



Town Settled 1639

Society Organized 1921

## The Stratford Historical Society

Box 382, Stratford, Connecticut 06497  
Telephone 378-0630

Judson House, 967 Academy Hill, Built 1750  
and Catharine B. Mitchell Museum, 1958

November 1992

**NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Friday, November 20, 1992--8:00PM  
Christ Episcopal Church  
2000 Main St., Stratford

### NATIVE AMERICAN EASTCOAST HISTORY

Johnette "Peggy" LaConte, a member of the Schaghticoke Tribe, will present a slide talk on the subject of Powwows and the Schaghticoke Reservation in Connecticut.

A Storyteller of the Schaghticoke tribe, Peggy will speak on the use of Stratford land by Native Americans as well as presenting traditional stories.

Displays of Native baskets and artifacts will be presented.

Peggy LaConte comes to us through the auspices of the Institute of Native American Studies in Washington, Connecticut (formerly the American Indian Archeological Institute).

All programs are open to the public. Bring a non-member with you.

Refreshments will be served following the program.

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### CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Plan to do some of your Christmas shopping at the November meeting.

We have just received a supply of postcard folders which have reproductions of early Stratford post cards. There is an 1894 view of Stratford Center, with a trolley car -- a 1925 picture of Lordship's wide sandy beach complete with bathing beauties, and a view of Paradise Green, a triangle formed by unpaved roads.

The folder of seven cards sells for \$3.00+ \$.75 postage (if mailed).

There will also be copies of the Stratford Cookbook and In Pursuit of Paradise.

There are colored reproductions of the Judson Coat of Arms available for \$15.00.

JUDSON HOUSE VISITORS COME FROM NEAR AND FAR

During this summer season Judson House visitors came from eighteen (18) states and three foreign countries. Ohio, Texas and California led with the most visitors (after Connecticut).

In addition to these, there were visitors from New York, Washington, Pennsylvania, Florida, Virginia, New Hampshire, Michigan, Tennessee, New Jersey, Delaware, Vermont, Illinois, Alabama, Utah and Colorado.

There were several from most states. Seven visitors were from England, Canada and Holland.

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BUILDING FUND MEMORIALS

Given by

Mrs. Glenn Beach Halliday  
M/M Joseph A. Fry  
M/M Elden Dustin  
Mrs. Lillian Larson

In Memory of

Beatrice Beach Lovell  
Joseph Moore  
Joseph Moore  
Einar Larson and  
Donald Fowler

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BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

Given by

M/M Hiram Tindall  
Mrs. Lillian Larson  
Donald Calkins  
Mrs. Catherine Lawrence  
Mrs. Donald Fowler  
M/M Vincent Hardy  
Mrs. Velmore Spamer  
Miss Jane Lafferty

In Memory of

Joseph Moore  
Joseph Moore

Mrs. Pearl Stock, In Honor of  
Anniversary of

M/M Irving Dobkin

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FROM PRESIDENT VINCENT HARDY

Catherine Lawrence, Society Historian, would like to hear from you about your memories of 'Old Stratford'. Former President Hildreth Winton shares his memories on the attached sheet.

Sincerely,

*Vincent L. Hardy*

Vincent Hardy, President

## STRATFORD MEMORIES

There was an admirable self-sufficiency about the early settlers of Stratford. Many families owned a wood lot in Putney or Oronoque, and a few acres in the great salt meadows where they harvested salt hay for their cattle.

While the salt hay was used mostly for bedding, or packing against the north side of the house foundation in winter it was, never-the-less, highly valued. I date myself a little when I recall the scows the Boothe Brothers, David and Stephen, kept at the point where Pecks Mill Pond empties into the river. The scows, if memory serves me, were at least forty foot long - of shallow draft - heavy wood planked bottoms caulked with oakum - square at both ends. They had to be big boats to float two horses, a mowing machine, hay rake, a few ton of hay and a crew of men. Just think of all the vagaries of nature these early farmers coped with in harvesting salt hay. Harvest time was in the summer - the hay had to be cut often by scythe for the ground would be marshy. It had to be dried in the sun, tossed or turned over, raked, stacked, loaded aboard the boats, transferred to wagons and stored in the barn. Thunder storms originating in the North West seemed to follow the river valley down and into the Sound. Rain on cured hay was tragic for even bedding had to be kept dry lest it become moldy and a hazard to livestock.

The hay scows had no mechanical means of propulsion. Diesel or gasoline motors were not available. It took an uncanny knowledge of tide and wind to scull, row or tow by row boat a heavily laden scow from one bank of the river to the other. Stand still high tide afforded but a short, precise interval at which a crossing could be made. A strong headwind could make crossing impossible.

From this distant point of time the harvesting of salt hay seems to have been an overwhelming task - yet in a horse, cow and farming era it must have been the economical thing to do. Our forbears worked hard. They took full advantage of the resources Stratford offered and they prospered.

I once heard a lecturer say that if he knew the ratio of cows to humans in a country he could quite readily tell you of the well being of the country's population. This ratio was good in Stratford in those days. They lived a sometimes stern, but wholesome good life.

Hildreth Winton