For a young girl growing up in colonial America, opportunities for education were sharply limited. Her ultimate goal in life was to be a wife and mother, and her preparation for that limited role took the form of instruction in the domestic arts—cooking, decorating, and needlework, although she was also given rudimentary schooling in reading and numbers.

A remaining vestige of this philosophy of education is on display at the Gibbon House in Greenwich at 960 Ye Greate St.—the “sampler,” which girls as young as 5 or 6 completed as their first “marking sampler,” so called because it was marked with her initials and a number.

Samplers created by ancestors of local families have come into sharper focus because they are candidates for an exhibition at the Morven Museum & Garden in Princeton in October 2014. Morven’s Curator of Collections & Exhibitions, Elizabeth Allan, along with three sampler collectors, visited the Gibbon House recently to look at the local collection.

“They took pictures, notes, and measurements of six of the samplers,” recalls Barbara Stratton, a sampler collector herself and member of the Cumberland County Historical Society, based in the Warren and Reba Lummis Genealogical & Historical Library at 981 Ye Greate St. in Greenwich.

“One of the samplers displayed at the Gibbon House in Greenwich. The artist embroidered the words, “Mary E Harwoods-Work done in the fourteenth year of her age-1846.”

“Their high-density digital camera enables the counting of stitches, and we asked for copies of the pictures for a possible Historical Society collection catalogue.” She adds that a decision on whether any of the local samplers will be included in the Morven exhibition should come by the end of October.

“This is truly exciting,” she says. “If even one sampler is chosen, it has the potential for a marketing boost and lays the groundwork for a local exhibit.”

Morven is inviting collectors to bring their needlework to “Sampler Discovery Day” at the museum on Saturday, Oct. 19, from 12 to 4 p.m. so that experts can evaluate them for possible inclusion in the exhibition. They are looking for needlework made before 1860. For those not able to travel to Princeton, photos and documentation may be e-mailed to Ms. Allan at eallan@morven.org before Oct. 19.

Nancy Applegate, Curator of Samplers and overseer of the historical Gibbon House, comments that the samplers give clues to family genealogy and are considered heirlooms that, depending on the needlework and the condition, can be worth “thousands.” Those on display at the Gibbon House were donated by local families and are constructed on linen or flax, she explains.

Studying these samplers gives a fascinating glimpse into history and the simplicity of a time long past. There is something primitive and sweet in these creations with their patient replicas of the alphabet and numbers (a way of reinforcing basic academic lessons) and the homespun art work that often accompanied them.

According to the Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History of the Chronicle October 2013}

Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission

October 2013 Chronicle

Greenwich samplers studied for Morven exhibit

For a comprehensive listing of cultural events in Cumberland County, visit www.ccculturalheritage.org/Events.asp

www.ccculturalheritage.org
Translation of Bridgeton’s Historic District Guidelines
Created by Center for American Building Arts (CHABA)

By Flavia Ayala

In an effort that experts say may “help preserve the rich architectural character” of the city, the non-profit Center for Historic American Building Arts (CHABA) in Bridgeton announced completion of an authoritative translation of the City’s Historic District Design Guidelines into Spanish, the first such translation in New Jersey.

“These ‘Guias de Diseño’ exactly parallel the City’s official English-language Design Guidelines,” said CHABA co-founder Flavia Alaya as she informally presented the final draft to members of the organization. “But their true significance lies in their having been created by as well as for the Spanish-speaking community, who are increasingly investing in Bridgeton’s historic neighborhoods and saving them.”

Matthew Pisarski, principal planner for the Cultural & Heritage Commission, one of the sponsors of the project, points out that Cumberland County is only one of two counties in the New Jersey which has reached “minority majority” status. The other is Essex.

Acknowledging this translation as a first, Dan Saunders, Administrator of the State Historic Preservation Office, called it a “pioneering effort…”

Jaime Bustos DeHaro of Bridgeton is pictured on a recent Boston Architectural College study visit to the Walter Gropius House in Lincoln, Mass. Jaime has just been awarded BAC’s prestigious Ada Louis Huxtable scholarship based in part on his work assisting CHABA in Bridgeton with the Guidelines translation.

Spanish-language Guidelines had been thoroughly vetted by several outside experts, “the translation has not yet been formally incorporated into the City ordinances,” a process that she said would be initiated in the coming weeks.

Ms. Alaya highlighted the importance of this tool to CHABA’s recently-launched Home-Fronts workshops initiative. The Bridgeton Historic District (over 2000 structures, nationally and municipally registered 1982-83) is “full of wonderfully architected buildings,” she said. But she describes its many interconnected, industrial era, working-class neighborhoods as perhaps its most characteristic feature. She says the idea of the translation is for everyone who owns or plans to own a home in the district to have a new comfort level with preservation’s process, knowing that their effort contributes to the value of their investment.

Ms. Cerda-Moreno stressed that while the Spanish-language Guidelines have been thoroughly vetted by outside experts, “the translation has not yet been formally incorporated into the City ordinances,” a process that she said would be initiated in the coming weeks.

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Jaime Bustos DeHaro of Bridgeton is pictured on a recent Boston Architectural College study visit to the Walter Gropius House in Lincoln, Mass. Jaime has just been awarded BAC’s prestigious Ada Louis Huxtable scholarship based in part on his work assisting CHABA in Bridgeton with the Guidelines translation.

Samples provide glimpse into early American history

(Continued from page 1)

Metropolitan Museum of Art, girls in more affluent families often created a second, more decorative sampler in their adolescent years, usually at a ladies’ boarding school. These more advanced samplers “also served an important function: they revealed the values of the girl and her family to potential suitors. The work was usually framed and hung in the parlor, proclaiming the maker’s obedience, patience, and skill. It also communicated that the parents were wealthy enough to send their daughter to school.”

in broadening the understanding of Historic Preservation among those who speak Spanish, or English as a second language.” The complex translation project was supervised by architect and CHABA co-founder Maria Cerda-Moreno (AIA), who worked with Jaime Bustos-DeHaro, now a student at Boston Architectural College, a bilingual graduate of Bridgeton High School and former intern at the Bridgeton-based preservation architects, Watson & Henry Associates.

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