



**SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS  
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NEWSLETTER

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Parker L. Hall Law Office - May 1975

ANNUAL MEETING

The third annual meeting of the Sheffield Historical Society will be held on June 13 at Old Parish Church beginning with a covered dish supper at 6:30. Each family is asked to bring a casserole or salad. The committee will take care of dessert and place settings. Laura Percy is in charge of the supper arrangements.

Following the supper there will be a short business meeting, including election of officers for 1975-76. The program will be a "show and tell" similar to the popular March 1974 program. If you have an antique or other personal treasure that you would like to show at the meeting and tell the group about, please let Muriel Rokos or Lillian Preiss know so that we can plan the necessary space.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Approaching the Bicentennial year 1976, we rejoice in the fact that Sheffield has a thriving young historical society with 140 members. The organization is embarked upon a number of significant projects, each incorporating one of the Bicentennial themes: Heritage '76, Festival U.S.A., Horizons '76.

Activities of the 1974-75 year got off to a scorching start, when we held a potluck picnic supper on a blistering July day on the back lawn of the Dan Raymond-Will Little House. It was a delightful spot for a picnic, and members and friends had an opportunity to look over the property that the society is hoping to acquire.

The next event at that location was the moving, on August 7, of the Parker L. Hall law office from Sheffield Plain to its restoration site. A supporting cage was built around the structure, and a giant crane then picked it up in a cable sling and swung it aboard a Berkshire Engineering Company trailer truck. It moved quickly down Route 7 and was placed on the new foundation prepared by Warren and Macchi. The cement cellar has proved to be perfectly dry and will provide valuable storage space. Much of the exterior work has been completed. If you haven't seen it lately, take a look; it's impressive.

Through the generosity of many people, more than \$17,000 in cash and pledges has been raised toward the purchase of the Dan Raymond House. A very successful auction in August encouraged us to schedule another one for August 2 of this year. Please let Milton Barnum or Arthur Chase know what you have to donate for this important event. It is one of our major fund-raising projects. Our industrious needlewomen have produced some beautiful works of art for the benefit of the development fund: an embroidered tablecloth by Ruth Leffingwell, a quilted pillow by Rachel Willcox, and a patchwork quilt by the indefatigable quilting committee.

Programs this past year have proved that history is far from dull. A demonstration of the old-time method of framing by Al Petersen and Ed Warren was elucidated by a display of antique woodworking tools. Margaret Philbrick demonstrated the silk-screening process and reviewed the history of stencilling as an art form, with particular emphasis on Jarred Johnson, a Brush Hill farmer and cabinetmaker who produced many Hitchcock-type stencils. Other programs of local interest were given by Gelston Hardy, who spoke on the Ashley family monument; Oliver Eldridge, whose topic was Chauncey Jerome, a Canaan clockmaker; and Oliver Willcox and Gladys Roraback, who contributed historical anecdotes and reminiscences. Louise Stevens brought a fascinating collection of dolls to illustrate her talk, and Bernard Fryc brought samples of student work to add interest to films he showed. Pure entertainment was afforded by the Cobbletones, who sang at our candlelight Christmas party.

We are delighted to have additional opportunity for cooperating with other community organizations. The Campfire Girls will serve at the opening of our collectors' exhibit August 3. Members of the Sheffield Garden Club will be hostesses at the Col. Ashley House at the conclusion of the historical tour of the town on August 16. Your president has addressed the Mothers' Club and the Sheffield Friendly Union and has been invited to speak at the Memorial Day exercises at Sheffield Center School, where the fourth graders have planted a mountain ash as a "second liberty tree."

A stimulating series of lectures will be offered this fall for enjoyment, edification, and profit. Sponsored by the development fund committee, the lectures will be presented by Blaine A. Cota, Jr., BFA and MFA, Yale University, an accomplished artist, craftsman, social historian, and lecturer. You will hear more of this later, but spread the word and save the dates of September 19 and 26 and October 3 and 10.

Many, many thanks to all who have helped to make this a great year!

Lillian E. Preiss, President