



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

# Stratford Historical Society UPDATE

VOLUME XXI, ISSUE 5

MAY 2017

## MARK THE DATES:

- Historical Society Governing Board Meeting: Monday, June 26th at 1:00pm
- Historical Society Governing Board Meeting: Monday, August 28th at 1:00pm
- September's General Membership Meeting: Saturday, September 23rd at 1:00 pm at the Stratford Library
- Civil War Re-enactment at Academy Hill Saturday, September 30th.

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## May's General Membership Meeting

May 20th, 1:00-4:00 pm, Christ Episcopal Church, 2000 Main Street

Stratford Historical Society will host the showing of Ed Brinsko's photographs.

Free to the public. Refreshments afterward. Donations welcomed.

Ed Brinsko was a life-long Bridgeport resident and worked for The Post Publishing Company for 43 years. He was a photographer who was also a son, a brother, a husband, a father, an uncle, a neighbor, and a friend. Few people he knew escaped his camera.

Ed created a tremendous his-



Ed Brinsko as a young man.

toric collection of photographs in the greater Bridgeport area. Several will be shown in this exhibit.

There will be a 14 minute showing of Ed's still photographs at 1:30 by **Connecticut Post** Editorial Page Editor, Michael Daly, who will lead an interactive discussion about Ed's work. Questions and comments from the audience about the pictures are welcomed.

All meetings are free and open to the general public. Please bring a friend! Donations are gratefully accepted.

## Open House Day

The Stratford Historical Society will participate for the second time in a statewide event: **Open House Day**. Open House Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 10th. The purpose is to showcase Connecticut's diverse world of history, art, and tourism 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. Docents, in costume, will be stationed in each room of the house. 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.



## Moving Our Meetings to the Library

As a reminder, our General Membership Meetings are being moved to the **Lovell Room** at the Stratford Library. September's

meeting will be held at 1:00 PM on September 23rd in the Lovell Room at the Library. Below, you will find a calendar of all

our upcoming General Membership Meetings which will all be held in the Lovell Room at the Stratford Library.

### 2017

Saturday	September 23rd	1:00 PM
Saturday	November 18th	1:00 PM

We're Moving!



## An UPDATE Newsletter in July?

That's right! As shocking as it may seem, we've not published a July **UPDATE** since July 1969. To help keep costs down, and, because there is no General Membership Meeting during the summer months, the July **UPDATE** was canceled for 1970 and moving forward until NOW.

With the advent of the worldwide web, we can publish and distribute newsletters without adding cost to the Historical Society's expenses.

Therefore, July's **UPDATE** will **ONLY** be available in an electronic format. On July 28th, we'll publish the **UPDATE** on the homepage of

[www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info](http://www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info). You'll also be able to download the July **UPDATE** at [july.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info](http://july.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info).

If you'd prefer to have us e-mail you the July **UPDATE**, please send your request to [newsletters@stratfordhistoricalsociety.info](mailto:newsletters@stratfordhistoricalsociety.info).



## An Historical Walk June 3rd

June 3rd is the date of this year's **Main Street Festival**. It also marks **National Trails Day**. In keeping with both of those celebrations, the Stratford Recreation Department, and the Historical Society, are co-sponsoring a history walk

which will begin at the Judson House at 1pm.

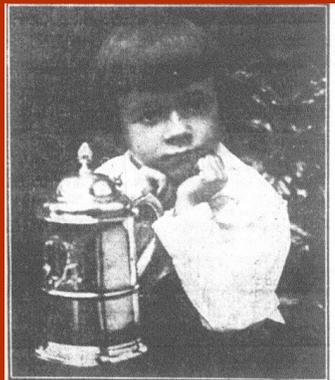
The walk will progress through the historical sites and homes on Academy Hill, down Elm Street to Stratford Avenue, on to Bond's Dock and the Shakespeare Theatre.

The walk will return to the Judson House via Elm Street and run approximately 2 hours in duration. **Main Street Festival** begins at 10am and continues until 5pm.

## Harold Lovell's Paul Revere Tankard

**Bridgeport Herald**  
April 15, 1917

**Paul Revere's Memory  
Calls Upon Every Man to  
Stand by His Colors**



Harold Lovell Jr. of Stratford, Conn., and silver tankard made by Paul Revere, which the boy inherited from the effects of his great-great-great grandfather, Maj. Ezra Beaman, a Revolutionary hero.

...For the past three weeks sixty-five men of Stratford have been drilling twice a week on the second floor of the Stratford Town Hall. Gathered together by Judge Howard W. Curtis, Harold C. Lovell and George A. Bateman, they called themselves the Stratford Coast Artillery, but since Governor Holcomb has refused to permit the continuance of private companies, these Stratford men will doubtless soon become a part of the state militia. While they have been learning under the supervision of Earl Garlick and Ralph Beers to shoulder and present arms or whatever it is the new recruits commence with, there has been lying below them in the town vault a relic of Paul Revere's own handiwork.

A large silver tankard, engraved with a coat of arms, the name "REVERE" and the mysterious initials "S. N. E.," it was handed down through generations to Town Clerk Harold C. Lovell from his great-great-great grandfather, Major Ezra Beaman.

This cup is now on exhibition in a window of G. W. Fairchild & Sons' jewelry store, where it cannot fail to stir the imagination of whoever stops to look. For the very hands that fashioned and engraved it held fast to the bridle of the horse whose hurrying hoofbeats struck out a spark, which "Kindled the land into flame with its heat."

Mr. Lovell was once offered \$1,000 for this tankard, but he refused to let it pass from the family and it is now the property of his small son and namesake, aged seven.

Major Ezra Beaman, one of the most influential men of his

community when he died in 1811, was a captain of militia at Shrewsbury, Mass., at the beginning of the Revolution. For years he was one of the selectmen of his town and either in his capacity as member of the Committee of Inspection of the Committee of Correspondence and Safety or as a prosecutor of persons inimically disposed toward the Colonies, he may have come into close contact with Paul Revere during the period while the latter was acting as "Mercury of the Revolution." Search has failed to reveal, however, just how or when Ezra Beaman came into possession of the tankard made by Paul Revere.

This article contains many very interesting historical details of the Revolutionary War era. Read the article in its entirety on our website at [revere.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info](http://revere.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info).

# Dateline Stratford April - May 1952

**The Bridgeport Post**

April 1, 1952

**Avco Dedicates First Aircraft Engine to Korea Hero**

Governor John Lodge lauds Connecticut industry in his address in the Stratford plant of the Bridgeport-Lycoming division, Avco Manufacturing company, at ceremonies yesterday marking completion of the first aircraft engine for the U. S. Air Force. The engine was dedicated to Pfc. William H. Hoiles, III, a Marine killed in Korea, and to his father, William H. Hoiles, Jr. an Avco employee.

**The Bridgeport Post**

April 3, 1952

**Nipponese War Bride Captures Stratford Fort Single-Handed**

Stratford welcomed its first Japanese war bride yesterday.

Tomiko Tannabe Knapp, wife of Sgt. Peter Knapp, of 295 Roosevelt street, Stratford, arrived at the home of her in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Knapp, Tuesday.

**The Bridgeport Post**

April 4, 1952

**STRATFORD C OF C HITS LOCHNER LINE**

**Directors Vote for Southern Route Crossing Great Salt Meadows**

The board of directors of the Stratford Chamber of Commerce last night unanimously voted in favor of "a southern route for the all-purpose throughway through Stratford."

At the same time, the Chamber directors unanimously condemned the so-called Lochner line as being "extremely injurious to the Town of Stratford."

The group did not pinpoint the southern route favored but said that generally "it should cross the Great Salt Meadows, bridge Nells Island and on to Devon."

**Sunday Herald**

April 6, 1952

**Stratford Students Strive for School Operetta Roles**

Excitement is really in the air these days at Stratford High School. The entire student body, and faculty too, is bustling through the corridors, each individual striving to carry out his part in the mass production.

The big event attracting this attention is the operetta, "Pirates of Penzance," to be given next month in the high school auditorium. The popular Gilbert and Sullivan production, in two acts, will be presented by the students on the evenings of May 9 and 10.

**The Stratford News**

April 10, 1952

**Father's Club Smoker**

The Lordship Father's club will hold its first annual "Smoker," Wednesday, April 16, at 8:00 p.m. at the Father's Club hall, Pauline street. Principal speaker will be George "Kiddo" Davis, former New York Giant and Philadelphia baseball player.

Other entertainment will include five exhibition boxing bouts by members of the Stratford P. A. L. and moving pictures of the Globetrotters pro ballteam. Refreshments will be served.

Invited guests will be the Rev. Buckner Coe, Rev. John F. X. Walsh, Mr. Frederick Cowles, Mr. Theodore Jorkenson and F. "Porky" Viera, Central High school basket-

ball ace. Martin Tristine will serve as toastmaster.

**Sunday Herald**

April 13, 1952

**HERE'S SOME REAL 'DIRT' Record Land Deal: .8 Square Foot**

In the double-A zone of Stratford, where one can build on no less than an acre, ground was sold by the spoonful last week.

The State of Connecticut paid \$1 to Henry and Pansy Bennett of Main St. and Oronoque La. For a "parcel" amounting to eight tenths of one square foot.

This acreage is undeveloped woodland on the right-of-way on the Merritt Pkwy.

Town Clerk W. Howard Wilcoxson, who registered the deed, said it was the smallest realty transaction in the history of the city.

**Sunday Herald**

May 18, 1952

**Stratford Hi Students Look to AA Dance**

It is again time for June to bring Farewells to school and its activities. These activities will be sadly missed by the students - especially the dances.

At Stratford High School the many school dances are to be climaxed with the dance of dances - the AA dance.

Each year the Athletic Assn. sponsors the last dance of the year, which is looked forward to by the students.

May 24, this Saturday, is to be the date of the awaited dance this year. It will be on this evening that the students will dance to the music of Bob Noltings' band in the new gym.



Sterling House Fashion Show. L-R: Alyce Lagerfeldt, Doris Lagerfeldt, Michele Kuhar, Suzanne Loxsom, Andrea Kuhar, Eleanor Dixon, Dolores Weise. Photo from **The Stratford News**, April 10, 1952.



Stratford High Student Council members (l-r) Tom Karwin, Al Burt, Barbara Collins. Photo from **The Stratford News**, April 10, 1952.



St. James Guild Officers L-R: Mrs. William Madden, Josephine Dineen, Marguerite Sheehan, Mrs. Thomas Clark. Photo from **The Stratford News**, April 24, 1952.

## Now Showing April - May 1952

April 6th	<b>Streetcar Named Desire</b>	Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter
April 13th	<b>Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs</b>	(Disney Animation)
April 20th	<b>Quo Vadis</b>	Robert Taylor, Deborah Kerr, Leo Genn
April 27th	<b>Jack and the Beanstalk</b>	Abbott & Costello
May 4th	<b>At Sword's Point</b>	Cornel Wilde, Maureen O'Hara
May 11th	<b>Lion and the Horse</b>	Steve Cochran, Wild Fire
May 18th	<b>Las Vegas Story</b>	Victor Mature, Jane Russell
May 25th	<b>David and Bathsheba</b>	Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward



# Fire at Shakespeare Theatre



**BARD BUILDING FIRE—** Stratford firefighters kept this fire at the administration building...under control...Officials said the fire started when a torch used by a workman to remove paint from the building ignited the woodframe structure.

## **THE BRIDGEPORT TELEGRAM**

Thursday, April 13, 1967  
**\$12,000 Fire Hits Office Building of Bard Theater**

Fire caused an estimated \$12,000 in damages to the administration building of the American Shakespeare Festival theater on Elm street, Stratford, yesterday, after officials said a torch used by a workman to remove paint from the building ignited the wood frame structure.

### **Theater Not Endangered**

The Shakespeare theater itself, approximately 1,000 feet from the office building was not endangered, fire officials said, and rehearsals at the

theater continued despite (he activity a short distance away.

Fire officials said the fire was believed to have started when a painter was using a blow-torch to burn paint off the building. Flames spread to a third-floor storage area.

All personnel who had been working in the building were evacuated, and firemen used the snorkel to gain access to the roof where flames, which whipped their way through the siding, threatened to break out.

Apparatus answering the alarm were engines one, two, five, snorkel one and emergency one of headquarters company, commanded by Chief Theodore S. Lockwood and Assistant Chiefs Hans Lundgren and

Fred Wilcoxson.

### **\$12,000 Loss Estimated**

Fire officials estimated damage to the office building at \$8,000 and damage to the contents, which included many costumes used in productions of the Shakespeare theater was set at \$4,000.

Chief Lockwood said the fire did not spread to the attic, but began with a painter's torch being used on the siding to burn paint from the exterior of the building.

Fire officials said insulation paper underneath the siding carried the flames upward, burned out a second floor closet and filled the attic with smoke. Fire did not spread to the roof, firemen said.

## Honeyspot School opens in 1918 not 1917

In W. H. Wilcoxson's *History of Stratford* page 589, Mr. Wilcoxson observes, "Honeyspot School was erected in 1917." As we learned from research on Nichols and Garden Schools, the schools were not occupied for one year later than Mr. Wilcoxson indicated. Construction began on the Honeyspot School in 1917, but the school was not ready for occupancy until 1918.



Honeyspot School May 1920

Stratford, May 7—At a special meeting of the town school committee held Friday evening at the Center school the board of finance voted to recommend an additional \$15,000 for building Honeyspot road school. The board of finance has already appropriated \$50,000 for the erection of the school but owing to the high cost of materials the school committee is unable to have the building completed for that amount. This recommendation of the finance board will be placed before the voters of the town for action at the annual town meeting Monday, October 7.

**Bridgeport Evening Farmer**  
 February 7, 2018

### **New School Nearly Completed.**

At a meeting of the town school committee held last evening at the town hall reports furnished by Architect Cooper of Boston state that work on the Honeyspot school is progressing rapidly despite the inclement weather. It is hoped that the school will be finished by the first of April. However, if the town is unable to procure coal to heat the building the opening will be postponed until next September. A number of bills were ordered paid at the meeting.

**Bridgeport Evening Farmer**  
 May 7, 1917

### **More Cash Needed For Stratford School** (Special to The Farmer.)

## Stratford's Police Force organized

**Bridgeport Herald**  
 May 13, 1917

### **STRATFORD'S NEW POLICE FORCE BEGINS TOMORROW**

For 278 years Stratford managed to get along very well without a police force. The constables and deputy sheriff always proved dependable. But tomorrow Stratford will begin to have a regular, modern, energetic force. His name is William Nichols, a young man



Stratford's Police Force c. 1920s

of good parts. He will perform the duties of his office after dark as well as during the daytime. Police headquarters will probably be at the fire house. This is easy of access day and night, Sundays and holidays.

The reason for Stratford's new force, after nearly three centuries of doing without one, reflects very little credit on the constabulary of the ancient town. The regularly and duly elected constables of Stratford

have not been on the job. When offended citizens made complaints to them they did not rush out and investigate - unless it was a matter that promised to warrant an arrest. Under the constable system, the reader will understand, the constable receives no stipend for his work, except he makes an arrest. Being all "good fellows" the constables did not like to make arrests; ...

# Field Day at Stratford 1867

**Bridgeport Daily Standard**  
May 24, 1867

The drilling of the military companies at Stratford yesterday, was conducted on Academy Hill, in front of the residences of Robert DeWitt and Seymour Curtis, Esqs. The battalion movements commenced at 10½ o'clock, and were conducted by Col. Crauford who exercised the command in a variety of movements, in the School of the Battalion, consisting principally of the formation and deployment

from column. The men were kept steadily at this work, acquitting themselves with credit, and manifesting improvement with each repetition, until 12½ o'clock, when the line broke into column and taking in their route some of the principal streets of the village, marched to the green, next south of and adjoining the Congregational church, where the private generosity of the whole souled ladies and gentlemen of Old Stratford, had provided ten of the most bountiful

tables ever spread out of doors. These tables were each about 80 feet long, and surpassed anything of the kind ever witnessed by us during our fifteen odd year's connection with the military. The officers and men were introduced to the feast by a committee of ladies and gentlemen, the band discoursed "Hail Columbia." An agreeable half hour was spent in discussing...the luxurious rations...



Academy Hill c. 1889

# Tramps in Stratford

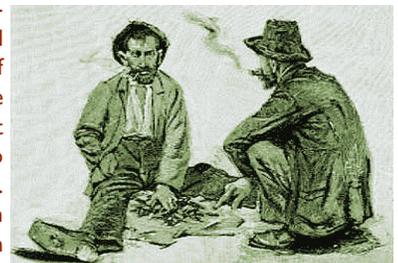
**The Bridgeport Daily Standard**  
April 4, 1892

For some time past the town of Stratford has been infested by tramps who make life miserable for residents. Each day houses are visited by a horde of strong able-bodied men who beg for food and if refused, grow abusive and insulting. Nearly every night the new lock-up is occupied by from four to six of the travelers who apply for lodgings. Early Saturday morning a gang of eight hard-looking specimens struck the town

and at once took possession. They lounged about the post office and depot all the morning but about noon became hungry and started on a foraging expedition.

They divided into two groups of four each and started up Main street begging at every door. Complaint was made to Constable Stagg, who, accompanied by another officer captured three of the men, who were at once locked up. They were later taken before Justice C. H. Peck to whom they gave their names as Edward Murphy of

Peekskill, N. Y., and William Rowell and George Barnes of Baltimore. They were bound over to the May term of the Superior court. The story hold by them is that rehearsed by every tramp who enters the town. They said they were on their way to New Haven where they expected to work. The tale was too old and did not impress the justice favorably.



From Josiah Flynt, *Tramping With Tramps* (New York: Century Co, 1899)

# Boats to be built on the Housatonic

**The Hartford Courant**  
April 3, 1917

## TO BUILD VESSELS ON HOUSATONIC

### Small Wooden Craft All on One Pattern Planned.

#### NEWSHIPYARD SPRINGS INTO BEING.

Near Long Island Sound and Close to Railroad.

The United States government has decided that a fleet of small new vessels of wood construction shall be launched in an effort to carry commerce despite German submarine activities, and a shipyard for building this class of craft has been established on the Housatonic River, near Bridgeport. While it is admitted that some mystery sur-

rounds the organization which will build the boats, it is noted that Judge Carl Foster, and his law partner, Foster L. Hawkins, both of Bridgeport, appear as incorporators. Beyond this little seems to be known of the company.

...According to information obtainable, the new company expects to lay its first keel within the next two weeks. The scheme to build these ships is said to offer a tremendous saving in the ultimate cost of the completed ship.

When emergency demands, the vessel can be slid down the ways within a week after the keel is laid, according to plans. The Housatonic company has acquired from Simon Lake, the inventor of the submarine, a large tract of land on the

shore front north of the railroad bridge in Stratford. Surveyors have been at work there for weeks and shipways are already in course of construction. The work is being pushed rapidly. It is believed there is an unusual pressure behind the project.

The depth of the Housatonic is such as to permit the launching of large vessels. The shipyards will be located only a mile or two from Long Island Sound. Another recommendation for the location is its accessibility to railroads.

It is said that nearly \$1,000,000 has been invested in the venture.



**Ganeri** ship awaiting launch in 1918. from the Housatonic Boat Company dock. Photo from *Stratford and the Sea*, by Lewis Knapp

# Snake Hunting with Shang

**THE HERALD DEMOCRAT.**  
FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1908  
**ANNUAL SNAKE HUNT  
OF FAMOUS RATTLER  
CLUB**

Bridgeport, Conn., May 29.—(Special)—The fifth annual hunt of the Schaghticoke Rattlesnake club, of this city was held yesterday on the Indian reservation of the Schaghticoke Indians, in Litchfield county, Conn.

The hunt this year was unusual in several ways. It was the first on which any one has been severely and dangerously bitten by one of the captured snakes. It was the first which has been attended by Peter Gruber, famous the world over as the rattlesnake king and hailing from Rochester, N. Y. The number of those attending was larger than ever before.

Seven rattlers were captured on yesterday's hunt, all of which were fine specimens of the venomous reptile. The first snake was caught by Lindsay Denison, the magazine writer. It was three and a half feet long, and heavy. Mr. Denison fastened the reptile with his forked stick and called to "Shang" Wheeler, who transfers the reptiles to the bag. Wheeler picks the reptiles up

with his hands and drops them into the bag.

Wheeler, in picking up the snake, took hold of the reptile back of the head, as usual. His grip was not close enough to the head to prevent the snake, from twisting. The reptile turned and buried its deadly fangs in Wheeler's right hand. "Rattlesnake Pete" Gruber, who was close at hand, and Dr. Spencer, of Chelsea, Mass. were ready for just such emergencies.

Gruber grabbed the bitten hand and instantly applied his mouth to the bite and for several minutes sucked the wound, drawing therefrom much of the fatal poison, which will cause death if it reaches the heart of the victim. Dr. Spencer swiftly injected permanganate of potash in and around the wound, after first having slashed it open with a small scalpel and allowing the blood to flow freely. Wheeler was bitten about 1:30 o'clock and his hand and arm swelled and continued to swell until 2:30, when the drugs began to act and the swelling became reduced.

Wheeler left at midnight for Providence, R. I., where he is in business, and said he "would be

on the job in the morning" despite the bite.

The hunters numbered about 100 men. They rode to the farm of George Coggeswell, on the Schaghticoke Indian reservation. Mr. Coggeswell is a full-blooded Indian and president of the Schaghticoke Rattlesnake club.

The party had luncheon at the chief's farm, and were then guided up the mountain by Jim Pan, an old Indian chief, and Eddie Harris, his son. The seven rattlers raptured were brought back to Coggeswell's farm by Big Louis Musante, of Bridgeport, in a burlap bag. They were loosed in the road at the farm house door, while photographs were made of them.

The hunters were then treated to a feast of spring lamb, roasted on the spit, over a wood fire in the open. Misante carried the snakes to Bridgeport in the burlap bag. Experts declared that "Rattlesnake Pete's" prompt and fearless action in sucking the poison from "Shang" Wheeler's hand saved the man's life.



"Shang" Wheeler with a snake in each hand. Photo from *The Hunter-Trapper-Trader Volume 14*, April 1907



"Shang's" fellow snake hunters. Photo from *The Hunter-Trapper-Trader Volume 14*, April 1907

**Bridgeport Daily Standard**  
April 12, 1892

Stratford, known throughout the state as the breeding place of blood-thirsty mosquitoes, is striving to gain further renown, and will succeed by setting the example to neighboring towns in macadamizing her main thoroughfare. If the example only becomes contagious Stratford will be entitled to a wide-bordered page in local history. *Ansonia Sentinel.*

## Grow your own or else...

**The Bridgeport Evening Farmer**  
May 9, 1917

The energetic campaign waged during the last week by the Stratford Food Growers' association, by means of personal appeals and posters displayed throughout the town, has brought some results in the way of labor and land offered. The amount available, however, is far short of what will be needed to make the town self-supporting as far as food is concerned. It is not believed that great amounts of food can be brought from other sections next winter except at war prices that few will be able to pay.

Persons who wish to plant and

tend their own gardens or farms may get seeds, tools and fertilizer, at cost, at the American Hardware Co.'s store on Middle street, Bridgeport, by arrangement with E. F. von Wettberg, a former resident of this town, who is chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Fairfield County Resources Mobilization Committee...

Those who can offer land, preferably land which has been cultivated before, should telephone Harry A. Burnes, 411, chairman of the land committee. There have been some responses to the appeal for land, but not a great deal of suitable land has been offered in certain sections of the town where there are people

ready and willing to do the work but not enough available land for them to cultivate.

The association feels that it cannot impress too strongly upon the people of Stratford, the fact that there will not be any overproduction of vegetables, grain and fruit. There is bound to be a shortage, and the only question is as to how large the shortage will be. It will be felt least by those who are working now to avert it, and will fall most heavily upon those who imagine it is no concern of theirs and that the farmers and others will take care of them in some way or other.

# Bungalows for Lordship

**Sunday Herald**  
May 13, 1917

## 20 BUNGALOWS FOR LORDSHIP

At a cost estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$80,000, twenty houses of the bungalow type will be erected by the Bridgeport Housing company on land purchased from the Wilkenda Land Company of Bridgeport at Lordship Manor, Stratford, during the past week. Information as to the purchase of the land has been withheld from publication, but the

Herald learned yesterday from an authoritative source that the deal will be put through early this week and ground will be broken as soon as possible. The T. J. Pardy Construction company has the contract for the work, and J. Clinton Sturges of Boston is the architect.

...The houses will not be erected at one particular point at Lordship, but will be built in different parts of the community and will be sold by the Housing company after erection.

When asked about the move-

ment, Geo. M. Eames, chairman of the Bridgeport Housing Co. building committee, said that the houses would be built single and a few for two-families.

It is assumed that the houses will be sold for \$4,000 each and rent for \$25 per month.

The Housing company has eighty houses now under construction at the corner of Connecticut avenue and Waterman street, but the Lordship Manor homes will be of a different type.

### An Expensive Luxury.

May 8, 1892

#### Sunday Herald

Minor Smith, the well known old vet and hotel keeper of the town of Stratford is never behind the times when it comes to looking after a treat for his guests.

Yesterday he was in this city (Bridgeport) to receive four dozen soft shell crabs, the first that were sent out from the New York market this season and according to Minor's statement they are an expensive luxury. He told a friend in confidence that the crabs cost him five dollars apiece and in the same breath said that his guests must have them so long as they call for them no matter what they cost so long as they are in market.

Minor has always been noted for his veracity but this is a fish story some of his friends will find hard to swallow. It is a fact, however, that he has the crabs but whether he paid such a price for them or not is another question.

# Bridge watchman imperiled

**Bridgeport Evening Farmer**  
May 17, 1917

## BRIDGE WATCHMAN IMPERILED TRYING TO AVERT ACCIDENT

### Stratford Man Pinioned Between Bridge Bail and Trolley Car

William S. Russell, watchman on the Washington Bridge, between Stratford and Milford was painfully Injured last night in a series of accidents that for a time to [sic] place the lives of a score of persons in hazard.

In passing through the open draw-bridge yesterday the tug Robert McAllister collided with the spiling of the rack, tearing away a section. After the closing of the bridge, Rus-

dell, employed as night watchman on the bridge during the repairs to the wooden roadway planking, was assisting in opening the gates. Three trolley cars approaching towards Bridgeport became jammed on one span of the bridge.

Russell, it was said today by fellow employes [sic], was afraid the weak span would give way with the great weight suddenly placed upon it. In an effort to check the progress of the forward car he was caught between the bridge railing and the side of the trolley. Without sufficient room for the body of a man to pass between the bridge and the car he was caught and rolled along until the motorman brought his car to a stop.

The Injured man with difficulty was rescued from the position into which he had been jammed. He fell to the roadway unconscious

Andrew V. Barber of 801 Broad street, artist and writer for a Bridgeport newspaper, who was near the scene of the accident for the purpose of placing his house boat in commission, immediately took charge of the injured man and hurried him to the office of a Stratford physician for treatment. It was reported that Russell had sustained a broken right arm, and possibly internal injury. He was taken to his home in Stratford.

Investigation of the accident is being made today by government, state and trolley officials.

# Let's Go Into Politics - Ray Baldwin

Former Governor, Chief Justice, and Stratford Resident, Raymond E. Baldwin published his views on local, state and national politics in April of 1952. Chapter II of **Let's Go Into Politics** is replete with Ray's experiences in Stratford town politics and Stratford's town politicians.

One of the most entertaining passages in the book, however, is to be found in Chapter V where Ray describes an experience he had with his mentor, Charles

"Shang" Wheeler, at the state political level.

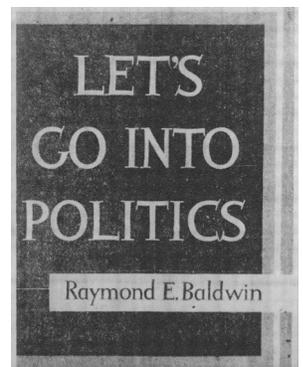
...The aftermath was interesting. In an effort to mollify us, Mackenzie called us together in his office in Danbury one day. My friend Shang was there, a fine figure of a man, then sixty-five. Charlie Marsh, who had been shingling his roof the day we stopped by, began to jolly us—not intending any offense, I'm sure—about the sheriffs convention. We were not in a mood for banter. Our wounds STILL smarted. Charlie had

been a boxer in his day, and was still very vigorous physically. He squared off and said:

"Shang, put up your dukes. I understand you can box."

"I used to do a little bit," Shang said calmly.

Marsh made a pass at him. Shang grabbed him by the back of his neck and the seat of his britches and put him on the floor before you could say "Jack Robinson." By that time Charley's friends were behind the desk in the corner, which gave Shang and me considerable satisfaction.



# Feed the mind as well as the body...

Since I first read Lewis Knapp's *Stratford and the Sea*, several years ago, it has become one of my favorites in my "Stratford" library. The book contains many photos that are published nowhere else, that I'm aware of, and contains some delightful stories of Stratford.

One of my favorite recollections in the book can be found on page 55 where Charles "Shang" Wheeler learns that Tommy Ryan has an eye for his girlfriend.

"...Shang came down Stratford Avenue and saw Tommy outside of the training quarters, working on the woodpile. Shang made a wild dive for the other axe, alongside the door, and started for Tommy. Tommy threw down his axe and started for the dock. He dove off the dock. Shang marched

*up and down the dock with the axe on his shoulders and yelled "You come ashore and I'll cut your head off!" They finally had to collar Shang and then somebody dove overboard to save Tommy from drowning."*

Also available from our Society office, and also available for purchase, the following is a recipe selected from our historic cookbook, "*Paradise Enow ... Treasures from Yesterday's Kitchens.*"

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### Sarah Jane Silliman's Succotash

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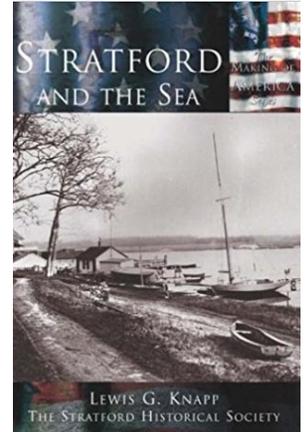
½ pound salt pork, diced  
1 quart water  
2 pounds fresh lima beans  
2 dozen ears young corn  
1 cup cream

1 tablespoon flour  
Salt and pepper

Cook salt pork in water for two hours. Add lima beans and cook until tender. Scrape kernels from ears of corn, add corn and cook 5 minutes. Add cream mixed with flour. Season to taste. Cook only until well heated and slightly thickened. Better eaten the next day.

**Tester's note:** "This recipe is worth the price of the book and more! Will serve about 20 as a side dish, but this was a very popular Sunday night supper served in solitary grandeur.

Do NOT try the shortcut of chopping the kernels off the cob. Make it exactly as written."



This attractive paperback volume of seagoing stories and photos is available for purchase from the Stratford Historical Society office.

To view past editions of our **UPDATE** newsletter, and/or to view current as well as historical photo slide shows and videos, visit [www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info](http://www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info).

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