



DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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Dear Members:

Sixteen people attended an organizational meeting Tuesday evening at Dewey Hall in Sheffield and laid the foundation for the Sheffield Historical Society.

Berkshire Courier
August 10, 1972

So much has happened in those ten years: programs, antiques fairs, auctions, tag sales, turkey dinners, fashion shows, quilters group, purchase and ongoing restoration of the DRH, and so many other projects which have brought pleasure and reward to the Society and the community it serves.

The purchase of the DRH property and the beginning of its restoration and furnishing is perhaps the greatest achievement. Its very existence is a symbol of what the Society strives for...preservation of our heritage for the education of our youth, and service to the community. The continued restoration and furnishing of the property is our show of faith in the coming generations and in our desire to make the area a better place to live.

As we begin our second decade there is much yet to be done. The spirit of cooperation and the commitment to ideas and projects that have characterized the Society in the past are still the foundation upon which our future success will depend. This spirit and commitment have been the backbone of the Society and must continue to be so if we are to be the same viable organization Sheffield has known for these ten years. We now have the opportunity to hasten to our goals and to expand our commitment to the community through the generosity of Sally Scanlon.

But our enlarged resources alone will not enable us to realize the full potential of our purpose. It will take the continued efforts of the membership through new ideas, participation, fund raising and a continued spirit of cooperation to keep the candle aglow. I accepted your returning me to the presidency of this organization last June on the condition that we would travel into the future with the same dispatch that permitted us to achieve the goals of our first decade. I accept that condition as a challenge and welcome the opportunity to work with all of you toward meeting it.

Catherine B. Miller

FALL PROGRAMS

All programs are scheduled for Dewey Hall, 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise specified.

September 10...Tony Malnati will speak on the history of Cooper Hill Farm. Refreshments...Bessie Coons, Esther Kervan, D.S. Willcox, Marion Willcox.

October 8.....Richard Babcock speaks on the Restoration of Old Barns. Refreshments...William Browne, Penny Browne, Carl Schumann, Alice Schumann, James R. Miller

November 12....Program to be announced. Refreshments...Irene Cranmer, Caroline Treiber, Ethel Mertching.

December 10....Christmas Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Reservations necessary. There will be a small charge for this dinner.

January 14.....The traditional "Whatsit", so get your "Whatsit" wit whetted and start to select that item that will stump the experts.

OF THINGS PAST

Annual Meeting, June 11. Our annual meeting this year was a covered dish supper which commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Society. Penny Browne supplied appropriate and delightful decorations for the festive occasion which featured a program on Society activities narrated by Arthur Chase.

Officers for the coming year elected at the meeting were president, Catherine B. Miller; vice president, Chris Coenen; secretary, Agnes Boardman; treasurer, Marion Barnum; trustee, Lillian Preiss.

A motion from the floor proposed a professional survey of the DRH property as there seemed to be reason for concern over conflicting boundary claims by neighbors. The area has experienced more than one recent real estate transaction. As of this writing a survey has been completed by Robert Macy, RLS, and a copy of his work is on file at the DRH for those who may wish to review it. It has been registered with the Registry of Deeds in Great Barrington.

Executive Committee, June 24. At the first executive committee meeting subsequent to the annual meeting, the following appointments were made: Curator of the DRH, Lillian Preiss; Asst. Curator, Marion Barnum; Chairman DRH Committee with responsibilities for Friday afternoon open house, exhibits, Christmas open house, special functions, assistance in inventory of DRH, Penny Browne; Curator of Photography, Chris Coenen; Newsletter, James Miller and Grace Arzt; Newsreleases, Lillian Preiss; Antiques Fair, Carl and Sally Proper; Turkey Dinner, Milton Barnum; Treasurer of Development Fund, Viola Bagnaschi; Historian, Dorothy Dinan; Christmas Dinner, Virginia Drury and crew; Scholarship Committee, James Miller (Chm.), Irene Cranmer,

C. Twiggs Myers, Lillian Preiss, Muriel Rokos, Frances Warren; By-Law Committee, Roger Drury (Chm.), Catherine B. Miller, Rachel Willcox, Harry Conklin; Membership, Irene Cranmer.

Annual Picnic. Our Annual Picnic was held July 25 at the restored upper bridge which project you will remember as the beneficiary of our first annual Turkey Dinner. It was a hot day but the inner sanctum of the ninety-one foot span was shaded and cool and held a banquet in home cooked delicacies including genuine bean hole beans prepared by Milton Barnum. Each person brought his own lawn chair and they filled the length of the bridge, spreading out among the arrangements of field flowers, day lilies and common barn items that were hung from the latticed walls of the bridge. An American flag flew high over the two wagon wheels that flanked the entrance. A few brave souls jumped up and down on the resilient planking, some trod more cautiously, but all agreed the setting was unique, the food delicious and the company wonderfully compatible.

Tag Sale. We thank all who contributed articles for the sale, and all those faithful members who gave so much time working to make the sale a success. We realized about \$780 so far, and have a tip on adding a little more to that amount. Such a profit makes wiping the brow a little bit easier. Again, many thanks.

The Committee

OF THINGS TO COME

Quilters. Now that summer is almost over, remember the squares to be finished so they will be ready for our October meeting on Wednesday the 13th.

October 24. Don't forget our annual Turkey Dinner. It's a beautiful time of the year to enjoy a turkey dinner, and then after getting helped back into your car, you can take a leisurely ride around our side roads to enjoy the foliage and again realize what a wise choice you made in settling here. (It's difficult to mention a Turkey Dinner without adding a little stuffing.) See you there!

The Giblets

The Docent Program. Are you interested in history? Do you enjoy meeting people? Are you flexible? Would you like to share what you have learned with others? If your answer is "Yes" to these questions, you have an opportunity to breathe life into the 18th century Dan Raymond House by volunteering to serve as a docent on an occasional Friday afternoon during the coming year.

Lillian Preiss, curator, Marion Barnum, assistant curator, and Penny Brown, chairman of the Dan Raymond House Committee, will conduct training sessions for anyone interested in serving in this capacity. The "courses" will be held on Fridays at 1 p.m. They are three-credit courses: One credit for satisfaction in serving the public; one credit for knowledge that you are helping your historical society to fulfill its purpose; one credit for enjoyment gained from meeting people with similar interests.

If there is sufficient interest, we will try to arrange a trip to Old Sturbridge Village, Deerfield, or The Farmer's Museum in Cooperstown to see and hear experienced interpreters.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND INFORMATION

DRH Restoration. Major restoration of the DRH is under way by the firm of Gilligan Brothers and also through the donated labor of Society members Carl Proper and Milton Barnum. The major portion of interior work should be completed in time for the Christmas Open House, followed by exterior work in the spring in time for the town's 250th Anniversary Celebration.

Gilligan Brothers has been engaged to strengthen the underpinnings of the original building, primarily the keeping room and the north and south parlors. The south parlor will undergo extensive additional renovation and alteration with a partition to be placed so that our present office will be separated from the south parlor and converted to a small bedroom or burning room with access from the keeping room. The two parlors will then be duplicates, as the Victorian bay window will be removed, bricked in and a window matching that in the north parlor installed. The painted floors will be reconditioned and the boards oiled. In addition to this restoration work, Gilligan's will modify and update the electrical and plumbing in the rear of the house in order that accommodation can be made for period furnishings and the new Historical Society office. The entire building will be used for society storage, display and offices as the members voted at the June meeting to end the rental arrangement on the rear apartment.

Carl and Milton are upgrading the heating system with the addition of two new boilers that have been purchased. They will be in place for the coming heating season. Thanks again to these two gentlemen who over the years have done so much for the Society.

From the DRH Committee. The membership of the Society is fortunate that through past efforts of enthusiastic members we have the DRH as our headquarters. We are also very fortunate to be the primary beneficiary of the Sally Scanlon estate which is to be used in various ways for the DRH project.

We are now in the midst of vital restoration. Our traditional open house has been cancelled to accommodate the construction. It is exciting to think we will soon be able to do many of the things we have planned and want you to be a part of our future as we put together a decent program that you can read about in an accompanying article in this Newsletter. The DRH is facing a hopeful future. Please come and join us.

The fine arts appraisal of the DRH contents has been completed by William Bradford who was kind enough to offer his professional services without a fee. We now have the contents insured in keeping with the custom of histori-

cal societies such as ours. Once again we owe a thank you to Bill. Partly as a result of his efforts the growing collection of the Society has been safeguarded against loss.

Membership. Annual dues are payable once again to Marion Barnum, Sheffield, MA 01257, or may be paid at one of the monthly meetings. As in the past they are three dollars (\$3.00) single membership or five dollars (\$5.00) for the family. Life memberships are fifty dollars (\$50.00) PER PERSON. In addition, this fall, a cooperative membership is available with the Berkshire County Historical Society for those who wish to join that Society as well. It will be available for an additional three dollars fifty cents (\$3.50) per year which if four dollars (\$4.00) below the regular individual membership for that organization. Those who take part in the expanded membership will receive every benefit of membership including free admission to Arrowhead, ten issues of the BCHS newsletter, the journal "Berkshire History", and admission to special programs at reduced rates.

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