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# Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

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Volume VIII Issue 1

SEPTEMBER 2003

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Capt. David Judson House c 1750  
Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

## NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday September 12, 2003 - 7:30pm

Christ Episcopal Church 50  
2000 Main Street, Stratford

## WALTER MATIS

### Revolutionary War Marine Re-Enactor

accompanied by

### Adam Drenkard and Matthew Gutierrez

This country cannot afford to be materially rich and spiritually poor.

John F. Kennedy  
State of the  
Union - 1963

Walter Matis, guest speaker at our next membership meeting, is a transplant from Fairfield to Stratford. After spending most of his life in Fairfield he moved to Stratford a few years ago with his wife, daughter and niece.

Since 1987, Walter has been a re-enactor usually portraying a colonial marine. During the revolutionary war marines were used to board enemy ships. Tonight Walter will tell us about the duties of a colonial marine, show us his uniform and other accouterments, and talk about life aboard ship.

During the summer History Camp Walter serves as a re-enactor and teaches the campers close-order drilling. He is a participant at the Early American Festival each Fall and is a great source of information about colonial days and the revolution.

Walter is very eager to have those present at the meeting ask questions and will be joined by two of our recent History Camp graduates. Adam Drenkard is a Freshman at Bunnell High School and Matthew Gutierrez is a senior at Fairfield Preparatory School. Both young gentlemen are active Junior Society members.



**The Meeting is open to the public and refreshments will be served.  
Meeting starts promptly at 7:30 - Bring a Friend.**

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## Dave Guion President

Have you ever visited the Society office? If you have, you undoubtedly noticed we are all a bunch of "old Fogey's"-all above 60 and some into their ninety's. This is not by our choice. We have found it almost impossible to get younger people (20-60) to volunteer here. We realize that the demand of children and jobs leave little time for volunteerism.

On the bright side, we have a cadre of Summer Camp graduates who have been arduously working on a project which will allow the handicapped and others to take a "tour" of the Judson House through viewing a video, complete with voice over and written captions.

Additionally, the young members help out by doing some of the chores we "old fogey's" are physically unable to do. Our thanks to these young, energetic people. They bring a breath of fresh air into our Society lives.

But please remember, young or old, we welcome any help from volunteers who have time and interest in Stratford and its history.

## An Artists Colony Visits The Judson House

The summer season found two groups of local artists touring the Judson House and sketching the front of the house. This is not that unusual an occurrence, however this group ranged in ages 5 to 13 years old. The Little Red School House of Art and Music brought their summer camp students to the Historical Society for an introduction to local history and a field study for their house sketches. The children's artwork will be on display in the museum during the month of September. Please stop by and enjoy their galleria moment.

One of the students in the art class was our own Liz Trojanowski, a member of our Junior society. Liz helped give the house tour to her art class.

## Todd Lovell 1st Vice President

The summer has been very busy in spite of the heavy rains. The Historical Society grounds have benefited greatly. The garden and lawn are in great shape due to fertilizer, rain and the TLC of Dolores Hocht.

History Camp in July was an outstanding success thanks to Diane Matthews and her wonderful staff. The 24 campers made up the largest group we have had. They were great! Thanks to all the volunteers and a "thumbs up" to the participating Juniors.

A new 10' x 20' storage shed has arrived and will be used as a repository for artifacts currently housed in the hot/dry attic of Judson House. This is also a needed space for the time when the roof is replaced.

We are in the process of reviewing bids on a new cedar shingle roof for the Judson House. It will be a major undertaking and very expensive, well into five figures. Would the members please be generous with a tax-deductible donation to the Society? Every dollar donated is one less we will be forced to borrow to complete this costly necessity. Make checks to SHS Roof Fund. You will receive a letter of thanks and a confirmation of your donation which you may use in preparation of your annual tax report.

Please come and visit your society. Big things have happened and will continue to happen with your support.

## Contributions

The Society wishes to thank the following for their contributions in the amount of \$300 each which covers the original cost of two lighted glass cases in the museum.

Plaques will be placed as follows:

Given By.

MARY SILLIMAN CHAPTER NSDAR  
organized January 1894

Daughters of the American Revolution  
In Memory Of

SALVADOR RICHARD BASSO

Donated By  
His Loving Family

**REMINDER!!!!**  
2003-2004 Dues are  
now due.  
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We have one display  
case still available in  
the gallery area of the  
museum. For a dona-  
tion of \$300 a plaque  
will be affixed with  
wording of your  
choice.

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September 20th  
Early American  
Fall Festival  
A great time for the  
entire family  
10am - 5pm  
\$5.00 adults  
\$4.00 seniors &  
students

\$2.00 children 12-6  
5 and under free  
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The office is open  
Tuesday & Thursday  
9am to 2pm  
All are welcome  
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## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

We are once again asking for a mail-in ballot for the annual election of officers. Please complete and return the ballot before October 15, 2003. Or come to the September meeting if you wish to nominate a candidate or work on a committee.

The slate of officers for 2003-2004.

PRESIDENT	David Guion
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	Todd Lovell
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	Gary Jacopian
RECORDING SECRETARY	Diane Wright
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	Marie Blake
TREASURER	Robert Hoctor
ASSISTANT TREASURER	Kay Moore
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT	John Calhoun

### DIRECTORS

2001-2004	Sandy Rutkowski
2002-2005	Lewis Knapp
2003-2006	Margaret Jacaruso
<del>2004-2007</del>	<del>Frances Sloane</del>

*2003-2006*

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Accessions/Exhibits	Carol Lovell
Building/Grounds	Vincent Hardy/ Todd Lovell
Education	Diane Matthews
Finance	John Calhoun
Hospitality	Mary Hardy/Janet Jacopian/Shirley Balascak
Hosts & Hostesses	
Library	Gloria Duggan
Membership	Dolores Hoctor
Nominating	Gary Jacopian
Program	Marie Blake
Publicity	Margaret Jacaruso

### Nominating Committee:

Gary Jacopian, Chairman	Dolores Hoctor
Marie Blake	Catherine Lawrence
John Calhoun	Diane Matthews
Dorothy Euerle	Kay Moore

## Another Fun Filled Week for History Camp

Our History Camp week was our biggest and best yet. This year our camp program had several more adult and teen helpers and we were able to increase our enrollment to 24 students. As our largest group to complete the history program we were delighted to have an extraordinarily nice group of campers. The week was filled with fun facts about colonial life and in depth tours of each room in the Judson House. In addition to our daily staff we had visits from a Connecticut Marine reenactor and a modern day spinner. The final day of the program found all campers dressed in colonial attire and ready to give tours of the Judson House to their friends and families.

A very big thank you to our staff and special guests:

Allison Comer	Adam Drenkard	Ms Joanne Dimenno
Mr. David Guion	Ms Lyn Kubina	Matthew Gutierrez
Mr. Walter Matis	Mrs. Diane Matthews	Samantha Matthews
Arla Mojcik	Mrs. Carolyn Ross	Kerri Rutkowski
Mrs. Sandy Rutkowski		Mrs. Pam Strasser

We would like to welcome all the campers and their families to the society and look forward to their joint participation in up coming events:

Sarah Lovell and Family	Stephanie, Christopher Puleo and Family
Victoria Regensburger and Family	Holly Velleca and Family
Marissa, Chelsea Barstow and Family	Kase Storey and Family
Emily Buzzanca and Family	Hannah, Gretchen Pancak and Family
Katlyn, Sarah Freddino and Family	Mollie Westbrook and Family
Haley, Allison Wallace and Family	Morgan Silva and Family
Teresa Wirtemberg and Family	Julia Hannigan and Family
Meghan Donnelly and Family	Jamie Kader and Family
Kathryn Carroll and Family	Kelly Fitzpatrick and Family



## What ARE those Teenagers Doing In The Office Every Thursday??

The Historical Society Office has been filled with a buzz and occasional bursts of giggles throughout the summer. The older portion of our Junior Society has begun a tremendous community service project. A group of teenagers, some of whom have been involved with our society for six years or more, are meeting several needs of ours with one major undertaking.

The volunteers are scanning a collection of the society's, and town historian Mr. Lew Knapp's, slides onto the computer while writing captions for each image. The CD presentation will be used for visitors with physical limitations as well as being available for local school history research projects. With a goal to complete the first two sections by this fall, the teens are well under way and have already completed scanning and captioning the Judson House Tour. The Introduction to Stratford is in process.

The size of this project is practically endless due to the amount of information our collections contain. It is possible to create sections on almost any topic connected to our town history. The current group of teens know that this will be an on-going project and as the younger Junior members reach their high school years new recruits will be added.

We are privileged to have a wonderful technical resource available to our teen team. Jeffrey dePascale, of Karbonstudios.com, has donated much of his time and knowledge along with the use of some of his own equipment, to the juniors. He will be handling the coordination and design of the final project. We are very grateful for all of his assistance thus far.

The group will be looking for funding for portions of the project through grants or local donations. As the project progresses, additional computer equipment and programs will be needed. Also, a computer with a large monitor screen must be available in the mus

## Early American Festival September 20, 2003

Sandy Rutkowski, Chairman of the Early American Festival, has once again arranged a great assortment of crafters and re-enactors to entertain on the grounds of Judson House on September 20th.

She promises demonstrations by a tinsmith, spinner, rug hooker, potter, quill writer and weaver along with music by The Hearthside Waits to keep the children dancing.

Re-enactor James A. Cook will be present (in kilts) to display the 1690-1840 firearms he has built, including a 1690 Doglock with 6' barrel. The Brigadier-General Delanceys Brigade, American Loyalists, will be there. This Brigade was reactivated in 1974 by individuals interested in authentically portraying one of the Provincial units of the War of the American Rebellion.

The 27th Connecticut Volunteers re-enactor group began in 1990 and quickly grew to be one of the largest reenactment units in New England. Members have recently spent time working for Turner Productions on the motion pictures "Gettysburg" and "Andersonville" also appearing in the movie "Gods and Generals."

All this and good food and Judson House tours with Junior Society guides. Bring the whole family including Gramma and Grandpa, everyone will have a fun day. There is no rain date so remember Saturday, Sept.20th, 10-5.

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eum to accommodate the needs of our guests unable to manage stairs.

The Stratford Historical Society is so fortunate to have this group of dedicated young people. As they work with our older knowledgeable members, they will be helping to preserve our town history and introducing a new format for sharing this knowledge with future generations.

The following Junior Society members working on this project are: Nikki Ashe, Adam Drenkard, Matthew Gutierrez, Samantha Matthews, Arla Mojcik, Kerri Rutkowski, Liz Trojanowski.



James A. Cook  
Montgomery's Highlanders

Now you who rhyme,  
and I who rhyme,  
Have not we sworn it,  
many a time,  
That we no more our  
verse would scrawl,  
For Shakespeare he  
had said it all !!  
R.W.Gilder -  
*The Modern Rhymers*

As a Society we feel fortunate to be able to provide information and materials to assist those who request help in their research of various topics. Leland Milstein, a student at the Hopkins School in New Haven, is a Stratford resident. Leland, accompanied by his mother, recently spent one morning going through material concerning the Shakespeare Theater for a school assignment and we were pleased to receive the following letter telling us how much information we were able to provide.

To Everyone at the Society:

"I'd like to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who helped me with my research on the Shakespeare Theater. You were all extremely helpful, and the personal stories some of you shared with me opened my eyes to aspects of the matter that I didn't encounter anywhere else. Both these personal histories and the primary source documents you helped me find were invaluable. Thanks to you all I was able to write a thirty-four page paper with over one hundred footnotes - and I received an A!

In addition to my actual research, I'd like to thank you simply for being there. The Society is a very useful, important, and interesting resource that unfortunately not enough people know about. You all were kind, funny, and helpful - in all, extremely pleasant to work and be with. So, again, thank you.

Sincerely, Leland Milstein

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## Stratford Historical Society

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**COMPUTER CORNER**  
e-mail us at:  
Judsonhousestfd@aol.com  
Fax: 378-2562

**Stratford Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting**  
October 27, 2003 - 7:00 pm  
Catharine B. Mitchell Museum  
All members of the Society are Welcome to Attend  
Please call 378-0630 for information