



# Sheffield Historical Society

## June 2003 Newsletter

### ► New Tourism Publication! ◀

Summer is for tourism in all its splendor, both for those who travel to a new region and for those who leave their homes to enjoy the special places in their own backyards. Therefore, the Sheffield Historical Society invites all tourists to join in the exploration of the Berkshire region. The Society's project *Spend a Summer in Sheffield & Environs: The Tourism Trade in the Railroad Era* encompasses a talk, an exhibit, and a publication on tourism.

**The Society, as the recipient of the Scholars in Residence project, a grant cosponsored by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities and the Bay State Historical League,** has been able to study in depth over 100 years of local tourism. The funds provided a stipend for local historian and author Bernard Drew to work within the Society's archives to research the topic. The project analyzed the changes in a community as it transitioned from a walking town to one heavily affected by mechanization and mass transit. In turn, it studied how people responded to these outside pressures through the adaptation of their living environments. Among the many topics covered during the research were the construction of the Housatonic Railroad in the 1840s, the growth of country inns and taverns, the advent of farm and home boarding facilities, and the popularity of natural landmarks (among them

Sage's Ravine and The Dome).

Bernard Drew has extensive research, writing, editing, and publishing qualifications, in particular on matters of local significance. He is one of the Berkshires' noted speakers, on a wide range of historical topics. Drew's work for this project on tourism will be available at the end of June. **To reserve your copy,** please call the Society at (413) 229-2694.

**The exhibition will open at the Old Stone Store with a reception on July 19 at 2 p.m. and will remain on view until the end of August.** Drew will speak on the topic at the opening reception. The talk will be given outside (unless we are driven inside by Mother Nature); so bring your lawn chair and sit back to listen to Drew as he relates the stories of Sheffield's past tourists. This outdoor gathering will also give you a chance to view the new garden area of the Stone Store. Refreshments will be served.

The exhibition, based on the research findings, will include photographs and memorabilia from a number of once popular destinations. Did you know that if you suffered from Scrofula

Dyspepsia, Chronic Rheumatism, or Gout, a sure cure could be found in the "Pool?" In the 1850s-1870s, many a tourist visited the Sheffield springs to take the natural cure. The pool was labeled "unsurpassed for medicinal virtues." In fact, its mineral waters were served in the Collins House sanitarium, located on Maple Avenue, by Dr. Clarkson T. Collins.

Drew is following in the footsteps of many who have sung the praises of the Southern Berkshires, often with the direct intention of increasing local tourism. Rev. Orville W. Dewey's daughter Mary composed the following lines over 100 years ago: "In following the course of the Housatonic through Berkshire, the southernmost of the villages strung like beads upon its shining thread, is Sheffield, lying in a peaceful breadth of valley, where every thing speaks of calm and repose."

Take time this summer to see the beauty of this region by visiting the exhibition or relaxing with this new publication on tourism.



## ANNUAL REPORTS

### Collections Committee

Committee Members: Betty Chapin, Connie Logan, Carl Proper and Doreen Atwood. Also present President Dorothy Marosy and Director Joanne Hurlbut.

The Sheffield Historical Society has benefited greatly from the grant funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities for two workshops. We met in October 2002 with Gwen Spicer, who presented a workshop on textile conservation. Society members learned to properly store quilts, coverlets, and clothing using the techniques taught at the workshop. We also met twice with Lori van Handel, who presented workshops on mounting objects. As a result the Bradford portraits have been rehung, a very large map from the law office was properly protected, and other items in the collection have been remounted.

I would like to thank the following members of the Society who attended workshops and followed up with conservation work on the collection: Dorothy Marosy, Jim Miller, Marion Whitman, Boyd Hutchison, Cory Hines, Connie Logan, and especially Anne Riou, all with the guidance of Joanne Hurlbut. The collection will benefit in the future with the ongoing conservation of its varied items.

Dorothy and I have begun photographing the collection with a digital camera so as to record the collection, with it eventually entering into the Past Perfect collection software program. This will better identify

and record information on each item in the collection. An informal appraisal of the collection has taken place for insurance purposes.

Several exhibits at the Stone Store have been well attended. An exhibit of farm equipment from the collection of a society member and a private collector took place in the fall. Currently there is a fine exhibit of early Sheffield and Massachusetts ephemera, again from the society's collection and from a private collector. The Stone Store has also been made available to local groups outside the SHS for exhibits.

Several items have been donated to the Society over the past year by a number of local residents. Many donations are textiles, as well as a variety of other Sheffield items.

*Doreen Atwood, Chairman*



### The Mark Dewey Research

**Center** has been kept busy this year with many inquiries and visitors. The volunteers have worked over 1600 hours at the Center, which is open Monday and Friday from 1:30 to 4:00 and by appointment.

Among the many requests we received was one from the Appomattox Court House seeking in-

formation on Sheffield's Gen. Barnard. Another came from the Smithsonian Institution, looking for information on the Saxton Family. In June we had a group of students from Mt. Everett tour the Center to learn about all the resources we have available.

We have put three picture displays at the library, on Sheffield's Irish, Blacks, and farms. In November we had a display at the monthly meeting on Sheffield's Veterans. At the Stone Store we have displayed pictures and journals on the early farms, with the tools displayed by Milton Barnum and Tony Carlotto. The Paper Trail exhibit at the Stone Store, organized by James Miller and Tony Carlotto, will run through mid-July.

Bernard A. Drew has done research at the Center for a book about the tourist trade in Sheffield in the early railroad era. This book will be published and for sale by the Society. This was made possible by a grant.

We have been given the following, which are great additions to our collection:

- Greenwood Family papers
- McNeil Genealogy and Civil War Journal
- Schellenger family research
- Wright family research
- Dewey Genealogy
- Ingersol Genealogy
- Parson Genealogy
- A collection of WWI picture section of newspapers
- An antique watch which belonged to a Kellogg

## Annual Reports, continued

Just recently we were given by Bernard Drew a collection of about 500 *Couriers* from the 1960's and 1970's. It has taken us about two months to read, clip, copy, and file information about Sheffield and its people.

Committee:

Doreen Atwood  
James Miller, Archivist  
David Prouty

*Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Chapin, Director*

### Outreach Committee:

This last year featured nine memorable programs and our Annual Meeting. Society members and friends enjoyed a variety of programs ranging from our annual What's It? Night, which featured a truly unique family heirloom, to Civil War history, a moving evening of local war memories, and readings of famous Berkshire authors and the poetry of two young girls from Mt. Washington. Programs for the upcoming year promise to be just as interesting and unique.

Committee members: Dorothy Marosy, Marion Whitman, Marilyn Wightman and myself, with our informal advisors Doreen Atwood and James Miller, all worked hard to provide the variety that has made this monthly event so popular. Thank you for an outstanding job!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rene Wood, Chair*

### Treasurer's Report

The annual year of the Sheffield Historical Society is from July 1 - June 30. Since the books have not closed for the current fiscal year, the Report of the Treasurer will appear in the late summer or early fall newsletter.

*Catherine Miller*

### President's Report

The past three years have been challenging, interesting, and successful. There have been a variety of programs and activities, some of which have been ongoing for 30 years, and others are new. Two special events, "The Music of George Washington's Time" and "The Music and Words of Sheffield's Civil War Residents," were exciting additions. The monthly programs, workshops, field trips, and cemetery stroll continue to attract people from outside Sheffield.

The Smokehouse was acquired and restored, and is now part of the "Place in Time" school program. Classes from other school districts now participate in the program, fulfilling our community outreach goal. Collaborative programs with the Bushnell Sage Library and Trustees of Reservations have helped to establish the society as part of the community.

The Stone Store renovation is 95% completed and has been the site for special exhibits and an expanding gift shop. Two celebrations were held: the 10th anniversary of the Mark Dewey Research Center and the 30th anniversary of the Society. The book "Early Life in Sheffield" was un-

veiled at the first annual Garden Party. Many visitors toured the Historic Sites and Structures as part of the House Tour in Ashley Falls and Sheffield.

The Festival of Trees, highlighting decorated trees and holiday decorations, continues to grow in scope and attendance.

Through grants received, the collections are being properly stored and catalogued.

The mailing list has been expanded and updated, and all correspondence efficiently handled. Hospitality chairpersons and their committees have provided refreshments, which have always been an important aspect of the Society. These successes are due to the many volunteers who have responded when the call went out for assistance. I thank the officers and trustees who over the past three years have been supportive, understanding, and always hands on. A special thanks to Joanne, whose sense of humor and professionalism has made the job so much easier. It has been a privilege to serve as president.

*Dorothy Marosy*

### Nominating Committee:

Inez Flinn, Pauline Schuman, and Marilyn Wightman offer the following names for election at the Annual Meeting:

Wray Gunn, President  
Jim Miller, Secretary  
Trustee:  
Harry Conklin and Cory Hines

## ANNUAL REPORTS cont'd

### Directors' Report

The Sheffield Historical Society is very fortunate to have a number of loyal supporters. Volunteers often give of their time, talents, and financial resources. **Thank you to all those who have given to the Society's first Annual Appeal, which began in April of 2003. To date, contributors are:**

*Emily and John Alexander*  
*Doreen and Walter Atwood*  
*Betty and Fred Bangs*  
*Ann Barrett*  
*Dana and Beth Bartholomew*  
*Paul Benjou and P.J. Bradley*  
*in memory of Robert Forman*  
*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bennett*  
*Richard Bernstein*  
*Robin Berthet*  
*Jean W. Blackmur*  
*Pamela Bloodworth*  
*Gardner Botsford*  
*Richard and Joan Brooks*  
*Lucy Brotman*  
*Bill and Penny Browne*  
*Paul and Tanya Buckner*  
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*Aidan Cassidy and Charles Teti*  
*George and Dorothy Caul*  
*Elizabeth M. Chapin*  
*Rose Chapin*  
*Gerry and Barbara Clow*  
*Chris Coenen and Amanda Morgan*  
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*William and Jacqueline Connell*  
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*Howard and Dorothy Crockett*  
*Miss Jean Curtiss*  
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*Richard and Sheila Drill*  
*Mr. Charles A. DuCharme, III*  
*Janet and Bart Elsbach*  
*Peter and Patricia Elsbach*  
*Elaine Friedman*  
*Warner Friedman*  
*Frank Garretson and*  
*Helen Bray-Garrestson*

*Rene Gibson*  
*Ruth A. Gillette*  
*John and Elsie Gilligan*  
*Bill Gillooly*  
*William Grief and Leonard Graziano*  
*Wray M. Gunn and Cora Portnoff*  
*Robert and Deann Halper*  
*Samuel and Sally Herrup*  
*Mr. and Mrs. James R. Hurley*  
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*Athena and Richard Kimball*  
*Nancy Kriegel*  
*Allison G. Lasso*  
*Marc Lavietes and Rose Rosal*  
*Gary LeBeau*  
*Mr and Mrs. Morton Levin*  
*Mrs. Bohn C. Lindemann*  
*Roy Lindstrom and Nancy Elliott*  
*Connie Logan*  
*Susan Lushing*  
*in honor of Wallace Kaminsky*  
*Bob and Sue Mac Veety*  
*in honor of Floyd Woodbeck*  
*Mr. and Mrs. A. Malnati*  
*Barbara and Norman Margolis*  
*Dorothy Marosy*  
*Barbara Martin*  
*Christopher Martin*  
*Dawn and Henry Massini*  
*Mary Ellen McNeil*  
*James and Catherine Miller*  
*Daniel and Anne Moulton*  
*Norma Moulton*  
*Patrice Mullin*  
*C. Twigg Myers*  
*in memory of Arthur C. Chase*  
*Judith A. Nelson*  
*Kathie Ness and John James*  
*Nancy F. Nirenberg*  
*Elisabeth H. O'Connor*  
*Thomas W. Orlando*  
*John and Charlotte Owens*  
*Alexander Papachristou*  
*Richard Pearse and*  
*Nancy O'Donohue*  
*David and Marsha Pottle*  
*Susan Rothschild and Don Freedman*  
*Peter and Ellen Rowntree*  
*Bob Rueger*  
*Judy and Bill Schnurr*  
*Becky and Ken Schopp*  
*Charles and Pauline Schumann*  
*Gary and Judy Schumer*  
*Andrea Scott and Rob Jenter*

*David Sepsenwol*  
*Myron and Marcia Sheinberg*  
*Barbara and Jim Shiminski,*  
*in memory of Mildred T. Roys*  
*Susan Silver*  
*George T. Smith*  
*Janet G. Stanton*  
*John and Katherine Stookey*  
*Ethel T. Storer*  
*in memory of Mildred Roys*  
*Robert and Rebecca Thomas*  
*Ronald and Judith Timm*  
*Peter Traub*  
*Mr. and Mrs. Albert Trocchi*  
*Merle and Karen Varney*  
*Loet and Edith Velmans*  
*in honor of PJ Schafer*  
*Paula Wardynski*  
*Jane F. Warner*  
*Massage Therapy Assoc./*  
*Jonathan Weinress*  
*David and Barbara West*  
*F. Robert Wheeler, Jr.*  
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*Thomas and Joan Wiehl*  
*John and Marilyn Wightman*  
*Nancy and Don Williams*  
*William and Elizabeth Wilson*  
*Ali Azarva Winston*  
*Jim and June Wolfe*  
*Rene Wood and Dennis Sears*  
*Tom and Susan Young*

***This appeal has met with great success!***

In addition to the financial donations, there is an enormous amount of work regularly carried out by Society volunteers. I wish to thank in particular those who have worked with me during the past year for school programming. The number of groups has continued to increase—this spring the number doubled! Several school systems outside of Sheffield visited SHS. The length of time spent here by several groups has increased, some visits were four hours!



## More Summer Happenings

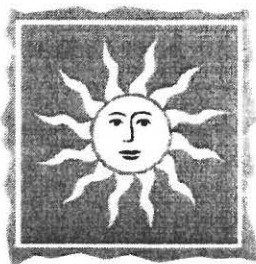
As a result of the National Endowment for the Humanities grant, a number of workshops have been held to provide training and the resulting opportunity for improving our collections care. Thank you to the intrepid collections volunteers, who have been willing to take on many challenging tasks.

During the past year, the Society celebrated its 30th year with a number of festivities. In addition, a number of new collaborative programs such, as *Songs Sung in Sheffield* and the school vacation workshop, were held. The Society conducted a house tour, its annual Cemetery Stroll, special walks, along with its regular monthly programs. The Stone Store has now offered a number of excellent exhibitions, from farming to textiles to paper. A special thanks to all those who have staffed the Stone Store and to those who have helped develop the exhibits.

It is clear that this is one very busy organization! After four years here, I will mention the same impressive conclusion: my colleagues and the public are amazed at all that we do and how well we do it! I wish to extend a special thanks to Dorothy Marosy, who it has been a pleasure to work with these past three years.

Joanne Hurlbut

The summer solstice will soon be upon us, and this year mem-



bers will celebrate the season at the **Annual Garden Party on Saturday, June 21, from 3 to 6 p.m.** Members are still talking about last year's first-ever garden party, and this year's event will be just as spectacular. The party will take place in the gardens at Ashley Pond, a private home on the site of the historic Ashley Falls quarry.

Attendees will have the opportunity to stroll around the pond, hear about the quarry in its heyday, and view an exhibit on the quarry. Fine food and beverages will be served al fresco, and guest performers will provide musical accompaniment. (Comfortable flat shoes are suggested.)

**Reservations are required.** Be sure to reserve your ticket soon: directions will be provided upon registration. **Tickets are \$25 per person.**

For the third summer in a row, the Trustees of Reservations and SHS will co-sponsor three special events. **Family Day** will be held on **Saturday, July 12, from noon to 5 p.m.**

**The Dan Raymond House and the Col. Ashley House** will offer a number of hands-on activities, demonstrations, and tours. This year's focus is on everyday plants, which were such a significant part of life in early America. Discussions of the plants used in cooking will be offered at the Dan Raymond House, and the smokehouse will be in operation. Atten-

dees will be able to go on a plant walk on the grounds and make an herbal sachet. Among the activities at the Col. Ashley house will be the



making of cornhusk dolls. Admission: Adults 1/2 usual price, children and members free.

The joint programs continue with **Revolutionary Period Tours to be offered on Saturdays July 26 and August 23.** The tours begin at the Dan Raymond House at 1:30 p.m.

What was the material life of our founding families really like? An exploration of their times begins with viewing of a number of 18th-century documents from the Mark Dewey Research Center archives. The group then moves on to visit material objects now on view in both the Dan Raymond and Col. Ashley homes. Size is limited: members free, non-members \$5. Reservations suggested: call 229-2694.

### ITEMS SOUGHT FOR SUMMER EXHIBIT

*The Society is seeking to augment its exhibition on tourism, which will open in July. Do you have any 19th- or early 20th-century souvenirs from Sheffield and environs? If you are willing to lend them for this summer, please call the office.*



159 Main Street  
PO Box 747  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Phone: 413-229-2694  
Email: shs@sheffieldhistory.org

Tours of the 1774 Dan Raymond House are available Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and by appointment.

Mark Dewey Research Center open Monday and Friday afternoons, 1:30 to 4 p.m., and by appointment.

Stone Store hours are Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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### ***Board of Directors***

Dorothy Marosy, *President*

Wray Gunn, *Vice-President*

Catherine Miller, *Treasurer*

Harry Conklin, *Clerk*

### *Trustees:*

Doreen Atwood

James Miller

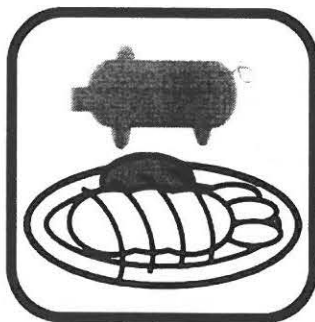
John-Arthur Miller

Marilyn Wightman

Rene Wood

Joanne Hurlbut, *Director*

## **Pig Roast**



Take a break in your busy summer schedule and join Society members this summer for a Pig Roast. **Saturday, August 23**, is the date for this new event, which will take place at the American Legion in Sheffield.

The afternoon's activities include marvelous foodstuffs, entertainment by Tom Ingersoll, artisan's booths, and more.

Scott Ryan will be in charge of serving up the pig roast. Ticket prices will be adults \$15, children \$8; children under 8 will be free.

The Society is now taking reservations for artisans who wish to operate a booth during the festivities. Please call the office at 413-229-2694 if you would like more information about reserving a booth.

Events such as this require the efforts of many hands. If you would like to volunteer to help out with the day, please call the office.

### **Save these dates:**

**June 21—Garden Party**  
**July 12—Family Day**  
**July 19—Exhibit Opening**  
**August 23—Pig Roast**