



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

The Stratford Historical Society

Box 382, Stratford, Connecticut 06497
Telephone 378-0630

September, 1984
59th Annual Meeting

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING FRIDAY SEPT. 28, 1984 at 8:00 P. M.
at the STRATFORD METHODIST CHURCH, MAIN STREET, STRATFORD.

Following a brief business meeting, which will include the election of officers for the new year, Lewis Knapp, a former president of the Society will present a program entitled Stratford Schools: Century of Change. Do you recall Sedgewick School? Remember Professor Sedgewick? What was our first modern school? Why do Garden and Nichols Schools look alike? What disaster struck on February 21, 1921?

Past president Lew Knapp has turned up many old photographic plates in our Wilcoxson photo collection, and converted them into slides. Together they tell the story of the evolution of our school system from the one room schoolhouse to our modern brick schools. Lew will show us these slides, and tell the story, from the days when all our state statutes were kept in every schoolhouse to the establishment of our present system, including hectic battles of the citizenry and the school board seventy years ago. He will show us old booklets, old newspapers—even the book of state statutes—to authenticate his story.

This promises to be an interesting program for all and especially to those involved (past and present) in our educational system on both sides of the desk. Bring a friend (perhaps one from your school days) and enjoy the evening with us.

In conjunction with photography of old Stratford our 1985 Calendars, based on William Howard Wilcoxson's collection, are now available. These calendars, when collected over the years, will provide an intriguing look at Stratford's past. You may pick up a copy at Judson House any Wednesday, Saturday, or Sunday from 11 a. m. to 4 p. m. They may also be purchased at Ornoque Orchards, Hamilton's Pharmacy, the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall, Catalano's, Colonial Square Art Shop, Sterling House, Steve's Market, Westshore Market, and Pineapple Junction. We thank these stores for their support of our Society. If you wish to order by mail, there is an order form at the end of the newsletter. Our thanks to the group headed by Bob Burns and assisted by Elden Dustin, Don Fowler, Lew Knapp, Einar Larson, Carol Lovell, and Joe Moore for this remembrance of Stratford's past.

This is the end of our 1983-84 year, Perhaps it is a convient time to sum up our Societie's position financially. While your support is always vital to the Society, it is especially so now. If we are to maintain our tax exempt status at least one-third of our budget must come from any combination of gifts, grants, contributions, membership fees, admissions, or sales. Also less than one-third of our budget can come from gross investment income. For 1983 the Society received 31.2% of its support from the latter. While we are re-orienting our portfolio somewhat toward growth as opposed to income, your support of the varied projects of the Society (calendars, membership renewal, raffle of the quilt) help to produce a balanced and tax exempt budget.

Kay Moore, Membership Chairman, will be mailing out renewal notices this month. While the amounts for different categories are stated on the envelope, any donation above the amount specified would be most welcome. You may renew your membership at the Sept. 28th meeting or by mail.

The raffle of the Eighteenth Century Design Quilt was a success. Bonnie Paradise, chairman, had the pleasure of working with twenty four ladies who gave a total of 259 volunteer hours. Under the direction and guidance of Paula Russell they marked, cut, stitched, and quilted a beautiful queen size quilt. Through the efforts of the many who not only helped in the construction of the quilt but the ticket sales, and those who purchased tickets, we had a total success. The one thousand tickets were sold. The quilt was won by Mr. John Fasavella of Nichols. A special thank you to the following who so graciously gave of their time and talent:

Mrs. Eleanor Anton	Mrs. Neil Kelly
Mrs. Russell Applegate	Ms. Jane Lafferty
Mrs. Jeffery Babey	Mrs. Adelaide Langbein
Mrs. Joyce Bradbury	Mrs. Joseph Laput
Mrs. Peter Dahl	Mrs. Russell Lanz
Mrs. Robert Herb	Mrs. Todd Lovell
Ms. Margaret Jacaruso	Mrs. Elizabeth Martin
Mrs. Morton Judd	Mrs. James McCormack

Mrs. Joseph Moore
Mrs. Michael Cross
Mrs. May Phillips
Mrs. Donald Powers
Mrs. Homer Rawson
Mrs. Paula Russell
Mrs. Fred Wilcoxson
Mrs. Richard Slater

Our Judson House Grounds have benefitted substantially from gifts to the Book of Remembrance. Ms. Susan Radel and the family and friends of Mr. Harold Bailey generously contributed toward the maintainence and improvement of the gardens and grounds. An automatic sprinkling system was installed this Spring along the eastern border of our property. The newly planted bushes and shrubs in this area are thriving. A small apple orchard has also been started. Populated with Roxbury Russets, it typifies the eighteenth century pratice of every household having its own fruit trees. Apples were a staple item of the diet in the form of apple-sauce, apple pie, fried apples, dried apples, etc. Our capable committees that deal with the grounds and gardens would appreciate any contribution toward their upkeep and improvement. There is a special need for laurel bushes and hemlocks.

The herb garden by the kitchen door needs a winter home (just a plant at a time). If you have a spare sunny spot-just enough room for some sage,

rosemary, lavender, or lemon balm-please call Helen Chagares (378-2997) or Bessie Burton (378-0717). This will save us starting the herbs from seed each year.

With the Fall season upon us, can leaves be far behind? Bill Reid, Grounds Chairman, has volunteered to organize a day or two of leaf raking. Please call him (378-6226) so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

For the Book of Remembrance Velmore Spamer, Assistant Treasurer, reports that the following contributions have been received since the last newsletter:

<u>In Memory Of:</u>	<u>Given By</u>
Mr. Benjamin Kelman	Mr. and Mrs. Todd Lovell
Mrs. Emma Chadwick	Ms. Jane Lafferty

While I have made a plea for financial support; the support in time and talent has been truly overwhelming for many years in many areas. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, the Accessions and Inventory committees have reassessed our entire clothing/textile collection. They volunteered over 812 hours. Our thanks to Mrs. Robert Cumpstone, Mrs. Irving Dobkin, Mrs. Donald Fowler, Mrs. Marion Herb, Mrs. Elizabeth Hanusovsky, and Mrs. Todd Lovell.

The focus of all our volunteer efforts, whether it be in the form of monetary donations, many hours assessing over fifty boxes of clothing, weeding the gardens on a hot day, or putting a quilt together is the care and exhibition of artifacts relating to Stratford's history. I guess our biggest artifact is Judson House. Another artifact of Stratford's past is the Putnam Chapel (1844). A group of concerned people (many of which are members of our Society) are involved in a restoration/renovation of this 138 year old building. Please contact either Velmore Spamer, President at 121 ~~Hungtun~~ Rd., Stratford, or George C. Lay, Secretary at 85 Chapel St., Stratford, if you wish to become further involved with this project.

As you may recall in November, 1980 Mr. Dixon Merkt spoke to our Society on decoys. He has just written and had published the biography, SHANG. It is the first biography to document the life and work of the remarkable Charles E. "Shang" Wheeler (1872-1949), whose prize winning decoys set a standard of excellence equalled by few and surpassed by none. Dixon Merkt is a native of Connecticut who grew up hunting, fishing, and exploring the shores of Long Island Sound. In the early 70's he began collecting Connecticut decoys and encountered many carvers, sportsmen, and collectors who had known "Shang" Wheeler. Countless conversations, taped interviews, and research in local newspaper files, libraries, and the State archives have culminated in SHANG. Merkt has written numerous articles on Connecticut decoy carvers, was curator of the exhibition JOEL BARBER: COLLECTOR AND CARVER, and is a member of Shelburne Museum's Decoy Advisory Board.

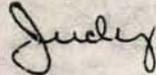
Copies of this very fine book are available for \$35.00 (inc. tax) from Todd Lovell at the H. C. Lovell Hardware and Equipment Co., Inc., 2419 Main Street., Stratford, 06497. To date the book is not available in bookstores. This would make a wonderful Christmas gift.

Listed below are the dates of meeting for the coming 1984-85 Society year. All meeting will be held at the Stratford Methodist Church, Main Street, Stratford at 8 p. m. I look forward to seeing you on September 28 for Stratford Schools: A Century of Change.

- Friday, Sept. 28, 1984
- Friday, Nov. 16, 1984 (to be held at Christ Episcopal Church)
- Friday, Jan. 25, 1985
- Friday, March 15, 1985
- Friday, May 17, 1985

Our Antique Show has been scheduled for Saturday, March 23, 1985 at the Baldwin Center.

Sincerely,



Judith M. Kurmay
(Mrs. F. Paul Kurmay)

1985 Calendar

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

The cost of the Calendar is \$4.00 each or \$5.00 each if mailed.
All mail orders should be addressed to:

Stratford Historical Society
Box 382
Stratford, Ct. 06497