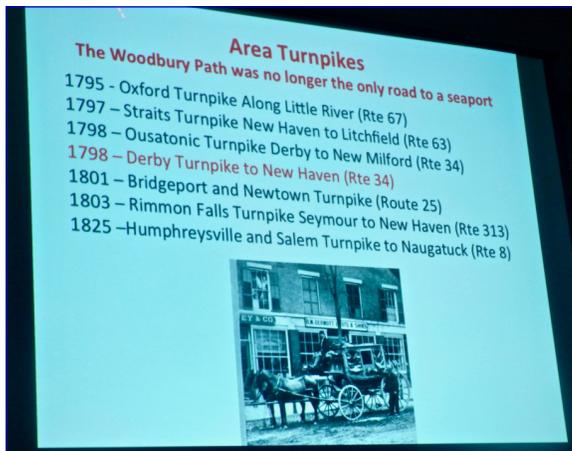


## Ancient highway became vital link between Woodbury, Derby



By Patricia Villers

SEYMOUR - In the mid-1600s Derby was an Indian trading post along the Naugatuck and Housatonic rivers. It was known as Paugasset.

In 1675 the town was named after Derby, England.

Derby Landing, at the confluence of the two rivers, grew into a bustling trading post and port for ships that carried products to New York, Boston and the West Indies.

Farmers who lived in Seymour and Oxford and as far away as Woodbury needed a market to sell their goods, which included wheat, corn, pork, and cheese.

That was the origin of The Woodbury Path,

subject of a presentation Sunday by resident Peter Rzasza at the Seymour Historical Society.

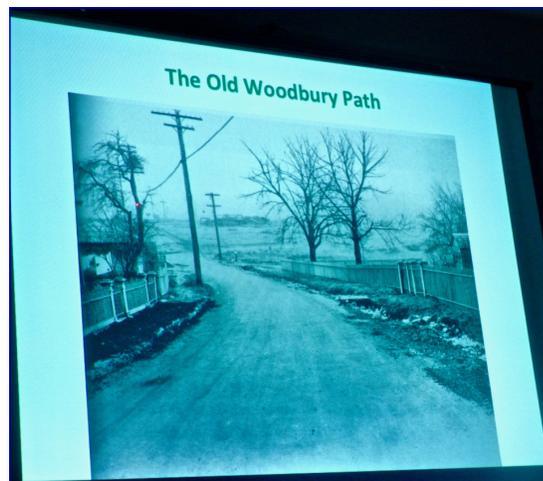
Settlers became shipbuilders, traders, and farmer-sailors and East Derby became a major shipbuilding area. Sloops that were built in Derby sailed down the Housatonic River to Long Island Sound.



Rzasza said The Woodbury Path was the main artery for bringing products to market in East Derby.

In his research he found the earliest mention of the road was in 1674. The ancient highway was called an Indian trail, a bridle path, a country road, among other names. It was widened to accommodate ox carts and became the main route connecting Woodbury to Derby.

Portions of The Woodbury Path are still visible today. Rzasza and his wife, Barbara, have hiked the trail near Fountain Lake in Ansonia and Seymour among other spots, he said. His wife assisted him during the Power Point presentation.



### About the Katharine Matthies mansion

The Seymour Historical Society has its headquarters at 59 West Street in the stately Katharine Matthies mansion.

It was built in 1940 as the private residence of Katharine Matthies, daughter of Seymour industrialist, George Matthies. She became a well-known philanthropist and resided in the home until 1987 when she died at the age of 85.

In 1989, the Society had the opportunity to move into The Katharine Matthies house, and in 1995, the historical society assumed the ownership as well as the responsibility for maintenance of the house and is the Society's permanent home.

The goal of the Seymour Historical Society is "to preserve the history of the Town of Seymour; and to record and preserve current happenings of historical significance to the Town of Seymour."

Learn more about the Society at [their website](#)



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### Columnist's opinion still holds true today

Editor's note: Patti and I thought it would be fun to travel down memory lane occasionally on these pages.

# OPINION

4—The Evening Sentinel, Monday, February 22, 1988

She recently looked through an album filled with her *Being There* columns from the '80s (!) that were published in the former Evening Sentinel. It just so happened she had written about President's Day in 1988.

In it she mentions Seymour resident Frank Stuban's letter to the editor about the significance of Washington's birthday. Sadly he passed away in January, 2015 at the age of 92.

## George given bum rap with President's Day

By PATTI McDONALD  
I don't care what anyone says. Today, Feb. 22, is George Washington's birthday. Call me old-fashioned. Call me out of date. You can even call me crabby.

But when I was in school we were taught that our two most famous presidents were born in February: Abraham Lincoln on the 12th and George Washington on the 22nd. Period. No questions asked.

George Washington chopped down a cherry tree. He never told a lie. Abe Lincoln freed the slaves and was later assassinated at Ford's theater.

Yes, I know that President's Day has been around for awhile—ever since somebody got the bright idea

to pass a Monday holiday (i.e. three-day weekend) bill, making the federal legal holiday the third Monday in February.



I still haven't gotten used to the idea. Why should we celebrate Washington's birthday a full week ahead of time? What kind of values does that teach schoolchildren?

That a three-day weekend is more important than marking Washington's birthday on the proper day? He was the father of our country, for goodness' sake.

I think Ol' George—even if he did have wooden teeth—deserves a little more respect than that.

Rodney Dangerfield probably gets more respect than the father of our country.

If you doubt me, just ask Frank Stuban of Seymour. He wrote a long letter about the significance of Washington's birthday that The Sentinel published Saturday.

Mr. Stuban still celebrates George's birthday on the right day. Are he and I the only ones left?

I hope not. I think today is a day in which

every American should pause and remember what George Washington did to help make our nation the greatest in the world.

Yes, it's Feb. 22. Lincoln's birthday is long gone. So are Groundhog Day and St. Valentine's Day.

This is a real holiday, as far as I'm concerned. And I want to celebrate. I think I'll stop at the supermarket for canned cherries and flour and shortening and go home and bake a cherry pie. Then my husband and I can raise a slice on high and say 'Happy Birthday' to George as we thank our lucky stars that we live in America and can celebrate the freedom he made possible.

I'm sure Ol' George would have wanted it that way.

### Fair supports Valley Diaper Bank

By Patricia Villers  
SEYMOUR - It was a Girls Night Out for a good cause.

A vendor fair at Seymour United Methodist Church Friday evening raised funds for the Valley Diaper Bank.

The event was organized by resident Laurie Brooks Casey, a member of the church's missions team. She said more than \$200 had been raised. The diaper bank is an initiative of Connecticut Partnership for Children, Inc., a nonprofit based in Seymour.

Casey said her hope is to hold a vendor fair at the Pearl Street church quarterly to raise funds for the missions team.



Vendors at the fair included:

- Magnolia and Vine
- Avon,
- LulaRoe,
- Younique,
- Jamberry Nails,
- Pampered Chef,
- Ash N Bee'z, and
- Bemer Health products.



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