
Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume IX Issue 3

JANUARY 2005



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

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, January 28, 2005

**Lovell Room
Stratford Library**

**Bond's Dock and the Early History of Boxing
Lou Bogash, Jr.**

Former Connecticut State Boxing Commissioner

The residents of Oronoque Village are well aware of Lou Bogash and the lifetime he has spent on the local and regional athletic arena. They recall his Men's Club presentations of fight films and commentary given shortly before his retirement in 1996 as State Boxing Commissioner and, again, in 2003.

Born in north Bridgeport, son of a world middleweight boxing champion, Lou made his first appearance in the ring as a nine-year-old on stage at Loew's Poli Theatre. It was a two-week stage show featuring his father and heavyweight Primo Camera.

Upon graduation from Central High in 1940, Lou went to work for Bridgeport Brass and began playing league baseball for them. While there, in 1941, his days as a boxer started with amateur bouts at Old Red Men's Hall in Bridgeport and at Pleasure Beach. Boxing as recreation continued during his World War II hitch with the Marines. As a member of their aviation boxing team, he had a 23-1-1 record. His boxing days ended, however, with a leg injury received during an air raid at Okinawa. After the war, he was back at the Bridgeport Brass, where he continued to be active for many years in baseball, being the first recipient of their Outstanding Athletic Award in 1952.

In 1965 Lou returned to boxing as a referee, and during the next 30 years he covered more than 5,000 professional and amateur rounds, including many championship bouts. He became Connecticut Amateur Boxing Commissioner in 1989, serving until 1996. His many honors included much credit for the resurgence of the sport during his tenure.

After a 37 year career at Bridgeport Brass, Lou joined Textron-Lycoming, a near-neighbor to Bond's Dock, for a 10 year stint as Safety Manager, retiring in 1989. He is a member and past honoree of both the Bridgeport and Stratford Old-timers Athletic Association.

The Meeting will be held in the **LOVELL ROOM AT THE STRATFORD LIBRARY**

The public is invited to attend and refreshments will be served.

In case of inclement weather please listen to WICC at 5:00 p.m.



Lou Bogash as referee, with insert of Lou during his Marine Corps years.

It's just a job, grass grows, birds fly, waves pound the sand. I beat people up.

Muhammad Ali -
quoted in the New
York Times

He can run, but he can't hide. -

Joe Lewis quoted in
the New York Herald
Tribune
(Louis was comment-
ing on his upcoming
fight with Billy Conn)

Todd Lovell 1st Vice President

With the holidays behind us your society is looking forward to a busy spring and summer. Plans have begun to have the Early American Festival in August. Sandy Rutkowski is booking re-enactors for the event which has always been enjoyed by children and families.

Re-construction of the 19th century carriage house will continue when warmer weather arrives. Eric Iott, our building contractor, estimates that the project is 75%-80% complete. He is eager to finish the work for our summer activities.

New entry doors have been installed at the lower entrance to the museum office. The old doors were installed in the mid-1970's and were warped allowing cold to enter the library area of the office.

On both a sad and happy note, Lewis G. Knapp, Stratford Town Historian, Past President of the Society and long-time member has sold his home on Shore Road and moved to a retirement community in North Branford, CT. He and his wife, Vivienne, will be missed by a great many people.

Lew's wise counsel and amazing knowledge of "old Stratford" have been a benefit to the many community groups for which he has given talks and done research. Questions frequently have arisen regarding a point in Stratford history to which the answer would be, "Call Lew. He will know."

Lew's generosity to the Stratford Historical Society over the years has been boundless. The proceeds of the several books he has authored or co-authored have been donated to the Society as have the proceeds from "Paradise Enow...Treasures from Yesterday's Kitchens," Vivienne's cookbook, the companion to Lew's "In Pursuit of Paradise."

In addition, Lew and Vivienne have donated his research collection of files, books, maps, etc., which, when combined with the Society's reference sources, will be a most complete history of the Town of Stratford.

The Society and I say "Thank you" to Lew for his years of service to all of us and to Vivienne who screened the phone calls, helped with the research and supported his efforts. All of us wish both of you happiness in your new home. Don't be strangers.

NOTE: If you would like to keep in touch with Lew and Viv their new address is:
Evergreen Woods - Apt. 131 88 Notch Hill Road, North Branford, CT 06471

INTIMATE STRANGERS

Slavery and Freedom in Fairfield County 1700-1850

Visit the William Hegarty Gallery at the Bush-Holley Historic Site in Cos Cob until April 17, 2005. *Intimate Strangers* introduces the world of slavery in eighteenth-century Fairfield County, Connecticut. Unlike Southern plantations where segregated quarters for slaves were commonly maintained, slaves and masters in Connecticut households lived and worked in close proximity. The exhibition features rare objects, historic documents and images, and audio transcripts from the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society Museum, Connecticut State Library, The Amistad Foundation at the Wadsworth Athenaeum and other historical societies in Fairfield County.

The Stratford Historical Society has allowed Flora's image to be used on the brochure for this exhibit. (Flora's silhouette traced from a candle shadow is possibly the only original replica of this kind).

"When a Town has lived for 350 years, those who dwell in it today deserve to know how it developed."

Lewis G. Knapp
In Pursuit of Paradise



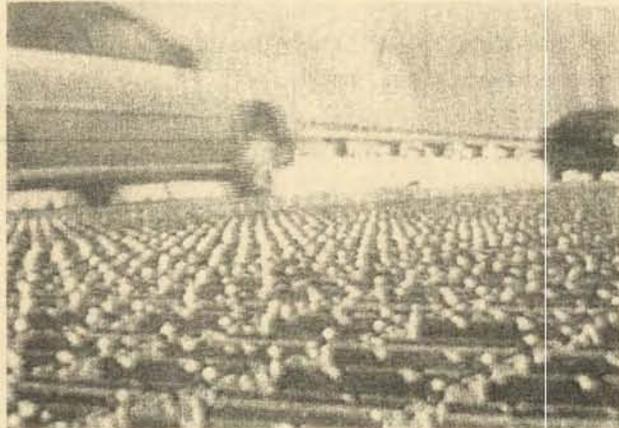
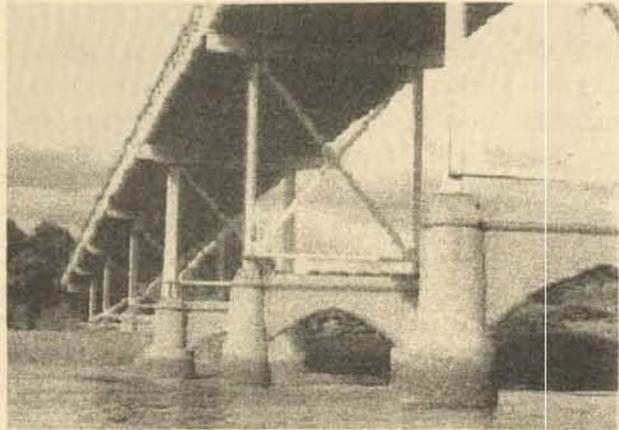
Flora's Profile

Sikorsky Bridge Reconstruction

After more than 60 years, the bridge over the Housatonic River at the juncture of Routes 15 and 110 is finally being replaced. While some underwater remnants of the old bridge are still to be removed, the old structured steel and columns are gone, and the new south side span has been temporarily accommodating both eastbound and westbound traffic since late November 2003. As to the status of the north side span, one new pier has been built, and construction of drill shafts and supports for the other three piers are in progress. The predicted date for completion of the north side span is now December 2005 when, with the completion of all associated highway work, it will become the throughway for westbound traffic. Each of the twin bridges will have two operational lanes plus an on/off lane and shoulder capacity to accommodate breakdowns and minor accidents. Also, a roadway surface of concrete and blacktop replaces the steel grid surface of the old bridge. The north westbound structure will also include a bike/pedestrian lane.

Intensive studies conducted in preparation for the project concerned wetlands, floodplains, soils, watershed and groundwater, fisheries, wildlife and vegetation, habitats, sensitive and endangered species, air quality, noise abatement, hazardous materials disturbance, seismic vulnerability, and archeology. Also, coordination throughout has been required with local, state and federal agencies including the Army Corps of Engineers, Coast Guard, EPA and Metro-North Railway. Construction has involved installation of cofferdams, drilled shaft foundations, cast in place concrete decking with asphalt riding surfaces. The bridge upgrade was initially expected to take 40 months and cost about \$84 million to complete. Delays attributed to river obstructions, revisions to one of the piers, weather, and an accident that killed a crane operator have extended the completion date and added to the project's cost.

The Old Bridge



New South Side Bridge



Sikorsky Bridge Reconstruction (con't)

The bridge, presently bearing the Sikorsky name, links the Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways. It opened for crossing with much fanfare in September 1940. It provided an alternate to the Boston Post Road for non-commercial traffic travelling from the New York State line through Fairfield County. Historically, the bridge location is at a place where, it is said, the first Stratford settlers coming overland with their cattle, sheep and hogs forded the Housatonic following an Indian trail where the river was only a few feet deep at low tide. In 1696 a shipyard was located on the river bank near the end of what is now Ryder's Lane; and in 1723 a ferry was authorized for the crossing to Milford from a spot adjacent to the shipyard, but details of subsequent operations are vague. However, reference is found to the fact that in the late 1800's it remained popular to row people across the river to the rail flag stop on the Milford side.

Some comments from drivers concerning the demise of the old bridge:

"They call it the 'Singing Bridge'"

"It's like a sheet of ice - like you're hydro planing"

"The real problem - metal studs on the surface"

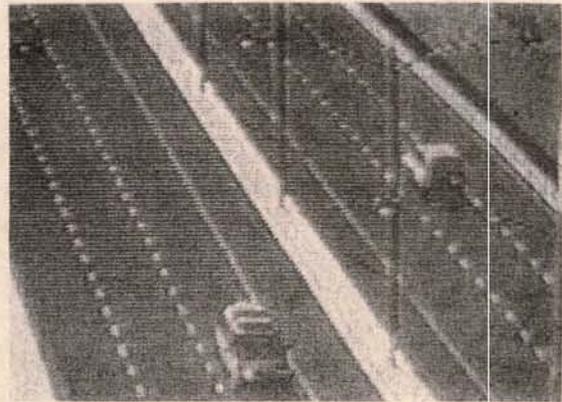
"A corporate executive, thinking of moving his company to Milford, nixed the move because his wife refused to go over the bridge"

Then, some said:

"It has its charms"

"It's unique and will be missed"

Future - Six Lanes Plus



SBC Participation Program

Last May SBC (formerly SNET) offered a program to members of non-profit organizations. SBC would donate 5% of your local and long distance charges each quarter.

The Society would like to acknowledge and thank the following members who participated.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Robert Alston | Rosalyn Amoroso |
| Elizabeth Applegate | John B Arkenberg |
| Eileen Asquith | Marie Blake |
| John Bradley | Esther Cartwright |
| Lewis Chaplowe | Kenneth J Crepeau |
| Edward J Doyle | William Dunlop |
| Pat J Falango | A.W. Fanslow |
| David P Guion | Kenneth L Hendren |
| Nancy Hendrickson | Robert F. Hocter |
| Lynn M Hubina | Gary Jacopian |
| Brian V Jennings | B M Johnson |
| Stephany Kirik | Lewis G Knapp |
| C Kuplack | George W Kupper |
| Leo H Lohrman | Todd Lovell |
| R G Mastroianni | Thomas P McCabe |
| Marie B Minahan | William N Morrison |
| Andrew Nelson | Dean L Paradise |
| Frederick Parsons | J C Potak |
| M & C Rafferty | H A Rawson |
| Daniel Record | D V Richardson |
| Roy Rutkowski | Beatrice W Schrader |
| Jane H Smith | Richard Steele |
| Edith Tolomeo | Charles W Woessner |
| Esther Wojtul | Linda Woods |

Book of Remembrance

The following contributions have been made in memory of

MURIEL CUMPSTONE

Given by:

Margaret Jacaruso
Carol and Todd Lovell

ROBERT FRITZ

Given by:

Carol and Todd Lovell

MARION HERB

Given by:

Carol and Todd Lovell

Judson House Hosts and Hostesses

Our thanks go to the Society members who have given their time to conduct tours of Judson House and the Museum

We would also like to recognize the following members who welcomed visitors at the entrance before taking the tour through Judson House.

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Laurene Basso | Marie Blake |
| Dorothy Bobko | Christine Constant |
| Ann Eisinger | Dorothy Euerle |
| Betty Falango | Robert Hocter |
| Elizabeth Karcinski | Lorraine Kupper |
| Marjorie Schlosser | Corrine Sharp |
| Jane Smith | Edith Tolomeo |
| Linda Woods | |

Visitors came from the following states as well as Canada during May through October when house tours were conducted at Judson House and the Museum:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| California | Delaware |
| Florida | Massachusetts |
| New Jersey | Tennessee |
| Texas | Virginia |
| and Stratford, Ontario, Canada | |

BLOODY PATH to the SHENANDOAH

This new publication is based chiefly on the diaries made on a day-to-day basis by author Stewart Judson Petrie's great-great uncle, George Earl Judson during the Civil War. The unending problems of long marches, heat exhaustion, poor food, and illness are punctuated with episodes of brutal warfare and stark terror. The Union VI Corps participated in such hard-fought battles as the Wilderness, North Anna River, the slaughter of Cold Harbor and most notable at Cedar Creek.

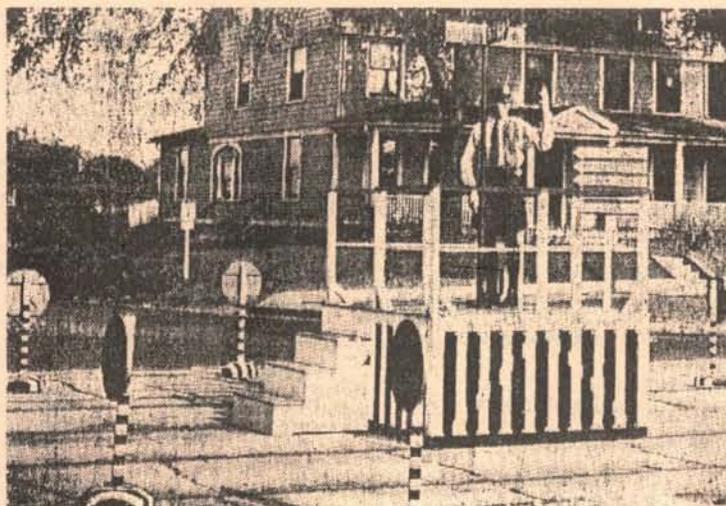
Dr. Petrie has published several times, including *Letters and Journals of a Civil War Surgeon and Captive of Libby Prison*.

Bloody Path to the Shenandoah is available for sale at the Stratford Historical Society.

Early American Festival
August 14th
A Time Line
In History

There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but, boys, it is all hell.

Gen. William T. Sherman
speech (1880)



REMEMBER STRATFORD'S ROTARY AND SEMAPHORE? Patrolman John Geary, who later became chief of the Stratford Police department is shown as he directed traffic in August, 1939, from a new semaphore traffic signal and stand erected at Barnum avenue and Main street. The view is toward the southeast, with Barnum avenue eastbound toward Devon and New Haven at the left, and Main street headed south at the right. The house in the background has long since been torn down and a gasoline service station now occupies the spot. The semaphore traffic signal and stand which had become known as the "Rotary" were removed after World War II. Bpt. Sunday Post picture 1967

Stratford Historical Society

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**REMEMBER!!
THE MEMBERSHIP MEET-
ING ON JANUARY 28TH WILL BE
HELD IN THE LOVELL ROOM AT
THE STRATFORD LIBRARY**

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

Stratford Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting
February 21, 2005
Catharine B. Mitchell Museum
All members of the Society are Welcome to Attend
Please call 378-0630 for information