

The Waterbury Fact Book



by

Michael DeLeo
The Silas Bronson Library
Waterbury, CT 06702
Telephone (203) 574-8221

<http://www.biblio.org/bronson/silas.htm>

special thanks to:

Waterbury Region

Convention & Visitors Bureau
21 Church Street
Waterbury, CT 06702
(203) 597-9527

FIRST
UNION

**Friends
of the
Silas Bronson Library**

Editing and Layout:
Robert G. Dorr
Executive Director

A COMMUNITY VISION FOR WATERBURY

General Information

✓ **The original settlement of Waterbury was in 1674** in the Town Plot section. King Philip's War caused it to be vacated and the location was changed to the Western part of the Green in 1677. Both sites are marked. The Algonquin name for the area was "Matetacoke" meaning "place without trees." It appeared as "Mattatock" in 1673, "Mattatuck" in the General Court record of May 18, 1674, and on May 15, 1686, "This court grants that Mattatuck shall be and belong to the County of Hartford, and the name of the plantation shall be for the future Waterbury."

✓ **"Quid Aere Perennius"** is the inscription in marble above the City Hall entrance. It translates as **"What is More Lasting Than Brass?"** and was chosen by Frederick Kingsbury for his design of the Waterbury Seal in 1876. It was inspired by **Horace's Book III, Ode XXX:**

"I have executed a monument which is more lasting than brass and more sublime than the regal elevation of pyramids which neither wasting the shower, the unavailing north wind, or an innumerable succession of years and the flight of seasons shall be able to demolish."

✓ **Waterbury occupies 28.9 square miles.** Its elevation is between 215 and 965 feet above sea level. Its population is approximately 105,000.

✓ **Waterbury is located in New Haven County,** in the Eastern Time Zone, midway between the 41st and 42nd latitudes north (roughly the same as Avigliano, Italy) and directly on the 73rd longitude west (the same as the coast of Chile.)

✓ **The public school system consists of:** 3 high schools, 3 middle schools, and 19 elementary schools. There are 10 private or parochial elementary schools, and 3 private or parochial high schools.

✓ **Waterbury is the metropolitan center** for a 13-town region known as the **Central Naugatuck Valley.** The City sits at the crossroads of two major expressways, I-84 and Route 8. This makes any site in Waterbury easily accessible from all points in the Northeast.

✓ **Driving times from major American cities to Waterbury are:**

1 1/2 hours from New York

1/2 hour from New Haven

2 1/2 hours from Boston

3/4 hour from Springfield

1/2 hour from Hartford

1/2 hour from Bridgeport

Monuments and Landmarks

✓ **Ben Franklin Statue** — Seated in front of the Silas Bronson Library, it was designed by renowned sculptor **Paul Wayland Bartlett**, a one-time Waterbury resident. The 1700 pound statue was made possible by a \$15,000 donation from **Elisha Leavenworth.** After completion, it made a 22-city tour, with celebrations in each city, from Baltimore to Boston and then to Waterbury where it was dedicated June 3, 1921. The route closely duplicated Franklin's stops when he ran away from home in 1723. A replica was made in 1982 by the US State Department to celebrate its 200th anniversary and Franklin as its first diplomat. Other Bartlett works include: Lafayette (Louvre Courtyard), Columbus and Michelangelo (Library of Congress), statues for the NY Public Library, the US Capitol and the NY Stock Exchange. His works are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and many major museums.

✓ **Soldiers Monument** — Sculpted by former Waterbury resident **George C. Bissell** as a tribute to the whole Civil War experience, the 48-foot-high bronze monument was cast in Paris and cost \$25,000. It was dedicated Oct. 23, 1884. Other Bissell works include: Memorial to Scottish American soldiers of the Civil War located in Edinburgh, Scotland, and many statues in Riverside Cemetery, including one of Waterbury Civil War hero, Col. John L. Chatfield. The poem on the Soldiers Monument, by Dr. Joseph Anderson of Waterbury history fame, was included in the Library of American Literature:

Brave men, who rallying at your country's call

Went forth to fight - if Heaven willed, to fall:

Returned, ye walk with us through sunnier years

And hear your nation say, God bless you all!

Brave men, who yet a heavier burden bore

And came not home to hearts by grief made sore!

They call you dead and lo ye grandly live.

Shrined in the nation's love forevermore!

✓ **Carrie Welton Fountain** — It was designed by Karl Gerhardt of Hartford. He was a favorite of Mark Twain who owned many of his pieces and financed his studies in Paris. The 2,500 pound statue is in memory of Caroline Josephine Welton's black stallion, Knight, and her love of animals. Welton's will left \$7,000 for the monument and \$100,000 to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; a cause to which she had already given \$250,000 in 1874. Relatives thought she was insane and contested the will, resulting in a long trial that was covered by the New York Times. Carrie's side prevailed, and the fountain was dedicated November 10, 1888. In 1874, Knight had killed Carrie's father with a kick. Carrie was born in 1842 and died in 1884 while mountain climbing in Colorado.

✓ **Harrub Pilgrim Memorial** — The 175 ton, 60-foot-long, 24-foot-high monument with 10-foot-high figures was carved out of French granite by **Herman Atkins MacNeil** of N. Y. **Charles Harrub**, a former engineer for American Brass, donated the \$100,000 needed for the project to honor his wife and the Pilgrims. Dedicated October 11, 1930, it was originally located at Chase Parkway. Other MacNeil works include: The Liberty Quarter with flying eagle on reverse side, McKinley Memorial in Ohio, Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Washington DC, many American Indian appreciations and statues of famous men in many American museums.

✓ **Father McGivney Statue** — It was cast by Joseph Coletti of Boston to honor the Waterburian who founded the Knights of Columbus. The 8-foot bronze figure stands atop a 10-foot granite block. Messages were read from Pope Pius XII and President Eisenhower to the 8,000 people attending the dedication on March 31, 1957. Cardinal Spellman's appearance meant that he was the first Cardinal to visit Waterbury since Cardinal Gibbons in 1903.

✓ **Clock Tower** — Constructed by the world famous architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White of N.Y., this structure resembles the **Torre Del Mangia** at the **Palazzo Pubblico** in Siena, Italy. This architectural firm also did the original Penn Station, wings of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the J.P. Morgan library. It cost \$332,000, is 240-feet high, has 318 steps and the clock was made by Seth Thomas Co. with a dial 16-feet in diameter with 5-foot tall Roman numerals. The eight she-wolf gargoyles are a reminder of the myth of Romulus & Remus. The Tower opened July 12, 1909 and is now the home of the Waterbury Republican-American.

✓ **Clock-On-The-Green** — The base and the 15 foot granite tower were designed by Paul Lux of the Lux Clock Co. It has been called "Colley's Clock" at times for the president of the Chamber of Commerce, **Charles Colley**, who fought for it. A major debate at the time (beautification or ruination of the Green) had one newspaper on each side. The clock was dedicated November 25, 1915.

✓ **Christopher Columbus Statue** — Done by Frank C. Gaylord of Barre, Vermont for the Christopher Columbus Committee that raised the \$25,000, this 12-foot statue is made of granite and weighs 12,000 pounds. This statue was dedicated Oct. 12, 1984. The Christopher Columbus Time Capsule, closed Oct. 12, 1992 to be opened October 12, 2092, is behind the monument.

✓ **M.A. Green Clock** — The historic two-dial clock was moved from its original 1920 site on Grand Street to Bank Street in 1935. The 17 foot tall timepiece, made by Seth Thomas Co., was given to the City in 1993.

✓ **Veterans Monument** — Designed by Luis Fucito for the City of Waterbury for about \$55,000, it was intended in honor of all those who have served in the wars of our country. The 15-foot star was dedicated on May 30, 1958 and is located on the west end of the Green.

✓ **Whale Sculpture** at the Grand Street entrance to Silas Bronson Library — Designed by Jerome Stein, this mobile of the state animal, the sperm whale, is constructed with 150 pieces of metal. Dedication took place on Oct. 25, 1983.

✓ **Drescher's Restaurant** — Built in 1903, this 300-ton building was physically moved 200 feet from Harrison Avenue to its present location on Leavenworth Street at a cost of \$130,000 in 1982.

✓ **Hobart Welton Carriage Shed** — The stone structure on Wolcott Street at the top of Manor Avenue has two Latin words inscribed at the top. They are a pun on Welton's name - PUTUES - meaning WELL and DOCIUM meaning TON. Most people know it as "the place where they used to water the horses" and in later years "where people waited for the bus" or "the cave."

✓ **Howland-Hughes** — Waterbury's worst fire occurred on Feb. 2-3, 1902 at the Bank and Grand Street area. 32 buildings and 100 businesses including the Reid & Hughes Dry Goods Co. were destroyed. (Property damage was valued at \$2,000,000) This business started in 1890, was later rebuilt and became Howland-Hughes department store. Three generations of the Paine family, Ralph, Morris and Hank, have made the store one of Waterbury's enduring landmarks. In 1996, the store was downsized and now sells only products made in Connecticut.

✓ **Holy Land Cross** — The present 52-foot-high cross replaced the first 32-foot-high cross in 1968. The 17-acre "Land of the Lord" with scenes from Bethlehem and Jerusalem consisted of 200 miniature buildings and figures of varying sizes. The catacomb area contained exhibits from the dismantled Vatican pavilion of the 1964 World's Fair. Holy Land took 30 years to complete, and it attracted 40,000 visitors a year from all over the country in the 1960's. Holy Land was conceived and built by John Greco and friends, and dedicated December 14, 1958.

✓ **Mattatuck Museum** — The only museum in Connecticut solely dedicated to collecting and exhibiting Connecticut artists and sculptors and reflecting the industrial history of the state. The renovation and construction was done in 1986, designed by noted Argentine-born architect Cesar Pelli. The original museum, built by Griggs and Hunt in 1912, is located on the opposite side of the Green.

✓ **John S. Monagan Federal Building (Waterbury Post Office)** — Designed by George Oakley Totten in 1931, the facade includes eleven panels facing Grand Street that illustrate the history of communication and transportation.

✓ **"That building that goes around the corner of Grand and Meadow Streets"** was the former headquarters of the **American Brass Company** (Anaconda). It was built in 1913 using a design by Trowbridge & Livingston of N.Y. It is now the office of the **Superior Court**.

✓ **Library Park** — Site of a former burying ground from 1686 - 1890. When it became a park in the early 1900's, some of the bodies were removed and 47 of the headstones were put in the wall along Meadow Street.

✓ **First Union Bank** — This building located at 60 North Main Street was designed in 1927 as the Dime Savings Bank by York and Sawyer.

✓ **Silas Bronson Plaque** — It is located in the lobby of the main library. The tablet reads: "Silas Bronson was born in Waterbury, West Farms, Feb. XV, MDCCLXXXVIII; died in the city of New York, Nov. XXV, MDCCCLXVII. An enterprising merchant in busy centers of trade, he was not forgetful of his native town, but bequeathed to it the fruit of his industry for the establishment of a free public library, seeking thereby 'to encourage and sustain good order and sound morals.' Let all who read these books and find help or comfort in them cherish his memory." The West Wing of the present building was built Oct. 20, 1963. The East Wing was completed Sept. 22, 1968. The original Bronson bequest was \$200,000. The present day equivalent would be about \$14,000,000, conservatively invested over that time span. The first Bronson Library was located on West Main Street in 1868.

NOTED WATERBURIANS Inventors & Innovators

✓ **Amasa Abraham Marks** — He invented and improved the artificial limb and was commissioned by the federal government to supply disabled Civil War veterans. Eventually his products were used worldwide. He has an entry in the Dictionary of American Biography.

✓ **Allen B. Wilson** — "several inventors (of the sewing machine) worked independently...Walter Hunt of New York, Elias Howe of Spencer, Massachusetts, and Allen B. Wilson of Waterbury." (from the book Eureka). "...no one of them [patents] fully covered a practical and useful sewing machine. The first patent for such a machine was this of Mr. Wilson's." (from Andersen's History of Waterbury)

✓ **Dr. Melinas C. Leavenworth** — (1796-1862). A medical doctor and botanist who discovered many new and rare plants. The genus of plants known as *Leavenworthii* was named in his honor.

✓ **Nicholas Jenkins** — (1833-1914). He invented the Jenkins wood paneling machine that became one of the best known Connecticut inventions and was exhibited at the Chicago World Columbian Exposition of 1893. He also invented the extension table, a process for sinking designs in marble, a substitute for whalebone in corsets and held many patents.

✓ **Hiram W. Hayden** — (1820-1904). The long-time resident was a diemaker, embosser, inventor and daguerrian. He had many inventions including one that revolutionized brass and copper kettle-making, a breech loading rifle, breech loading cannon, magazine rifle, patents & designs for buttons, medals, kerosene oil lamps and one of the first daguerreotypes put on paper. Hayden also designed dies for a daguerreotype case with a bas-relief copy of Sir Thomas Lawrence's "The Calmady Children".

✓ **Professor William H. Bristol** — One of the first full-length sound motion pictures was made at the studios of the Bristol Co. at Platts Mills by this professor, who experimented for years with sound pictures. In 1927 he gave a lecture at the Franklin Institute on "synchronized talking motion pictures" His Talking Picture Corp. also became involved in improving loudspeakers, amplifiers, announcing systems and phonograph recording reproduction. He invented gauges used worldwide to accurately measure air, gas, and steam pressure and temperature to monitor plant conditions, eliminate wasteful processes and help industry get control over production. Bristol is mentioned in Electrical World magazine of Oct. 14, 1893. He received awards at expositions in St. Louis, Paris, San Francisco, Philadelphia and the Chicago World Columbian Exposition of 1893.

✓ **Tadeusz Sendzimir** — He was a scientist, industrialist and inventor of cold strip mills and a galvanizing process that revolutionized the steel industry throughout the world from his Waterbury plant. With companies in 33 countries, 85-90% of the world's stainless steel passed through T. Sendzimir Inc. in the early 1980's. The Kosciuszko Foundation said he was "the greatest inventor in the steel industry since Henry Bessemer. His invention and technological achievements have contributed to human welfare around the globe." The Association of Iron & Steel gives out an annual award in his name, and on the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty, Mr. Sendzimir was one of the 886 immigrants honored for their contributions to America.

✓ **Dr. Robert Gallo** — The leading AIDS researcher and author, is credited as a co-discoverer of the AIDS virus in 1984.

✓ **Donald Bunger** — This Waterbury resident designed a golf ball for Spalding that had a pattern of dimples for high trajectory flight. All top grade Spalding golf balls in 1992 were created using computer software developed by mathematician and consultant Bunger.

Waterburians in Entertainment

✓ **Lucia Chase** — She was born in Waterbury and maintained a home here (Rose Hill on Prospect Street) until she died in 1986. She was a ballet dancer and mime, the founder, producer, co-director and financial backer (her father was an officer of the Waterbury Clock Co.) of the Ballet Theatre which became the American Ballet Theatre from 1945-1979. Lucia Chase received the Handel Medallion (NYC's highest cultural citation), the President's Medal of Freedom (highest civilian award), the Capezio Award, and the Connecticut Arts Award. She also was the first non-British member elected to the Royal Academy of Dance and had the rare distinction of having two entries in Current Biography (in 1947 and again in 1975). "This fairy godmother of American dance" was succeeded as artistic director for the **American Ballet Theatre** by a person she introduced to American audiences: the famous Russian and star of the Moscow Ballet Mikhail Baryshnikov.

✓ **Rosalind Russell** — (1908-1976). Born and raised on Willow Street, she made films from 1934-1971 and received Academy Award nominations four times for "My Sister Eileen," "Sister Kenny," "Morning Becomes Electra," and "Auntie Mame." In 1972 she was awarded a special Oscar, the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, for her charity work. Her autobiography is titled Life Is A Banquet.

✓ **Jean Dixon** — (1896-1981). The Broadway stage and movie actress from 1921-1938 made her stage debut in Paris with Sarah Bernhardt as the leading lady. She played character roles in many 1930's films including "My Man Godfrey," "Holiday," "You Only Live Once" and "Joy of Living."

✓ **Bob Crane** — (1928-1978). He was the popular star of the hit television show, "Hogan's Heroes." Crane appeared on "The Donna Reed Show," "The Twilight Zone," "Dick Van Dyke Show," "Alfred Hitchcock Show," "The Lucy Show," "Laugh-In" and many others. He had his own show, "The Bob Crane Show," for one year (1975).

Waterburians in the Arts

- ✓ **Truman Bartlett** — (1836-1923). This sculptor and friend of Rodin spent his early years in Waterbury and has many works here and in France. He also wrote a biography of William Morris Hunt. His son sculpted Waterbury's Ben Franklin Statue.
- ✓ **Horace Chauncey Johnson** — (1820-1869). This local artist painted the portraits of at least 80 prominent Waterburians including the one of Silas Bronson hanging in the library.
- ✓ **Henry Golden Dearth** — (1864-1918). - This artist spent a large part of his life in Waterbury while making many trips to Paris. His "Harbor at Boulognes" painting is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- ✓ **Hobart Victory Welton** — (1811-1895). This wood carver and sculptor has his carved gate listed in [Index of American Design](#).
- ✓ **George Marinko** — This prominent local artist, art teacher and later director of the Hudson River Museum, painted the mural in City Hall's Aldermanic Chambers along with artist Francis Jmanie.
- ✓ **Guiseppe Trotta** — This long-time resident was chosen by the Italian Societies of America to paint a portrait of President Wilson to be presented to the Italian government in 1918.
- ✓ **Jacob Kainen** — This painter, etcher, lithographer, printmaker and curator who expanded the print collection of the National Museum of Art. He was friends with William de Koonig, Mark Rothko, and Stuart Davis and was one of the pioneers of color lithography. Many prominent museums and galleries own this Waterbury-born artist's works.

Famous Architects

- ✓ **David Hoadley** — (1774-1839). He was considered one of the finest architects of his time while building many homes and churches in Connecticut including the Church on the New Haven Green. Cass Gilbert designed a tablet in honor of Hoadley's fine work. Some of his works are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- ✓ **Robert W. Hill** — (1828-1909). He was the architect for Connecticut under four governors. He built many public buildings including armories in Waterbury, New London, Bridgeport, Norwalk and New Britain, the old City Hall, St. Margaret's School and the Thomaston Opera House.
- ✓ **Theodore B. Peck** — (1856-1927). He was the architect of Apothecaries Hall (1894), the Waterbury American Building (1895) on Grand Street, the original Barnard School, the old Leavenworth Hall, Citizen's National Bank and many factories and Romanesque homes in the area.
- ✓ **Ralph Thomas Walker** — (1889-1973). He received the American Institute of Architects Centennial Award for the "most significant contribution of any living American architect to humanity and the environment." This Waterbury native built many research centers, libraries and office buildings including the Bell Telephone Labs, the IBM Research Center and the New York Telephone Co. He was a leading proponent of the Art Deco style.

Waterbury Authors

- ✓ **Lemuel Hopkins** — (1750-1801). Born in Waterbury this physician, poet and satirist was one of the founders of the Connecticut Medical Society and a recognized authority on tuberculosis. A member of the "Hartford Wits," he wrote "The Anarchiad" with others, many satirical papers and poems. [The National Encyclopedia of American Biography](#) calls him one of the "best known early American poets" and he has entries in [Library of American Literature](#).
- ✓ **Samuel Hopkins** — (1721-1803). He was born in Waterbury and became such an influential theologian and philosopher that a school of thought called "Hopkinsianism" emerged. Hopkins wrote many books on theology, a biography of Jonathan Edwards (his associate) and in 1776 [A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans: Showing It To Be A Duty and the Interest of the American States to Emancipate All Their African Slaves](#). He was the central figure in Harriet Beecher Stowe's [The Minister's Wooing](#).
- ✓ **John Trumbull** — (1750-1831). This well-known Revolutionary War era poet was born in Westbury, then a parish of Waterbury. His most famous works were "McFingal, A Modern Epic Poem" and "The Anarchiad" written with three others. He also has many entries in the [Library of American Literature](#) and [The Poets of Connecticut](#). He passed the Yale entrance exam at age 7, later worked for John Adams and became a judge.

- ✓ **Constance Goddard DuBois** — She wrote four historical novels, [Martha Corey: A Tale of Salem Witchcraft](#), [Columbus and Beatriz](#), [A Modern Pagan](#) and her last work [Fleur de Lis](#) which appeared in 1895.
- ✓ **Frederick John Kingsbury** — He wrote many historical articles and contributed to various historical works during the mid to late 1800's.
- ✓ **Charles Allen Dinsmore** — A recognized authority on Dante, he wrote [Life of Dante Aligieri](#) in 1919. The Reverend Dr. Dinsmore was the pastor of Waterbury's First Congregational Church from 1905 to 1920.
- ✓ **Sarah J. Pritchard** — In 1898 she wrote [The Only Woman In Town and Other Tales of the American Revolution](#). She wrote at least 12 other books, many for young adults as well as Volume One of Anderson's [Town and City of Waterbury Connecticut](#).
- ✓ **Arthur Reed Kimball** — (1855-1933). He wrote pieces, many periodicals, as well as a novel, [A Reporter's Story](#) and [The Blue Ribbon](#) a biography of Frances E. Murphy. A man of letters who created appreciation of the arts in the city, Mr. Kimball was also a banker and President of the [American](#) newspaper.
- ✓ **Rev. Joseph Anderson** — (1836-1916). He wrote, edited and compiled the [Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut](#) completed in 1896 and wrote many articles and pamphlets on regional history.
- ✓ **William J. Pape** — (1873-1961). This publisher of the [Waterbury Republican](#) wrote the [History of Waterbury and the Naugatuck Valley Connecticut](#) which was completed in 1918.
- ✓ **John S. Monagan** — This former mayor of Waterbury (1943-1948) and congressman from the 5th district (1959-1973) wrote [Horace, Priest of the Poor](#), a biography of Horace McKenna and [The Grand Panjandrum](#) about Justice Holmes. He also produced two videos of his Waterbury songs and recollections entitled "One Man's View of Bauby Corner" and "From Green Road to Cracker Hill."

Other Noted Waterburians

- ✓ **John W. Hill** — (1834-1921). This Waterbury postmaster (1869-1886) was known as "The Whittling Yankee," and created hundreds of unique postal cancellations. During a 1980's auction one of these "Waterbury Fancy Cancellations" sold for \$250,000.
- ✓ **Chief Two Moon** — (1888-1933). Born Chico Colon Meridas, he lived in Waterbury from 1914-1933 and claimed to be a full-blooded Pueblo Indian but many doubted his assertions. He sold Chief Two Moon Tonic, ointments, creams and herbal powders that were made in his East Main Street laboratory which were distributed throughout this country and Europe. The Indian Head portraits with two moons underneath are still on the outside of the building at 1870 East Main Street.
- ✓ **Frank S. Hogan** — (1902-1974) In 1941 he succeeded Thomas E. Dewey as District Attorney of Manhattan, and served in that office until his death (the longest period of service of any elected New York official). He was returned to office in 8 successive elections without serious opposition. The N. Y. newspapers called him "Mr. Integrity." Among the cases he was involved with were Lucky Luciano, Dutch Schultz, Frank Costello, and the basketball and quiz show scandals. In 1958 he ran unsuccessfully against Kenneth Keating for the U. S. Senate. The 1977 Book, [Mr. District Attorney](#), by Barry Cunningham details his exploits.
- ✓ **B. Jay Cooper** — He was deputy White House press secretary, special assistant to the President (1987-1988), deputy White House press secretary, deputy assistant to the President (1988-1989) and director of communications for the Republican National Committee (1989-1993).
- ✓ **William Bolger** — (1923-1989). He was the first postal employee to rise through the ranks to become Postmaster General.
- ✓ **E. Gerald Corrigan** — He served as President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (the largest and most influential of the U.S central bank) for 8 years and resigned on Aug. 20, 1993. He was also considered by President Clinton to be head of the World Bank.
- ✓ **Marian Burros** - She is the current New York Times food columnist.

Waterburians who played in the Major Leagues

- ✓ **Roger Connor** — He led the league at various times in batting average, hits, doubles, triples, home runs, runs batted in, and walks. The Home Run King before Babe Ruth, he was tall for the era (6'3") and was one of the men referred to when the team name "Giants" was adopted. He primarily played first base, but saw time at second base, third base and outfield. He played 1880-1897. Member, Baseball Hall of Fame.

- ✓ **Joe Connor** — He was the brother of Roger, and played in the years 1895, 1900-1901 and 1905.
- ✓ **Francis "Red" Donahue** — He was a pitcher who 3 times won 20 games in a season. He played 1893-1906.
- ✓ **Fred Klobedanz** — He was a pitcher who led the league in winning pct. 26-7, .788 in 1897. He played 1893-1899, 1902.
- ✓ **George "Candy" LaChance** — He was a first baseman who played on the first World Series winner the 1903 Boston Pilgrims.
- ✓ **Johnny Moore** — He was the center fielder for the Chicago Cubs in the 1932 World Series when Babe Ruth "called" his home run by pointing to the outfield. The Home Run ball flew over his head.
- ✓ **Jimmy Piersall** — His lifetime batting average was .272. In 1961 he led league in doubles, hit .322 (third in the league), was fifth in stolen bases in 1960. He won the Gold Glove for fielding excellence in 1958 and 1961 and would have won more if the award was presented in his early years. When discussing right fielders in 1953 (Jimmy's position at the time), Casey Stengel said "Piersall is the best I've seen." The book and movie (starring Anthony Perkins), "Fear Strikes Out," recounts the mental breakdown and comeback of this colorful, eccentric, talented player who ran around the bases backward when he hit his 100th home run. Later a baseball broadcaster, he wrote The Truth Hurts in 1984.
- ✓ **Ron Diorio** — He was a pitcher with the Philadelphia Phillies. He played in 1973-1974.
- ✓ **Dave Wallace** — He was the pitching coach for the Los Angeles Dodgers and played with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1973-1974 and with the Toronto Blue Jays in 1978.
- ✓ **Most of baseball's top players**, including Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle, Willie Mays, Joe DiMaggio, and even current superstar Ken Griffey, Jr. (who played here as a teenager in the national Mickey Mantle Tournament) came to Waterbury. But no event is remembered as much as the time Ted Williams appeared, only a few years after his retirement, and was struck out at Municipal Stadium by Joan Joyce, the best softball pitcher in the world!
- ✓ The first Black professional baseball player was not Jackie Robinson but **Moses Fleetwood Walker** who played for Toledo in the American Association, a professional baseball league in 1884. Walker later played for Waterbury in 1886-1888.

WATERBURY'S LINKS TO THE WORLD

- ✓ **Bergin Wright Tinker**, the superintendent of Waterbury Schools for twenty years, was a descendent of Thomas Tinker of the Mayflower.
- ✓ **When George Washington laid siege to Boston in 1775**, 52 Waterbury men were in his troops.
- ✓ **Waterburians John Saxon and Mark Richards** were with George Washington at Valley Forge 1777-78. 689 Waterburians were in the Revolutionary War.
- ✓ **Millicent Baldwin Porter**, namesake of the Waterbury Chapter of the D.A.R., helped Washington's troops at the Battle of Monmouth, June 1778.
- ✓ **Waterbury resident Moses Dunbar**, a Tory and Church of England devotee, was hanged in Hartford on March 19, 1777 for "high treason against the state of Connecticut" as an example to all Tories.
- ✓ **Lafayette and Washington were said to have passed through Waterbury** on their way to Hartford on September 17, 1780.
- ✓ **A plaque in East Farm cemetery** commemorates two French soldiers who died in Waterbury during Rochambeau's march of 1781.
- ✓ **David Hale**, the brother of Nathan Hale, taught school at the Waterbury Academy (1784-85)
- ✓ **Charles Commerford**, ex-postmaster of Waterbury and deputy chief of the first state labor bureau married Alexander Hamilton's daughter, Elizabeth.
- ✓ **The Hayden, Scovill and Leavenworth Co.** made the **Lafayette Presentation Button** set which was a gift to General Lafayette on his return visit to the U.S. in 1824.
- ✓ **The Waterbury Button Co.** made a button stamped "Andrew Jackson, March 4, 1829" that was duplicated several times during Jackson's presidential campaign.
- ✓ **Charles Ferdinand Dowd**, the Waterbury Superintendent of Schools from 1859-1860, was the originator of the system of "standard time."

- ✓ **Theodore R. Timby** (1822-1909), A Waterbury resident, invented a revolving turret that revolutionized military warfare and was used on the "Monitor" during its historic battle with the "Merrimack."
- ✓ **55 Waterbury soldiers accompanied General Grant** to accept General Lee's surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. 942 Waterburians fought in the Civil War.
- ✓ **John Hoadley Abbott** was a member of the famous Tompkins Band of Waterbury that performed at Abraham Lincoln's funeral cortege in New York City on April 24, 1865.
- ✓ **William Frederick Poole**, who introduced the pioneering Poole's Index to Periodical Literature, purchased and organized the first collection of the Silas Bronson Library in 1869.
- ✓ **Lt. Frank W. Kellogg** of Waterbury was on one of Adm. Dewey's naval ships during the Battle of Manila Bay, May 1898. Kellogg Day was observed in Waterbury on October 21, 1898.
- ✓ **On May 21, 1901, the Waterbury Clock Co.** received a letter from Mark Twain stating, "Please send me a watch. \$1 enclosed." This refers to the highly successful and inexpensive "Watch That Made The Dollar Famous" made by the company. By 1917, 300 workers produced 23,000 clocks and watches a day on benches which, if laid end-to-end, would extend for seven miles. The Waterbury Clock evolved to U. S. Time of Middlebury in 1942 and Timex in 1969. In 1957 Walt Disney was presented with the 25 millionth watch produced.
- ✓ **Architect Henry Bacon** of New York, who designed Waterbury Hospital in 1908 and the Citizens & Manufacturers Bank on Leavenworth Street, also designed the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.
- ✓ **On October 13, 1908 Waterbury's U.S. Congressman, George W. Lilly** read a letter he received from President Teddy Roosevelt requesting a copy of Lilly's speech on the naval bill, delivered before Congress on April 11, 1908.
- ✓ **On April 15, 1912 Waterbury's Rev. Roger Anderson** was a passenger on the ship, Carpathia, that rescued survivors of the Titanic. He gave a memorial service over the exact location where the Titanic had just gone down and later gave a burial service at sea for three crew members and a passenger who died of their injuries while on the Carpathia.
- ✓ **Many Waterbury veterans returned to Gettysburg** on the 50 year reunion of the battle in 1913.
- ✓ **Thomas P. Devine** was the lawyer for Bessie Wakefield during the infamous trial covered by the N.Y. Times, 1913-14. Bessie and her paramour, **James Plew**, a one-time Waterbury resident, murdered her husband. They were both sentenced to hang. He was hanged. She would have been the first woman ever hanged in Connecticut since the seven "witches" between 1647-1653. Instead, she received life imprisonment after much controversy which included pleas to President Wilson and anger from the renowned Emmeline Pankhurst and Women's Suffrage organizations.
- ✓ **Representatives from many clans of gypsies throughout the U.S. came to Waterbury** to mourn Tryphena McNeil, Queen of the McNeil tribe, at a South Main Street site on April 28, 1915.
- ✓ **Former Waterbury residents Stefan Bialaneus, Yvan Mozurak and Alexander Stuart** were passengers on the Lusitania when it was sunk on May 7, 1915, leading to U.S. entry in WW I.
- ✓ **Eleanor Chase**, the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Irving Chase of Waterbury, married Charles Taft, the son of the ex-President, in 1917.
- ✓ **Raymond Guyette**, winner of the Croix de Guerre, is one of 50 heroes sent back from France by General Pershing to help with the Liberty Loan campaign and tour of the U.S. on April 29, 1918.
- ✓ **About 6,100 military personnel** came from Waterbury in World War I. Twelve Distinguished Service Crosses and twenty-one Croix de Guerres were awarded to Waterbury residents.
- ✓ **Five "alleged Reds" from Waterbury** were rounded-up and sent to Hartford. They were later put on a ship, called "The Soviet Ark" to be sent back to Russia. on January 8, 1920.
- ✓ **Spanish War veterans** unveiled a memorial tablet at Hamilton Park on July 4, 1921.
- ✓ **Materials for Charles Lindbergh's "Spirit of St. Louis" airplane** were obtained from Waterbury's French Manufacturing Co., then located on Robbins Street, in 1927.

- ✓ Charles Lindbergh, along with four other famous aviators, sent autographs to Waterbury teenage fan, Justin F. Casey in 1927. His uncle had met them in a Long Island hotel and spoken of Justin's admiration for them.
- ✓ Telecells manufactured by the Waterbury Battery Co. were used by Admiral Byrd on his expeditions, 1928-30.
- ✓ The first chapter in David Garrow's 1994 book, Liberty and Sexuality, is entitled "The Waterbury Origins of Roe v. Wade" and it details the turmoil and historical significance of the Chase Dispensary being Connecticut's first clinic in a public institution to offer birth control information.
- ✓ The Waterbury Republican American won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize for Journalism for its exposure of graft in the city. Mayor T. Frank Hayes and 22 others were convicted of conspiracy to defraud the City of Waterbury. Hayes received a 10-15 year sentence and served six years.
- ✓ Waterburian George "The Mad Bomber" Metesky returned to the headlines in 1995 when the FBI examined his case in an attempt to catch the Unabomber. Metesky's reign of terror from 1940-57 was provoked by the denial of his Workmen's Compensation claim by Con Edison after a gas accident in the plant caused him chronic lung problems. Fifteen people were injured by Metesky's bombs, and he spent sixteen years in jail. The bomb sites like Macy's, Radio City Music Hall, and the subway, were linked because they all used Con Edison electric power.
- ✓ The 10,800 ton S.S. Waterbury Victory was a merchant marine ship launched on July 26, 1945 in Baltimore and christened by Rose Bergin. It was sold to a Dutch company in 1947, to Liberia in 1965, and Taiwan in 1968. It sank off the shore of Taiwan in February 1973.
- ✓ In July of 1945, Waterbury resident Michael Nido helped repair the USS Indianapolis - the cruiser that delivered the Atomic Bomb that would later be dropped on Hiroshima.
- ✓ In World War II, over 12,000 men and over 500 women (from Waterbury) served at every major campaign. 150 won Bronze Stars.
- ✓ George D. Lilly, born in Maine, entered the military service in Waterbury. For his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action" during the Korean War he received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.
- ✓ Concetta Di Michele was listed as one of the missing when the elegant Italian passenger liner, Andrea Doria, sank after colliding with the liner Stockholm off Nantucket Island on July 25, 1956.
- ✓ 40,000 people waited until 3 a.m. on the Green to greet Presidential Candidate John F. Kennedy, Sunday, November 6, 1960. Sen. Kennedy spoke to them from the balcony of the Roger Smith Hotel (now called the Elton). Pierre Salinger later said it was the greatest night of the campaign.
- ✓ The Mattatuck Drum Band, (founded 1767) the oldest continuing active musical organization in the country played at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy in 1961.
- ✓ All of the large structural steel sculptures of Alexander Calder, located throughout the world, were constructed by Segre Iron Works on Reidville Drive in Waterbury.
- ✓ Herbert Marcuse, philosopher, social activist, author of Eros and Civilization and One-Dimensional Man, favorite of 1960's radical thinkers and mentor of Angela Davis, had a son, Peter Marcuse, who lived in Waterbury for many years.
- ✓ Judge John J. Sirica, born in Waterbury, presided at the Watergate Trial and was Time magazine's Man of the Year in 1973.
- ✓ Lescare Kitchens, one of the largest privately held kitchen and bath cabinet manufacturers in the U.S., made cabinets for Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Frank Sinatra.
- ✓ Platt Bros. & Co., has been doing business in Waterbury since 1797. They produced 800 miles of zinc alloy rod which was used in the underground section of the Alaskan Pipeline to protect it against corrosion.
- ✓ George A. Krinsky, former asst. state news editor for the Waterbury Republican, was expelled from the Soviet Union for being a US intelligence agent involved in an illegal currency operation on Feb. 5, 1977.
- ✓ Waterbury medical students Mark Perazella and Mark Albini were evacuated from Grenada when the U.S. invaded on October 25, 1983.
- ✓ On April 23, 1987, Astronaut Kenneth Cameron gave a special NASA award to Hayden Switch for its high-quality workmanship on the switches it supplied to the Space Shuttle.

- ✓ In 1987 Congress established the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for American companies in honor of the former President of Scovill Inc. and U.S. Secretary of Labor during the Reagan Administration.
- ✓ 5,000 people lined the streets on May 12, 1984, as Joseph Carrah, Thomas Fava, Frank Fulco, Gary Coles, Richard Boutot, Bob Wesson and others carried the Olympic Torch through Waterbury on its way from Greece to California for the 1984 Summer Games.
- ✓ Sr. Mary Donovan, a Waterbury native and Maryknoll missionary, was taken hostage by the Nicaraguan Contras on January 3, 1985, and released unharmed, on January 10, 1985. At that time, the Contras were funded by White House arms sales to Iran.
- ✓ Fyodor Fedorenko, a former Waterbury resident and Scovill worker, was put to death on July 27, 1987 for being a Nazi war criminal; guilty of mass murder and treason. He was the first person ever extradited to the Soviet Union by the U.S.
- ✓ Curt Blik, an investment advisor working on the 33rd floor of the World Trade Center, used his Timex Ironman Indiglo wristwatch to guide himself and others down thirty-three darkened staircases after the bombing knocked out power in 1993. His story was featured in a full-page print ad in USA Today.
- ✓ Deirdre Coleman, Waterbury-born actress with appearances on "The Cosby Show," "Regis and Kathie Lee," a French perfume commercial that won a Cannes Award and star of a one-woman show, "Gorgeous Mistakes," married famed radio personality Don Imus in 1995.
- ✓ The seventh annual American Tour de Sol, an eight-day, 300-mile educational road rally for solar and electric powered cars began in Waterbury on May 20, 1995 and ended in Portland, ME on May 27, 1995.
- ✓ The torch for the Special Olympics World Games, the largest athletic event in the world, (140 countries, 7,000 athletes, 15,000 families, 45,000 volunteers), passed through Waterbury on June 27, 1995 on its way from Greece to New Haven, CT.
- ✓ The Naval destroyer, U.S.S. Stetham, is named after Waterbury native, Robert D. Stetham, who was killed by Arab terrorists during the TWA Airliner hijacking in 1985. Commissioned on October 21, 1995 it is the first U. S. Navy ship named in memory of an enlisted man.
- ✓ The button division of the Waterbury Companies supplies metal buttons to America's top fashion designers, including Anne Klein, Liz Claiborne, Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan. They also manufacture buttons for retailers, such as Brooks Brothers and J. Press and design buttons for Burger King, American Airlines, and made buttons for uniforms worn on the Titanic. Waterbury Companies' buttons have been created for all branches of the U.S. Military since the Civil War.

WATERBURY FIRSTS

- ✓ The first brass in America was rolled by Abel Porter & Co. They were also first to make brass by direct fusion of copper and zinc in 1802 and to commercially make gilt buttons.
- ✓ The first brass spinning was invented by Hiram Washington Hayden in 1851.
- ✓ The first hooks and eyes were successfully manufactured by Holmes & Hotchkiss, in 1836.
- ✓ The first pewter or tin buttons were made by the Grilley Bros. in 1790.
- ✓ The first covering of cloth buttons by machinery was done by Daniel Hayden and Joseph Hayden from 1828-1870.
- ✓ The first expert in the treatment of Asiatic cholera was Dr. Henry Bronson in 1832. He was a professor at Yale Medical School.
- ✓ The first ferrotypes which made photography easier, less expensive, more stable and better for the less affluent were manufactured by William Delius in 1859.
- ✓ The first can opener was patented by Ezra J. Warner in 1858.
- ✓ The first Girls Club in the United States opened in 1864.
- ✓ William H. Davis, the General Secretary of the Waterbury YMCA in 1912, was a member of the first organized team to play basketball. In 1892, he played on the Springfield YMCA training school team of Dr. James Naismith, the creator of the game.
- ✓ The first Mickey Mouse watch was produced by the Waterbury Clock Co. under the Ingersoll name in the late 1920's. The price of \$1.50 did not result in the company making a big profit.

- ✓ **The first golf tournament in Connecticut for women only** was held in Waterbury on June 12, 1917.
- ✓ **The first Unico Club** was founded in Waterbury in 1922. It now has 8,000 members and 150 regional groups. The membership is composed of business and professional people of Italian lineage or those who are married to an Italian-American. The clubs sponsor educational, cultural and civic programs.
- ✓ **The famous Minstrel Team of Primrose and West** played in Waterbury as far back as 1878. George Primrose said the first rendition of "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" was in Waterbury.
- ✓ **Sacred Heart** was the first Catholic High School in Connecticut, September 6, 1922.
- ✓ **The Eastern Color Printing Co. of Waterbury produced the first regular monthly newsstand comic book.** The "Famous Funnies" #1, July 1934 issue, in near-mint condition, is now worth \$13,500.

Cultural and Other Resources

- ✓ **Waterbury has a newly renovated public water system**, recently rated the best tasting municipal water in Connecticut. Over 99% of all housing has public sewer and water service.
- ✓ **The City's municipal parks and recreation facilities include:** 902 acres of playgrounds and fields, 42 tennis courts, 35 softball and baseball fields, two 18-hole golf courses, a public lake with a swimming beach, and a stadium which seats over 8,000 fans.
- ✓ **The Country Club of Waterbury** has one of the finest golf courses in the Northeast, designed by Donald Ross.
- ✓ **Waterbury is within a 2-hour drive** from Broadway, the ski slopes of Vermont, the surf beaches of Rhode Island, and Saratoga Race Track. Also within two hours are the games of New York Yankees and Mets, the Boston Red Sox, the New York Giants and Jets, the New England Patriots, the Boston Celtics, the New Jersey Nets and New York Knicks, the New York Islanders and Rangers, the Boston Bruins and the New Jersey Devils.
- ✓ **Municipal Stadium**, newly renovated, hosts events ranging from minor league baseball to league tournaments to holiday fireworks.
- ✓ **Fulton Park and many other Waterbury parks** were designed by the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, which also designed New York's Central Park. Fulton Park is on the National Register of Historical Places.
- ✓ **Waterbury boasts approximately 40 performing arts organizations**, which include: the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, the Waterbury Ballet, the Waterbury Chorale, the Waterbury Opera, the Playreaders and the Seven Angels Theater.
- ✓ **St. John's Episcopal Church on the Green**, the First Baptist Church and Riverside Chapel have windows created by **Louis Comfort Tiffany**. Several Roman Catholic Churches are notable for their exceptional interior treatments; for example, the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes and the Immaculate Conception Church.
- ✓ **Riverside Cemetery** — Riverside St. The statues, monuments, chapel and landscape exude serenity and beauty. Many Waterbury Civil War veterans, early industrialists and leading citizens are buried here. The stately Elk statue honors Edward Leach, a Grand Exalted Ruler. Riverside was dedicated on September 24, 1853.
- ✓ **The Flood of 1955** occurred on August 19, 1955. 29 Waterbury residents died. \$50 million in property damage was recorded. 60 hours of rain produced 19 inches of rain causing 50 m.p.h. flood waters.
- ✓ **Bauby's Corner** was the commercial center of downtown Waterbury where West Main and Bank Streets met. Bauby family owned stores there.
- ✓ **Cracker Hill** designated the upper Willow Street and Overlook area. It was said that the houses were so expensive that all you could afford after paying for them were crackers.
- ✓ **White City** includes Brookdale, White Oak, and Seymour Lanes. The area was built in 1918 by the Waterbury Brass Co. and consists of 73 white houses. Scenes for the Hollywood film "Stanley & Iris" were shot here.
- ✓ **In 1887 the Brass City Hose Co. No. 6**, part of the Waterbury Fire Department, was the first organization to use the phrase "**Brass City**" in its name. The nickname "**Brass City**" became interchangeable with Waterbury and remains to this day.

entire contents copyright:

Friends of the Silas Bronson Library 1999

First Edition - June 1993, Second Edition - March 1995

Third Edition - January 1999