

Athletics at Sterling House ...

Tennis Now Leader Here Among Sports

Sterling House Group Brings Game to Old Standing

By Arthur Davenport
Chairman, Tennis, Sterling House

These past few days with its touch of Fall in the air begins to mark the wane of this year's tennis season. And Stratford has a tennis season as more and more townspeople are coming to realize.

That Sterling Community House is largely responsible for the growing interest in the game seems to us to be one of the most valuable contributions that the House can give the town.

This year in conjunction with the American Legion court, the House has been able to offer the use of three excellent clay courts as well as the cement court and all four courts have had constant and active use throughout the summer months both for major matches and for the innumerable personal and private feuds of which they are daily the scene of action.

That Stratford is definitely on the tennis map becomes more evident each year with the increased number contestants in the annual Housatonic Valley Tennis Championship Tournament. We are most fortunate in being able under the auspices of the Community House to hold this tournament.

.... We are particularly pleased at the increased interest shown by the size of the galleries attending even the first round. We realize that "Tournament Week" is beginning to mean something to the town as a whole. The buzz of activity that surrounds Sterling House and grounds throughout the week is a healthy sign to those of us anxious to keep tennis a town-wide activity.

.... The part in which Sterling House has played in building up enthusiasm should not go unmentioned. Not only does it offer three good courts and instruction at very nominal rates but it serves to bind together the general tennis interest and enthusiasm throughout the town.

- September 2, 1938, The Stratford News



TABLE TENNIS EVENT PLANNED IN STRATFORD

It was decided at a meeting of the Sterling House Table Tennis club yesterday to have another "round table" division in the annual Stratford Open championship tournament scheduled for Sunday, April 10, at the Stratford American Legion hall. This competition, which proved highly popular last year, will take place before the semi-final round matches in other divisions. (April 1949)





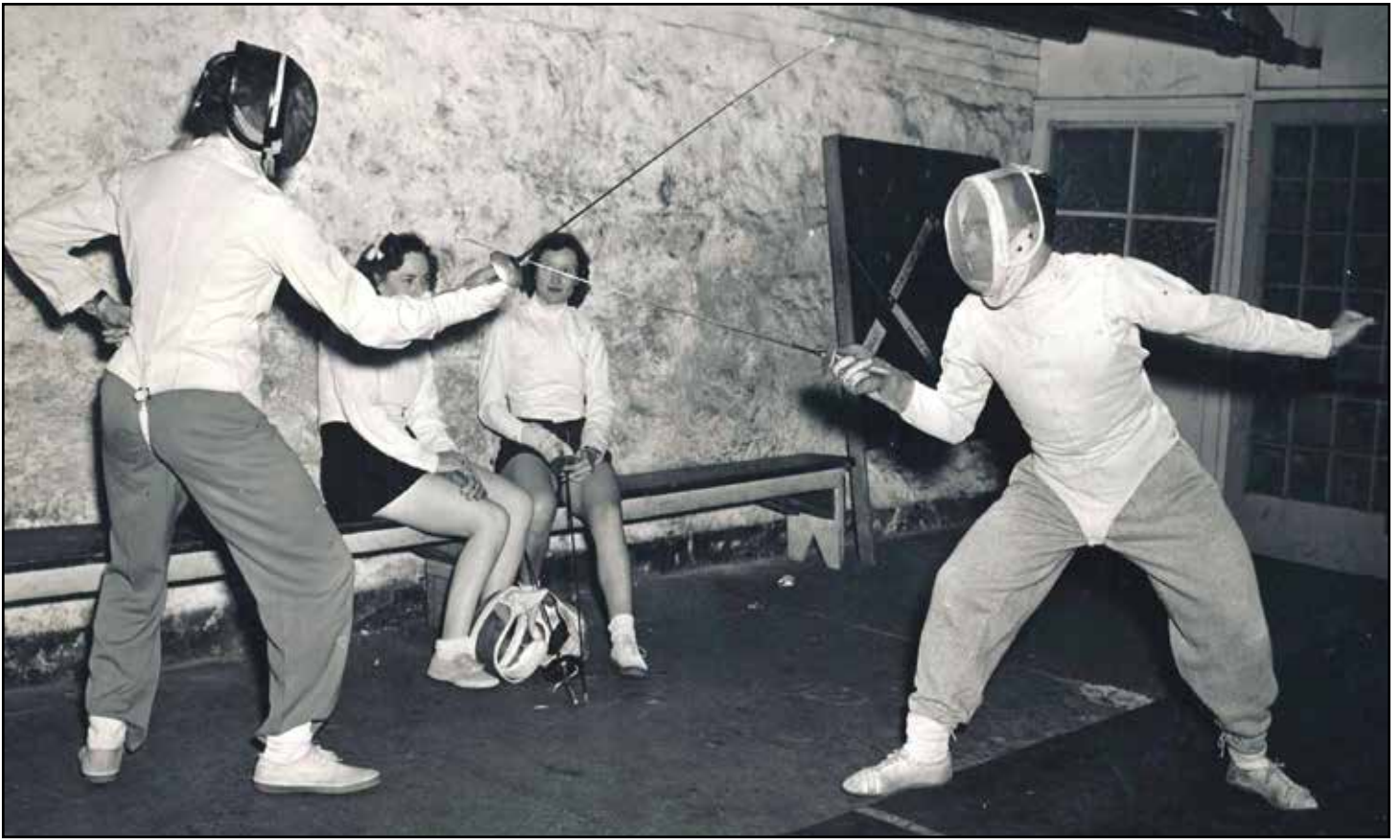
“It was 70-80 years ago that my friends and I hung out at Sterling House in the basement weight room, and in the back yard playing softball and tennis. Sy Knepler taught archery, which I attended. Sterling House is a great place and a great influence on kids and teens.”

**Dave Cobb
Tennessee**



“I remember archery when I was a kid from 1964 to 1966. Since 2006, I have worked for Bridgeport Fittings supporting Sterling House programs.”

**Jim Connor
Stratford**



A popular winter sport was fencing. Above, August Maskro, of the Mold Loft at the Chance Vought factory during World War II, fences with Valentine Yurchenco of Bullard company. This photo was taken at 4:30 a.m. in 1943 after the workers finished third shift.



Sports awards in late 1950s. Left to right, Joe "Chops" Jankowski, Perry Pilotti, Howie Doe, Billy Jackson, Ron Fiorella and Carl Braun, special guest and player at the time for the New York Knicks.



At right, 1949 Little League Champions

Athletics at Sterling House

ATHLETICS & GAMES

Simon Knepler, Director

Sterling House tries to meet the needs of the young people in recreation by the forming of teams and leagues throughout the town, such as baseball, softball, football, basketball and table tennis. Instruction in archery, boxing and tennis is also given in season. Croquet, paddle tennis, chess and checkers are a few of the games available to members of Sterling House.

Mr. Knepler has been a successful leader in this field at Sterling House for more than three years. We are happy to announce that Mr. Knepler has received his Masters degree from New York University in Community Recreation. His previous training was received at the University of Connecticut before entering the service, and upon release from the Air Corp attended Arnold College.

- 1947-1948 Annual Report

Midget Boxing Class

Our midget athletes of Stratford seem to realize and appreciate the fun and healthful exercise derived from the sport of boxing. In that class there are more than 23 boys taking their boxing instructions every Monday afternoon. The midget boys have a contest during their skip rope period to see who can get the most consecutive jumps without missing. Last Monday, Robert Sampson was in first position with 100.



BOXING MATCH TONIGHT

The Sterling House boxing team will oppose the West Side Boys' Club tonight at 7:30 o'clock in a team match at the Stratford Red Men's hall. (March 1949)





Sterling House 'Memories'

“During my grammar school years (1945-1949) I used to play on the girls basketball and softball teams under Sy Knepler. I used to go to Sterling House often during my grammar school and high school years. I had taken painting classes (still have a picture I painted) and other classes. I loved to play ping-pong on the third floor. I would often

meet my boyfriend there to play and he later turned out to be my husband in 1954. I remember graduating from Stratford High School in the field in the back in June of 1953. That was the day my husband had proposed to me after graduation. Many years later, my grandchildren played soccer, basketball and baseball through the youth programs. My company, Butterworth & Scheck, sponsored many of these teams.”

**Linnea Scheck
Stratford**



**Top photo, the 1947-48 girls
YWCA league champions.
Bottom photo, game play in
the same era.**