



STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Newsletter

March 7, 1973

THE NEXT MEETING will be on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, with Professor Rudy J. Favretti, Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Connecticut presenting a talk, illustrated with slides, on his area of special study and interest, "COLONIAL GARDENS". The meeting will be at the Methodist Church Hall at 8:00 P.M. Prof. Favretti is consultant in his field to Old Sturbridge Village and to the Stonington, Conn., Historical Society in the restoration of the old gardens and orchards of their Whitehall Mansion. He is the author of "New England Colonial Gardens" published by the Pequod Press in Stonington and a regular contributor to leading garden magazines including the garden section of the New York Times. "Growing for Showing," Doubleday 1961, is another of his publications.

Because of Mr. Favretti's expertise in the colonial garden topic, the very favorable comments of those who have heard him speak, and as a gesture of inter-organization cooperation and courtesy, we have invited members of the Stratford, Lordship, and Bridgeport Garden Clubs, and members of the Milford, Trumbull, Fairfield, and Huntington Historical Societies to our Wednesday, March 21st meeting and therefore are looking forward with pleasure to having at least 50 visitors on this occasion. PLEASE DO PLAN TO ATTEND THIS MEETING TO HELP BE HOST OR HOSTESS TO OUR NEIGHBORS.

Mr. Tindall, Chairman of the Program Committee, reports that Mr. Favretti will be at the House and Museum grounds by mid-afternoon to give us advice on the new landscaping needed because of the razing of the Sammis House.

Work is progressing well to make the Captain David Judson House ready for opening on Wednesday, April 4, to begin its regular April through October, Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. visitation schedule. The first floor kitchen, parlor, Miss Celia's room, upper and lower hall and stairway, the cellar stairway, and the public part of the upstairs bathroom have been repainted by the Smith, Larson, Melcher, Fowler, Dustin, David, Cole crew; the cellar has been newly whitewashed in some areas; the cellar stairs have been provided with rubber treads and the tool display area has a new six foot wide rubber mat along its traveled portion. Mrs. Mildred Melcher will chair a committee with Mrs. Mae Wardman and Mrs. Martha Marks to begin cleaning and polishing in the House the week of March 12.

At the Executive Board meeting on February 19th it was voted: to authorize John Dolyak to paint the front of the House; to authorize Mr. Fowler, Chairman of the Education Committee, to purchase 100 winter scene postcards of the House in black and white for sale to visitors (as an emergency supply, because the winter scene in color did not come out well and there has been no more snow!); to purchase fifty 7" by 10" snow scene pictures of the House suitable for sale for framing (really a

beautiful picture showing the east side with the old shingles on the gable end); to empower the president to name a House and Museum Director Study Committee (to make recommendations as to duties, salary, etc. of a director, not professional curator, responsible to the Board); to obtain information from the American Association of Museums as to requirements to qualify our Society for accreditation in this national organization.

It is difficult to describe adequately the careful, painstaking, meticulous, and thoroughly professional work the Accessions Committee is doing, working almost daily, to examine, identify, label, describe, catalog, and store our outstandingly fine and large clothing collection. We are very grateful to two members of the New Canaan Historical Society, Mrs. Lorraine Van Loan and Mrs. Robert Williams, experts in the clothing of bygone years field, who spent two days sharing their knowledge with our committee.

Mrs. Mussler, Chairman of the Hostesses Committee, is scheduling special orientation meetings for volunteer guides. Talks and slide presentations on Chinese export china by Mr. Tindall and on the history and renovation of Judson House by Mr. Fowler, and a trip to the Garvin collection of period furniture in New Haven have already taken place. Volunteers thus far include Mrs. Gilbert Williams, Mrs. J. Oliver Carson, Mrs. Harold Bailey, Mrs. John Boras, Mrs. Winston Perkins, Mrs. Stephen Lawrence, Mrs. Fred Wilcoxson, Mrs. Arden Kilty and Mrs. Sidney Colborne. Additional members are needed for this group.

We welcome to our Society the following new members enrolled since the time of the last newsletter: Mrs. Bette Benfanti, Mr. Michael Aurelia, and Mrs. Stephen Lawrence. The membership-fund raising undertaking, assigned to a committee chaired by Donald Fowler, will take place in the fall, according to present plans. A special fund drive among our own members is projected.

THE MAY MEETING, as previously announced, will be combined with the general meeting of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies on Saturday, May 19, when our Society, in a major event of our Judson House 250th Anniversary Year, is host to our State organization. The auditorium and cafeteria facilities of Stratford High School have been reserved for this occasion. (We regret that expected size of attendance and the dependence of the speaker on the projection of color transparencies, difficult to use during the daytime in the Episcopal Church Parish Hall, makes a change from the originally scheduled church facility necessary). Mr. George Bowditch, Director of Exhibits at the Margaret Strong Museum in Rochester, N.Y., will be the featured speaker at both morning and afternoon sessions. Mr. Bowditch was professional consultant in the renovation of our Museum; much of his talk will center around the organization and potential of the small local museum with special attention to our Society's experience. A visitation of our House and Museum will conclude the League program. We hope you will check May 19th on your calendar and will plan to attend the League meeting, all or at least one session of it.

* * * * *

REMEMBER: NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21.

Elden H. Dustin, President