

The Society of the Hawley Family

Reunion 2019

In Trumbull and Stratford, Connecticut



Where Joseph Hawley First Settled

The 87th Reunion of the Hawley Society took place in Trumbull, Connecticut, not far from Stratford, where our ancestor Joseph Hawley settled in or around 1627 – 1630. (One day we may be able to verify.) We shared our time trekking where Hawleys lived and worked for centuries in both Stratford and Trumbull.

Reunion co-chair (and former Society president) Joseph S. Hawley enlisted the help of his wife Susan in planning the lodging, events and dining spots. Though there was some rain, Hawley descendants were not to be deterred. We may have gotten lost, but we found our way eventually. Imagine the 1600s without GPS or even maps.



Photo: Society president Linda Hawley presented the Stratford Historical Society with an original 1883 program booklet celebrating the 63th birthday of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman at the Portland in Washington DC. It was signed by numerous notables in attendance, including Senator Joseph Roswell Hawley.



Mac's Harbor

Photo: Society members gather at Mac's Harbor, where Joseph Hawley landed in Stratford in the 17th century.

Mac's Harbor is the considered the traditional landing place of Stratford, Connecticut's first settlers in the spring of 1639 under the leadership of the Rev. Adam Blakeman. On the right, at the inner entrance of the harbor, stood the first meeting house and burial ground, and across the harbor at the stone embankment was erected the first Tide Mill in this the village of Cupheag. In 1643, renamed Stratford after Stratford-on-Avon, England.



Hawley descendants gathered from across the country—representing two nations and twelve states, spanning the East, South, Midwest, Southwest, and West—for a memorable long weekend together.

The festivities kicked off Thursday evening with an extended Happy Hour at the Trumbull Marriott, fittingly located on Hawley Road, followed by a special gathering with Mayor Laura Hoydick, who opened the weekend by presenting a proclamation declaring October 5, 2019, as “Joseph Hawley Day” in Stratford.



Photo: Proclaiming “Joseph Hawley Day” with Mayor Laura Hoydick.

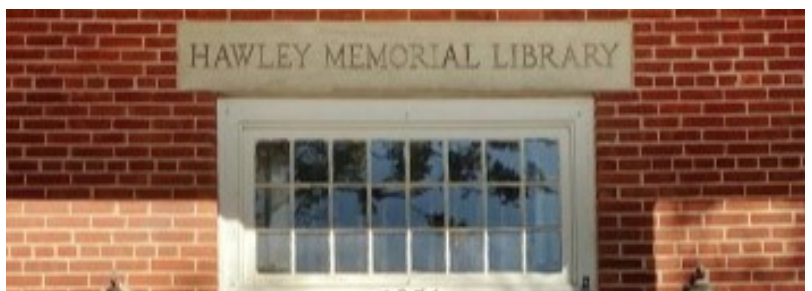
Highlights of the weekend included a visit to the Ephraim Hawley House, a colonial saltbox built between 1683 and 1690 by farmer Ephraim Hawley, who married Sarah Welles, granddaughter of Connecticut Colony Governor Thomas Welles. We also toured Mac’s Harbor, the traditional landing site of Stratford’s first settlers, and the Hawley Memorial Library.



Photo: The Ephraim Hawley house



Photo: The Hawley Memorial Library





At the Annual Meeting, we were honored to hear from descendant Kerry S. Wood, Representative of Connecticut's 29th District, who gave a fascinating presentation on "Hawleys in the Connecticut Legislature"—past and present (photo left).



A special note of gratitude goes to Joe and Susan Hawley (pictured above with Hawley Society President, Linda Hawley), our wonderful 87th Reunion co-chairs. Their thoughtful planning made every event—from Thursday's welcome through Saturday evening—flow seamlessly. Sadly, only five months later, we faced heartbreaking news. Joseph S. Hawley, former Society president, contracted COVID-19 and passed away on April 2, 2020, at the age of 67. Joe's warmth, humor, and gift for making every person feel welcome touched everyone who knew him, whether for a lifetime or just a weekend. His passing was a shock and a tremendous loss to our community.

Finally, we extend our thanks to the Trumbull and Stratford Historical Societies for their expertise, hospitality, and contributions, which made our time in their towns deeply meaningful.

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