



NEWSLETTER

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL 2012



The annual Strawberry Festival fund raiser for the Stephentown Historical Society was held Sunday, June 24 at The Berry Patch on Route 22 in Stephentown.

Volunteers began picking berries at the farm on Thursday evening, enduring the hot, humid temperatures. About 150 pounds of strawberries were picked and then a crew hulled and cut the berries on Friday to make the berry mixture for the shortcakes. Homemade biscuits, pies and chocolate dipped-strawberries were delivered Sunday morning for the festival.

The red and white check covered table offered shortcakes complete with fresh biscuits, Stewart's Philly Vanilla ice cream, and strawberries topped with whipped cream or strawberry sundaes. You could order a Large or Mini Strawberry Rhubarb or Strawberry Apple Pie to take home or a slice of pie, or a chocolate dipped strawberry to eat at the tables provided under the white tents.

The ladies from the SHS also were selling T-shirts, historical books produced by the Society, note cards and a DVD of the Rutland Railroad.

The weather cooperated providing a beautiful day for the festival. Attendance was lighter than previous years but all had an enjoyable day greeting the local people and travelers who stopped by to support this event.



ANNUAL COMMUNITY TAG SALE

The annual fund raising Community Tag Sale was held the last weekend of July in Gardner's field on Route 22. Donations of housewares were accepted to sell. The Tag Sale is one of the major fund raisers the Stephentown Historical Society holds to raise funds and initial capital for the programs and maintenance of the Heritage Center.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE FROM CRANE PAPER LEDGERS

by David Flint, Reprinted from the Eastwick Press

Peter Hopkins gave an illustrated talk Monday, June 4, at the Stephentown Heritage Center about the Crane paper company and its colonial roots. Hopkins is a marketing and PR consultant and also historian for Crane & Company. Crane is noted especially for its beautiful 100% cotton engraved stationery and also for its high quality currency paper.

He spoke briefly about the history of Crane in nearby Dalton, MA – Zenas Crane started the company there in 1801 – and about currency and currency paper because money is an attention getter for everyone. He showed pictures of a huge 1,000 lb roll of Franklin one hundred dollar bills, which when finally printed he said would have a value of about \$1.3 billion. He didn't bring any samples of paper money because, "The Secret Service gets a little cranky when someone tries to take samples."

Hopkins' focus, however, was on a predecessor company started in 1770 near Boston and taken over by Zenas' father Stephen Crane and two partners. This was the Liberty Paper Mill situated in the town of Milton. One of nine ledgers kept at this mill has survived and Hopkins has been

intrigued by the fascinating history that can be obtained from what we normally think of as a bone dry summary of who bought what and how did they pay for it. "History is a living organism," he said, "History doesn't change but what we find out about it does."

From the ledger entries we can see that the Liberty Paper



Drawing depicting a British soldier in the 1760's at what is believed to be Stephen Crane's first paper mill in Milton, Massachusetts. Photo courtesy of Peter Hopkins.

THE HERITAGE CENTER IS OPEN AND STAFFED BY THE
STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY MOST
FRIDAYS FROM 1 PM TO 4 PM.

VISIT TO SEE THE EXHIBITIONS AND CAREFULLY
CATALOGUED ARTIFACTS FROM THE LOCAL AREA.
ALTERNATE APPOINTMENT TIMES CAN BE MADE WITH
CURATOR BEV McCLAVE AT 733-5170.

Mill was actively involved in the movement for independence. It is well known that patriot Paul Revere, who had a printing shop and became America's first Bank Note engraver, was a big customer of the Liberty Mill – though it took him two years to pay his bill. What is lesser known and came out in the ledger is that he also pastured a number of horses at the mill, horses that he was keeping safe for his use and that of the Committees of Correspondence. Hopkins said that in going over the ledger he was interested to see what other noteworthy customers there were. The first customer mentioned is Samuel Bliss, a farmer who also commanded a company of Minutemen. The mill supplied paper for newspapers, newsletters and broadsheets for a variety of printers. These included notably the Edes & Gill firm whose office got nicknamed "The Sedition Foundry" as it was the meeting place of the Sons of Liberty and the Boston Tea Party was plotted there. William Burbeck in the early days of independence agitation was castigated by the patriots because he served the British Army as Ordnance Officer. But the ledger shows that his bills in 1774 at Liberty Paper were paid by William Salisbury, a rabid revolutionary merchant from Worcester. Later in 1777 Burbeck is recorded as buying the best cartridge paper. Apparently by then he was making muskets in his carpentry shop and having them transported secretly in milk cans to the Militia by his wife.

Henry Knox, a young book seller, was another big customer for paste boards and printing paper. Knox of course

The rag room in the late 19th or early 20th century at the Crane Paper Mill in Dalton, MA, where women spent long, tedious hours sorting through piles of cotton and linen rags, removing buttons and other debris and cutting them up into smaller rags



Rag Room at Crane in Dalton

went on to become the leading artillerist in the Militia and later the nation's first Secretary of War. Another customer was Caleb Davis, a merchant and member of the Sons of Liberty. Davis bought writing paper but entries show that he also purchased at least two reams of cartridge paper for which he paid in chocolate. Cartridge paper for muskets and cannons became in these years a major product of the Liberty Mill. In 1776, when a powder

PROGRAMS FOR THE
STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
August 2012 to January 2013

All programs are free and open to the public. They begin after a short business meeting held at the Heritage Center on the corner of Garfield and Staples Roads at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month.

August 6: Michael Barrett - The Troy Draft Riots

September 10: (Note this is the 2nd Monday as Labor Day falls on the 3rd)
 Sharon Klein - W.J. Cowee: The Man and the Company

October 1: Paul and Mary Liz Stewart - The Underground Railroad

November 5: Janes Parrish - The War of 1812 and its Particular Meaning for Pittsfield

December 3: Carry-in supper at 6:30 followed by Sharon Klein - The Old Dutch Church on Berlin Mountain

January 7: Panel with Audience Participation: Stephentown in the '50s

Crane Paper Continued from page 2

mill was authorized to be built in Milton by Paul Revere and Thomas Crane, records show that there was a huge increase in cartridge paper at the Liberty Mill. Other customers for large amounts of cartridge paper for both muskets and cannon were Richard Devons – spelled “Davens” in the ledger – who became Commissary General for the Massachusetts Militia, Thomas Chaise, a close associate of Sam Adams and member of the Loyal Nine, predecessor of the Sons of Liberty. Chaise was a whisky distiller who

Log onto the Stephentown Historical Society's Website:
www.stephentown-historical.org

Answer: Apple Peeler/Corer

WHAT IS IT???

A new feature in our newsletter is a photo from the Stephentown Historic Society's archives. Do you know what this item is or was used for?



Come visit the Heritage Center Friday afternoons to see this and other unusual items.

Answer on this page

Crane Paper Continued

for some reason had a need for a lot of cannon and musket cartridge paper. Chaise was on the London Enemies List and was one of 13 Liberty Mill customers who participated in the Boston Tea Party.

Another patriot customer was William Conant, Colonel in the Massachusetts Militia who in 1775 concocted with Paul Revere the plan to alert the colonists in Charlestown about the approach of the British. Then there was Isaiah Thomas, another printer who published *The Massachusetts Spy* newspaper. In 1775 he moved his print shop to Worcester. In 1793 Zenas Crane and his brother Stephen built a paper mill there for Thomas and Zenas stayed and worked there until 1799 when he struck out on his own and eventually started his own paper mill on the Housatonic River in Dalton.

The evidence is all there in the ledger. “There’s a lot of history here,” Hopkins said. It’s evidence of the active role Stephen Crane’s mill played in securing independence. Had the war turned out differently, all those entries would surely have been used as evidence of sedition and treason against the King on the part of both the Liberty Paper Mill and its customers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS		COMMITTEES		<i>Nominating</i>	
<i>President</i>		<i>Cemeteries</i>		Caroline White	733-5250
Marilyn Osgood	733-0010	Patricia Flint	733-5871	David Flint	733-5871
<i>Vice-President</i>		Dale Riggs	733-6772	Esther Koepf	733-5811
Lorri Parisi	733-6455	Linda Sullivan	733-5231	Bill Zimmerman	794-8430
<i>Recording Secretary</i>		Dave Cummings	733-5838	<i>Program</i>	
Joyce Armstrong	733-0830	<i>Collection and Exhibit</i>		Isabel Krebs	733-5935
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>		Bev McClave	733-5170	Meredith Rhindress	733-5675
Linda Sullivan	733-5231	Marilyn Osgood	733-0010	Marilyn Osgood	733-0010
<i>Treasurer</i>		<i>Fundraising</i>		<i>Strawberry Festival</i>	
Bill Zimmerman	794-8430	Marilyn Osgood	733-0010	Committee	
<i>Trustees</i>		<i>Genealogy & Heritage Center</i>		<i>Tag Sale</i>	
Tammy Madden	733-5603	Bill Zimmerman	794-8430	Bev McClave	733-5170
Bev McClave	733-5170	<i>Historic Buildings</i>		Millie Smith	658-2605
Janet Edwards	733-5217	Bev McClave	733-5170	<i>Technology</i>	
Patricia Mohos	733-5054	Sylvia Leibensperger	733-5716	Tammy Madden	733-5603
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Millie Smith	658-2605	Patricia Mohos	733-5054	Linda Sullivan	733-5231
		<i>Membership</i>		Brad McClave	833-6899
		Duane Booth	733-0830	Patricia Flint	733-5871
		<i>Newsletter</i>		<i>Webmaster</i>	
		Lorri Parisi	733-6455	Bob Tibbetts	733-6086



The Heritage Center is open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Fridays and by appointment. It will be closed for the following dates in 2012: Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving,, Christmas, April 6, May 25, June 22, July 6, July 27, Aug 31, Sept 28, Oct 5, Nov 9, Nov 23, all Fridays in December

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