



DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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FALL ACTIVITIES

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Memorial Hall

The History of Photography; or, How I Spent My Summer Vacation. Chris Coenen will give an illustrated talk about early photography. Included will be some of the 600 glass plate negatives, owned by the Society, that he developed over the course of the summer.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Memorial Hall

The Bidwell House. Shirley Klute, director, will describe the establishment and development of Berkshire County's newest historic site. Located on 190 acres in Monterey, the Bidwell House offers fine examples of 18th and early 19th century New England furniture and household furnishings. As a follow-up, there will be a field trip to The Bidwell House later in October.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 12 and 1:30 p.m., American Legion Hall

Annual Turkey Dinner. See page 3 for details.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Memorial Hall

The Vanderbilt Houses. Robbe Stimson, co-author of "The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations 1879-1901," will give an illustrated talk about the Vanderbilt mansions, including Elm Court in Lenox. You may have seen articles about the authors in the local papers this summer.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 7:30 p.m., Dewey Memorial Hall

Christmas Program. Feasting and festivities.

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings! As I write this there are only two days left to summer vacation before I must disappear into the academic life of Berkshire School. Looking back, it has been a very pleasant summer. Our Antiques Show was a huge success despite some fireworks late Sunday afternoon. Everyone took it all in stride and we did better financially than we have ever done. We thank all who contributed to its success. It's one time of the year when so many of our members come by to help out and everyone has a good time. To me, the camaraderie of so many people working towards a common goal is what the Society is really all about.

Our annual picnic was also one of the nicest in memory. The weatherman cooperated, and the picnickers partook of jovial conversation and fine food. Even Milton's switcheled garnished rave revues! We also took time out to say good-bye to Irene Cranmer, who will be dearly missed. And I found out that I grew up about a mile from her house in Westchester--small world!

The Program Committee has been scouring the countryside in search of the finest entertainment that can be procured, so I'm sure I'll see you at all the fall meetings. We also have some other ideas, such as craft workshops and trips planned for the fall and winter, so keep looking and listening for announcements.

If you haven't stopped by the Family History Center lately, you've missed some outstanding displays on our local families. Currently the Willcoxes are being highlighted, and it is well worth a visit.

Finally, we are looking for someone who would like to work with Marion Barnum as a curatorial assistant. It's not time-consuming and would be a great help to the Society. Just let Marion or me know, or stop by the Dan Raymond House some Friday afternoon.

See you all on September 13th --

Chris Coenen

AT THE DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

The current exhibit at the Dan Raymond House features an interesting variety of wedding dresses, some from the Society's collection and others loaned by members.

Included are a green dress and a black one, worn by Sheffield brides in 1862 and 1884 respectively. Also on display are a satin and lace dress from England, an intricately decorated dress belonging to Mrs. Harry Warren, as well as traditional gowns from 1917 to 1950. A wedding picture of Mr. and Mrs. John Gaskill accompanies the latter's 1932 dress.

The exhibit will run through September 13 and may be seen on Friday afternoons from 1:30 to 4 or by appointment by calling

FAMILY HISTORY CENTER OFFERS GENEALOGY CLASSES

The Family History Center is sponsoring a series of genealogy classes designed to introduce participants to the methods and resources available to those interested in doing their own family histories.

Kathleen Reilly, a professional genealogist and former research assistant in the Local History and Genealogy department of the Berkshire Athenaeum, will conduct the six-week series at the Family History Center. Classes are scheduled for Tuesday mornings from 10 to 12, starting on October 1. Subjects to be covered will include how to get started in tracing a family history, the use of published and microfilmed records, and the utilization of church, cemetery, court, land, military, and immigration records.

There is a fee for the course and class size is limited. Contact Roger Drury (229-2687) or Jean Blackmur (528-1371) for further information.

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THE TURKEY TROT'S COMING!

It's that time again -- circle Sunday, October 27, on your calendar because you won't want to miss this annual event.

The first Turkey Dinner we served was on November 4, 1979, and the proceeds went to the restoration of the covered bridge. Each year since then, we have given the entire proceeds to our education fund for student field trips and scholarships.

We will be in contact with you later to make sure you don't miss out on the fun of preparing, serving, or cleaning up after serving over 300 dinners.

Getting excited? Just can't wait!

--The Old Gobbler

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Have you renewed your membership for 1991-92? If not, please do it now -- just send in the form enclosed with this newsletter. Thanks!



OUR GROWING COLLECTION

Now that the checking of all items in the Dan Raymond House for tags and numbers has been completed, the acting curator's job has slowed down. Articles have been coming in slowly and I am able to keep up with them.

In August William Meyer gave the Society two books: "The Appledore Cook Book," published in 1877, and "Cram's Unrivaed Atlas of the World," printed in 1891. He also gave a nutcracker to add to the buttery collection of old kitchen utensils, and an old wrench for the carriage barn.

Grace Arzt has loaned the Society a Chippendale-style mirror that was given to her by her grandmother. It is hanging in the north chamber.

--Marion M. Barnum, Acting Curator

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FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

September offers four more weeks of the Willcox Family Exhibit at the Family History Center--open on Monday and Friday afternoons until September 26.

Come and see Caroline Sage Willcox's melodeon, Colonel Joseph Willcox's spontoon, William Sage Willcox's demonstration model of an adjustable ox-yoke, silver prize spoons won at the fairs of the Housatonic Agricultural Society (and dented by teething Willcox infants seventy years ago), the Willcox family cradle (in use for 130 years), and a river diagram of the families that have joined to form the Willcox heritage, like tributary streams entering a river, during the last 200 years--all of it illustrated by many photographs of Willcoxes living and dead.

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We are always looking for volunteers. Are you interested in working on a committee or helping out for a specific event? Don't be shy! Just speak to any of the officers or committee members, or write a note on your membership renewal form. And let us know if you have ideas for committee projects, too.