

The Stratford Historical Society

Box 382, Stratford, Connecticut 06497

Telephone 378-0630



Judson House, 967 Academy Hill, Built C1750
and Catharine B. Mitchell Museum, 1958

May, 1983

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1983 at 8:00 PM
at the STRATFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Main Street.

Hiram Tindall, our Program Chairman, has arranged a fine lecture entitled American Folk Art Today to be given by Martha Scott, art critic and museum curator. Focusing on painting, woodcarving, and other sculptural forms, the lecture will include Edward Hicks, Ammi Phillips, Grandma Moses, Miles Carpenter, and the Reverend Howard Finster.

According to Mrs. Scott: You don't need a weather vane to tell which way the wind is blowing in the American folk art market. Folk art has never been more popular with the public, collectors, and museums. What is loosely termed American folk art is marked at its best by an originality and highly personal vision. It speaks for a society trying to define its times and does so with great charm and spontaneity, in both the 19th and 20th centuries. Yes, there is a flourishing folk art today.

Mrs. Scott, who lives in Easton, is one of Connecticut's foremost art critics and art historians. She was an art history major at Smith College and took her graduate degree at NYU Institute of Fine Arts. She has lectured extensively and presented art seminars at the Silvermine Guild and the Aldrich Museum. As Curator of Education at the Aldrich Museum, she has written and directed the ARTREACH programs which take art history slide lectures into Fairfield County high schools. Mrs. Scott's art criticism can be read in the Bridgeport Sunday Post, Art New England, and Arts Magazine.

Judson House has already welcomed approximately 50 visitors on Wed., Sat., or Sundays, in addition to several classes of children both from Stratford and out-of-town. The season has begun with a burst of enthusiasm which we hope will continue! Have YOU visited YOUR historic house and museum within the past five years? Please make every effort to do so this year. It is really worth your time!

It seems to those of us who keep track that only a small percentage of our membership actually visits Judson House. Please come! See what your dues help to support! I'm sure you'll be most pleased.

(Over)

THE CONNECTICUT LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES will be meeting in Stratford on June 4. Representatives from many of Connecticut's historical societies will be welcomed by our Society at the Baldwin Center for two lectures and a visit to Judson House. (The program for the meeting is enclosed elsewhere in this newsletter.) Members of the Stratford Historical Society are invited and urged to attend this important meeting. It should be a most interesting day! The last time the League was here was in 1973. Let's hope for good weather. Please come to welcome our visitors.

We will need volunteers to be in Judson House from approximately 3:00 to 5:00pm. You do not need to know how to give tours of the house, just be in the rooms as visitors take a walk-through tour. If you can help, please return form #1 at the end of this letter.

EXHIBITS--Coinciding with the opening of our season and in time for the Connecticut League of Historical Societies meeting, Einar Larson and Alma Fowler have mounted a marvelous exhibit of Stratford artifacts of the late Victorian era (circa 1880). A printed explanation of the exhibit should be ready shortly, but the exhibit awaits your perusal. Einar and Alma have devoted countless hours to this triple exhibit, and it shows! Be sure to see it soon.

**Following all of the preceding good news, here is some not-so-good news.

ASSISTANT GUIDE--Beginning in July, we will need a new Assistant Guide for Judson House and the museum on Saturdays and Sundays. Peggy Bayer, who has given us so much of her time, will be leaving the position. The requirements of and salary for the job are available from Judy Kurmay, 45 Alexandra Dr., Stratford (378-8025) or Carol Lovell, 5365 Main St., Stratford (375-3569).

This position must be filled in order for us to continue to keep Judson House open to the public (and membership) on weekends. Jean Wilcoxson, our Head Guide, cannot possibly handle visitors single-handedly. Please, please consider giving some time--even for one of the two days--on a regular basis.

HOST/HOUSTESS--Our chairperson, Maryann Grandchamp, has had to leave the position. Could YOU do some telephoning and scheduling of people to greet visitors and collect admissions from 12:00 to 3:00 pm on Wed., Sat., and Sun. between now and Nov. 1? It is a perfect opportunity for someone who is at home for any length of time.

If you have already indicated a day when you would serve at Judson House, please let us know again. Our records have become confused. Use form #2 at the end of this letter for this second notice to us and for additional days when you will help.

**I know that you really do read this newsletter. Many kind comments regarding it have come my way, for which I am truly grateful. Your response to our 1984 calendar idea has been overwhelming! WE REALLY NEED YOUR HELP NOW! Please respond by volunteering to chair the Host/Hostess committee or be a host/hostess on a day of your choice at Judson House or assume the position of Assistant Guide. This is a most critical time for our Society!

**Back to the good news:

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE contributions received by Velmore Spamer, Assistant Treasurer, are:

In memory of:

Harold V. Bailey

Mabel Nettleton (Mrs. Rexford)

In thanks for the recovery
of Todd Lovell

Given by:

Rec Tec, Inc.
Sidney W. Bailey, Jr.
John, Deborah and
Joy Fridrick

Einar and Lillian Larson

Selma and Irving Dobkin

ANTIQUÉ SHOW AND SALE--In spite of terrible weather our Antique Show was a success as usual. Thanks to all of you for your marvelous support and various contributions of goods and time. The following is from Hiram Tindall, Co-chairman of the Society's booth.

Each year, when donations are received for the Antique Show, it is the policy to retain any rare or unusual items which would enhance the Society's collection. This year such items were received from: Mr. & Mrs. Richard F. Blake (Milford), an early milk can with original wooden stopper and applied copper monogram, a milk funnel, and a milk pail with strainer; Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Canfield (Stratford), an early (circa 1870) circular tin bath tub with seating depression and soap holder; Miss Elinor Varney (Stratford), an early small curling iron for "bangs" and an ink scraper with sterling silver handle. These gifts add greatly to our collection. Many thanks to the donors.

If anyone has chairs, tables, chests/trunks or small items of furniture in need of repair we would be pleased to have them donated. This year chairs which volunteers refinished and re-seated, repaired and refinished were an excellent source of income.

Give Hy Tindall a call (874-1819) and he will pick them up at once and get his committee to work on them.

CURATOR--A new position of Curator has been approved by the Governing Board. Hiram Tindall will be Acting Curator until Sept. 1 when he will assume the position of Curator.

NATIONAL HELICOPTER MUSEUM--will hold a meeting on June 12. Sergei Sikorsky, son of Igor Sikorsky, will speak on the first flight of the V-S 300 in Stratford. Place of the meeting is indefinite at this time. Members of the Helicopter Museum will receive further details by mail. Other interested persons are requested to check the newspaper for information.

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1984 CALENDAR--The response to the calendar idea for 1984 has been so positive that the committee is proceeding with publication. The price has been set at \$4.00 per calendar plus \$1.00 for postage. We would hope that Stratford people could pick up their orders at a General Meeting or at Judson House, in order to avoid postage costs. Out-of-town orders for more than one calendar will have to have the postage determined and billed at the time of mailing.

If you wish to order, please enclose your check (payable to Stratford Historical Society) with Response Form #3 at the end of this letter. Please be advised that you will not be listed as having placed an order unless you have sent a check. The previous forms were only declarations of intent and have not been considered orders. Mail your order and your check now.

Think of this calendar as a fine gift: birthday, Christmas, etc. Order several. You'll love them!

Another gift idea is fresh from the press: LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE: JULY, 1879 contains an article entitled "Stratford-on-the-Sound", sixteen pages of words, marvelously illustrated with many engravings. This article has been reproduced by the Society and is contained in a photocopy of the original magazine cover in a close approximation of the original color.

This is a fine example of high Victorian prose. It's great fun to read and deserves a place in the home of each of our members (next to your copy of Wm Howard Wilcoxson's "History of Stratford", perhaps?)

Copies are available at \$3.00 per copy plus \$1.00 postage. We'll use the same mailing procedure described in the above calendar article. Again, please find the form at the end of this letter. (#4)

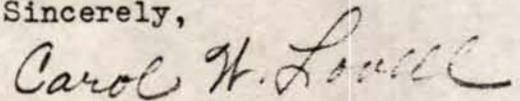
And, even though I feel that I've done enough selling, there is one more item of which you should be aware. The Society has acquired a copy of Wm. Howard Wilcoxson's "History of Stratford, 1639-1939". The rare-book dealer from which it was purchased reduced the price from \$95 to \$85 to the Society. It is now offered for sale at that same \$85 price.

The persons on my list-to-purchase this book have not responded to my informing them of the copy's availability. Therefore, it is offered to anyone who wishes to purchase it--plus postage to be determined. Please use the proper form (#5) and enclose a check payable to Stratford Historical Society. First check received buys the book. All others will be returned to sender.

**There was much to tell you this month. Thank you for your interest and patience. Please use as many of the enclosed five response forms as you wish. We do so appreciate your involvement.

**Don't forget Martha Scott's lecture on American Folk Art--Friday, May 20, 1983. 8:00 pm.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Todd B. Lovell, Pres.