



The Stratford Historical Society

NEWS LETTER

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FRIDAY,
MAY 16, 1980, 8:00 P.M. METHODIST CHURCH HALL.

Please come, meet and talk with friends and enjoy another interesting program. Ruth Ray of Orange will provide us a talk entitled, "Nature's Encore - A Study in Period Flower Arrangements". Mrs. Ray is an experimenter in various drying methods. She is an accredited judge by the National Council of Garden Clubs. She is also a past president of Stratford and Orange Garden Clubs and a member of the American Guild of Flower Arrangers. She will have a great many examples of flower arrangements and Hi Tindall, our Program Chairman, assures us that this will be an interesting evening for all our members. Do come and bring a friend.

ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE - APPROX. \$4,500 PROFIT.

The Show was a great success! The Society owes much to Committee chairpersons and the many Society members who participated in the two day program. Preliminary reports indicate a profit of approximately \$4,500 which is more than last year's very successful show. This is a very important annual fund raiser and the programs of our Society are very dependent on this two day activity. Although much of the work goes on during the two days and the two weeks prior, the success of the Show is greatly dependent on contributions to our Society Booth. Keep us in mind every month of the year. Anytime an attic is cleaned or emptied, save all kinds of items. Call Hi Tindall (874-1819) or Bonnie Paradise (377-2332) who will gladly arrange to pick up items and store them for our next year's Show. Think Antiques Show all year long.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. ABBOTT L. CUMMINGS

The Stratford Historical Society wishes to congratulate Dr. Abbott L. Cummings, an Honorary Member of the Society, as the 1979 winner of the Boston Globe Book Festivals prestigious Winship Award for his book, "The Framed Houses of the Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725". The \$1,000.00 award is given annually by the Globe in memory of Laurence F. Winship, former editor of the Globe, to the author of an outstanding book featuring a New England subject. Dr. Cummings' book was published in May, 1979 by the Harvard University Press after 30 years of research and preparation. The Stratford Historical Society library has an autographed copy of Dr. Cummings book. Dr. Cummings is presently the Executive Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston, Massachusetts.

Dr. Cummings interest in Stratford's Captain David Judson House dates back to 1958, when the upper kitchen was restored under his direction with the help of volunteers. This was followed by the restoration of the west room or parlor in 1962, again under Dr. Cummings supervision. Last September, 1979, Dr. Cummings returned to Judson House for the third time, to review his earlier study of the architectural features of Judson House. The Society's newsletter of March, 1980, briefly reviews the important facts of Dr. Cummings report with the date of Judson House changed from 1723 to c. 1750. This report is available to members and may be ordered from the Society for \$1.00 to cover zeroxing and postage. Please address your request to Mr. David Wiggin, President of the Stratford Historical Society, Box 382, Stratford, Conn. 06497.

Research continues with the dating of Judson House. Unfortunately, there is a lack of official records for the period. If anyone has any letters, account books, or diaries of the period, we would like to look at them. Please communicate with either Carol Lovell (375-3569) or Judy Kurmay (378-8025).

THE BRITISH ARE COMING !

Yes -- the British are coming on Sept. 21, 1980. Save that date. The Fifth Connecticut Regiment and Delancy's Loyalist Brigade will conduct a skirmish on Academy Hill on Sunday, September 21st at about 1:00 P.M. Each one will have a military encampment representative of the period as well as a large craft section. Plan to come and spend the afternoon. The rain date is September 28th. Arrangements are being made by Judy Kurmay, our 2nd Vice President.

THE EMPIRE PERIOD BOOKCASE

Carol Lovell, chairperson of the Assessments Committee reports the Empire Period bookcase (china closet) c. 1840, which was formerly in our Catherine B. Mitchell Museum has been given a new home in Boston -- at the Museum of Fine Arts.

The Executive Board of the Stratford Historical Society approved the removal of the piece due to its lack of Stratford connections and its poor value as an exhibit case for porcelain and glass.

Mr. Thomas Lloyd of Sotheby, Park, Bernet Galleries appraised the piece in order that we might offer it for sale. The Museum of Fine Arts, which had previously expressed interest, was contacted and the transaction was executed in March, 1980.

The \$6,500 which was received will be placed into a special fund for the care of artifacts and the purchase of new exhibit areas. These monies will not go into the current fund drive, or the general working funds of the Society.

The Bookcase/China closet, which once belonged to the daughter of Alexander Hamilton, is now where it can be studied, cared for, and properly appreciated. Miss Adelaide Milton deGroot gave the piece in 1955 and we are sure that she would be most pleased with its new location.

REPAIRS AND RESTORATION OF JUDSON HOUSE

Work has started on this year's program at the Captain David Judson House. Complete repairs and repainting of the thirty-two windows have begun. The first three or four windows are completed. The first is the window immediately to the left of the back door. The others are the next windows facing the Museum -- all on the first floor. I am sure you will approve of the work being carried out by Jack Wardman and Howard Smith. Please come and see our work.

The other two portions of the project -- painting of the Judson House is expected to be done in May and the repairs of the front sill will be started on October 1. The latter date will force closing our showing of the Judson House and Museum a month earlier than usual; that is September 30 instead of October 31.

This work on the Judson House is being carried out with the support of a \$10,000 grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic Development and the Connecticut Committee for the Restoration of Historical Assets. Additional money needed for the Judson House project will come from our 1979 - '80 Fund Drive.

Our Fund Drive is also being used for repairs and remodeling of the Museum. Work already completed include the replacement of the porch floor and installation of new guard railings, the roof gutters and re-arrangements of bookcases and cabinets on the lower level of the Museum to afford more work space. Work remaining to be done in the next few months is repainting of the outside walls and relocation of the lower floor lighting fixtures. This work is being done under the supervision of Howard Smith, chairman of our building committee.

If you have not yet contributed to the 1979 - '80 Fund Drive or if you wish to add to your previous contribution, please do so soon so we can assure completion of our much needed repairs and restoration at the Judson House and Museum.

TWO REVISED SOCIETY BROCHURES

We are enclosing copies of our two newly revised brochures entitled "Captain David Judson House c. 1750" (yellow) and "Captain David Judson House and Catherine B. Mitchell Museum" (blue). Please read them and pass them on to friends urging them to visit the House and Museum, to attend our membership meetings, and to join our Society. I can personally vouch for the fact that it will enrich their lives.

See you on May 16,
David C. Wiggin
President

P.S. From Barbara Olsen and Judy Kurmay:

All docents and members who have reservations for tour and luncheon at the Decorator Showhouse of the Junior League of Greater Bridgeport are requested to meet at the Burr Homestead, 739 Old Post Road, Fairfield at 10:00 A.M., Wednesday, May 14. The Burr Homestead is just west of the Fairfield Town Hall and the Fairfield Historical Society office. Plan your own car-pooling.