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# Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

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

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Volume XVIII Issue 4

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

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, March 27 - 7:00pm  
Christ Episcopal Church  
2000 Main Street, Stratford

### The Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg A Journey Through Time



This illustrated lecture compares early paintings and 1920 era photographs with modern pictures of the magnificent restoration work done to bring this city back to life. Frequently, “before” and “after” views are shown with explanations of the work that was required. Often, nineteenth century remodeling had to be removed before restoration could begin. The colonial Capitol and the Governors Palace had to be restored “from the ground up” since all that remained were foundation ruins.

By 1607, a new settlement at Jamestown, in Virginia, became the first successful English colony in America. The discovery of a local strain of tobacco proved to be the life-blood the colony needed to survive. By 1615, exports to England attracted more settlers who built additional plantations along both sides of the James River. Unfortunately, relations with the local natives were often strained. In 1622, all of the James River plantations were burned and many settlers were killed in an Indian uprising. Subsequent political upheavals forced the colonial legislature to establish itself in an area further inland - Williamsburg. Williamsburg soon became the prosperous colonial capital of Virginia. When the American Revolution broke out in 1775, a British warship threatened the government and it was moved to a safer location further west to Richmond. In the late summer of 1781, Williamsburg became a battleground as thousands of American and French troops closed in on the British army a few miles away at Yorktown. Fortunately, a French engineer drew an accurate map of the layout of the city to find quarters for the troops. This map would later prove invaluable in locating many of the buildings that, over the years, were lost to time.

Dr. William Archer Rutherford Goodwin accepted the position of rector of the Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg in 1903. By 1923, realizing that there was a chance to restore an entire city to its former splendor as a monument to colonial America; he contacted John D. Rockefeller and told him of his vision to restore Williamsburg to its former glory. The rest is history.

We welcome back Bob Berthelson for another of his popular presentations. A photographer with a life-long interest in American history and nostalgia, Bob has presented programs to over 2000 Connecticut audiences including libraries, historical societies, schools, social groups, retirement communities and other organizations.

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

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## The Stratford Historical Society is accepting registrations for our annual History Camps

**Camp 1** is scheduled for July 6 through 10. The camp will run from 9:00 am to 12:30 on the grounds of the Captain David Judson House, 967 Academy Hill Road. This camp is for Elementary (grades 4 and up), Middle School and High School students are welcomed to attend.

The week-long camp will offer hands-on activities each day and will explore life in the 1700's, such as cooking, weaving, candle making, schooling as well as other aspects of family life.

Graduation exercises will take place on the final day and campers will conduct tours of Judson House for family members and friends. Campers will become members of the Junior Historical Society and can participate in activities throughout the year.

The fee is \$150 per child and one adult society membership \$20, membership fee is required only for non-members.

The membership includes five newsletters a year, guest speakers, and free admission to Judson House tours during June to the end of October when the house is open to the public on Wednesday and Sunday.

Space is limited and fills up quickly. You can print a registration form from our site -

[stratfordhistoricalsociety.org](http://stratfordhistoricalsociety.org) and send it in, or stop by the office and pick one up.



School Days - Learning to write with a quill and ink.

A walking tour stop at Mac's Harbor where the town began.



**Camp 2, EXPLORING HISTORICAL TOPICS**, will be July 27 - 31, 9:00 am -12:00.

This camp is for Elementary( 5th-6th grade) Middle and High School Students  
COST: History Camp Week: \$150.00 (per child) plus one adult membership: \$20.00 (per family)  
Each day a separate historical topic will be explored and discussed with a related hands-on project.

### TOPICS

- Eastern Woodland Indians
- Native American Re-enactor presenting demos
- Vanishing Milestones - A walking tour of Stratford Jamestown, Virginia
- Customs and Sayings - Why do we say and do that?

To sign up print the registration form at

[stratfordhistoricalsociety.org](http://stratfordhistoricalsociety.org) or call Stratford Historical Society at 203-378-0630.



Weaving blankets.

Making historical Canton china.



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**A Note from the President** = The Governing Board is looking for someone to do the Publicity for the Society. We will show you what has to be done and how to do it. We are also looking for someone to be our Corresponding Secretary. If you are interested in either one of these positions, please contact me at the Society or e-mail me at [shirlmac7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shirlmac7@sbcglobal.net). Hope to hear from you soon. Shirley

## THE SHORT GOWN

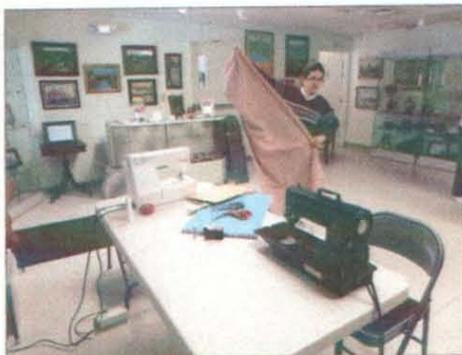
## Keeping Up with the Long Ago Times

This is not the first time the Stratford Historical Society has updated its period dress to conform to the latest thinking about what people wore in colonial times. Until the 1990s docents wore a printed gingham dress, long white apron and a fichu tied around the neck.

Our current outfit was introduced by a re-enactor who was also involved in school tours. This one includes: a shift (chemise), petticoat (skirt), bodice (vest) and mobcap (hat). Facts in recent literature have caused us to modify our current clothing somewhat by either using a short gown (jacket), or the bodice we have been using.

One cold and snowy winter day in early March, a group of diligent docents: Laureen Pekar, Joanne Gallagher, Liz Rivera, Eileen Salamon, Gail Liscio, Carolyn Shannon, Pam Hutchinson, Nancy Sirois and Dolores Hockett gathered in the Society's Museum for a Sewing Bee. With work tables set up for cutting, sewing machines assembled for stitching and the iron ready for pressing, the ladies, using purchased patterns, set to work with scissors, pins and thread to assemble the garments under the expert eye of Laureen Pekar.

All the ladies had to bring was fabric and matching thread. Volunteers did the rest, working on their own short gown or on that of someone who needed help. We hope to hold another session to make additional gowns from donated fabric that can be borrowed from our period dress collection.





Oronoque Post Office was in the wing of this 1786 era home located about where the Sunoco gas station now sits.

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**Upcoming Events: Call for Information**

April 6 - Governing Board Meeting - 1pm

May 29 - General Membership Meeting - 7pm