

# Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

Volume XVI Issue 5

May 2012



Capt. David Judson House c 1750

**The Stratford Historical Society Presents  
This Old Hat – Women of American History  
Pat Carver  
Friday, May 25, 2012 - 7:00pm  
Christ Episcopal Church**

"This Old Hat – Women of American History" is a one-woman, tour de force musical performance, bringing to life women in history who helped shape this great country. Entertaining, educational and historically correct, "This Old Hat" combines music, dialogue and song to inspire and delight. Women portrayed include Betsy Ross, Deborah Sampson, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Amelia Earhart. The characters speak directly to the audience and there is some audience participation.



Patty Carver is a singer, actress, teacher and writer with international credits. She has performed in New York, Los Angeles, and London and been seen across the country in Regional, Stock and Dinner Theatre. Among her favorite and critically acclaimed roles are Nellie in

*South Pacific*, Millie in *7 Brides for 7 Brothers* and Maria in *The Sound of Music*. She has written over 30 original musicals for young audiences that have been produced for national tours and NY productions. She is also co-author and featured performer in the internationally acclaimed hit, *Definitely Doris, The Music of Doris Day*.



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The Stratford Historical Society will honor our five 2012 Scholarship winners at the beginning of the evening. Please come celebrate the achievements of these young people.

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

**Rudy Mastroianni, President**

Ah... Spring when Mother Nature comes to life! As our members should expect it's the same for the Society in many ways. Our attention turns to the indoors and the outdoors. The doors to the Judson House and Catharine B. Mitchell Museum were opened during April and May for school tours to 5th grades focusing on the Revolutionary War period. In the fall, 3rd grade students will gain some experience about the type of life that Stratford townspeople endured during early Colonial days. This very active tour schedule is made possible by the dedicated team of Docents, ten of which were added by Dolores Hoctor's 2012 recruitment effort, who were trained in time to participate.

The Constitution/Bylaws Review Committee completed their review. A draft copy with their proposed amendments was distributed to the Governing Board at the April 30 meeting. A review of the document was initiated and will be resumed at the June 25 meeting. The Board was tasked to continue their independent review during the interim and feedback comments to the Committee. We welcome any nominations or comments from the Society's members.

Tours for the general public will begin on Main Street Festival Day, Saturday June 2 and remain open on Wednesdays and Sundays through Sunday October 26.

The Society has reserved space at the Main Street Festival Day, at which we expect to promote the opening of the Judson House and Museum and to encourage Festival goers to take advantage of the Open House. Members are invited to ask and answer questions about the Society that the public may have.

**An added attraction for our Main Street Festival Day:** I am very pleased to announce that several costumes which were used in Shakespearean plays at the Theatre will be on display in the Museum. Visitors will have the unique opportunity to view them throughout the season. We owe thanks to the Stratford Arts Commission for entrusting the Society with the costumes that for quite some time they have voluntarily served as custodians.

I look forward to being with you at the May 25th General Membership meeting!

**BUMPER CROP**

Want to see a Bumper Crop? Come on down to Judson House and have a look at the gardens - in the dooryard, the courtyard in back and the raised beds in front. There is an amazing collection of flourishing plants all labeled.

Credit for this lovely scene goes to Pat Caseniser, Master Gardener, in charge of selecting and planting specimens, Lori Laput in charge of maintenance and Dolores Hoctor, coordinator. As if that were not enough, credit also goes to Bumper Crop, an organic mix guaranteed to get results (available at Ganim's Garden Center on the Post Road in Fairfield). You, too, can have a Bumper Crop!

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**Another March**

Another March, another docent training course and another cadre of talented volunteers namely Mistress Betty (Minaudo), Mistress Robin (Mojcik) Mistress Lisa (Wierzbicki), Mistress Patty (Siksay), the returning Mistress Arleen (Bernor) as well as Master Dennis (Brunelle), Master Dick (Steele) and Master Dave (McPadden).

Altogether we have thirty working docents and we need every one of them to teach 500 plus fifth graders in the spring about Stratford's part in the American Revolution and 500 plus third graders in the fall about Colonial Life.

The Stratford Historical Society hosts 25 classes of each grade, over 16 tour days in May and October. Generally there are two classes on the same day and each has a two hour tour - an hour in the House and an hour in the Museum with a short visit to the Carriage House in between. The classes then make their way to the Perry House

You are more than welcome to join us. It requires a few hours of instruction, some studying, some practice and a few hours of giving tours twice a year. You would be doing a service to the school children of your community and personal satisfaction in return.

**200 YEARS AGO**

At the age of 85 years, in 1812, the Honorable DOCTOR WILLIAM SAMUEL JOHNSON signer of the United States Constitution, entered the Fairfield County Superior Court, returning from a 27 year absence, and took a seat at the Bar. Still widely respected as the "father of the bar on Connecticut", he was honored with a proclamation later that week, delivered to him at Mrs. Bulkley's home.

## March Meeting

Rick Spencer again entertained society members with a musical walk through the War of 1812, for both the newly minted American views and the British soldiers' perspective.

We were joined at the meeting by District 3 Town Council Representative Matt Catalano and Arts Commission Ed Goodrich, two of the most passionate advocates for the Shakespeare Theater's renaissance, who advised of the project's current status. Mr. Catalano also told of the recovery of a large cache of costumes attributed to the performances at the theatre prior to its closing in 1985. The Theater is a significant part of Stratford's reputation and the Society is pleased to display a small number of the rescued costumes while the Theater's future is considered by the town.

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## Scholarships

The SHS Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that we have selected five students from Stratford to be awarded our annual \$2,000 Stratford Historical Society scholarships. All the entries that were received were excellent and it was very difficult to pick the top five. The following students will receive their awards at the May 25th Membership Meeting.

### 2012 Scholarship Winners

Gretchen Pancak - Stratford High School

Amanda Ocasio - Stratford High School

Daniel Proposki - Stratford High School

Beata Hlinka - Bunnell High School

Colby Clayton - St. Joseph's High School



From left to right: Molly Bailey-Dillon with Council Representative Matt Catalano, Ed Goodrich and Christine Rudney of the Arts Commission , and Society President Rudy Mastroianni.

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## History Camp

History Camp will be from July 9- 13. Hours are 9:00-12:30. Camp is open to children entering 4th grade through High School. The cost is \$125 plus a \$20 Historical Society one year membership which includes the newsletter.

If your child or grandchild is interested please contact the Society by telephone at 203-378-0630, or e-mail at judsonhousestfd@aol.com to hold a spot! Spend a week with us in the 18th century, it will be a lot of fun!



## Book of Remembrance

Donations have been made in

Memory of:

Maury Johnson

James L. O'Sullivan

Charles H. Petrino

Ester Wojtul

Given by:

M/M R. Steele



Paul Hecht and Salome Jens in the 1972 Production of Anthony & Cleopatra at the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy in Stratford.

Items from the 1972 production, along with costumes from the 30 years of shows at the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy, to be exhibited at the

Cathrine Bunnell Mitchell Museum

Summer 2012

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**Upcoming Events:** Call for Information

Costume Preview—June 2nd

Opening Day—June 3rd

Governing Board Meeting—June 25th:

History Camp—July 9th—13th