added, "It's a great way to find things and it's so much fun."

Museum president Barb Fahrenholz gives credit to all the hard work done by a group of dedicated volunteers who gathered the great amount of items

for the sale, checked out, sorted and priced each piece, arose so early on this day to place everything on the grounds and under the tent, spent the day manning stations and then gathered up remaining items at the end of the day for disbursement.

For this huge project, kudos to all, nothing could have been done without you.

# M O M E N T S   I N   T I M E

## 100th anniversary of World War I

John Joseph Pershing, leader of the American Expeditionary Force in France during World War I, was born in Missouri in 1860. He was a precocious student. After obtaining his college degree, he applied to West Point to improve what he thought was a less than adequate education. By his graduation at the academy he had achieved its highest honor, First Captain of the Cadets.

Life in the military suited him. He served in several campaigns against Indian tribes in the southwest and was cited for bravery. Ten years later he became a professor of military history and tactics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln while studying for and obtaining his law degree. From there he commanded an African American troop and gained the soubriquet “Back Jack,” a derogatory term for his commanding black soldiers. He also gained a reputation as rigid in command and strict in discipline.

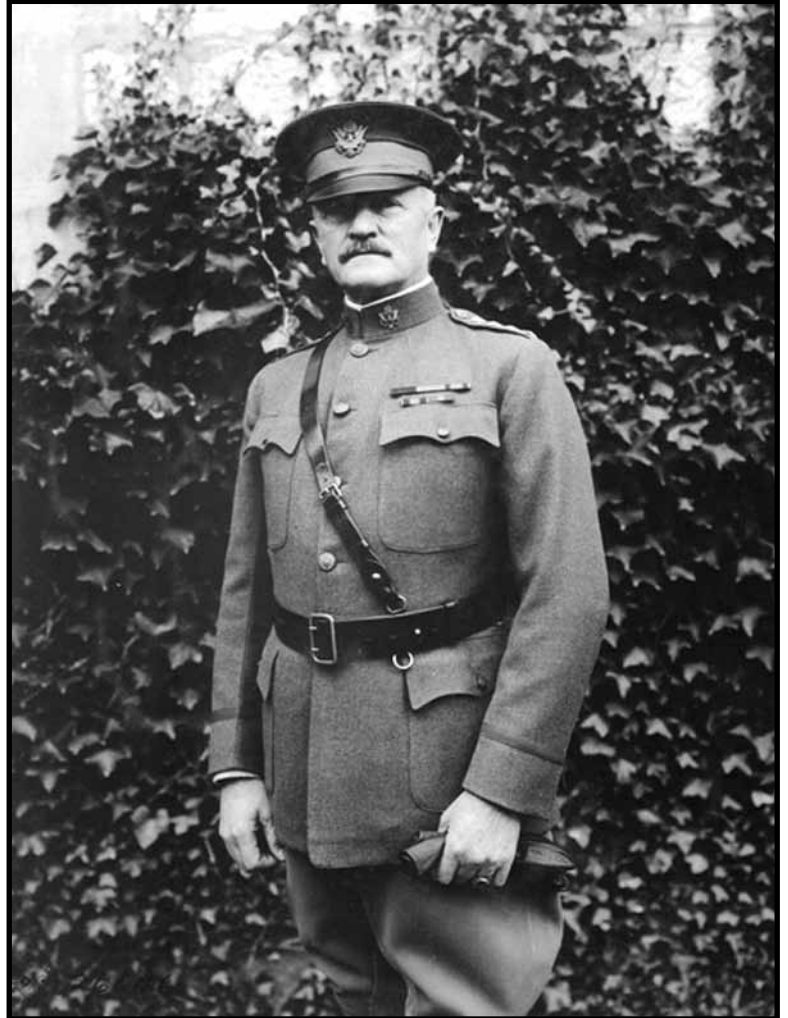
Reputation aside, his bravery was acclaimed in the Spanish-American war, where he won the Silver Star. Here he came to know Theodore Roosevelt, who approved of his gallantry on the battlefield.

Based at several other posts, including Paris and the Philippines, Pershing met and married Frances Warren in 1905. The family was stationed at The Presidio in San Francisco in 1915 when fire destroyed their home and killed Pershing’s wife and three daughters. His son Francis survived.

Roosevelt by this time was president and through his influence, Pershing jumped over 835 other officers senior to him to the rank of Brigadier General. Sent to the Mexican border, he was given orders to capture Pancho Villa. Villa’s revolutionaries were routed but Pershing was not able to capture Villa.

President Woodrow Wilson awarded Pershing the head of the AEF and its two million soldiers after the original candidate died unexpectedly. Pershing was one of the most celebrated leaders of the war, but was also heavily criticized, especially for ordering his troops to fight, causing 3,500 casualties the day after the armistice was signed.

In 1919, the president promoted Pershing to General of the Armies of the United States, its highest rank. After his mandatory retirement from the army at age 64, he won the Pulitzer Prize for his memoir, “My Experience in the World War.” John Pershing died in 1948 at the age of 84 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery next to his fellow soldiers.



General John Pershing, 1918

“War on the one hand is such a terrible, such an atrocious thing, that no man has the right to assume the responsibility of it.”

Count Lyof Nikolayevitch Tolstoi (1828-1910)  
War and Peace, Part 8, Chapter 15

# MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Our wonderful museum is blessed with so many advantages there are too many to list. Alas, many of these advantages are based on funds in the museum's account, which is in much need of replenishing. Luckily, two very nice women, Cindy Vengroff and Gail Vincent, are trying their best to gain funds for cultural, educational and problematic things such as roof repair. Yes indeed, the museum desperately needs roof repair.

Cindy, whose professional work involved other museums before her retirement, is in her third year as a volunteer at the museum. She has had experience in grant writing and her skills have been much appreciated.

Gail Vincent has been a volunteer for the last 13 years. She was a history major in college and the museum, in all its fazes, benefits from her efforts. Together, Gail and Cindy have combined their skills and expertise to try to gain monies needed so that Centerville and its history can be shown to the public. "We both took a course at Bridgewater State University to help us," says Gail.

Grant writing is difficult. It requires good writing skills, knowledge of who to apply to and ability to be precise yet stand out in a crowded field of applicants. Gail and Cindy peruse the Massachusetts Cultural Council publications which list applications in a certain time frame. They try to limit their grant writing to that list as well as local groups that distribute grants such as Cape Cod Five Foundation and other private companies.

"We haven't had any big bites yet; we are tapping into several areas for resources and have received a nibble or two," says Cindy. There are many non profits about and only a limited amount of funds can be distributed each year. So the grant writing, the specific and detailed requests for cultural as well as capital funds, goes on in the hopes that somewhere out there a small but important museum's needs will be recognized.



Don't forget. The Centerville Historical Museum is on Facebook, [centerville historical museum](https://www.facebook.com/centervillehistoricalmuseum) and on Instagram, [@centerville\\_historical\\_museum](https://www.instagram.com/centerville_historical_museum)



# MUSEUM MATINEE MOVIES

The fall series of movies we will feature are in five topical groups. All movies are free and donations are welcome.

In September will be **The Lubitsch Touch**

In October will be **Western Echoes** and **Halloween Classics**

\*\* In November will be **Spanning the Wars**

\*\* In December will be **Holiday Favorites**

\*\* November and December movie feature information will be in our next newsletter.

11/3: All Quiet on the Western Front (1930), 11/17: Confessions of a Nazi Spy (1939)

12/1: Holiday (1938), 12/8: Desk Set (1957)

## SEPTEMBER

### **The Lubitsch Touch**

“The Lubitsch Touch” was an indefinable something that director Ernst Lubitsch possessed that allowed him to make movies, usually romantic comedies, which dealt obliquely but frankly with sex. His films often featured closed doors behind which something was going on; we all knew what it was, but it was never stated.

Saturday, September 15 at 2PM.

*If I Had a Million* (1933). Remember the television series, *The Millionaire*? This is the movie that inspired it. A dying millionaire decides to give away his millions before he dies to a half-dozen or so random individuals (so his greedy relatives can't get his fortune. Lubitsch directs one of the episodes (the one with Charles Laughton. Other episodes with George Raft, Gary Cooper, W.C.Fields.

Saturday, September 29 at 2PM.

*To Be or Not to Be* (1942). Jack Benny is “that great, great Polish actor,” Joseph Tura. Carole Lombard is his actress wife. They're trapped in Warsaw when the Nazis invade and must outwit the occupying German forces.

## OCTOBER

### **Western Echoes**

“Western Echoes” explores two cowboy pictures by one famous director—how he took the same theme and dealt with it differently from one picture to the next.

Saturday, October 6 at 2PM.

*The Searchers* (1956). Many critics regard *The Searchers* as John Ford's western masterpiece. John Wayne and Jeffrey Hunter spend seven years searching for Wayne's niece, kidnapped by Indians when she was nine. (Lana Wood plays the little girl; Natalie Wood plays the grown-up version.) With Ward Bond and Patrick Wayne.

Saturday, October 13 at 2PM.

*Two Rode Together* (1961). Also a Ford film. In it, Richard Widmark and James Stewart go on a quest to retrieve people kidnapped by the Indians. In some ways, it's a more comic version of the same story, though it has its elements of stark drama (just as the dramatic *Searchers* has its elements of comedy). Also featuring Shirley Jones.

### **Halloween Classics**

“Halloween Classics” offers two pictures, one chockfull of chuckles, the other guaranteed to give you chills.

Saturday, October 20 at 2PM.

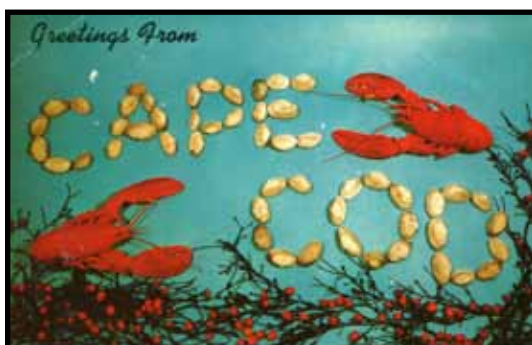
*Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944). Classic comedy about the harmless Brewster sisters (Josephine Hutchinson, Jean Adair) and their nephews, drama-critic Mortimer (Cary Grant); Teddy, who thinks he's Theodore Roosevelt (John Knox); and sadistic criminal Jonathan (Raymond Massey), who has a sidekick, plastic surgeon Dr. Einstein (Peter Lorre). Unfortunately for all concerned, Jonathan decides to return to his family home on the day that Mortimer marries Elaine (Priscilla Lane), the girl next door.

Saturday, October 27 at 2PM

*Curse of the Demon* (1958). Dana Andrews is a skeptic about occult matters who has his skepticism sorely tested when he journeys to England and comes up against a magician who uses the dark arts to eliminate folks who cross him. An atmospheric horror film in the manner of the Val Lewton horror films of the 1940s (*Cat People* [1942], *I Walked with a Zombie* [1943], etc.).

# EXHIBITS AT THE MUSEUM

When White was the New Black  
On The Home Front - Over Here  
Battles, Spies, Cooties *The Great War*  
Messages From Cape Cod *Postcard History*  
Hello Dollies *International Dolls*  
American Folk Art  
Shipwrecks - *mystery - murder - misery*  
1860s School Room  
Mary Lincoln House Rooms



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