



STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter



September 18, 1973

I hope that you have had a pleasant summer in spite of the heat and humidity and that you are looking forward with as much pleasure as I am to a new Historical Society season.

THE NEXT MEETING, THE ANNUAL MEETING, will be on Friday evening, September 28, at 8:00 P.M. in the Methodist Church hall. Annual reports will be given by Executive Board committee chairmen, the president, and treasurer; the election of 1973-74 officers and Executive Board will be held. To avoid the possibility of encroaching on an outside speaker's time by the business of the annual meeting, a film has been obtained for the entertainment-education part of the program. The movie, entitled "Yankee Calling", reviews Connecticut contributions to American industry from the colonial period to the present. This film was used as part of the State League of Historical Societies March program; it was judged very pleasing and instructive. You will enjoy it and also the review of a busy year's work by committee chairmen and officers.

TO OUTLINE BRIEFLY HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS SINCE MAY 1, THE DATE OF THE LAST NEWSLETTER:

The meeting of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies with our Society as host on a beautiful May 19th was very successful with 165 registered in attendance. Our guests made us happy with their favorable comments concerning the House and Museum. A pleasant surprise was the personal visit of Mr. Peter Herrick of the Parks Department of the Department of Interior, to present, as part of the program, the certificate of registration of Judson House in the National Register of Historic Places and a copy of the latest compilation of the National Register for our library. We are grateful to our member, Mr. John Sober, for arranging this presentation with his Colgate University friend, Mr. Herrick.

On June 11th the Acquisitions Committee, Mrs. Chapman and Mrs. Fowler, co-chairmen, held a late afternoon reception and tea for the Community Advisory Board and officers of the Bank of Stratford as a token of our gratitude to them for a donation of \$1600 as "seed money" to underwrite the expenses of our town-wide membership-fund raising project, - truly a heartening indication of support for which we are very thankful.

The Open House and Tea for members and friends on Sunday, July 29, was successful beyond our most optimistic expectations with over 100 members and friends enjoying the afternoon together. The occasion was made most memorable by the presence of Judge Raymond E. Baldwin accompanied by two of his sons and their wives. An unexpected and touching part of the program was Judge Baldwin's presentation of Mrs. Baldwin's gown and slippers worn at Mr. Baldwin's inauguration as governor, along with his top hat which he wore at so many ceremonial state and national events, and the recently published biography of Judge Baldwin by Curtiss Johnson: "Raymond E. Baldwin, Connecticut Statesman".

Delicious refreshments were served under the supervision of Mrs. Harold Cruikshank.

The Outdoor Antique Show and Sale on the Bunnell High School grounds on a hot, humid, shower-threatening August 11th was again a success with a profit of \$1976 in line with that of other years. The Society was lucky; the showers held off until about 3:00 P.M. and, although attendance was "off", there were more dealers (105) than usual, and the Society "wagon" and foods booth did unusually well. The Society owes a great deal to Mrs. Mabel Miller (ably

assisted by husband Leo) who so graciously and skillfully has undertaken the chairmanship of this major project each year.

SUMMER ACTIVITY at the House and Museum slowed somewhat. It has been a busy season in the visitation area with Mrs. Mussler doing fine work in coordination of guiding services. Mrs. Leslie Oakman kept regular Wednesday morning library hours and found herself very busy with people doing genealogical research as well as in the endless job of library maintenance. The acquisitions committee has started the task of cataloging our prints, engravings, and paintings and storing them in the Museum in the special area built for this purpose.

Two major grounds and buildings projects were accomplished: Mr. Robert Abercrombie gave nearly one and one half days of time to the Society in replacing old cord-suspended lighting fixtures in the attic and bathroom areas of the House with approved porcelain fixtures and doing other electrical work required by the Stratford Fire Department. We are very grateful to Mr. Abercrombie for sharing his skill with us. Mr. Howard Smith installed a board fence to complete the outlining of the north and west boundaries. With an assist from Mr. Fowler in painting and from your president in landscaping and terracing the area, Mr. Smith has added one more item to a long list of projects he has done for the Society, and we thank him very much.

We note with sorrow the deaths of two of our members, Raymond O'Connor and Mrs. Arthur Millington.

New Members not previously listed include: Mr. Raymond Dunleavy, Mrs. John Dickerson, Mr. John Olha, Mrs. Andrew Patrick, Mr. and Mrs. John Santa, Mrs. Julie Sullivan, Miss Ellen Williams, and Mr. Dominick Fazzari. We are happy to welcome them to the Society.

The Membership-Fund Raising Committee, chaired by Mr. Fowler, has set the first week in November as the time for mailing out materials to start the drive, and work is well on its way to accomplishing this. As a current member, your support for the project is needed.

Good news was received in July when we learned that the American Society for State and Local History, through funding by the Smithsonian Institution, granted our request for professional consultation service to assist in preparing exhibits in the Museum. The grant is for two days of consultant aid, and, at our request, that consultant will be George Bowditch of the Strong Museum in Rochester, N.Y., thus providing continuity of work with Mr. Bowditch, who assisted in the planning of the renovation of the Museum. The grant carries no obligation to the Society beyond hospitality for Mr. Bowditch.

PLEASE NOTE: NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th.

Elden H. Dustin, President



STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT
SEPTEMBER 5, 1973



To the 1972-1973 Members of the Stratford Historical Society:

You will find enclosed a membership renewal envelope and enrollment form. Membership renewal fees (\$5.00 is the regular membership fee for each adult member of your family) are due annually in October. We hope you will continue your membership and the support it implies, both financial and moral. We would, of course, be most grateful if you could consider this year one of the other types of memberships as noted inside the flap of the envelope.

In continuing your membership as one of our 378 members this year, you will be helping in our on-going projects:

Preserving our historic Captain David Judson House and its beautiful artifacts of Stratford's distinguished history (old houses do require constant maintenance);

Helping in the final stages of preparing the Catharine T. Mitchell Museum as an outstanding exhibit and classified storage area of thousands of additional artifacts;

Continuation of a superior educational program from which nearly 1000 school children annually gain knowledge of Stratford's heritage from guided tours and in-school lecture-slide presentations;

Continuation of the regular visitation program Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, April through October; (Your membership entitles you and your family to visit the House and Museum at no charge.)

Maintenance of the gardens and lawns, a considerable expense in spite of volunteer assistance;

Provision of at least four programs per year at general meetings planned to interest and educate in fields of historical interest;

Special activities such as the Open House and Tea held this summer;

The president's Newsletter prepared at least four times a year to keep members informed as to the programs and projects of the Society.

We are always happy when members wish to volunteer as guides, gardeners, refreshment committee workers, acquisition committee workers on the cataloging and preservation of artifacts, carpenters, painters, - the types of assistance needed at various times of the year are numerous. Many members have found volunteer work for the Society an enriching part of their lives. Certainly our purpose is important; the preservation of reminders of our past as anchor points for the unfolding of our history.

Now, to return to more mundane matters: You should know that you will receive, the first week in November, a letter as part of a general mailing to be sent out community-wide as part of our 1973-74 Membership-Fund Raising Drive. You, as a current member, should consider this September letter as your membership renewal reminder, as usual.

Money and materials are unfortunately so important, but in this letter we hope we have made the point also that the spirit of personal helpfulness to the Society and devotion to its aims are equally important. You have proved that you have these qualities. Thank you.

Mrs. John W. Andrews, Membership Chairman

Elden H. Dustin, President