



Yuletide of past marked

By JILL WALLACH
Republican correspondent

STOCKBRIDGE — Naumkeag the former home of the Joseph H. Choate family now administered by the Trustees of Reservations, held its third celebration of Christmas past Saturday with cider, cookies, holiday music and a wide variety of 19th century Christmas trees and decorations.

The celebrations began in 1980, but are held only every two years. The trustees open the house for one day during the winter to the public both to recreate the atmosphere of a 19th century Christmas and to raise funds to help maintain the house and 40-acre estate. The estate is usually open to the public from Memorial Day weekend through mid-October.

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The rooms on the first and second floors are open to the public during the special celebration and each room is decorated with different types of Christmas trees, wreaths, children's toys, and Christmas candles. One room had a collection of antique Santa Clauses dating back to the mid-1800s.

All of the Christmas items on display were donated by Stockbridge families. The wreaths and trees were prepared earlier in the week by members of the local Naumkeag committee. The guides available in each room were also town residents.

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Delphine Williams, the administrator for Naumkeag, said Saturday the Choate family lived in the 23-



Photo by Jill Wallach

Danielle Atcheson, 10, of Stockbridge, shows off a few of the antique toys on display Saturday in the former Schoolroom at Naumkeag that was the Stockbridge summer home of the Joseph H. Choate family until 1958.

room house from its completion in 1886 until 1958 when Mabel Choate died at the age of 88. But they only spent one Christmas at what was considered their "summer cottage."

"The house has inadequate heating systems and was really intended for use from mid-April until the end of October. The remainder of the year was spent in New York City or abroad," Williams said.

Joseph H. Choate, a New York attorney who made his fortune in corporate law cases, and his wife Caroline Sterling Choate, built the house in 1885-86. It was designed by

Stanford White. Nathaniel Barrett of Boston was the landscape architect for the property.

Choate was U.S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James in England from 1899 to 1905. His brother, William, founded the Choate School, a private boys' high school in Connecticut.

Caroline Choate, an artist, continued to live at Naumkeag after her husband's death in 1917. She died in 1929 and left the estate to her only daughter, Mabel, who continued to live there until her death in 1958.

Williams said Ms. Choate

received the property because her older brother, George, never recovered from an illness developed after a fraternity initiation while a freshman at Williams College. Her younger brother, Joseph, already had a large family and two homes when Caroline Choate died in 1929 and was not interested in maintaining the estate, although his family visited often.

Mabel Choate never married, but was very active in the Garden Club of America and the Trustees of Reservations, based in Milton. She also was an extensive collector of Chinese and antique furniture, as well as oriental rugs.

Mount Hope purchase comes one step closer

By JILL WALLACH
Republican correspondent

WILLIAMSTOWN — Williams College is a step closer to completing purchase of the 1,100-acre Mount Hope Farm estate.

The deadline for appealing the U.S. Bankruptcy Court's approval of the sale to Williams College passed Friday afternoon and no one had filed any objections or appeals, according to Bruce D. Grinnell, attorney for the college.

The sale of the property by August E. Mansker to Williams College for \$1.64 million was approved by Judge Paul Glennon Dec. 4 after a final hearing in Worcester. Anyone who had objections or other proposals had 10 days to appeal Glennon's ruling.

Grinnell said he will confirm Monday that no appeals were filed through the Springfield office of attorney Irving Labovitz, who represents a group of Williams College alumni interested in the property.

Grinnell said if no appeals are filed, the decision of the bankruptcy court will be filed Monday with a U.S. District Court judge in Springfield for confirmation. He said the papers probably will be filed with Judge Frank Freedman.

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Approval by the U.S. District Court was a condition of the offer made by the college for the property, according to Grinnell. He said the college wanted to insure that no one challenged the sale later on grounds that the bankruptcy court ruling was unconstitutional.

"We don't expect any further opposition from other interested parties and expect the sale to be finalized by the end of December," Grinnell said Saturday.

The college had expected an appeal to be filed because of the

objections raised during the Dec. 4 hearing.

Daniel Swords, a Springfield attorney representing John R. Campbell of California, tried unsuccessfully to file objections to the sale of the property to the college. Campbell had made a deposit of \$110,000 on an option to purchase the property from Mansker. He had been paying the \$5,000 a week maintenance costs on the property since early summer and had offered \$2.2 million for the estate.

Philip Hendel, the Springfield attorney handling the bankruptcy proceedings for Mansker, told the bankruptcy court Oct. 23 that Campbell had defaulted on maintenance payments and was no longer a candidate for purchase of the estate. Campbell told reporters several times in November he planned to appeal. He was not available for comment Saturday, nor was his attorney available.

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Grinnell said several parties have expressed interest in the estate, but the college has made no definitive plans for the property. The alumni, calling themselves the Purple Mountain Partnership, have proposed to build several homes on the property with the college using the 72-room, neo-Georgian Elm Tree House as a conference center. There has been no public discussion of what will become of the other 13 buildings on the estate.

Stanley Piatzyc, director of the western regional management unit of the trustees of reservations, said Saturday he has had some discussions with the college about maintaining as open space the 300 to 400 acres now used as farmland. He said the trustees are very interested in working closely with the college to maintain Mount Hope's open spaces.

Arrest expected in Hadley shooting

By DONNA PARKER
Republican correspondent

HADLEY — Police said Saturday they plan to arrest an Amherst man in connection with a shooting about 9 p.m. Friday at a Route 9 bar.

About 20 patrons at Funnybones were stunned by a hail of shotgun pellets which pierced the southside wall after being discharged in a single round fired from outside the building.

Information gathered from patrons led police to three suspects. After questioning, one of the suspects named the man who fired the gun, police said.

The suspect, whom police have not yet located, allegedly fired the round from outside his parked vehicle. There were no injuries.

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At least two of the pellets missed several patrons by only a few feet, hitting a mirror hung near the bar. Another pellet pierced a hot water pipe, causing damage to the bar's

heating system.

Nine pellets hit the building and five penetrated through the wall and across the empty dance floor, police said.

Witnesses said the man was traveling west on Route 9 with two companions in an older-model pickup truck.

CHICOPEE — A series of flash fires, believed caused by fumes from underground tanks containing remnants of inflammable solvents, broke out Saturday while workmen were cutting pipes at the Eastern Heating and Air Supply Co., a tenant in the former Uniroyal complex on Grove Street.

Deputy Fire Chief Clarence E. Roy said workmen from the Face-mate Corp., owner of the building now known as Chicopee Industrial Park, were cutting the pipes to

"He stopped the vehicle, got out and fired a round at the building," police said.

The pellets entered the south side of the building, causing damage to the outside and inside.

Police, who are still investigating the incident, have not decided what

charges will be filed against the suspect.

The man was named in a written statement given to police by one of the passengers.

One police source said the shot was fired because of the suspect's alleged problems with the management.

Fumes blamed for sparking flash fires

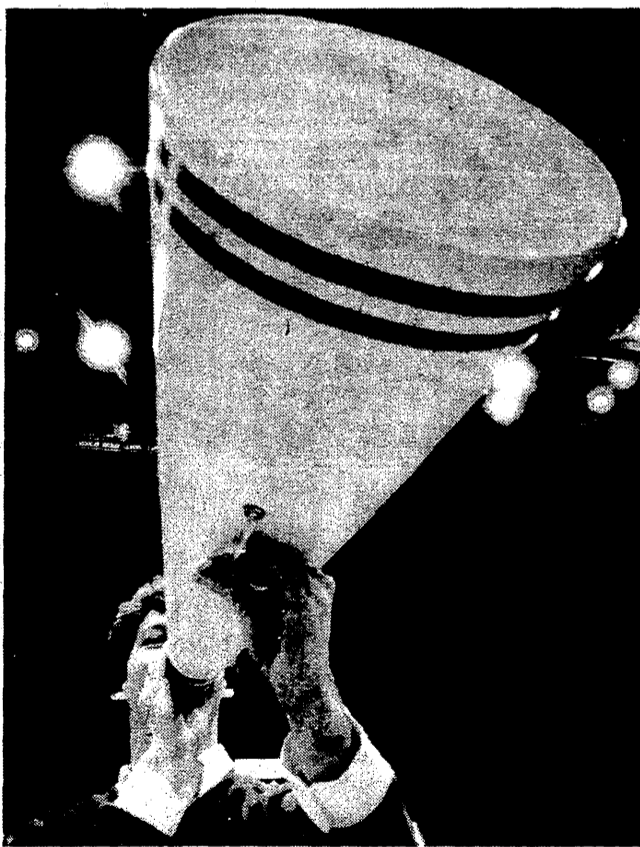
make more room in the tenant's quarters. The first fire erupted at 12:33 p.m. and set off the sprinkler system. Engine 1 and Ladder 1 responded to the call and remained at the scene as a protective measure during the operation, he said.

A couple of flash fires occurred while the units were there and were quickly controlled, Roy said.

Fire damage was restricted to scorched paint on walls and an undetermined amount of water damage was done to stock stored in cartons, he added.

The workmen, he said, were pumping out the tanks in addition to cutting the pipes when the fires broke out. The outlet pipes of the tanks were capped with cement by the three-man work crew, he added.

Roy said that he believed the tanks contained the remnants of a rubber cement used by the tire-making company. He filed a request for an investigation with the Fire Prevention Bureau to determine the cause of the fire and the nature of the contents of the tanks.



Republican photo by Nancy Palmieri

Hooting to win

Cheerleader Greg LaRouche, a freshman at the University of Massachusetts, roots for his team during a basketball game against Northeastern at the Springfield Civic Center Saturday.

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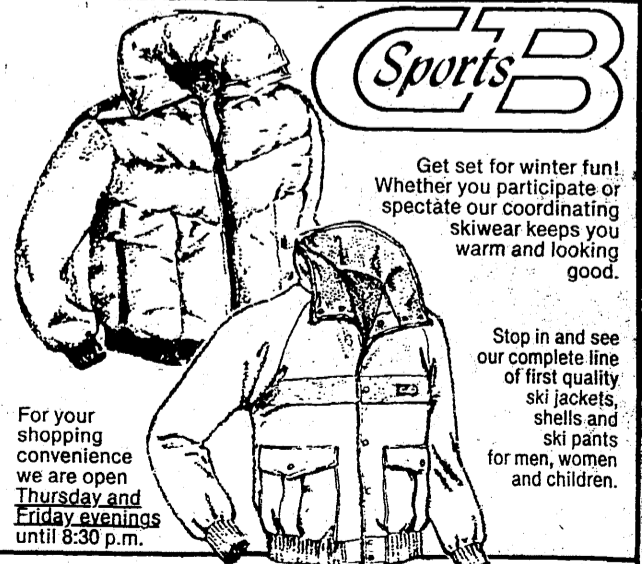
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