

Henry Whitfield State Museum



A new exhibit about Guilford architecture is now on display at the Henry Whitfield State Museum. On loan from the Guilford Keeping Society, “Weld-Built: The Guilford Architecture of William E. Weld” chronicles the life’s work of a person who played a large role in how Guilford looks today. Weld’s architectural drawings, ledgers, and day books now in the collection of the Guilford Keeping Society inspired the exhibit. Their research reveals that Weld’s career spanned 35 years, from 1837 to 1872. He was Guilford’s foremost builder in the decades

leading up to the Civil War through to the early years of Reconstruction, introducing the latest architectural styles to the area, including Italianate, Greek Revival, and Gothic Revival. In addition to building over 50 houses in Guilford, Branford, and Madison, Weld also built schools, stores, a hotel, a social hall, and church additions.

Weld even renovated the Whitfield House in 1868 when it was still a private home. The house was nearly 230 years old (and it was about 30 years before the site would become a museum) when owner Mary Griffing Chittenden hired Weld to renovate the building and expand its footprint with an addition off the back. Weld’s architectural drawings from the Society’s collection document how the house looked before the renovation and detail Weld’s proposed work, while photographs from the Henry Whitfield State Museum’s collection show before and after views. Exhibit visitors of all ages are also invited to color and construct a paper model of the Whitfield House.

The exhibit is open for free in the museum’s Visitor Center galleries. Through April, the galleries are open 10:00-4:00 most weekdays. Beginning in May, the entire site is open 10:00-4:00, Wednesday-Sunday. Admission is required to tour the Whitfield House. For more information, call 203-453-2457 or visit our [website](#), and stay up to date with everything happening at the museum by following us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Photo caption: The Whitfield House in the 1880s showing Weld’s addition at right. *From the Henry Whitfield State Museum collection.*