



"THE STONE HOUSE MUSEUM"

Belchertown Historical Association
Belchertown, Massachusetts
1903—2016

April 2016

Volume 16, Issue 1

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

DEDICATED TO THE MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO SUPPORT THE ASSOCIATION'S MISSION

2016 Calendar

Save the dates and share them with family, friends, neighbors!

Annual Meeting April 24 2 pm

All members are invited to attend the annual meeting of the Belchertown Historical Association at the BUCC Parish House, 18 Park Street. A pot-luck luncheon at 2:00 will be followed by the business meeting, which will conclude with a presentation including Historical Restoration by Dennis Picard from Storowton Village. Take this opportunity to catch up on the latest from your association, re-connect with old friends, make some new friends, and have an enjoyable afternoon. Bring a dish to share, and we hope to see you on April 24th!

Opening Day May 7 9-2 FREE

Join us on the Museum grounds just in time for Mother's Day! Crafts, Plants, Old Bags and Tours!

Stone House Museum

Open May through October

Saturday 2—5 pm

Admission: **FREE** for Members;
\$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$2 children

Check out our Facebook page, StoneHouseMuseum.org and the local Belchertown Sentinel for announcements of ongoing Lecture Series and other upcoming events.

We are always looking for cleaners, dusters, house-sitters and docents during the summer months.

Call 413-323-6573

It's Opening Season...Think Spring

BY TOM STOCKTON, PRESIDENT

Despite the snow outside I have seen robins and had my first phone call from "Kevin in the Powerwashing business," so—it must be spring!

The Stone House is truly a busy place, filled with momentum and activity in all aspects of our mission and it is exciting to be part of such a vibrant organization! A lot has been happening with regards to the maintenance and preservation of our Museum, our finances, and of course, the social life of the Association, and we pause to look back on all the important work members of the Association have been doing during the long winter months and consider the current state of our Association.

After the Fair we had our annual Living History Days event in the fall, with a New England Harvest Theme. For this year's Living History Days event we provided another activity relevant to Belchertown's history: Bringing the House to Life: Harvest and Fall Activities in the 19th century New England Home. Live reënactors, many dressed in period costumes, demonstrated and discussed many of the fall and Harvest activities that might have occupied residents of a house such as the Stone House in 19th century New England. Demonstrations and Lecture topics included Herb Gardening; Historic Farm Implements; Local Archaeology (thank you **Lindsay Hoadley!**); Preserving Herbs, Vegetables and Fruits; and other seasonal activities. The Stone House was open with a display of our nineteenth century farm equipment, our re-creation 19th

century garden and house tours from 10 to 2. This was a truly wonderful event—interesting, informative, entertaining, and very pertinent to our mission.

We wish to thank our Sponsors - **Easthampton Savings Bank, Bell & Hudson Insurance, Country Bank for Savings, Florence Savings Bank, and McCarthy's Pub.** We appreciate everyone's support, and hope more families will note the first Saturday in October 2016, for a new installment of this quality event.

Following our Living History Event, it was time for our annual Yuletide Event, and many kudos are due to **Sally Shattuck, Denise Smith, Maureen Austin, Carol Mierzewski, Gerri Amprino, Becki Smith, Millie Harrington, Darren Chevalier** and the whole committee for bringing off this event so beautifully. Our many elegant baskets, wreaths, and traditional crafts were the talk of the town and all who attended.

This year we attempted to reduce our winter expenses by limiting use of the Stone House during late December and January, but since then much work has been done by the Museum Committee and the Membership Committee, all of whom have worked tirelessly in their respective areas to make sure that the museum will be on a firm footing for the



Continued on page 3

Opening Day Event May 7th—Please join us!

Saturday, May 7, 2016 is our annual Opening Day event for the Stone House Museum with history and creativity of Belchertown's past and present! Activities will run from 9am to 2pm and **admission is Free**. Just in time for Mother's Day, we will offer a variety of shopping opportunities. We expect a great selection of local crafts people selling their homemade items; perennials for your neighbors' gardens will be in abundance; and of course our famous 'gently used' bags will be for sale. **So pass the word to everyone you know that this event is not to be missed!**

This year, more than ever, we need everyone's support. Here's how you can help:



PLANTS—May 7th is very early for our beloved perennials, so we will need everyone to “dig deep” and find what you can that is popping up. If you can dig them a few weeks in advance and keep them in a warm place, they will have time to recover and look healthy for the sale. As always, if you need us to come and dig them for you, just get in touch with **Sally at 323-4239**. Variety is always welcome, but we still love our old faithfuls like forsythia, bee balm and daisies. We are looking for vegetable plants, ferns, trees, shrubs, houseplants and bulbs as well as perennials.

OLD BAGS need to come out of hiding and be cleaned up for our Old Bag Sale. This is a very popular sale and your donations of bags of all varieties are welcomed. There will be drop off bins at the Making Waves Hair Salon and the Station 5 Salon. Look for more information in the Sentinel closer to Opening Day.



CRAFTS—Please help us pass the word to all of those talented crafts people in our area! Attendees at our Opening Day event look forward to seeing and buying locally hand-made items. Details about renting space and displaying wares are available from **Carol Mierzewski at 413-323-4344** or email her at emierzewsk@aol.com.

History Garden Notes—from Peg and Lou Louraine

It is a new year for the Stone House History Garden and we have a few plans to share with you all. Some of our sage bushes will be removed this year; oregano and thyme will be thinned and somewhat contained. Our horseradish is coming up female this year, so we'll buy a second plant that is in the male phase. We hope that way to have a crop every year. The hops are already coming up in the back corner of the herb bed. You can see the twig teepee where they will be climbing. Look closely at the bottom; the little purple shoots are coming out now. Most everything perennial will be leafing out in the next week or two.



We will harvest out the Rose Campion for Opening Day sale and replace that whole quadrant of the bed with annual herbs – parsley, cilantro, dill, and whatever else takes our fancy. As long as it is cuisinal and would have been grown in Belchertown in the 1820s to 1830s, we can give it a shot. We decided against medicinal herbs pretty early on since we cannot supervise their harvesting.

In the veggie beds, our garlic is well up from last fall. We had a failed parsnip crop this year; no idea why! Some things just do better in alternative years. We will be planting carrots, beans, beets, radishes, more onions (some from seeds and some from sets – we are not having wild success with onions, so we're trying everything!), more parsnips, potatoes, maybe peppers, and we may cheat a little with a tomato or two – even though they were probably not grown in Belchertown; they WERE grown in the Northeast in that time period and we LOVE tomatoes.

All of our herbs and produce are available to members who want to visit us while we are working in the garden. We do try to be there on Saturdays at some point during opening hours, and you are all welcome to give us a call (253-3124) if you want to share ideas, share in the harvest, or share in the work!



Membership News

Our new Membership Year begins on May 1. Your membership donations, business sponsorships and our successful fundraising events enable us to care for the Stone House Museum and all its collections, and present exhibits and programs that ensure Belchertown's heritage will be preserved for future generations. Look for a forthcoming Membership Renewal Letter, and we hope you will all continue to support our Association with your membership.

Annual dues remain the same: \$20 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$10 for seniors and \$5 for students under 18.

And remember—a 1-year membership makes a wonderful gift.

If you want to get a head start, print off a membership form at our website: stonehousemuseum.org/make-history-with-us

Belchertown Historical Association MEMBERSHIP For you, your Family, as a Gift, in Memory or in Honor	
<small>The Belchertown Historical Association, a non-profit organization, exists primarily on income from your membership, event admissions, contributions and bequests.</small>	
<small>A membership entitles you to: Unlimited visits to the Stone House Museum complex (including special events) during the membership year; Subscription to the Association Newsletter; Discounted admission to all museum events and special member privileges when announced. While these are significant benefits, the real benefit is the sense of belonging to an organization which is preserving our past for our future. Make history with us!</small>	
<small>Joining is easy and affordable. Just send us this form with a check payable to the Belchertown Historical Association.</small>	
Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal Membership <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership	
Name: _____	
Address: _____	
Phone: _____ Email: _____	
If this is a Gift Membership, please indicate who the gift is from: _____	
Membership Categories Student (under 18) \$5 Senior (65+) \$10 Individual \$20 Family \$35 (children < 18) Patron \$50 Patron \$100 Benefactor \$250	Dues enclosed (please check off categories on left) \$ _____ Additional Membership Donation: \$ _____ If Membership donation is in Honor or in Memory, please so indicate: _____ Send completed form and tax-deductible check (payable to Belchertown Historical Association) to the address below or hand deliver to a Board Member.
<small>Corporate Matching Program— Circle your tax-deductible donation by attaching a matching gift form from your employer</small>	
<small>The Belchertown Historical Association Maple Street (Route 202) PO Box 1211, Belchertown, MA 01027-1211</small>	
<small>I am interested in getting involved in activities of the Association. Best time/waytime to contact me: _____</small>	

Message from our President Continued from Page 1

coming season. The Museum Committee's lecture series, in particular, was very well-received and provided an opportunity to hear lectures on many fascinating topics. In the Stone House we are still working on implementing our Community Preservation grant addressing certain structural issues inside the museum. We are very grateful for the income from the **Edward & Eleanor Schmidt Trust** that has enabled us to acquire some really fascinating Belchertown artifacts. In addition to the new de-humidifier for the cellar, we have installed a new hot water heater for the bathroom and kitchen, and a new mini-split heat pump to assist with climate control and conditions in the archives. We are grateful to a bequest from **Doris Dickinson** that is enabling us to upgrade our ancient computer system. We will have a full report at our Annual Meeting, on April 24.

We are grateful to those who attended the Special Town Meeting in March and voted to support the Conservation Commission's plan to acquire the Holland Glen property on Rt. 9 from the Stone House. We are thrilled that this property will finally be in preservation and recreational plans of the town, and are pleased that our organization has been able to preserve it for this moment. We are also hopeful that we will be able to use the funds from the sale to further our Association's unique mission. It's too early to make any kind of announcement concerning the Washington District Schoolhouse, but we are now cautiously optimistic that we will be able to preserve this historic building for use on the grounds of the Stone House Museum. More will be written about this when there is some definite good news, but everybody: please keep your fingers crossed!

The trustees and museum committee have been involved in too many projects to fully mention here. And we would like your help in supporting our work. We hope that this year will see an increase in attendance at the museum. We need volunteers to help with a variety of administrative tasks. We are always looking for cleaners, dusters, house-sitters and docents during the summer months. If you have time during the week or on Saturdays and an interest in becoming more involved with our museum please contact me at 323-0946.

Of course, we have made time for a little fun this winter too, and thanks to our Fundraising Committee a wonderful time was had at the Tenth Annual Mystery Dinner Theater held at two locations this year—the VFW in Belchertown and Villa Rose in Ludlow, with the actors from BUCC's Playhouse performing a seasonal Irish-themed mystery.

As spring progresses we begin to look forward to our traditional springtime activities at the Stone House. We are hoping for a good turn-out at our Annual Meeting on April 24th. This is always a fun time to get together and take stock of all we have been doing as an Association, and enjoy each other's company and wonderful deserts. Our annual Opening Day Plant Sale, Crafters and Old Bag Sale, Saturday May 7th will be a wonderful day, and an opportunity to shop for your garden or closet while supporting your Association. We still need plants and crafters, so please read how you can help later on in the newsletter. Plans are also underway for our annual Members Only Cocktail Party in June, and for our third Fall Living History Days event that will celebrate harvest-time activities and traditional New England crafting. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending these events!



BELCHERTOWN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
 20 MAPLE STREET
 BELCHERTOWN, MA 01007-1211
 VISIT US AT THE STONE HOUSE, CALL US
 AT 413 323-6573 OR EMAIL US AT
 INFO@STONEHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG

ASSISTANT CURATOR: SHIRLEY BOCK
 ARCHIVIST: CLIFF MCCARTHY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
 PRESIDENT: THOMAS STOCKTON
 VICE PRESIDENT: RANDI SHENKMAN
 VICE PRESIDENT: DENISE SMITH
 SECRETARY: SALLY SHATTUCK
 TREASURER: MAUREEN AUSTIN

DARREN CHEVALIER PEG LOURAINÉ
 AMY MORAN TONY TRIFONE

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER AND MUSEUM
 WEBSITE EDITOR: MARY F. KNIGHT,
 MFKNIGHT@CROCKER.COM

MYSTERY DINNER TOPPED EXPECTATIONS!



We would like to thank all who supported our tenth annual Murder Mystery Dinner this winter. Instead of hiring actors from outside of town, the Historical Association again entered into an agreement with BUCC'S PLAYHOUSE, from the Belchertown Congregational Church, so the dinner theater served jointly both as a much-needed fundraiser for the Histori-

cal Association and also as a fundraiser for the Congregational Church. The actors performed Paula Hilton's "Top O' the Murder to You", a high-energy Irish-themed comedy/mystery. Someone was murdered (of course) and bedlam ensued, resulting in an evening of entertainment that delighted the audience. More than 120 people came to the two shows at the VFW and the Villa Rose to support this much-needed fundraiser. The food was wonderful, the staffs were very attentive and, of course, the actors from BUCC's Playhouse did a wonderful job. Everyone seemed to have a great time, so many thanks to the actors from BUCC's Playhouse, the management and staff of the VFW and the Villa Rose, and all who attended this fun, mid-winter event.

BELCHERTOWN HISTORICAL
 ASSOCIATION
 20 MAPLE STREET
 PO BOX 1211
 BELCHERTOWN, MA
 01007-1211

