



"THE STONE HOUSE MUSEUM"

Belchertown Historical Association
Belchertown, Massachusetts
1903—2018

April 2018

Volume 18, Issue 1

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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

2018 Calendar

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

BHA Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 29 @ 1 - 4pm

Hope United Methodist Church, 31 Main Street. Every year at the Annual Meeting important items are discussed and voted on by the Members present. Your input and opinion are valued. Please come to the Annual Meeting to support all of the wonderful volunteers that keep the Historical Association running. We will review the news and events of the past year, propose some By-Law changes. The meeting will be preceded by a Potluck luncheon and followed by the latest in our Lecture Series:

Ann Pieroway on Traditional Foods of Massachusetts.

Annual Membership time! Please renew membership and invite others to join your lead.

Opening Day at the Museum

Saturday May 12 @ 9 - 2 FREE

Join us on the Museum grounds for mini house tours, Old Bags, Crafts and Artists, and Plant sales—just in time for Mother's Day!

Stone House Museum

Open May through October

Saturday @ 2 - 5 pm

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

Members Only Cocktail Party

Friday, June 15th @ 6 - 8 pm

Museum grounds—rain or shine!

Please join us for an evening of food, drinks, and fun. We provide the drinks; please bring an appetizer to share. Watch for your postcard in the mail, and remember to bring it to be entered into our door prize drawings.

SPRING IS POKING THROUGH

BY TOM STOCKTON, PRESIDENT

Despite the snow outside it must be spring somewhere! And with the approach of the season our thoughts turn to a particularly exciting spring and summer at the Stone House, a truly busy place, filled with momentum and activity in all aspects of our mission. How 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 to consider the current state of our Association.

After the Fair we had our annual Living History Day event in October, with the theme "Bringing the House to Life: Harvest and Fall Activities in the 19th century New England Home," showcasing activities relevant to Belchertown's history. 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; 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: it was interesting, informative, entertaining, and very pertinent to our mission. We appreciate

everyone's support, and hope more families will note the first Saturday in October 2018, for a new installment of this quality event. See you next year!



Following our Living History Event, it was time for our annual Yuletide celebration, and many kudos are due to **Sally Shattuck, Denise Smith, Maureen Austin, Carol Mierzewski, Gerri Amprimo, Becki Smith, Millie Harrington, Sally Shattuck, Tony Trifone** (the great "School House Birdhouse Raffle") 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 coming season.

The Education Committee's lecture series, in particular, was very well-received and provided an opportunity to hear lectures on many fascinating topics. We are very grateful for the income from the **Edward & Eleanor Schmidt Trust** that has enabled us to acquire some really fascinating Belchertown artifacts, including a 1777 document signed by

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Opening Day Event May 12th—Please join us!

Saturday, May 12 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 artists and crafts people selling their original, local 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!** Here are some other ways members and friends can help:



PLANTS—May 12th 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 413-323-4239**. 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, Looks to Kill, Easthampton Savings Bank and at the Town Hall - 2nd Floor. If you have any questions please call **Erica Morrison-Brazitis at 413-537-3218**

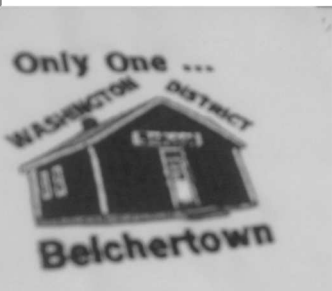
or **Sharon Moran at 413-896-7531**.

SCHOOLHOUSE ITEMS

One of our schoolhouse fundraisers is a new Belchertown Cat's Meow figure, Washington District School. The replica shows the building is its previous location in South Belchertown and sells for \$20.00. We also have a Cat's Meow figure of our historic stagecoach, which sells for \$15.00. The price for both pieces is \$30.00. The schoolhouse is available at Swift River Crafts, Rannsaka, and the Town Clerk's office. Both pieces will be available on Opening Day as well.



Also on sale will be our Washington District Schoolhouse Tees—light gray with the Schoolhouse logo. The cost of the t-shirts is \$15 for sizes S-XL and \$18 for 2XL.



CRAFTS and ARTWORK—Please help us pass the word to all of those talented 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**.

PARTICIPATE—Join us on Opening Day and bring two or more friends; offer to volunteer at this event or one in the future. This year, more than ever, we need everyone's support.

Message from our President Continued from Page 1

three Belchertown Selectmen, concerning re-imbusement for two Belchertown residents who carted goods for the Revolutionary War effort. We are also continually thankful for a bequest from **Doris Dickinson** that has enabled us to upgrade our ancient computer system. We are planning on a full report at our Annual Meeting, on April 29th.

The astute observer will have noticed by now that the historic Washington District Schoolhouse is now on its new foundation and awaits the next phase of restoration. This whole process is very complicated, and we continue to be extremely appreciative of **Bill Austin** for all his help and guidance. Now the real restoration work can begin, and we are grateful that **Rob Hislop** is helping to guide us in various aspects of that complex job. We continue to need help with fundraising, as none of us is an expert in this. To date, 67 people have contributed toward this project, and we estimate that the whole restoration will cost about \$150,000. We are pleased to announce that we are eligible for Community Preservation Grants to enable us to re-roof the building (with historically correct wood shakes) and provide new, historically appropriate windows and a front door, and restore the wooden siding of the building. Let's all hope that we receive these grants at the upcoming Belchertown Town Meeting in May!

In terms of fundraising, we are particularly pleased to announce the publication of our first-ever annual program booklet. With guidance from **Mary Knight** we are producing a very attractive booklet that describes our museum and annual events, with brief articles about new acquisitions and the resources at the Stone House. We are both excited and humbled by the support of over 60 local businesses that have supported us in this endeavor by purchasing ads in our program. Special recognition goes out to three major

contributors: Belchertown Photos, Bell & Hudson Insurance Agency, Inc, and Turley Publications, Inc. These programs will be available around town and at all of our events. PLEASE let our sponsors know that you appreciate their support of our local museum!

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 Annual Mystery Dinner Theater held at the Villa Rose Restaurant in Ludlow, with the actors from BUCC's Playhouse performing a clever Italian-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 29th. 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 inviting pot-luck dishes. Also, our annual Opening Day Plant Sale, Crafters and Old Bag Sale, Saturday May 12th 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 June 15th, and October's Living History Day event that will celebrate harvest-time activities and traditional New England crafting.

We hope that this year will see an increase in attendance at the museum. Please mark your calendars and plan on taking advantage of these events!

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING!

The Annual Meeting of The Belchertown Historical Association will be held on Sunday, April 29th at about 1:45 in the Meeting Room at the Hope United Methodist Church. **The Meeting will be preceded by a pot-luck luncheon at 1:00**, and will be followed at 3:00 by a stimulating lecture on Traditional Foods of New England by **Ann Pieroway**.

We are hoping for a good turn-out at our Annual Meeting, 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.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

It's always great to be involved in local history, and the trustees and museum committee have been involved in many such endeavors. And there is so much more to do! We have several volunteer opportunities for teens, adults and seniors! We are always looking for cleaners, dusters, house-sitters and docents during the summer months. Marketing and communication support is also needed. If you have time during the week or on Saturdays and an interest in becoming more involved with our museum please contact us at (413) 323-0946. Also check out our website **stonehousemuseum.org/volunteer**. Help us make history!

Membership Form Belchertown Historical Association

The BHA, a nonprofit organization, exists primarily on income from membership, event admissions, contributions and bequests. Members enjoy unlimited visits to the museum, subscription to our newsletter, discounted admission to special events, and deep satisfaction in knowing they are preserving the past for generations to come.

Check one: ___ New Membership ___ Renewal Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

If this is a gift membership, provide giver's name:

Member Categories

- \$5 Student (under 18)
- \$10 Senior ((65+)
- \$20 Individual
- \$35 Family (children <18)
- \$50 Friend
- \$100 Patron
- \$250 Benefactor

Corporate Matching Program

Double your tax-deductible donation by attaching a matching

Member Dues enclosed:

\$ _____

Please check off categories on left

Additional Membership Donation \$ _____

Specify In Honor or In Memory of, or specific purpose of this donation.

I am interested in volunteer opportunities

Our new membership year begins May 1st.

We have kept the cost affordable and hope you will respond promptly to our upcoming mailing. Also, keep in mind that a 1-year membership makes a wonderful gift.

Please also invite relatives, neighbors, friends and colleagues to be part of our mission:

The Belchertown Historical Association exists to preserve historical artifacts pertaining to the Town of Belchertown; to maintain the Stone House Museum; and to foster knowledge of and interest in the history of Belchertown by opening the Museum to the public and by offering educational programs, lectures and events.

Thank you for all you do. Our important work would be impossible to accomplish without your support.

Send completed form and tax-deductible donation payable to the Belchertown Historical Association to:

**The Belchertown Historical Association
PO Box 1211
Belchertown MA 01007-1211**

"Get on the Bus" for the Washington District School Restoration



Much progress has been made on the restoration of Washington District School. Last summer its cellar hole was dug and the foundation was poured. On September 23, 2017, the school was placed on its new foundation, and preparations began to ready the building for winter. Our next steps include a new roof, new windows, and vinyl-coat painting. We are grateful for all who have donated to our restoration fund and would like to thank our most recent donors: **Victoria Blunt, Erica Morrison Brazitis, Richard Dalton, Dan Fitzpatrick, Barbara Harrington, Melissa Madden, Theresa Petraszewicz (in memory of Jeremiah M. Cavanaugh), Randi Shenkman, Ken and Linda**

Snow, Fred Stockton, and Helen Towne. We have also received donations in memory of **Anita Jarrett from Darlene Dewhurst, Leslie Gladu, Bacon & Wilson, Maria Butler, and Susan and Stevie and Alina.**

Won't you join us in this important and exciting endeavor?

- We are looking for volunteers to serve on a development committee focused on raising capital. We hope to have your help, cooperation, and maybe some willing hands to complete a project which is exciting and significant to the entire town. **Contact Tom at 413-323-0946 or email info@stonehousemuseum.org**
- Donations for restoration, maintenance, and continued use of the Washington Street School can be sent to the Belchertown Historical Association, P. O. Box 1211, Belchertown, MA 01007 - please specify Schoolhouse in the memo line of your check... or donate online at www.razoo.com/us/story/Stone-House-Museum... or participate in **Valley Gives Day on May 1st!**
- In addition to donations, we also need your memories, stories, and (if we are very lucky) your pictures of yourselves and/or your family members who attended this or other schools in Belchertown. BCTV is partnering with us to tape and preserve these stories for sharing with the entire community. Watch for some of these shows on BCTV, and feel free to offer ideas and names of others you think we should talk with, so special memories are not lost. Contact **Peg at plouraine3124@charter.net**

You can also follow our progress with its new foundation and restoration on Facebook www.facebook.com/TheBelchertownStoneHouseMuseum, our website www.stonehousemuseum.org, and as you drive by The Stone House.

Questions can be directed to our president, **Tom Stockton** tstockton@earthlink.net, or to any member of the Board of Trustees.



Valley Gives is a 24-hour online giving event that allows individuals to support the good work of nonprofit organizations across the Pioneer Valley.

To support the Museum and the Washington District School Restoration, go to valley-gives.org on 5/1.

In the Search Field (top of page) enter Stone House...then click on the museum page. Donations of any size are appreciated.

Please also share your giving choice with friends and family on Social Media and face-to-face! Help us get new donors to support this important project.



BELCHERTOWN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
 20 MAPLE ST
 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

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

Kitchen Garden—Check it out on Opening Day!



The 2018 Kitchen Garden is ready for turning over and replanting, cleaning, pruning, trimming, and so on and so forth! Our perennial herbs need tidying, but they are all thriving.

This year, we will plant annual parsley and cilantro among our herbs. The rhubarb is peeking up already, and the veggie beds are showing early sprouts of the garlic we planted last fall. Our potato starts have arrived and we will plant the usual beans, po-

tatoes, tomatoes, radishes, parsnips, and one or two experimental crops. The Jerusalem Artichoke and hops plants have survived the winter and we hope they will be as verdant and happy this year as last.

Members and guests are welcome to watch us work on Opening Day, and the herbs are available all season for sampling. We hope you will join us this season in enjoying our 19th century gardens!

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