

From The Harrison House

The Branford Historical Society Newsletter

February 2020

All-New Event for Branford! April 5 House Tours

From Stick to Shingle to Queen Anne, the Victorian style shaped the architectural 'feel' of the Stony Creek area. You can join the heritage tourism company Histoury on a guided trolley tour that explores these styles and rekindles tales of Branford's storied past. From the comfort of old-fashioned trolleys, the tour will showcase some 20 buildings, as well as provide guests with the unique opportunity to tour the interior of several of these homes to see original details and stylish decor. The tour will be offered at 11:00 a.m. and at 2:30 p.m. Stay for the receptions that will follow each tour! The Stony Creek Museum has generously provided its headquarters at 84 Thimble Island Road for the receptions, and it will be the departure point of the tour. To purchase tickets, go to Histoury.org - you may also call Histoury at 212-683-7833. [The Branford Historical Society is also contributing time and resources to this event; as always, the Society's promotion of programs which are being offered by groups/organizations other than the Society does not constitute endorsement.]

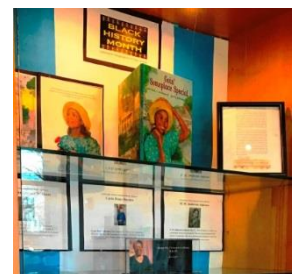
Upcoming Programs/Presentations

All events start at 7 PM and are free (except for the Annual Dinner) and open to the public. Please join us! We'll send out notices as new programs are added.

- Wednesday, March 11th: Branford resident Bob Barnett will speak at Willoughby Wallace Library on the evolution of secondary school education, focusing on Branford. Bob is the author of [Eight Schools: Campus and Culture](#).
- May: Annual Meeting and Dinner: The date and venue are still being worked out; the meeting will feature a presentation on the 1824 and 1825 tour of the United States by the Marquis de Lafayette, including his visit to Branford – and the Society has a memento of that Branford visit on display at the Harrison House! Come learn more about the tour (which covered not only the original states, but also extended as far as Illinois and Louisiana), and about Lafayette himself, from a nationally recognized expert on the tour.
- Wednesday, July 15th: Society Board member and former Historical Society President John Ifkovic will lead a discussion focusing on the changes to our town's Main Street through the years. Please come and share your own memories of the center of town. We will meet at Blackstone Library.
- Wednesday, October 21st: Local author and Society member, Ted Braun will speak on a portion of his book, [The Barkers of Branford](#), in a talk titled "Branford at the Turn of the Century: Wheels of Progress" which will include information about street cars, the Golden Age of bicycles, and the 'Horseless Carriage'. The event will be held at Blackstone Library.

Honoring Black History Month

A Branford Historical Society member visiting Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library noticed an excellent display on African-American history milestones in the library's entrance – a photo of part of the display is at right, and it will be posted full-sized on the Society's website. The Society salutes the many contributions of Branford's past and present African-American residents in community leadership, public service and volunteer activities.



Looking Back at Branford's 375th

A Branford Historical Society member perusing the James Blackstone Memorial Library's website came upon the following tidbit: "Cherry Hill, on one of the highest points in Branford, has an interesting history. Daniel Morris planted 300 cherry trees on his farm and sold the fruit. Schuyler Hamilton, grandson of...Alexander Hamilton, purchased the...farm in 1859 and built a fine mansion...It was [later] a dairy farm owned by movie mogul Louis Sagal until after World War II when the area was commercially developed in the 1950's and 1960's." Other interesting items, and photos illustrating them, are on the website:

- The German passenger airship **Hindenburg** flew over Branford on the same day it caught fire in New Jersey (a photo of the Hindenburg passing over Branford accompanies the story).
- White phosphorus '**Lucifer**' matches were manufactured where the Blackstone Library stands today – these possibly were the first ones made in the United States – and the Society has some of these matches in its collection.
- Branford's **town jail** once stood behind Town Hall; the Society has the jail's stone lintel.

To read other Branford stories and see dozens of photos from Branford's history, go to <https://www.blackstone.lioninc.org/branford375/>



The Branford Historical Society
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**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

Check out our expanded and improved website – www.BranfordHistoricalSociety.org – brought to you by Branford's own Webbersaur.us web-development agency (led by Chris Hauman)

The mission of the Branford Historical Society is to "Discover and preserve the history of Branford, Connecticut by the acquisition and preservation of artifacts, documents, and records of Branford provenance, and to actively promote Branford's history to the community." Encourage others to join the Society to help us with that mission!

Recent Programs/Presentations

On February 19th, Branford Recreation Director Alex Palluzzi spoke at the newly remodeled Community House/Senior Citizens' Center about the history of the department, its five different centers, and his mentorship under the guidance of past director Joe Trapasso. And on February 27th, Architectural Preservationist Erin Fink of the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office presented information on how to earn a rebate for the cost of up to 30% of certain rehabilitation work on homes listed on the National and/or State Registers of Historic Places – Branford has many qualifying homes, including those in the newly listed Short Beach Historic District.