
Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume VIII Issue 2

January 2004



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

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Friday, January 30, 2004 - 7:30pm
Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street, Stratford

Author and Playwright
STEVEN OTFINOSKI

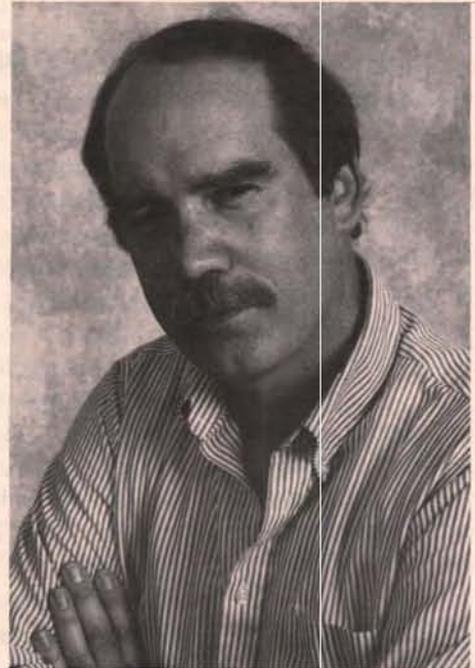
“In Search of Glorianna Stirling”

Glorianna Fulsom was born on Christmas Eve in 1753, the eighth child of Blacksmith Samuel Fulsom and his wife Ann. In 1770 Glorianna was a fair-haired blue-eyed beauty of sixteen. That same year a handsome, well mannered and obviously cultured young man took a room in town. John Stirling was the son of a Scottish baronet, Sir John Stirling. John pursued Glorianna and they married in 1771. Glorianna gave John and Scotland twenty-two children and provided Stratford one of its most romantic stories

Local author and playwright Steven Otfinoski will talk about his search for one of Stratford's most renowned historical figures at the Stratford Historical Society meeting on January 30th.

Otfinoski brought his play Stratford Characters to Stratford-upon-Avon, England in celebration of our town's 350th birthday. Among the play's characters was Glorianna Stirling, who married a Scottish nobleman in the 18th century and moved to Scotland. She never returned to Stratford and little about the rest of her life has been known. Otfinoski and his wife, Beverly Larson, while in Great Britain, tracked down Glorianna's descendants near Glasgow and saw the house she lived in. Otfinoski's retelling of their adventures will be accompanied by slides and a reading of his dramatic monologue on Glorianna's life by local actress and teacher Sue Saylor, who played the part in the show's first performance.

Steven Otfinoski is the author of more than 100 books and 40 plays, many of which have been produced in Connecticut and New York. His theater company, History Alive!, has been performing one-person plays on American history for schoolchildren throughout the state for more than a decade.



NOTE
In case of bad weather please listen to WICC at 5pm

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

David Guion President

A Happy New Year to All

We are fortunate to have Renee Basso back with us after many years of being involved in other endeavors. Other volunteers who plan to become active are Lorraine and Bill Kupper who are new in town and greatly interested in Stratford's history and the colonial period. While we very much appreciate the expertise these people will bring to the Society, we still are in need of younger people with strong backs and the enthusiasm of youth. (to us that means under 50).

Matt Gutierrez, one of our more active camp graduates, has joined the 5th Regiment of re-enactors. We wish him well and hope this new activity will not take him away from us. He is a real asset to the Society.

The desk of the President has been moved to the front office. Please stop in and visit, we welcome any questions you may have about Stratford, your ancestors, upcoming events or publications we have available for study or sale.

2004 Tag Sale

Last year the Historical Society Tag Sale was a huge success thanks to the overwhelming response from our members and friends. This year we are again asking that you respond as generously as before with items suitable for sale.

Space is available for storing, so we will be accepting items immediately. Please leave your donations on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 9am to 2pm. If you would like an item picked up at any time, please call the office (378-0630) and leave a message.

The 2004 Tag Sale is tentatively planned for Friday and Saturday May 23rd and 24th. This is a great source of income for the Society, so bring us your (no longer have use for) items. We will sell them all to our many true tag-salers who now look forward to this yearly event.

Todd Lovell 1st Vice President

Since the November Newsletter, work of the Society has continued. The contract for a replacement cedar shingle roof on the Judson House has been awarded. Work will start in early spring and should be completed within one week. The existing roof, while not leaking, is pretty scary. Only a small water leak could result in many dollars in damage.

The attic in Judson House has been emptied of all artifacts thanks to the mighty effort of our new volunteer Bill Kupper who made innumerable trips up and down the curvy staircase lugging items. We all thank Bill for a job well done. All attic artifacts are stored in the new outbuilding designated #3. Fortunately, we have the space which is rapidly being filled.

Outbuilding #2 has been designated for tag sale items and miscellaneous storage. This too will soon be filled as items for our Spring Tag Sale arrive. Future plans are to electrify these outbuildings - budgets permitting.

Before Spring, the lower doors to the office area of the museum building will be replaced. The existing doors have been in place since the building was built in the early 1970's. They are in bad shape, leaking cold air, unsightly and warped. The new doors will conform to all building and safety codes.

With all of these future projects in mind, please remember that all contributions (monetary or tag sale donations) will be acknowledged by a statement of charitable contribution which you may use when filing your income tax.

Thanks for your continued interest in the work of the Stratford Historical Society.

On September 1, 1928, The Stratford News made its bow to the people of the Town of Stratford as a weekly publication.

Residents were informed to expect "a paper for all of Stratford" with the real news presented impartially."

Match the famous people with their quotes:

A. I am glad to see that men are getting their rights, but I want women to get theirs, and while the water is stirring I will step into the pool.

B. Be nice to people on your way up because you might meet'em on your way down.

C. Nothing in the world is so exhilarating as to be shot at without result.

D. If my husband ever met a woman on the street who looked like the women in his paintings, he would faint

E. It is often easier to fight for one's principles than to live up to them.

F. Nature gives you the face you have at twenty; it is up to you to merit the face you have at fifty

See back page for answers



Saloon at Bond's Dock circa 1890. Boxing camp was located above the saloon. Front row 7th from left, Ashabel Bond, brother of John. Man leaning against pillar is Charles "Cappy" Wicks, a colorful figure around town.

At the foot of Stratford Avenue and Shore Road, just below the American Shakespeare Theatre is the area known as Bond's Dock. It has existed since colonial days when the area was known as "Upper Landing," and is only a short distance away from Mac's Harbor on South Avenue where Stratford's first settlers landed. Today, the dock is a peaceful place to gather and fish, picnic and feed the water fowl. Hardly a trace remains of the man John Bond and his Boxing Training Quarters which for 35 years honed young men into leading contenders gaining high honors in the world of fisticuffs.

John C. Bond born in Commack, Long Island October 24, 1840 was the mentor of this mecca for pugilism. After many years as a schooner captain sailing from Northport, Long Island, Bond, his wife Julia, younger brother Ashabel and sister Ella moved to the greater Bridgeport area. Ashabel and sister Ella settled in Bridgeport; John and Julia moved to Stratford and purchased property in the dock area. With \$3,000 borrowed from Ashabel, John opened a saloon and training camp in 1880.

From the beginning, Bond's Training Quarters proved to be an important center for some of the greatest boxers of America. "Terrible" Terry McGovern, who won the World Championship Featherweight crown over George Dixon in January 1900 started training at Stratford. Larry Temple, Hugh McGovern, Jack Johnson, Stanley Ketchell, Young Corbett, Jack Britton, Tommy Ryan, Tommy Murphy, Jack "The Duke" Diamond and Battling Levinsky all trained at Bond's and were friends of the Captain.

From April through September one would find "Captain John" and his wife Julia moving about the training quarters. Bond involved himself in all aspects of the fight game except promoting. A tall, strong jovial man sporting a handlebar moustache, Captain John pushed his fighters to their limits and then some. Strenuous roadwork, vigorous double rope jumping and endless rounds of sparring constituted the regimen for boxers and trainers alike.

The great John L. Sullivan is said to have been a frequent visitor to Bond's Dock. In 1882 he KO'ed Paddy Ryan in 9 rounds of bare knuckle fighting. On July 8, 1889, Sullivan defeated Jake Kilrain in 75 rounds of one of the last bare knuckle fights fought in America at Bond's place. Sullivan was known for his quick solid punching agility.

The boxers were not without their gallant side however. They were known for demonstrating impeccable manner and decorum especially when ladies were present. A day picnicking and watching training sessions at the camp was a favorite pastime for local folks.

The golden days of boxing for Bond's Training Quarters spanned some 35 years. Each spring and summer produced a new crop of eager trainees. Bond's reputation left him well known and respected. In addition he and Julia amassed a considerable sum of money and real estate. Just short of his 76th birthday on November 11, 1915 the Captain succumbed to heart failure. Condolences poured in from all parts of the United States. He was known as "the man whose training quarters figured in so many championships."

By 1925, the training quarters and other properties lay abandoned, the Town acquired the property in 1940 and in 1962 dedicated the park now known as Bond's Dock.

**Renew Your 2003-2004 Membership
Help Us In Our Quest For New Members**

2003 Stratford Historical Society, Inc. 2004

Mail to: 967 Academy Hill — Stratford, Connecticut 06615-0382
or email: www.Judsonhousestfd@aol.com FAX: 203-378-2562

We invite you to become a Member of the Stratford Historical Society for 2003-2004, or to give a membership as a gift.

We appreciate any support to maintain The Judson House and the Catharine B. Mitchell Museum, of course, any donation you make will be tax-deductible.

NAME _____

Renewal _____

ADDRESS _____

New Member _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Individual \$12.00

Senior \$8.00

Business \$25.00

**STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOST AND HOSTESS
COMMITTEE**

Volunteers are asked to complete and mail the following tear-off notice

I wish to serve as a Hostess-Host at the door of Judson House:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone # Day _____ Night _____

May through October - Hours 11:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Kindly mail to: Mrs. Laurene Basso or call: 378-4880
338 Burbank Ave.
Stratford, CT 06614

Laurene "Renee" Basso, Chairman

"Bon Appetite" (If You Dare)

Sometime ago in a Newsletter we printed an item from the *Old Fashioned Recipe Book* on how to barbecue or roast a Raccoon. Well, *Foods of Old New England* By Margorie Mosser shows how resourceful these old New England cooks really were.

PORCUPINE LIVER:

Why the porcupine should be viewed with distaste or aversion, unless because of his malevolent appearance, is not easy to understand; for he feeds on the most delicate buds he can find, and pursues a semi-sedentary existence that is almost a guarantee of tenderness.

Perhaps because of his slow movements and his hearty meals, the porcupine has a relatively enormous liver, almost as large as a fat man's hand. Thousands of New England gunners have eaten porcupine liver, and have unhesitatingly pronounced it one of the greatest delicacies.

To cook porcupine liver: Soak the whole liver ¼ hour in lightly salted water. Remove from water and cut in slices about ¾ inch thick. Drop slices into boiling water for 1 minute. Drain, cool and remove thin membrane from edge of each slice, and all gristle from interior. Wrap in strips of bacon and broil 5 minutes over coals, or fry 2 minutes in a blue-hot frying pan. Serve with lemon juice and boiled new potatoes.

Editor's Note: Coming soon in a future Newsletter look for "Field Mouse Pie" from the Yankee Magazine. We would be happy to hear from any person venturous enough to try these delicacies.



Judson House Hosts and Hostesses

Although we are sorry that Betty Applegate has relinquished the position as Chairman of Hosts and Hostesses and are very thankful of her many years of service, we are very pleased to welcome Laurene Basso who has now accepted this responsibility.

With just one guide in attendance on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays during the 2003 season the Society could not have been open for tours of the David Judson House without the assistance of the following nineteen ladies and one gentleman. The volunteers were present for four hours and many times were called upon to remain after 3 o'clock. The following volunteers deserve special thanks for their generous contribution of time.

Betty Applegate	Mary Evers
Shirley Balascak	Elizabeth Martin
Helen Balberchak	Stephany Kirik
Marjorie Schlosser	Robert Hoctor
Edith Tolomeo	Peggy Doyle
Ann Eisinger	Connie Nowak
Beverly Elmendorf	Eleanor Guion
Dorothy Euerle	Dorothy Bobko
Elizabeth Karscinski	Betty Falango
Molly Brown	Kathleen Surette
	Gutierrez

The Society hopes the above volunteers will again be willing to give of their time when they are contacted by "Renee" Basso our new Chairman.

Note: A form is enclosed with this Newsletter with information about this very important service to the Society. New volunteers will be most welcome and remember - volunteer hours are useful, happy hours.

REMEMBER - If there is an X over your name on the cover address label your dues for the current year are not paid. We regret that we cannot send future Newsletters if dues are not received immediately. Note insert for more information.

THIS IS THE FLU SEASON - DID YOU GET YOUR FLU SHOT?

During epidemics in the late 1700's and 1800's newspapers printed helpful tips such as this one

HOW TO TELL WHETHER A PERSON IS DEAD OR ALIVE.

Apply the flame of a candle to the tip of one of the great toes of the supposed corpse, and a blister will immediately rise. If the vitality is gone this will be full of air, and will burst with some noise. If the flame be applied to it a few seconds longer; if life is not extinct, the blister will be full of matter, and will not burst. The public will doubtless be glad to know of a simple test which can be used even where there is no reasonable doubt, and thus free the mind from future misgivings as to whether or not a friend or relative might not after all have had some life left when the body was treated as a corpse. Though very few are actually buried alive, many more may be abandoned as dead while life is still in them, and then die from being handled and exposed as corpses are. The test, therefore, should be applied as soon as life is supposed to be extinct, and before an undertaker is called in.

Answers to quotes:

- A. Sojourner Truth
- B. Jimmy Durante
- C. Winston Churchill
- D. Mrs. Pablo Picasso
- D. Adlai Stevenson
- F. Coco Chanel



JANUARY - FEBRUARY

Years ago, barrel-stave skis were childhood's cherished possessions, easily made by nailing a strap for the foot at the midpoint of the stave. Sometimes those stubby skis created as much joy as the most expensive pair of Fiberglas or polished hickory today. Steady fires in the kitchen stove produced warm substantial food, and a day outdoors in wintertime supplied the appetites.

In deep Winter, there was time for parties, candy-pulls and socials, promenades and hymn sings. Sometimes the party was just popping corn in a big kitchen and playing games around the dining-room table - lotto and flinch, authors and checkers, jackstraws, tiddley-winks and Peter Coddle.

Until about 1830 all cooking and baking was done at the open fireplace.

Snow falls deep and often, just right for Snow Pancakes. Old snow won't do. A cup of immaculate snow for each cup of milk folded in quickly does something wonderful to them. They're lighter, airier and Oh! so good!

February, the shortest month, is well supplied with special days. Children used to make marvelous Valentines of wallpaper, mothers made heart-shaped cookies and decorated cakes. A hundred years ago, Washington's birthday was observed with parties, speeches and parades. There were hatchet-shaped cookies and cakes with cherries, and special pieces to speak at school

The end of February brings unmistakably longer days.

Spring arrives on March 20th

Stratford Historical Society

(203) 378-0630

967 Academy Hill

P.O.Box 382

Stratford, CT 06615-0382

UNPAID DUES
 If you find an "X" above
 your name on the address label
 your dues are not paid for the
 2003-2004 year.

COMPUTER CORNER

e-mail us at:

Judsonhousestfd@aol.com

Fax: 378-2562

Stratford Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting

February 23, 2004 - 7:00 pm

Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

All Members of the Society are Welcome to Attend

Please call 378-0630 for information