

Branford Review

Section II

Age 25
BRANFORD REVIEW
September 21, 1978



STONY CREEK waterfront homes fared badly when the hurricane and tidal wave struck.

Terrific tempest and sea excite fear and terror as storm hits

(Branford Review,
Sept. 22, 1938)

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BRANFORD POINT

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fear and terror as storm hits

(Branford Review,
Sept. 22, 1938)

The town is a maze puzzle. The fringe of a tropical hurricane hit here Wednesday afternoon and was immediately followed by a tremendous sea which left disaster in its wake.

Branford is a sorry sight of waste. Rescue work went on all Wednesday night and will continue until all roads are clear and safe for traffic. First Selectman Gurdon Bradley has crews in all parts of the village and work is progressing as rapidly as may be expected.

Utilities have been interrupted but not entirely discontinued. Gas and water pipe breaks are under repair and some points about town continue to have all services.

Auto traffic is holding back repair work and sightseers are urged to keep away from precarious trees, poles and wires.

Because of interrupted service

and impossible roads it has been useless to attempt to ascertain the extent of the damage.

It is a sober day. Some degree of the loss may be derived from the following:

Fourth Ward is in fair condition and so is Montowese Street.

At 130 West Main Street, the home of Mr. Richkowski, a tin roof rolled up as if it were a carpet.

The loss on the Green can never be replaced.

Marvelous trees are gone out East Main Street way.

Ray Sparico's tree is in a tottering corner of his roof. August Altermatt's house, East Main Street, and the Regan Cabin vicinity was entirely flooded. Ward's ice house was in the midst of a terrific stream overflowing the dam.

The Hammer properties and the former Dr. Tenney home, St. Mary's Church are only a few to regret the hurricane.

Charles Blackstone's 150-year-old barn could not withstand the force, parts of the roof and chimney crumbled into the house.

Teddy Enquist's son was pinned beneath the tips of a tree and was rescued by a worker returning from work at the MIF.

Alex Struzinski lost two cows, two horses, chickens, pigs and the best part of a barn.

PINE ORCHARD

Only identified cars, residents

or delivery men were permitted in Pine Orchard since early Thursday afternoon following the ransacking of some of the homes.

The Alexis Gregory and one of the Smith homes are said to be off their foundations and the Arthur Lane home has been moved 40 feet from its pinions.

About 20 yachts are ruined at the Sheldon House and Sheldon House Hill 40 or more trees have fallen. Workmen estimate the

roads will not be passable for three or four days.

BRANFORD POINT

Parker Memorial Park is well constructed of Stony Creek granite and bathhouses are intact but the trees are in a bad state. Harbor Street nearest to the Point was in a wrecked condition but passable.

Averill's cottages and stores were torn and Dr. William E. Thompson's store and summer

(Please turn to page 47)

Drag waters for missing

(Branford Review,
Sept. 22, 1938)

Those who are known to have lost their lives at Stony Creek are Mrs. Arthur W. Jepson, Mrs. Walter Spicer and Mrs. Harry O. White of Bristol.

The body of Harry I. Lewis of Stratford was located yesterday about 4 o'clock.

Mr. Jepson is still among the missing as is Mrs. Helen Lewis. Both are believed drowned.

Officials are dragging the waters today for the bodies.

Mrs. Lewis, one of the most prominent women in Connecticut politics, was nominated as the first woman ever to have a place on the Republican State ticket.

She is a former member of the House of Representatives and her primary interest in politics has been in the field of education. She was distinguished for being the first woman to get the chairmanship of the legislative committee and was a one time member of the state board of education.

Two of the Madeira cottages are undermined, the three Bishoff homes are overhanging the breakwater. Mason Klock's home is partially gone. Some of the Thimble Island residences are shattered all along the meadow banks.

The Brainerd and Betts garage had at least three feet of water but little actual damage was done to the cars in storage. Mr. Brainerd spoke Wednesday of the excellent service rendered by the Telephone Co. in keeping

a line open during the disaster.

Bradley Brothers, Milton, Addison and Clair lost 400 lobster pots, all their buildings, docks and buoys.

Starlight, a boat owned by Jack Doolittle, rests against a pole in Main Street. Other crafts, debris, roofs, garages, clothing and furniture form a border at the high water mark.

Boy Scouts aided police and volunteer workers in refugee work.

Mrs. Weld and Mrs. Bussenshut were recovered from Governor's Island early Thursday morning.

Captain Phelps remains at his island home but the show spot is now one of destruction.

High Island is only one of the 365 Islands affected by the tragedy.

A light in the window brought rescue workers to Mrs. Mary Lewis Roessler's home where she and Mrs. Sarah Carden Ritchie passed the night sitting on a piano to keep as safe as possible.

Mrs. Roessler is the sister of Leroy Lewis, who lost his life. She had returned only last week from a hospital where she was under treatment.



SHORT BEACH house got the full brunt of this huge fallen tree.

home appear to be beyond repair, the first floor having been entirely washed out to sea.

The roof is off the Yacht Club building and the windows are all cracked or broken.

Boats are ashore all along the harbor. A few fine ones are submerged and many smaller crafts are capsized.

The point road is a snarled upheaval.

SHORT BEACH

Bartlett's boats, Mansfield Grove are probably those being cared for at the Vay View Filling Station.

Mrs. Homer Shepperd and her mother were forced from their home at Shepperd's Point and passed the entire night in the woods with trees crashing all about them.

Mrs. Alexander Murphy was rescued from a sailboat by Roger Kelsey and Edwin R. Kelsey Jr. of Kelsey's Point who in a power boat spent three hours before they were able to bring her to safety at the Branford Harbor.

The greatest toll was taken at Granite Bay.

The attractive Rocky Point, known as the Dr. McGuire summer home, was undetermined, the sea wall demolished and otherwise damaged.

Miss Ruth Doerfier, her mother and her nephew, were forced to evacuate when the front porch tumbled and the garage attached simply vanished.

Next door, all that remains of the Pierpont cottage is a lawn mower and a fireplace chimney. Berkeley, owned by Mrs. E. Reed of West Haven is thoroughly undermined.

The garage adjoining the home of Mrs. Reardon left its foundation and started traveling toward East Haven.

Mrs. Rita Nesbit's Lollipop is completely gone. Some of the lumber being located in the A.A. Young yard, Stone Street. The gas stove found a resting place 10 feet beyond

appeared to be in a respectable state.

HOTCHKISS GROVE

Hotchkiss Grove suffered more from water than from fallen trees. The beach and road have gone to sea and 4th and 5th Avenues are still inundated.

INDIAN NECK

Limewood Avenue, Indian Neck, near the Palmer Casino is a wreckage of branches and the road was impassable because of the depth of the sand on the pavement. Entry from Indian Neck Avenue was blocked. Severe loss was experienced at the Montowese House.

Sea wall at Montowese is entirely gone. The Ark damaged and 12 garages swept away. Montowese bath houses "just ain't."

JOHNSON'S POINT

A crushed and broken archway of trees isolated Johnson's Point during the storm. Workmen got busy at daybreak and last evening the road was

clear but the pleasant shade of a day previous was a sad sight. Some repairs are necessary to the Philip English house.

BROCKETT'S POINT

Because of highway obstructions the loss at Brockett's Point, Lanphier's Cove and Robinson's Point is undetermined. It is believed that three cottages were lost.

Mr. and Mrs. Carleton Beals reminded as long as it was safe and today enter their cottage, Westwood Road, Short Beach.

A Coast Guard cutter worked about Pine Orchard and Stony Creek Thursday and three police officers are stationed at Pine Orchard and four at Stony Creek to protect property from prowlers. They will continue on duty until electric service is restored.

Clifford Collins, Indian Neck, was on the boat in which Simon Etzel, 48, of New Haven was washed ashore on the beach at Plum Banks and lost his life.



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At Colonial Bank, we know we can help you fight inflation by making your dollar work harder. Here are more Colonial services that should provide food for financial thought:

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thoroughly and unreminded.
The garage adjoining the home of Mrs. Reardon left its foundation and started traveling toward East Haven.

Mrs. Rita Nesbit's Lollipop is completely gone. Some of the lumber being located in the A.A. Young yard, Stone Street. The gas stove found a resting place 10 feet beyond.

In the road was a demolished mirror, piano and hot water boiler — and a trolley car. Eight feet more and the car would have tumbled into the sea for the heavy rip rap was torn from the edge and taken goodness knows where.

Thursday morning's incoming tide continued to undermine the road bed.

The road surface is a jumbled mass in some spots knee deep in sand and debris. At Casper Matson's Shady Nook, the sand has been carried almost as high as the windows.

Vernon Kelsey of Riverside found it impossible last evening to drive through the water at the Creek so he parked in the Edward Walker front yard. Thursday morning it was discovered partially buried, the window broken and driftwood piled neatly in the back seat.

The Elizabeth Rogers, Silas Stowe and Edward Walker homes were minus porches and foundations when the waters receded. Frank Dendas and Louis DeAngelis found Stanley's pier and dock obstructing passage to their porch doors.

Upper Granite Bay escaped the tidal fury but experienced the loss of trees, fences, garages and porches.

Three houses are reported to have sailed away at Brockett's Point and the tree damage is tremendous at the Lanphier Homestead occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Babcock. Mrs. Grace Vredenburg lost dozens of large trees on the main road and a road crew worked hours clearing from Forrester Hammer's to the Double Beach Road.

PAWSON PARK

Pawson Park as viewed from the wreckage at the public dock

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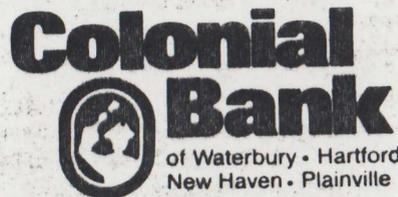
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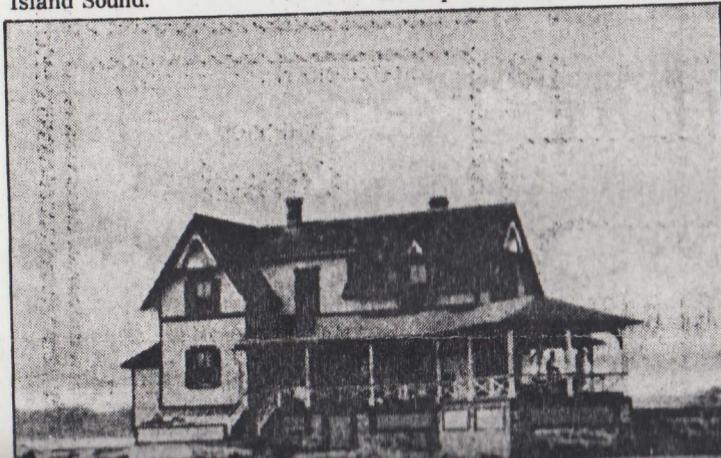
OLD ELM TREE falls on the John Sliney House, Cherry Hill Road. First Selectman Sliney who remembers the day well, noted the tree fell down so slowly it did little damage to the house.

Body found Friday

(New Haven Journal Courier, Sept. 24, 1938)

The body of Mrs. Henry L. Lewis of Stratford, Republican nominee for Secretary of State, was found yesterday (Sept. 23) on the beach at Stony Creek by a group of WPA workers, clearing wreckage from littered Long Island Sound.

The body of her husband, wealthy oyster grower, was recovered from the wreckage of the Lewis summer home Thursday (Sept. 22). The Lewis' 26-year old daughter, Cait, was rescued from the raging sea during the latter part of Wednesday's hurricane, but was too dazed to give coherent details of her experiences.



Donat calmly eats food a-la Cristo

(Branford Review, Sept. 22, 1938)

In spite of the storm young feminine hearts were treated to extra romantic beats Wednesday night at Short Beach when Robert Donat, movie and matinee idol of the British and American public, was recognized sitting in an automobile in front of Harry Tucker's store.

Mr. Donat, who is visiting with his brother at the beach with a party comprised of his relatives and friends, was apparently undaunted by the fury of the raging hurricane which was then at its height. He sat in the front seat of the car calmly munching food without much thought of Emily Post and her famous "What-Nots" of etiquette —

perhaps just as you and me.

One wondered if the handsome actor gave thoughts of his histrionic past especially when he portrayed the escape from the sea surrounded dungeon by the Count of Monte Cristo. His acting in that classic established him in the hearts of the American movie public. Perhaps after his experiences of the last few days as a guest of Connecticut his realism in portraying the fury of the sea will be flawless.

Here's a tip girls: Mr. Donat's brother is renting the Ella Wheeler Wilcox Barracks.

(Robert Donat won an Oscar in 1939 for his performance in "Goodbye Mr. Chips." The film too was up for an Oscar but lost out to "Gone with the Wind." Ed)



PINE ORCHARD YACHT CLUB (center three story structure) was isolated when waters flooded streets and field on that 1938 September day.

Tide nearly takes girl's life

(Branford Review Sept. 22, 1938)

Weighted down by heavy boots and clothing, Miss Virginia Bracken and Earl Fournier, both of Short Beach, almost met death by drowning when they attempted to cross the patch of road facing Granite Bay during the height of the hurricane Wednesday.

her to the bottom of the over-flooded road bed. Fred Courtsal, a neighbor, came to the rescue of the plucky girl and assisted her until Freddy Salvatore, Louis and Pat Pacileo came to their aid and brought them to safety in a boat.

Don Haywood and Bert

Dickenson, who also took part in the rescue were nearly overcome while they were aiding Fournier. Pat Pacileo dove into the water from the Pacileo boat and courageously brought Fournier to shore. The others were then able to save themselves.

Tree falls woman



CLASSIC VICTORIAN home on Burr Island about 100 yards off the Stony Creek mainland, was totally destroyed in the '38 hurricane. The storm also took the lives of the two owners, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Jepson and three of their guests. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lewis, who lived on nearby Lewis Island, also lost their lives that day. Only Cait, 26-year old daughter of the Lewis', who was on the island with her parents that fateful day, survived.

Every cloud has a silver lining

(Branford Review, Sept. 22, 1938)

The terrifying experiences of the last two days had also a spark of humanness beneath.

Attention in many sections is being given homeless birds and squirrels.

At Doctor Thompson's an adorable antique baby carriage came to light.

Children spent a glorious day playing in the abandoned trolley car in Short Beach.

On the beach at Stony Creek, a lone bathtub two hundred feet from any house emphasizes the force of the storm.

Mrs. Ben Nelson made an effort Wednesday to rescue a coop of drowning chickens.

One refugee worker tells of saving three goldfish from a muddy drain presumably having gone over the top of Mrs. Robert Noerr's garden pool.

An early morning milk

deliveryman tells of finding three one dollar bills floating with the fourth just evacuating an empty bottle on a customers' back porch.

Frank Page, Summer Island, was surprised to find his cottage moved several feet but a vase of flowers on a table was undisturbed.

While owners counted their losses one man at the shore was heard to speak sharply to a young lady for cutting across his lawn. It was too soft for walking he said it might spoil the grass.

A gentleman in the Double Beach vicinity, it might be wise not to mention names, fumbled home toward midnight over boulders, under wire and through thicket. Obstructing the way was a tub. The gentleman picked up the tub. Tub had white streak down the back. Tub was mad. Man dropped tub. Tub was mad. Man will leave tub along hereafter.

Weighted down by heavy boots and clothing, Miss Virginia Bracken and Earl Fournier, both of Short Beach, almost met death by drowning when they attempted to cross the patch of road facing Granite Bay during the height of the hurricane Wednesday.

Miss Bracken, accompanied by young Fournier, was carrying boots to her father, who was marooned at Pacileo's grocery store, when she was seized by a heavy wind and hurled against the Sound View cottage which was more than twenty feet from where she was walking. Fournier came to her assistance but both were carried down and under the water by a heavy sweep of the tide which was at the time being driven by a ninety-mile gale. Miss Bracken who is an expert swimmer, succeeded in freeing herself from the heavy boots that held

a neighbor, came to the rescue of the plucky girl and assisted her until Freddy Salvatore, Louis and Pat Pacileo came to their aid and brought them to safety in a boat.

Don Haywood and Bert

come while they were aiding Fournier. Pat Pacileo dove into the water from the Pacileo boat and courageously brought Fournier to shore. The others were then able to save themselves.

Tree fells woman

(Branford Review, Sept. 22, 1938)

The death of Ella May Stevens Carlson, wife of Carl A. Carlson, of 152 Montowese Street, occurred as a large tree crashed through the top of her car on the Post Road in front of the residences of Mrs. Tott and Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Kneuer. Mrs. Carlson, who was returning from her work in Madison, was sitting in her car in the line of traffic in her lap being the book, "Gone With the Wind," which

she was reading while waiting for the traffic to proceed.

She was 24 years of age and a resident of the town of Guilford, a daughter of Raymond S. Stevens and Pearl E. Stannard. She was a bride of a little over four months and at the time of her marriage was a resident of Clinton, where she was married.

Funeral services will be from W.S. Clancy and Sons mortuary home Saturday afternoon at 2:30 with interment in Tabor Cemetery.



HERE CRUISER STARLIGHT ends up in the middle of Thimble Islands Road (center) with damage all around it.