

THE CUPHEAG CORNER

VOLUME IV, ISSUE 6

JUNE-JULY 2022



Capt. David Judson House
c. 1750

MARK THE DATES:

- September's General Membership Meeting, Saturday, September 17th, 2pm, Stratford Library
- Stratford Bird Festival, Saturday, September 24th, Stratford Point

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BONUS ISSUE

WE find ourselves at the end of another fiscal year at the Stratford Historical Society. For the past several years, the end of our fiscal year meant we would publish our all ONLINE ONLY bonus issue of the newsletter. We love this issue because space is no limitation for us. We are able to include lots of pho-

tos, and have some fun with this issue. You may also check out all our past newsletters at www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.org. We hope you'll enjoy this bonus issue!

Let's start you off with some photos of our museum renovations. Roger Salls took these photos back

in March. Much, much work has been done since then, and more work is underway. To appreciate all that's been done, please stop by to see us on a Tuesday or Friday.

You may view all of Roger's wonderful photos at <https://bit.ly/3HX8D9L>.



From the mid 1950s to the late 1960s, Americans learned more about the history of colonial America and the American West from movies and television than from scholarly books.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*

HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAPPENINGS

Our Historical Society Officers have been installed for 2022-23. Please see the last page of this newsletter.

We have just released our 2022-23 meetings calendar. You'll see the calendar below. Our Septem-

ber meeting will feature a presentation by Ken Staffey. Ken's topic will be **Housestories: Researching the Stories Behind Historic Homes**. Please join us on Saturday, September 17th at the Stratford Library's Lovell Room. Additional details will be forthcoming in our September newsletter.

We have received a grant to participate in "CT Summer at the Museum". You will find details on the flyer on the cover of this newsletter, on our Facebook page, and on our website.

We are trying out a new program, **Candlelight Historical Walks**, on Wednesday nights in August and September. Walks for August will all begin at 7pm and assemble at the Judson House. Our walk flyer may be found on the last page of this newsletter and on our Facebook page. Advance registration is required.

Lighthouse Property Tours will

be offered August 28th, September 4th and September 11th from noon to 3pm at Stratford Point Lighthouse. We will also be offering our historical and virtual lighthouse tour program. The lighthouse is currently closed to visitors, but the lighthouse property is gorgeous and may be enjoyed by all visitors.

The **Stratford Bird Festival** is to be held Saturday, September 24th. There will be a number of birding related activities and programs at the Stratford Point Lighthouse.

2022-23 Meeting Calendar

Saturday	September 17th	2pm
Saturday	November 19th	2pm
Sunday	January 23rd	2pm
Sunday	March 27th	2pm
Sunday	May 22nd	2pm



CT Summer at the Museum is supported by Connecticut Humanities and the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts, which also receives support from the Federal ARPA.

OUR RECENT EVENTS

The shells which have been stored on Knell's Island during the past year, are being rapidly loaded on vessels by the oystermen, taken to their ground in the sound and dumped overboard as a foundation for a new set of oysters. Every species of floating craft available has been pressed into this service, and the immense piles of shells will soon be under water. The Newtown Bee July 23, 1897



Criticism by the pastor, the Rev. Joel R. Ives, the previous Sunday, caused the choir of the Stratford Congregational Church last Sunday to sit in the pews, and there was no choir music. Hartford Courant June 8, 1897

Bringing the Museum back into operation and preparing our gardens for the growing season has been a herculean effort. Due to the dedicated teams working on these projects we now have much to admire on our Society's grounds. A new gardening

group has "sprouted" from these efforts.

We were also favored to be able to showcase all the hard work that's been done by holding some notable events on our grounds, namely Pollinator Garden Planting Day, May 21st; Stratford Museum Day, June

11th; and, Membership & Volunteer Fair Day, June 25th. Attendance was good at each of these events and we appreciate all who helped and all who attended these events.

Many thanks to Kevin Moore and Roger Salls for all the photos.

POLLINATOR GARDEN PLANTING DAY



STRATFORD MUSEUM DAY



MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEER FAIR



DATELINE STRATFORD JUNE—JULY 1957

The Bridgeport Post

June 2, 1957

STRATFORD COP HURT BY FLYING STEEL

Stratford Patrolman Michael Szabo was taken to Bridgeport hospital at 10:45 a.m. yesterday after he received an injury to his left leg while working as a special policemen on the Connecticut turnpike project at Bar street, Stratford.

Patrolman Szabo said that he had been standing near a workman who was driving a wedge into a bridge abutment when a steel splinter from the wedge struck him below the left knee.

He was released from the hospital after the splinter was removed.

The Stratford News

June 6, 1957

389 Will Receive S. H. S. Diplomas

Commencement week exercises for the largest Stratford High School class in history began last night when the Senior banquet was held at the Stratfield Hotel and announcements of scholarship and other awards were made.

Baccalaureate services are scheduled for Sunday evening at 7:30 p. m. at the Shakespeare Theatre and graduation exercises when 389 Seniors receive diplomas are slated for Monday at 6:30 p.m. at Longbrook Park.

THIS IS the first graduating class under the double session system.

The Stratford News

June 6, 1957

Final Plans Made in Mrs. Youngs' Party

Arrangements and preparations have been completed for the Mrs. Lillian Youngs Reception on June 17, Garden School, from 8 to 10 p. m. Mrs. Robert Stauffer, chairman, announces.

...Mrs. Youngs graduated from Bridgeport Normal School, and re-

ceived her degree at New Haven Teachers College. She is a member of the Stratford Education Association, National Education Association, Connecticut Education Association and Garden School Parent Teacher Association.

The Stratford News

June 13, 1957

Hearing of the Green

The girls in Brownie Troop 79 of the Wilcoxson School, who received wings and Girl Scout pins at the "Fly-Up Ceremony" in the school auditorium Friday night were as follows: Dawn Cadwell, Elizabeth Carter, Gail Claussen, Barbara Coviolo, Ronna Dennis, Virginia Dore, Carol Goodman, Janice Jacopian, Maureen Keenan, Sandra Kochiss, Paula Kraft, Josephine Marmo, Susan Mitchell, Susan Niedehaurer, Nancy Orban, Merreies Ostbert, Pam Paterson, Helen Platt, Jo Lynn Shaughnassy, Cynthia Showah, Catherine Small, Patricia Soderberg and Sharon Van Wart.

Sunday Herald

July 7, 1957

Teacher Dies After Collapse Aboard Train

Mrs. Grace Van, 62, of 27 Shelter Cove, Milford, a teacher at Stratford's Center School, died yesterday at St. Vincent's Hospital shortly after suffering a heart attack on a New Haven train.

Mrs. Van Buren was stricken while en route to New York City, where she planned to board a plane for Bermuda and visit her daughter, Mrs. George Hopper, a resident of Warwick.

Sunday Herald

If you're interested in viewing additional newspaper photos from this time period, please consult our Stratford 400 Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/stratford400>.

July 14, 1957

Joan Joyce Pitches Brakette No-Hitter

WATERBURY—Joan Joyce, hurled a no-hitter as the Raybestos Brakettes blanked Kuhn's Sparkettes of Fairfield, 12-0, here yesterday to pass their first test as defending champs in the fourth annual Eastern Seaboard Women's softball title tourney.

...The Brakettes opened their easy victory with a six-run splurge in the second.



Brakettes Jo-Jo Ottaviano, Joan Wallace and Edna Fraser with Bill Simpson. Photo from the *The Stratford News*, June 6, 1957.

The Bridgeport Post

July 28, 1957

Stratford Leaders Seek Candidates for Council

Political leaders admit that Council candidates are not as easy to find as might be expected and both Stratford major political parties are checking with district leaders to come up with names for the October town election.

Sunday Herald

July 28, 1957

Restaurants Hit Festival Food OK

The Stratford Restaurant Assn. yesterday called for an "immediate rehearing" of a petition permitting the Shakespeare Theater to sell food on a limited basis.

The association asserted that it is "highly improbable" board member Joseph Lupe "could have been impartial in considering this application."

...Lupe said he took up the matter of his relationship to the theater with board members prior to the hearing, and it was agreed he should not disqualify himself.

He said that he listened to both sides in the controversial hearing "in all sincerity" and with full objectivity.

But he said that the crucial consideration, from the standpoint of the Restaurant Assn.'s plea for a rehearing, is the fact that there was "no reason whatever" why he should have disqualified himself.



Mary Hardy, Mrs. S. B. Withington, Ray O'Connor, Bill Ambrose, Donald Bundock. Photo from *The Stratford News*, June 27, 1957.



Raybestos Brake Liners team 1957. Photo from *Sunday Herald*, July 14, 1957.

NOW SHOWING JUNE-JULY 1957



Stratford Theater c 1934

June 2nd	For Whom the Bell Tolls	Gary Cooper, Ingrid Bergman, Akim Tamiroff, Arturo de Cordova
June 9th	The Quiet Man	John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Barry Fitzgerald
June 16th	A Face in the Crowd	Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal
June 23rd	Desk Set	Katharine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy
June 30th	Gunfight at the O. K. Corral	Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Rhonda Fleming
July 7th	The D. I.	Jack Webb, Monica Lewis
July 14th	The Lonely Man	Jack Palance, Anthony Perkins
July 21st	The Bachelor Party	Don Murray
July 28th	The Prince & The Showgirl	Marilyn Monroe

JUDSON POND THREATENED



Judson's Pond c 1910.
Now known as Brewster's Pond.

Judson's Pond was created in the late 1800's when Long Brook was dammed. The pond was renamed Brewster's Pond after Bill Brewster bought the pond some time after 1922. The pond has had its ups and downs over the years. Apparently, 1922 was a down year for the pond.

The Bridgeport Times

Stratford, July 20, 1922.

Editor Bridgeport Times:

Can anything be done to save Judson Pond? It seems to be fast disappearing and has already changed from a beauty spot (of which Stratford has all too few) and a source of wholesome sport to hundreds of girls and boys, to a stagnant, mosquito-breeding pool.

I asked our councilman, Mr. Sherwood, what was the matter with it and if he could do anything about it and he replied that it was a matter in which he was deeply interested and had watched with keenest regret. He said that the people had kept the council so busy with matters which were of no profit to the town or anybody else, that he has been able to give little attention to the department in which he was most interested, the parks. He also said that he understood that last winter, gravel was dumped into the big spring that feeds the pond, apparently under instructions from the administration then controlling the town's affairs. That he has heard that Mr. Wilcoxson, whose property borders the pond, has told the

boys that he should make a hole in the dam and if they mended it, he would tear it down again. Mr. Sherwood says he has not talked with Mr. Wilcoxson and does not know what his reasons may be, but they should be very good and very important ones to warrant destroying a thing of such recognized beauty that is a source of pleasure to so many people.

It seems to me that there is one thing we can all do to save the pond, and that is to vote not to recall our present councilman, thus voting against the election of a man who would deliberately set his own personal interests above the wishes and comfort of the people in his neighborhood.

A Woman Voter of the Seventh District.



John Kenneth Moore. *The Bridgeport Telegram*, November 23, 1920



John Kenneth Moore. Bridgeport High School *Criterion* yearbook, 1924.

MISSING TEEN LOCATED IN NYC

For certain Stratford High School students looking at the possibility of continuing their educations beyond high school in the early 1900's, Bridgeport High School seemed like a more "prestigious" path to higher education than was Stratford High at that time. Kenneth Moore was one such student.

Apparently, by November of 1920, Kenneth came to believe he was not meeting the expectations his parents had for him, so he decided to run away.

What followed that decision was agony and heartache for his parents. His father pursued every avenue, every lead, every clue to locate his missing son. Unscrupulous operators learned of Kenneth's father's attempts to locate his son, and decided to attempt to extort money from Mr. Moore in exchange for information on Kenneth's whereabouts.

Kenneth was fortuitously, and accidentally, located about 19 months later. Kenneth returned home and graduated from Bridgeport High School. He was a popular student, and was involved in many student activities after his return.

Looking back from many years later, one can't help but wonder how Kenneth's life might have progressed differently had he not run away. Kenneth's story, no doubt, is

the actualization of most every parent's worst nightmare.

The Bridgeport Times

June 23, 1922

MOTHER AND FATHER OVERCOME WITH JOY

Kenneth J. Moore, of 203 King street, Stratford, who on November 17, 1920, at the age of fifteen, disappeared from sight, shortly after noon, as if the earth had opened and engulfed him, has been located. He is now on a farm in Northern New York State, and will probably be back in Bridgeport tomorrow. The clue that led to his discovery was from a letter received at Police Headquarters yesterday from a blind man, an attaché of the Holland Consulate, a reproduction of which is printed on this page.

The parents of the boy, overcome with joy over the report that their long lost son had been located, left this morning in company with Sergeant Michael Arnolsky of the Bureau of Missing Persons, to bring the boy back to this city.

...Kenneth Moore had been living in New York ever since his departure from this city under the name of John Long. Long was his mother's maiden name.

Whether the boy will be returned to this city or whether he will after a short stay be again allowed to return to work for the company with which he has been employed since has [sic] disap-

pearance [sic] is not known,

An incident in connection with the story is that if he had remained in this city he would last night have completed his four years and been graduated from the Bridgeport High school. In his younger days Moore had always expressed a hope that he might some day go to College and complete his education.

Mr. Moore was overcome with joy this morning at the thought that he was once again to see his long lost son. Tears of joy streamed down his face and it was with the greatest of difficulty that he was able to control the complex emotions that arose within him. His wife also wept with joy, and while waiting for the train they breathed nervously, and walked tempestuously up and down the platform in an effort to conceal the thousands of pangs beating their hearts.

Reporters talked with the father and mother as tears of joy came to their eyes, dimmed for the past two years by the sadness which had so heavily clouded their lives. They were too greatly overcome to converse with anyone and gave mute silence, far greater than any words, to the unlimited amount of happiness which had driven all gloom from their hearts.

You may read this story in its entirety on the home page of our newsletter website.

AN ACCIDENTAL FOREST—REMINGTON WOODS

Before GPS, before WAZE, before Mapquest, and before the World Wide Web there was Hagstrom. If you're an auto driver of a certain age, you will likely recall just how absolutely essential the wire bound Connecticut **Hagstrom** maps were to have in your car. It was next to impossible to locate a previously unvisited Connecticut locale without the aid of your trusty **Hagstrom**.

There was always a large blank space on the Stratford-Bridgeport map page which really puzzled me. No label was attached to this space, and I used to drive by the area on Broadbridge Avenue to attempt to identify, or assign a label to, this white space in the **Hagstrom**.

Sometime around 2000, I attended a presentation at the Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby given by Milan Bull of the Connecticut Audubon Society. "Miley" provided a label for this blank space: "**Remington Woods**". I learned "the Woods" were under threat of development, and a group, **Friends of Remington Woods**, had been

formed to protect and preserve "the Woods".

I learned a great deal about Remington Woods from my association with "The Friends", not the least of those learnings was the fact that "the Woods" had been the site for Remington Arms for burying unexploded ordinance, and that the property was being remediated by DuPont. As the years had passed, "the Woods" had become an "accidental forest" and were home to many animals, birds, and plants.

Years later, I was privileged to tour "the Woods", several times, with employees of the DuPont Corporation. I couldn't help but draw comparisons between Roosevelt Forest and Remington Woods. And, yes, I came to feel that converting this "accidental forest" into a business park would not be the best use of the site.

A very complete history of Remington Woods was assembled by **The Friends of Remington Woods**. You may read the history on the home page of our newsletter website. Here are some excerpts from the history.

Remington Woods in Bridgeport and Stratford is a unique and precious survival-422 acres of old-growth oak forest and wildlife habitat in the midst of one of America's most densely developed metropolitan areas. Set aside in 1906, this private preserve includes a sizeable lake, rock outcrops, streams, and wetlands that remain as nature created them. No city in the Northeast retains a wild open space of this magnitude and quality anywhere near the population center. And, quite possibly, no city in North America is more in need of the preservation in perpetuity of so magnificent a resource.

...Barnum described our site in his autobiography: The eastern line of East Bridgeport, when I first purchased so large a portion of the property, was bounded by a long, narrow swale or valley of salt meadow, through which a small stream passed, and which was flooded with salt water at every tide. At considerable expense, I erected a dam at the foot of this meadow, and thus converted this heretofore filthy, repulsive mosquito-inhabited and malaria-breeding marsh into a charming sheet of water, which is now known as Pembroke Lake...



From Hagstrom Fairfield County 1989.



Deer in Remington Woods during Sporting Goods Properties' bus tour September 21, 2015.

AGNES JUDSON SAVES FISHERMEN



Drawing from *The Bridgeport Herald*, July 11, 1897.



Stratford Point Lighthouse 1882..

Theodore Judson was Stratford Point's Lighthouse Keeper for 40 years. He began his Keeper career when the "new" Stratford Light was built in 1881. Theodore and his wife, Kate, raised and educated their four children at the Lighthouse. Agnes was the youngest of the four.

Bridgeport Herald
July 11, 1897

BRAVE AGNES JUDSON

THE PRETTIEST and bravest girl on the Long Island shore is not yet out of her teens. She is Agnes Judson, the daughter of the lighthouse keeper at Stratford point. Like all people who risk their lives to save those of their fellowmen she is shy and modest and appears to look upon her deed of heroism, and it was heroism, in the strictest sense of the word, as though it was an everyday occurrence for her to risk her life to save that of some other

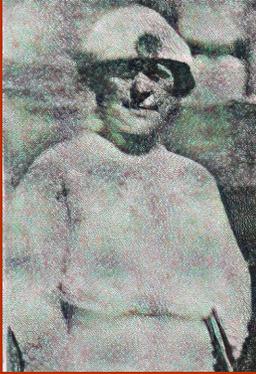
person.

Last Thursday two young men went out in a small boat on a fishing trip. One of them was Herman Chase. The other's name could not be learned, but he is a member of the Y. M. C. A. in Bridgeport. They anchored about 200 yards off the Stratford lighthouse and for some time they had good sport. The tide was just about right. The fish bit well and when they decided that they had had enough they started for home. The anchor was a heavy piece of iron and when one of them attempted to raise it he found that he could not do it. He called his companion to his assistance. Landman like he went to the wrong side of the boat. Both pulled on the painter and it was only a few seconds when the skiff had no ballast in her. She righted at once. One of the men could swim but he was a long ways from home. He shouted for help.

Miss Agnes Judson, the daughter of the lighthouse keeper was in the house near the tower. She heard the cry and at once ran from the house and rang the alarm bell. Her brother, Henry Judson, and her father heard the bell, and answered it. He rushed to her assistance but the brave little girl did not wait for him. Two lives were in danger. She knew it and grabbing a piece of rope she ran into the water and dragged Chase ashore. Her brother went after the other man and pulled him ashore about the time that his brave sister landed.

Miss Agnes Judson was seen yesterday by a "Herald" representative. She said: "I do not see what makes people try to make such amount of matter of such a little thing. It was of no consequence, and did not amount to much. You will oblige me by saying nothing about it."

STRATFORD'S QUINTESSENTIAL GIRL SCOUT



Billie Howell. Photo from the *Bridgeport Herald*, September 1, 1918.



Billie Howell. Photo from *The Bridgeport Times*, April 26, 1922.

Recently, we discovered that Billie Howell created, ostensibly, the first Girl Scout Camp in America. Before further expounding upon that achievement, let us recall some of Billie Howell's plethora of accomplishments.

Billie, a Vaudeville comedienne, moved to town when she was just 22 years of age and resided with her husband, Richard Howell, in a beautiful mansion, which, at the time, was located at 1585 Elm Street (corner of South Avenue and Elm Street).

Billie's husband, Richard, was the owner of the *Bridgeport Herald* and had been the reporter on the scene of Gustave Whitehead's historic flights in 1901 in Fairfield, Bridgeport, and Stratford.

Billie had no children of her own, but she rapidly became known as the "big sister" of Stratford's children. Her particular focus was ensuring that the roughly 400 hungry children in the town in the early 1920's were properly nourished.

To that end, Billie created the Boys and Girls Useful Club in 1918, comprised of some 45 Stratford children, whose primary goal was to grow garden vegetables for the impoverished youngsters in town and

to assist with the war effort.

When Billie first learned of the Girl Scout organization, sometime before 1921, she formed three Stratford Girl Scout troops: one at Sedgewick School, one in Lordship, and one at Nichols School. The focus of these 75 girl scouts was to extend the reach of the Boys and Girls Useful club in providing sustenance for Stratford's hungry children.

In 1922 Billie wished to create a camp for training her girl scouts and furthering their scouting skills. There was no scout camp in Stratford at the time. Billie leased land in Redding Ridge and created what as best we can determine, was the very first Girl Scout camp in America.

Billie built the camp with her and her husband's private funds, and transported the girl scouts to the camp each summer at her own expense. Because there was no other Girl Scout camp in Fairfield County, Billie offered the camp to Girl Scout troops throughout the county.

Juliette Gordon Low founded the Girl Scouts of America in 1912. A park was created and named for Juliette Gordon Low in the south end of Stratford by way of Town Council

Ordinance in 1973.

The Juliette Low Park is located at the site of the old Sedgewick School at the corner of Woodend Road and Sedgewick Avenue. Billie Howell, although childless herself, was president of the Sedgewick School PTA.

Billie died at the much too young age of 35. You might think Billie's legendary life would be well-documented in Stratford's history. Billie is unknown to Stratford's written history, and to its Girl Scouts.

One marker exists for just one of Stratford's Suffragettes, Edith Hastings. That marker is located at Academy Hill across the street from the David Judson house.

We have proposed to the Parks & Recreation Committee of the town that we create a marker to commemorate Billie Howell, Stratford's first Girl Scout leader, Sedgewick School PTA President, and Suffragette extraordinaire, at the site of the old Sedgewick School, now the Juliette Low Park. We believe we can secure a grant to fund the placement of such a marker.

Further, we suggested that the committee consider renaming the Juliette Low Park in honor of Stratford's first Girl Scout leader, Billie Howell.

CLOSING THE "OLD COACH" ROAD

The Bridgeport Times
June 15, 1922

Stratford Road In Use For 283 Years, Closed By Orders Of Town Council

Stratford's town council has done many things, some wise and some unwise. The latest of the latter is the closing of a road to the rear of Christ church which runs from the Post road to Elm street, thence connecting with Ferry boulevard, eliminating several blocks' travel through the center of the town.

For the past 285 years the road has been in use and residents of the old town are indignant at its closing. They say that the council ordered the street closed at a secret meeting, but this is denied by members of the council, who say that the hearing was advertised. Now the residents are scanning papers look-

ing for the notices.

...Tradition says that Washington, Lafayette, Jefferson and other outstanding heroes of the Revolution passed over the road on their travels between New York [sic] and Boston.

The British troops, history says, stood in this same road and fired shots at the rooster perched on the top of the weather vane of Christ church. Pdlaces [sic] where the bullets struc [sic] can still beseen [sic]. Recently the cock was struck by lightning and was loosened from its perch, falling to the ground.

Charles Dickens, the noted English author, passed over the road on his way from Hartford to New York.

...Harold Holmes of Main street, Stratford, whose grandfather William [sic] Holmes, who died at the age of 93, drove the

mail stage over the road, is one who laments the passing of the road. Mr. Holmes remembers some of granddad's tales.

The road was the home stretch to Stratford for the old stage coach coming in from Boston. At Lovejoy's Inn, a famous Revolutionary period hostelry, horses were changed. The Post Road then, is now the Broad street of Stratford. To arrive at the old Post Office and Inn, it was necessary to drive several blocks south after reaching Main street. After the horses were changed the old road was utilized to get back on to the Post Road. Thorough [sic] winter and summer the stage drivers worked and great men of history passed over the road.

Read this article in its entirety on our newsletter website: stratfordhistoricalsociety.info.



Frederick Beach's phaeton, pulled by his horse Kansas c 1910, on "the old Coach Road" just to the south of Christ Episcopal Church.

FUNDRAISERS TO BENEFIT THE SOCIETY

Here are a couple of painless ways you can help out the Historical Society financially.

The first is by using your Amazon account. If, when you're planning to make a purchase from Amazon, you point your browser to smile.amazon.com as opposed to using amazon.com, you'll be able to specify a charity to which Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase amount to the Historical Society. For instance, if you spend \$100 with Amazon, Amazon will automatically donate \$.50

to the Society. It costs you nothing, but those purchases can add up to a very beneficial, cost-free annual donation to the Society.

The second way you can help out is by shopping at Stop & Shop and purchasing a recyclable bag during the month of August. Stop & Shop will donate \$1 of your bag purchase price to the Society. It might not seem like much, but over the years Stop & Shop has run this program, the Society has received \$938!



STOP&SHOP
200 EAST MAIN STREET STRATFORD

COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM

DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST WE WILL RECEIVE \$1.00 FOR EVERY \$2.50 REUSABLE COMMUNITY BAG YOU BUY!

the STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY est. 1925

SALERNO'S 75 YEARS OLD



Photo from Salerno's Facebook page.



Ad from *The Bridgeport Post*, January 7, 1951.

One of Stratford's Senior Citizens is celebrating its 75th birthday this year. While not "born" in Stratford, Salerno's opened its Stratford doors at the Cutrufello's building in April 1970.

Salerno's opened its first location at 563 Park Avenue, Bridgeport in 1947. As you're well aware, it's rare indeed for a restaurant to remain viable for 75 years!

In my mind, Salerno's and scamorza (skuh-motes) cheese pizza will be eternally wed. Apparently, difficulty in importing mozzarella cheese into the Bridgeport area following World War II resulted in some of the local pizza establishments switching over to scamorza cheese.

Scamorza cheese appears to be making inroads all over the U.S. these days on pizza, in antipasto trays, and for snacking due to its firm, dry texture.

At one time in the 1950's and 1960's there were scamorza pizza restaurants in Milford, Bridgeport, and Stratford.

For me, scamorza cheese will always bring to mind Salerno's pizza. Things weren't always easy for our 75 year old Salerno's. The restaurant struggled with obtaining a beer permit back in the early 1970's. And what's pizza without beer, anyway?

The Bridgeport Post
April 19, 1973

STRATFORD

...Nine other petitions will also be heard Monday including the request of Vito and Josephine Salerno, owners of Salerno's Italian restaurant at 1398 Barnum avenue, for an amendment of the zoning regulations to permit beer to be sold in a commercial district.

Currently beer may be sold in a hotel in a commercial, district but an amendment is needed to authorize its sale without other liquor in a restaurant in a commercial district, according to Mrs. McLellan.

If the amendment is approved, the Salernos want to apply for what would be a class-H permit for restaurants to sell beer for their establishment.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT—AMANDA DEBIASE

Twenty-five years and still going strong! Because Amanda's amazing, because she's always been there for us, and because she's very quiet by nature, we, unfortunately, tend to take her for granted. Because Amanda's such a constant, calming presence, we frequently have to remind ourselves that Amanda's been a part of the Stratford Historical Society much longer than most of the rest of us have been members.

Amanda joined our Historical Society through our Summer Camp program some 25 years ago! Amanda has spent many summers since assisting in the



Amanda, center, in Docent costume, July 2008.

management of training of our Summer Camp program. Amanda graduated from our Docent Training Program a dozen years, or so, ago.

Today, Amanda helps with all of our Society programs and special events. She serves on our Executive Committee as our Recording Secretary. We greatly benefit from Amanda's attention to detail and meticulous observations of the activities of our Governing Board. Our only regret as it pertains to Amanda is that we've found no way, yet, to clone her!

Thanks for all you do, Amanda.



Amanda's LinkedIn.com profile photo.

THE REPORT WHICH WAS circulated during the week in reference to the Rev. Joel S. Ives, of Stratford, and his choir being on the outs is evidently without foundation in one sense of the word.

The members of the choir are all members of the congregation and while they have not had any direct trouble with Mr. Ives as was rumored they are by no means on the best of terms with the reverend gentleman.

The circulation of the petition which was published exclusively in the "Herald" last Sunday, has much to do with the above rumor being circulated, but aside from the general dissatisfaction which is existing between Mr. Ives and his congregation there is no other grievance. The non-appearance of the choir last Sunday at the church was evidently an oversight on the part of the members. Some were sick, others were out of town and the few who were well and able to attend church refused to sing on account of their leader being absent. Today, however, it is thought that the members of the choir will be in their usual places and the services at the church will be conducted as usual.

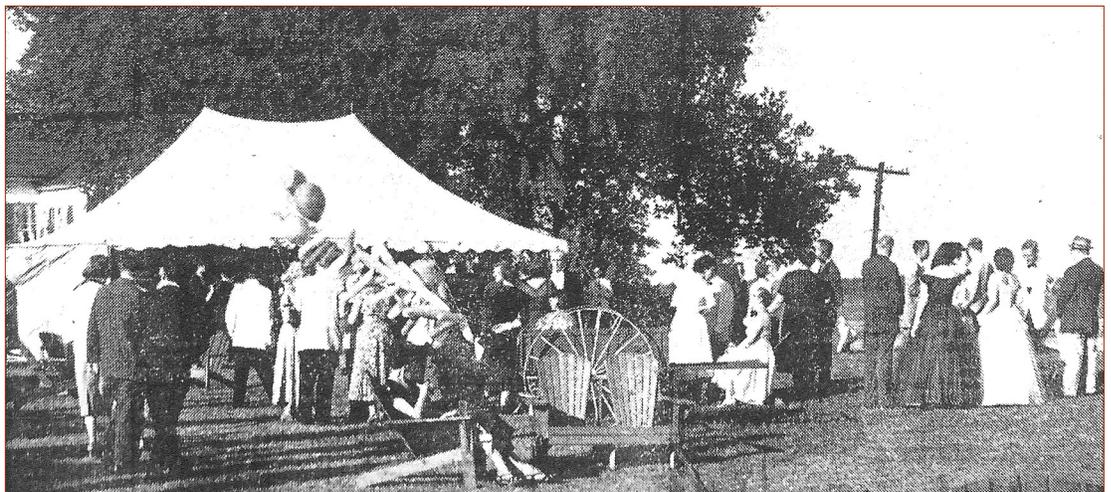
Bridgeport Herald
June 13, 1897



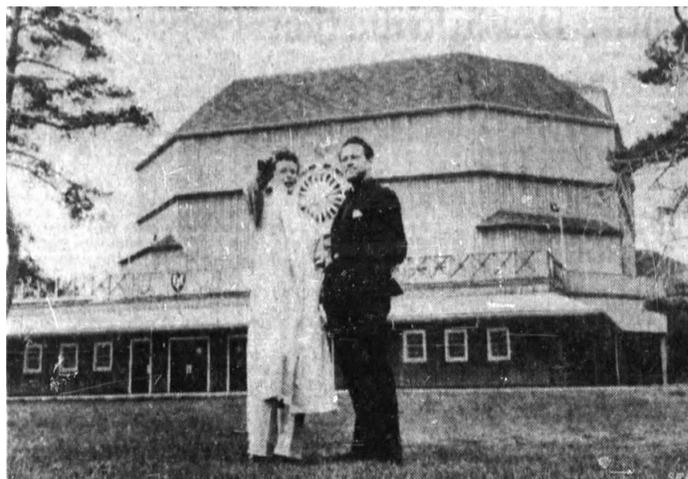
Katharine Hepburn appears as Portia in the trial scene from "The Merchant of Venice".
The Stratford News, July 11, 1957.



Alfred Drake and Earle Hyman in a scene from "Othello".
The Stratford News, June 27, 1957.



EARLY ARRIVALS in capacity first-night audience gather at refreshment tent prior to the opening Saturday of third American Shakespeare Festival season. **The Stratford News**, June 27, 1957.



Katharine Hepburn and Alfred Drake.
The Hartford Courant, June 2, 1957.

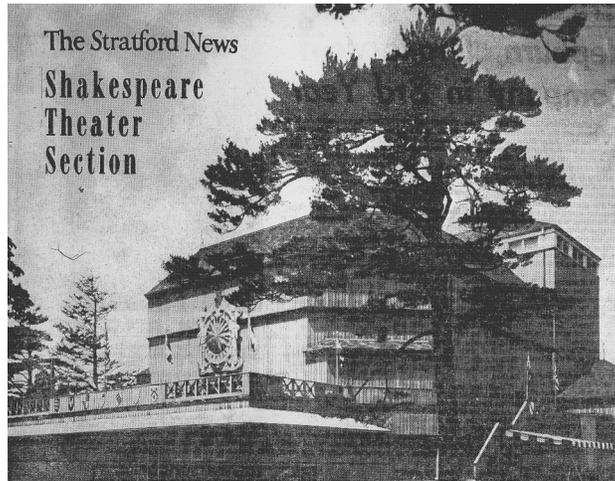


Paul Hecht and Salome Jens.
The Hartford Courant, June 18, 1957.

AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL THEATRE 1957



Katharine Hepburn, Morris Carnovsky, and Richard Waring.
Sunday Herald, July 7, 1957.



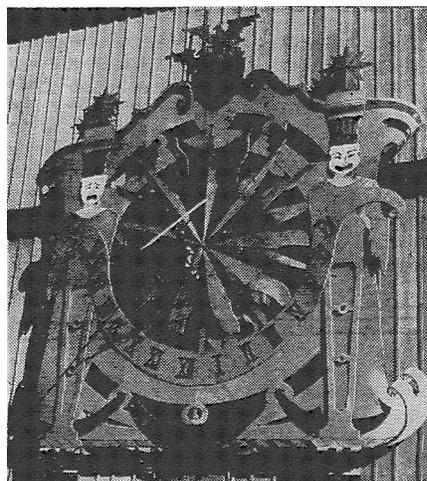
American Shakespeare Festival Theatre.
The Stratford News, June 20, 1957.



Katharine Hepburn, Dina Doronne, and Richard Lupino.
Sunday Herald, July 7, 1957.



Morris Carnovsky as Shylock in *Merchant of Venice*.
The Stratford News, July 11, 1957.



Timex Sun Dial on the face of the Shakespeare Theatre.
The Stratford News, July 11, 1957.



Jacqueline Brookes, Earle Hyman, and Larry Gates.
The Stratford News, July 11, 1957.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S VIEWS OF THE AREA

The Bridgeport Telegram

February 22, 1922

Washington' Views of This Vicinity Described in Diary

...Taking the Stratford town records as a basis George Washington is known to have crossed the ferry which then existed between Stratford and Milford no less than seven times. The first time he was but a young man, about 24 years of age, a British officer and commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces. He was on his way to consult with General Shirley, the commander-in-chief of the British forces in America, about a matter of precedence among the

troops.

Nineteen years later June 28, 1775, Washington, now commander-in-chief of the Continental army passed through this section again on his way east from Philadelphia.

...Washington says in his diary:

"A little after sunrise we left Fairfield and passed through Stratford, wch. is ten miles from Fairfield, and is a pretty village on or near Stratford river. The Road between these two places is not on the whole bad (for this country) - in some places very gd., especially through Et. Fairfield (now Black Rock wch., is in a plain, and free from stone.

"There are two decent looking churches in this place though small, viz.; an Episcopal, and Presbyterian or Congregationalist (as they call themselves.) At Stratford there is the same. At this place I was received with an effort of military parade; and was attended to the Ferry which is near a mile from the center of the Town, by sevl. Gentlemen on horseback.

"Doctr. Johnson of the Senate, visited me here, being, with Mrs. Johnson in this Town, (where be formerly resided.) The Ferry is near half a mile; and sometimes much incommoded, by winds and cross

tides. The navigation for vessels of about 775 Tons extends up to Derby, ten miles higher, where it is said there is a pretty brisk trade.

"At Stratford they are establishing a manufactory of Duck, and have thusly turned out about 400 bolts. From the Ferry it is abt. 3 miles to Milford, which is situated in more uneven and stony gd. than the 3 last villages through wch. we passed. ...there are Grist and Saw mills, and a handsome Cascade over the Tumbling dam;



Earle Hyman as Othello and Jacqueline Brookes as Desdemona. Photo from *The Stratford News*, July 18, 1957.



Sada Thompson plays Emilia in "Othello" and Margaret in "Much Ado About Nothing." Photo from *The Stratford News*, July 25, 1957.



Stanley Bell as the Duke of Venice in "Othello" and the Prince of Aragon in "Much Ado About Nothing." Photo from *The Stratford News*, July 25, 1957.

The Stratford News created a bit of a firestorm in town, when they published the following editorial on the front page of the June 20, 1957 edition. The article expressed the feelings of many people throughout the State who felt as though Stratford had been awarded a money machine. On the eve of the third season, many in town felt imposed upon rather than rewarded by the Theatre's presence. Celebrities flocked to town for season 3.

The Stratford News
June 20, 1957

**Welcome to Theater,
Warning to Our Neighbors**

This is a welcome – and a warning.

The welcome is extended by the *Stratford News*, speaking for all the people of Stratford, to the first of the thousands of visitors who'll come to town this weekend for the opening of the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre's 1957 season.

The warning is extended to a small but highly vocal minority of our Stratford neighbors who haven't yet come to appreciate what a tremendous boon the Shakespeare Theater is to our town – and whose selfishness and recklessness have too often plagued and impeded its operations.

...Why the warning?

Simply because the editors of *The News*, along with a great many other Stratford residents, are deeply concerned over our collective failure to understand the great significance of the Shakespeare Theater to our town, and to realize the vast opportunities it presents for all Stratford residents.

Not enough of us are aware that next to our large industries, the theater represents Stratford's greatest physical and economic asset – a major resource which, if it is nurtured and supported, will bolster and expand the economic underpinnings of our community.

Ever fewer Stratfordites yet understand that since the establishment of the theater two years ago, our town has become the most prominent spot on the cultural map of Connecticut.

The purpose of this editorial is

not to pass judgment on several incidents – picayne [sic] in motivation but potentially dangerous in effect – which have marred the relationship between the town as a whole and the theater.

Our point is that the people of Stratford must start reassessing the vast value of the theater to the town, and must begin acting accordingly.

For one thing, let's start making Shakespeare feel at home in his adopted town.

Let's pledge our full cooperation to the theater management – both as individual citizens and working through our elected and appointed officials.

Let's make an organized effort to transform Stratford during the theater season into a festival town.

If mere legal technicalities are interpreted as restricting certain phases of theater operations, let's examine them to see if the restrictions are really necessary, of if they're merely over-zealous interpretations.

Most of all, let's start acting grown-up in our relations with the theater. And let's show our justifiable resentment over the small-minded and small-motivated people who have attempted to hamstring the theater for purely selfish motives.

On the eve of its third season, the theater looks forward to its greatest year. This could be the year that Stratford-on-Housatonic is firmly established as the world-wide center of Shakespearean drama.

Let's not let anything stand in the way of that monumental achievement.

The Stratford News
July 11, 1957

**New Haven Lawyer Says
Town Should Provide Visitors
With Elizabethan Atmosphere**

A prominent New Haven attorney this week urged Stratford to "put your imagination to work and take advantage of the God-given opportunity you have received to make the Shakespeare Theatre one of the leading cultural centers in the world."

Frances Rauth told the *Stratford News* that people all over the country are awakening to

Shakespeare, but they must have something to attract them to the place where his works are being presented.

Mrs. Rauth suggested that a civic committee be named for the purpose of developing the area around the theater into "something that really resembles the Elizabethan period.

"The theater is a magnificent thing as it is," she said, "but it takes big minds and big thinking by the community to make it the cultural center it should be."

MRS. RAUTH envisions the development of approaches to the theatre so to put the visitor into an Elizabethan mood as he comes upon the building.

She said a pavilion [sic] should be constructed where food could be served and the lake neighboring the theater developed into an outdoor skating rink in the Winter and a beautiful addition to the landscape in the Summer.

She is puzzled by the opposition of various groups to a restaurant on theater grounds.

"It's like all new things," she said, "people are suspicious of them until they try them and discover how much good it can do for them."

If Stratford made a concentrated community effort to make the theater a center of culture not only during the Summer but the year around, these groups would soon learn they were only fighting themselves, she said.

..."**THE THEATER** should be a place that would attract people from all over the world. By their presence in Stratford not only the town's businessmen but every resident would benefit," she said.

But this may only be achieved by a combined civic effort, by townspeople, she said. "Stratford people should make it their concern to fill the theater for every performance and give their visitors a feeling that they are actually walking back into the Elizabethan period.

"More important, it must make them feel that they are welcome.

"Stratford could become a must stop on the list of any Eastern traveler if certain individuals and groups would forget their smallness and selfish interests and devote their energy to efforts that would promote the welfare of the entire community," Mrs. Rauth concluded.

FRACTURED TALES OF THE '90's

The Bridgeport Herald
July 11, 1897

HOT TIME CLAMMING
THREE WELL KNOWN MEN
LITERALLY ROASTED AT
STRATFORD.

The Breeze on the Beach
Were So Cold That the
Clams Had Moved. Will

There Be a Fashionable Fu-
neral in the Near Future?

THE LITTLE clams about the shores of old Stratford, are having a hearty laugh at the expense of three of Bridgeport's well known citizens. The clams though are not the only ones that are laughing, as the friends of the trio have been convulsed during the week and will continue to smile until the snow flakes fall.

Thursday. Ike Klopstock the tobacconist, conceived the idea that it would be great sport to go clamming. About three times every year Ike feels as if he must have some clams and Thursday was one of those times, and he induced his two friends, Herbert Seldon, and George Freyer, to don their clamming outfits, which, are the old style gulf rigs minus the stockings, and row from Seaside to the beach on the edge of the Lordship Farm.

This happy trio who have been through many experiences on the briney, started just as Old Sol showed his face in the heavens. They did not take a good look at the old fellow's face or they would have seen that he was smiling derisively at them and saw through the mists that the fun that he would have before the noon hour arrived.

Ike rowed the boat to the Stratford shore while his companions sat under a dilapidated sunshade at the stern, steering the craft with an old broomstick that they had taken with them to fan away the big mosquitoes.

When the beach was reached the three men dug and raked away as if their life depended upon their getting a boat load of the succulent bivalves. Old Sol pressed the heat button and as the men dug he got in his fine work and burned through to the very marrows.

A spanking breeze blew over the beach and every few moments Ike would ask "Bert" and George if they were not tickled to death to think that they had left the scorching Park city pavements and found such a delightful spot where it was almost chilly enough to don a fall overcoat.

"Bert" is considerable of a philoso-

pher, in his way, and he agreed with Ike but bothered his brain considerably about the scarceness of the clams and several times wondered if the little fellows had left that portion of the beach for a warmer clime. He felt the chilly blasts and imagined that the bivalves did.

For four long hours the men worked like beavers but the clams came not and when the men were perfectly satisfied that not over fifty cents worth of the luscious sea food was in that part of the world, they drew their old row boat upon the sands, turned it bottom side up and at Ike's suggestion played three handed pinocle on its bottom—the lowest man at the end of the game would have to row the craft to the Bridgeport shore.

Through some strange plays Ike was high man at the finish of the game and "Bert" and George had even scores and the latter decided that they would each take an oar and let Ike sit under the sunshade and manipulate the old broom.

Thoroughly enjoying his berth, Ike fanned himself with the boat's colors and jollied the others about the lost breeze which had disappeared as soon as the boat left the sands.

With about 'steen [sic] cents worth of consumptive looking clams, that one could readily see had been frozen by those cold breezes, in their baskets, the trio tied up their boat at Henry street and bade each other a fond goodbye until the evening.

The evening came, but none of the lone clambers showed up about their usual haunts and the following morning it was announced that all three were under the doctor's care. Old Sol, had pressed that heat button as bard as he knew how and the trio of clambers flesh was literally roasted. Their necks, arms and legs were sights to behold as they were about three times their natural size and for a day they lay on cotton batten suffering the same tortures, but boys are told that they will suffer if they do not mind their mammas.

Ike's store Saturday was a veritable hospital. All the known remedies for sunburn were there by the baskets full and "Bert" and Ike were in such a condition that they were obliged to hire Billy Englehart to bring their meals to them and then feed them with a spoon. George remained at home and at last accounts "Bert" and Ike were counting up their pennies to see if they had enough to buy black gloves with if the poor fellow died from the effects of the most disastrous clamming

expedition that has been heard of this summer.

The Bridgeport Herald

June 6, 1897

THE ACTIONS OF CONSTABLES Sam Wakely, E. Wakely and Selectman Innes of Stratford, on last Saturday night, when they proceeded to Avon park, and after seizing six kegs of beer, placed a number of the attendants under arrest, has caused no end of comment in the little town and perhaps before the affair is settled the three officious constables may find them-selves in a whole lot of trouble. The action of the constables appears to be a little premature and committed more through a desire to be revenged upon the company for not hiring them in place of the Bridgeport officials to preserve order at the park, than it was to carry out the law. It is true that at the present time the Traction company is without a license, but they have applied for one, and it has been the custom for the applicants for licenses to keep their bars running within the lawful hours until the license has been granted. "Without a warrant in their possession the constables proceeded to the park and made the seizure and arrests. It happened about 8 o'clock in the evening and the trial in the Stratford Town hall which followed immediately after the raid was practically a farce and made the constables the laughing stock of the town. No evidence at all was presented against the men arrested and of course they were discharged. The constables, seeing that they were being guyed, set about to make things as unpleasant as possible for the social club officials and before they finished, C. K. Matthews, who had been tending bar, was placed under arrest, and at 11:30 Saturday night was taken from Bridgeport to Stratford, and placed under bonds of \$100, which were furnished by the Traction company. His case was thrown out of court Tuesday morning and the officious constables were given a piece of advice which may teach them something. This is not by any means the first time that Stratford's constables have placed themselves in a like position, and the sooner that the selectmen of the town ask for their badges and present them to others, who have a little more common sense the better the residents of the town would like it.



Men and boys crabbing in Lordship 1894.



Mr. Brownell, "Pa" Knapp, Jimmy Sullivan, and (?) clamming June 1919.



Fishing at the Housatonic River Jetty c 1910.



Lordship Beach west c 1900.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-23

Executive Committee

President
Vice-president
Treasurer
Corresponding Secretary
Recording Secretary

Gail Liscio
David Wright
Jeri Ann Cook
Christine Duffy
Amanda DeBiase

Committees

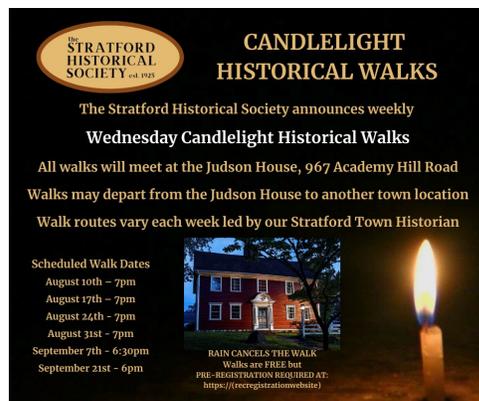
Building
Education
Finance
Gardens
Governance
Grounds
Hospitality
Hosts & Hostesses
Membership
Newsletter
Programs
Publicity
Research
Statistics
Ways & Means

Roger Salls
Mary Ann Vlahac

Kevin Moore
Barbara Firisin
Kevin Moore
Pam Hutchinson
Barbara Firisin
Christine Duffy
David Wright
Gail Liscio
Margo Paquette
Ethan Stewart
Georgene Fasanella

Directors

Anne Larsen
Carl Larsen
John Sober
Barbara Stewart



STRATFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY est. 1923

CANDLELIGHT HISTORICAL WALKS

The Stratford Historical Society announces weekly
Wednesday Candlelight Historical Walks

All walks will meet at the Judson House, 967 Academy Hill Road
Walks may depart from the Judson House to another town location
Walk routes vary each week led by our Stratford Town Historian

Scheduled Walk Dates
August 10th - 7pm
August 17th - 7pm
August 24th - 7pm
August 31st - 7pm
September 7th - 6:30pm
September 21st - 6pm

RAIN CANCELS THE WALK
Walks are FREE but
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED AT:
<https://registrationwebsite.com>

Registration required. Register for the walks at townofstratford.recdesk.com.

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM STRATFORD'S PAST

Every move of this character undertaken in the town is certain to be opposed by some people. The question the council must decide, however, is whether the interest of one or two property owners is to be paramount to the interests of the town as a whole.

Donald Sammis, Town Council Chairman, August 1922, in reference to imposing building restrictions on Main Street.



Stratford Historical Society

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*Our mission is to preserve,
protect, cherish, and
celebrate the history of the
Town of Stratford.*

www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.org