



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

Stratford Historical Society Update

VOLUME XX, ISSUE 5

MAY 2016

MARK THE DATES:

- Judson House opens for the season June 5th at noon
- September's General Membership Meeting: September 30th at 7:00 pm at Christ Church
- Historical Society Governing Board Meeting: Monday, May 23rd & June 27th at 1:00pm

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- WWII Exhibit 2
- Cleaning Judson House 2
- State Open House Day 2
- Stiles Judson Monument 3
- Town Hall Cornerstone 3
- Dateline Stratford 4
- 1928 Insights 5
- Docent Training 5
- Summer History Camp 6

May's General Membership Meeting

May 27th, 7:00 pm, Christ Church

Perhaps women and girls need to be reminded of how far we've come in order to see how far we still can go.

Discover what life was really like for New England's colonial women - because we've always been curious about: menstruation, sex & birth control, childbirth, sickness & medicine. For instance, in an era when underwear hadn't been invented, what did women do when they had their periods? What were early American birth control methods? It was suggested that women try jumping backwards seven times

after intercourse to expel sperm, drink water that blacksmiths used to cool metals, or insert a mixture of dried crocodile dung and honey into the vagina.

The Not-So-Good Life of The Colonial Goodwife not only makes audience members laugh and grimace, but it also honors our foremothers. It's not about quilting bees and spinning wheels - it's an interactive presentation about the little-known issues faced by New England's colonial women.

Moving into a 1770 Connecticut farmhouse ignited Velya's

interest in the colonial era.

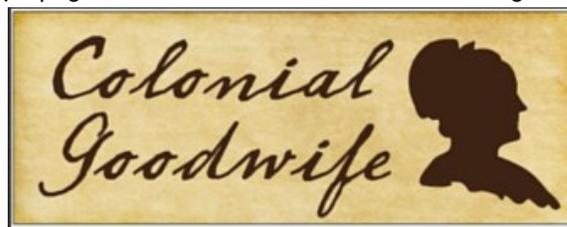


Velya Jancz-Urban

While researching her novel, *Acquiescence*, she became obsessed (in a good way) with everyday colonial women.

Even history buffs will learn a thing or two during this interactively-amusing presentation. Read more at

<http://www.colonialgoodwife.com>



A Thing of Beauty and Fragrance

One of the hidden treasures in Stratford is the garden behind Judson House. Once the cold and snow of winter have made way for the sun and rain of spring, those brave and hardy little herbs and perennials wake up and as summer approaches, they fill the garden with their blooms and foliage and fresh clean scents.



Unassuming astilbe bearing feathery plumes of palest pink.

A World War II exhibit at the Stratford Historical Society



Photo of U.S. Marines chow time in the Pacific

The Stratford Historical Society is planning to create an exhibit to honor members of our Armed Forces from Stratford who served in World War II.

We are looking for a variety of WWII memorabilia. We have need of items such as equipment, photographs, etc., which would be put on display

in our museum.

If you have anything related to World War II, you could either donate or loan these items to the Stratford Historical Society.

Get in touch with the Stratford Historical Society at 203-378-0630. We are located at 967 Academy Hill Road.



WWII U.S. Army 24th Infantry Division Patch

When all is in readiness, let the tours begin!

Hurray, Hurray for Cleaning Day

Judson House gets its annual cleaning sometime in mid-April each year in preparation for School Tours. Cobwebs are whisked away, furniture is carefully dusted with a dry cloth and the floors are mopped both under and behind furniture. Collected dust and dirt is swept up with dustpan and brush, and windows are washed.



Dennis Brunelle

All of this is done by a team of volunteer docents who not

only take pride in guiding students on tours, but in the appearance of our beautiful eighteenth century Judson House furnished with rare and valuable artifacts from Stratford families and maintained by the Stratford Historical Society.

When all is in readiness, let the tours begin.

Open House Day

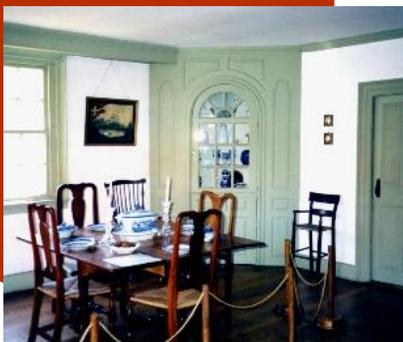
The Stratford Historical Society will participate for the first time this year in a statewide event:

Open House Day. The purpose is to showcase Connecticut's diverse world of history, art and tour-

ism to Connecticut residents.

The Judson House at 967 Academy Hill Road will be open to all visitors for a free walk through of the beautiful and historic eighteenth century mansion from 12:00 until 3:00 with docents in costume stationed in each room. They will be ready to greet you, talk

about the House, the authentic artifacts that furnish it, the Judson family and what life was like in the 1700s.



Stiles Judson Monument Centennial

The Hartford Times
(Hartford, CT)
Saturday, July 22, 1916

JUDSON MEMORIAL.

Monument Erected to Memory of Former state Official Completed in Stratford.

Stratford, July 22.-The Judson memorial fountain is completed and within a few days, when the street is graded at the base and the drain put in, it will be put in complete operation and turned over to the town of Stratford as a monument in memory of the late Stiles Judson.

The fountain stands at the east angle of the plot of ground on West Broad street. nearly opposite the A. B. Benjamin home, and fronts St. James' church. From the base to the tip of the bill of the bronze sea gull on top, it is ten feet high. It is made of Deer Island granite, and it has the appearance of solidity and endurance. There

are two founts for horses, that form the arms of the monument. The basins closer to the ground are for dogs. Just over the dog basin is a small flow of water, which is for humans.

On the face of the main shaft over all the drinking basins is a bronze medallion, that is a striking likeness of the late Mr. Judson. Beneath the profile and at the bottom of the medallion is the following

STILES JUDSON

LEFT TO HIS NATIVE TOWN.

On the reserve side of the shaft and carved in the granite is the following:

.....
STRATFORD HONORS ITSELF BY ACCEPTING THIS MEMORIAL FROM STILES JUDSON.

A GIFTED SON, A PUBLIC OFFICIAL TRUE TO EVERY TRUST, AN ABLE LAWYER, AND A LOYAL CITIZEN .

.....
The sculptor is Bela Lyon Pratt of

Boston. Examples of his work are The Nathan Hale statue on the college green in New Haven and the Governor Winthrop statue at New London.

A feature of the Judson memorial is the bronze sea gull at the top of the shaft. There is an interesting story in connection with it. On one of Mr. Judson's trips to Europe there were as usual a flock of sea gulls about the boat. The passengers on the boat threw food to them. Several attempted to get the birds to take food from their hands. In this, Mr. Judson alone succeeded.

One sea gull would swoop down and take food from his hand as often as he offered it. This incident attracted notice among the passengers and gave Mr. Judson a great satisfaction.



Stiles Judson Monument at the foot of West Broad Street c 1916

Town Hall Cornerstone Laid 80 Years Ago

The Bridgeport Post
May 11, 1936

LAY CORNERSTONE OF STRATFORD HALL

Farley, PWA Chief, Officiate with Town Officials and Citizens.

The cornerstone of the new Stratford Town Hall was placed yesterday by William J. Farley, State administrator for the PWA, at ceremonies that were opened by Town Manager William H. Shea. Clergymen of all churches, members of the town council, town officials and the architect each placed a trowelful of mortar under the stone after Farley.

Town Clerk W. Howard Wilcoxson described the articles placed in the copper box which will be sealed

within the stone. The articles in the box include a copy of the State manual for 1935 with its Tercentenary history of the state, an old one dollar bill from Councilman Herman A. Leveen, a copy of the first report of the Stratford Historical society, map of the town, a copy of the Bridgeport Sunday Post, town reports from 1921 to 1935, a brief history of the town from Okenuk tribe of Red Men, pictures of the building and photographs of the old site with its form buildings standing.

Also, a record of all town officials and town employees of 1935, the Cupheag Social club gold jubilee program, photographs of the Sikorsky S-42 flying boat and the S-43 amphibian with a history of their record flights, a town charter, pic-

tures of the town hall of 1844 and 1872 and the present building and several silver coins minted in 1889 for the Soldiers and Sailors monument.



William J. Farley, state PWA administrator, throws the first trowel of mortar...Officials directly behind him are C. Wellington Walker (architect), Town Manager William H. Shea, Council Chairman Vernon S. Morehouse, and Town Clerk W. Howard Wilcoxson. (Photo by Al Mathewson of The Bridgeport Telegram, May 11, 1936)

Dateline Stratford April-May 1951



New ambulance for Stratford—Harry Flood and Council Chair Frank Larkin accept keys from James Cochrane. (The Stratford News, April 20th, 1951)



Mrs. Robert Brockway and Mrs. Frank Sammis prepare for the 25th anniversary of the Stratford Historical Society. (The Stratford News, June 1, 1951)

Sunday Herald 4/01/1951 Plants Lose Key Workers to Avco

Many Bridgeport area plants are threatened with the loss of key personnel, including trained supervisory workers, as soon as the Bridgeport Lycoming division of Avco Manufacturing Co. begins operations, The Herald learned this week...Nine out of every 10 who apply for jobs are employed in another factory. They want to be on the ground floor of a new enterprise.

Sunday Herald 4/08/1951 \$64 Question: Ray Baldwin Plans Political Comeback?

Stratford's favorite son, who has served Connecticut as Governor for six years, U.S. Senator for three, and in his present role as Supreme Court Justice for 16 months, has been more in the public eye than most members of the five-main Supreme Court panel...The revelation that Baldwin was leaving the Senate—thus allowing appointment of a Democrat to replace him—aroused

such a furor among Republicans that the matter was reconsidered.

Sunday Herald 4/22/1951 Corsairs Clean Up in Tilt with Yaks

Tokyo, (UP) - Carrier-based Marine Corsairs fought their first air battle of the Korean War yesterday and made a clean sweep against Communist planes outnumbering the two to one.

Two Corsairs shot down three Yaks and probably destroyed a fourth in a short but deadly dogfight over the Chinampo area of the Korean West coast below Pyongyang.

Sunday Herald 4/22/1951 Housing Problems Eyed of Town Council Heads

The housing problem in Stratford, which poses the question as to whether there'll be Federal housing or private garden apartments, provides interesting food for thought.

On the one hand, Avco, as represented by Eil Elliott at the council meeting, wants some kind of housing; if not garden

apartments then Federal.

While on the other, the council, and many interested citizens don't want a repetition of Woodend and Stonybrook.

Sunday Herald 4/29/1951 Raybestos General Manager Denies Plant to Move West

Reports that a great part of the Raybestos division will be moved to its new plant in Crawfordsville, Ind., were denied this week by Ass. Gen. Mgr. William S. Simpson of the Stratford unit.

Simpson said only one man—a junior engineer—would be transferred. Another will work in Crawfordsville for the organizational period and then come back to the Connecticut operation, he said.

Raybestos, a division of Raybestos-Manhattan, will make metal products for General Walker tanks at both the Stratford and the Indiana locations. The company is spending a half million dollars expanding the Stratford plant.

Stratford Theater



April 1st

Operation Pacific

John Wayne, Patricia Neal

April 8th

Great Missouri Raid

Wendell Corey, MacDonald Carey

April 15th

Lullaby of Broadway

Doris Day, Gene Nelson, Billy DeWolf

April 22nd

Raton Pass

Dennis Morgan, Patricia Neal, Steve Cochran

April 29th

September Affair

Joan Fontaine, Joseph Cotten

May 5th

You're in the Navy Now

Gary Cooper, Jane Greer

May 13th

Lemon Drop Kid

Bob Hope, Marilyn Maxwell

May 20th

I Was a Communist for the FBI

Frank Lovejoy, Dorothy Hart

May 26th

I Can Get It For You Wholesale

Susan Hayward, Dan Dailey

Some insights from 1928

From *The Bridgeport Post*
January 12th, 1928

STRATFORD—Louise E. Parson, 16 year old school girl, elopes but pains of homesickness assail her in South Orange, N. J., and she tells parents on telephone that she “wants to go home.” Her father says, “she didn’t say anything to him when she left and he hasn’t anything to say about her coming back.”

From *The Bridgeport Post*,
January 13th, 1928

Former Town Clerk Harold C. Lovell, long an advocate of a return to the old town meeting form of government, has come to the conclusion that Stratford has grown so rapidly during the past few years, that a city form of government is what the town needs now if any change is made.

“If I were to have my say, I’d do away with the council-manager form of government, and call in some man like Elliott W. Peck to sit

for a while as a sort of a receiver or dictator,” said Harold. “Of course I’d fire most of the hired help to cut down expenses until the town’s indebtedness has been reduced. Then I’d institute a city form of government, where we could elect our own mayor, our aldermen, our dog inspector, cat inspector, and peach inspector, burn plenty of red fire on election night, and on the morning after, forget politics until the next election day rolled around.”



Harold C. Lovell
One time Town Clerk, Businessman and Community Leader

Docent Training

Friday, April 15 was a beautiful day for a walking tour to Mac’s Harbor to complete the 2016 docent training. Twelve docents participated in the tour conducted annually for docents by Sandy Rutkowski, Assistant Director of the Stratford Historical Society and longtime docent herself.

The walk began from Judson House, along Elm Street to Stratford Avenue headed toward the water.

The first item of interest was Selby’s Pond, created by a glacier that provided the first settlers with fresh water until it became brackish with salt water infiltrating from the Sound.

At Bond’s Dock there was evidence of the oyster industry in a building where oysters were stored and later home of Lew Knapp, author of *In Pursuit of Paradise*. Passing the Shakespeare Theater

the Shore Road led to Mac’s Harbor, named for Mac who in later days calcined oyster shells to be made into plaster for the walls of colonial homes.

Originally called Sandy Hollow, it was the first area inhabited by the seventeen families that accompanied Adam Blakeman from Wethersfield to found a new community. Here the earliest colonists built their homes, a church with a bell and a tide mill. They farmed the surrounding fields and buried their dead in the first burying ground.

Back on Elm Street the group passed the Beach family homes and the area that once was graced by the Phelps Mansion with a story of its own.



Left to right: Sandy Rutkowski, Linda Woods, Carolyn Shannon, Christine Lesko, Shirley Clevenger Dennis Brunelle, Dolores Hctor, Tom Vos, and Joanne Gallagher



Silted in Sandy Harbor where the first settlers made their homes

We’re always looking for new Docents. Please contact Dolores Hctor if you would like more information

Stratford Historical Society Summer Camps

The Stratford Historical Society is accepting registrations for our annual **STEP BACK IN TIME** history camp scheduled July 11 through 15. The camp will run from 9:00 to 12:30 on the grounds of the Captain David Judson House, 967 Academy Hill Road. Elementary (grades 4 and up), Middle School and High School students are welcomed to attend. Groups are arranged according to age.

The week long camp will offer hands on activities each day and will explore life in the 1700's. Related hands on activities include weaving, candle making, churning our own butter, writing with quills as well as other crafts related to family life.

Graduation exercises will take place on the final day. Campers will conduct tours of Judson House, in period costumes from our costume

department, for family members and friends. This will be followed by a picnic on our grounds for all that attend. 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 only applies for non-members. The membership is good for one year and 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.

Also offered is our camp for 5th grade through high school called **EXPLORING HISTORICAL TOPICS**. Offered July 25-29. Cost is \$150 and one \$20 family membership to the society. This member-

ship fee applies to non-members and is good for one year. The same benefits as above.

TOPICS: Vikings, Salem Witch Trials, Connecticut History, Famous American Artists and walking tour to see the towns historical buildings and places. There will be hands on projects to go along with each topic.

Space is limited in both camps and camps fill up quickly. You may print a registration form from our website

www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.org and send it in or stop by the office and pick one up. You may call now to hold a space at 203-378-0630, but payment must be paid by June 1st to hold the spot.



Stratford Historical Society

967 Academy Hill

P.O. Box 382

Stratford, CT 06615

Phone: (203) 378-0630

Fax: (203) 378-2562

E-mail: judsonhousestfd@aol.com

newsletters@stratfordhistoricalsociety.info

**The best we can do about the past is to
keep the memories alive!**

www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.org