



Town Settled 1639

Society Organized 1925

## 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

November 1994

**NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Fri., December 2, 1994--8:00PM  
Christ Episcopal Church Hall  
2000 Main St., Stratford

### STRATFORD'S HISTORIC RIVER WAY Town Historian Lewis G. Knapp

For the past two years, Lewis Knapp has been researching the maritime history of our town. A list of local historic spots, prepared for the Conservation Commission, confirms that the town grew up along its shores, and that the river's edge has been the focal point for Stratford's growth since the town began.

Meanwhile, the Federal Dept. of Transportation, recognizing that the era of dominance by motor car is over, has instituted the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), to create alternate transportation routes--walking paths and bikeways. The Governor's Greenway Committee and the Housatonic Valley Assoc. have outlined the Housatonic RiverBelt Greenway to stretch from Stratford lighthouse to the Massachusetts border, and Stratford has a federal grant to plan its route through town.

At our December 2 meeting, Lew Knapp will guide us along a prospective route, first laid out by the Conservation Commission in 1974, and show us slides of the historical events that made our river so important to our history. See the first lighthouse, early aeroplanes, the VS 300, Oldfield Rock, the Shakespeare Theatre, the Housatonic Club, Captain Bond's Clubhouse, the oyster industry, White's Shipyard, Ben Franklin's milestones, the Washington Bridge, the longest covered bridge in the state, launching of 4,000 ton freighters, Brewster's (Judson's) Pond, Peck's (Wheeler's) Mill, the Shelton Street Railway Company trolley wreck, the hay scows, Booth's buildings, the shad fisheries, Oronoque, and the route across the Farmill to Shelton.

Follow the path our ancestors walked along the riverfront, and gain a new perspective on one of our town's most valuable assets--to our past and to our future--the Housatonic River shore.

The Public is invited. Refreshments will be served.

(Over)

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IMPORTANT GIFT:

One of the most important gifts in recent years is a late 18th century map, no doubt the oldest known map of Stratford. Carl Wischan has presented it to the Society, but wishes the honor to go to John Wilson and Rachel Dorman since the map descended in the Dorman family. Before donating the map, Mr. Wischan had it professionally restored, de-acidified, matted and framed using glass that inhibits ultra violet rays.

This freehand map, attributed to Abijah Brooks, was executed in brown ink on six joined sheets of handmade paper measuring 24 by 30 1/2 inches overall. The map shows Stratford extending to the area that is now Park Ave, Bridgeport. The area shown as "North Stratford" is now Trumbull. "Saw Mill Cove" appears to be the mouth of Far Mill River. Bridges shown are "Lottery Bridge" over the Pequonnock, "Benjamin Bridge" over Yellow Mill and "Pixlees Bridge" on what is now North Ave., Bridgeport. "Great Salt Meadows and Marsh", "Nell's Island" and "Milford Beach" are other locations given.

Distances are shown as follows: "From Long Beach to Nathan Gorhams house is two miles and one half and thirty two rods", "From Nathan Gorhams house to North Stratford line is three miles and three quarters and twenty five rods".

We are indeed fortunate to have this map in our collection and will place it on permanent view in the Museum in May 1995.

Thank you, Carl Wischan!

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THINK AHEAD!

The Society owns 12 grave sites in Mountain Grove Cemetery, Bridgeport. The Cemetery charges \$800-\$1,000 per grave. Members of the Stratford Historical Society may purchase these sites at \$700 each. Call the Society at 203-378-0630 if you are interested. Be buried with P.T. Barnum, Tom Thumb and Fanny Crosby who wrote the hymn "Abide With Me".

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THANKS

to those members who included an extra gift in their annual membership renewal. These monies will be placed in the Endowment Fund.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

are included in this mailing for those persons whose dues were received at the Society before November 10. Please check to be sure that you have received the correct card. Call the Society at 203-378-0630 if you have a question.

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COMPUTERIZATION of our membership/ mailing list will be completed in time for the January 1995 Newsletter. Please check your label now and advise us if there are errors. Thank you.

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WILCOXSON'S HISTORY OF STRATFORD

We have several copies of Wilcoxson available in prices ranging from \$110 for a pristine copy to \$70 for one which is clean and has a good binding but has "rippled" pages as if it were once damp. Call or write the Society if you are interested.

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KNAPP'S "In Pursuit of Paradise", published in 1989, is available from the Society: \$32.50 plus \$3.50 shipping plus 6% state tax (\$1.95) for Connecticut residents. The companion cookbook is also available for \$8.00 plus \$1.50 shipping plus 6% state tax (\$.48). Perhaps this is a good idea for a Christmas gift!

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BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE CONTRIBUTIONS (since Sept. 20, 1994):

Given By:

In Memory Of:

M/M Todd Lovell  
M/M Hiram Tindall  
Mrs. Alma Fowler

Robert C. Dickgiesser  
"  
"

Mrs. Alma Fowler  
Frederick C. Zorn  
M/M Bruce Schow  
M/M Eugene McCarthy  
M/M David Wiggin  
Joseph Quire

Jack Wardman  
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"  
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M/M David Wiggin

Nancy Calkins

In Celebration of the 90th Birthday of  
Alma Fowler

Mrs. Joseph Moore  
Eleanore Anton  
Jane F.T. Lafferty

Margaret Jaacaruso  
M/M Paul Kurmay  
M/M David Wiggin

Next Meeting: Friday, January 27, 1995

Judith Kurmay, President

(Over)

THE STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Report of the Nominating Committee, 1994-1995

President	Mrs. Judith Kurmay
First Vice-President	Mr. Louis J. Petriell, Jr.
Second Vice-President	Mr. Lewis G. Knapp
Recording Secretary	Mrs. Joseph Moore
Corresponding Secretary	
Treasurer	Mr. Donald Calkins
Assistant Treasurer	Miss Margaret Jacaruso
Immediate Past President	Mr. Vincent Hardy

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3 Years	Mrs. Jane Claussen
2 Years	Mrs. Selma Clark
1 Year	Mrs. Catherine C. Lawrence

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Buildings	Mr. Joseph A. Fry
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Grounds/Gardens Co-Chairpersons	(Mr. Richard Hershner Mr. Vincent Hardy)
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Hospitality	(Mrs. Faye Gerarden )
Host/Hostesses	Mrs. Betty Applegate
League Delegates	(Mr. Raymond Cable Mrs. Lillian Larson Mrs. Margaret VanGieson)
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Publicity	(Mrs. Dorothy Euerle Miss Margaret Jacaruso Ms. Diane Wright)
Ways and Means Co-Chairpersons	(Mr. Stanley Ochman Mr. Robert Cumpstone Hiram Tindall)

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee:

Mr. Louis J. Petriell, Jr., Chairperson	
Mr. Lewis G. Knapp	Mr. Howard Lounsbury
Mrs. Elizabeth Applegate	Mrs. Catherine C. Lawrence
Mr. Hiram Tindall	Mrs. Carol Lovell
Mr. Vincent Hardy	Ex-Officio