

Francophone Connections in CT

history, culture, art

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Cheshire Academy

- French Intermediate (level 2/3; intermediate novice to low intermediate) – grades 9 & 10
- IB French ab initio year 2
- IB French HL 1 & 2 combo
- Grade 10 seminar class, spring semester

The French Connection in Connecticut

Knowledge of local history is of critical value for a sense of place, a sense of belonging, and a sense of purpose. Seeing the ways in which various cultures and national identities have shaped the environments we think of as 'everyday' helps broaden our understanding of our community and our place in it.

In this highly experiential course, students will travel—both virtually and in person—to a variety of important local and regional Connecticut historical and cultural sites, focusing on the connections between U.S. History, French/French-Canadian culture, and the lives of the communities in and around Cheshire and the state of Connecticut.

10th-grade semester course - research, writing, skill building, community building, through a subject lens

Topics

Overview of Indigenous Peoples in CT - [Mashantucket Pequot Museum virtual tour](#)

Rochambeau's Trail - marker visit, [Marion, CT](#) & [Southington Coffee House](#); [CT markers Washington-Rochambeau route](#); [Washington-Rochambeau revolutionary trail](#)

[Hillstead Museum](#) – [Impressionism](#) Manet, Monet, Degas, Cassatt; painting with Dollar Store supplies

French Canadians and [Windham Texttile & History Museum](#); [Chez Ben Diner, Manchester](#), [sugar on snow](#); guest speaker, [Chez Ben Diner, Manchester](#)

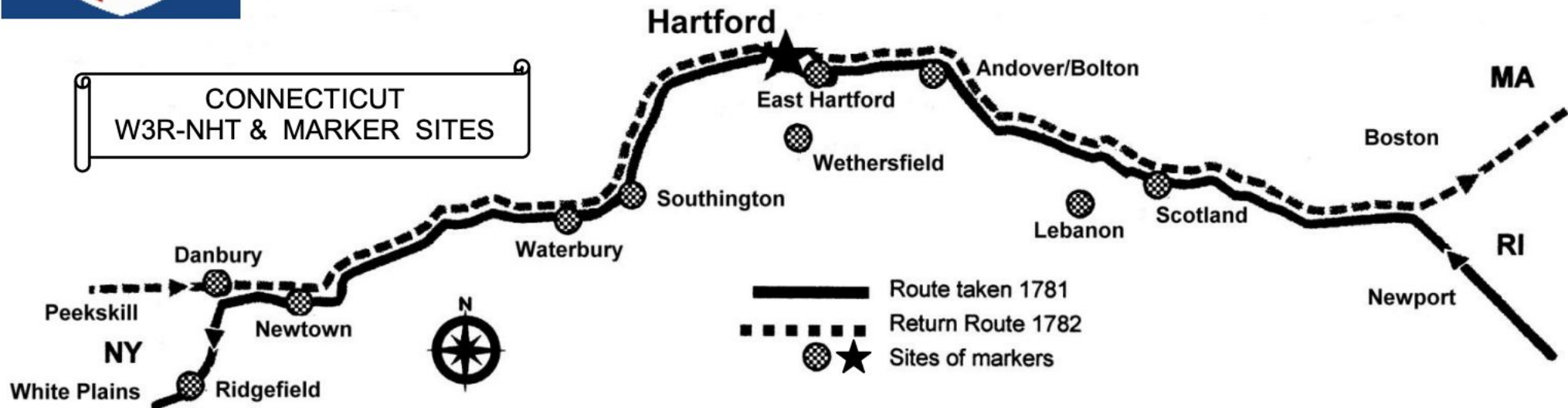
World War 1 and CT soldiers; CT State Library guest speaker Christine Pittsley; [CT soldier in WW!](#); [Museum of CT history](#)

Haïtian immigrants in CT, [Pierre Sylvain artist](#); [Lourdes Creole restaurant, Waterbury](#)

Additional Food - crêpes (La Chandeleur); fondue with Aldi supplies; [Avert Brasserie, West Hartford](#)



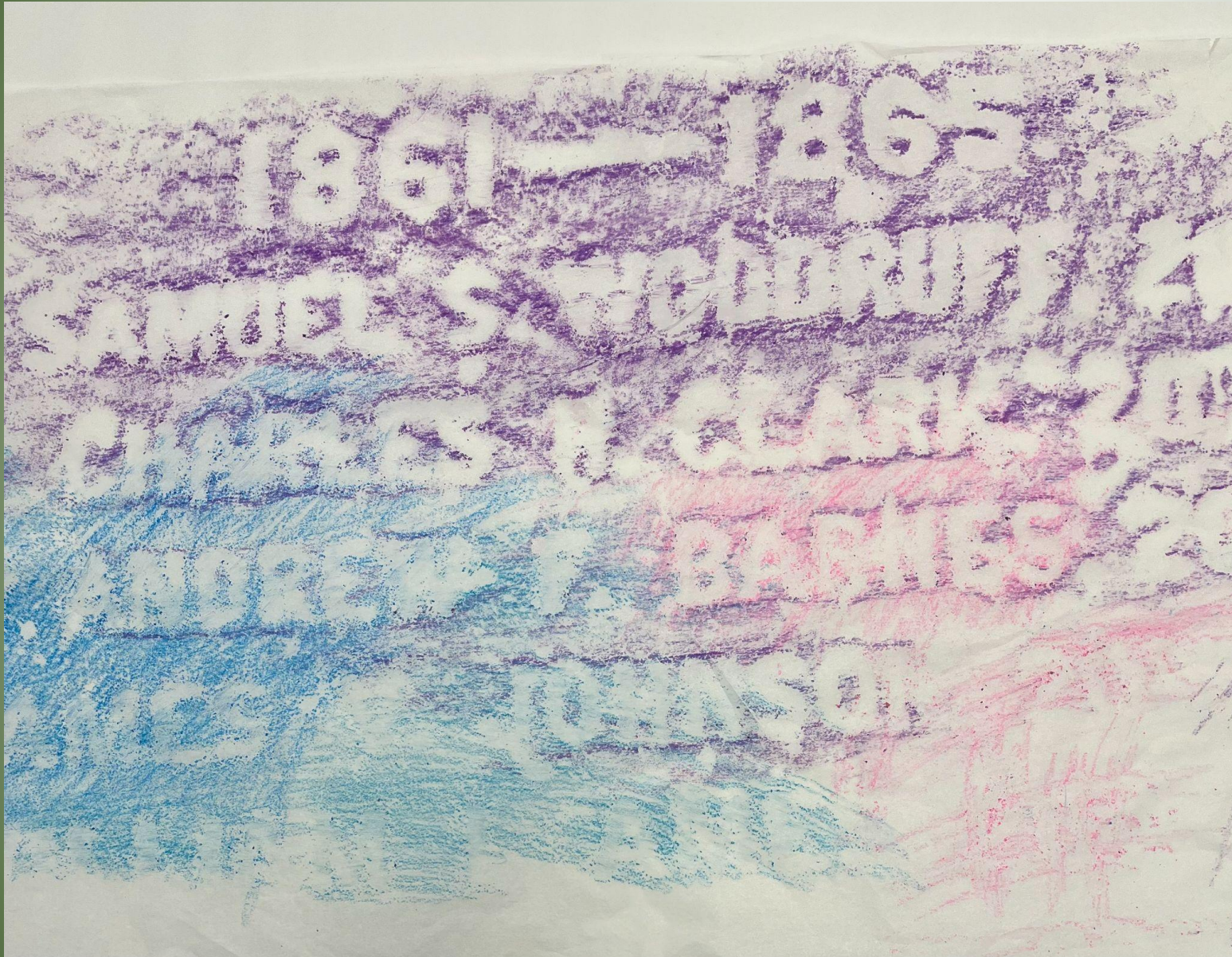
CONNECTICUT MARKERS on the WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL





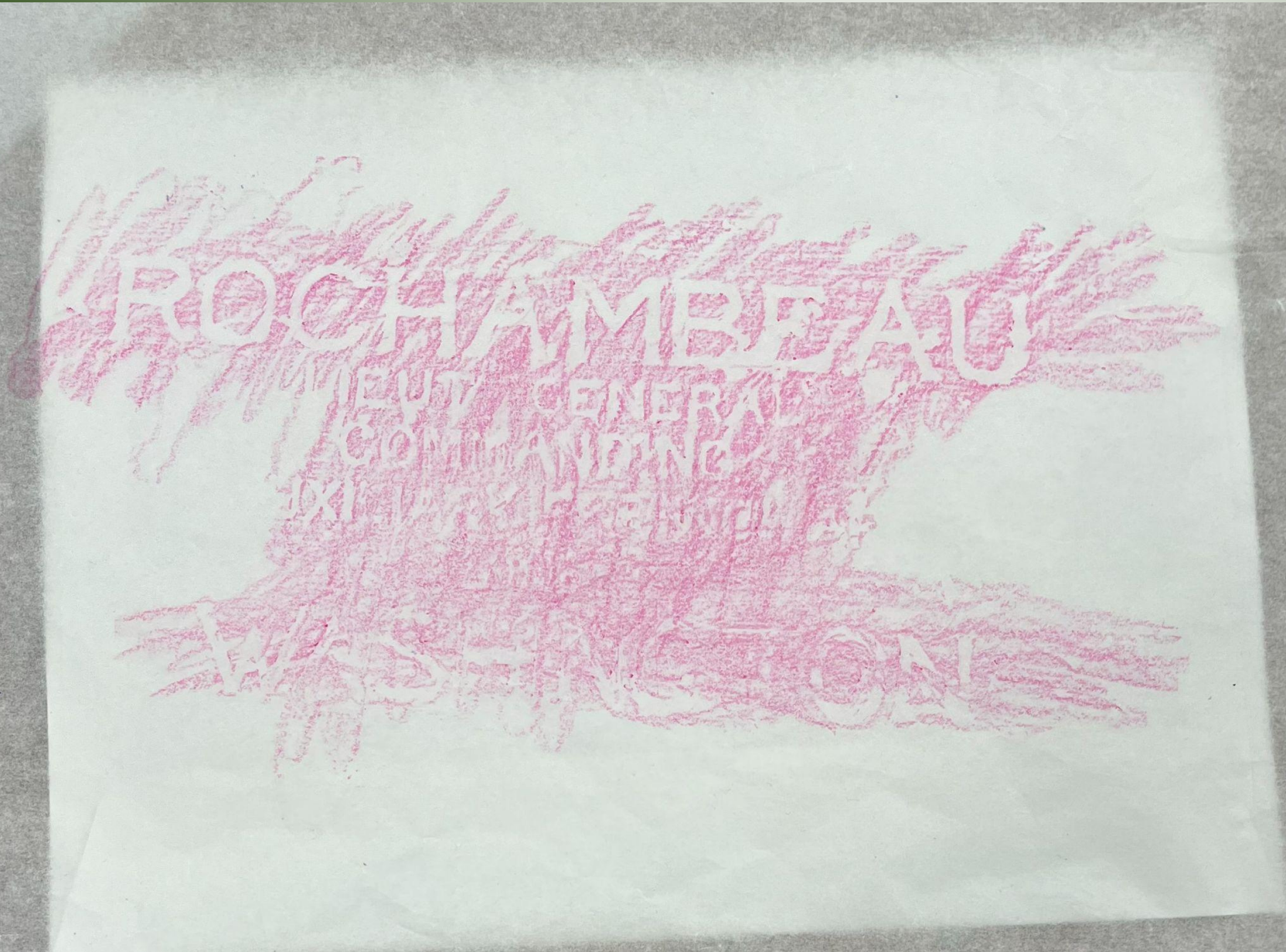
Rochambeau Trail

- Visit to a marker in Marion, CT
- Southington Coffee House



Rubbings

Rubbings





“Old
fashioned”
letter
writing

Dear Natalie,

December 4th, 1780

I am writing you a letter to inform you of what I have been up to recently and to let you know that I love and miss you very much. Right now we are encamped in Newport, Rhode Island. Rochambeau and Washington said that they were planning on leaving in June of 1781 to march to Phillipsburg, New York. On our way to camp, we had to march for about eight hours a day, while carrying our utensils, weapons, and personal items, which weighed about 60 pounds. This was difficult, but we eventually made it. Once we got to Newport, we were all very tired, but we knew we had to set up camp. So, we unloaded all our camp equipment and pitched the tents. We also set up our camp kettles, to cook food. After this, we were given our meal rations and collected water. But, it was a very scarce amount, so many of us are weak from hunger. But, I am very thankful for my health, as some people have fallen ill with Malaria and cholera. Also, due to the winter, it has been difficult trying to deal with the harsh conditions of the cold weather. But, I promise I will be fine and get through this. I hope you are doing well and will write back when you can.

Love, your husband,
Louis Garnier

Laci LT

Dear Mom and Dad,

I was very fortunate to receive the materials for this letter. I am writing on the 6th of March. As you know, it is 1781. Currently, it is a warm spring night in Newport Rhode Island. This year has been very eventful. We arrived in Newport on July 11th 1780. I was designated to be a fisher since I was hunting when we were in the woods. Between Mom's knowledge of dates and Dad's hunting skills I excelled at hunting and fishing. I had spent my days hiking but once we reached Newport we settled down. Rochambeau told us Washington was on his way. The days were sweltering; to get out of the heat I retreated to the shady woods to hunt. However, once we reached Newport the woods were thin and scarce. A local mussel fisher taught me the trick of the trade. In the night I have been passing time by playing a card game called whist. I have also been known to do the occasional journaling.

The most eventful part of this year was when Washington finally arrived. Washington joined us on the 6th of March 1781. I had the pleasure of catching mussels for his supper. I made sure to catch the finest mussels. Although I didn't get a chance to chat with Washington I'm sure he loved them.

Miss you both,
Marcel Monet

Bw

To mine own dearest wife and child,

The army is struggling. We nas't weapons and satchels we carry'n yond maketh up to sixty avoidupois, worth of weight. Mine own tight suit madeth and linen sticks to me as the dirt I tread on floats weightlessly in the air. The light green vegetation swipes across my unrested body, the scratches possibly infected. It has been many nights and years since we nas't seen each other, but our love is still hopelessly kind and alight through the many trials and tribulations we nas't did face. Through all of this, the only things I nas't done are march, consume gamey meat from slaughtered animals, and passeth time by talking to the soulless, shell-shocked men I march with. I couldst even tell thee what the goal of the mission is, but I desire my departure so I may see you once again. Is there any possible way you can support us in our journey? In love I sendeth thee mine own dearest prayers and wishes of health and prosperity.

Regards,
Gene Glasgow

643 73 283 330
nies jgl wu

August 14th, 1775

Dear Thomas,

I am so afraid. Life back home becomes harder and harder everyday. This news that you won't be able to return this summer breaks my heart. I am glad to hear that you are in good health, but I can't say the same for back home. Anne has fallen sick. I've done everything the doctor ordered but she doesn't seem to be getting any better. I'm scared Alice will fall sick as well. I feel I've already lost you to this war and I can't bear the thought of losing both our children too. Children in town have been dying left and right as infant mortality rates have risen. I have tried to convince Anne to study, but her coughing has gotten worse and her fever became even higher than the week before. Alice asks about you everyday. I know they both miss you, but not nearly as much as I do. All I want is for you to come back home. I'm sure you feel the same. You live everyday with the fear you won't survive to see tomorrow. I have the same worries. First I am losing you and what if the children come next?

From your ever loving wife,

Mary

Whist & currency





Hill-Stead Museum





- Manet
- Monet
- Degas
- Cassatt
- Japanese woodblock prints
- Architecture
- Furnished home - per Theodate's will
- Guided tours - English/French
- Archives
- Outdoor spaces; Sunken Garden





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Interview with the Artist



Windham Textile & History Museum











THE MIDDLETOWN TRIBUNE



FRENCH CANADIAN MILL WORKER

Middletown, Connecticut - It is a brisk morning as mill worker Jean-Pierre begins his long day at the American Thread Company. The 32-year-old French-Canadian immigrant has worked at the mill for six years, enduring long hours and difficult conditions to provide for his wife and three children.

Jean-Pierre arrives at the mill promptly at 6:00 am, along with hundreds of other workers. He punches in and heads to his station, where he will spend the next twelve hours operating a spinning machine that produces cotton thread. The noise of the machines is deafening, and the air is thick with dust and lint.

HOW WORK GOES IN THE MILLS

For the first few hours, Jean-Pierre works steadily, stopping only briefly for a quick breakfast of bread and coffee. By mid-morning, however, he begins to feel the strain of the long hours and the repetitive nature of his work. His back aches from standing all day, and his eyes are strained from the dim lighting.

At noon, Jean-Pierre takes a brief break for lunch, eating a simple meal of bread and cheese that he brought from home. He chats with his fellow workers, most of whom are also French-Canadian immigrants, about their families and the latest news from their hometowns. After lunch, Jean-Pierre returns to his machine and continues working until 6:00 pm, when the whistle signals the end of the day. He punches out and heads home, exhausted but grateful for the steady employment that provides for his family.

Life as a mill worker is difficult, but for Jean-Pierre and many other immigrants like him, it is the only option for earning a living in their new country. They endure long hours, poor conditions, and low pay, but they do so with determination and resilience, hoping for a better future for themselves and their families.







Chez Ben Diner, Manchester

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[Museum of Connecticut History](#) | [Connecticut in World War 1](#) |