



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

VOLUME I, Issue 1

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December-February 1996
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Editor, Harriet White

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

About a month ago, members preparing for the Harvest Festival noticed that a good deal of shrubbery down past the barn had been cleared, leaving open access to foot traffic from Route 1 through our property to West Main Street, and, in one instance, a car that was blocked in the driveway simply drove through on the far side of the barn to exit through a parking lot to Route 1. So we are now accepting bids to extend the palisade fence either to the far corner of the barn or straight down the property line to where the swamp begins. At the same time we are in correspondence with SPNEA hoping that they may acknowledge responsibility for boundary lines as a capital expense, which they might assume.

The revised brochures will be available by December, looking somewhat different and with much clearer photographs. We have had donated professional services by a graphic artist and the gift of the stock used. We hope you like them and will help to disseminate them.

A large effort will shortly be underway by a nominating committee which will be looking for some important officers, as the president, vice president and treasurer complete their terms. Anyone willing to serve on the nominating committee, or with suggestions for nominations, please contact me at 488-2126. We also want to hear from persons willing to serve on a committee or to take any responsibility.

John Ifkovic, President.

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE: Harrison House, Sunday, December 8, 1 - 5 pm.

There will be a wassail bowl, delicious goodies to nibble, candlelight and decorations that, this year, will reflect Branford's maritime history. Kathyann Vaccaro's Music Makers will provide seasonal music in the parlor, and our old and gracious house will again become a festive setting in which to greet your friends and neighbors. Stephanie Amman, Jackie Ulrich and Linda Peterson are among those working on the preparations. Refreshment donations should be brought to the Harrison House on Friday, the 7th from 9 to 5. The committee also welcomes contributions of greens brought in on Friday and a few more hands to help decorate would be most welcome.

See you there!

DATES TO REMEMBER:

MARCH 15: The bus trip mentioned in our last newsletter will be finalized shortly. It's planned to go to the Daniel Webster House, the Old State House and possibly the Governor's Mansion. Sign-up will be in the next newsletter.

APRIL 14, Archie Hanna will talk about the Thimble Islands and will be happy to sign copies of his book, which will also be onsale.

IN SEPTEMBER, DAVE DRIESSENS, affectionately called "Dusty Dave" from his work as archivist at the Congregational Church, gave a program of anecdotal stories of old Branford families. Many of his tales went back to 1644 when the Puritans from Wethersfield established the church in Branford and the church and state were inseparable. One of the interesting stories concerned one Anna Williams, whose tombstone in Center Cemetery lists all three of her husbands. The first two died of tuberculosis, and of the third we can surmise the same fate. Voting in Branford in the early years required not only membership in the Congregational Church, but oath of allegiance to the New Haven Colony, as well as being male and a property owner. Trinity Church was founded in 1784 by dissidents from the original church who wished to return to the Anglican worship. Dave Driessen is a source of knowledge on early Branford history, and a delightful speaker. Thank you, Dave!

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ON NOVEMBER 14TH, BILL BARR gave a slide show and talk entitled CONNECTICUT ODDITIES. He has collected interesting historical facts about places and events in the State's history. Bill is active in the West Haven Historical Society and his talk was enjoyed by about 30 members.

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After having to postpone the HARVEST FESTIVAL for a week because of heavy rain, we had a beautiful sunny day on October 26th and good attendance. Many thanks to all of you who helped to make the Harvest Tag and Bake Sale a success! Because of your efforts we were able to raise the substantial sum of \$1,048.

The list of contributors is almost as long as that of our membership, from those who contributed baked goods and tag sale items, to those who gave their time and talents. It is impossible to name each and every one, but special thanks to Eunice Medlyn whose phone calls elicited a wonderful array of baked goods; Winifred Judge and George Goeben's efforts produced a prodigious amount of tag sale items; Eva Peterson and Jane Bouley did the pricing and categorizing and Mary Hitchcock and Nancy Morse were our chief cashiers.

The Fall decorations, pumpkins, scarecrow and mums, were supplied by the Hamptons - Harry and Peg - as well as Linda Peterson. Peg and Harry also supplied "Harrison House" strawberry jam and apple butter which were the usual best sellers. Alice Donadio contributed dried flower arrangements. We sold day lily bulbs from the garden and Winifred Judge manned the membership table all day.

Bob Sobolewski was a great help as an all-around carrier of heavy items, and cleaner-upper. He was especially appreciated as Pete Peterson, our frequent helper, was laid up with an injury from a fall. Other members of great help were Priscilla Oliver, Ozzie Poole, John Ifkovic and Harriet White. Nancy Hendricks and Elinor King did house tours on request..

Special thanks, too, to Don Corrigan, manager of Stop and Shop on Leetes Island Road, who contributed \$25.00 in merchandise of our choice- cider and food items, and to Anthony Castellon of Castellon's Bakery, who gave us a substantial discount on the price of doughnuts.

Again, many thanks, a rousing salute, and kudos to one and all.

Stephanie Amman, chairman

Hospitality.

APPRECIATION TO THE GUIDES.

The centerpiece of the Historical Society is the 1724 Harrison House, the care and maintenance of which takes much of our thought as well as 42% of the budget. The joy of owning and displaying the House rests largely on a cadre of volunteer guides who take pride in and have fun with their duties. This year we had 260 visitors, about half of them school children, and from as far away as Alaska, the West Indies and Australia. The following were guides in '96, and some of these have been guides for several years:

- Pattie LaBonte
- Peg Hampton
- Joyce Tierney
- Jean Sunny
- Jane Cheek
- Anton Wohlert
- Betty Mount
- Elinor King

Guides are trained and given support. Next summer we will welcome new men and women to volunteer. Give it a thought!

Elinor King, Guide Chairman, '96.

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NEWS LETTER;

Your editor is seeking any sort of help with the newsletter - proof reading, writing, ideas, and, eventually, someone with computer expertise to set it up for the copiers. Our good and faithful friend, Alice Lambert, will be turning to other projects. Call Harriet at 488-3658.

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MEMBERSHIP

Stephanie Amman has agreed to move from hospitality committee to become Membership Chair and will be forming a committee to make sure that new members are welcomed into the Society, to receive their suggestions, and to help them find involvement on a committee if they so desire. Ellie King remains the computer person and keeper of membership lists. Help on any facet of membership will be welcome. Give Stephanie a call.

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DUES REMINDER.

We are still looking for those who have not renewed membership. This newsletter will carry a red X on the label of those not renewed as a visible reminder. Send your check in the official envelope or mail to the Branford Historical Society at P O Box 504, Branford, CT 06405.

President	John Ifkovic
Vice-president	Mary Hitchcock
Secretary	Harriet White
Treasurer	Michael Sykes
Asst. Secretary/Treasurer	Priscilla Oliver
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