

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring-Summer 1998

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 7: WORKSHOP ON SCHERENSCHNITTE: Pamela Dalton, well known in this art form, participated in the Society's 1997 Early American Crafts Festival. She will teach participants about the early art form of cutting designs and pictures from paper. Bring an X-acto knife and package of #11 blades, a cutting mat, sharpened pencils, scissors and a rubber cement glue. **To reserve a space**, mail a check, payable to Pamela Dalton, for \$35, to Dorothy Marosy, P.O. Box 688, Sheffield, MA 01257. Bring a bag lunch as the class will run through the noon hour. 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Sheffield Library.

May 8: CIVIL WAR: BATTLEFIELDS OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC: C. Twigg Myers, a teacher at Berkshire School for 42 years, will present a program on the War of the Rebellion, his interest inspired by the fact that his great-great grandfather was a Confederate general in the Army of the Confederacy. As an adjunct, the Society will have a display related to Sheffield residents who served in the military during the conflict. The famous Massachusetts 34th Regiment, an all black unit, had eleven Sheffield residents, among them, Milo Freeland, the first Black to enlist following the Emancipation Proclamation. 7:30 p.m. Dewey Hall, Sheffield.

June 2: ANNUAL VISIT OF 8TH GRADE TO SOCIETY: Each year the eighth graders visit the Society where they tour the premises, learn from Milt Barnum about the tools and equipment in the Carriage House and visit the Dan Raymond House. Several volunteers are needed to assist in this important program. 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Dan Raymond House.

June 9: ANNUAL MEETING. ARTISTIC VISIONS OF THE PAST: Visual delights from Sheffield's past will be on display. Use your imagination to create a dish to feed six people **because you are part of the show**. Your culinary creation will be viewed by a panel of judges who will honor the funniest, the most original and the most decorative. The Society will provide all desserts and beverages. Please bring your own place setting. 6:30 p.m. Dewey Hall, Sheffield.

August 22: FESTIVAL OF COUNTY ARTS & ARTISANS : Join other Society members, friends and neighbors at this event which will feature a basket maker, weaver, blacksmith, stone cutter, cooper, wheat weaver, tinsmith, broom maker, furniture makers, a country store, entertainment, genealogical workshops, demonstrations/workshops on shingle making, ruler construction, children's activities, food, fun and more fun. Your interest and participation and that of your friends is not only welcome, but encouraged. 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Society Headquarters.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The annual meeting in June will mark the beginning of the Society's 26th year. This is remarkable. Twenty six years ago a small group of dedicated volunteers, a few of whom are still active in the Society, joined together to establish the Sheffield Historical Society.

Since that time the membership has grown twenty fold. More than two hundred monthly programs have been presented, nearly twenty antiques shows and the same number of turkey dinners sponsored, several thousand dollars of scholarships have been awarded, field trips and educational programs at the school have occurred, several craft festivals, a house museum and genealogical and research library established. Numerous hand made quilts have been created for raffles in the earlier years, countless visitors to the property in the center of Sheffield and a myriad of other activities and programs enjoyed by young and old. These programs just touch the surface of what the Society has contributed to the community. And, the most amazing part of all of this is that it has been accomplished by volunteers! This is unique in the county. Congratulations and thanks to all of you who have made this incredible journey possible. It is a testimony to the indomitable spirit of the volunteers over the years.

Now that we are about to move into a new era, with a professional director to assist us in our mission, let's not lose sight of that vision, that energy, that enthusiasm we have shared these twenty-six years!

Berkshire Courier, 1876 (Before women won the right to vote)

"The town meeting for the yearly election of officers occurred last week, and Messrs. Andrus, Bronson and Boardman were elected as select men. B.N. Clark, S.H. Bushnell and J.C. Smith, Assessors. Alford H. Hoadley, School Committee. Five ladies voted; viz Mrs. Roys, Smith, Boardman, Noble and Miss Dewey. Others would have done the same had not necessary absence from town prevented. One man made an idiot of himself by making a notice that 'the town vote that the wimman stay at hum and mind their own businesses.' The ignoramuses of Sheffield will not scare the Commonwealth of Massachusetts"

PAST EVENTS

8th Grade Breakfast: On March 10 a dozen eighth graders and their teachers, Bill Gillooly and Paul Menin, gathered around the table in the keeping room of the Dan Raymond House and enjoyed a colonial breakfast of pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, toast, spiced fruit, hot chocolate and coffee. Much of the food was cooked over the open hearth by Milt Barnum. Penny Browne. Cathy Hutchison and Catherine Miller assisted in the kitchen. Chris Coenen challenged the knowledge and imagination of the students with a modified "What's It" Program.

Mad Hatter's Tea Party: About 30 people gathered at the Dan Raymond House on March 15 for an interesting and amusing talk on the history of tea. Participants enjoyed several kinds of teas provided by tea merchant, John Harney of Salisbury, along with a variety of sumptuous desserts. There also was a display of items associated with the storing, preparing and serving of tea.

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Committee placed advertisements in several newspapers and professional journals in early March for the position of Director of the Society. A person trained in museum studies and experienced in working with volunteers is being sought to assist the Society in fulfilling its educational mission and raising its profile in the community. Many resumes have been received, and the Committee has begun the process of prescreening and checking references. It is anticipated that on-site interviews will occur during May and June and that an individual will be joining us no later than early autumn, preferably earlier.

WORD FROM THE FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

Another spectacular acquisition.

Just when the volunteers at the Family History Center think they have it all, another archival coup comes along. This time it is a Sheffield family record that encompasses virtually the whole of the 19th century, the Giles Andrews family papers, 1802-1890's. It seems the Andrews threw no scrap of paper away. Among the approximately 600 documents are extensive family correspondence of Giles with his five sons Franklin, Nelson, Orville, George and Dwight and his son-in-law Solomon Hall, plus voluminous deeds and business correspondence, court proceedings and decisions, guardianship and genealogy along with travel schedules and ticket prices for state coach travel out of Sheffield and barge and packet travel from Albany westward on the Erie Canal to Utica, Auburn, Syracuse and Buffalo. Exactingly pertinent to Sheffield's agrarian history are crop, animal, farm life descriptions and commodity prices that can be generalized to most Sheffield family histories of that era.

What family or social historian would not be excited about the following quotation from a letter by son Franklin, living in Dupage County, Illinois, to his father, Giles, in Sheffield, September, 1851.

Dear father I now take pen in hand to inform you of ... health which is good... [and] to inform you... [that] I found a girl... [and] we took a load of oats yesterday, went to Chicago, got married, and took a load of boards and went home just as any man of business would."

Life should be so simple.

THE SOCIETY IS "ADOPTING" PART OF ROUTE 7

The Society was approached about doing a bi-annual cleanup along a portion of Route 7 between Sheffield and Great Barrington. (just south of Limey's Restaurant to just north of the Pine Tree Restaurant) There was not an overwhelming response to the idea, but it has gathered some support in recent weeks. The Board of Directors voted at its last meeting to accept the challenge. Milt Barnum has volunteered his pickup truck so all we will need at the appointed time are some able bodied volunteers! The state will provide the orange vests and bags for the debris.

MEMBERSHIP

Have you paid your annual dues for membership? The year runs from September 1 through August 31. If there is an envelope in this mailing, our records indicate that you have not renewed your membership. We look forward to receiving it soon.

ANNUAL MEETING

The membership will receive reports from committees and elect a president, vice president, treasurer and two trustees (pending by-law change).

Morton Levin and Dorothy Marosy have agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee. The slate of nominees will be presented at the May meeting, with election to follow in June.

PROPOSED BY-LAWS

It has been eight years since any by-law revision. The hiring of a full-time director prompted the Board of Directors to do a review. Harry Conklin spear-headed the effort and at the last meeting of the Board, changes were adopted.

The principal changes are:

- * President's and Vice President's terms to two years each with the option to be reelected for a third year.
- * eliminate one Vice President
- * add one Trustee
- * change name to Board of Trustees
- * combine Director and Archivist/Historian of Family History Center into one position Director/Archivist
- * clarify role of President and Board of Trustees with respect to Director
- * delete the Curator's position (responsibility of new Director)
- * delete Town of Sheffield as specific beneficiary in the event of the Society's dissolution and leave decision regarding any asset disposition to the Board and membership.

The proposed by-laws follow. The present (and proposed) by-laws call for any changes to be mailed to the membership at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting at which the vote will be taken. *This is that mailing.* That vote will occur on Friday, May 8. Two-thirds of those members present and voting can approve these changes. They are recommended by the Board of Directors.

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC., BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1. PURPOSE: The Sheffield Historical Society, Inc., is a non-profit organization, designed to foster interest in the history of the Town of Sheffield, including the hamlets of Sheffield and Ashley Falls, and the region of which they are a part, and in related educational, charitable and antiquarian purposes approved by either the membership or its Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 2. MEMBERSHIP is open to any person interested in the purposes and activities of the Society, upon payment of dues (individual, joint or life membership), the amount of which will be set by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 3. MEETINGS of the Society will be on the second Friday of each month, from September through June. Members in good standing will be eligible to vote and twenty-five (25) such members will constitute a quorum.

A. The ANNUAL MEETING of the Society will be the June meeting. At that time the Society will

- Receive annual reports from officers and committees;
- Vote on matters of general policy previously proposed by the Board of Trustees or the membership;
- Elect officers as follows:

President and Vice President; a two-year term, with option to be elected for one additional year; i.e., to serve not more than three consecutive years;

Treasurer and Secretary (Clerk), three-year term, not to serve more than three consecutive years;

Five Trustees, two to be elected in even numbered years and three to be elected in odd numbered years, to three-year terms not to serve more than three consecutive years.

- Elect officers to finish out terms in offices vacated during the year.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS may be called by the Board of Trustees, either at the President's direction or upon petition to the Board by ten (10) members, provided seven (7) days notice is given to members.

ARTICLE 4. A NOMINATING COMMITTEE of three current members will be appointed by the Board of Trustees by April 1st of each year and will be furnished at that

time with a list of offices due to be filled in June. The Committee will bring a slate of nominees to the May meeting to be voted on in June.

ARTICLE 5. ELECTED OFFICERS: A President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and five Trustees will be elected as described in Article 3-A.

Duties of Officers:

A. The President:

- Presides at all meetings of the Society and Board of Trustees;
- Appoints any committee chairmen not otherwise appointed by the Board of Trustees;
- Supervises the Society's life and activities and serves as the direct supervisor of any employees;

The President will meet with the Vice-President and other elected officers as soon as practicable after the Annual Meeting and begin to delegate specific responsibility for overseeing certain of the Society's custodial and educational tasks (including the President's right to be an ex officio member of all committees).

B. The Vice President will assist the President in overseeing the Society's assets and outreach, custodial oversight (e.g., museums, family history center, accessions, property maintenance, finances, fund-raising, membership records) and educational oversight (e.g., programs, public relations, newsletter, educational events, field trips, guides, etc.).

C. Five Trustees, elected to three-year terms, will assist the officers in overseeing the Society's operations, as they may decide among them.

D. The Secretary, elected for a three-year term,

- Records and maintains the minutes of the meetings of the Society and the Board of Trustees;
- Conducts the Society's correspondence;
- Performs the corporate functions of Clerk.

E. The Treasurer, elected for a three-year term, as chief financial officer,

- Oversees all financial affairs of the Society, including the investment portfolio and the Operating Fund;
- Sees that members are notified when dues are payable;
- Deposits all funds of the Society in reliable financial institutions;

- Pays valid bills of the Society for current expenses up to \$1,000., and secures an additional signature from the President or the Vice-President on checks of larger amounts;
- Presides at Finance Committee Meetings;
- Provides the Board of Trustees and the membership with timely information about the Society's financial activities.

F. The BOARD OF TRUSTEES will consist of nine (9) members, namely the Society's President, Vice-president, five Trustees, Secretary and Treasurer, meeting at least six times per year at the call of the President. The Board

- Conducts all affairs of the Society which do not require general membership approval, or which cannot be acted upon at a meeting of the Society;
- Fills any vacancies until the next Annual Meeting;
- Appoints Standing Committees and Appointed Officers;
- Hears and acts upon recommendations of committees;
- Arranges for annual audit of the Society's books;
- Sets policies and oversees programs, including the hiring and supervision of any employees (and the terms and conditions of employment).

Special meetings of the Board may be called at the request of four (4) Trustees. A quorum will be six (6) Trustees.

ARTICLE 6. SUCCESSION TO THE PRESIDENCY. In the case of the continued absence, incapacity or resignation of the President, the Vice President will exercise the duties of the President; and in the President's and Vice President's absence or incapacity, the Secretary, or in his absence, the Treasurer will call a meeting of the Board of Trustees to elect an acting president, to serve until the return to duty of the President or Vice-President, or until the next annual meeting.

ARTICLE 7. APPOINTED OFFICERS. An Investment Manager, and a Director/Archivist, neither of whom may also be an elected officer, will be appointed annually by the Board of Trustees. They will meet with the Board, when requested, having a voice but no vote in the Board's decisions. None may serve more than three consecutive years in the same position.

- A. The INVESTMENT MANAGER, under the direction of the Treasurer, will be responsible for the Society's capital funds, investing them according to policies approved by the Finance Committee and Board of Trustees. The Investment Manager
 - Maintains a checking account for uninvested Development Funds, on which checks may be drawn only for new investments or for transfer of funds to other accounts of the Society, in amounts not to exceed \$5,000. Checks for larger amounts will be countersigned by the President or Treasurer;

- Renders a monthly income and expense statement to the President and Treasurer;
- Renders an annual report to the membership.

B. The DIRECTOR/ARCHIVIST, acting in accord with policies approved by the Board of Trustees

- Calls meetings required for conduct of activities and programs of the Family History Center;
- Has charge of the cataloguing, care, use and display of all manuscript, printed and pictorial research material;
- Keeps records of the acquisition-value of all such property;
- Reports at least annually to the Board of Trustees and membership.

ARTICLE 8. STANDING COMMITTEES: (members of which may serve up to three consecutive years on the same committee.)

A. FINANCE. The Treasurer will chair, and the Investment Manager will be a member, of the five-member Finance Committee (at least three members), which

- Receives and reviews the annual audit of an independent auditor;
- Recommends financial policy to the Board of Trustees;
- Has authority to act on policies approved by the Board, within limits, the Board may set;
- Gathers information for the annual budget and presents it to the Board of Trustees.

The remaining members of the Finance Committee will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

B. ACCESSIONS. A five-member committee, including the Director ex officio and three others appointed annually by the Board of Trustees, will administer the Collections Management Policy of the Society and allocate Accessions Fund monies.

C. MUSEUMS. A committee consisting of at least five member, including the Director ex officio and four others appointed annually by the Board of Trustees

- Plans and organizes exhibits or special programs in the Society's museums;
- Has charge of housekeeping and staffing of the museums.

D. FAMILY HISTORY CENTER. A committee of at least five members, consisting of the Director/Archivist and four others, will be appointed annually by the Board of Trustees, to

- Supervise the development of the historical research library;
- Plan for staffing and use of collections.

E. EDUCATION. The Board of Trustees will appoint annually a committee of at least five members to

- Plan programs, field, trips, workshops, etc.;
- Administer scholarship awards;
- Allocate disbursements from the Education Fund.

F. PROPERTY. A committee of at least three, appointed annually by the Board of Trustees will be responsible for the care, maintenance and improvement of the Society's buildings and grounds.

ARTICLE 9. ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER will be the basis of procedure at all meetings of the Society and its Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 10. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY: If the Society is dissolved by its own action or any legal procedure, all assets then in its possession, after satisfaction of all obligations, will be transferred or paid over to one or more non-profit organizations which then appear best able to carry forward the aims and programs of the Sheffield Historical Society, Inc., and which qualify under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and the amendments thereto. If the circumstances require dissolution, the Board of Trustees shall by majority vote recommend to the membership the entity or entities to so receive assets, and the terms and conditions of such transfer of assets.

ARTICLE 11. AMENDMENTS: Amendments by these By-laws will take effect if approved by two-thirds of those members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Society. The text of a proposed amendment must be mailed to all members at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting at which a vote thereon will be taken.

ADOPTED: _____

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