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Hello Friends!



*Danbury Museum garden, spring 2019*

It's Friday and it is good to "see" you all again! It's been another busy week of #MuseumFromHome and we've got some highlights to share as well as some really fun additions to our weekly newsletter.

We've had more webinars (is it really even Wednesday if there is not a museum webinar?) and our daily check-ins (text chains and phone calls) too, to strategize and plan out the week ahead and beyond. It's just the three of us (Brigid, Patrick, and Michele) and we endeavor to keep the Greater Danbury community engaged and informed.

Puzzle master Patrick Wells has been hard at work crafting cryptograms and crosswords to help keep your brains nimble and PDFs of the new puzzles are on the [#MuseumFromHome](#) page of our website. (The cryptogram is a well-known quote from JM Bailey's *History of Danbury*, and we've uploaded a full PDF of the book to help you out.) All of this can be found on the [#MuseumFromHome](#) page. We'd love to see your puzzle solving successes--share them with us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#)!

If you scroll down we have Bob Young's informative *Genealogy Research* column, this week's focus is on sources for marriage records. In addition to Bob, we're so happy to welcome John O'Donnell to our newsletter. John's shared a great piece of Danbury history featuring a most unexpected connection to Hawaii. **HAWAII**. We're grateful to both Bob and John for their contributions.

We enjoy keeping in touch and staying connected (though physically distant!) with you, our Danbury and museum communities. Thank you for your continued support and we will see you right here next Friday.

Keep well,

Brigid Guertin (Executive Director, City Historian, Fearless Leader)

Patrick Wells (Research Specialist, Social Media Manager, Puzzle Master)

Michele Lee Amundsen (Collections Manager, Twitter Aficionado, Grammar Police)

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## GENEALOGY RESEARCH

By Bob Young

This is the third in a series of articles on conducting genealogy research, with a focus on greater Danbury families. This article will cover sources for marriages and data.

At the Danbury Museum and Historical Society there are the following items available for your research.

1) **Danbury News-Times** - This collection spans the years of 1837 to 2014. There are a few gaps in the earliest years. Within this collection are the published marriages for the greater Danbury area. The data included ranges from sparse to clear identification. Marriages and deaths were published almost from the beginning. Museum staff will gladly assist you in locating the roll of film that you might need.

2) **Early Danbury Newspapers** – The museum also has, on microfilm, the following older newspapers:

- a. *The Farmer Journal* – 1790-1793
- b. *The New England Republican* – 1804-1805
- c. *The Republican Farmer* – 1810-1857

Many issues include marriages and deaths.

3) **Barbour Collection of Vital Records** – Several volumes of this extensive database are available on microfilm. The local towns that are included are Danbury, Brookfield, New Fairfield, Newtown, New Milford, Redding, Ridgefield, and Sherman. Most volumes include marriages to about 1850. The marriages for Bethel are included in the Danbury volume.

4) **Federal Census Records** – Beginning with the 1850 Census, all persons living in a household are listed. Before this census only the Head of Household was listed. While all census records are available on line at sites such as [Family Search](#) or [Ancestry](#). Numerous rolls of microfilm from the earlier censuses are available at the Museum.

All local towns are included in the 1850 Census rolls. Census records after 1850 tend to concentrate on towns in Fairfield County. For Danbury, all census rolls are available with the exception of 1860. (Also note that the 1890 census records were destroyed by fire and no copies exist.)

From 1860 to 1900, most all towns are represented with the notable exception of New Milford (because it is in Litchfield County).

Danbury Census Records are included up to 1930. New Fairfield, Newtown, Sherman, Brookfield, and Bethel are included up to 1900. Ridgefield and Redding are included up to 1870.

*Just a friendly reminder – when you are looking for a married woman in the Census, remember her name will be her married name, not maiden name.*

5) **Family Genealogy and data files** – The museum has numerous family genealogies on the shelves. We also have 12 file drawers packed with data on Danbury families. Included in many of those files are newspaper articles, letters, and correspondence as well as Family Group Sheets from prior research for many of the larger families.

6) **Indexes to Connecticut marriages** – Several rolls of microfilm contain marriage records from newspapers compiled by Charles Hale back in the 1930s. There are indices for the *News-Times* for 1837 to 1872, and a more general index of marriages in the whole state from 1872 to 1900.

7) **City Directories** – The Museum has a large collection of Danbury City directories as well as numerous Bethel Town directories. If you know that your sought after family lived in Danbury or Bethel, you may find them listed in one of the directories. You would not only have their address in town but many times it will state the husband's line of business.

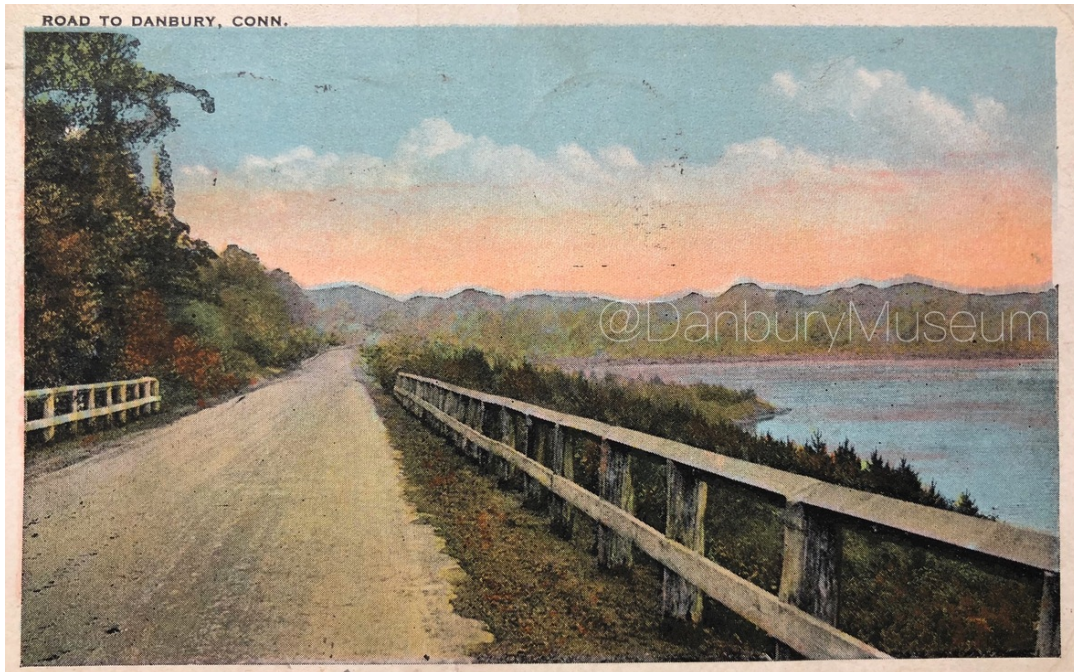
As always, we have a number of additional resources to which we can direct you for your research. We also offer research done by our Research Specialist, Patrick Wells, ([p.wells@danbury-ct.gov](mailto:p.wells@danbury-ct.gov)) at a nominal fee.

Next week's article will deal primarily with property and taxes – the who, what, where, and when of research.

**Bob Young** has been a history buff all of his life. He was fortunate to grow up just outside of Boston, near Salem, and spent many hours exploring. He's been working on his family's



genealogy since he was 18.



## Danbury and Hawaii

By John O'Donnell

Danbury and Hawaii are generally not usually paired in terms of historic events. But thanks to an incredible journey taken by a married couple Danbury had an important influence on the history and economic future of Hawaii.

Amos Starr Cooke was born in Danbury on December 1, 1810. His family had a distinguished history in Danbury. His grandfather, Colonel Joseph Platt Cooke, was a graduate of Yale University. He served in the Revolutionary War and was the commander of state forces when the British burned Danbury in April of 1777. After the War he had a prominent role as a politician.

His grandson, Amos Starr Cooke married Juliette Montague on November 27, 1836. Less than a month later the couple set sail for Hawaii under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to serve as missionaries in Hawaii. They set sail from Boston on December 14, 1836 and arrived in Honolulu on April 9, 1837. Neither one of them would ever return to Connecticut.

They were placed in charge of the Chiefs' Children's School. King Kamehameha III chose as students for the school the heirs to the throne and the subsequent five monarchs of Hawaii studied at the school. The couple had an extremely successful tenure while in charge of the school. So successful that in 1846 it was renamed the Royal School and funded by the government. Letters from the couple that were written to Amos's sister Mary Keeler Seeley in Danbury (and are held at the Connecticut Historical Society) seem to indicate that the couple were reluctant to return to Connecticut because Amos had heard that missionaries were not always welcomed when they returned home.

In addition to the great work that was done at the school Amos became a partner of Samuel Northrup Castle (who had come out to Hawaii on the same voyage and was a secular supply agent for the mission) in a company called Castle & Cooke which they founded in June 1851. Initially the company started as a general store for the mission. But these partners had great drive and ambition and the company started expanding into sugar plantations and became spectacularly successful. It became one of the Big Five corporations that dominated the economy of Hawaii. It is still in existence today but its interests are much more diversified: residential communities on Oahu, homeowner & home buyer services, commercial real estate leasing & sales, Dole Plantation Attraction, aviation facilities & services on Oahu, transportation equipment leasing, trucking, and brick & building materials manufacturing. This was an incredible achievement by a missionary from Danbury.

The couple survived an influenza outbreak in 1845, a measles outbreak in 1848 and a smallpox epidemic in 1853. Eventually Amos Starr Cooke's health declined and he relinquished his company duties in 1859. He died in Honolulu on March 20, 1871 and is buried in Kawaiahao Church Cemetery. His wife stayed in Hawaii and died on August 11, 1896 and is buried in the same cemetery. They had had an enormous influence on Hawaiian history during their tenure there. So Danbury also has been a key influence in Hawaii as well. They did us proud.

**John O'Donnell** first became a history devotee while in elementary school. He was raised in Brooklyn & frequently went to Prospect Park which has a Revolutionary War monument. He was hooked!



*Bucolic Oil Mill Pond*

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Danbury Museum  
@DanburyMuseum



Day 2 of @ARAScot #Archive30 is #FavouriteItem. It's a tough choice, but one of the things that resonates across generations of #Danburians is #MainStreet. Tracking the growth & change across time via photographs/postcards is an important facet of our collection. #MuseumFromHome



## #MuseumFromHome

It's been another great week for the Danbury Museum team on social media. In addition to our usual course of #HatCityHistory we're excited to participate once again in #Archive30 with museums and archives from all over the world on Twitter. Each day in April there's a different theme and it's great fun to share our treasures and to see what all the other participants are sharing.

We're also doing a fun #MuseumAlphabet each day in April so join us on one of our platforms to see what we choose to illustrate that day's letter.

Not following us? We can fix that. The buttons below will take you to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and we'd love to have you join us.

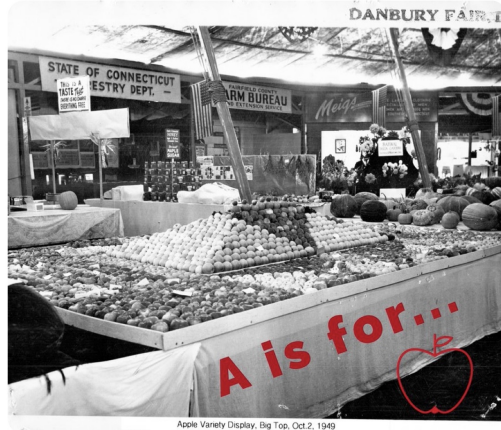






Danbury Museum  
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We thought, what the heck, new month, why not start #MuseumAlphabet? A is for all the 🍏s in the produce displays at the #GreatDanburyStateFair. #MuseumFromHome



Apple Variety Display, Big Top, Oct. 2, 1949

#MuseumAlphabet B is for 🎳! This gal is #SquadGoals! Her wry smile, classic dress and cardi combo—so evocative of her era. Duckpin/candlepin bowling is still popular here in New England. One of our favorite photos. #MuseumFromHome #DanburyCT #hatcityhistory



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Asking the question "Where were you when I was in Po-Keepsie?"





## WE NEED YOU, DANBURY!

We've had a few people email us their COVID-19 thoughts and observations, but we really hope to collect these sentiments from throughout the Danbury community. Photos, poems, art, stories, anything you'd like us to keep for the future to document what we did and how Danbury is changing because of the pandemic. You can email to [Brigid Guertin](#) or [Michele Lee Amundsen](#) or send directly to the Danbury Museum, 43 Main Street, Danbury, CT 06810.

We'd like to know what you'd like to see. (Keeping in mind that we are not physically at the museum and some topics might take a little time to research.) Do you want Danbury stories? Danbury's #HiddenHistory? Walking tour ideas? Keep reaching out to us—we'd like to keep our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter feeds lively and full of funny, odd, insightful images, stories, and artifacts.

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**The COVID-19 health crisis has had a strong impact on the Danbury Museum, not unlike other public service organizations. To help us continue doing the work we love--from home and from behind the scenes over the next few months--please consider making a donation. Your gift, regardless of size, is important to us as we regroup and continue to work toward eventually reopening to the public.**

[Donate here.](#)

[Become a member here.](#)

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**We'll keep in touch, and we hope you will, too. Be well, take care of yourselves, and we'll look forward to meeting here again next week.**



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