

# ***SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER***

## ***Fall 1997***

### **The President's Corner:**

What a terrific beginning we have had to this our 26th year! The Berkshire School hockey rink was transformed in to the setting for our Antiques Show in late June and the grounds of the Society came alive in August with the Early American Crafts Festival. Society members and friends were actively involved in both ventures. Behind the scenes, the Board of Directors and several committees have been thinking and working to develop some wonderful programs and activities for this year. It is going to be a very good year and I look forward to seeing the familiar faces as well as some new ones. There is room for everyone to play a part, large or small, frequent or infrequent, in the activities. Won't each of you invite at least one other person to join you in one of the Society's functions? See you there!

### **Calendar of Events:**

September 12: ORNAMENTATION OF CLOCK CASES: Chris Bailey, Horologist of the American Clock and Watch Museum, Bristol, CT, author of numerous books and articles and editor of the publication, "Timepiece Journal" will provide an illustrated talk on clock cases.  
7:30 p.m. Dewey Hall, Sheffield

October 10: EARLY GLASS AND ITS IDENTIFICATION: Mason Dutcher, collector, and authority on glass will discuss glass objects - identifying characteristics, use and value. Participants are encouraged to bring pieces of their own to the meeting.  
7:30 p.m. Dewey Hall, Sheffield

October 26: 20TH ANNUAL TURKEY DINNER with proceeds to benefit educational programs, grants and scholarships administered by the Education Committee.  
12:00 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. seatings at the Sheffield American Legion

October 30: MR. & MRS. DAN RAYMOND'S Masquerade Party.  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Dan Raymond House (details inside newsletter)

November 12: FIELD TRIP TO LUNT SILVERSMITH FACTORY AND SPRINGFIELD MUSEUMS (details & registration form follow later in newsletter)

November 14: CEMETERIES OF SHEFFIELD: Cynthia Tryon Hoogs, researcher and author of Sheffield, Massachusetts Cemetery Inscriptions will provide an illustrated program on the historical, cultural and social history of some of Sheffield's thirteen cemeteries.  
7:30 p.m. Dewey Hall, Sheffield

November 4 & 5: CONSTRUCT AN OVAL SHAKER BOX: Boyd Hutchison, local craftsperson and student of Shaker artifacts will conduct a workshop in two evening sessions. (details & registration form follow later in newsletter)  
6:30- 9:30 535 Home Road, Sheffield

December 12: HOLIDAY POTLUCK & READING OF DYLAN THOMAS' A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES by Tom Driver. Bring a dish to pass, your own place setting and your holiday spirit. Dessert & beverage provided by the Society.  
6:30 p.m. Dewey Memorial Hall

December 14: HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE & DISPLAY OF ANTIQUE MINIATURE FARM ITEMS: Join your friends and neighbors in front of the fire and enjoy some holiday egg nog and yule goodies. Bob Ledlie will share some of his collection of over 800 antique miniatures of farm figures. The annual town tree lighting follows on the green at 6:00 with an ecumenical service in the Old Parish Church to follow.  
4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Dan Raymond House

**Field Trips and Workshops and Other Activities:**

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**MR. AND MRS. DAN RAYMOND**

*request the honour of your presence at*

*a*

**MASQUERADE PARTY**

**Thursday, October 30, 1997**

**7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

**The Dan Raymond Residence**

**159 Main Street, Sheffield, MA**

**Costume Appropriate to the Period  
Refreshments, Prizes, Period Games**

**RSVP by October 1 Dorothy Marosy 229-2129**

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### Silver, Art, History and a Trip to the Stars!

Join a field trip to Greenfield and Springfield on Wednesday, November 12. The bus will leave Dewey Hall at 8:30 a.m. and return by 5:30 p.m.

The first stop will be the Lunt Design Center in Greenfield where there will be a one-half hour guided tour of a hundred year old silversmith factory, followed by a visit to the showroom and Christmas shop. Upon departure from the Center, each participant will be provided with a gourmet box lunch which will be eaten at the second stop, the Springfield Museum where four distinctive buildings surround an attractive New England green. The group will have guided tours of the Springfield Science Museum, the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts, the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum and the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum.

Following the tour, there will be an opportunity to see the new planetarium show, "Oceans of the Sky" during which the group will be transported from the oceans to the stars.

This fun filled day will cost \$30 per person which includes bus, lunch, admission to all museums and the planetarium show.

Reservations must be received by September 20. Cancellations must be by October 27 in order to receive a full refund. Complete the reservation form (at end of newsletter) and mail with a check payable to the Sheffield Historical Society to Dorothy Marosy, P.O. Box 608, Sheffield, MA 01257.

### Construct an Oval Shaker Box - You Can Do It!

Boyd Hutchison will lead a workshop on the construction of an oval Shaker box November 4 & 5 from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Each participant will make an oval box (approximately 4 to 6 inches) in two evening sessions. The workshop will be limited to five (5) individuals, so early registration is recommended. The cost is \$50 per person. Call Bob Dean at 229-2608. Once accepted the registration form (at end of newsletter) and a check payable to Hutchison Woodworking must be mailed to Bob Dean at P.O. Box 832, Sheffield, MA 01257. *Do Not Delay, If Interested!*

### **"One Teary Eye ————— One Smiling Eye"**

It is hard to admit that Father time is telling me that my body just can't stand the pace that is required to take charge of our Turkey Dinner (October 26), but nevertheless, it is the truth. I really enjoyed working with so many willing people and hearing the many kind remarks from the public. Of course, our connection with the 8th grade class and the proceeds going to our education programs was the icing on the cake.

Now for the happy side; we are very fortunate to have Bill Preston and Harry Conklin step up and be willing to take charge of the dinner. Let's get behind them and make our 20th year as good, if not better, than the past dinners. I know I will help them.

Many thanks from out in the pasture,  
Milton Barnum

**Let's make this the best dinner yet, to honor Milton for his many years of turkey calling!  
Call Bill Preston at 229-2077 to indicate your willingness to assist with this event. And call 229-2569 to make reservations for either seating. We know we can count on you for both**

### **News from the Family History Center:**

The Family History Library added a new slant to our recent craft fair, offering genealogical assistance from our extensive files on local families plus the use of Internet research. Dennis Sears was chief technical engineer for the cyber aspect, bringing his personal computer to the site and overseeing its operation throughout the day, making data bases containing over 100 million names available to local genealogists. Regular Library staff handled the local research files. The event was oversubscribed with a waiting list for research that often extended up to an hour or more. The facility is open on Monday and Friday from 1:30 to 4:00 or by appointment and you do not have to be a member to do research. Get the word out. (The Internet aspect was for the Craft Fair only.)

A recent gift of Sheffield tax records dating to the 1760's was given to the Library through the efforts of the town assessors' office, Ruth Gillette, assessor chairman, being responsible for this single most important research source in the Family History Library. About sixty lineal feet of steel shelving had to be added to hold the collection which covers over 200 years to the 1970's. The collection is presently being catalogued and will be available to the membership and public in the near future. The importance of these records can not be overstated. What we are now able to do is research year-by-year the town's taxpayers, the amount they paid, and, in some cases, the property taxed, thus being able to reconstruct Sheffield's economic hierarchy, almost from its inception. The records not only close significant gaps where town vital records are missing, but cover the years between the regular ten-year federal census.

### **Society Supports Hannah Pixley Project:**

The Education Committee and the Board of Director voted to provide a \$2,000 grant to the Barrington Stage Company to support two performances of Hannah Pixley: The Autobiography of a Berkshire County Woman (1862 - 1953). This is a one-woman play based on the autobiography of a woman who lived her entire life in Monterey and its environs. Hannah Pixley's formal education ended when she was nine, and yet she went on to become a poet, writer and epic story-teller. She was an independent, strong-willed woman who managed to survive and even flourish during a difficult time. As a dramatic work, Hannah Pixley's true life experiences illustrate the social history and demonstrate how one individual was able to sustain herself in times of hardship and poverty.

The grant will cover two performances at the Consolati Performing Arts Center at Mt. Everett as well as a study guide and traveling exhibit, each of which will be used throughout Berkshire County schools.

### **Early American Crafts Festival:**

The grounds of the Society came alive on August 16 as nearly 800 people enjoyed the activity of the festival. Twenty craft persons, each proficient in a seventeenth or eighteenth century craft demonstrated and discussed their trade. Horse rides, scarecrow making and clothespin doll making continued throughout the day for children. Two lambs and two goats, all five months old, grazed nearby for kids, large and small, to enjoy. Music and food accompanied all the activity. About 200 persons toured the Dan Raymond House and the Family History Center was overwhelmed with requests to trace ancestral roots through the use of the Internet and the records available in the Center. The educational mission of the Society was truly in evidence on this day.

### **Notes from the Curator of the Dan Raymond House:**

As summer wanes the exterior of the DRH, FHC, Carriage Barn, Law Office and fences are being spruced up with some painting. Property owners know that something is always in need of attention and the Society's property is no exception.

Many people attended the Early American Crafts Festival, enjoyed tours of the Dan Raymond House and the ambiance of the home, as well as the stories told by the various docents. The old house heard compliments regarding its history, its furnishings, the activities the Society sponsors in the house, and the tales it holds.

Lillian Preiss, a founding member of the Society and its first president and for so many years a faithful worker at the DRH has "retired" and is living in Housatonic. Her presence as the Society's and the Town's historian will be missed. However, Lillian will be with us whenever her schedule permits.

Marion Barnum, also a founding member along with her husband Milton, also dedicated many years to the care and development of the Dan Raymond House. She, too, has "retired" and looks forward to some young blood following in her footsteps.

The Dan Raymond House/Museums Committee is in need of three or four individuals who would like to assist with the programs at the house and /or provide tours to visitors. If you would like to enjoy yourself and learn a bit more about Sheffield history please let the President or the Curator know of your interest.

### **Membership, Membership, Membership:**

'Tis the season to renew your membership in the Society. Please complete the application in the enclosed envelope. Wouldn't you like to help in some way? Let us know your interests so we can invite you to be more involved.

## **Food, Food, Glorious Food:**

Refreshments have long been a part of the activities of the Society. Our monthly meetings are no exception. We need groups of three or four people to provide the refreshments for October, November, January, February, March, April and May. Please consider a commitment in this way and let the President know, so that we can be assured of having refreshments at each meeting.

## **Board of Directors:**

President:	Catherine B. Miller	229-8668
Vice President:	Morton Levin	229-7972
Vice President:	Betty Chapin	229-2000
Secretary:	Eleanor Griffiths	229-2015
Treasurer:	John Huegel	229-2531
Trustee:	Marion Barnum	229-2569
Trustee:	Harry Conklin	229-3149
Trustee:	Dorothy Marosy	229-2129
Trustee:	Kathie Ness	229-3368

## **Appointed Officers:**

Investment Manager:	Dennis Sears
Director/Archivist-FHC:	James Miller
Curator - DRH	Penny Browne

## **Standing Committees:**

### *Finance:*

John Huegel, Chairman  
Dennis Sears  
Fred Gordon  
Wesley McCain  
Bill Preston

### *Education:*

Marion Whitman, Chairman  
Grace Arzt  
Marie Erwin  
Susan Huegel

### *Programs:*

Virginia Drury, Chairman  
LuAnn Allen  
Ann Dean  
Bob Dean  
Rene Gibson  
Bobbie Goodman  
Fred Gordon  
Kathy Hutchison

### *Interactive Programs:*

Dorothy Marosy, Chairman  
Ann Dean  
Bob Dean  
Inez Flynn  
Bob Ledlie  
Edith McAusland  
Rene Wood

*Family History Center:*  
James Miller, Chairman  
Betty Chapin  
Pauline Clark  
Pauline Dennis  
Betty Dunk  
Claire Height  
Kathy Hutchison

*Property:*  
Milton Barnum, Chairman  
John James  
Penny Browne (gardens)

*Public Relations:*  
Kathy Orlando

*Membership:*  
Grace Arzt  
Bill Preston  
Kathy Orlando

*Museums:*  
Penny Browne  
Volunteer Needed  
Volunteer Needed  
Volunteer Needed  
Volunteer Needed

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**RESERVATION FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of Check Included \_\_\_\_\_

*PLEASE CIRCLE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY*

***Oval Shaker Box Workshop***  
***November 4 & 5***  
*Return to Bob Dean*  
*P.O. Box 832*  
*Sheffield, MA 01257*

***Lunt Workshop/Springfield Museums***  
***November 12***  
*Return to Dorothy Marosy*  
*P.O. Box 608*  
*Sheffield, MA 01257*

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***Sheffield Historical Society***  
***P.O. Box 747***  
***Sheffield, MA 01257***