



DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

01257

Vol. XVII, No. 2
September 1990

FALL/WINTER ACTIVITIES

September 14, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Hall

Discovery Night with David LeBeau, professional antiques appraiser, owner of an antiques store in Sheffield, and assistant professor of fine arts at NYU. Bring in something you've always wondered about--a silver serving spoon, a porcelain vase, a photo of a piece of furniture, an old ring--for a free appraisal. You may discover you have a treasure!

October 6 & 7, Dewey building, Main Street

Opening of the Family History Center. See page 3 for a description of this special program.

October 12, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Hall

Boyd Hutchison, local cabinetmaker whose work has been featured at Hancock Shaker Village, will discuss Shaker Oval Boxes and demonstrate how they are made with examples of his own work.

October 28, 12 and 1:30 p.m., American Legion Hall

Annual Turkey Dinner. See the President's Column for details about this popular event.

November 9, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Hall

A special program by the Family History Committee.

December 14, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Hall

Annual Holiday Party.

January 11, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Hall

Milton Barnum's annual What's It? program.

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Other fall plans:

Plans are under way for a bus trip to historic houses in the Hudson Valley.

The Education Committee is arranging a cemetery walk for students in the regional school district. They are currently "digging up" a selection of interesting and unusual information about Sheffield's cemeteries. Anyone with suggestions is urged to call Martha Williamson at 229-8110.

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The latest figures on the Antiques Show, courtesy of treasurer Mort Levin, is a net profit of \$8,045. We thank each and every one of you who worked so hard for the success of the show.

And while we're on the subject, I'd like to give special thanks to Catherine and James Miller, who have the operation at their fingertips--all the information about the dealers and the attendance. The third one in that trio is Chris Coenen. How fortunate we are to have Chris so calmly coordinating all the details between the Historical Society, the Sidelis, and Berkshire School. In addition, of course, the Society is very grateful to Berkshire School for the generous loan of their facilities.

The Open House on August 9-11 was not as successful as we would have liked, but it was certainly enjoyed by those who came by. Special thanks to Agnes Boardman, Lillian Preiss, Penny Browne, and Marion Barnum, who all worked so hard preparing the house and grounds.

How about Grace Arzt making that beautiful afghan by hand, with her own material, and then donating it to the Society! We received \$75 in donations from it, and the lucky winner was Eleanor Ahlbaum of Buffalo, sister of our own Lucia Davidson. Thank you very much, Grace!

Don't forget our Turkey Dinner on October 28. As you know, the proceeds go entirely toward scholarships. It will take many faithful members to bake 40 pies, roast and carve 13 turkeys, peel and cut 3 bushels each of squash and potatoes--after which we serve 160 people in 10 minutes! So when you are called, I hope you'll say, "Can't wait to help. What can I do?"

Thanks to a wonderful group,

Milton Barnum

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Welcome to new members!

From Great Barrington: Jennifer Berryhill and Arnold & Jean Blackmur. Also Sheffield residents Donald & Amy Haworth, Bernhard & Shellie Schneider, and Mark & Claudia Ziobro.

Anyone else who's interested in joining the Historical Society is urged to send in the form at the end of this newsletter.

Missing: Our green 32-cup coffee maker and one insulated coffee pitcher. Any ideas?

OPENING OF THE FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

The formal opening of the Family History Center, in the 1816 Dewey building next door to the Dan Raymond House, will be marked by events and exhibits designed for all tastes and ages on Saturday, October 6, and Sunday afternoon, October 7. Circle these dates on your calendars and stay tuned for details.

The program will include: Dedication of the Center; a Historic House Walk led by Lillian Preiss; a special exhibit about the talented Smith Family of "Orchard Shade"; an opportunity to Stop Your Forebears From Fading by bringing in a valued family photograph or document for copying without charge; tips on How to Get Started on a Family Tree and fill in empty branches; a puzzle, Where in Ashley Falls Did William Jennys Spend the Night in 1795? and much more, including a sampling of reference materials that will be regularly available in the Center.

In addition, the Museums Committee will exhibit some items typical of those used or sold in the Hatter's Shop that occupied the building for 50 years.

This opening celebration has seemed to be a long time coming, but the committee has had its hands full of details to be considered and decisions to be made over the past 18 months. Not least of these concerns has been the renovation of the building--not as a restoration but as an adaptation to new uses.

The genesis of the Center came during a study of 10-year goals for the Society in 1988. To James Miller goes credit for setting that study in motion. Major credit also belongs to Lillian Preiss, town historian and unofficial family researcher for the Society, who knew the need and had long advocated an enlarged and organized family history effort; to genealogist Ursula Kilner, who dropped a hot spark into the tinder by suggesting use of the Dewey building for that purpose; to Virginia Moskowitz, Ruth Degenhardt, Guy McLain, and Helen McLellan, our guides through local history libraries in the region; to Penny Browne and Greg Farmer, consultants on the Hatter's Shop exhibit space; to John James, for architectural plans and advice; to Boyd Hutchison, designer/builder of the reading room table; and to many others.

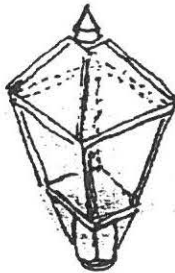
The Committee members have set policy, winnowed ideas and suggestions, and thereby earned credit for the overall results (still evolving) as well as blame for any blunders or oversights. The following have all shared enthusiastically in the work: Lillian Preiss, Bill Browne, Virginia Moskowitz, James Miller, Betty Chapin, Holly Coon, and Roger Drury. Chris Coenen, representing the SHS Executive Committee, is our principal adviser on photo archives.

After the opening, we intend to have the Center open at least one evening and one afternoon each week, and at other times by request. Volunteers will be recruited to staff the Center for additional hours as demand requires.

A TREASURE OF TOWN HISTORY

The Society recently received from Alice Warren one of the early street lamps used in the town. This treasure from our past stood in front of "Orchard Shade" for many decades, surviving the assaults of weather and the changes of fashion long after others of its type were replaced. It is un-restored and in sound condition, except inside the conical shield which covers vents at the top, where fumes from the burning oil caused some severe rust.

Can one of our members tell us how those conical caps were attached over the vents? Better still, is there another unrestored old street lamp in existence which could serve as a guide for correct repair? Please call Roger Drury (229-2687) if you have information which might be of help.



Have you looked at your SHS membership card lately? When did you last pay your annual dues?

To continue your membership for 1990-91, or to join for the first time, please fill out this coupon and send it with the proper amount to:

Membership, Sheffield Historical Society
P.O. Box 1733, Sheffield, MA 01257

Name _____

Tel. _____

Address _____

Amount _____

Renewal ___ New member ___

I/we are especially interested in _____

I/we are willing to help out as volunteers for _____

Annual dues: Family \$5, Individual \$3