



STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



January 15, 1974

The next meeting of the Stratford Historical Society will be on Friday, January 25th at 8:00 P.M. in the Methodist Church Hall, when Michael Aurelia, one of our members, will speak on "A History of the Stratford Shoreline" and illustrate his talk with slides. Mr. Aurelia is Director of Wetlands and Water Protection for the Connecticut Conservation Association with his office in Bridgewater. Mr. Aurelia's presentation, representing a life-long interest, will cover such topics as the significance of the Great Meadows in the early life of the town and their continuing important role as a part of our environment. Please circle this date, January 25th, on your calendar, and plan to attend what we are sure will be a fine meeting.

We extend the heartiest of welcomes to the 118 new members who have thus far in our Membership-Fund Drive joined with the Society. We appreciate your support and hope you will become active in the work of the Society. We hope you can attend the January meeting.

The Membership-Fund Drive is off to a good start toward its \$50,000 goal over a three-year period with \$8387.81 thus far accumulated in new membership fees and donations. The committee, Donald Fowler, Chairman, will make a more complete report to members in the coming weeks.

Activity in the Society continues at a busy pace:

November 7: Mr. Gilbert Andrews, first vice-president and chairman of a curator-director study committee, held a meeting of his committee which resulted in a recommendation to seek a part-time employee who would do some custodial duties, maintain scheduled building inspection, and work closely with volunteer hosts and hostesses. The employment of a full time director was considered as a long range plan dependent on available funds.

November 24: Work group (Mr. Ice, Mr. Spamer, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Dustin) headed by John Dolyak, chairman of the grounds committee, cleared leaves from the grounds.

December 1 and 2: George Bowditch, curator of exhibits at the Margaret Strong Museum in Rochester, N.Y., was at the museum full days working as professional consultant in the preparation of exhibits on the upper floor of the museum. Mr. Bowditch's suggestions and his actual preparation of "mock-ups" of two exhibits were most helpful to accession committee members Mrs. Chapman, Mr. and Mrs. Larson, Mr. and Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Hubbell, and Mr. and Mrs. Dustin who had previously held several meetings to do the research on Stratford's early history to prepare for Mr. Bowditch's visit. The exhibits as projected at this time will involve six museum areas devoted to the following: (1) Indian occupation (2) The first settlement and Indian land "sales" (3) Government and church (4) Early trade (1700's) (5) Home crafts (6) Manufacture and commerce (1800's). Much of Mr. Bowditch's commentary was recorded on tape, the first use of a new tape recorder purchased by the education committee. Our Society is greatly indebted to the American Association for State and Local History for providing the grant of funds which made possible this assistance by a professional consultant.

December 5: The finance committee, Jack Wardman, chairman, met to review Society investments.

December 12: The Executive Board met, heard committee reports and voted: to authorize Mr. Wardman to expend up to \$2000 to renovate the furnace room of Judson House in accord with Fire Department requirements; to empower the 1973-74 Finance Committee, within its term of office, to sell certain securities at future favorable times to increase yield and/or growth potential; to publish annually the names of those memorialized by gifts to the Society, and the amount of the gifts.

January 23: 9:30 A.M. Meeting of hostess-guides (docents) at the museum to study projected exhibits based on theme of "What is Unique in Stratford's History?" and to hear the recording of Mr. Bowditch's suggestions. 7:30 P.M. Meeting of Finance Committee in museum for further study of the financial "picture" of the Society.

November, December, January: The following volunteer staff members, according to interests, talents, and House and Museum needs, busied themselves with such activities as cleaning, identifying, cataloging, and storing paintings and prints, accessioning of artifacts, secretarial work, painting, research, work on exhibits, and library work: Howard Smith (who put up opaque window shades in the linen room to prevent fabric deterioration from sunlight, and shades in the Museum so slides and films can be projected in the daytime); Mrs. Freda Chapman, Mrs. Ruth Barrows, Mr. and Mrs. Einar Larson, Mrs. Alma Hubbell, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Fowler, Mrs. Elizabeth Oakman, librarian; Mr. Marshall Nye, Mrs. Ann Minatti, Mrs. Susan Switzgale, Mrs. Ella Breetz, Mrs. Louise Brandt, Mrs. Doris David, and Mr. and Mrs. Elden Dustin.

The electrical work involved in installing 200 ampere service for the House and Museum and changing wiring in the furnace area is nearly complete. The completion of the sheetrock "room" around the House furnace is promised by the end of January. The retirees painting group, Howard Smith buildings chairman, projects for the winter season the repainting of the burning room, and scraping, re-puttying and painting of windows in the linen room, and the Hawley room, with some work in the dining room.

Mr. Tindall, program chairman, announced the following meeting dates and programs for the remainder of the season:

March 20 (a WEDNESDAY MEETING): Mr. Lowell Hess will speak on "Construction of Early American Houses".

May 24 (Friday): Our Society member and former president, Mr. Lewis Knapp, will present an illustrated talk on "Coastal Trade".

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of General N. Hillyer Egleston, an honorary member of our Society, recently deceased.

Does any member have a copy for donation to the Society of the Tercentenary Edition (1639-1939) of the "Who's Who Directory of Stratford"? If you have one available, will you please call the Museum (378-0630) on any Tuesday, 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M. Apparently this publication was widely distributed in town in 1939.

REMEMBER: NEXT MEETING IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 25. A FINE PROGRAM, GOOD FELLOWSHIP, AND REFRESHMENTS.

Elden H. Dustin,
President