

# Founders Room

## (Video 3)

(stand in front of the Timeline Tree)

- This is our Founders Room. In this room you will learn how we became Seymour. This is also the room that we have our monthly programs and in December, where children can come visit Santa.
- Did you know that Seymour was part of Derby?
- Before we became Seymour, our town had many different names. Do you know any of them? ([wait for response](#))

**Move to the side and show the Timeline Tree.** \*\*As you explain the various names, replace the pieces on the timeline\*\*

- 1642-Amaugsuck-name given to the area around the great falls which meant fishing in a pouring out of water.
- 1738-Chusetown-name given to the area by the settlers to honor their friend, Chief Joseph (Mauwehu) Chuse
- 1804-Humphreysville-name given to the area to honor General David Humphreys, first to import Merino sheep here and built a woolen mill by the falls.
- 1850-Seymour-name given to the area when it was incorporated as a town and named after Thomas H Seymour, Governor of Connecticut.
- Before the European settlers came, the Pequot Indians lived here along the banks of the Naugatuck River. They called where they lived Amaugsuck (pronounced Awmawsuck) which means “fishing in a pouring out of water. (Today a fish ladder has been built at those very falls so that fish would return). They were a peaceful people and lived in harmony with the settler who came. They loved the land and took care of the earth and environment- something we must remember to do, even today.
- An Native American, named Joseph Mauwehu (pronounced Mawawhey) and his large family lived by the falls. The settlers called him Joe Chuse. When Joseph became chief to honor him, Amaugsuck became known as Chusetown.

### Move to Red Men Display

- How many of you have heard of the Sons of Liberty?
- Do you remember what they did?
- We have our own connection to the Sons of Liberty via the Improved Order of Red Men. If you remember the Sons of Liberty helped lead the charge against the British in the American Revolution. You may be questioning the Red Men part, they created their organization as almost like a mirror image of the great Iroquois nation and its governing body which at the time in the late 1700s natives were called Red Men. The fraternal order has kept many of the customs and terminology of the Native Americans as part of its governing organization. This organization is still very active today as a chartered by Congress patriotic charitable organization.

\*\*Allow time for the group to look at the artifacts.\*\*

\*\*Point out paintings on the wall donated to SHS by the Improved Order of Red Men Organization in Seymour. They were painted by Albert V Durand in 1907 and depict various aspects of Native American life, perhaps in this area.

### Move to David Humphreys Corner

- Who is this man on the left ? ([George Washington](#))
- Who is the man on the right? ([David Humphreys](#))
- What is the connection between these two men and what is David Humphreys, who was born in Derby, connection to Seymour?
- David Humphreys was a soldier in the Continental Army which was led by General George Washington. Humphreys was Washington's aide-de-camp(secretary) during the American Revolution. After the war, they remained close friends and when Washington became president, he appointed his friend ambassador to Spain & Portugal.

### Move to the Humphreysville case

- It was in Spain that Humphreys discovered the Merino breed of sheep. The wool from these sheep made a superior quality cloth. He shipped them back to his home, where they grazed in the hillsides in Chusetown. On returning, he built a large mill on land he had purchased on the Naugatuck River at the Falls. The town around the mill continued to grow due to this new industry .This was truly the beginning of industry not just in the Valley but in Connecticut. To honor Humphreys, the town was renamed to Humphreysville.

**\*\*Note that James M Smith was the last man to have a business in the Humphreys Mill. You will learn more about him upstairs in the Industry Room**

- Now remember, we were still part of Derby. Many wished to separate and become our own town with our own leaders. A group of men led by Lemman Chatfield went to Hartford to get permission to rename the town Richmond. They were told they couldn't see the governor however, if they changed the name to Seymour in honor of Thomas Seymour, the governor, it was sure to pass. In 1850, with a population of 1,677, we became Seymour and Lemman Chatfield was elected Seymour's first 1<sup>st</sup> selectman.

Allow time for any questions.

**\*\*Before exiting the room, point out the portrait of Katharine Matthies over the fireplace. \*\***