



Legend for Robert L. Lambdin's *Saugatuck in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, c. 1969-70

1. Disbrow Ferry, est. 1748
2. Oxen drawn carts carried goods to and from Saugatuck docks and wharves
3. NY & NH Railroad, 1848, expanded 1904
4. Engine 4-4-0; based on *Daniel Nason* (1858), a Danbury Fair display
5. Buttons, Saugatuck Mfg. Co.
6. Westport farmers grew corn, wheat, apples, onions for NYC markets. Dairy, poultry products oysters exported too.
7. Oak barrels used to transport produce
8. G. W. Bradley (Weston) Axe, est. 1834, shipped from Saugatuck; later had Westport office; 3 tool grades: G.W. Bradley; Westport Tool; David Platt.
9. Plane made by Marten Doscher
10. Computing Scale Company, est. c. 1895
11. Capt. Sereno Gould Allen (1845-1922), the "Captain of the Westport-New York market boat," plied waters in coastal trade for over 50 years . He operated many vessels: the sloops *Emily*, *Francis Burritt*, *The Stranger* and *Lizzie A. Tolles*; and the steamboats *Sarah Thorpe* and *DePuy*.
12. Sloops built on the Saugatuck were engaged in Long Island Sound and Atlantic coastal trade.
13. Allen's steam canal boat, *Capt. DePuy*, a market boat making trips New York
14. Horace Staples' lumberyard; later owned by Hubbell Coal, then Gaults
15. Saugatuck Mfg. Co., est. 1860
16. Doscher Plane & Tool, est. c. 1885
17. Saugatuck Bank, est. 1852
18. *Unidentified residence on Ketchum St.*
19. "Little White Church on the Hill," Saugatuck Methodist Church (est. 1853; destroyed c. 1954)
20. Gothic Revival residence, Elonzo S. Wheeler, owner Saugatuck Mfg Co. (destroyed c. 1954)
21. Queen Ann Italianate Residence, E. C. Smith, owner Computing Scale Co., located across from Bridge Street Bridge.
22. Wakeman Mattress & Cushion Co. (recently, Mansion Clam House)
23. Saugatuck River Bridge (1884; designed by Union Bridge Co., Buffalo, is oldest surviving movable bridge in CT.
24. Products were shipped to Saugatuck port, then delivered by wagon to factories and merchants
25. Saugatuck River Bridge, U.S. I-95 (CT Tpk), 1954-58
26. Saugatuck Fire Company received a charter from the state legislature in July 1832



More Lambin murals that connect to other CT towns/cities:

<http://www.barnum-museum.org/artandindustry.htm>

<http://ctstatelibrary.org/lambdin-robert/>

Bridge Street Bridge: <http://o6880danwoog.com/tag/robert-lambdin/>

Westport Historical

Society: <http://westporthistory.org/events/exhibit-saugatuck-2015-01-01/>

Robert L. Lambdin's meticulously researched mural depicting Saugatuck as a center of manufacturing and river commerce in 19th century Westport will anchor the exhibition "Saugatuck @ Work – Haven of Community, Industry, Innovation".

The late Westport artist's large wall painting, "Saugatuck in the 19th Century," was created for the Westport Bank & Trust Company's Saugatuck branch when it opened in 1970. It measures 6 by 10 feet and shows the various types of vessels that plied the river over the course of the century, as well as such long-gone landmarks as the Saugatuck Bank, precursor of Westport Bank & Trust, and the Methodist Church, and those that still survive: Saugatuck original firehouse and the village's historic swing bridge and train depot. Though I-95 did not come into being until the mid 20th century, its bridge over the river appears as a huge arc framing the riverfront scene.

"The mural's depiction of the genesis of our town is a great teaching tool for our students and hopefully will stimulate dialogue and further exploration," said Westport's Town Curator, Kathleen Motes Bennewitz, who curated the exhibit. "And with Saugatuck's present-day renewed economic and social vitality," she added, "comes a unique opportunity to build a new awareness and appreciation of its rich historical, economic and cultural significance as the first town center, not simply 'a neighborhood of Westport.' "

The exhibition will also display historic photographs of workers and workplaces of the village, antique maps of Saugatuck harbor, vintage tools made there, patents by Saugatuck inventors, costumes, and ship and railroad logs.

In addition, the Society and partner organizations will offer an array of education programs to WHS members and to adult, youth and family audiences in Westport and the towns with which it shares a common heritage. They will include book and film discussions, community conversations, exhibitions, performances and more.

In the early years of the Connecticut Colony, the area known today as Westport was called Saugatuck and was a part of the towns of Fairfield and Norwalk. The river was the boundary between the two towns. But by 1835, the river's growing economic importance moved Saugatuck's business leaders, concerned that their river was playing second fiddle to ports closer to the centers of Norwalk and Fairfield, to have Saugatuck incorporated as a town to be called Westport.

Bennewitz says Saugatuck's location near the mouth of the river, allowing raw materials to be delivered by boat and products to be shipped to New York and other ports, made it an

ideal setting for manufacturing and maritime commerce. One of Saugatuck's longtime employers was Elonzo Wheeler's button factory, and some of Wheeler's buttons, produced from ivory nuts imported from Brazil, along with local produce, can be seen in the foreground of Lambdin's mural waiting to be loaded onto a market boat. Saugatuck eventually became a tight-knit community of Irish and Italian immigrants who came to Westport to work in factories and as stonemasons, gardeners and laborers on the railroad.

A companion exhibit devoted to the life of those immigrants, "Framing Saugatuck," will run in the WHS's Mollie Donovan Gallery concurrently with "Saugatuck @ Work." In a recent interview, retired Westport police officers John Anastasia and Ted Giannitti, who grew up in Saugatuck, said the fact that its homes were huddled together contributed to the closeness of the community. Holidays saw food passed from family to family as a form of community sharing, and one of the village's homes even had a large outdoor stone oven where women from the neighborhood made bread. St. Anthony's Hall on Franklin Street was a focal point of the community, and on the saint's day, it hosted fireworks and a parade.

But the construction of I-95 in the mid-1950s cut a wide swath through the community, taking some of the old ways with it. Those whose homes were spared made do as best they could, according to Anastasia and Giannitti, but the festival and parade were gone for good. Some of the homes, however, were moved, and one of these, a beautiful three-story Victorian, now sits on Sunrise Street overlooking Saugatuck.

"Framing Saugatuck" will be a celebration of Saugatuck families, their heritage and contributions to the Town of Westport.

Robert Lambdin, a Kansas native who moved to Westport in 1918, painted the Saugatuck mural in the later years of a long, successful career as an illustrator and muralist. He died here in 1981 at the age of 94. According to the Westport News, the artist spent months "reading local histories, delving into yellowed records at the library, studying old photographs, and talking with old-timers who remembered those days."

Westport Bank & Trust eventually merged into TD Bank, which donated the mural to the town when it closed and sold the Saugatuck office earlier this year. The mural was then handed over to Joseph T. Matteis of Clinton Fine Arts Workshop for cleaning and restoration. After the show at the Historical Society the mural will become part of the permanent art collection at Town Hall.

Bennewitz said the exhibit was made possible by a CT @ Work grant from CT Humanities. The exhibit and accompanying programs help the CT at Work initiative meet its goal of

sharing stories about the past, present and future of CT at Work, she said. Local sponsors for the show are the Connecticut Humanities, Betty R. and Ralph Sheffer Foundation, Westport Rotary, Westport Arts Advisory Committee, Westport Auction, Edward F. Gerber, Darien Rowayton Bank and Bankwell.