



DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

Sheffield Historical Society Sheffield, MA 01257

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NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT:

The Society has grown remarkably. We began with a handful of enthusiastic founding members and the Dan Raymond House, and look where we are now! We have more than 100 paid up members, 240 on our newsletter list, we have added satellite museum exhibits in the Barn, the Law Office, and the Hatter's Shop. We put on an annual Turkey Dinner to raise educational funds, and sponsor the Antiques Show to raise accessions funds. We operate the Family History Center as a public service for genealogical and historical researchers.

The Dan Raymond House has been the nucleus of the Society from the beginning. Acquired through the generosity and labor of such as Milt Barnum and Ed Warren, and the money-raising efforts of so many others, it has been nurtured through the years by a committee of three: Marion Barnum, Penny Browne, and Lillian Preiss and many others. It has been beautifully cared for and has attracted many visitors, by yearly workshops, programs for school children and special exhibits. Yet it is beginning to be clear that volunteers are not easily found to keep up the pace.

For example, we have discovered that the only way to keep the Dan Raymond House open on weekends, when people are most easily able to enjoy visits there, was to train and pay docents. Perhaps this is a sign that we, like many museums, are facing a need for professional guidance in the carrying out of our museum program.

I have therefore appointed a study committee to consider this question. They will gather suggestions for forward-looking museum methods and bring their recommendations to the Board of Directors, along with their estimate of the Society's ability to carry the expense of a part-time professional Director to guide us toward the goals we recently re-stated in our Statement of purpose. Members of the committee are: Boyd Hutchinson, Chairman, Marion Barnum, Roger Drury, Catherine Miller, Kathie Ness, and Lillian Preiss.

Virginia Drury

DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES 1994-95

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MEMBERSHIP:

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MUSEUMS:

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Marion Barnum
Penny Browne

MUSEUM STUDY:

Boyd Hutchinson, Chr.
Marion Barnum
Roger Drury
Catherine Miller
Kathie Ness
Lillian Preiss

NEWSLETTER:

Marion Whitman

NOMINATING:

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Chris Coenen
Virginia Drury

PROPERTY:

Bill Preston, Chr.
Milt Barnum
Ann Riou
Lou Caputzal

PUBLICITY:

Kathie Ness

REFRESHMENTS:

Teresa Brazie

SATURDAYS AT THE DAN RAYMOND HOUSE

There is still time to take advantage of the new Saturday hours at the Dan Raymond House. Alison LeBeau and Kathy Orlando have been working as docents since the July 4th weekend and will be on duty through Labor Day. They will answer your questions and provide tours of the house and grounds. We are very pleased with the response to these extended hours. Kathy and Alison have been doing a great job. Anyone who has volunteered at the house knows how much there is to learn before you can be a guide!

We hope to be able to continue this program. If you haven't stopped by, we hope you will!!!

THE HISTORIC COMMISSION MET OUR CHALLENGE

As you know, earlier this summer the Historical Society issued a challenge grant to the SHEFFIELD HISTORIC COMMISSION to raise up to \$2,5000.00 in donations to the Town Clock Fund and we would match it dollar for dollar. Well, the Commission lost no time in getting to work, and on July 25th we handed over a check for the full amount. The Commission has done an excellent job of fundraising for the clock repair work. The Society is pleased to have been able to play this role.

1994 ANTIQUES SHOW NETS \$3,596.83

Perhaps not as good money-wise, but still a SUPER show. We were pleased with the management of the Coffmans for the show and they have agreed to do it next year. Kathie Ness and Catherine Miller will co-chair the 1995 show.

SUMMER TAG SALE NETS \$13.00

Perhaps we were all too tired from the antique show and the summer picnic to properly prepare for it. Maybe we will have it in the Fall next year?

A TRI-STATE HISTORY PROJECT

A regional local history effort is underway involving groups from Canaan, Cornwall, Falls Village, Norfolk, Northeast, Salisbury, Sharon and Sheffield. Under the guidance of Whitney North Seymour, Jr., the TRI-CORNERS HISTORY COUNCIL plans to work on cooperative projects, such as a brochure on area historic house museums (including the Dan Raymond House). Also in the works is a revised and expanded book length edition of "Arsenal of the Revolution", slated for publication in May 1995. Our own Lillian Preiss was one of the authors of the original pamphlet, published by the Lakeville Journal for the Bicentennial.

Future projects include a "History Trail" brochure, cooperative open house weekends, and circulating exhibits. This is a very exciting undertaking, one that is sure to be mutually beneficial, to engender new ideas for the individual historical societies, and to attract both residents and visitors to the wealth of historical sites in the area.

Lillian Preiss will be the SHS representative on the Tri-Corners Council.

SHEFFIELD MOURNS LOSS OF COVERED BRIDGE

We are saddened to report to our out-of-town members, who may not have heard, that Sheffield's covered bridge was completely lost to fire early on the morning of August 13th. Long recognized as the oldest covered bridge in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the bridge had been restored and been the source of great pride by many of the members of our Society. The investigation as to the cause of the fire continues and a reward of \$5,000.00 has been offered for any information as to the cause of the fire.

Gov. Weld has pledged \$300,000 to re-build the bridge with state funds.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 9 7:30 PM

ANTIQUES AT THE TABLE Sheila Chefetz, owner of the Country Dining Room Antiques in Gt. Barrington will speak to us. Mrs. Chefetz's book Antiques for the Table with color photography by Joshua Greene, was published by Viking in May 1993 and received high praise. She will share her expertise with a slide presentation. Autographed copies of her book will be available for purchase.

OCTOBER 14 7:30 PM

NATIVE AMERICAN DEEDS Shirley Dunn, a Sheffield Historical Society member who has recently published a book on Native American deeds will speak to us about her research in preparing this book. Watch local newspapers for more information.

NOVEMBER 11 7:30 PM

THE NIGHT SHEFFIELD FARMER RILEY CHASE FELL INTO THE ICY HOUSATONIC RIVER Bernard Drew, Great Barrington historical writer and reporter, will tell us the story which he found in the 1 March 1906 Berkshire Courier that triggered his research into Farmer Chase's adventure. Tracking the stories of those who pulled Chase from the river led him to the story we will hear.

DECEMBER 9. ANNUAL HOLIDAY MEETING

See November Newsletter for further details

TO ALL CHAIRPERSONS: The deadline for the next Newsletter is November 12th.

WHO WANTS THE DRUMSTICK?

After a scorching summer, let's turn our thoughts to October with the beautiful fresh fallen leaves and a little refreshing nip in the air. It makes you feel like getting up-and-at-em, doesn't it? At least I hope so because we are going to be getting in touch with our friends to help with our 16th turkey dinner. The students who help us now weren't even born when we started annual event.

It doesn't seem possible we have been having so much fun for that many years. If you have been with us a few years, you know what I mean. If you have just recently favored us with your membership, please come and help out. If you feel that it is time for you to retire from this event, we certainly thank you for all you have done in the past and wish you congratulations on your 93rd birthday.

Please tell your friends to come to the Legion Hall on Sunday, October 23rd to see how Catherine Miller and her troops can feed 145 people in 13 minutes (and most of the help has been getting Social Security for a few years). See how well they blend with the students from Mt. Everett who help us out every year. It is nice to see them working for their own cause.

As you know, the total proceeds from the dinner goes 100% for student programs and scholarships.

Oh yes, we are planning on your wanting seconds.

See you there,

Milton Barnum

