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# Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

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Volume XI Issue 1

September 2006

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

## NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday September 29, 2006 - 7:30pm

Christ Episcopal Church  
2000 Main Street, Stratford

**Carolyn Ivanoff**  
*Votes for Women*

### *The 70 Year Fight For Women's Suffrage*

“1917—Women win the vote in New York State. A suffrage petition signed by more than a million women signals the determination of the women of the state (and the suffrage campaign workers who gathered the signatures) to gain the vote. The suffrage measure wins by a margin of 100,000 votes in New York City and breaks even in the rest of the state.”

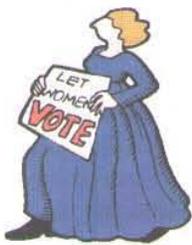
Carolyn Ivanoff, dressed as a suffragette, will relate the 70 years struggle by the NAWSA to bring about ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment and women's right to vote.

For twenty years as a versatile, proficient educator experienced in a variety of educational settings in public high school, Ivanoff is currently an assistant principal at Shelton High School. She graduated summa cum laude from Sacred Heart University with a B.S. in Business and History, an M.A. in Education from the University of Bridgeport and a sixth-year degree in school administration from Southern Connecticut State University.

As a teacher and administrator Carolyn takes pride in her continued commitment to partnering with, and collaborating with, community and national preservation and educational organizations to provide opportunities for students.

In 2003, Carolyn was named Civil War Preservation Trust's Civil War Preservationist Teacher of the Year. She was selected “for her outstanding commitment to promoting battlefield preservation in the classroom,” according to the Trust. She is the sole recipient of the national honor.

She is committed to bringing history and social studies educational programs beyond the classrooms and into the community. Carolyn is very proud of her continued involvement and membership in the Civil War Preservation Trust, which she believes the finest historical preservation organization in our nation.



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

## **Ted Iott President**

Over the last 80 years the Stratford Historical Society has had a broad appeal to the town residents. Its many programs and tours have stimulated young and old alike. The Beach Carriage House is the first significant historical structure added to our grounds since 1925.

However, over these many years Stratford has become a more diverse town. Therefore, what the Society has to offer is relevant to fewer and fewer people. The challenge to the Society in the future is to interest this diversity.

## **A Reminder To Our Members**

September is the beginning of a new membership year. A membership envelope for the year 2006-2007 is enclosed with this Newsletter for your convenience.

Also enclosed is a ballot form for the election of officers for the coming year. Please mark and return this ballot with your dues envelope.

Thank you for your continued support of the Stratford Historical Society.

## **Book of Remembrance**

The following donations have been made in  
Memory of:

### **MARY W. DICKGIESSER**

Given by:

Mr. & Mrs. William M. Miller  
Todd & Carol Lovell

### **ARTHUR N. HALE**

Given by:

Mr. & Mrs. R. James Horton  
Mr. & Mrs. A. Taylor

### **ROBERT MADDEN**

Given by:

Mr. & Mrs. John A. Jensen

## **Robert Sammis Honored**

The Stratford Waterfront and Harbor Management Commission hosted a reception recently to honor Bob Sammis on the occasion of his retirement as one of its most illustrious members and past chairman. Both state and town officials, as well as members of the Waterfront Commission and related agencies, attended.

Sammis was presented with a citation from the Connecticut General Assembly by state Senator George "Doc" Gunther. In addition, Gunther read an official statement on behalf of Governor M. Jodi Rell proclaiming a "Robert 'Bob' Sammis Day" in the state.

Bill Rock, chairman of the Stratford Waterfront and Harbor Management Commission, presented a plaque in appreciation of Sammis' many contributions over the past 39 years. Sammis also received a proclamation from Stratford Mayor James Miron in Stratford Town Council chambers.

Sammis has been in the forefront of issues both local and regional to advance the coastline as a resource available to the citizenry and to regulate the commercial and recreational development of these resources. In addition to recognition by the Commission, he has been acknowledged by the Connecticut Harbor Management Association, which he founded and chaired some 10 years ago, representing the shoreline cities and towns of Connecticut on state and national issues

Conn. Post 8-28-06

## **Christ Episcopal Church 300th Anniversary in 2007**

A timeline of Church history is being planned. If you have photos, newspaper clippings, memories, stories or mementos to share, please call Ruth Munson at 380-6623. More information about the year-long celebration will be forthcoming.

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## History Camp Brings Smiles to Many Faces Young and Old

Our history camp program held in July brought together many children and adults from a wide variety of home fronts. We had children in attendance from Stratford, Bangor Maine and Ireland!! Our staff was a combination of retired educators, veterans, and high school students. Together we had one of the nicest weeks imaginable.

While living a time line of facts in early Stratford we enjoyed one another's company and learned that while we had fun doing colonial chores it really was an extreme way of living. Candle making is fun when you only need one or two candles, writing a short paragraph with a quill is challenging, writing a long document would be a true test of patience.

Sharing a daily snack and local legends which continued the theme for the day was a treat enjoyed by one and all.

New topics introduced to camp this year included a wood craft project creating a candle box to hold our prized poured beeswax and hand dipped candles, and studying documents for Stratford slaves from the 1700's. Our program also introduced the campers to our newly restored carriage house. Each camper was photographed sitting in a carriage by our everlasting horse, Kansas.

The society conveys deep appreciation to our staff members for their time and love of sharing history with our future historians:

|                 |                  |               |             |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Barbara Firisin | Ted lott         | Lyn Hubina    |             |
| Diane Matthews  | Rudy Mastroianni | Carolyn Ross  |             |
| Adam Drenkard   | Annie Lyond      | Hannah Pancak | Caity Simon |

The campers presented with certificates of achievement this summer are:

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|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Emily Barksdale     | Audrey Pancak         |
| Elizabeth Bluett    | Gretchen Pancak       |
| Benjamin Brown      | Claudia Regensburger  |
| Christopher Carroll | Victoria Regensburger |
| Katie Freddino      | Myra Sampson          |
| Sarah Freddino      | Rebecca Simon         |
| Sarah Lovell        | Victoria Stadtmueller |
| Melissa Lovell      | Haley Tomsheck        |
| Angela Mariano      | Allison Warren        |
| Gina Mariano        | Patrick Warren        |

HISTORY CAMP — SUMMER 2006



## The Beach Family Carriage House

Frederick Converse Beach of New York City and Stratford built this carriage house at 1812 Elm Street about 1880-1885.

His carriage and horse were housed on the ground floor while the upper floor was used for storage of hay and grains and, for many years, for Halloween parties and other family and neighborhood gatherings.

"Kansas", a white horse, owned by Beach (an early amateur photographer) appears in many of his street views of Stratford. In a photograph dated 1861, "Kansas" appears. Interestingly, the State of Kansas was admitted into the Union in 1861.

The original green glass insulators on the carriage house probably date to the turn of the twentieth century when the Beach family owned a gasoline-powered generator which served several houses in the Elm Street area before electricity came to Stratford.

The carriage is a restored Goddard Style carriage/buggy, circa 1870-1880.

In late February 2004, after being neglected for more than a quarter century, the carriage house was slated for demolition to make way for a new development. Tony Nizzardo, owner of the property, gave the building to The Stratford Historical Society on condition that it be removed in ten days!

The Society accepted the challenge, cut the building into pieces, loaded them with a crane onto a flatbed truck, moved them to the Society grounds on Academy Hill and re-built it, celebrating its re-birth in August 2005.

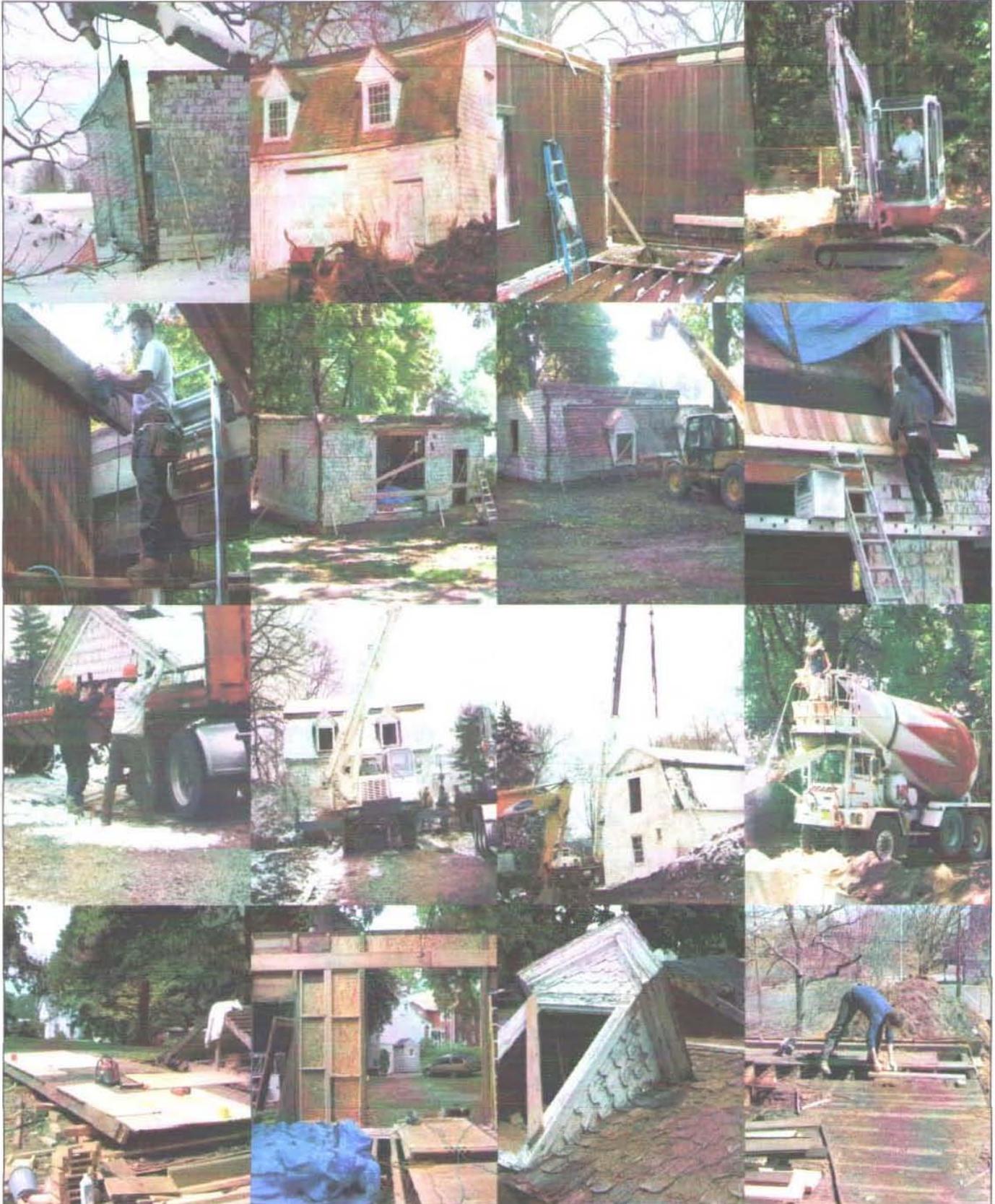
Thanks to the family and friends of the late David Guion and numerous other donors, the restoration was completed in June 2006 after two years and four months.

Special thanks to Eric Iott, the "Contractor with a Conscience".

### A preservation success story!



# Carriage House - Move and Reconstruction



## BEACH FAMILY CARRIAGE HOUSE

Built on Elm Street circa 1885

Moved and restored 2005-2006

With contributions from

Laurine Basso

Eleanor Guion

Elizabeth Birdseye Sniffen Gullander

Barbara and Brian Jennings

Robin and Christopher Mojcik

Andrew Nelson

Betty and Hildreth Winton

And

Friends of the Stratford Historical Society

## 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, 2006. If you wish to nominate a candidate or work on a committee, please come to the September 29, 2006 meeting.

### THE SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2006 - 2007

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| PRESIDENT               | Ted Iott          |
| FIRST VICE PRESIDENT    | Todd Lovell       |
| SECOND VICE PRESIDENT   | Rudy Mastroianni  |
| RECORDING SECRETARY     | Barbara Firisin   |
| CORRESPONDING SECRETARY | Marie Blake       |
| TREASURER               | Robert Hoctor     |
| ASSISTANT TREASURER     | Margaret Jacaruso |

### DIRECTORS

2004-2007 Rebecca Arkenberg  
2005-2008 Sandy Rutkowski  
2006-2009 Shirley McCormack  
2006-2009 Tim Jezierny

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Accessions/Exhibits | Carol Lovell                                      |
| Building/Grounds    | Todd Lovell, Eric Iott<br>& Rudy Mastroianni      |
| Education           | Diane Matthews/Barbara Firisin                    |
| Finance             | Todd Lovell                                       |
| Hospitality         | Shirley Balascak & Shirley McCormack              |
| Hosts & Hostesses   | Dolores Hoctor                                    |
| Library             | Gloria Duggan, Marie Blake                        |
| Membership          | Dolores Hoctor                                    |
| Newsletter          | Marie Blake, Richard Steele<br>& Rudy Mastroianni |
| Program             | Marie Blake/Shirley McCormack                     |
| Publicity           | Dorothy Euerle                                    |
| Town Historian      | Lewis G. Knapp                                    |

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## School Study of Slavery And Black History in Stratford

May 20, 2006

Dear Mrs. Cornish,

It is with great pleasure that I write this note to notify you of a recent event which occurred at the Stratford Historical Society. Last week we received 110 students from Wooster School as guests to Captain David Judson's home and the Catharine Bunnell Mitchell museum over the course of three days. The students were part of the seventh grade reading program and had been reading books in the "War Comes to Willie Freeman" series. Mrs. Alicia McIntosh contacted the society this winter and we worked with her forming a unit of study on local slavery and black history.

Our volunteers gave tours of our colonial home and geared the tour topics to the life of servants and slaves and their responsibilities in each area of the home. The lower section of the Judson home was referred to as the slave quarters in many of our documents. This allowed the students to see first hand what life was actually like for some of the slaves in our community. The tour is rich in information and runs approximately one and a quarter hours. In addition to the tours, the students heard a one and a quarter hour long lecture on reading primary source documents in our collection regarding slavery, emancipation, and real estate contracts with "free women of color". We also summarized a booklet of memoirs of a local woman born to slavery.

As you can see the visit was very intense and filled with facts from our community. We were so pleased and excited by the student's reactions, attention and behaviors throughout the event. This was a morning filled with listening and the students rose to the challenge beautifully. Each of our docents commented that their groups were so polite and interested in all that was shared. Our feelings at the conclusion of each day were that this was a great day of sharing our treasures of Stratford. We would love to have you thank these students for representing their school so favorably.

Respectfully your,  
Mrs. Diane Matthews, Education Chairperson  
Stratford Historical Society

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**Note:** We are in need of **Bunnell High School** Yearbooks, regardless of condition, for research purposes. The only copy on hand is for the year 1971.

## May General Meeting



Pictured is guest speaker Morgan Kaolian being introduced by Marie Blake, program chairperson. Mr. Kaolian, well known local aviator, journalist and aerial photographer, spoke of his lifelong interest in aviation, and of the many contributions made to the Town and to the State resulting from aerial operations conducted from the airport off Main Street. He also expressed his advocacy for finding a means to get Pleasure Beach re-established as a local destination, and for the historic preservation of the two old aircraft hangars at the airport that have fallen into a state of disrepair and are now being threatened with extinction. Mr. Kaolian has provided the Society with a CD of his pictures of the Sikorsky Memorial Bridge reconstruction.

## On Immigrants And Being An American

"In the first place, we should insist that as the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed, or birthplace, or origin. But this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet an American, and nothing but an American.... There can be no divided allegiance here. Any man who says he is an American, but something else, isn't an American at all. We have room for but one flag, the American flag.... We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language...and we have room for but one sole loyalty and that is a loyalty to the American People." ..... Theodore Roosevelt—1907

## PUTNEY SCHOOL

This school on Main Street Putney was built in 1857 replacing an older one-room house. It was located just north of Wheeler's Mill where grain was ground for the local farmers. It was a two room school house with a pot bellied stove and a school marm—an improvement over the prior facility. The 1857 building was abandoned and a larger portable one installed in 1930 to better serve a growing population.

When the school bell was rung in 1955, the class of 12 graduates went on to bigger things and certainly bigger schools. This old school, however, will always have a special place in the hearts of the local farmers.



### Stratford Historical Society

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#### COMPUTER CORNER

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Judsonhousestfd@aol.com

Fax: 203-378-2562

Stratford Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting

October 30, 2006

Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

All members of the Society are Welcome to Attend

Please call 378-0630 for information