



"THE STONE HOUSE MUSEUM"

Belchertown Historical Association
Belchertown, Massachusetts
1903—2024

May 2024

Volume 24, Issue 1

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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

2024 Calendar

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

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

Opening Day at the Museum

Saturday May 11 @ 9 - 2 FREE

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

Stone House Museum

Open May through October

Saturday @ 2 - 5 pm

Admission: **FREE** for Members; \$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$2 children
Call us to arrange private tours.

Members Only Cocktail Party

Friday, June 14th @ 6 - 8 pm

Museum grounds—a fun time, rain or shine! Look for an invite in the mail.

Dwight Day

Saturday June 15 - Dwight Chapel

Ice Cream Social—Free/open to all!

Sunday, July 21 Museum grounds

Living History Day—free/open to all

September 14th—Museum Grounds

Fair Day Weekend—Sept 20-22

Halloween Tours - October 27

Yuletide—November 2

Volunteers needed:

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

We also need individuals with experience in fundraising and development.

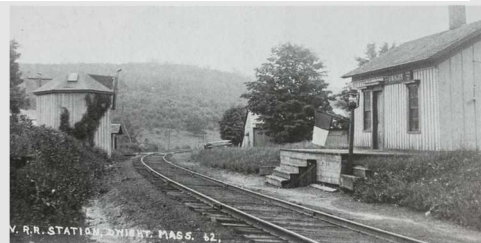
CELEBRATING OUR ROOTS

Dear Friends,

Spring is here, and with the change 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! Over the winter 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.

As we begin a new year with Opening Day on May 11, planning for our wonderful, almost-monthly events that give a rhythm to our Association's year are underway! Our cocktail party, ice-cream social, the Fair, Halloween event, in-person Yuletide, and Murder Dinner and the personal contacts that go along with them are annual milestones in our lives, and we are appreciative of the Trustees and volunteers who have pitched in and pushed so we can regain the momentum of all these events. We are also excited by two new events this year:

Dwight Day, will be held on Saturday, June 15 at Dwight Station, and will celebrate with lectures and activities the life of that historic section of Belchertown, and the Stone House will sponsor a **Living History Day** on Saturday, September 14, which will serve as our commemoration of the beginning of the anniversary of the War of Independence, and will feature reënactors in period costumes and traditional craft demonstrations.



Central Vermont Railroad Station, Dwight, postcard, undated. medium.com/@mcarolan

Over the winter much work has been done by the Museum and Fundraising Committees, 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. In particular, the Museum Committee continues to devote an **incredible amount of energy and work** to restoring the interior of the house, and to give it a much-needed facelift—and preparing for the 200th Anniversary Year of the construction of the Stone House in 2027!

Period-appropriate wallpapers and repairing plaster are only the beginnings of the work that has been going on, and it's very exciting to see this amount of energy in the house. At the museum, the trim repair and exterior painting of house and barn is almost complete, and repairs to the chimney have been long overdue; next will be a new picket fence, and the removal of the tree stump out front. We are thankful to Trustee **Sally Shattuck** for all she has done to coordinate these projects.

At the Washington District Schoolhouse, work is continuing on the interior of the building; we are building a storage room and installing interior stairs to the basement, and the installation of electricity is still

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Opening Day at the Museum: May 11th—Please join us!



The Belchertown Historical Association is holding its Opening Day activities at the Stone House Museum on Saturday, May 11th from 9-2. Visitors will be able to tour the house free of charge while viewing the many new renovations to the interior of the house. **This year's displays focus on "Crossroads"**. Belchertown played an integral part in the carriage manufacturing business, hosted two large hotels on the common as well as an inn. Trains came through town several times a day bringing visitors from the cities as well as travelers from across neighboring states. Travelers could then ride by carriage down to the lakes where they could stroll and enjoy the cooler temperatures. Exhibits throughout the museum and out buildings will showcase examples of carriages, clothing, luggage, maps, and photographs.

We could use your help to make this Opening Day extra special!

OLD BAGS—We are looking for donations of gently used pocketbooks, backpacks, and tote bags. Old bags can be dropped in the collection boxes at the Easthampton Savings Bank, North Brookfield Savings Bank, Bell and Hudson Insurance Company, the Senior Center, Clapp Memorial Library, Town Hall Lobby, Ransaka Gift Shop, Swift River Gift Shop, Making Waves Salon, Looks to Kill Salon, Liberty Nails, Beauty of Orchids Nail Salon, Station 5 Salon, Tina Marie's Hair and Boutique, and Dynamic Do's Salon. Contact person for Old Bags: **Diane Genie** (860) 306-0946 and **Beth Jacobs** (413) 687-1073



PLANTS—Every year the plant sale receives many donations of perennials dug from gardens in our community and generously donated to the plant sale. Please check your gardens for new plants that can be potted now and have time to recover and look their best in time for the sale. We are looking for flowering plants, shade plants, vegetable plants, trees, shrubs, bulbs, fruit bearing plants and house plants. Plants can be brought to the Stone House during the week before the sale. For more information email **Sally Shattuck**: sallyshattuck54@gmail.com

CRAFTS and ARTWORK—Part of the 2024 Opening Day at the Stone House Museum will be a celebration of local creativity and ingenuity. We are again inviting local artists, craft artisans, and culinary artists to exhibit and sell their wares. Booth space is limited. Applications will be processed on a first come basis. 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 **Denise Smith** at 413-537-3030, or email her at dsmith39@charter.net.



PARTICIPATION—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.

President's Message continued from page 1

in progress. This whole process is extremely complicated, and we continue to be extremely grateful to **Bill Austin** for all his help and guidance. We continue to need **help with fundraising**, as none of us is an expert in this. We are so grateful for the more than 100 people who have contributed to this project, but we still estimate that the whole project will cost about \$150,000 more than we have raised.

In terms of special fundraising, we have again printed a new program book this year, and will continue to proudly distribute our beautiful **fifth** annual (except during COVID) program booklet, which is now available. With guidance from **Mary Knight**, we have produced 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 remain excited and humbled by the support of the many local businesses that support us in this endeavor by purchasing ads in our program, and sponsoring our events! The programs represent our Museum and our annual events and we will make them available to the public throughout the year. These brochures will be available around town and will be available at all of our vents. **PLEASE let our local sponsors know that you appreciate their support of our local museum!**



As a hopeful new beginning, WE ARE PLANNING TO HAVE OUR TRADITIONAL OPENING DAY ON MAY 11! (See separate article.) This will be a wonderful opportunity to see the renovated Dining Room, Front Parlor, and entrance hallway. The house looks truly splendid; we can't wait for you all to see the dramatic results!

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 we 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 info@stonehousemuseum.org or (413) 323-7452.

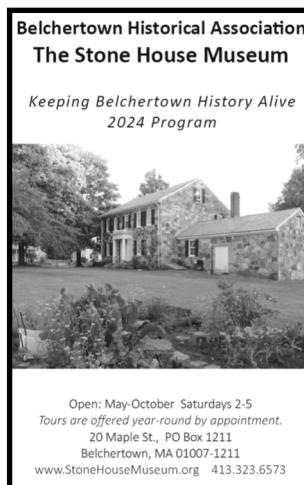
Please watch for future updates; we certainly hope to see you all around the grounds of the Museum!

Hot off the Press!

Please review and share the latest Stone House Museum Program to learn about all the exciting events coming up in 2024—from Opening Day to Yuletide in the Stonehouse, and the Murder Mystery Dinner in February 2025.

Read about **Dwight Day (6/15)** on the grounds of Dwight Chapel celebrating this distinct and historic village in North Belchertown, and **Living History Day (9/14)** at the Stone House focused on the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War period. Learn also about updates in the Museum (page 16) and new acquisitions (page 17), and refresh your memory on the buildings on the museum property and the services offered with our archives and genealogical database.

Please also join us in thanking our local businesses and supporters for their generosity.



New Membership Year

Sincere thanks for your continued support in the preservation and promotion of our community's heritage. Membership donations, business sponsorships and our successful fundraising events enable us to care for the Stone House Museum, its collections, exhibits, and programs, ensuring that Belchertown's history will be preserved for future generations.

Regular members, please use the enclosed form to renew your membership at the highest possible level.

Lifetime members, although you do not need to renew your membership annually, please use the enclosed form to update your membership information – especially e-mail – and make an additional donation if you would like to do so.

To all of our members, we ask that you help us to increase our membership by inviting family, friends and neighbors to join the Association or by giving gift memberships. Our website has membership forms available or you can call me to request extra membership forms. Check our website www.stonehousemuseum.org and Facebook page [@TheBelchertownStoneHouseMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/TheBelchertownStoneHouseMuseum) to keep up with our latest projects and view pictures from our events. I look forward to seeing you at the annual festive Members' Cocktail Party!

Sincerely, Thomas Stockton, President
323-7452 or tstockton@earthlink.net



BELCHERTOWN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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 CALL US AT 413 323-6573 OR
 EMAIL INFO@STONEHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG

ARCHIVIST: CLIFF MCCARTHY

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

ANNUAL MEETING held April 28, 2024

The Annual Meeting of The Belchertown Historical Association was held virtually on April 28th. President Tom Stockton welcomed attendees and paused to remember members who have passed since the last annual meeting.

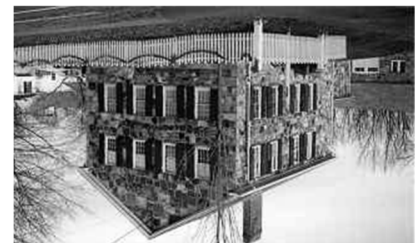
He then introduced the business portion of the meeting. The Minutes and Treasurer's Report were reviewed and voted unanimously. Members Sally Shattuck, Tony Trifone and Maureen Austin were nominated for re-election and voted unanimously. Mary Ann Brennan was nominated to fill a vacant seat (Amy Moran has moved out of the area); she was voted unanimously. The slate of Board officers was presented and voted unanimously: Tom Stockton, President; Denise Smith and Erica Morrison-Brazitis, co-Vice Presidents; Maureen Austin, Treasurer, and Sally Shattuck, Secretary.



At the conclusion of the formal meeting, Tom thanked volunteers and the trustees for their effort. Special kudos were offered to Cliff McCarthy, Becki Smith, Bill Austin and Mary Knight. He went on to share accomplishments and challenges of managing the Stone House Museum and listed off the exciting events planned for 2024. All of which are included in this newsletter and our 2024 Program booklet.

**Annual Membership Renewal and
 Spring Fundraising Form inside**

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



Save us postage! Please send in your dues and donations today.

Use this form or download one at www.stonehousemuseum.org/member

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 Life Member (Donation only)

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 Individual Life Member

\$400 Couple Life Member

Life Member = no annual renewal

Corporate Matching Program

Double your tax-deductible donation by attaching a matching gift form from your employer.

Member Dues enclosed:

\$ _____

Please check off categories on left

Donation \$ _____ Direct this gift to

School House renovation

Other: _____

Specify In Honor or In Memory of:

Annual Membership and Spring 2024 Fundraising Drive

While the membership dues are low, we depend on this revenue stream to help with administrative costs.

We also invite donations to help us renovate the School House and as honor/memorial gifts. Each will be recognized as directed.

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**