
Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume XIV Issue 1

September 2009



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

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday September 25, 2009 - 7:00pm

Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street, Stratford

Mike Kachuba's It Happened In Connecticut



Mike Kachuba is a songwriter and performer of both traditional and contemporary folk music of America and the British Isles. Mike's experience as a classroom teacher and a CCT Master Teaching Artist helps him reach audiences of all ages in a relaxed and humorous style. The Connecticut Commission on the Arts has honored Mike as the 1999 Connecticut State Troubadour.



Gustave Whitehead



Leatherman

Tonight, Mike celebrates the “lesser known”, yet interesting people who have contributed to Connecticut's colorful past. Meet Goody Bassett, the witch of Stratford; Jack Arabas, the slave who was given his freedom in a New Haven court of law opening the door for others to gain their freedom as well; John Hinson, the first man to escape from Granby's Newgate Prison; Dinny Seidel, a fisherman who became a hero after the hurricane of 1938; Gustave Whitehead, who some believe was the first man to fly an airplane; the “Leatherman” one of the first folk legends in the state; and many more! Many instruments of historic nature and lessons on respect and character development in this educational and entertaining program.

Last with us in 2005, we are pleased to have Mike back for this return engagement.

The meeting is open to the Public
Refreshments will be served — Bring a Friend

Rudy Mastroianni, President

Borrowing from the theme of the UPDATE: A Hand on the PAST >> An Eye to the future; serves as the theme for this month. Since the May Newsletter several good activities were accomplished at your Society.

The Judson House reopened for public tours in May. Since then, school tours (see photo, p.6) were given and an open house held on Stratford Day. The summer *History Camp* of July 6 through July 10 on the Society's grounds was another outstanding success with the attendance of 17 campers (see photos, p.6). Congratulations to the campers who received certificates into the Stratford Junior Historical Society. They will now, if they wish, become involved in the Historical Society's ongoing programs and learn more about Judson House and the early settlers of our community. They all agreed that they had a great time and several expressed interest to return in 2010. A great gift idea for children or grandchildren: think of enrolling them for History Camp 2010. Call the Office for more information.

The Camp which is an annual activity open to young people in the community was organized and supervised by Sandy Rutkowski (Director), Diane Matthews, Dolores Hctor, Joanne Dimenno, Kerry Rutkowski and Amanda DeBiase, with the assistance of Dave Schroeder, Joe Dimenno and Rudy Mastroianni.

A Reminder: September is the time to elect the Governing Board, and the beginning of a new membership year. The list of candidates for the 2009-10 Board is shown on page 5. In place of a mail-in card ballot one is printed at the bottom of the page. Please vote your choice of either all the candidates or by writing in names and position (s) in the space provided. Cut and mail it in to the Office. A membership envelope for the 2009-10 year is also enclosed with this Newsletter for your convenience. Please note the new fee for dues approved by the Governing Board at the February 23, 2009 meeting. Additional donations are always gratefully accepted.

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial

Civil War Encampment - Free Admission
Saturday, October 3rd 10 AM - 4 PM
1 Elizabeth Street, Hartford

Stratford Town Criers

News of the organization of the Stratford Town Criers, a group of local men interested in the development of Stratford created great interest in the town today. This interest was increased by the news that the organization will hold its next meeting aboard the Chinese junk Amoy, which has just been purchased by Leroy Lewis, head of the H. J. Lewis Oyster Company, and one of the members of the new organization.

Sentiment appeared to be agreed that there are great possibilities for development work in Stratford, the object for which the Town Criers has been organized. As there name implies, the Town Criers expect to sing the praises of Stratford as an ideal place for light manufacturing plants, publishing establishments, and other enterprises which require a location not too far distant from the New York market. Although there are but a dozen men in the organization at the present time, it is expected eventually that a much larger organization will be built around this nucleus. It is hoped eventually to take in all citizens interested in the development of the town.

Stratford at the present time has many fine residences but few business enterprises, the result is that the town is dependent upon Bridgeport for its prosperity. It is believed that by inducing business men and manufacturers to locate their plants in Stratford, the town's economic standing will be vastly improved. The town has a zoning ordinance, so there is no danger of factories being built in residential sections. There are however many acres of land in the town set aside for industrial zones, and the plan is to put these industrial zones to good use by getting acceptable factories and light manufacturing plants to locate here.

The Bridgeport Telegram-Sept.1924

Note from Rebecca Arkenberg

The Stratford Historical Society is on FaceBook. Become a fan and join the discussions on Solomon Plant's spinning wheels, Silas Burton's woven carpet figures, and the house garden. See history campers weaving, learning about silhouettes, and displaying their finished birdhouses and quill pen writings. Fans of the SHS on FaceBook will receive reminders of meetings, special events, and updates on the Society's activities.

The Constitution State

John Fiske, the historian, claimed that The Fundamental Orders of 1638-39 comprised the first written constitution in history. Though this claim has been disputed by some, it remains a landmark document. It is thought that many of the features of the Federal Constitution were drawn from this document. The General Assembly designated Connecticut "The Constitution State" in 1959.

The last of the mighty Elm Street Elms

Located at Elm Street and Stratford Avenue, it had a diameter of 4 1/2 feet to 6 feet 8 inches and a circumference of 18 feet 2 inches. (The measures were taken by Gordon Beach and Andy Nelson)



May Membership Meeting

Following presentation of the Society's 3rd Annual Scholarship Awards to five deserving high school seniors who are residents of Stratford, the meeting continued with an evening of *crackin'* good music provided by The Jackson Pike Skiffers, on this occasion comprised of Tressler family members Will, Katie and Dan, plus Katie's brother, David McCann, and Dan Carlucci. Katie and David's father was Donald.



Caitlin Simon, Kimberly McCabe, Sean Morrisroe, Courtney Fitzpatrick & Christian Crosby

The Jackson Pike Skiffers



"Grandmother's Flower Garden" Quilt

This quilt, recently donated by Jane Hill Smith, was handmade by Dorothy Hill Birdseye from fabric pieces cut by her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley B. Hill, in the 1940's.



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 16, 2009. If you wish to nominate a candidate or work on a committee, please come to the September 25, 2009 meeting.

THE PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2009-2010

PRESIDENT* (acting)	Rudy Mastroianni
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT*	Todd Lovell
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT*	Rev. George Birge
RECORDING SECRETARY*	VACANT
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY*	Shirley McCormack
TREASURER*	Robert Hocter
ASSISTANT TREASURER*	Margaret Jacaruso

*Comprise the Executive Committee

Nominating Committee: Governing Board as a whole

DIRECTORS

2007-2010	Rebecca Arkenberg	2008-2011	Rev. George Birge
2009-2012	Shirley McCormack	2009-2012	Judy Kurmay

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS (1st Name Listed)

Accessions/Exhibits	Carol Lovell, Marie Blake
Buildings/Grounds	Todd Lovell
Education	Co - Chairs
School Tours	Dolores Hocter
History Camp	Sandy Rutkowski
Docent Recruitment & Training	Diane Matthews
Finance	Todd Lovell
Hospitality	Pam Hutchinson
House Tours, Hosts & Hostesses	Dolores Hocter
Library	Gloria Duggan, Marie Blake
Membership	Dolores Hocter
Newsletter	Dick Steele, Marie Blake
Program	Marie Blake, Gail Liscio
Publicity	Dorothy Euerle
Town Historian Emeritus	Lewis G. Knapp

Interim Happenings

School Tour (L) and History Camp (C,R) on the Society Grounds



Memorial Day

Garden at Boothe



Stratford Day

Sikorsky Airport Airshow

Broad St. Beautification



Farmer's Market

B-17 Visit



Ballot may be mailed to:
Stratford Historical Society
967 Academy Hill
P.O.Box 382
Stratford, CT 06615-0382

STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2009-2010 ELECTION BALLOT
—FOR ALL CANDIDATES, OR

—FOR ALL CANDIDATES EXCEPT
NOMINATIONS FOR:

POSITION _____ **NAME** _____

POSITION _____ **NAME** _____

MEMBER'S NAME _____

Elm Street looking South - c 1895



Stratford Historical Society

(203) 378-0630

967 Academy Hill

P.O.Box 382

Stratford, CT 06615-0382



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

October 26, 2009 7:00pm

Please call 203-378-0630

for more information