



"THE STONE HOUSE MUSEUM"

Belchertown Historical Association
Belchertown, Massachusetts
1903—2019

April 2019

Volume 19, Issue 1

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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

2019 Calendar

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

Lecture Series: Adam Strzempko Sunday, April 28 @ 1:20pm Stone House Museum

Adam, a meteorologist for Springfield's WWLP, will speak about weather impacts in Western MA.

BHA Annual Meeting Sunday, April 28 @ 5 - 7pm

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 dinner at 5pm

Annual Membership time! Please renew membership and invite others to join your lead. Fees remain the same.

Opening Day at the Museum Saturday May 11 @ 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 21st @ 6 - 8 pm

Museum grounds—rain or shine!
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.

TIME TO REPLENISH, REFRESH, RENEW

BY TOM STOCKTON, PRESIDENT

Spring Finally?! Despite the snow outside, it finally feels like winter is giving up! And with the approach of the season our thoughts turn to the exciting spring and summer events at the Stone House—a truly busy place, filled with momentum and activity in all aspects of our mission. 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 now 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, with a New England Harvest Theme and activities relevant to Belchertown's history. The Bringing the House to Life: Harvest and Fall Activities in the 19th century New England Home event featured live reënactors, some dressed in period costumes. They 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 demonstration 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 save the date of October 5, 2019, 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, Becki Smith, Erica Morrison -Brazitis**, and the whole committee for bringing off this event so beautifully. Our many elegant baskets, wreaths, homemade goods from the kitchen, and traditional crafts were the talk of the town and of all who attended.

This year we did not limit the use of the Stone House during late December and January because of the very exciting work on the STEP grant project, and what an exciting time the Museum Committee members and volunteers had with **Pat Warner** (thanks, Pat!) who very expertly helped catalogue many of the interesting dresses in our collection. Since then, much work has been done by the Museum Committee and the Fundraising 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.



Continued on page 3

Opening Day Event May 11th—Please join us!

Saturday, May 11 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 from 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 11th 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 Florence Bank. If you have any questions please call **Erica Morrison-Brazitis at 413-537-3218** or **Sharon Moran at 413-896-7531**.

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**.

SCHOOLHOUSE ITEMS

One of our schoolhouse fundraisers is a Belchertown Cat's Meow figure, Washington District School. The replica shows the building in 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 Ransaka 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.

PARTICIPATE—The Stone House Museum is a unique treasure in Belchertown. The Belchertown Historical Association's mission is to help collect, preserve, and present our local history. Your support helps us enrich the community, both culturally and educationally.

Join us on **Opening Day** and bring two or more friends; offer to volunteer at this event or one in the future. Meet up with folks who appreciate the gem that we have here and make the acquaintance of visitors who are seeing the museum for the first time. This year, more than ever, we need everyone's support.



Message from our President Continued from Page 1

The Education Committee's lecture series was very well-received and provided an opportunity to hear lectures on fascinating topics, most recently **Cliff McCarthy's** snow-postponed lecture on the origins of town road names. Our next in the lecture series is on April 28th at 1:20pm. **Adam Strzempko**, meteorologist for Springfield's WWLP, who will talk about our weather in western Mass and how climate change is impacting us now.

We are very grateful for the income from the Edward & Eleanor Schmidt Trust that has enabled us to acquire some really fascinating Belchertown artifacts and purchase the new transom over the door to the Schoolhouse. We are planning on a full report at our Annual Meeting, on April 28th.

Speaking of the Washington District Schoolhouse, renovations continue. A cellar floor has been poured. A chimney has been built. The siding has been readied for painting. The next step is to install the authentic, cedar shake roof. This whole process is extremely complicated, and we continue to be very thankful to **Bill Austin, Rob Hislop and Tony Trifone** for their help in guiding us in various aspects of that complex job. We are pleased to announce that we will be spending funds from Community Preservation Grants to enable us to re-roof the building (with historically correct wood shakes) provide new, historically appropriate windows and a front door, and restore the wooden siding of the building.

Thank you to everyone who has and continues to support the schoolhouse fund through direct and on-line donations. We appreciate all those who remembered **Doris Stockton** with donations. Over \$1,000 was received in her memory. We continue to need help with fundraising, as none of us is an expert in this. **To date, fewer than 100 people have contributed toward this project, and we estimate that the whole project will cost about \$150,000. If you or someone you know could provide guidance, please contact me at info@stonehousemuseum.org.**

In terms of fundraising, we are particularly pleased to announce the publication of our second annual program booklet. With guidance from **Mary Knight**, we are producing another 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 the many local businesses that have supported us in this endeavor by purchasing ads in our program. These programs will be available around town and will be available at all of our events. **PLEASE let our local sponsors (page 4 of his newsletter) know their support of our local museum is appreciated!**



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 Wine-themed mystery.

It's always a great year to be involved in local history and the trustees and museum committee have been involved in too many projects to fully mention here. We hope that this year will see an increase in attendance at the museum—and please don't forget that 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 (413) 323-7452 or info@stonehousemuseum.org.

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 28th. 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 during the potluck dinner. Also, our annual Opening Day Plant Sale, Crafters, and Old Bag Sale, Saturday May 11th 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 on page 2 of this newsletter. Plans are also underway for our annual Members Only Cocktail Party on June 21st, and the annual Fall Living History Day event October 5th, that will celebrate harvest-time activities and traditional New England crafting. **Please mark your calendars and plan on attending these events!**

P.S. "Concerts on the Lawn" sound of interest? We are considering hosting some local bands and musicians for a fun summertime family activity. If you would like to be involved with the effort, contact Sally at info@stonehousemuseum.org.

Kitchen Garden

The 2019 Kitchen Garden will look familiar to you all. The herb garden doesn't move, and most of the herbs are perennial. We do dig up and carry our rosemary home each year, since it can't survive the harsh New England winters. The parsley, basil, dill, fennel, and tomatoes are annuals, so they are replanted each spring. In the fall, we prune back perennial herbs, plant garlic for the next season, and harvest whatever is left in the four vegetable beds. Each year, we rotate beans, tomatoes, potatoes, parsnips, carrots, onions, beans, and selected other vegetables. Our summers are spent cultivating, planting, feeding, and weeding the beds. Visitors are always welcome to pick a few herbs to take home, and when produce is available, we give it away freely to members and visitors. The beds are small, so amounts are limited, but we love sharing!! We hope you will join us this season in enjoying our 19th century gardens!



Our Clothing Collection and Our New Special Exhibit

The museum has been fortunate to have had so many people in town donate their families' historic clothing from the early 1800s through the early 20th century. For years, our collection has not been organized in a user-friendly way. Now, that has changed!

The museum committee wrote a grant which included our attending classes about ways to run the museum more efficiently. The grant also provided a stipend to help us accomplish a project which would put what we had learned to work. Our program choice was to hire an expert in historic clothing so that each item in our collection could be properly labeled.



One of our own members, Patricia Warner, Ph.D. Fashion/Costume design, UMASS Professor Emerita, has the knowledge base we needed and was willing to help us. We met weekly through January and February and made it through almost all our dresses, each tagged with a description of the dress, the type of fabric and when it was in style. Our next step is to hang the dresses in chronological order.

This project is the inspiration for the Stone House's exhibit, The Art of Fashion, for this year's ArtWalk, April 27 and for our Special Exhibit over the next two years.



Support Our Sponsors

- A Healing Touch Therapeutic Massage
- Alden Credit Union
- Alix & Son's Computer Center
- Beers & Story Funeral Home
- Belchertown Photos
- Bell & Hudson Insurance Agency, Inc.
- Bulldog Finish Carpentry
- Christopher Heights of Belchertown
- Cold Spring Discount Liquor
- Country Bank
- DF Plumbing & Mechanical
- Don's Auto Service Inc.
- Easthampton Savings Bank
- Florence Bank
- Ginnybrook Farm
- Grapevine Grille
- Green Acres Equestrian Center, LLC
- Gregory A. Galanek, Attorney
- Hargeo Auto Service, LLC
- Hodgen Landscape Co., Inc.
- Holistic Health Care Services Inc.
- Hulmes Transportation
- Jones Group Real Estate
- Judith Roberts
- Kristina's Kafe and Bakery
- Lead Yourself Youth
- Liberty Nails
- Liberty Orchards Landscaping
- Making Waves
- Megan's Valley Garden & Landscape Supply
- Mill Valley Splicing, Inc.
- Minfen Kitchen
- Minuteman Pest Control
- Moulton Insurance Agency, Inc.
- Noonan Energy
- Quabbin Service Center
- Quabbin Valley Acupuncture
- Roadhouse Cafe
- Sedelow Electric
- ShedWorks Inc.
- Snow's Self Storage
- Station 5 Salon
- Sunraise Printing
- Valley Dentists of Belchertown
- Villa Rose Restaurant
- Ye Olde Grog Shoppe

Save us postage! Send in your dues today!

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**



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

ARCHIVIST: CLIFF MCCARTHY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

PEG LOURAINÉ AMY MORAN
 ERICA MORRISON-BRAZITIS
 TONY TRIFONE

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

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING!

The 2019 “Call to the Meeting” of the Belchertown Historical Association will be held Sunday, April 28th at the Hope United Methodist Church—starting with a potluck dinner at 5pm.

Note: The 28th day of April, 1740 was the date of the first legal meeting ever held in Cold Spring, the settlement which later became the Town of Belchertown.

At this meeting the President of the Association shares some of the successful projects the Board of Trustees has worked on during the past year, thanks volunteers for their hard work and presents goals for the year ahead. Members of the association elect trustees and officers of the board, vote on any changes to the by-laws, and discuss any other business matters of concern put forth on the agenda.

We are hoping for a good turn-out. 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 treats.

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

