



"THE STONE HOUSE MUSEUM"

Belchertown Historical Association
Belchertown, Massachusetts
1903—2011

April 2011

Volume 11, Issue 2

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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

2011 Calendar
Save the dates and share them with family, friends, neighbors!



Annual Meeting & Potluck Supper
Sunday, May 1 6pm
home of Denise and Dan Smith
32 South Main Street, Belchertown



Stone House Museum
Open May through October
Saturday 2—5 pm
and by Appointment (call 323-6573)
Admission: **FREE** for Members;
\$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$2 children

Opening Day Event
Saturday, May 7 9-2
Plant Sale / Old Bags / Crafters
On the Grounds of the Museum

Member Cocktail Party
Friday, June 24 6-8 pm
On the Grounds of the Museum

Living History Days
August—Details coming soon!



Volunteers Needed!

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 Tom at 323-0946.**

A Season of Change

BY TOM STOCKTON, PRESIDENT

With the sightings of the first robins of spring 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.

First, **OUR PIPES DIDN'T FREEZE!** Thanks to **Pete Stebbins** and **Tony Trifone** for their excellent work insulating the kitchen water pipes!

Much work has been done during the winter months by the Museum Committee, the Membership Committee and the Finance 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.

Our Annual Meeting will be at the home of **Denise and Dan Smith**, 32 South Main Street. We are grateful to the Smith's for opening their home, and hope that having our meeting there will boost our attendance at this year's event. As usual, this will be a pot-luck supper followed by our annual meeting. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Much work has been done also at the Tremaine House in order to maintain that property, and still more work is planned for the Spring and Summer. In the Stone House work continues toward replacing our climate control system and to address certain structural issues inside the museum. We

were awarded two Community Preservation Grants at 2009's town meeting, and are now informed that the funds can be released to us. We are waiting to actually receive the funds before commencing work.

As we get ready to open the museum, we need volunteers—just let us know your interests and availability!

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 Sixth Annual February Dinner Theater held at the Villa Rose in Ludlow.

This is a great year to be involved with history, and the town's 250th Celebration Committee has been

hard at work planning events to celebrate the history of our town. The New Year's Eve event was very successful, and even though much of our furniture was moved upstairs to accommodate the New Years Eve crowds and the Yuletide event, it was rewarding to see how impressed so many people were with our beautiful museum. Let's hope this year sees a great increase in membership and local attendance at the Stone House!

The second event for the 250th celebration was a gala Ball held at the Belchertown High School on April 2. The Association



For a complete update, I urge you to come to our Annual Meeting, Sunday May 1st!

Continued on page 3

Opening Day at the Stone House Museum Saturday May 7—Just in time for Mother's Day

Highlights:

Stone House Museum grounds

Free Admission

9am—2pm

A variety of shopping opportunities!

Old Bags—incredible selection, phenomenal prices

Perennials—something for everyone to show off in their garden this year

Crafters—local talent selling their creations

This is a FUN FUNDRAISER!



Annual Plant Sale

Calling all Green
Thumbs from near
and far!



- ◆ If you have perennials in your yard that you can dig up and pot, please bring them to the Stone House and leave them by the Print Shop. We would like all the donations **by Sunday May 1.**
- ◆ If you have perennials to donate, but you would like someone to come dig and pot them for you, **please call Sally Shattuck (323-4239).** Leave your name and phone number and I will arrange a time to come to your home and get the plants.
- ◆ If you would like to donate your time, we will need volunteers to help dig, pot, sort plants and set up tables on Friday afternoon, and sell on Saturday, May 7.
- ◆ If you know someone that has perennials in their garden, PLEASE encourage them to donate some to this event in support of our beautiful museum.

Please contact **Sally Shattuck** about any questions or donations. 323-4239, or e-mail sallyshattuck@charter.net

CRAFTERS WANTED

Craftspeople and local artists are invited to display and sell their products. If you or a friend would like to be part of this event, contact us for info on participation fees and an application.

Carol Mierzewski

(323 4344 or emierzewsk@aol.com) or

Gerri Amprimo

(323 8633 or Gaamprimo@aol.com)



The “Old Bags” Need Your Help Again!

The Belchertown Historical Association is seeking donations of new and gently used hand bags, totes, wallets, purses, etc. for the Seventh Annual “Old Bag Sale” to be held on Opening Day, May 7th on the grounds of The Stone House Museum at Maple St., in Belchertown. This annual fundraiser has proven to be very popular and we need to collect as many bags as possible.

Now is a great time to clean out your closet and donate to a worthy cause at the same time. Remember that bag you just fell in love with and had to have...and have never used, well now is the time to give that bag a hand! New and gently used bags may be dropped off at the following Belchertown Businesses:

- ◆ Bell & Hudson Insurance Co. [19 North Main St.]
- ◆ Easthampton Savings Bank [10 Turkey Hill Rd., Rts. 202 & 21]
- ◆ Jones-Bay Path Realty [10 South Main St.]
- ◆ Station 5 Salon [5 Jabish St.]
- ◆ Making Waves The Salon [8 Jabish St., behind the Laundromat]
- ◆ Looks To Kill [40 Daniel Shays Highway]

If you have a large amount of bags to donate, please call **Linda Snow** at 413-256-4936 to arrange for pick up.

Remember the best excuse to get a new bag is because you got rid of an “Old Bag”!

Belchertown 250th Anniversary Ball was Enjoyed by all!



Message from our President Continued from Page 1

had two tables of attendees, and several of us came in historic costumes. (We had two hoopskirts, a 19th century gentleman, a flapper and an elegant lady from the 40s!) The food was fabulous and the Heritage Pops Orchestra was a lot of fun to listen and dance to!

Watch for the third 250th event, a Picnic on the common with entertainment, a quilt show, a carriage show and "Celebrate Belchertown" booths on the common. The Stone House will have a booth and be open for tours on that day, July 2. (This important event has caused us to move our usual Living History Days weekend to August this year.)

As spring progresses we begin to look forward to our traditional springtime activities at the Stone House. Don't miss our **Annual Meeting** on Sunday May 1st at 6:00 at 32 South Main Street. 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 a potluck dinner.

Our annual **Opening Day**, with its Plant Sale, Old Bag Sale and Crafters, on **Saturday May 7th** will be a wonderful opportunity to shop AND support your Association. **We can use your help**, so please check out page 2 in this newsletter to see how you might assist us.

Plans are also underway for our annual **Members Only Cocktail Party, June 24th**, and this year our **Living History Days** event will take the form of a FARM TOUR and SQUARE and CONTRA-dance in August. This will be a lot of fun, help draw attention to our agrarian history and our agrarian present, as well as serving as a much-needed fundraiser. Events will include a **Farm Tour**, our **new Belchertown Time-Line exhibit** and other fun and educational events including the Agricultural Commission-sponsored **historic small engines** on the Common.

Please mark your calendars and plan on attending these events—and I hope to see a really great turnout at our annual meeting!

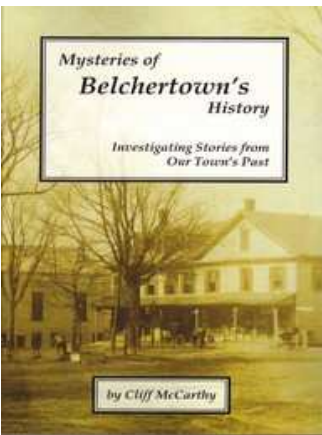
"HISTORY DOUBLE-HEADER" DELIGHTS LIBRARY AUDIENCE

Two local authors spoke to a rapt audience at the Clapp Memorial Library on March 21st. Dr. **Robert H. Romer**, former physics professor at Amherst College, addressed the subject of "Slavery in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts" and Stone House archivist **Cliff McCarthy** read from his new book, "Mysteries of Belchertown's History".

In *Slavery in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts* (Levellers Press, 2009), Robert H. Romer demonstrates that slavery was pervasive in the Pioneer Valley in the 1700s, where many of the ministers and other "important people" owned black slaves. In his talk, Professor Romer presented a "snapshot" of slavery, choosing a moment (1752) and a place (the main street of Deerfield) to present detailed information about the slaves who lived in that place at that time – and their owners. Some twenty-five slaves belonging to fifteen different owners lived on that mile-long street in 1752. He emphasized that these were individuals, some born in Africa, some born as slaves in New England, forced to live their lives as property, always subject to being sold away at the whim of an owner. His work brings out of obscurity the many black slaves who lived in the Valley, the invisible men and women of our colonial past.



Peg Louraine won the door prize: a copy of Dr. Romer's book



Cliff McCarthy's book, **Mysteries of Belchertown's History**, is a compilation of three dozen articles that have appeared in The Sentinel newspaper over the past decade. Using some images from the collection of the Stone House Museum, the author read six stories from the book, including "The Abduction of Angeline Palmer" and "The Mother of 400 Children", an homage to foster-mother Germaine Desilets.

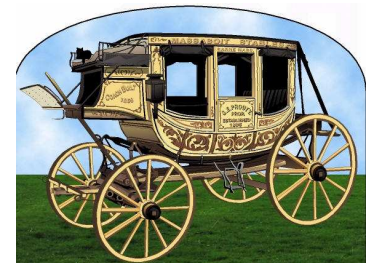
Both authors remained afterwards to answer questions and sign books.

Just in time for Belchertown's 250th anniversary, Cliff McCarthy, Archivist at the Stone House Museum and contributor to The Sentinel newspaper, has released a new book that examines tales and mysteries of Belchertown's past. All proceeds from the book will help fund the town's 250th celebrations in 2011. . The book is available at the Town Clerk's office.

Great Memento of Belchertown's 250th

Cat's Meow figures of the Belchertown Historical Association's stage coach are available at **Rannsaka** (115 North Main Street) and **Swift River Crafts** (51 South Main Street - on the common) for **\$15.00**.

Typical of stage coaches that ran through Belchertown in the 19th Century, this coach was built in Concord New Hampshire in 1869, and purchased by the Belchertown Historical Association in 1929. The coach is now housed at the Ford Annex on the grounds of the Stone House Museum. Great collector item to buy and share!



Membership Update

Carol Mierzewski, Chair

It is that time of year again when memberships come up for renewal. Our membership year is May 1- April 30. You should have received renewal forms in the mail. If you did not, call me. Please feel free to contact me (emierzewsk@aol.com or #323 4344) with any changes of address. Thank you to all who have already renewed. Fuel, plowing, and mailing costs have increased after this hard winter. We would appreciate your prompt response.

Our goals are to maintain our present membership and to increase our numbers. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to become members. The membership form is below and can be downloaded from our web site: www.stonehousemuseum.org.

The Belchertown Historical Association exists primarily on income from your membership, event admissions, donations, and bequests. This enables us to care for the Stone House Museum and its collections and offer varied exhibits and programs to Members and the Community.

Your Membership renewal is a sound investment in our Community Treasure. Consider renewing and make history with us.



Don't miss out! Membership is affordable, fun and rewarding!

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Belchertown Historical Association (BHA)

MEMBERSHIP FORM – May 1, 2011 thru April 30, 2012

I am pleased to support the Stone House Museum and the BHA Belchertown Historical Association



I am interested in getting involved in activities of the Association. Best way / time to contact me:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

If this is a Gift Membership, please indicate who the gift is from: _____

Membership Category:

Individual \$15 Student (<18) \$5 Senior (>64) \$8 Family \$30 (adult and children <18)

Friend \$50 Patron \$100 Benefactor \$250 Additional donation: \$ _____

Membership Donation in honor in memory of _____

Eligible for Corporate Matching Program (attach employer's corporate matching gift form)

Total enclosed: \$ _____ Send completed form and tax-deductible check (payable to Belchertown Historical Association) to **The Belchertown Historical Association PO Box 1211, Belchertown, MA 01007-1211**



BELCHERTOWN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
 P.O. BOX 1211 BELCHERTOWN, MA
 01007 | VISIT US AT THE STONE HOUSE,
 CALL US AT 413 323-6573 OR VIEW US AT
 WWW.STONEHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG

ASS'T CURATOR: SHIRLEY BOCK
 ARCHIVIST: CLIFF MCCARTHY

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MEMBERS NEWSLETTER —
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Murder Mystery Dinner

Thanks to all who supported our sixth annual Murder Mystery Dinner in February. 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 Historical Association and also as a fundraiser for the Congregational Church. The actors performed Paula Hilton's *Fatal Football Fever*, a high-energy comedy/mystery about a professional football team coming to town. Someone was murdered (or course) and bedlam ensued, resulting in an evening of entertainment that delighted the audience.

More than 100 people came to the Villa Rose to support this much-needed fundraiser. The food was wonderful, the staff was 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 Grapevine Grille, and all who attended this fun, mid-winter event.



Thank you Ron!

The Belchertown Copy Center, locally owned and operated by Ron Po-bieglo has closed. Through the years Ron has taken care of a variety of print jobs for the Belchertown Historical Association: our Newsletter, Membership mailings, raffle tickets, advertising flyers and more. We are sorry to see your business close and thank you for your years of outstanding service to us. We wish you the best of luck .

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