

DM | DANBURY MUSEUM



Hello, Friends!

Where did October go? Autumn is whizzing by and the holidays are nearly upon us. In any event, we are most thankful to be with you here again. This is a very newsy newsletter, so make sure you click the three dots or "view more" prompt so that you don't miss anything.

You have heard this from us before, but we've been busy these last two months! In addition to welcoming researchers and tour guests on most days, we've been able to begin the process of digitizing important segments of our collection. We know accessibility is important and it's not always convenient or possible to come to the museum, so we are making some of our most used subject files available online. Our Revolutionary

War subject files are already available on the [Student/Educator](#) page, and we're starting to upload Civil War files, too, beginning with the James E Moore Post GAR book. Check back often as we'll be uploading files as we finish digitizing them.

We are happy to say that our signature fundraiser—and one of the best parties of the new year—is in person this year! Yes, the Hat City Ball is BACK! The event—held on Valentine's Day weekend, February 11, 2022—will feature live music and dancing, a great meal from the Amber Room Colonnade, and the online auction will conclude the evening of the Ball. To allow as many friends as possible to take part, we will also have a take-away meal option for those who would prefer a quieter night at home but still want to support the Danbury Museum.

Also returning this holiday season is the Arion Singing Society's Christkindlmarkt. *If you know, you know*—you'll want to arrive early to get their incredible baked goods like the German stollen. They also have evergreen items and other gifts available for purchase. The holiday event will be in Huntington Hall on Saturday, December 4, from 10-3.

There's so much we're thankful for this year: your continued support and visitation, our intrepid interns and volunteers, the return of our partner organizations (The Danbury Garden Club, the Arion Singing Society, Mary Wooster DAR, Fabric Friends of the Danbury Museum, and the Danbury Mineralogical Society) and all the interactions across the museum's social media platforms. We could not do this without you.

We're also thankful to have regular columnists John O'Donnell and Thomas MacGregor back again—their contribution to each newsletter is much appreciated.

The past 20 months have been, to use a much overused word, challenging. But we have found opportunity for engagement and improvement within the challenges. We wish you and yours a very Happy Thanksgiving and send on our best for the entire Holiday Season.

Happy Holidays from the museum staff,

Brigid Guertin (*Executive Director, City Historian*)

Patrick Wells (*Research Specialist, Social Media Manager*)

Michele Lee Amundsen (*Collections Manager, Newsletter Editor*)

Ways to support the Danbury Museum this Holiday Season:

Give the gift of Membership! Your membership support is integral to the mission of the Danbury Museum. A [monthly sustaining membership](#) provides the museum with income year round.

Join us at the Hat City Ball on Friday, February 11, 2022! It's a great night of dining and dancing that benefits the Danbury Museum. If you'd rather have a quiet night in, let the Amber Room do the cooking and pick up a fully boxed take away meal the night of the Ball. Tickets to the Ball make perfect holiday gifts and will be on sale online on December 1!

Make a contribution of any size for *Day of Giving* on November 30, 2021, or as a special end of year gift. Donations can be made at anytime via our website's [Donation page](#).

Explore our online shop for your holiday giving! You can find Danbury, Danbury Museum, and Danbury Fair gifts for everyone on your list at our [TeeSpring](#) shop. Not only does the Danbury Museum get a cut of every sale, you can have these items shipped right to yourself or your friends and family.



A Danbury Veteran and Artist

By John O'Donnell

We have set aside November 11 as a holiday to honor our military veterans. We can take time to celebrate the service of these men and women who have donated so much to the safety of our country. It is right and proper that we should do this. We tend to concentrate on their years of military service. But one of the neglected aspects of doing this is that we have not looked deeply into the demobilization of veterans after their service years. This topic has been subsumed in the euphoria of victory but deserves to have more research done about it. In preparing this essay I went to one of my main reference works about World War II, *The Oxford Companion to World War II*, and found that there is not an entry for demobilization in it—I was taken aback by this. After the end of the war the United States faced a gigantic logistical problem: how to quickly and efficiently reintegrate back into civilian life some 12 million soldiers and sailors. This was a massive undertaking which took several years to complete. In order to look at this topic from a manageable perspective I

chose a man from Danbury who served in World War II. We will look at his service years but then take a look at his postwar years and see how he was reintegrated into society.

His name was Edward A. Tomasiewicz. The reason I am using him as my example is that the Danbury Museum recently received a generous donation from his family. These materials include notebooks of his Army Order Papers (1941-1945), his G. I. Bill Papers, Air Force Reserve Papers, and his Diary: Notebook #12 (1988-1993). I have been reading these materials as the museum prepares to catalog this collection and it has made me think about both his service years and then his postwar years very closely.

He was born in Danbury on August 16, 1919. The son of John and Antonina Tomasiewicz who had emigrated to the United States from Galicia in eastern Europe. He enlisted in the army on October 8, 1940. Before enlisting he had been very interested in photography and in painting. While he was in service, he was able to use and develop these skills which would greatly influence his postwar career. One of the first stops in his military career was taking a three-month course in Military Tactical Camouflage in 1941 at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. He became a skilled flight navigator and spent most of his service years in Bermuda. He fell in love with Bermuda and returned periodically to it and painted multiple oils and watercolors of scenes there. He also became very interested in the history of Bermuda. In the documents donated are two papers: one on Kindley Air Force Base Bermuda and another on the United States Naval Station Bermuda. He planned a project during the war dealing with the history of the island, but he does not seem to have written but had collected the materials for it. He continued to develop his photographic and artistic skills while serving there.

Edward was separated out of the service at Westover Field, Massachusetts, on October 18, 1945, and he joined the enormous number of people who were being demobilized. But he was driven by his vision of developing the photographic and artistic skills that he knew he had. He went back to school part time and joined the Art Department of the *New York Times*. He had started studying art at the Pratt Institute prior to the war and resumed his studies there postwar. He was able to graduate in 1952. He pursued further studies at several other institutions including

the Art Student's League in New York City. In his diary he records that he briefly studied there under George Grosz. Grosz was a major figure in modern art. He was a painter and caricaturist in the Weimar Republic in Germany. He emigrated to the United States in 1933 and became a citizen in 1938. While in the United States he shunned his previous caricature work and concentrated on painting. I am sure he exerted a major influence on Edward's painting style.

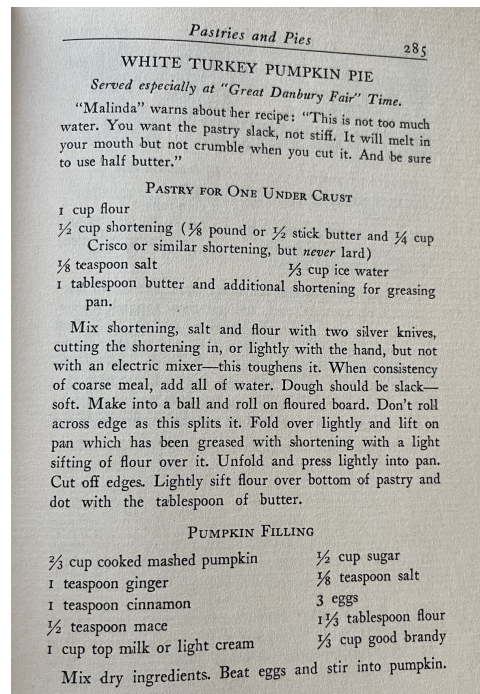
Tomasiewicz's mature years as a painter were largely dominated by equestrian sports and horses. His diary entries that I read reveal his deep interest in perfecting his ability to accurately portray the anatomy of both horses and dogs. He paid very close attention to making sure he did this in as realistic a fashion as he could. He made regular trips to Saratoga Race Track and has many entries about them. He was particularly attracted to the steeplechase races. A corollary of this interest was his fascination with fox hunting which became a staple of his paintings in his mature period. Again, his diary contains detailed descriptions of his attendance at fox hunting events in North Salem and Goldens Bridge, New York. He was interested in every aspect of the hunt and you can feel his love for it in his painting and diary entries. Your author shares his love for the hunt as well. While living in North Salem, New York, in the 1970s I was witness to several hunts passing by the cottage that I lived in. It is an amazingly visceral experience. First you hear the horns followed by the hounds baying and the thunderous noises of the horses and riders approaching which grows into a mighty din when you actually see them. I can readily understand Edward A. Tomasiewicz's attraction to the hunt. You feel as if you have gone back to the 18th Century and are seeing a scene from Tom Jones. It is awe inspiring.

I think it is a fair statement to say that Edward A Tomasiewicz had a successful demobilization through using his keen powers of observation to become a successful flight navigator, photographer, and artist. But the war did stay with him. He has a clipping for an obituary for Edward T. Joseph of Danbury who came to Rogers Park to watch his sons play baseball. His diary then goes on to say: "I wasn't aware of his war record. A chance missed. I would have liked to talk to him about his Air Corps days." The obituary mentions that Joseph, who was an aerial gunnery sergeant, was awarded the Air Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster. In 1943 he was cited by the Army as one of the best aerial gunners in North Africa. He was shot down

on his 24th bombing mission as a tail gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress on August 27, 1943. He was a Prisoner of War in Germany for 27 months.

Civilian life was clearly a success for Edward A. Tomaszewicz. However, my mother's oldest brother enlisted in 1940 and was discharged on October 26, 1947. Less than a month later he reenlisted and served an additional 16 years as a Captain in the Air Force. Civilian life clearly was not for him!

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



Pumpkin Pie recipe from "Let's Talk Turkey: Adventures and Recipes of the White Turkey Inn."

Alternately add dry ingredients and cream. Stir in brandy last. Start in hot oven, 450°, then reduce heat to 300°.

SWEET POTATO PIE
(1 pie)

1 unbaked pie pastry	½ teaspoon salt
3 large sweet potatoes	5 eggs
1 cup sugar	2 cups milk
1 teaspoon grated nutmeg	3 ounces butter (¾ of a quarter-pound stick)
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon	
½ teaspoon ground mace	

Make pie pastry by first recipe in chapter but do not bake. Boil sweet potatoes, peel, and put them through a sieve. ("Pumpkin yams" make the prettiest, tastiest pie.) Beat pureed sweet potatoes thoroughly, then add sugar, nutmeg, cinnamon, mace, salt and beat again. Break the eggs into the mixture and beat again. Add milk and melted butter last, with a final beating. Pour into unbaked pie pastry and bake at 400° for 30 minutes or until set and slightly brown on top.

The Connecticut Field Pumpkin

By Thomas MacGregor, Ph.D.
UConn Advanced Master Gardener

*Peter, Peter pumpkin eater
Had a wife but couldn't keep her,
Would a pumpkin-spiced latté
Have enticed her not to stray?*

Very few plants are as original to American cuisine as the pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo*). The pumpkin was a food staple grown and used by Native Americans in pre-Columbian times. Pumpkin strips were roasted in open fires for eating. According to the 1629 diary of Francis Higginson, an early Puritan minister in Salem, Massachusetts, pumpkins were the chief food source after corn for Native Americans.

In his 1672 book *New England's Rarities*, John Josselyn describes a vegetable stew, to be eaten with fish or meat, which the Native Americans taught the Pilgrims to make using diced, ripe pumpkins, butter, a little vinegar, and spices. Enterprising colonists opened the tops of ripe pumpkins, removed the seeds, and added honey, spices, and milk, before baking them in a hot pit to produce their version of pumpkin pies.

The classic, heirloom variety pumpkin grown in colonial times was the Connecticut field pumpkin, so called by the colonists because of where it was first located as a native plant. Native Americans intermingled this variety within their corn fields. The two vegetables complemented each other as warm-season crops with similar environmental needs of soil, sun, and rain. Since pumpkins thrive where daytime high temperatures average 65 to 75 degrees with a full 6 to 12 hours of sunlight and a soil temperature of at least 60 degrees, the environments of Connecticut and Massachusetts were ideal for growing pumpkins.

Current cultivars, including, the smaller "New England" pie pumpkin which is considered to have superior cooking properties, are strains selected from the heirloom Connecticut field pumpkin. Likewise, the Howden pumpkin developed by John Howden of Massachusetts in 1960, is a strain designed to be more symmetrical for carving scary jack-o'-lanterns.

A pumpkin's hue is due to beta-carotene, the same compound that gives carrots their orange color. When cut, fresh pumpkins emit a vegetal, buttery aroma due to long-chain alcohols. However, canned, pureed pumpkin no longer emits these odorous alcohols. On the other hand "pumpkin-spice" flavor has little to do with pumpkins and more to do with the spices added, including cinnamon, nutmeg, and clove oil. When heated these spices give off that incredibly popular odor that accounted for \$500 million in pumpkin-flavored product sales in the United States in 2019 (Nielsen pre-pandemic data). Additionally, pumpkin bread and cookies containing the actual vegetable are the most searched for foods in the United States in autumn according to Google.

Maybe this year, a best seller might be pumpkin spice scented face masks.

After 33 years at Boehringer Ingelheim, Dr. Tom (UConn '85) retired to his garden and piano.

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Hat City Ball 2022

Together, Again.



Friday, February 11, 2022

A very special evening of dining in with your Valentine to benefit the Danbury Museum.

Join Us For the Hat City Ball! Tickets on sale 12/1/2021.

The Arion Singing Society

P.O. Box 1196 * New Milford, CT 06776 * 203-740-7599
www.arionsingsociety.com



Join Us

Christkindlmarkt



Saturday, December 4th

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Danbury Museum and Historical Society—Main Building
43 Main Street, Danbury CT 06810



Fresh Greens & Wreaths
Handmade Crafts
Coffee and Cake for sale



If you are interested in singing, we are welcoming new singers!
Contact us at the number above.

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 in January.



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