



The Stratford Historical Society

# NEWS LETTER

March 6, 1978

NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1978 - 8 P.M.  
METHODIST CHURCH HALL

The speaker for our March meeting will be Mr. Blaine A. Cota Jr. of Litchfield, Conn. His subject is "Colonial Gardens and Planting". The program will deal with the indigenous gardens and plantings of the Indians, the transplanted gardens of the new world and the development of a colonial garden as illustrated by the recreation of the rural garden at the Deacon Peter Buell House.

In 1958, Mr. Cota and his wife founded Heritage House Inc., a non-profit project devoted to preservation of our New England heritage. In 1961, the Cotas rescued the Buell house, ca. 1728, from demolition, moved it seven miles and restored it. As a lecturer on many facets of social history, Mr. Cota is now on the faculty of Eastern Conn. State College.

#### Antique Show and Sale:

The enclosed flyer gives the details. It may be convenient for you, and it would be helpful for the committee if small items for the Society's table at the Show could be brought with you to the March 31 meeting. Hy Tindall will collect them from you and list any items you'd like picked up later.

#### Judson House opens April 1:

This year that headline has special meaning because opening was, of course, paced by completion of a very major restoration effort. The work is essentially done, and clean-up is underway. Those working to prepare the house for opening can use more help in the few days remaining. If you can pitch in, please call Ella McCullough, 375-6203 or Doris Carson, 375-6087.

The restoration project, besides correcting structural damage, included two significant improvements not previously mentioned in these letters. First, the original corner cupboard in the dining room has been restored, as nearly as possible, to its original size and shape. At some point prior to 1900, it had been reduced in size and the curved, domed interior removed. A copy of the modified original was added in the NE corner. When both cupboards were removed to permit work on the east wall, it was decided to restore the original and not to replace the copy. Jack Wardman, Elden Dustin and others have now faithfully and skillfully reconstructed the old cupboard.

Secondly, to improve the handling of "gift shop" items sold in the House, the new kitchen was extensively remodeled with storage and display areas more appropriate to a gift shop. Einar Larsen's art work has come through again to make the room not only more functional, but also more in keeping with the rest of the House.

The one area still needing work is the tool room on the east side of the cellar. That area will be closed off in early April until it, too, can be readied for inspection.

Docent Program in full swing:

The docent program training guides for the House and Museum is under way on Thursday mornings. Both new and experienced docents (27 in all) are studying Stratford and Judson family history as well as the artifacts on display and the Judson House itself. Docents will conduct school tours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during the school year.

Accessions Committee:

Current committee activity involves unpacking those items usually on display in Judson House. These pieces were packed away for safe-keeping last fall before the restoration work began, and now will be returned to their accustomed places.

A recent acquisition is a collection of over 100 articles of clothing (ca. 1860-1918) from Myron T. Smith of Maine. These have been sorted and are being inventoried and stored.

The committee is usually busy in the work area of the museum on Tuesdays. If you are interested in the inner workings of the Society you would be most welcome. Drop in, or call Carol Lovell, 375-3569. There is always something for interested and willing hands.

Trust Fund Management:

For many years, the Finance Committee of the Society has handled the Trust Fund assets, deciding on investment policies and recommending stock and bond purchases and sales to the Executive Board. With the growing size of the Trust Fund this approach seemed risky. The Board has now voted, on the advice of the Finance Committee, to engage Citytrust as an investment manager. Their Trust Department, besides handling actual transactions, will periodically review our accounts and take investment actions in line with guidelines we set down. This professional help should assure us all that the Society's future is getting the attention it deserves.

Future Events:

There will be a regular membership meeting in May. Another Society picnic, patterned after last year's very successful first endeavor, is being planned for Sunday, August 27 on the Judson House grounds.

David S. Jenney, President