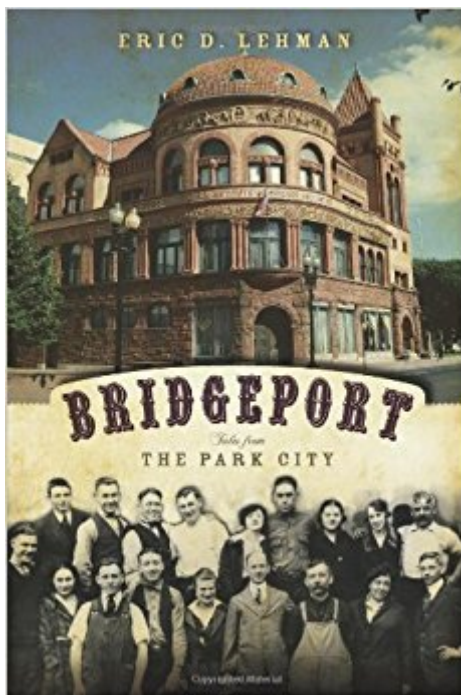


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# Bridgeport: Tales From The Park City



## Synopsis

In the late nineteenth century, P.T. Barnum was known worldwide for his traveling circus, but to the city of Bridgeport he meant much more. The city's mayor and benefactor, Barnum was also a mastermind at urban planning. Thus, amid Bridgeport's growing industrial factories, orchestras played from the bandstand at Seaside Park and bucolic hills surrounded Bunnell's Pond. In this collection of narratives, Eric D. Lehman captures the city's natural beauty and richly eccentric history. From the brave women of the Black Rock Lighthouse to war heroes of 'the nation's arsenal', from 'the tiniest general', Tom Thumb, to the tragic death of Jumbo the elephant, these are the best stories from Connecticut's 'Park City.'

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Eric D. Lehman teaches literature and creative writing at the University of Bridgeport and is the president of the Bridgeport chapter of Phi Kappa Phi. His essays, reviews, poems and stories have been published in dozens of journals and magazines, and his previous book, *Bridgeport: Tales from the Park City*, was released in 2009 by The History Press. Travel writing is his passion, whether he is hiking the Inca Trail in Peru or fly-fishing the rivers of Connecticut. He lives in Hamden with his wife and two cats.

very enjoyable

I heard about this book on a fan of Bridgeport Facebook page. I am very happy I purchased it. It was well written and contained lots of obscure facts about the city I grew up in. If you are from Bridgeport - get this book you won't be disappointed. It would also make a nice gift for someone from Bridgeport. A quick read.

I'm not from CT, but this book had me rooting for the people that helped make Bridgeport what it is today.

When I was in the fourth grade, the day I received my textbooks, I curled up on my bed and read my history book all the way through. I was not necessarily a history buff. I just liked a good story. Lehman has written a book full of good stories. He writes in an animated style that gives the reader a hint of the excitement he must have felt as he unearthed each tidbit about what I had always considered a blah city. He combines human interest stories with the dates, statistics and geography of traditional history books. One can imagine a young Catherine Moore going about her duties as unofficial lighthouse keeper, growing old in the job. Yet, at the same time, the importance of the merchant business in that time and place is not lost on the reader. The beauty of reading this book is that I can open it up to a random chapter and step into a time long ago that foreshadows the Bridgeport of today. I can see beyond the abandoned factories and mansions turned multi-family dwellings and rooming houses to catch a glimpse of a city both genteel and earthy, bucolic and vibrant. It's not your father's history book. It is the biography of a city. Lehman pieces together the squares of events to create a quilt of Bridgeport history that warms the heart of anyone familiar with the city.

What I love about Eric Lehman's book, Bridgeport, is the chance to step back in time and see an old, ugly, hard-bitten city the way it was in its early days and in its glory days, and to meet the people who shaped her and much of the nation with their inventive spirits and actual inventions. Eric weaves the history of the past with the biographies of the rich and famous who created Bridgeport, taking the reader inside the city as first a colonial town, then a pillar and supporter of the union, then as an industrialization mecca, a thriving seaport, a town that housed a circus, and home to inventors who changed not only their hometown, but the face of a nation. The city that we know today still retains certain elements of Eric's lovely vision. However, the romance of the beach as seen from Barnum's lovely home, the feeling of sea air - those things have been swept away by decaying neighborhoods that surround the sea. Even the beauty of Seaside Park can't erase the fact that

much of Bridgeport is desperate for a makeover. So thank you Eric Lehman for writing about the city in such a way that people might want to rekindle her, make her over, change her enough to make her a place that can once again play an important part in the history of our state and our country.

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