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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 3

January 2007

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

## NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday January 26, 2007 - 7:30pm

Christ Episcopal Church  
2000 Main Street, Stratford

### Robert Berthelson Connecticut Leaders In The American Revolution

Numerous great patriot leaders from Connecticut have played significant roles in our nation's independence. Trumbull resident Robert Berthelson will speak of men with names that are familiar. But can we recall the role they played in our Country's founding ?

Jonathan Trumbull—One of Connecticut's best-known governors. He was the only governor of an English colony to side with the colonists

John Trumbull— The first American painter to have a college education. His ambition was to become the painter of the American Revolution ..

Samuel Huntington—Became the first President of the United States in Congress Assembled. He was elected to ten consecutive terms as Governor of Connecticut.

Bob has more historical leaders that he will talk about this evening such as Silas Deane, Sybill Luddington, Oliver Wallcock, Benjamin Talmidge and of course Nathan Hale.

This will be the fourth time that Bob has presented a program to our members and friends, the most recent being in September 2005 when he showed slides of the 1938 Hurricane and how it affected the Town of Stratford and the surrounding area.

Robert Berthelson is a photographer with a lifelong interest in American history and nostalgia. By combining these interests he has produced over 45 color slide programs which include historical documentaries on Connecticut history, the American Revolution, the Civil War, post card collecting, early photography, stamp collecting and nostalgia.



Jonathan Trumbull



John Trumbull



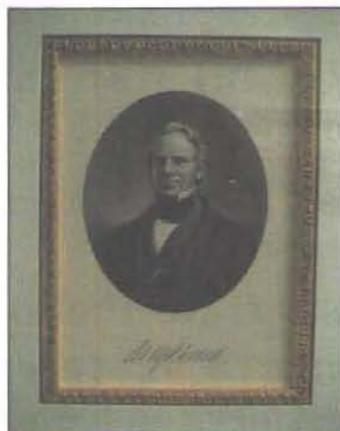
Samuel Huntington

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

## Moses Yale Beach

(1800 - 1868)

Journalist - Inventor - Philanthropist



See insert for photo of silver tray Moses Yale Beach received on retirement from The Sun, and for biographical sketch of his career.

### Did You Know?

1901—The Spindletop gusher comes in with a roar; sets off the Texas oil boom.

1909—Peary and Henson reach the North Pole

1955—Dr. Jonas Salk announces development of his polio vaccine on 10th Anniversary of FDR's death.

## Book of Remembrance

Donations have been made in

Memory of:

**BARBARA MASTROIANNI**

Given By:

**Richard and Florence Steele**

**DEAN L. PARADISE**

Given By: **Margaret Jacaruso**

**Mr. and Mrs. Todd B. Lovell**

**Marie E. Blake**



## Rudy Mastroianni President

It is my honor to be following in the footsteps of Ted Iott, immediate past president and a truly hands on leader. Ted was many things to the Stratford Historical Society—docent, history camp activist, and best known for preserving the Society property and the history of Stratford. On behalf of the Executive Board and myself, thank you Ted for the time, enthusiasm and friendship we received during your tenure. And we would be greatly remiss for not saying thanks to your wife, Joyce for sharing you with the Society. Good health and happiness Ted and Joyce.

The Executive Board will be focusing on continuing several much needed activities. These include: an oral history project to convert to digital format long held audio cassettes and reel tapes of recorded interviews with townspeople of historical significance. Digital format thus makes it possible to distribute these interviews by several "modern" techniques such as e-mail, to be posted on the Society's web site, and to the media.

Regarding the web site, updates are planned. We are anxious to know if, and how often you have visited it, and we will appreciate your feedback. Also, let us know your feelings about the Newsletter. The Committee will like knowing your reactions, especially to the inclusion of color photographs in recent publications. We'll be looking forward to your responses either by surface mail, e-mail or telephone, at the addresses and number shown in the Newsletter.

It will be a pleasure to meet you and receive your responses at the January meeting, after the presentation "Connecticut Leaders In The American Revolution" by Robert Berthelson.

## MOSES BEACH: ENGINEER - INVENTOR - JOURNALIST - INNOVATIVE BUSINESSMAN

*MOSES YALE BEACH* was a descendant of John Beach who came from England about 1635 and settled in the New Haven colony. By the age of ten the boy worked on the family farm in Wallingford, yet found time to exercise his mechanical ingenuity in the manufacture of playthings for himself and others. When he was fourteen years old he was bound as an apprentice to a cabinet maker of Hartford. The lad's industry was so great that he soon won from his master a contract by which he received two cents an hour for overtime work a concession which Beach used to describe, in his years of affluence, as the happiest incident of his whole business career.

At age 18, he bargained to buy his freedom for \$400. He then worked a short time as a journeyman at Northampton and subsequently formed a partnership with another cabinet-maker. Their work received a prize from the Franklin Institute. On Nov. 19, 1819, he married Nancy Day of West Springfield, Mass. His next ten years were a struggle for success in the field of mechanics.

He invented an engine, the power of which came from explosions of gunpowder. When this failed he turned to steam, then in its early stages, as the motive power for a boat which he intended to run on the Connecticut River from Springfield to Hartford, but his funds were too limited to let him make a success of this enterprise. His next invention was a rag-cutting machine for use in paper mills. This would have meant a fortune for him if he had taken out a patent in time, as the process is still used. As it was, his device enabled him to obtain an interest in a paper-mill at Saugerties, N. Y. in 1829. This, like his previous ventures, was not a financial success.

Five years later Beach went to New York City to join his wife's brother, Benjamin H. Day, owner of the *Sun*, as manager of the mechanical department of that newspaper. In 1838 he bought the paper from Day. The *Sun* was then popular, having a circulation of 30,000 copies daily, but its profits were small. It appeared for a time as if Beach would record another failure, but not succeeding in effecting a sale he went to work with renewed ardor and at the age of thirty-

eight Beach's unflagging industry was at last rewarded by the beginning of real success.

The following ten years were as busy as any preceding decade of his life. The *Sun*, although first in the field of "penny papers," had to face competition from both the *New York Herald* and the *New York Tribune*. The newsboys of the rival journals even fought in the streets. During Beach's tenure as publisher, the *Sun* was noted for its many contributions to the operation of the news gathering industry.

A ship news service was established with the *Sun's* own vessels meeting incoming steamships in the bay and obtaining the freshest news from Europe. Horse expresses brought news from Albany, and special trains ran from Baltimore to New York with the news of the National Democratic Convention of 1844, beating the United States mail train by an hour or more. Atop their building they built a huge pigeon house for the birds that brought to the *Sun* news from the ships at Sandy Hook, from Albany, and even from Washington. *Beach* had a London correspondent who ran a special horse-express with the newsletters from London to the ships at Bristol. He sent a reporter to cover Webster's speech at the unveiling of the Bunker Hill monument.

During the Mexican War, when news was delayed between Mobile, where reports arrived by steamer, and Montgomery, he established a special railroad news-service between those Alabama cities. The war showed Beach how the New York newspapers, each acting for itself, were wasting much money. So, at a conference in his office, the editors of a number of New York newspapers established the New York Associated Press, designed to cooperate in the gathering of news.

This conference also led to the Harbor Association, a syndicate through which the New York newspapers were able, with one fleet of news boats, to do the work in which half a dozen fleets had been employed. Beach is also credited with inventing the syndicated newspaper article, for in 1841, when the *Sun* received by special messenger President Tyler's message to Congress, Beach printed in his office a special message edition (all alike except the title heads)

for twenty other newspapers, which thus saved them the delay and cost of setting up the message.

He was the first American publisher to issue a European edition. This was the *American Sun*, a weekly, issued in 1848, and sold abroad at twelve shillings a year. He also established the *Weekly Sun*, printed every Saturday and circulated among farmers at one dollar a year. Another venture was the *Illustrated Sun and Monthly Literary Journal*, a sixteen-page magazine lavishly illustrated with woodcuts. On its tenth birthday, in 1843, the paper was employing eight editors and reporters, twenty compositors, sixteen pressmen and one hundred carriers.

In 1848, when Beach turned the *Sun* over to his sons, Moses Sperry Beach and Alfred Ely Beach, he announced that the penny paper, then only fifteen years old, had a circulation of 50,000, "together with the largest cash advertising patronage on this continent." Beach had brought the *Sun* from a tiny three column paper to one of eight columns, although he never increased the number of pages beyond the original four.

Charles A. Dana, who bought the *Sun* from the Beach family in 1868, wrote of Moses Yale Beach that he was "a business man and a newspaper manager rather than what we now understand as a journalist," but added that "under the stimulus of Mr. Beach's energetic intellect, aided by the cheapness of its price, the *Sun* became in his hands an important and profitable establishment."

Beach retired from business life in December 1848 because of ill health, and spent his remaining years in his native town of Wallingford, where he died at the age of sixty-eight. He left five sons and three daughters. His son, Alfred Ely Beach acquired his home in Stratford in 1891.

Primary source: *Story of the Sun* by Frank M. O'Brien (1918)

### Moses Yale Beach Silver Tray

This tray is inscribed - *Presented to Moses Yale Beach By David H. Sturtevant one of the Carriers of the New York Sun on the occasion of his retiring from the Proprietorship of that Newspaper, Nov. 29th 1848.* Note the detail in a few of the tray's etchings shown below..



On loan from the *Curtiss Sparling Beach Family*



## Capt. David Judson House Visitors

The Captain David Judson House welcomed 79 visitors during the 2006 June through October season. Persons came from 11 states and 13 towns in Connecticut. Stratford residents accounted for most of those touring the house and museum to see the unique treasures the Society has on view.

Connecticut—12	Out of State—11
Fairfield	Arizona
Glenville	Florida
Glenville	Indiana
Huntington	Iowa
Jewett City	Maryland
Milford	Massachusetts
Monroe	Nebraska
Newtown	New York
Southport	Oregon
Trumbull	Pennsylvania
Waterbury	Washington
Westport	Wilton

When the house and museum are open next Spring, we sincerely urge our members to bring friends and relatives to take the tour with our adult and junior docents and become more enlightened and informed about Stratford's settlers and past history

On Sunday, November 5, 2006 a Reception was held for the Host and Hostesses in the Catharine B. Mitchell Museum



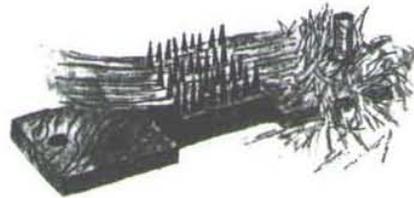
## November Membership Meeting

Our guest was raconteur, *Geoff Kaufman*, who related through song and recitation tales of Mariners from early years. *Geoff* continues to work as a musician and interpreter at Mystic seaport.



## George Washington Birthday Tea

Christ Episcopal Church will be hosting a high tea in honor of George Washington's Birthday on Sunday, February 18th, from 3:00-5:00pm in the Church Parish House. Songs, readings and food from the 18th century will be featured. Call the Church office at 375-4447 for tickets and more information.



*A heckle, or hackle, was used in making linen. Flax was pulled through its nails to get rid of the broken pieces and tangles. To "heckle" means to tease someone. Perhaps people who are annoyed by others feel as if they are being pulled through a heckle!*

## Oronoque Orchards



Located at Main Street and Oronoque Lane - Owned and operated until the mid 1980's by Helen (Betty) and Hildreth Winton

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## Stratford Historical Society

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### COMPUTER CORNER

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Stratford Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting

February 26, 2007

Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

All members of the Society are Welcome to Attend

Please call 378-0630 for information