

Janet



Branford Historical Society
Post Office Box 504
Branford, Connecticut 06405

NEWSLETTER, WINTER 1987



FOCUS ON BRANFORD
by Jane Bouley

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Branford was settled by families from Wethersfield and New Haven. Among them were Richard Harrison, Robert Rose and John Linsley, all of whom have descendants living in Branford today. Home lots for the settlers were provided for by the first land division in 1645 which centered around the corner of today's Main and Montowese Streets. Main Street was part of the Kings Highway that ran from New York City to Boston, and Montowese Street was known as Towne Street. We know little of the early life in Branford, but families survived by farming the rich soil and utilizing the products of the sea. The settlement of "Totoket" grew slowly and life focused around the family and the church. A threat to this focus occurred in 1667 with the Newark migration.
(more in our next issue)

Sunday, December 6 is the date of our annual Open House and Wassail Party at the Harrison House from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The House will be festively decorated for the season. Members and guests are cordially invited to meet with friends and neighbors to begin the holiday season.



SPRING SERIES

Program Chairman John Ifkovic has announced that Spring Series will be devoted to the various ethnic groups that have come to Branford and the When, Where and Why of their arrival here.

- Feb- Joe Chandler will represent the Black community, and with him will be the St. Stephens Gospel Choir.
- March- The Eastern Europeans, including Lithuanians, Poles and Croatsians
- April- Scandinavian, Irish and Italian cultures will be represented at....

Watch the newspaper for further details.

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Please send ___ copies of
"Brief History of the Thimble Islands"
Price \$7.00, plus \$1.00 for postage.

To: _____

Gift: _____

The new edition of "Brief History of the Thimble Islands" will be available for Christmas gift-giving. The book was written by member Archibald Hanna, commissioned by late member Henry DuPont, and is a property of the Branford Historical Society. It is a lively history, well written, attractively illustrated, and of great general interest.

A mail order form is provided for your convenience or the book may be purchased at the Willoughby Wallace Library, Blackstone Library, Branford Book Store, or Breakwater Books. The price of \$7.00 plus \$1.00 for postage (when applicable) will be effective through January 30, 1987.

Report from Membership Chair/
STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL Treasurer.

Thank you for your prompt and generous response in renewing your membership. Your contributions are so important in keeping the society's programs available to its members and the residents of Branford. The Harrison House is Branford's quiet oasis, where a sense of "What it was like in the early days" can be experienced. I hope you will enjoy our many activities throughout the year.

As of this printing we welcome 25 new members, including Palmer-Plant, Inc., and Dr. Donald DiGiulian to our business and professional category.

You will be pleased to know, our very popular fund raiser "The Strawberry Festival" netted \$3,186.81. Again, a grateful thank you for your generosity of purse and presence.

Sincerely,

Jeanne K. Szeifert

Notes:

- There is a goodly supply of Holiday Note Cards available with a sketch of the Harrison House (in Red on Cream) and "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" inside.
- Harry Hammond has been giving the kitchen a fresh coat of paint.
- Terry Tucker has trimmed the back hedge on the Society Property.

- The Harbor Street Walking Tour had about 60 participants and Jane Bouley's lecture was given to a SRO crowd!
- Anthony Papa and Brent Ryan have been recording tombstone information at Mill Plain and Damascus Cemeteries for our Records.
- The Harrison House is now closed for the Season but is open by appointment by calling 488-8835.
- Save the date and your unused treasures for upcoming "Heritage Day" Tag Sale next October.



New Acquisitions

Two major photograph collections have recently been donated to the Society. All photographs are properly stored in acid free containers and are referenced. The Society is dedicated to preserving Branford's past through its photos and would appreciate any donations, or the opportunity to make photographs or negatives.

We also have acquired the Records of the Branford Art League from its inception as the group has disbanded.

A very interesting volume containing horse brands and their owners has been purchased from the Totoket Historical Society in North Branford.

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