



*Branford Historical Society  
 Post Office Box 504  
 Branford, Connecticut 06405*

Jane Bouley's FOCUS ON BRANFORD - continued

During its first two centuries Branford was essentially a farming community, but some attempts at manufacturing were made. The first of significance was an iron works on the shore of The Great Lake, later known as Furnace Pond and now Lake Salstonstall.

The first iron works and blast furnace in Connecticut was started in 1655 on this lake and continued operations about 25 years. Its principal owners were Stephen Goodyear and John Winthrop of New Haven. Before this time metal items had to be imported from England and were very expensive. The furnace was supplied with bog-ore from North Haven which probably was brought down by water. Branford supplied about a third of the wood and lime, New Haven the rest. Jasper Crane was Branford's agent to the Iron Works.

The operation was not without problems. After Winthrop left to become Connecticut's governor controversies arose. The work was very hazardous; conduct of workers in the town was cause for complaints. In 1679 a foreman was killed at the site and there was difficulty getting workmen due to an epidemic at that time. The Iron Works was sold in 1680 and operation ceased.

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1989-90 OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS of the Branford Historical Society (& committee assignments)

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| President - BILL JOHNSTON        | PEG HAMPTON (Guides and Membership) |
| Vice President - BETTY LINSLEY   | MICHAEL SYKES (Hospitality)         |
| Treasurer - ROBERT SHERWOOD      | LIZ RADULSKI (Library)              |
| Secretary - MARJORENE AINLEY     | PRISCILLA OLIVER (Museum)           |
| Asst. Secy-Treas - HARRY HAMPTON | JANE BOULEY (Program)               |
|                                  | JACKIE ULRICH (Publicity)           |

Members-at-large

- JANET GAINES  
 MARGE DILL

NEW MEMBERS

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|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| John COOKE                | J. Arthur HOWE               | Geraldine McCAUSLAND |
| M/M Erskine CROSSLEY      | Mary & Bill JOHNSTON         | J. L. POTTENGER      |
| Linda & Richard DeMICHELE | M/M Elmer LARSON             | Susan H. WHARFE      |
| Robin & Paul DWYER        | Rev. & Mrs. Richardson LIBBY | Dawn STOUTSENBERGER  |
| Nancy & William HENDRICKS | Alfred MAHAN                 | M/M John TAMSON      |



STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL - JUNE 1989

"At times they were on line thirty and forty deep," said LIZ RADULSKI, chairperson for this past June's Strawberry Festival, "and it was a struggle to keep the whipped cream coming fast enough."

With over 70 volunteers working on some aspect of the festival the struggle proved a grand success. Over 1200 shortcakes were served netting a profit of more than \$2000.

"The combination of advance ticket purchases by the Society's membership and our willing crew of volunteers made this possible," Liz continued. "And a special word of thanks goes to those who headed several task groups and gave extra time and effort: Jane Bouley, Janet Gaines, Peg Hampton, Bill Johnston, Alice Lambert, Tootsie Laske, Betty Linsley, Jeanne Szeifert, and Michael Sykes."

When submitting her report to the board, Liz took pains to emphasize that if it is planned to continue sponsorship of the Strawberry Festival, whether independently or in conjunction with the Branford Festival, we are faced with increasing costs. "To assure a worthwhile profit we'll need two things," she said. "More ticket purchases by increasing numbers of Society members and a larger pool of volunteers to help in myriad capacities. We need to find new talent willing and able to help lighten the load carried by those who now give so many hours in support of our activities."

Board members and officers have yet to discuss Strawberry Festival plans for 1990, but they had to agree with Liz Radulski's advice about a larger volunteer work force and increased ticket sales.

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WE OWE SPECIAL THANKS TO -

Alice Lambert, who works miracles on her computer spinning out our address labels.

John Tamson, our good neighbor who keeps a special watch on Harrison House.

Jim Collopy, our faithful heating and plumbing expert.

VOLUNTEER GUIDES COMPLETE ACTIVE SEASON

The restored Harrison House on Main Street was opened for guided tours Wednesday to Saturday, 2 - 5 PM, during the four months June through September. In our "off season" it's open by special appointment; to make arrangements call 488-4828.

During the season just completed, PEG HAMPTON and the guide volunteers welcomed several hundred guests to Harrison House and conducted tours for them with remarks focused on the occupants and the house's furnishings and construction.

The guides this year were:

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| MARGE AINLEY    | JANE PAUK       |
| MARGE BARCLAY   | SYLVIA PEALE    |
| JANE CHEEK      | ELLEN PRICE     |
| MARGE DILL      | MARY REICHERT   |
| JANET GAINES    | FRANCES SKELTON |
| NANCY HENDRICKS | MARION SMITH    |
| EUNICE JONES    | JEAN SUNNY      |
| GLORIA MURPHY   | BETTY UPSON     |

A mere listing of names is wholly inadequate thanks for the time and talent these ladies gave to keep history alive and well at Harrison House this past season. Peg Hampton says it would be well if we had some men on this list as, indeed, there were in previous years. Service in this fashion can refresh your appreciation for our colonial forebearers and those sturdy folks who built Branford, and it can also be your chance to meet and greet visitors from around the world.

In late September a group of the guides visited Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, CT, enjoyed a luncheon at Apricots, and then toured the Stanley Whitman House. The latter is a reconstruction/restoration project in which our president, Bill Johnston, participated; the house is comparable to our Harrison House and dates from the same period.

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THE 1989-90 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE -

has been a success, according to Peg Hampton...up to a point. So as to get beyond that point, more membership renewals would be welcomed. LIKEWISE NEW MEMBERS.

Need a membership application form? Call Peg at 488-1177. Thanks.



MUSEUM / ACCESSIONS

On the "home field" this group of Society members assembled the season's exhibit in the Memorabilia Room (Hall chamber) on the theme "Textiles & More" using many items acquired in recent years and all having a connection with Branford. Dismantling is planned following the December 3d Christmas party.

"Away from home," on July 13, several accessions group members spent an enjoyable day viewing the special 350th birthday exhibit held at both the Fairfield Historical Society and the Fairfield Library. 36 locally-made quilts dating from the mid-1770s to the present plus quilted clothing and antique fabrics were shown.

In recent months the Society has been fortunate to acquire a sizable treasure of photos, documents, newsclips and other materials from the Arthur Seaburg estate relating to Branford. These include several thousand slides taken by Art throughout the community beginning in 1951, plus uncoun- ted MIF pictures & related items, and doz- ens of other photographs and Branford mem- orabilia/collectibles. We are grateful to members of the Seaburg family and their friends for making this possible.

It follows, of course, that we are con- templating an exhibit on the Malleable Iron Foundry for next year based upon a great portion of this collection.

We're pleased to announce that the Soc- iety has the honor to permanently house in its collection photographs taken by Earl Colter during his 40-year career. These are wonderful pictures of Branford Center, our schools, public buildings and homes...many of them already of notable historic value. THANK YOU! Earl Colter.

-Priscilla Oliver-

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*BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS  
of the Branford Historical Society  
(as of October 25, 1989)*

- BRADLEY & UPSON
- BRANFORD SAVINGS BANK
- DOBA & GUDDO, Inc.
- ROBIN BRUCE SANDLER, Esq.
- RICHARD W. SQUERI AGENCY, Inc.
- TILCON-TOMASSO, Inc.

*We gratefully acknowledge their strong financial support!*

PROGRAMS PAST

Despite chilling, damp and windy weather the evening of October 19, an appreciative large audience was held spellbound by John Menta's presentation on the Quinnipiac In- dians and their relationship with the colo- nist-settlers of Branford and environs. Truly outstanding; too bad if you missed it.

Perfect weather attended the October 1st HARVEST FESTIVAL-Tag & Bake Sale. Homemade comestibles sold in a flash. Tagged trea- sures rescued from basements and attics moved somewhat slower, but most moved for a price benefitting the Society. MANY THANKS TO THE SET-UP, SALES and BREAKDOWN CREWS who made this event such a successful one!

The Bouley-Radulski Walking Tour of the Bradley Street triangle on September 24 was likewise favored by spectacular weather and a great crowd of enthusiastic participants. We're sorry if you couldn't take part.

The season's kickoff brought Joy Freeman to the Community House's lecture podium September 21 for another look at American silver plate history. Great turnout and much fun learning if family treasures are really worth keeping.

Since you ought not to have missed any of these presentations, take a look at page 4 - PROGRAMS FUTURE. Get your busy calendar sorted out and join fellow Society members for enlightening and entertaining evenings this winter. Far better than your average TV pro- gram!! Great company too!!!

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CAN YOU HELP Barbara Torello, Clerk of the Branford Probate Court, locate three photos of past judges? There were 14 starting about 1850 to present times. Earl Colter is prepar- ing a montage incorporating portraits of them all, but these three are missing: ORIN D. SQUIRE, JAY E RUSSELL, and HENRY HARRI- SON STEDMAN. For further information & details, call Ms. Torello at 488-0318. Thanks!  
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SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER, IF YOU MUST...

It was a "shameful" error, according to at least one Society member. Well -- at least regrettable, unfortunate, certainly unintentional. It has been amended in the PROGRAMS FUTURE column on page 4. Our typ- ist inserted the letter R in AMISTAD on the programs announcement page mailed a few weeks ago. Oops! Our proofreader slept.

...BUT PLEASE DON'T SHOOT OUR TYPIST!!



P R O G R A M S  
F U T U R E

1989

Thursday  
November 16  
7:30 PM

THE AMISTAD INCIDENT - Slide lecture by Richard Hudson on the 150th anniversary of the 1839 mutiny-rebellion aboard the Spanish sailing vessel AMISTAD in which 53 West Africans seized the ship, were captured, brought to trial in New Haven. "All we want is make us free," they pleaded. John Quincy Adams successfully represented them before the U.S. Supreme Court. (Branford Community House)

Sunday  
December 3  
3 - 5 PM

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY AT HARRISON HOUSE - Come and enjoy the beauty and share the hospitality of the house. Bring friends, especially a child. (Hospitality Chairman Michael Sykes has names/phone numbers of all who volunteered to help, responding to the early fall membership mailing...but don't be shy adding your name to those who would join in the fun of decorating the house and preparing/serving refreshments. You may phone Michael at 488-3270.) Join us to initiate a merry Merry Christmas Season, please.

1990

No program for January is scheduled.

Thursday  
February 15  
7:30 PM

SHOW 'N TELL - You are the program! Here's your chance to share with Society members some favorite antique, a cherished memento, tell a tall tale of yesteryear, or even reveal a family skeleton (not restricted to Branford origins). (Branford Community House)

Thursday  
March 15  
7:30 PM

SONGS OF THE SEA - Balladeer Geoff Kaufman of Mystic Seaport will sing sea songs and chanteys from colonial times, when the Branford River estuary was a busy, thriving port. Add your voice to the Society's hysterical chorus. (Branford Community House)

THESE PROGRAMS ARE ...BUT THEY'RE MADE RICHER ...HELP MAKE THE BRANFORD HISTORICAL  
ARRANGED FOR THE IF YOU BRING A FRIEND SOCIETY THE TOWN'S FRIENDSHIP  
SOCIETY'S MEMBERS ... OR NEIGHBOR TO ENJOY THEM... SOCIETY. IT COSTS YOU NOTHING.

AND REMEMBER TO VOTE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1989 IN THE TOWN ELECTIONS.  
YOUR OPPORTUNITY, RIGHT AND PRIVILEGE TO DO SO HAS A DIRECT CONNECTION TO  
SOME OF THE REASONS BRANFORD WAS SETTLED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

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BRANFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PO Box 504  
Branford, Connecticut 06405

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