

Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume XIII Issue 3

January 2009



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

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday January 30, 2009 - 7:00pm

Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street, Stratford

James S. Connery, Jr.

presents:

Colonel William Burr Wooster

Born on a farm in Oxford in 1821, a graduate of Yale Law School, a practicing attorney in Derby, William B. Wooster, became one of the first Republicans in town and represented them in the General Assembly and Senate until the Civil War started. Then, in 1862, at age 41, he enlisted in the 20th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry.

From that point in time, Jim Connery, a licensed Battlefield Guide in the Gettysburg National Military Park, and Jim's wife, Barbara, present a program about the Colonel's honorable wartime service.

Jim, a resident of Shelton, has many volunteer affiliations including Spooner House, the Boys and Girls Club, Kiwanis Club, Council of Boy Scouts of America, the Derby-Shelton Rotary and the Shelton Historical Society



Col. Wooster



The meeting is open to the Public
Refreshments will be served — Bring a Friend
Note starting time now 7:00pm

Rudy Mastroianni, President

The Governing Board trusts that you have experienced a smooth transition to Year 2009. We are pleased to acknowledge the facts that it's Year 84 for the Stratford Historical Society, and Year 259 for the Judson House! So, it then becomes our mission, for the sake of the faithful who have served the Society in past years, to exceed the successful efforts of 2008 as reported within the pages of this Newsletter.

Present plans include, but surely not limited to preparing for the Judson House Tours, for school groups and the public, for the return of the very popular History Camp, and to prepare for the bi-monthly Newsletter and Membership Meeting Programs. Ideas for new activities will be ever present in our thinking, and we invite you to do the same.

Looking forward to seeing you at the January 30th meeting, and to extending best wishes for a happy, healthy Year 2009.

William Samuel Johnson

1727—1819

“He knows not his own strength who has not met adversity.”

“Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, sickness and captivity would, without this comfort, be insupportable.



Book of Remembrance

The following donations have been made in
Memory of:

Theodore R. & Howard R. Beardsley

Given by:
Ruth B. Parker



Catherine Clinton Lawrence

David Guion
Given by:
Andy Nelson

Curator's Report (Carol Lovell)

Solomon Plant Spinning Wheel

(castle wheel)



During the summer of 2008 we received a telephone call from Texas offering a spinning wheel made in Stratford by Solomon Plant in about 1800. Since the wheel was made in Plant's workshop at the corner of Elm and Broad Streets, just across Academy Hill, it was purchased and is now on display in the second floor "storage room" of the Judson House along with other spinning wheels and a flax production exhibit.

The wheel was obtained from a small antique shop in El Paso where the shop owners knew nothing about its history. The purchaser did an on-line search for wheels with "SP" carved into the table and found Solomon Plant, Stratford, Connecticut; one of the most prolific spinning wheel makers in Fairfield County.

Wouldn't be interesting to know the story behind the wheel's move to Texas?

Texas, again!

A two-volume set of Orcutt's History of Bridgeport and Stratford, published in 1886, also made a Texas connection when an individual with Stratford ancestors purchased a set from our gift shop. Many persons living in other parts of the country have found that their ancestral search leads to Stratford where our excellent library/genealogy staff very frequently can document the new-found information.

History Camp for the Young - July 7-8, 2008



The Country Store

I know it by the sight of it, I'd know it by the smell:
 I'd know it by the sound of it, and know it mighty well.
 I'd know it if you set me down at midnight, 'mid the scent
 Of coffee bags and sugar bins and country butter blent.
 With eyes shut, I can smell again the prints upon the shelf
 Amid the hickory shirting _ you could do the same yourself.
 If you had lived among them in the days when life was bleak
 And all you saw was in the town _ say, every other week.
 On that side is the candy _ I can see it now, and oh,
 How good those striped sticks used to look in days of long ago!
 On this side is the muslin, with blue trademarks printed on,
 The bleached and unbleached side by side; and here's some sleazy
 lawn
 And dimity that wouldn't sell (they'd bought it by mistake):
 Some blacking, fans and currycombs, wit hoe and garden rake.
 We used to carry in the eggs and butter, and we'd buy
 Our sugar, tea and bluing and the concentrated lye.
 We used to wander back into the small room where the kept
 The coal oil and the axle grease _ 'twas hardly ever swept;
 But there it was we found the scales and weighed ourselves and said
 It wasn't like the steelyards out in our old wagon shed.
 'Twas there that in the springtime pa would buy us old straw hats _
 The 10-cent kind, made out of straw they use for making mats.
 In fall we got our footgear that must last the winter through,
 For pa said: "Them's yer winter boots _ ye've got t' make em do."
 I've been in houses mercantile that covered blocks and blocks;
 I've seen the clerks that swarmed around in beavies and in flocks;
 I've seen the elevators; but I cannot make it seem
 Like anything substantial, for 'tis nothing but a dream.
 To me the real store will be, as long as life shall last,
 That smelly country village place I knew there in the past.
 With just one clerk to sell you things _ some fellow that you knew,
 Though sometimes on a circus day there'd be as high as two.
 No fun to" do the tradin' like I used to' any more _
 How clear is memories picture of that "gen'ral" country store!

-Leslie's Weekly.

A Recent Letter to the Society

Greetings,

I am the historian of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, raised by Montreal's David M. Stewart Museum in 1967 to perpetuate the exploits of the original 78th Regiment of Foot, or Fraser's Highlanders, during the Seven Years' War. The 78th Foot were raised in 1757 in Scotland and served in North America until 1763. The regiment spent the winter of 1757/58 in winter quarters in Stratford, Connecticut. I am hoping that you might have some contemporary information which cover the regiment's stay in Stratford. One significant event was a fight between two members of the regiment which took place on 27 December 1757 which resulted in the death of one of the participants, Corporal Macky. A military court of inquiry was held on 3 January 1758. It is my understanding that the surviving soldier, Sergeant Fraser, was charged by a civilian court with wilful murder. The court, sitting likely in February or March, acquitted Sergeant Fraser. One of the Highlanders, Sergeant James Thompson, was billeted with a civilian, Mr. Thomas Ivers, a ropemaker by trade.

Any information which you might have, perhaps in contemporary newspaper, or perhaps a copy of the court proceedings, would be very much appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you in this regard.

Sincerely,

Lieutenant Earl J. Chapman, Historian, The 78th Fraser Highlanders, The David M. Stewart Museum

Society Participates in Sterling House Holiday Tour Day December 7, 2008



Welcome



Ready for Dinner



Gift Shop



Docents in Waiting



Season Decor



Birthing/Sick Quarters



Serving Hot Chocolate



Junior Docents

Status of the Corsair Restoration Project



Restoration Committee Members from left:

Morgan Kaolian, Dick Evans, Jack LaBreque, Doc Gunther and Bill O’Neill, with rack for storage of removed parts shown on right.

Memorabilia on sale through the Society or the Connecticut Air & Space Center for application towards the restoration costs.



Pricing for the Corsair items:

Deluxe Mug	\$15
Spotter Mug	10
Hats (Tan or Blue)	15
Mouse Pads	15
Stamps (24/.42c per sheet)	20

Hosts and Hostesses

Annual Report 2008 - Dolores Hoctor

Again this year there was a positive response from our membership when asked to serve as hosts and hostesses during the season from June through October. We attempted to engage as many people as possible. Three of our campers (Emma Simmons, Caroline Drenkard and Christopher Carroll) came with a parent, dressed in costume and actually participated in the tours as did Julie Sharp, a former camper who came with her grandmother, Janet Jacopian. We hope to engage more young people next year.

Several of those hosting were new including Basil Nasto, Antoinette LaReau, Joan Naples, Donna Reynolds, Molly Brown, Patricia Caray and Pam Hutchinson .

Most who contributed their time were people we have depended upon for several years. Bob Hoctor was prevailed upon to fill in many times when there were cancellations at short notice. Some hostesses came more than once including Mary Evers, Dorothy Bobko, Ann Eisinger, Barbara Reid and Stephany Kirik.

The remaining hostesses included Shirley Balascak, Marge Jacaruso, Nancy Goodrich, Lucille DeMarco, Diane Drenkard, Heather Simmons, Janet Jacopian, Florence and Dick Steele, Antoinette Carroll, Linda Woods, Marie Blake and Gail Liscio.

Without the help of all of these volunteers we would not have been able to open the house on the Wednesdays and Sundays scheduled. The times were scheduled a month at a time and each volunteer received a reminder call the day before.

To thank the volunteer hosts and hostesses, and docents Dave Schroeder, Gail Bowman and Joanne Dimenno, docents Rudy Mastroianni, Diane Matthews, Barbara Firisin and Dolores Hoctor and the Society held a reception on November 2, 2008, the Sunday after the closing, which was attended by about three fourths of everyone involved in the season.

Rudy Mastroianni showed a CD of photographs taken at this year's History Camp which Sandy Rutkowski, the camp's leader, was kind enough to narrate to inform members not involved of another facet of the Society's work.

November Membership Meeting

Presenting a program on Presidents and First Ladies from the years of those presiding over the early Continental Congresses to current times, with interesting footnotes on their lives, Bob Berthelson kept the attention of an appreciative audience.



Scholarship Awards

The Stratford Historical Society will again be accepting applications for \$1,000 scholarships to be given to high school seniors who reside in Stratford.

Applicants must have a favorable academic record and a strong interest in history through participation in U. S. history related activities.

Applications have been sent to the various high schools, or the Society may be contacted to obtain an application.

Historical Trolley Tour of Lordship

Saturday, June 13, 9am-4pm

Six historic stops plus specialty venues including antique cars, specialty foods, marketplace, concerts, lectures, Christmas in June

\$10 per person, \$20 per family

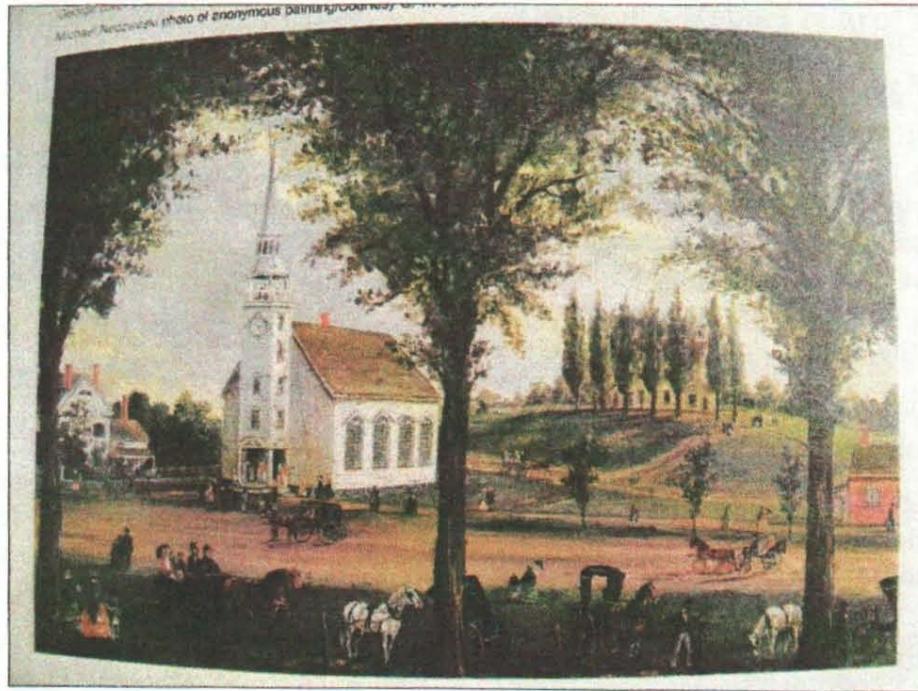
Contact Lordship Historical Tour,

21 1/2 Prospect Drive, Stratford 06615

January 30, 1948

Gandhi Assassinated

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement, is assassinated in New Delhi by a Hindu fanatic.



Christ Episcopal Church depicted about 1850, with Lovejoy's Tavern on the left, and Academy Hill and the old Stratford Academy on the Hill and the red brick New South School at the foot of the hill. (*In Pursuit of Paradise*)

Stratford Historical Society

(203) 378-0630

967 Academy Hill

P.O.Box 382

Stratford, CT 06615-0382



An
Early
Ice
Storm
1/7/09

COMPUTER CORNER

e-mail us at: Judsonhousestfd@aol.com

Fax: 203-378-2562

On the Web: www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.com

Stratford Historical Society Governing Board Meeting
February 23, 2009 7:00pm
 Please call 203-378-0630 for information