
Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume III Issue 4

March 1999

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, March 26, 1999-7:30 p.m.

Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street Stratford

IGOR I. SIKORSKY, JR.

Igor I. Sikorsky, Sr.

**Russian Born American Aeronautical
Engineer and Manufacturer**

*"To invent a flying
machine is nothing;
to build it is little; to
make it fly is every-
thing."*

*Igor I. Sikorsky
1889-1972*

Igor I. Sikorsky, Jr. was born on July 20, 1929. The third son of five children, he watched the great and near great come and go in their home, Lindbergh, Andre Priester from Pan American, Rosco Turner and Captain Eddie Rickenbacker just back from his ordeal on a life raft in the Pacific among them. He attended Choate School in Wallingford and Yale University, where he received his undergraduate degree in Russian studies in 1951. He served two years in the Air Force intelligence as a lieutenant studying Soviet air power and its role in Central Europe. Thereafter, he entered Yale Law School where he graduated in 1956.

His law career included seven years as an associate and then partner with Alcorn, Bakewell and Smith. Most of his career since 1963 has been in general practice in the greater Hartford area.

Sikorsky has long been active in aviation history, serving as a founder and first Chairman of the Board of the New England Air Museum and a member of the Smithsonian Institute Council.

He frequently writes and lectures on the aviation history encompassed by his father's career spanning the beginning of flight early in 1909 through his pioneering the development of the helicopter.

The meeting is open to the public and refreshments will be served.
If the meeting is cancelled for any reason, tune to station WICC at 5 p.m.

Coming Event...
Antique Show
April 24th
New Location
Christ Church
Hall, Main St.,
Stratford, CT

The Antique Show is our major fund raiser, your donations and participation are the reason it continues to succeed.

NOTE:
We would appreciate your posting the enclosed flyer so your friends and co-workers will join us.

Message from the Vice President

Although it still feels like winter, our committees are busy getting ready for the new season. Preparations for the Antique Show in its new location, the Judson House opening, the Red, White & Blue exhibit, and our History Camp are well underway. We are also planning some interesting new projects. We hope you will join us for some of these activities.

Carol Lovell, Lew Knapp, and I have completed work on the Historical Society's "Images of America" book. Picture selections, text, and layout were all done here at the office. The book tells the story of Stratford since the beginning of photography in both pictures and words. It is scheduled to be out this summer and will be a major fund raising project for us.

John Calhoun
Vice President

Oak Tree on Academy Hill

In 1925 the Stratford League of Women Voters planted an Oak Tree on Academy Hill. A plaque under the tree reads as follows:

In Memory of Edith Hastings
Planted by the
Stratford League of Women Voters
November 1925

We are interested in learning more about Edith Hastings, and would appreciate receiving information concerning her and the League.

Raymond D. Cable

Raymond D. Cable, a longtime member of the Stratford Historical Society, died suddenly on February 10, 1999 in his home.

Ray was a historian and collector of many things. His hundreds of books covered a wide range of diversified subjects, his extensive collection of postcards imaged every town and city in the State of Connecticut. Ray loved collecting.

He was the librarian and historian at Norwalk Community College for twenty-three years and was a United States Army veteran during the Korean War. He was an enthusiastic member of the Antiquarian and Landmark Society, Trumbull Historical Society, Milford Historical Society, Connecticut Historical Society, Historic Deerfield Inc. and Secretary of Connecticut Postcard Club. He served as League Delegate to the Connecticut League of History Org., reporting to our Board and Membership.

At Ray's well attended funeral at Church of Christ Congregational in Milford, friends and family rose to pay tribute to him each in their own way. His interest and participation in the Stratford Historical Society will be missed.

Book of Remembrance

The following contributions have been made to the Book of Remembrance:

In Memory of Stanley Chayka

Given by Mrs. Donald Parker

In Memory of Claribel N. Spamer

Given by Elizabeth Birdseye Sniffen
Gullander

In Memory of Raymond D. Cable

Given by the Governing Board of the
Stratford Historical Society

Antique Show April 24, 1999

On April 24th the Stratford Historical Society will again hold the Spring Antique Show, a very popular event for many years.

Starting in 1961, Fund Raising Committee Co-Chairmen Mrs. Mabel Miller and Mrs. Harold Lovell, Sr. announced a one day sale of "This and That" for the benefit of the Society to be held at Christ Episcopal Church. It was to be the one major fund raising event of the year with proceeds to be used for much needed electrical repairs to Judson House. It was a success.

For the next thirteen years (1962-1975) this event continued to bring much needed funds to the Society through the work of many volunteers. Advertised as a "Flea Market" and held out of doors at Bunnell High School field, visitors were attracted to the wide assortment of treasures contributed by members and friends. Professional dealers participated also, and it was noted "94 wagons displayed their treasures, 1,842 persons paid admission and a handsome profit was made despite the cost of flea market management, police for parking, catering and rain insurance."

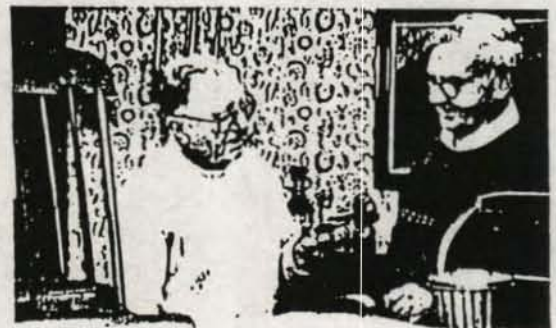
In 1976 it was decided to move indoors and the show was held at the American Legion Hall. Perhaps the Committee thought Mother Nature had cooperated in the past and as this would be a two-day sale, a move would eliminate the worry of bad weather. Then, in 1979 the American Legion became part of the renovated town library so another move had to be made and Wooster Junior High's Cafeteria was selected. This worked well until the Baldwin Center became available in 1985

where all shows have since been held.

The Show has grown over the years, because it had "something for everyone." Society members and their families worked tirelessly to make it a success year after year. It would be impossible to mention the names of all of the members and their families who worked and contributed to the success of the show, but we have to thank a special few: Hiram Tindall and Bonnie Paradise for taking charge of the Society's booth for many years, Stanley Ochman the show coordinator and Mrs. Margaret VanGeison Calkins who saw that the Baked Goods overflowed that table year after year.

Now, thirty-eight years after that first event the Antique Show will return to Christ Church Hall under co-chairmen Sandy Rutkowski and Diane Matthews. We hope to have a fine selection of items, once again donated by our members, as well as selections by dealers. Please look through your attic, basement, workshed, wherever and send us your contributions. Jewelry, glassware, china, kitchenware, pictures and picture frames, hardcover and paperback books, brass and tinware, rugs, bric-brac, baskets, etc. Bring your articles and let us offer them, some browser is sure to find your item irresistible and will take it home. If you need items picked up please call the office, 378-0630, Tuesday or Thursday from 9am to 2pm.

Antique is applied to that which has survived from the past.



Stan Ochman and Hiram Tindall

Collectibles are not just beautiful objects they are wise investments.

An Old Cradle

Kissing one's wife on a Sunday was a highly improper act in the American Colonies in the year 1648, for which one Moses Wheeler was banished from New Haven. It's an ill wind which blows nobody any good, however, and by Moses' punishment the Stratford Historical Society gained a fine old cradle.

It happened this way, Moses, whose human "error" gives one a friendly feeling toward him, returned to New Haven on a certain Sunday in 1648 after a visit of several months in England. He was indecorous enough to embrace his own wife immediately upon his arrival in town, to the scandal of the town. A vote was taken, and Moses was forced to pack up his bag and baggage, take his beloved wife by the hand, and leave the town which was so shocked by his impetuous manner.

Stratford, as a consequence, became the home of the Wheeler family, and the fine old cradle, once owned by Moses Wheeler, and occupied by his children, came almost two centuries after Moses' famous sin, into the possession of the Historical Society.

It is of some interest to know that Moses ran the ferry over the Housatonic River for many years after he settled in Stratford, and one is glad that history, with the perspective lent by time, has reversed the judgment on the hero's noted kiss!

NOTE: The above article which appeared in the Bridgeport Post many years ago may not be historically correct. It is believed Moses Wheeler was in Stratford as early as 1639. However, the cradle mentioned above did belong to his family and is on

Ice Gone From River

**Stratford Times-Feb. 26, 1915
For First Time In Many Years
Housatonic Is Open
In February**

For the first time in many years the Housatonic river is practically clear of heavy ice and is open for navigation in the month of February. The usually mild winter has broken up and melted the ice in the river except above the dam at Derby and a barge load of coal will be towed up to that place within a day or two, thus establishing a record for river traffic in this season.

The Red Ball Line tug Abram P. Skidmore arrived in Bridgeport Wednesday with two boats, one consigned to Bridgeport and the other for Derby, the latter being the first cargo boat to go up the river in the month of February in years. With customary winter freez-ups, the usual plan does not provide for transportation above Stratford until about the middle of March and sometimes later.

Already the shellers and fishermen near the mouth of the Housatonic are getting their power boats ready for business and a few of the motor workboats are already in commission on the river. Waterfront men have remarked on the early clearing of the ice as it is no unusual sight at this time of year to see the Housatonic frozen solid from bank to bank. They admit, of course that there is a possibility of another cold spell closing the river but a protracted period of it is not anticipated. The appearance of a tug in the river at this time breaks a precedent of long standing and it is likely that from now on boats for Shelton and Derby will continue to come right along as the weather permits.



COMING EVENTS

ANTIQUE SHOW AND SALE -April 24th

Christ Episcopal Church Hall- 2000 Main St., Stratford, CT

Co-Chairmen-Sandy Rutkowski and Diane Matthews

DOCENT TRAINING - March 9 through April 13 - Tues. 9:30-11 am

JUDSON HOUSE OPENING-May 15th

Wed., Sat., Sun., 11am-last tour starting at 3pm

CHILDREN'S HISTORY CAMP-July 12th-16th

EARLY AMERICAN FESTIVAL-September 25-rain date October 2nd

Jurored Crafters and the Colonel Flowers Regiment

THANK YOU:

The Society now has a new Color Copying machine in the office thanks to a grant from the Gas Pipeline Fund.

A bequest of \$440 was received from the Estate of Mrs. Alma Fowler

Ruth Beardsley Parker recently made a gift to the Beardsley Fund in memory of her father Theodore R. Beardsley and brother Howard F. Beardsley.

Stratford Historical Society

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U.S. Postage

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