

SALTY, INDEED

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That's one way to describe this place called Stony Creek

STONY CREEK IS DIFFERENT. Its coastal perch along a picture-perfect harbor is postcard-worthy, but that is true of about 40 towns in Connecticut. Its population is eclectic, varying from artists to lobstermen, but that is true of any number of New England towns.

The place is unique because it has the moxie and sense of itself that any Greek city state would envy — even though it's merely a borough of Branford. However, native son “Unk” DaRos is the first selectman of all of Branford, proving that a “Creeker,” a lifetime resident of “The Creek,” can play well

with others.

Why is this hamlet so delightfully pungent? For one thing Stony Creek is one of the few small towns in coastal Connecticut that literally has a rock-hard industrial base. Its famous century-old quarry produces a speckled pink granite that is found nowhere else on the planet. It also has a legitimate (though threatened) commercial fishing community. Trap rock is loaded to the west of the harbor off a train-accommodating pier onto huge barges any day of the week. These muscular enterprises have provided regular employment for scores of “Creeker” families for generations.

This economic base has had the usual post I-95 coastal Connecticut pressures. As transportation to and from the greater New York City area became easier, more people began to flood central Connecticut coastal towns because of their ambience and proximities to Boston and New York for weekenders and its central location for those working in-state. Of course, the investment opportunity captured by the phrase, “God only made so much coastal prop-



Above, the Pratt/Clark House.

Left, the front of the Vlock/Arbonies House.

Right, detail of ceramic tile on the granite wall in the backyard of the Ells House.

