



From The Harrison House

The Branford Historical Society Newsletter

Fall 2012, Volume 17, Issue 2

From the Harrison House

The Harrison House has had a busy summer season. Mary Hitchcock, Maryanne Hall, Karen Fortunati and Jane Bouley cleaned the objects and furniture in the house followed by a heavy cleaning by Hallys of Branford. The Fortunati family helped trim around the yard. Virginia Page and Jane Bouley have met weekly to inventory, measure, and photograph the contents of the house comparing the results to a previous inventory. The attic storage space has been reorganized and cleaned. The outhouse has been painted and the front of the house touched up.

Nadja Cardona and Jane Bouley have been meeting to freshen and label the exhibits in the Hall Chamber or Exhibit Room. A focus on Branford's maritime, military, industrial, and children's objects continues. The Society still has on display documents and objects from the Civil War and have added are three items from the Revolutionary War.

Guides Diane Altieri, Ted Eastwood, Karen Fortunati, Jenna Fortunati, and Margaret Iacobellis are at the Harrison House every Saturday through September from 2:00 until 5:00 p.m. We have had visitors every Saturday and several groups. Guide Roberta Rowe helps with school tours.

The Alton Newton herb garden and tiered gardens in the backyard have looked marvelous this year under the watchful eye of the Garden Club.

Do come by to visit and bring your guests to see the house, gardens and consider volunteering to help maintain this valuable Branford asset. 🌿



From the Archives

As part of the exhibit marking the 200th anniversary of the Civil War is a bible found by Rodolphus Bartholomew of Branford on the field after the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia on May 3, 1863.

Bartholomew was forty-two years of age when he enlisted in Co. B of the 27th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry in 1862. He was an ambulance driver for the regiment and also saw action at the Battle of Fredericksburg. The 27th was discharged on July 27, 1863.

Bartholomew died in Branford in 1905 at the age of 85 and is buried in Center Cemetery. He lived at 36 Windmill Hill Road later known as the Governor John Brainard house which still stands today. 🌿

Society Wish List

Wanted for Display

- Antique marbles, perhaps in an antique jar for display at the Harrison House
- Antique sewing items, especially used for making samplers
- Children's antique toys (small), dolls and clothing

Volunteers Needed

- People willing to go to the schools
- Guides for school groups
- Guide board chairman
- Preservation board chairman

From the Harrison House

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Branford Historical Society
124 Main Street, P.O. Box 504
Branford, Connecticut 06405
(203) 488-4828
branfordhistory@gmail.com
www.branfordhistory.org

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A Variety Of Programs

Michael Russo, our Program Chair, has offered members of the Society and the public a variety of interesting programs.

In January, Richard Radune, explained how the topography and use of the Sound affected the history of the colony and the new nation. Branford Land Trust cosponsored this program.

Post card aficionados were out in February to hear Jane Bouley give a presentation of Pine Orchard postcards and see hundreds of other cards of historic Branford.

A Genealogy five-session workshop was offered about starting your own genealogy research by Gregory Thompson, noted Connecticut genealogist in March.

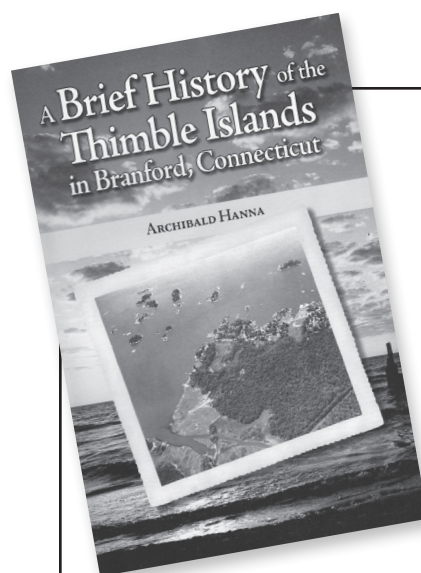
Fire vehicles were parked near the Blackstone Library as members of

the fire department, the Society and the public heard Dorrance Johnson speak personally about the history of the Branford Fire Department and historic fires during the 20th century.

The culmination of the season was a return of noted Connecticut State Archeologist Nicholas Bellantoni who discussed the discovery of bones during the excavation at Yale-New Haven Medical Center in June at our Annual Dinner at the Owenego.

So from the Sound topography to postcards to genealogy, to the history of fires and discovery of ancient bones, the Branford Historical society continues to keep the history of Branford's and surrounding areas alive.

Jeanne McParland



A Brief History of the Thimble Islands

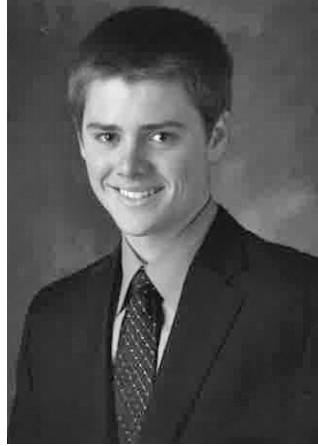
The Society received the rights to this book by the author Archie Hanna in the 1970s. Through the generous support of an anonymous donor, the Society has updated the publication with new photographs and cover. The book is now in its fourth printing and sells for \$12.00.

Historic Society Awards Scholarship

Ryan Hackett is the recipient of the Branford Historical Society scholarship. The award is given to a graduating senior at Branford High School.

The son of Billy and Julie Hackett, Ryan plans to major in political science at Syracuse University. Because he eventually wants to study law, he feels it is best to have a background in history as well as American politics and government.

While at Branford High, Ryan earned a 4.1 G.P.A. and high honors for four years. He also was named a CAPT Scholar. He was historian of the National Honor Society and a member of the Science National Honor Society and World Language Society. He also was president of the Model Congress and captain of the cross country team. 🏆



Strawberry Festival

The Society's 33rd annual Strawberry Festival held June 16 on the Branford Green was a big success! A profit of \$4,700 was realized to support the maintenance of the Harrison House and our programs. With excellent weather, so many lovers of our strawberry shortcakes turned out that we ran out of berries by 3:30 in the afternoon. Many thanks go to all of those who helped—members, friends and high school students; many worked all day and those who bought tickets in advance. Over forty people hulled the berries the day before in record time. 🏆



Did you know... the Society purchases 80 quarts of cream and 1,200 biscuits for the event? Here's Chief Bob Gill getting his generous portioned shortcake.



Over 40 hullers and kitchen workers helped to process 384 quarts of berries. (Photos by Susanne Zdanowicz and Bill O'Brien.)

Membership Update

The Society welcomes members David Baker, Alan Brown, David Campbell, John Daley, Dan DeLuca, Ted Eastwood, Jenna & Karen Fortunati, Ann & Michael Freeman, Pat Freeman, Peter Fusco, Nancy & Christopher Gracey, Anne Hitchcock, Sharon Kearns, Margaret King, Fred Leng, Ann Hastings Murray, Sandra Pandora, Jeanne-Rivaldi Manning, Andrea Moore, John Riley & Sally Gouverneur, Amanda Romano, Anthony Solomine, Gregory Thompson, Virginia Page, Stephan and Diane Zack. Three of these members have joined the Board of Directors. They are Anthony Solomine, Vice President, John Daley, Treasurer and Virginia Page, Accessions Chair. Ted Eastwood, Jenna & Karen Fortunati are Guides at Harrison House. Many members helped to hull and serve the Strawberry Short Cakes at the Branford Festival. Thank you all for your membership and the support you have given the Branford Historical Society. Despite the lengthy list of members above membership still remains at 235. To keep Branford's History alive, new members are needed to bring ideas and energy to the Society. You may contact me at (203) 468-5433 with the names of family or friends who may be interested in becoming members.

🐾 Jeanne McParland

Branford Historical Society
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Branford Historical Society Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate the area(s) in which you would like to volunteer:

() Building/Grounds () Hospitality () Museum/Accessions
() Guides () Holiday Party () Strawberry Festival

<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$5.00

Additional donations, or contributions
to our Memorial Fund are also appreci-
ated. Please make checks payable to
Branford Historical Society and return
this form to us at:

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Branford Historical Society
P.O. Box 504
Branford, CT 06405

Thank you for your support.

Publications & Prints

Vintage Postcards on CD (Indian
Neck, Short Beach, Thimble
Islands & Double Beach) \$15 ea.

*The History of Damascus
Cemetery* \$25

Malachi Linsley's Diary \$25

Early History of Branford \$5

Thimble Islands Book \$7.00

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*Contact Winnifred Judge,
488-8755 or visit our website,
branfordhistory.org for details.*