

CUPHEAG CORNER



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

MARK THE DATES:

- January's General Membership Meeting: Sunday, January 27th at 2:00 pm at the Stratford Library
- Governing Board Meeting, Monday, February 25th, 1 pm
- March's General Membership Meeting: Saturday, March 23rd at 2:00 pm at the Stratford Library

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JANUARY'S GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sunday, January 27th, 2:00 pm, Stratford Library Lovell Room, 2203 Main Street

Growing up in Trumbull, Sue DelBianco hiked and camped with her friends at Parlor Rock Park in the Pequonnock River Valley. Parlor Rock Park had been a property of the Housatonic Valley Railroad in the nineteenth century. The park was a refuge for Bridgeport and Stratford people wishing to escape on a hot summer day. The park hosted a carousel, dance hall, skating rink, swimming hole, and boat rental.

"The (Pequonnock River) trail has always had a certain mysterious aura around it. It wasn't so much spooky as it had this cache of a hidden, unknown past that I've gotten more and more curious about as I've gotten older," DelBianco said. "I knew that there had been a swimming hole there as a kid. But the rest of its history – that the railroad built Parlor Rock as one of the country's earliest



Sue DelBianco

Photo from Sue's Facebook page

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

amusement parks – that I had no idea of. It was the railroad's way of driving commerce and giving people a reason to get on the train, get out of the city, go to what was then the country and spend money."

The Pequonnock River Valley area was home to a number of businesses which relied on the river and the Housatonic Valley Railroad to ferry customers up from the shoreline communities. Numbered among those railroad dependent businesses were the Kaatz Ice House, Radcliffe Wool and Glove Lining Factory, Hubbell Hadley Shirt Factory, Touceys Shirt Factory, Beers Grist Mill, Tait Paper Mill, and United Witch Hazel Factory.

Sue will speak about the train line from Bridgeport to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and how it evolved into a recreational hiking trail.

There should be some kind of a historical society in every town in Connecticut, to study the history of the locality, and carefully preserve historical and genealogical records, and the many manuscripts and relics that can be brought to light by diligent workers in almost any section of our state.

The Connecticut Quarterly, Volume II Number 2, April-June 1896

CUPHEAG CORNER LAUNCHES

The intersection of today's Elm Street and Shore Road marks the location of the first English settlers in the Cupheag plantation of the Connecticut Colony in 1639. (Cupheag was the Indian name for our town.)

For the first 70 years of our Society's existence, our newsletter had no name. Then, in September 1996, our newsletter was christened **UPDATE**. The **UPDATE** served our needs well for 20 years, but, as we begin looking forward to Stratford's 400th anniversary, it seems an auspicious moment in our Society's history to examine a new identity for our newsletter.

Considering many possible names, we settled on **Cupheag Corner** as this designation seems to align perfectly with our town's historical roots, and our Society's reason for being. Welcome to Volume I, Issue I of **Cupheag Corner**! Please let us know what you think of our new branding endeavor.

The goal of the **Cupheag Corner** is to continue to provide you much enlightenment on our town's history, and serve well our mission as stated on the last page of every newsletter: "The best we can do about the past is to keep the memories alive!"

2019 Meeting Calendar

Sunday	January	27th	2PM
Saturday	March	23rd	2PM
Sunday	May	19th	2PM
Sunday	September	29th	2PM
Sunday	November	24th	2PM

Governing Board Meetings

Monday	February	25th	1PM
Monday	April	29th	1PM
Monday	June	24th	1PM
Monday	August	26th	1PM
Monday	October	28th	1PM

The Stratford Rotary Club is holding a special fundraiser to assist the Stratford Historical Society in its historic document and artifact preservation mission.

Please consider joining your Historical Society officers at this fundraiser on Saturday, January 26th. For additional information, or to purchase tickets, please go to <http://www.stratfordrotaryribnight.com>.

STRATFORD  ROTARY CLUB

Annual
RIB NIGHT



Sat., Jan. 26, 6-10^{pm}

Vazzano's 4 Seasons • \$50

to benefit

Stratford Fire Department

AND

Stratford Historical Society

Music • Silent Auction • Raffle

Johnny's Ribs or Chicken Marsala

StratfordRotaryClub.org

203 615-2338 203 218-5236

DATELINE STRATFORD DEC. 1953 - JANUARY 1954

Sunday Herald

December 6, 1953

63 Towns Pay Cops Under \$75

Greenwich leads the state in the salary paid its chief of police and up to \$82 a week paid patrolmen in the town.

Bridgeport, Stamford, Norwalk, Stratford, Westport and Milford stand with Greenwich among the 34 communities in the state which pay their chiefs as much as \$100 a week and their patrolmen as much as \$75.

Sunday Herald

December 13, 1953

\$40,000 Budget Deficit Predicted by Dr. Chaffee

A "large budget increase" in the 1954-55 appropriation request of the Stratford Board of Education was indicated strongly yesterday in a statement by Dr. Charles E. Chaffee, superintendent of schools.

The Board of Education is presently operating under a budget of \$1,479,282. And even with this budget, there's a likelihood of a \$40,000 deficit which the Town will have to make up.

Sunday Herald

December 20, 1953

When Peoples Bank opened on Main Street in Stratford in December 1953, Peoples published a commemorative opening brochure in the *Sunday Herald*. You may view the brochure in its entirety at: <http://peoplesstratfordhistoricalsociety.info/>

Sunday Herald

December 27, 1953

Leaving Lordship, Gerstls Get Sendoff from Friends

Out in Lordship they hated to see Ernie and Pearl Gerstl leave.

Lordship's druggist, soda-pop dispenser and friend for the past 13 years, Ernie's retiring, having sold

his subiness to Martin Plukas of Fairfield.,

For health reasons the Gerstls will go to Arizona for a while. Their home is in Milford.

When Lordship heard the news the reaction was spontaneous and fast.

Everybody chipped in and the result was a chair for Ernie to take it easy in and Traveling bags for both the Gerstls.

Last Monday, by a ruse, the couple was lured back to the drugstore at the intersection of Jefferson St., Pauline St., and Stratford Rd.

Everybody who could "just happened" to be in the store when Ernie and Pearl arrive, and the place was packed for the presentation.

Hartford Courant

January 8, 1954

Peterson Reverses Field, Declines Housing Position

State Sen. Oscar Peterson of Stratford, president pro tempore of the State Senate, reversed his field suddenly Thursday and announced he didn't want the job of state director of the Federal Housing Administration.

His declaration caught state Republican leaders by surprise. His name had already been sent to Washington by the state GOP as a candidate for the \$8,960-a-year job who had the "clearance" of the party. This "clearance" normally precedes an appointment.

Hartford Courant

January 11, 1954

...That big noise out of Stratford isn't a helicopter squadron but the veteran Stratford High club (6-0) rushing onward. Norwalk gave the North Paraders their closest fight Friday but lost 57-48-Stratford veterans, Vitko, Rukan, Geter and Saffo could go all the way without a

loss in the Fairfield County League race.

Hartford Courant

January 11, 1954

Stratford Judge Calls Brawl At Game 'Degrading'

STRATFORD, Jan. 21 (AP) - Lashing out at Stratford School officials and parents for what he termed "a pretty degrading situation," Judge Milton H. Hausman in Stratford Town Court today recommended that school officials consider abolishing outside high school athletic programs, except for intramural activities.

The remarks by Judge Hausman came during a trial of Edward T. Howard, 19, of 21 Mead St., Stratford, a truck driver, and Anthony Jordhmo, 18, 300 Lake Ave., Bridgeport, a Bassick High School student.

The two, charged with breach of peace, were arrested Tuesday night in the Stratford High School gymnasium when they engaged in a fight during the half time of the Stratford-Bassick High School basketball game.

Hartford Courant

January 30, 1954

Sikorsky Breaks Ground For \$20 Million Plant

STRATFORD, Jan 29 (AP) - With General Manager B. I. Whelan operating the huge shovel of a Bridgeport construction company, ground was broken today on the 250-acre site of the new multi-million dollar Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation plant there. Frank D'Addario, president of the construction company, said plans and specifications for steel work will go to the steel mills next week, and contracts for construction of the factory and office buildings will be awarded in March.



Cover of the Peoples Bank opening brochure. *Sunday Herald*, December 20, 1953.



Christmas Faces At St. James
Billy Castelot, Carol Wronski, Sheil Whitney, Richard Ryan, Nancy Toughill, Elaine Wills, Macy Minnahan, John Cody, Billy O'Brien. *The Stratford News*, December 23, 1953.



Jeffrey Taylor, first baby of 1954. *The Stratford News*, January 7, 1954.

NOW SHOWING DECEMBER 1953 - JANUARY 1954



Stratford Theater c 1946

December 6th	Flight to Tangier	Joan Fontaine, Jack Palance
December 13th	Kiss Me Kate	Kathrine Grayson, Howard Keel, Ann Miller
December 20th	Dream Wife	Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, Walter Pidgeon
December 27th	Fighter Attack	Sterling Hayden, Joy Page, J. Carrol Naish
January 3rd	Thunder Over The Plains	Randolph Scott, Phyliss Kirk
January 10th	3 Sailors and a Girl	Jane Powell, Gordon MacRae, Gene Nelson
January 17th	Here Come the Girls	Bob Hope, Arline Dahl, Tony Martin
January 24th	Flight Nurse	Joan Leslie, Forest Tucker, Arthur Franz
January 31st	His Majesty O'Keefe	Burt Lancaster, Joan Rice

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE



Photos from News 12's video coverage of our Holiday Open House.



We're delighted to announce that News 12 provided video coverage of our December 1st Holiday Open House. The following is posted on News 12's website.

STRATFORD—Members of the Stratford Historical Society invited the community Saturday to step through a portal into the 1700s.

The Holiday Open House comes every other year, welcoming people to walk through the historical Captain David Judson House and get a full colonial tour.

"The house was brought back to its natural colors. Everything is authenticated in here and all the furnishings were given by some of

the first families. The descendants were very proud to have this place become a historical society," says assistant director Sandra Rutkowski.

In the museum that sits behind the house, children made crafts and visited with Santa.

You may watch the entire News 12 video coverage of the Holiday Open House at <http://www.news12.com/clip/14703322/holiday-open-house-turns-back-the-clock-in-stratford>.



Photos from News 12's video coverage of our Holiday Open House.



FIRST WAR SHIP LAUNCHED

Sunday Herald
January 5, 1918

First Ship Completed at Housatonic Yards Slides Down the Ways Tuesday Morning and Goes Along Just As Prettily As If the Bottle Had Broken Against Her Bow

The Housatonic shipyards launched their first ship Tuesday morning. There were some 5,000 people who cheered lustily when the good ship Fairfield slid off into the water without a hitch.

Miss Grace Dietrich, of New York, was sponsor, and a nerve racking moment it was for her as her friends all instructed her just how to hit the boat's prow so as to smash the bottle of champagne. As the signal was given and the ship began its graceful slide, Miss Dietrich slammed the bottle with all her might because she did not want to "hoodoo" the vessel. But the bottle was entirely too much decorated to break even on the bow of the Fairfield, and Miss Dietrich, being nervous and disappointed at the refusal of the bottle to do its duty, said - but she threatened war if anyone told what she said, so we hasten to add that she was a little peeved.

Among sailors it is considered an ill omen if a launching is not accompanied by a christening. In fact, so powerful has

become the tradition on this point that the duty of making certain that a new boat is actually christened is placed upon the yard foreman.

He is supposed to see to it, that if the fair lady who is scheduled to smash the wine on the prow makes a slip and fails, the foreman is supposed to grasp the lanyard to which the bottle is fastened and successfully smash the bottle against the boat before the boat strikes the water.

In fact, this is one of the reasons why the bottle of wine is attached to the boat by a lanyard. In the old days, when superstition was more pronounced among sailors than it is today, many an old salt would have declined to sign up on the Fairfield because he would call it a "coffin ship."

The Fairfield, however, is going to prove that a prohibition ship is no hoodoo, regardless of old fogies' opinions.

Miss Dietrich is only sixteen and is still a school girl. She says there isn't anything at all unusual about her - that she simply enjoys life as it comes and is anxious for the time to come when she will be out of school "and have a good time." Paul Brown, acting resident agent for the United States Shipping board, asked Miss Dietrich to be sponsor for the ship, "because I thought it was a job for a young girl, and she's

the only one of the right age I know," said Mr. Brown.

Mrs. Albert Young, Miss Dietrich's grandmother, a prominent New York society woman chaperoned the crowd of young people who composed the out of town party at the christening of the Fairfield. There were in the party, besides Miss Dietrich, Miss Violette Ferris, of Syracuse; Miss Dorothy Lincoln, of New York; Gardiner Foster, of New York; Lockwood Ferris, of Syracuse, and Ensign Albert Simpson of Poughkeepsie.

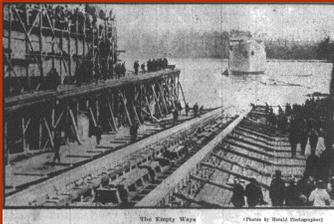
There are five sister ships of the Fairfield nearing completion. One will be launched in about a month, and all of the others when the ice breaks in the spring. The Fairfield has been something over a year in construction, and has cost about \$400,000.

After the launching, the ship was taken to the Bridgeport harbor where she spent the night, and the next day she started on her journey to Providence, R. I., where the Lord Electric Co. will fit her out with engines.

...At least one more ship will be launched before the Housatonic River freezes over, and in the spring several will undoubtedly be ready for the grand plunge.



Paul Brown Telling Miss Dietrich When To Smash The Bottle
Paul Brown Telling Miss Dietrich When To Smash The Bottle



The Empty Ways



The Fairfield After Leaving The Ways

The Stratford Historical Society*Friend of Education***invites you to join
OUR DOCENT TEAM**

**If you like to work with children
If you want to teach them about local history
If you have a few hours to perform
a real community service by conducting school tours**

DOCENT TRAINING CLASSES**February and March - 6 sessions****September - 2 sessions****9:00 – 11:00 a.m. - one lesson each week****Judson House & Museum, 967 Academy Hill Road, Stratford 06615****Please contact****Dolores Hctor (203) 378-6842 or Judson House (203) 378-0630****hctor@optonline.net****judsonhousestfd@aol.com****COMMUNITY NEWS**

The Stratford Historical Society invites you to join our docent team if you have a few hours in May and October to conduct school tours about local history to third and fifth graders at Judson House and Museum, 967 Academy Hill Road 06615.

Training is in March (6 sessions) and September (2 sessions) from 9:00 to 11:00, one class each week. (203) 376-6842.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE - STRATFORD STYLE



Francis J. Brennan holding a clock. Photo from the *Sunday Herald*, January 29, 1950.



Rodney Peavey, the boy Francis Brennan rescued January 18, 1944. Photo from the *Bridgeport Post*, January 19, 1944.



Robert and Kenneth Mackes with Francis Brennan in Bridgeport Hospital. Photo courtesy of Robert Mackes.



Mackes family at home in Stratford c. 1943. Robert at the upper left and Kenneth at the middle far right. Photo courtesy of Robert Mackes.

It's a *Wonderful Life* is the quintessential American Christmas movie classic produced and directed by Frank Capra, based on the short story and booklet **The Greatest Gift**. The movie made its American theatrical debut on Christmas Day 1946. Three years earlier, almost to the day, a real life version of *It's a Wonderful Life* unfolded in the Town of Stratford.

Weather in Stratford for December 1943 was unusual with continual warming and cooling episodes causing ice on ponds to form and recede continually throughout the month. Residents, particularly in the South End, were being warned to stay off lake and pond ice due to the ice's instability. Frash Pond, with its continual incursion of sea water, formed an even less stable ice surface.

A particularly virulent influenza had invaded Stratford immediately following Thanksgiving. It seemed everyone in town had just recovered from the flu or was coming down with it. Governor Ray Baldwin was at home in Stratford with a bad case. The headline of the December 22, 1943 *The Stratford News* read, "**Anyone Who Hasn't Been Ill Of Grippe, Or Isn't, Seems In A Very Exclusive Class.**"

The Stratford Housing Authority had been formed by the Town Council in August of 1943 due to the town's dissatisfaction with the way in which the town's housing projects were being administered by Bridgeport and the Federal Government. Francis Brennan, a very successful, 59 year old, businessman and community leader, was selected by the town from a pool of seven candidates to be the Executive Director.

When the Stratford Housing Authority was created, the Federal Government promised the Town there would be no out-of-pocket expenses for the Town. From the Housing Authority's creation until mid-January of 1944, the Town received no money from the Federal Government to administer the Authority. Francis Brennan, consequently, had received no salary for his work, through December.

The northeast was experiencing a critical coal shortage. Coal was in short supply and one of Francis Brennan's daily struggles was to find sufficient coal to heat the Wood End Housing Project's housing units. Coal was selected as the heat source for the project as the coal furnaces were less

expensive to install and operate.

Christmas break for the elementary students began after the end of the school day Thursday, December 23rd, and classes weren't scheduled to resume until Monday, January 3rd. The children had to be delighted the afternoon of December 23rd to be free from school for several days. Additionally, Santa was coming in two days. Frash Pond's ice covered surface must have looked inviting for an afternoon of play now that school was out for the holidays. The outdoor temperature was reported at about 16 degrees the afternoon of December 23rd.

Early in the afternoon of December 23rd, eight year old Eleanor Baclawski frantically ran into Francis Brennan's Main Street office, which was located across the street from the Chance-Vaught plant (today's Army Engine plant). Eleanor shouted that two boys had just fallen through the ice on Frash Pond.

Francis sprinted from his office stripping off his coat and vest as he ran the 200 feet to where the boys had fallen through the ice. Seven year old Kenneth Mackes was under water, so Francis Brennan dove in to locate him. On finding Kenneth, Francis swam with him to the shore. On reaching the Frash Pond shore, Francis saw the ice that nine year Robert Mackes was clinging to break apart. Robert was submerged. Francis dove back into the icy water and pulled Robert to the safety of the shore.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In a recent conversation with Robert Mackes, he remarked, "*I can still recall being under water and I thank God for Mr. Brennan as I was going down for the count when he was able to pull me out.*")

Now that both boys were secured on the shore, Francis began to administer first aid to the boys. Francis continued his ministrations on Kenneth and Robert until an ambulance arrived and took the boys to Bridgeport Hospital.

Francis Brennan retrieved his coat and vest, and returned to his office to finish out his work day.

Just over three weeks later, Francis was working in his office when ten year old Christina Munumer ran in shouting that

another boy had fallen through the Frash Pond ice. Once more, Francis dashed to Frash Pond, plunged in, and pulled five year old Rodney Peavey to safety.

It's quite apparent what the outcome of these two eventful days would have been had Francis Brennan decided to leave work early either day; or, if Francis would have been one of the unfortunates to contract the flu on December 23rd or January 18th, disaster would have displayed rejoicing. Francis Brennan could have done what most of us would have in similar circumstances and just waited for the emergency responders to arrive and attempt to rescue the boys. Had he done so, however, three young lives would have been lost.

The Mackes family Christmas of 1943 had to be one filled with exceeding joy realizing what might have been had Francis not been at work on December 23rd. In the ensuing years, the Mackes family moved back to their former hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Kenneth Mackes graduated from Central High School in Scranton following which he served his country in the U.S. Army. Kenneth worked and travelled throughout the United States. He was working at Fletcher Allen Hospital in Burlington, Vermont at the time of his passing in 2017.

Robert Mackes married and raised a family with his wife, Janice. Robert reports, "*I was fortunate to survive a potential drowning and hope my life has had a meaning and purpose. I served 4 years in the Air Force and retired after 28 years working for the CIA.*"

Rodney Peavey graduated from Stratford High School in 1957; served in the U.S. military after graduation; attended mechanics training school in Cheyenne, Wyoming; married a Shelton girl; and, was working as a mechanic at Sikorsky Aircraft at the time of his passing in 1974.

Francis Brennan continued his active community service until his passing in 1973. His selfless contributions to his community, even beyond the heroic rescue of three boys, were legion. It is a wonderful life, indeed!

THE BLACK WIDOW VISITS STRATFORD

Stratford's history is always fascinating as it is filled with surprising twists, turns, and tales. Imagine our surprise when we learned that, for a brief 8 months in 1868, Stratford had been home to America's first female serial killer.

In most written accounts of Lydia Sherman she is identified with the Town of Derby, so the 1954 *Sunday Herald* account was surprising to discover as it linked Lydia with Stratford.

Lydia's only tie to Stratford was the eight months she spent working for James Curtiss' mother. James Curtiss was living in New York City, at the time, and hired Lydia to care for his mother. When James met Lydia, she has already dispatched her husband and six children with her arsenic ministrations. Fortunately for James' mother, and out-of-character for Lydia, Mrs. Curtiss was cared for by Lydia and seemed to emerge from Lydia's care no "worse for the wear".

Lydia's time in Stratford was related by her at her trial for murder. Her account was published shortly after her trial concluded and follows (below).

The Poison Fiend: Life and Conviction of Lydia Sherman

By Geo. Lippard Barclay
1873

I then kept house until the following May, going out as usual to do nursing. About that time Lydia, my eldest daughter, went to New York with work, was taken sick, and after an illness of 21 days she died a natural death. I never gave her anything the doctor did not order. Then I went to Sailorsville, Pa., with a family named Maxom. It was not a profitable venture, so I returned to New York and went to live with my step-daughter,

Mrs. Thompson. Then I took a situation with Mr. Cochran, who kept a sewing machine establishment in Canal street. There I became acquainted with Mr. James Curtiss. He asked me to go to Stratford, Conn., to take care of his aged mother and keep house for them. I consented to go for \$8.00 per month. I lived there eight months. One day Mr. John Fairchild, at whose store I bought our groceries, asked me if I would like to keep house for a man who had just lost his wife. In this way I became acquainted with Mr. Hurlburt, who lived in Coram, Huntington. After I had been a few days with him he asked me to marry him, which I did Nov. 22, 1868. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr. Morton in his own house. We lived happily for fourteen months. About three months after we were married Mr. Hurlburt made his will. He was subject to fits of dizziness.

After Mr. Hurlburt suddenly, and suspiciously, passed away, some months after marrying Lydia, she married Nelson Sherman of Derby. Nelson believed he was marrying into money since Lydia had inherited Dennis Hurlburt's estate. Nelson didn't know that Lydia's attentions and affections ended with her husbands' demises.

There are many accounts of Lydia's murders which can all be found on the internet. You may read a modern account of Lydia's life in the 2012 book "**Fatal: The Poisonous Life of a Female Serial Killer**". We've also created a link to the "Lydia" passages of the book from Amazon's website at lydia.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info.

An extract from the 1954 *Sunday Herald* article follows. To read the article in its entirety, you may go to poison.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info.

The book "**The Poison Fiend: Life and Conviction of Lydia Sherman**" may be downloaded from the web.

Sunday Herald

January 31, 1954

Lovely Lydia's Poison Took 11-or 23-Lives

In the amazing parade of Connecticut murderesses none stands out like the weird mass killer of the last century — Lydia Struck Hurlburt Sherman of Stratford.

Like many of her sisters in crime, Lydia used arsenic to dispose of her victims.

But compared to a woman like "Arsenic Annie" Monahan, whose story was told last week, Lydia was a creature from another world. For Annie killed only one person, or, at the most two.

Even Mrs. Amy Archer-Gilligan, who couldn't wait for natural causes to create vacancies at her old folks' home but hastened the process with judicious sprinklings of fatal "seasoning" on the delicious food she served never equaled Lydia's record.

3 HUSBANDS VICTIMS

The sloe-eyed, dark-haired beauty from Stratford is known to have poisoned at least 11 people during her lifetime, and is suspected of having done away with a dozen more.

Here is the known list of her victims: Policeman Edward Struck, her first husband.

Mary Ann, 6, Edward 4, and William Struck, 1, her children.

George, 14, Ann, 12, and Lydia Struck, 18, her stepchildren.

Dennis Hurlburt, 75, her second husband.

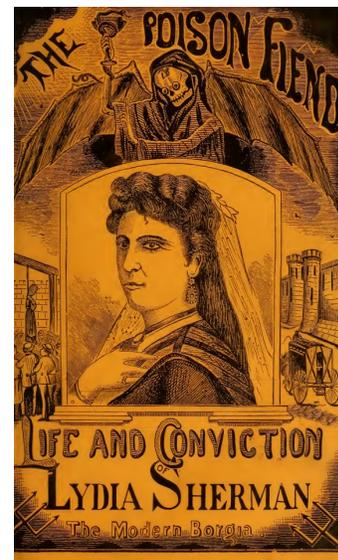
Nelson Sherman, of Derby, her third husband.

Addie Sherman, 15, and Frank Sherman, 2, Nelson's children.

Lydia, a veritable Bluebeard in skirts, started her crime career in New York City.



Lydia Sherman image from Wikipedia



BOOKS OF NOTE

Three books well worth the time spent reading are: **The Old Leather Man; Post Roads & Iron Horses**; and, **White Pine: American History and the Tree That Made a Nation**.

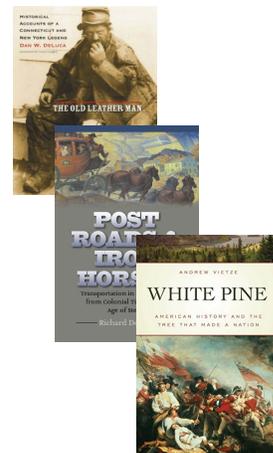
The old leather man was a regular traveler through western Connecticut. Not generally associated with stopping in Stratford, Dan DeLuca notes, in **The Old Leath-**

er Man, that he did pass through the northwestern edge of town. Oddly, no Stratford accounts appear to exist of his visits.

When a 90 minute train ride to New York City can seem to take an eternity, imagine a time when traveling to the City took days. **Post Roads & Iron Horses** charts the changes brought to Connecticut when traveling to the city became a luxurious 12 hour over-

night cruise.

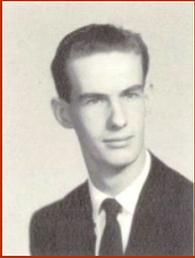
It's common for us to think that tea was the motivating genesis for the American Revolution. **White Pine: ...the Tree...** tells the story of how much more impactful our native pine was on relations with the British. A third war with Britain was nearly fought in the 1830s over the boundary of Maine due to a dispute over which country owned those northern white pines.



A WONDERFUL LIFE - THE REST OF THE STORY



Francis J. Brennan on the left, Ruby Brennan on the right. Photo from the *Sunday Herald*, January 29, 1950.



Rodney Peavey's Senior Class photo from the 1957 *The Log*.



Kenneth Mackes photo from his 2017 memorial. Photo from *Scranton Times*, February 7, 2017.



Robert (Bob) and Janice Mackes. Photo from Bob's Facebook page.

The Francis Brennan story is the Christmas gift that just keeps on giving. On December 23rd we posted our Francis Brennan story on Facebook. Janet Geary Haffner replied shortly after the posting, "In 1943 I was 11 years old and had come home from early dismissal at Franklin School. My Dad was working the 7 to 4 shift in the police department. When 4:15 came he hadn't arrived home. There were no cell phones and I remember how worried my Mom was. It wasn't until much later that he arrived to tell the story of the boys he drove to Bridgeport Hospital in that green ambulance we see at parades".

Francis Brennan was born in the Borough of West Stratford (today known as east Bridgeport) on June 7, 1884. He was a resident of Bridgeport until 1950 when he bought a home in Stratford.

Francis obtained his educational background, after attending the Nichols street grammar school, by attending night school at the YMCA. He became acting manager of a stone yard on Long Island, then, in 1921, he formed his own company, Brennan and Shea Stone Company.

Mr. Brennan was one of the city's most energetic figures in civic and fraternal affairs for many years. During World War I he served as chief clerk of the Draft Board, during which interval he also was campaign director for the Knights of Columbus, the Near East Relief, the Jewish Relief and the Salvation Army drives, and captain of the No. 1 team in the first Red Cross drive.

In his earlier years Mr. Brennan was a director and member of the Parole board of the Connecticut State reformatory for 11 years, and from 1936 to 1940 was chairman of the State Labor board which was charged with the task of determining wage scales for all state building construction.

His toughest years, he will tell you, were in the 1930-36 period, when he was a member of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation when we had a depression to contend with. "But, we didn't foreclose a single piece of property," Mr. Brennan revealed recently. (Foregoing from the January 13, 1963 *Bridgeport Post*).

Following his tenure as the Executive Director of the Stratford Housing Authority, he became a real estate appraiser and formed another company, Brennan and Brennan.

Francis and Ruby Brennan were parents to two daughters and a son. Francis received the Carnegie

Medal from the Carnegie Hero Fund for rescuing Kenneth, Robert, and Rodney. The Carnegie Award "was established to recognize persons who perform extraordinary acts of heroism in civilian life in the United States and Canada, and to provide financial assistance for those disabled and the dependents of those killed saving or attempting to save others".

After Francis rescued Rodney Peavey, he pled with local parents, "If parents would only realize how dangerous Frash pond is, they would make absolutely certain that their children are kept away from that location. We can't always be here to offer assistance, and sooner or later there will be a tragedy". (Foregoing from the January 19, 1943 *Bridgeport Post*).

Francis passed away on September 20, 1973 in Fairfield.

One is led to wonder what went through the minds of the parents of the Mackes brothers and of Rodney Peavey when they learned of their nearly tragic loss. Were they angry with the town for not doing a better job of securing Frash Pond against adventurous children? Did they feel a special bond to Francis Brennan for saving their sons? Was Christmas particularly sweet since they had avoided a horrific loss? Did they sternly council their boys against further frolicking on Frash Pond?

And, what of Ruby Brennan? Was she deeply concerned that her no longer youthful Francis had thrown himself into such peril? Did she worry that Francis may, as a result of his exposure in Frash Pond develop pneumonia? the flu (grip)? a respiratory infection? poisoning from the water in Frash Pond? Was Ruby particularly vexed that Francis had cast himself into peril, yet never received any remuneration for the work he'd done for four months on behalf of the Housing Authority?

When we first located this story, several weeks ago, we shared it with several town residents. Each, in turn, listened intently, then, invariably, posed the question, "but what happened to the boys Francis rescued?" So, we sensed the need, and accepted the challenge, to locate the three boys.

We were too late to contact Rodney Peavey and Kenneth Mackes. Both men had passed away. Luckily, we were able to locate Robert (Bob) Mackes even

though all newspaper accounts of the Mackes brothers had misspelled their last name as "Mackas".

Robert Mackes now lives in Virginia and prefers to be addressed as "Bob". Quite coincidentally, Bob lives on "Stratford Circle" within a few paces of a large lake. (We sincerely hope that as ice forms on that lake, Bob resists the urge to go "sliding" on the lake as he once did, 75 years ago, on Frash Pond)! 😊

Being the kind, generous, and humble man that Bob is, he willingly shared his thoughts of that fateful December day 75 years ago.

"We lived in a housing project that was administered by the Stratford Housing Authority and I believe the pond was located nearby. The pond was covered in ice and kids were sliding on the ice as children will do. My brother Ken fell through the ice and I attempted to help him out when I fell through. I can still recall being under water and I thank God for Mr. Brennan as I was going down for the count when he was able to pull me out. Although I can still remember vividly being under water, I don't recall much after the incident or talking about it with other kids at school. It is possible that schools were closed for Christmas vacation and I don't remember even talking about it with any of the other children. I think at that age you don't realize how close you came to a tragic end and not until you're an adult do you think back and realize how fortunate you were that an Angel was looking over you. I don't remember any of the children I'm sure we played with nor do I remember the name of the school either but I do remember playing little league baseball for the first time which I loved and continued playing through my adult years."

"As far as I know my family didn't maintain contact with Mr. Brennan after we returned to Scranton...My brother Norman was two years older than I and more nostalgic about Stratford and probably had more memories of Stratford than I did. I remember on one occasion during one of our family reunions he said he was in the Veterans Hospital at some time talking to one of the patients and Stratford was mentioned. I believe my brother told me that either the patient himself was Frank Brennan or a relative of his. Unfortunately I don't remember the exact details."

R.I.P. CENTER SCHOOL

Center School, the “new” one on Sutton Avenue, was proposed in 1968 as a replacement for the old Center School on East Broadway. What was to become of the old Center School was going to take some time to determine. A fight erupted within the Town Council as to whether the new Center School should have 8 or 16 rooms, and whether the new school should be air conditioned or not. A final

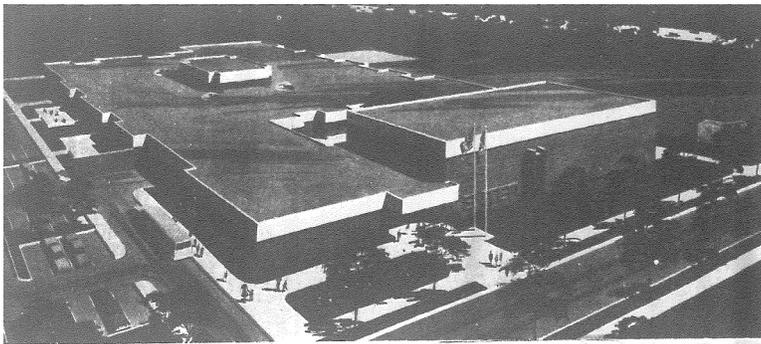
plan was put forward in December of 1968 with 16 rooms and air conditioning.

The new Center School opened in 1970 and served the town’s elementary pupils until 2006. The Town Council approved the demolition of Center School in 2017, and demolition work began in August of 2018.

As with the loss of any school building, memories fall with the walls of the school. The students

who were educated within those walls will only have their memories of what the school meant to them. The building itself is no more.

We wonder what memories will fall with the walls of Stratford High as it begins to be demolished. How many former students will long for one more opportunity to walk the halls of the high school once it’s gone? How many former Center School students experience that longing already?



Center School

This is an artist's conception of the Center School which was out for bids Monday. Because agreement between the three bodies responsible for building the school hasn't been reached, the bids are asking for four different types of building, 18 and 14 rooms with and without air-conditioning.

Artist's rendering of Center School from the December 12, 1968 *The Stratford News*.



Front of Center School June 17, 2018



Front of Center School December 3, 2018

ROOSEVELT FOREST

The Stratford News
December 5, 1968
**Reports prove false
Roosevelt Forest open**

Roosevelt Forest is still open and will remain open to campers despite reports to the contrary.

A change that has taken place, however, is that there will be stricter enforcement of the regulation that the forest ranger should be notified beforehand by those planning to camp at the Forest. According to Fred Kelly, Director of Parks, there has been abuse of Roosevelt Forest that must be controlled by the Town.

"Out of town people," he said, "unknown to us, have come to camp or to picnic and have left small fires burning. Hoodlums have broken windows, damaged lean-

tos, and generally vandalized Town property."

Kelly said that some "motorcycle nuts" who come to the forest often drive off the provided trails through the woods, leaving beer bottles and broken brush throughout the area.

"Littering is not a big problem," he said, "but a series of small abuses have added up to wasted time and costs for the Town in correcting them."

Many people, including the Pomperaug Council of the Boy Scouts, were under the impression that the Forest was completely closed for immediate camping activities.

According to Thomas Knowles, District Scout Executive, he had received no official notification of the Forest's closing but had read a story to that effect in an area newspaper a couple of weeks ago. Kelly said that the water had been

turned off in the Forest because of the danger of frozen pipes during the winter months, but added that camping activity could continue as usual with the provision that the forest ranger is contacted.

"This provision is not designed so that we may refuse certain persons," Kelly said, "it is rather designed to afford the ranger knowledge of what's going on in the areas he's supposed to supervise."

"We have never had any trouble with the Boy Scouts," he added, "and they may carry on their programs as normal. We want to prevent what's been happening so often from happening again."

Kelly said that the ranger, Bob Blakeley, can be contacted concerning planned camping on evenings or weekends at the Forest headquarters. Picnic grounds are open to the public and notice need not be given for this purpose.



Roosevelt Forest ranger station c. 2007.

WHAT A BITE!

Bridgeport Evening Farmer
December 29, 1868
"Ephraim's" Stratford
Gossip.

We learn from a gentleman, whose veracity cannot be doubted in the least, that, some two or three weeks ago, while Mr. James H. Lewis, together with Mr. Nathan Clark, (the well-known fisherman,) of this town, were engaged in butchering hogs at the farm home of Thomas Lewis, on Stratford Avenue, several swine were entered into the farm yard awaiting their doom in turn, when one, on being approached by the blood-thirsty individual, with up-lifted knife, made a desperate raid upon his would-be murderer, and, jumping upon him, the hog seemed determined to destroy his pursuer, notwith-

standing the severe blows with which he was treated. But, fortunately for the individual, the enraged hog became dissatisfied with "the situation and put off through the adjoining fields, across the railroad track, north upon the new road, and thence east to the homestead of one Mr. Slawson, on Prospect Hill, whose yard the hog entered, when he was again cornered by his pursuers, and another ferocious encounter took place between the contesting parties in which the hog appears to have got the advantage and succeeded in carrying away a part of one of the pursuer's unmentionables. After this second attack, the hog quitted its supposed place of safety, and repaired to the premises of Mr. James Lewis, (hog's enemy at this

particular period,) where he finally succumbed to a long, sharp piece of steel in the form of a butcher knife. After life was extinct, the animal was carried in a wagon to the place where its untimely death had been premeditated — a distance of nearly two miles — where the customary exercises were carried out over its remains. The gentleman who informed us of the above actual facts says the hog was really mad, and dangerous in its then state. He also says that the laugh upon Thomas Lewis was hearty, owing to the fact that he had engaged the men to butcher his hog at home, and not two miles away, thereby incurring an additional expense for cartage.

Property for Sale in Stratford.

THE heirs of the estate of the Widow Rebecca and Miss Catharine Poore, late of Stratford, deceased, offer for sale to close the estate, the entire property belonging to it situated in said Stratford. The premises consisting of the homestead containing about one and a half acres good land centrally and eligibly situated on the Main Street, on the corner of the road leading to the Housatonic River and near to St. John's Lodge, affording a very superior building site on the Main Street and two of smaller dimensions on the side street leading to the river, very desirable for building or business purposes.

There is a large dwelling house on the front on Main street, a good large barn and other buildings on the premises, presenting an opportunity to secure a handsome location in this beautiful town seldom offered. A part of the estate consists of a tract of ground eligibly and handsomely situated on the Main Street about fifty rods below the homestead, containing about seven (7) acres of good land in good order and very suitable for gardening purposes, a part being meadow land, with a frontage on Main Street of between two and three hundred feet. The terms will be liberal to any wishing to purchase, and any information will be given upon application to L. H. RUSSELL, at Perry & Russell's, No. 98 Water Street, Bridgeport, or to LEWIS W. BURRITT, Administrator, Stratford, Conn.

Ad from the *Bridgeport Evening Farmer*, December 29, 1868



BOOTHE PARK HOLIDAY DECORATED

The Boothe Homestead and the Putney Chapel were beautifully decorated for a Holiday Open House on December 8th and 9th. We've included a few photos here, but you may view a slide show of both decorated buildings on the home page of our website: www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info.



SHANG WHEELER PLAYED FOOTBALL

The Bridgeport Post
January 23, 1944
Shang Starred on Y.M.C.A. Eleven—Builder of Decoy Ducks, Model Boats

Charles E. (Shang) Wheeler played a lot of football a half century back. He was a star in New Britain High school, on the local Y.M.C.A. eleven and later with professional teams. The team of 1894 was a crackerjack and is pictured above (to the left). The roster included: - first row, left to right, Nelson Hatch and Pietro Madero; second row—Lyle Walker, Shang Wheeler,

Mike Dailey, Frank Seeley and Dwight Hall; third row—Frank Cann, Charley Gerdinier, Sam Wakeman and Percy Anderson. This photo was taken by Farini, who was the first man ever shot out of a cannon in the Barnum circus.

Shang Wheeler, a great lover of nature, and the sea, has many hobbies—among them building models of boats and decoy ducks. He is shown above (to the right) looking at some of his models, and is holding a replica of the sandbagger "Americus". This boat held the 21 foot champion-

ship until another framed ship—the "Rival" came along to rule the waves. Even today Shang draws the blueprints and shapes the models for his oyster boats. (Sunday Post photo—Hayduk).



STRATFORD CHRISTMAS 1868

Bridgeport Evening Farmer
December 28, 1868
"Ephraim's" Stratford Gos-sip.

We neglected on Saturday to mention the interesting exercises which took place at the churches on Christmas Eve. However, we believe in the old saying, "better late than never," and therefore note as follows of the exercises at Christ Church, which was most elegantly adorned with evergreens, in nearly the same style as last year. On either side of the galleries were numerous appropriate mottos, on white cloth, in black and gilt letters. There were two triangles of wax candles suspended from the wall, the base being trimmed with greens, while the chandelier, of three rows of kerosene lamps, forming a pyramid, in the centre {sic}, together with numerous other "lesser" and "greater" lights, made a brilliant and dazzling show. The tree, about ten or twelve feet high, placed immediately in front of the broad main aisle, and just outside the

chancel, was heavily laden with some very rich and valuable presents for the scholars and teachers. The discourse, delivered by the rector, Rev. Dr. D. C. Weston, was an able, illustrative and interesting production, and was listened to with deep interest by the large audience. The music, under the superintendence of Miss Carrie Hurd, (who presided at the organ,) assisted by the scholars and teachers, was of a fine selection, well rendered, and appropriate to the occasion. The whole amount of offerings was \$273.84, which is satisfactory evidence that the scholars love their Sunday School, and those connected therewith. The members of the school presented the reverend doctor with a very handsome black gown, which he received in a manner betokening surprise, closing his remarks by saying that he hoped he might "be spared to minister unto them that which pertains to everlasting life" in years to come. At an early hour, the exercises were

finished, when a large number of those present proceeded to the Methodist Church, where exercises were taking place similar to those we have above described.--The tree here was also abundantly loaded with rich, ripe fruit for the scholars, which was gladly received by them with sunny smiles when plucked from the bending branch-es. In the basement of the church, there had been prepared a table, sumptuously spread with almost every variety of cake, beautifully iced, of which the children, young and old, were invited to partake, and to which justice was done. In behalf of the members of the Society, Mr. Walter Sanford presented to the pastor, Rev. James Smith, a purse of \$100, which was thankfully received by the latter. There were other and valuable presents given, which were gratefully received by the recipients. The exercises closed at about eleven o'clock, all feeling that they had spent a very pleasant and enjoyable Christmas Eve.

*The Hartford
Courant
January 30, 1869
FAIRFIELD
COUNTY
A noted
chicken thief
who has been
devastating the
hen roosts in
Stratford, was
caught lately
in the act, and
is now sus-
pended by the
neck, in the
public street.*

STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETS

The Stratford News
November 27, 1968
Treasures

A full house greeted Mr.

Eddie Welch, speaker for the Friday evening program of the Stratford Historical Society, in the Stratford United Methodist

Church all-purpose room. Mr. Welch who owns a Treasure Gallery in Southport, came to the meeting with a background

rich in the study of antiques, including book, documents, paintings, and old prints.



The Hartford Courant
January 13, 1869
A prize fight took place in West Stratford on Sunday between Thomas Hickey, late of Chicago, and John Lines of Bridgeport. Five rounds are said to have been fought, in which Lines was too much for his antagonist, who retired from the contest. The battle was for ten dollars a side, and was witnessed by a large number of spectators.

The Hartford Courant
January 14, 1869
Steps are being taken by the authorities of Stratford to arrest and bring to punishment the principals and others engaged in the disgraceful prize fight on Sunday last in that place.

POTHOLES PALE PROPORTIONALLY

Bridgeport Evening Farmer
 January 11, 1869

The bad state of our streets, owing to the thaw, is beyond description, rendering it impossible for ladies to go out, except that they pick their way along beside the fences, and take spacious strides from root to stone, in attempting to find terra firma. This predicament of our walks can be remedied if our cit-izens will but drain them, which may be done with but little exertion and a small expense. In several localities, from actual observation, we noticed parties picking out their way to church, and

occasionally they would step, as they thought, upon a rock, but, to their great astonishment, their limbs commenced sinking, sinking down into the earth, with a prospect of being engulfed as by the opening of an earthquake, with an iron grasp clinging to the pickets or trees, and frequently calling out "help! help!" One young lady, who had almost given up in despair, and was fast sinking from view in the miry depths, "raising her hands in an imploring manner," attracted the attention of a young gentleman, who immediately rendered assistance and reclaimed

her from her perilous situation. Others were observed to be walking on stilts, endeavoring to reach the several places of worship. That such a ridiculous state of our sidewalks should be allowed astonishes the most disinterested, and causes the escape of vituperate language from the lips of the fair sex. Certainly the welfare of the gentler sex should be considered in all matters, and in no wise could our public functionaries afford them a greater benefit than in placing our walks in a passable condition.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1868

Bridgeport Daily Standard January 6, 1869	Stratford, for the year 1868:	Deaths 35
Stratford	Births 38	Males 17
Report of Births, Marriages and Deaths in the town of	Males 19	Females 18
	Females 19	
	Marriages 9	

OH WHAT A NIGHT! LATE DECEMBER BACK IN '68...

Bridgeport Evening Farmer
 December 5, 1868

A Fearful Freak of Somnambulism in Stratford --- The Victim walks a Mile.

One of the most fearful and strangest freaks of somnambulism occurred to one of our young inhabitants, (whose name we will not give publicity to, for personal reasons,) last week, which has ever been recorded in the annals of sleep walking. The facts in the case are nearly as follows, as we learn them from our informant, whose veracity we have no reason to doubt. It would appear that this young man had been out spending the evening at a friend's, where he had imbibed of the sparkling wine pretty freely, and on returning home at a late hour, (having seen his lady-love safely to her abode,) he entered his chamber and ensconsed [sic] himself in bed, dreaming of the pleasantries that had taken place during the evening, when, as we learn, he was taken with a sudden freak of night walking and an

earnest desire to catch frost fish, and accordingly donned hat and coat, with line in hand, and proceeded to the Upper Wharf, where he cast his line. The foregoing, together with the following, our informant was an eye-witness to, and he says the sleeping fisherman stood upon the verge of the wharf, casting his line and occasionally drawing it in without "nary a bite," and then, finding his luck not good, retreat-ed to the rear of the wharf, where he was followed by our friend, and there took a seat, uttering some unintelligible words to himself. — The victim, of this weird spell sat in this manner gazing off upon the moon-lit waters for some time, when he arose and proceeded on the way to his residence, closely followed by our informant, who saw him enter the house, close the door, and heard him turn the key. Being satisfied that the person was in a state of somnambulism; our friend did not awake him, but watched his every motion during

the entire time, which he believes to have been one hour or more. The next day, the subject of these curious turns of mind was asked at what hour he arrived home the night previous, when he answered "at eleven o'clock." This answer, of course, fully confirmed our friend in his belief that the above mentioned party was sound asleep when he was met on Main street, near the Methodist Church, with fishing tackle in hand, and after taking him a question and receiving no answer, he deemed it his duty to watch his movements. The somnambulist was told of his exploits and travels of the night, which he at first stoutly denied, but, as our informant is a strong man for truth, he finally acknowledged that he was subject to freaks of sleep walking. Thus ended an occurrence which might have been attended with fatal results, perhaps.

EPHRAIM.

GREEN GOODS GANG BROKEN UP

This article tells the tale of a money counterfeiting operation being run from a barn in Stratford.

Waterbury Evening Democrat
January 12, 1894
GREEN GOODS MEN.

Their Headquarters in an Old Barn in Stratford.

BRIDGEPORT, Jan 12.—High Sheriff Clarkson and deputies Fennell and Curtis yesterday located the store house of the green goods gang which was recently exposed in this city. It is

an old barn in Stratford belonging to Grant McKeel, a colored truckman of this city, and the officers found there a large quantity of green goods, including circulars and some envelopes that were addressed. It was in McKeel's barn in this

city that the deal took place in which "Big Walter" Haynes was arrested less than two weeks ago. The police arrested McKeel yesterday after-noon for being allied with the gang. He is held in \$3,000 bonds.

STRATFORD TOWN NEWS 1893

The Newtown Bee
December 15, 1893
STRATFORD.
HELP THE POOR.

There seems to be plenty of opportunities for our well-to-do, charitably-disposed citizens to show their good will and assist many of our people, who are suffering for want of the necessities of life. A few articles of warm clothing, a little wood and coal or a supply of vegetables from some of our well stocked cellars, properly bestowed, may make life seem less like a burden, to some of our fellow townspeople.

VARIOUS TOWN MATTERS

At the town meeting, last week, a committee was appointed to consider the advisability of opening a new highway, on the

north of the railroad tracks, from King street to Main; the committee to report at a meeting to be held in January next. It was voted to purchase a new road machine. It was also voted to accept of the work done on Skidmore hill. The matter of purchasing more fire extinguishers was left with the selectmen.

Mrs Brown is arranging a grand concert, the proceeds from which are to be devoted to charitable work.

Contractors Stagg and Beardsley are building a new barn for John Peck Wheeler.

The action of the town meeting, in voting to accept of the work done on Skidmore hill, is exciting some unfavorable comment. It is claimed by some that the work was not done in ac-

cordance with the specifications or contract.

The boys are enjoying the fine skating on all the ponds.

Rev Mr Cornwall of Christ church and Rev J. S. Ives of the Congregational church are suffering from severe attacks of the grip.

There was a freshet in the river, last week, and the platforms and staging erected for work on the Washington bridge, were carried away by the ice coining down the river. This will delay the work some; still it is expected the new bridge will be up February 1.

Constable Stagg was seriously injured, last week, by his horse slipping on the ice and falling on top of him. No bones were broken but he was badly

bruised and confined to the house for several days.

There seems to be a great necessity for the locating of lamps under the railroad crossings. They are so dark at night that one can scarcely find their way through without mishap.

It is estimated that it will cost some one from \$4000 to \$5000 to fill in the western approach to the new Washington bridge. The contractors say the town must do it and the town fathers think differently.

Our people are far from pleased at the accommodations offered by the tramway company, under the new management. They miss the work of the old manager in keeping the track clear and cars running regularly in bad weather.

DESTITUTE FAMILY SAYS "NO" TO TOWN ASSISTANCE

Sunday Herald
January 3, 1954

HOME SWEET HOME
Family Living in Woods In Shack--and Likes It!

Stratford do-gooders were ready to go all out this week, when a report got around about a destitute family living in the woods.

Surprise: — the family doesn't want or need help.

A widow and three children live on Connors Lane in a shack. The cold blows in through the wall cracks. A 10-year-old boy bikes to Bridgeport to bring the groceries. Last August when the father was dying, at night, no doctor would go out.

So ran the story, with much more. As a result of the boy

bringing home a sick cat, the shack was infested with germs. Ringworm was suspected. Stratford's welfare and health departments looked in. For one thing, Richard L. Auten traveled to the shack and brought back the family clothes for fumigation and laundering.

George Iverson, welfare head, was first to deflate the melodrama. He said that Mrs. X insisted she wanted no help. She had \$2,500 insurance, and apparently believing more in fancy dying than living, she paid \$1,000 for her husband's funeral. She told Iverson of having a checking account, also a deposit box.

"Then where's the problem?" a reporter asked.

"There isn't any. This woman isn't complaining. She owns the shack and she likes it like that. We say every man's house is his castle."

GIFTS REFUSED

The Health Dept.'s Mrs. Roger Cole gives the same description of the family. When Jack Havery brought some things to the place for Christmas, the woman came out and indignantly asked, "What's this for? I don't want it!"

What other people regard as "backwood," Mrs. X. likes. She says it isn't half that bad, with dogwood, lady slippers, etc., in the Spring.

The moral is: leave people be.



Longbrook Park from **The Stratford News**, January 14, 1954

ANNAMAE ANDREWS' SCRAPBOOKS

Annamae Andrews graduated from Stratford High in 1937. From 1932 until 1945, Annamae kept scrapbooks of newspaper articles she found important or interesting.

Annamae was born Anna May Betsy Andrews on October 11, 1918 in Bridgeport. Her family was living on French Street at the time of her birth. At some point, her family moved to 147 Warwick Avenue in Stratford.

Annamae's obituary reads as follows:

Annamae Betsy (Andrews) Snow, 85, died peacefully at her home in the presence of her loving family on Tuesday, March 23, 2004.

Mrs. Snow was born in Bridgeport, Conn., on Oct. 11, 1918, the daughter of Harold K. and Anna M. (Gedda) Andrews. She graduated from Brattleboro Memorial School of Nursing in 1941 and did private duty nursing for many years. She was a volunteer for the Red Cross for 40 years.

She was an active member of the Eastern Star Bingham Chapter #30

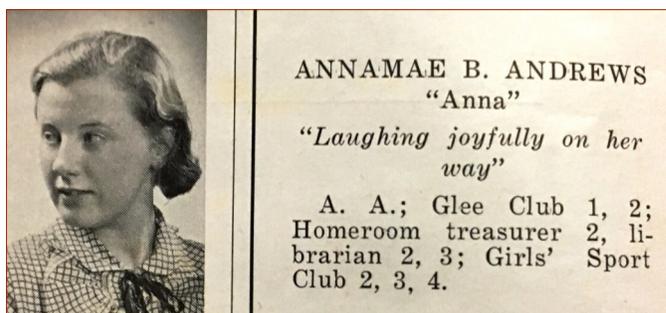
in Brattleboro for 50 years and a longtime member of Center Congregational Church in Brattleboro.

...Mrs. Snow took great pride in and pleasure from her homemaking. She was locally famous for her prodigious production of delicious doughnuts and sparkling homebrew.

She is survived by three sons, Daniel E. Snow of Dummerston, Douglas C. Snow of Elgin, Ariz., and Leslie A. Snow of Marshfield; three granddaughters; one grandson; a brother, Kenneth W. Andrews of San Diego; a sister, Marjorie Brelsford of Stratford, Conn.; and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased in 1995 by her husband of 50-plus years.

Annamae's scrapbooks were recently found at the Baldwin Center. Many of the newspaper articles contained within are beginning to deteriorate. We are in the process of digitizing Annamae's scrapbooks. Over the coming months, we will be sharing articles from Annamae's scrapbooks with you.



ANNAMAE B. ANDREWS
"Anna"

"Laughing joyfully on her way"

A. A.; Glee Club 1, 2;
Homerom treasurer 2, li-
brarian 2, 3; Girls' Sport
Club 2, 3, 4.



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

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