

STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS LETTER

MARCH 1963

Next Meeting, Friday, March 22, 1963
Christ Church Hall

David Wooster, Stratford Born Hero of the Revolution. Mr. Knapp has again put together a most interesting program; a color illustrated talk on the life and times of David Wooster. Our speaker will be Mr. James Case, Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, and former President, and now Secretary-Treasurer of the Chaplain Ebenezer Baldwin Branch, Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. I'm sure we will all find Mr. Case a very interesting authority on his subject.

Because of the growth of our Society membership and the increased attendance at our meetings, we plan to use the larger hall at the Church for this meeting, so don't stay home because of a past crowded situation. We now will have room to comfortably seat everyone.

Mrs. Lovell and her hard-working acquisitions committee will have something interesting to tell us about.

This is one meeting none of us should miss.

JUDSON HOUSE

Mr. Fowler and his restoration committee have things well under control and will have an interesting report on the progress of the parlor restoration.

A fortunate turn in the restoration program was realized when Mr. John Cowperthwaite, Architect and Designer, donated his services for the design research and the making of a detail drawing for the pilasters and bolection mouldings for the panel walls. Dr. Cummings has seen and approved the drawings and the sections are now being made at Burritt's mill.

LONG RANGE STUDY COMMITTEE

At the last meeting of the Executive Board it was decided to establish a Long Range Study Committee to study and determine the future needs and expansion of the Society. Mrs. Bunnell has agreed to head this committee. They will work to present a long range plan with goals toward an orderly growth program. I'm sure their future findings and reports will be helpful.

PIANO

The wonderful publicity we have had on our piano and the letter writing by our Acquisitions Committee members is starting to bear fruit. I am sure, by our May meeting, they will have good news to report.

HALL RUG WEAVING

Did you see the picture in the Sunday Post of our ladies and their sewing bee? One call for help and our ladies responded with wonderful cooperation. They have been meeting each Friday at the museum, cutting and sewing. Now they have gone a step further and set up a loom and are going, also, to do the weaving at the museum. If you can't come and help with the sewing and cutting, it might be interesting to watch the weaving!

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is growing . . . at last report we had 275 members, most of them active. Are you active? If not, do you want to be? The more active members we have, the more new projects we can plan and complete. If you can and want to take a greater part, let your officers or committee chairmen know and we will put you to work.

HOSTESSES

Ladies, can you give some time this summer as a hostess? Mrs. Oakman will soon be organizing her hostess groups for the Spring and Summer. If you would like to take part guiding visitors and tourists through Judson House and the Museum, call Mrs. Oakman, ED 7-1292.

CURATOR

Mr. Booth still reports a growing number of visitors especially among the younger people. By the end of the month, he should have a handsomely restored parlor to show along with the rest of our historic house.

CONNECTICUT LEAGUE

The next meeting of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies will be held on March 30 at the Fairfield Historical Society. As a member of our Society, you are also a member of the State League and you are invited to attend this meeting. Mrs. Nettleton will have information on the meeting agenda at our next meeting.

* * * WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE SPECIAL * * *

Mrs. Miller, our Ways and Means Committee Chairman, has tentatively arranged for our lecture speaker, a man of national importance and one of the most prominent curators in our country! Our problem will be whether Bunnell High School auditorium is large enough to hold all the people who will want to hear him! Mrs. Miller will tell us all about it at our meeting.

Stanley E. Johnson
President

TOWN SETTLED 1639



SOCIETY ORGANIZED 1925

Built 1723

P. S. Executive Board Meeting at 7:30 before regular meeting
on March 22nd

I. PLAN FOR TOUR OF JUDSON HOUSE.

Members and guests register and receive brochure (if weather is fair, table will be outside; if rainy it will be in dining room).

- (1) Greeted in hall and escorted to receiving line in living room. Centers of interest explained by those assigned to this room.
- (2) Kitchen is next on the tour.
- (3) Pantry - china, silver, glass, etc.
- (4) Dining Room.
- (5) Up the front stairs to -
- (6) Miss Celia Curtis' bedroom.
- (7) Across the hall to Hawley bedroom.
- (8) Gun Room.
- (9) Library.
- (10) Up to the attic - many treasures.
- (11) Down the Back stairs and out the kitchen door to garden.
- (12) Slave kitchen (refreshments served; Early American cooking utensils on display).

II. HOUSE PARTY MEMBERS to wear old fashioned costume (any period). Please be in your places at 7:45 P.M. on May 25th.

III. GENERAL FACTS.

1. Judson house was built in 1723 by Capt. David Judson, (fourth of his line in America). It is built on the original "Homelot" of William Judson and his children as shown by the earliest Stratford records. (oldest preserved record dates from 1650).
2. First structure was a stone house (first stone house in Stratford) built on this site by Wm. Judson and his son Joseph. Wm. Judson came to this country in 1634, settled for 4 years in Concord, Mass., then came to Stratford with his wife Grace and three children. He later moved on to New Haven where he remarried. This "Stone house" was a fortified house, designated as a shelter for women and children in case of need. It is on the lower slope of what was known as "Watch House Hill", later "Meeting House Hill", and currently "Academy Hill". Portions of the foundations, and stones for the chimney in the present structure are undoubtedly from the original stone house. This Capt. David Judson House is an excellent example of Early American Farm House Architecture. He did his own planning and achieved an architectural gem.
3. This house was continuously occupied by descendants of David Judson until "Abner" (last of the line) died in 1867. His wife Maria had life use of the house until her death in 1881. Then the house passed into hands of his sisters and nephews. Was sold to "Mitchell" who held it for one year and then sold it to John D. Wheeler, whose attempted changes were eradicated by the Trustees of Celia Curtis.
4. After nine years of "Wheeler" ownership, the house was bought in 1890 by Misses Celia and Cornelia Curtis, and thus restored to Judson lineage, they being descendants of Capt. David and Phebe Stiles Judson, whose daughter married Stephen Curtis.