
Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

A Hand on the PAST >> An Eye to the FUTURE

Volume 1 Issue 3

January 1997



A thing of beauty is a joy forever; its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness.

John Keats

Coming Event....

Keep your calendar open for our April 5, 1997, Antique Show!

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, January 31, 1997-8:00 pm

**Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street Stratford**

Touches of Tiffany Louis Comfort Tiffany in New Haven William A. Wiedersheim

Mr. William Wiedersheim, Senior Research Associate at the New Haven Colony Historical Society, will present a portrait of Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) using slides to show examples of this great American artists work in glass. The forty-five minute talk will include views of Tiffany's work in the New Haven area where he had close personal and professional ties.

Louis C. Tiffany was the most notable American contributor to the Art Nouveau style. Although he was renowned for his work in stained and iridescent glass, his accomplishments ranged from painting, architecture, and interior design to such crafts as mosaic and jewelry. He was the eldest son of Charles L. Tiffany, founder of Tiffany and Company. Uninterested in the firm, Louis took up painting, and in 1868, journeyed to Paris and to North Africa where he acquired a love for Islamic art that was to influence his later work.

Tiffany's interest in the Arts and Crafts movement led him to found the decorating firm of Louis C. Tiffany and Associated Artists in 1881; within a year it was enormously successful. Tiffany designed interiors for the White House (1882-3; removed 1904) and for New York City theaters, clubs, and private homes. His Veteran's Room (1880) in the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York City remains unchanged, as does his immense stained-glass curtain (1911) in Mexico City's Art Nouveau Palacia de Bellas Artes.

By the time of his death Tiffany's works in general were out of style. Beginning in the 1950's, however, his contribution to American culture was reborn and has steadily increased.

After Mr. Wiedersheim's presentation, you may wish to view examples of Tiffany windows by visiting the First Church Congregational in Fairfield, Connecticut. A restoration project was completed in 1983 and tours are available, whether self-guided or in the company of a parishioner, to view their eighteen glorious Tiffany windows.

The meeting is open to the public and refreshments will be served.

Deer Invades Center November 17, 1928

BELIEVE IT OR NOT. This happened right in Stratford Center shortly before 8 o'clock Tuesday morning.

Patrolman Victor Marcus was on duty near East Broadway, when a well put up deer, 'twas a buck, too, ambled down the highway between trolley cars and automobiles, and committed the unpardonable sin. The deer cut to the left of the silent cop in the center and that was too much for Marcus. He gave chase. The deer took to its heels, darted down Church Street, and plunged through a window of Packard Hall, the rear wing of the Congregational church.

Marcus kept on the trail, with Sid Dunning at his heels. They entered the church. The deer tried the plan of climbing a piano, then with Marcus on its heels made another break, but Marcus made a flying tackle and downed Mr. Deer. "Hold him, hold him," shouted Dunning. "Hold me eye," said Marcus, "I can't let go."

Others answered the SOS and Marcus, Dunning and Paul Goodell, in the latter's car took the deer to Far Mill river and turned him loose in the woods. He had a slightly cut leg and a bruised nose. But you should have seen Packard Hall!

Correction

On October 24, students and adults from Ontario, Canada toured Judson House and the Museum. We wish to acknowledge and thank Town Historian Lewis Knapp for conducting the tour.

Antique Show

April 5th, 1997 is the date for the Antique Show and it is not too early to put aside articles you wish to donate.

We are eager to receive all salable items: glassware, china, kitchen ware, rugs, pictures and picture frames, hardcover and paperback books.

The Society's office is open on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 until 1:00 if you care to drop items off or call 378-0630.

Many volunteers have worked many hours over the years to make the Antique Show a continued success. We would like to acknowledge an especially dedicated volunteer, Mrs. Joyce Slater, who for the past 35 years has been chairman of the book sale. Joyce will retire as chairman this year, it has been through her efforts that the book sale has been so successful each year.

Early American Festival

Co-Chairmen Sandy Rutkowski and Cindy Kleynowski will be forming committees and making plans for the next American Festival. Saturday, September 27th is the date.

Last year's festival was very well attended and many of the same crafts people are eager to return this year. Judson House and the Museum will be open at specified times during the day.

From Marie Peck's Diary

January 13, 1890 Mrs. Peter Curtis died from shock the last of December 1889, her daughter was married to John Wilcoxson the same week.

Whenever you observe an animal closely, you feel as if a human being sitting inside were making fun of you.

Elias Canetti

New Acquisitions

We have recently acquired two important Revolutionary War items. A Powder Horn by exchange from William Guthman, a leading dealer in military memorabilia. The Powder Horn, in excellent condition, has beautiful scrimshaw decoration including a bird, houses, intricate borders and the inscription "Abel French, Stratford, 1783." Abel French enlisted October 6, 1777 and served until 1783 under General Greene.

The second item is a Revolutionary bill from General Gold Silliman to the governor of the State of Connecticut for services of Captain Hawley. It is dated Stratford, June 18th, 1780.

We now have our first work by a Stratford Carver

A Canadian Goose has migrated back to Stratford from Arthur Hale in Hendersonville, North Carolina. The weathervane was carved in 1888 by Ben Holmes, an important Stratford decoy carver, for the newly built barn of his brother. The Holmes farm was located at Main Street and South Avenue. The store now known as Steve's Market, and located at this site, was first owned by the Holmes family.

Mr. Hale, whose mother was a Wells, has contributed many items including an antique family teapot, a portrait of a great uncle who was the last Stratford stagecoach driver, his mother's album of Stratford postcards, and a family violin played at Stratford dances.

These items will be on display at the January membership meeting.

New Exhibits

In the Spring there will be two new exhibits in the Catharine B. Mitchell Museum. Do you remember when all gentlemen and ladies wore hats? And the hats were kept in very colorful boxes? A display of period hats and hat boxes is in the planning stage.

Also, in the Dickgiesser/Viner wing a collection of 12 portraits by the artist Calvin Curtis. Lew Knapp wrote in his book "In Pursuit of Paradise"—

"Born in Stratford on July 5, 1822, from youth Calvin Curtis was determined to paint. He taught himself from instruction books and built his own palette and easel without ever having seen either. In 1841 he studied at the National Academy of Design under Daniel Huntington. He had a studio in New York until 1847, when he came home through Stratford to settle and paint in Derby and Waterbury. In 1856 he was confined to bed with a long illness, but in 1859 began to paint again. It wasn't easy; for 20 years, each brush stroke brought on pain. But he continued—in fact, he added ability in landscape painting to his skills with portraiture. Calvin Curtis lived and painted local scenes until 1893, and his portrait of President James Garfield hangs today in the White House."

Gifts

Ruth Beardsley Parker has again made a gift in memory of her father and brother T.R. Beardsley and H.R. Beardsley. Mrs. Parker established the Beardsley Fund several years ago in their memory.

Louis J. Petriel, President

*Time flies over
us, but leaves its
shadow behind.
- Nathaniel
Hawthorne*

It is all a matter of education, and we shall never have good art in our homes until the people learn to distinguish the beautiful from the ugly.

Louis C. Tiffany
(1910)

Let us make a thing of beauty
that long may live when we are gone;
Let us make a thing of beauty
that hungry souls may feast upon;
Whether it be glass or marble, music, art or poetry,
Let us make a thing of beauty to help set man's bound spirit free.

Edward Matchett

NOTE: Inclement weather is always a problem at this time of year, it will be announced on station WICC if the membership meeting must be cancelled.

Stratford Historical Society

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