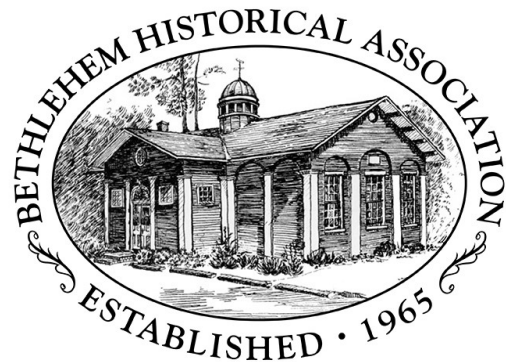


Bethlehem Historical Association NEWSLETTER Summer 2016



Parade of Fashion 1860s to 1960s



Don't miss the summer exhibit at the schoolhouse. Dresses representing styles that span a century as well as clothing for men and children are on display. You will also see wonderful selections of hats, accessories and even sewing notions. Many thanks to Marian Davis, Faith Fuller, Linda Schacht and Ann VanDervort for the time and creative talent they brought to this tremendous effort. Charlie Fuller and Tim Beebe were a big help working behind the scenes. Now through August 28 the museum is open Sundays from 2 to 4 PM. All welcome! Free!



Can you find us at the museum this summer?



The Bethlehem Historical Association

Cedar Hill Schoolhouse
1003 River Road
P.O. Box 263
Selkirk, NY 12158
(518) 767-9432
bethhist1965@gmail.com
BethlehemHistorical.org

OFFICERS

President: Karen Beck
Vice President: Wendy Brandow
Recording Secretary:
Sue Gutman
Corresponding Secretary:
Sharon Sestak
Treasurer: Anne Young

TRUSTEES

Tim Beebe
Charles Fuller
Sheila Giordano
Carl Gutman
Norma June
Dawn Pratt
William Seyler

Newsletter Editors

Karen Beck & Susan Leath

News & Notes

Pardon our Appearance

Please pardon our appearance as we undergo some much needed improvements at the Schoolhouse. An overhead door and new flooring in the carriage house will provide more space for display and storage. Inside the Schoolhouse, cases and cabinets are being renovated and rearranged in order to allow better access to our resources and a more efficient workspace for our volunteers. We thank Charlie Fuller for his clever ideas and hard work so quietly and cheerfully done.



Outside, The Town Highway Department has removed some overgrown shrubs both from the front of the Schoolhouse and a few locations on the grounds. The department will also be removing gravel, amending the soil and adding a railing to the steps. When the timing is right, we will install low maintenance plantings that are appropriate in the context of our country schoolhouse. We thank our good friends, "the highway guys", who do so much for us.

Education Team News

The Young Historians co chairs recently spoke with member Nick Petracione who is the Social Studies Chairman for Bethlehem Central Schools. Nick had shared information about their History Detectives lessons with the elementary teachers and already has 2nd and 4th grades in three schools on board for the 2016-2017 school year! We thank Debbie Croscup and Linda Davies who are working on adapting lessons and creating new ideas during the summer months.

2016-2017 Program Schedule

We have a full roster of fine speakers lined up for the upcoming season. We will open on September 15 with Tom Allison talking about the history of the circus. Did you know that a druggist in Albany had much to do with several familiar aspects of the American circus? We hope to see you there! We thank Galen Ritchie for all his help getting our speakers in place.

*Live for Today
Dream for Tomorrow
Learn from Yesterday*



Ashley Hogan crafts a fine decorative hook under the skilled supervision of Jim Moran, BHA member and blacksmith. Jim recently demonstrated his craft for us at the Normans Kill Farm Park blacksmith shop. It was great fun!

President's Annual Report

By Karen Beck

Presented at the Annual Membership Meeting on May 19

Good evening, Everyone. It is my pleasure to present the annual review of the year as it gives me the opportunity to share with you some of our many accomplishments. It also provides a chance to publicly thank our members, because of course, without their support, BHA would not exist.

As our fiscal year began June 1, I will begin there.

The annual Ice Cream Social and museum open hours over the summer attracted 200 visitors. The exhibit featured a nostalgic look back at businesses, clothing and other items from the 1960's. For the first time in many years the Toll house was spiffed up and open as well. We recognize Ann VanDervort for her ongoing creative efforts and hard work. We also thank all the volunteers who serve as greeters, and particularly Dawn Pratt for organizing that effort.

In September our Executive Committee held its first meeting. This group handles all the day to day business of BHA as well as the planning of events and programs, so it seemed wise to begin to try meeting every month instead of every other month as had been the practice for many years. This the members have willingly done, in addition to handling whatever responsibilities accompany their office or committee. There were twenty-two people, or fully 10% of the membership, on the Executive Committee this year so we had excellent representation.

Everything the Executive Committee has done, and plans to do, has been driven by our purpose as stated in our bylaws, which basically says that we will collect, preserve, display and interpret historical information and items. This, of course, is what every NYS chartered museum is required to do. BHA is expected to fulfill that mandate by scheduling public events and programs, as well as by providing access to our resources and opening the museum as much as possible. It is a laudable but tall order for a volunteer organization. Finding ways to meet that challenge is energizing and sparks creativity.

On October 15, after a year of preparation, a revision of the bylaws was passed, the vote was strong, 20 to 2. In a short time this evening, we will be addressing a few amendments that are proposed to refine that document.

Our program chair, Galen Richie, scheduled a variety of interesting topics that attracted many new people to our programs. Our attendance has been strong with an average of 41 present each month. As has been noticed in recent years, however, the ability to simultaneously conduct a meaningful membership meeting is no longer realistic as there is not a consistent, engaged core of members present, and it is an awkward situation for our guests.

Study of the visitor book over the past two years shows that approximately one third of those in our audience each month are now non – members. Other than the executive committee, there were total of 49 other members who attended programs this past season, but of those 49, 28 of

them came to just one program. One member, Chris Phillippo, came 5 times: and there was only one who came to 6 programs - Bill Seyler. None attended all seven.

As we are committed to make everyone in our audience feel warmly welcomed and comfortable, we decided to do what so many similar organizations have long been doing, which is to schedule one annual membership meeting, and call for additional meetings whenever there is a reason to do so.

The Executive Committee has been evaluating the ways we communicate with our members and the community.

We began to make our monthly minutes and treasury reports available to members.

Due to increased cost of printing and postage, it was decided to discontinue the monthly postcard reminders. Instead we have consolidated the information and sent just two seasonal postcards, which seems to suffice just fine.

Susan Leath, our publicity chair, efficiently broadcasts word of our events in the print media. Matt Barron recently began working with Susan and is bringing new ideas to the website and Facebook page.

E-mail continues to grow as an important means of communication for us. As of May 1, we had 119 member addresses. Our telephone committee continues to notify those who are without e-mail and wish to be called.

We sent out newsletters in October and March, with a third one planned for July.

Finally, we continue to put together a yearbook. I believe we are the only group in the county to do so.

Because there are so many details involved with the running of the organization and the turn over is high, we have introduced a Procedure Handbook to improve internal communication. This is a binder of information used as a reference to help ensure continuity and smooth transitions.

Challenged by the space and storage limitations of this building, which we use for multi-purposes, an ad-hoc committee has been formed to address the issues. This Facility Committee has already come up with creative ways to optimize the use of our space which we are implementing as resources allow.

Our Ways and Means chairs, Wendy Brandow and Linda Schacht, dusted off a couple of ideas that had been successful here in the past and found that they work just fine today. Taking advantage of the fact that this building is a polling location, Wendy and Linda organized three very successful bake sales on voting days. They also hold a 50/50 raffle at our monthly programs, which has brought us some fun as well as additional revenue. Their efforts raised over \$1200 this year.

Sharon Sestak, our dependable, efficient membership chair, reports that our membership as of May 1, prior to renewals, totaled 50 families and 102 individuals. Sharon has taken the initiative to put together an informative packet which she gives to all new members.

You might have noticed that our membership remittance envelope no longer has a "business membership" option. That is because we have instead initiated a separate business sponsorship program. We are hopeful that this effort in time will increase our revenue as well as forge good partnerships with businesses in our community.

One of the long standing traditions that we all enjoy is the annual Silver Tea. A group of talented, hard workers, Jan Brown, Tim Beebe, David Marshall, Sharon Sestak, Bill Seyler and Charlie Fuller joined the Display Committee, chaired by Ann VanDervort and Faith Fuller, to transform the schoolhouse using the theme "Cozy Plaids and Sparkling Lights".

Continued on page 4

President's Annual Report continued...

Kathy Newkirk and Dawn Pratt organized the refreshments for both the tea and the monthly programs. You can only fully appreciate that undertaking if you have spent even 5 minutes trying to work in our tiny kitchen. They don't just manage but set a beautiful table as well.

This year, as usual, the DAR, the Bethlehem Garden Club and the Senior Citizens took advantage of the festive décor by using the building for their holiday parties. We enjoy sharing the space with other community organizations.

The inventory of our collections began January first. This is a huge undertaking that will continue for some time. First, we needed to update the 1994 Collection Management Policy, a NYS requirement. We lost count of the hours that Faith Fuller, Sue Gutman, Ann VanDervort, Linda Schacht and others spent on the many steps involved, but all agree that it is not only worthwhile but very engaging and we had good times working together.

That project necessitated the relocation of our January and February afternoon meetings to the Delmar Reformed Church where we attracted new visitors, four of whom decided to join.

Charles Fuller, our Building and Grounds Chair, has a good working relationship with the Town, most often interacting with the highway department. Largely because of his efforts, among other things there is new carpeting in the vestibule and ongoing improvements to the lighting inside and out. Charlie himself built new shelving in the basement designed to hold the archival boxes of clothing and also reconfigured our coat rack to accommodate twice the number of coats. (Charlie is on that facility committee I just mentioned)

Thanks to the generosity of members Bruce and Mary Ann Shubert who were concerned for the future of an outhouse on their property, it is now safely situated behind the Schoolhouse. Again it was Charlie who organized the arrangements for the move and installation by working with the Town Highway Department.

At the invitation of a second grade teacher, our Education Committee chairs, Deborah Croscup and Linda Davies, created a lesson and visited the Becker School in February. They have since adapted the lesson for fourth grade and currently are working on preparing materials specific to the Bethlehem Schools. This is an excellent example of BHA fulfilling its promise to the community.

The Historic Resources Committee has been somewhat inactive in recent years. The death of Lois Dillon in August left new member, Nan Heinzen, alone and wondering what she had gotten into. There had been a great deal of good work done but the records are scattered so getting that organized seemed a good place to start. Nan has a good perspective on the committee and its role which will be addressed in the coming season.

A total of seven hundred and seventy-six visitors signed the book this year. That includes those who attended the programs, events, summer museum hours and groups who made special arrangements to visit. We are determined and optimistic that the number will grow.

Before closing, I want to mention some very important people. First, our elected officers: Vice president, Wendy Brandow, recording secretary, Sue Gutman, Corresponding Secretary, Sharon Sestak and Treasurer, Anne Young. I can tell you that these women take their jobs seriously and perform them professionally. We are fortunate. Thank you.

And finally, the Trustees, those who handle the really big decisions. They are responsible for the oversight of BHA

and its collections. I personally have depended on them a great deal and thank them for their support throughout the year: Tim Beebe, Charles Fuller, Sheila Giordano, Carl Gutman, Norma June, Dawn Pratt and outgoing Trustee, George Lenhardt.

It has been a very busy but productive year. As in all such situations, we have not pleased everyone all of the time and there have been a few miss-steps along the way. But a more enthusiastic, fair-minded group, all volunteers, cannot be found. With their efforts, the Bethlehem Historical Association is getting stronger and going forward. Thank you, everyone.

Annual Meeting Report

Our annual meeting was held at the Schoolhouse on May 19. Twenty-nine people were in attendance. All elected officers are now beginning the second year of their term.

Trustees Charles Fuller and Norma June agreed to accept a second three-year term. George Lenhardt opted not to serve a second term. Over the years, George has willingly filled many roles for BHA, including president. We thank George for his many years of service.

We welcome Bill Seyler to the Board of Trustees. Bill is a retired engineer, a dependable supporter of BHA and a long time volunteer in town. He will be a fine asset to the organization.

All proposed amendments to the bylaws passed. (The bylaws will be included in the yearbook which will be distributed about September 1)

The Budget, which includes money designated for building improvements was accepted.

The business meeting was followed by a delightful dessert buffet organized by Kathy Newkirk and Dawn Pratt.

Trustee Report

In addition to attending all the monthly Executive Committee meetings, the Trustees met six times this past season. Carl Gutman served as chair and Tim Beebe was the recorder.

One important accomplishment was the approval of a Conflict of Interest policy, which the NYS Revitalization Act of 2014 requires of all non – profit organizations. Those forms have been completed and are on file.

The Trustees reviewed and prepared proposed amendments to the bylaws. They then conducted that vote at the annual meeting.

During our ongoing inventory process, the Collection Committee has recommended items for de-accession. The Trustees reviewed the decisions and agreed with the advice of the Collection committee on the disposition of the items. All this was done in accordance with our Collection Management Policy, which was updated this year.

Our Business Sponsors

We have initiated a Business Sponsorship program, and are very pleased to already have several local businesses readily agree to support us. Fostering such partnerships strengthens our community, and we believe it will be a healthy direction for BHA. Won't you consider supporting our sponsors and mention that you are a member of BHA? We thank Sharon Sestak for her initiative and efficiency on behalf of this effort.



VADNEY'S
Underground Plumbing
Sewers, Septic Tanks, Drain Fields & Water Services
439-2645
Joel fax 439-4391
32 Marvin Avenue
Delmar, New York 12054

Allstate
You're in good hands.
24-Hour Customer Service

Jules Ianniello
Exclusive Agent
Honor Ring
The Ianniello Agency Inc.,
Allstate Insurance Company
257 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054
Phone 518-478-9100
Cell 518-221-3567
Fax 518-439-0407
jianniello@allstate.com

SECURITY SUPPLY
PLUMBING & HEATING
secsupply.com

BATH EXPRESSIONS
SHOWROOM



BURT ANTHONY ASSOCIATES
General Insurance • 750 Delaware Ave., Delmar, N.Y. 12054

MEYERS FUNERAL HOME Ltd.



Hey, Daddy o, Can You Dig This?

The Becker School is planning a "50's Day" on September 28 in conjunction with their One School, One Book project. As this year's book is set in the 1950's, they are seeking items typical of that time period to display. If you have anything that you might consider loaning, contact Colleen Bonacci. Email is cbonacc@rcscsd.org or leave a message at 756-5200 ext. 5250.

We would like to hear from you!

Would you be interested in joining a committee or just helping out occasionally? Do you have suggestions for speakers or programs? Do you have an interest or craft that you would like to share as a speaker or demonstrate, or do you know someone who does? Contact Karen to discuss. (439-9260 or bethist1965@gmail.com)

Looking ahead to December...

We hope you enjoy our annual Holiday Silver Tea. Did you know that you can schedule a time for your civic group to come and enjoy the decorations? Already the DAR and Garden Club have holiday events at the schoolhouse. Time slots are available! Contact Dawn Pratt, 767-2285

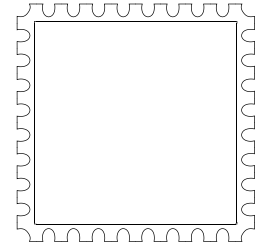
Our **Opening Day** along with the traditional Stewarts' ice cream sundaes was a success despite the cool, breezy weather. Over 75 people came for the opportunity to socialize and enjoy the exhibits. We thank Wendy Brandow for coordinating all the details of the event. There were many who helped in so many ways, including our scoopers who cheerfully served through the kitchen door: Sue and Carl Gutman and Galen Ritchie.

Bethlehem Historical Association

Cedar Hill School House

P.O. Box 263

Selkirk, NY 12158



Our contingent gets ready to step off in the Bethlehem Memorial Day Parade. In all, ten of us represented BHA. The crowds were large and enthusiastic; the weather was perfect. – and we got to wear some neat vintage hats!

COMING EVENTS
*All take place at the Cedar Hill Schoolhouse,
1003 River Road, Selkirk .*

Summer Exhibit
Parade of Fashion 1860s to 1960s
Now through August 28
Museum open Sundays from 2 to 4 PM

2016– 2017 Program Year Begins
September 15, 2016

