

## Celebrating 375 Years—The Town of Stratford



**The History of Stratford,**  
written by Barbara M. Sirois in 1988

Located on the Eastern edge of Fairfield County, Stratford is a coastal New England community of 51,000 residents, comprising 18.7 square miles, enjoying a varied climate of vibrant changing seasons with summer temperatures averaging 82 degrees F. and winter averages of 41 degrees F. The town stretches for some 8 miles along the Housatonic River, and for at least 200 years, this waterway was a main highway for trade and transportation.

The community's colonial history is traced to the year 1639, when a courageous group of settlers arrived at Mac's Harbor

on the banks of the Housatonic River. This was the Native American Village of Cupheag. According to town records, Cupheag was first called Stratford in April of 1643. Though there is little historical data to allow us to determine the exact origin of the name, it is traditionally assumed that one Thomas Alsop was among the first group of settlers who came to America in 1639. John Alsop, Thomas' father, and William Shakespeare were supposedly both from the same parish of the Town of Stratford-upon-Avon in England, and both were taxed by the Crown according to his individual worth. From the foregoing, it may reasonably be deduced that our Stratford was so named after the great playwright's own town of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Stratford takes great pride in its heritage - from its first settlers to the brave immigrants who followed in later years - from its sparkling seashore to its rolling countryside - it is steeped in history and rich in natural beauty. It is one of the few communities in the entire nation to own its own forest, and it proudly keeps watch over the magnificent "Great Meadows" - the last great salt marsh left in New England. A special town of unique diversity transcended into a homogeneous melding, Stratford is quintessential New England.

Festivities and special events are on the next page.

## Travelling this summer?

Whether you are travelling abroad or just going on daytrips, here are some tips for you.

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## Town of Stratford Special Events

Monday, May 26th marks a Memorial Day celebration which will be extra special this year as Stratford remembers 375 years of achievements and those who made them possible.

The Stratford Main Street Festival is a day long celebration of food, fun and festivities on Main Street. This year's Main Street Festival will be held on Saturday, June 7th.

Stratford's Summer Concert Series begins June 10th at 7:00 p.m. and continues weekly through August 26th. We look forward to sharing great music with you on many warm Tuesday nights through the summer.

Stratford's annual Independence Day will be marked by Fireworks at Short Beach on Thursday, July 3rd at sundown. On Saturday, July 26th, an annual musical favorite returns to Short Beach: Blues on the Beach. Enjoy some quality time at Short Beach this summer.

Festival Stratford returns to the grounds of the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre July 30th - August 3rd. This is a week long celebration of all things Shakespeare. Stratford is especially fortunate to be host to the Stratfords of the World Reunion which will occur in conjunction with Festival Stratford.

The Latin Music Festival returns to Paradise Green on Sunday, September 14th. And, on Saturday and Sunday, September 20th & 21st, the Town of Stratford joins with the Stratford Historical Society for a weekend "Early American Festival" commemorating Stratford's 375 years of history.

And, there's more! The Pumpkin Festival promises to delight all the youngsters and youngsters at heart at Boothe Park on Saturday, October 18th and the Holiday Festival is scheduled for Tuesday, December 2nd. Still in the planning phases are an Art Contest at Two Roads Brewery, a softball tournament with other Connecticut towns celebrating 375th anniversaries, a clam bake dinner and a boat parade on the Housatonic River.

To see photos, learn more about the history of Stratford or get a full list of events, please visit <http://www.townofstratford.com/stratford375>.

## Employees who have celebrated anniversaries:

Marge Denhup	24 years
Jody Byron	13 years
Paul Portnoy	9 years
Ted Goodwin	8 years
JoAnn Sabas	4 years
Nicole Carrasco	3 years
Peter DeLeo	3 years

**Congratulations!**



## Upcoming Bank-Sponsored Events:

**June 1st**—Junior Woman's Club of Milford Touch a Truck Event, Eisenhower Park

**June 2nd**—Stratford Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament, Mill River Country Club

**June 10th**—Michael J Fox Foundation's Pancakes for Parkinsons, Chip's Restaurant, Orange

**June 12th**—Milford Arts Council Trees Art Show, Milford Arts Center

## Some offbeat days to celebrate in June

**June 1st**—**Flip a Coin Day.** This tradition dates back to Julius Caesar. Caesar would take a coin and flip it to make decisions where the right choice was unclear. The correct answer was "heads" which of course carried his image on the coin.



**June 6th**—**National Donut Day.** Always the first Friday in June. National Donut Day honors the Salvation Army "Lassies" of WWI. It is also used as a fund raiser for needy causes of the Salvation Army.



**June 15th**—**Smile Power Day.** Feel the power. Give everyone you see a big, friendly, "I like you" smile. You never know—your warm smile just might turn someone's day right around...for the good!

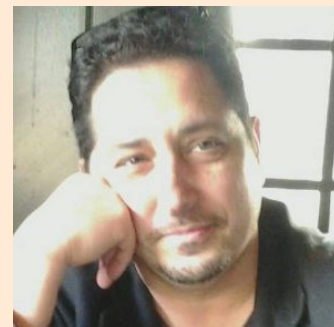
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