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MEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May 5, 1989

Message from the President

Ed Penberthy

Last year, my first as your President, was an exciting one for me. It was my pleasure to witness the addition of new curators, adoption of the Cross Keys School House, the Union Fire Company Replica, Society funds shifted for better return and a successful recognition dinner (thanks to Beverly Mickle and her team). It was also my pleasure to witness the start of this type of newsletter, blacksmith shop dedication, great strides at the Mill, progress at the new millinery museum, additions to the gift shop and quilt show, a very successful apple festival and the start of a very successful field trip program. Still to come are the opening ceremonies at the Mill to mark the start of the summer tour season, the 1989 quilt show, the 1989 apple festival and the 1989 house tour.

In order to cover increased postage and communications costs, the Board has authorized an increase in dues to \$7.50 per year individual and \$15.00 per year for family.. This is payable June 1, 1989 and will be good until May 31, 1990. Make checks payable to Medford Historical Society. Our records for 1988-89 show all members have paid their dues for that year. New cards will be issued as 1989-90 dues are paid.

Membership and Programs

Paul Hellberg

The success of any organization is measured by the willingness of members to participate. This year, because most of our group was willing to share their interests with us, we have had a series of thought provoking, informative, as well as humorous programs. Thanks to the following for their great presentations.

Barbara Crankshaw	Showing Us How to Dress for a Ball
Everett Mickle	Pictures of Medford Yesteryears
Ella and Larry Corn	Night Before Christmas - Complete with Toys
Charles Bakley and	The Art of Coopering
Don Davis	
Coles Roberts	Farm Machinery - One Step at a Time

On June 6 we will be meeting at the Mill and John Hines will be showing and telling us about some of the treasures in the Society's collection.

We're looking forward to our spring trip on May 20th to Longwood Gardens. Our tour will include the Pierce DuPont house as well as an overview of the outside gardens and the indoor conservatories. It will offer a historical and horticultural perspective of the gardens and an introduction to the people responsible for its development.

Quilt Show and Gift Shop

Irene Domanski and Jackie Levy

Quilt Show time is almost here - Saturday, June 3 and Sunday, June 4, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free but donations are accepted. Work crews have almost completed their objectives and it looks like a super Quilt Show year.

Handcrafted items are ready to go, however, we still need materials to cut for "Quilters Fat Quarters". (Pieces should be 18" x 22" or 18" x 44".) Please call me (Irene) at 654-0595 if you can supply.

Help Wanted - Men or women to be "White Glove" hosts and hostesses. These persons will advise our visitors not to touch the quilts but to seek out the assistance of the "White Glove" host or hostess.

Help Wanted - Pastry chefs and baked goods chefs to supply needed baked goods for the bake sale. Any questions on this please call me (Irene) 654-0595.

Help Wanted - 7 p.m. Friday, June 2, 1989, men and/or women, to assist in "quilt hanging". Sunday after the show to assist in packing up!

Special note - It is expected the Church Road bridge will be torn up by the County work crews at the time of the show. Access to the Mill will be via Vincenttown/Eayerstown Road and/or Flying W/Fostertown Road. Parking for the Fostertown Road drivers will be on the north side of the creek near the caboose. Parking in front of the Mill will be for the handicapped who will access the area by way of Church Road via Vincenttown or Eayerstown Road.

For those coming east on Church Road from Route 541 the parking areas will be accessible by turning left on Fostertown Road at the bridge and before the Mill. Park in the lot next to the caboose.

House Tour

Ed Penberthy

Everett Mickle will shortly supply me with a list of houses for the December house tour. We will again charge \$6.00 per ticket with the tour starting at the Community Center. 30% of the proceeds will benefit the Community Center Building Fund, the balance for the Historical Society operating budget.

Union Fire Company Replica

Ed Penberthy

A letter of authority to rehabilitate the Union Fire House on Union Street has been written to Paul Musgrove Graphic Designs. The work will be started shortly and will be completed by the end of May.

The Language of the Blacksmith

Don Davis

I know a fascinating old lady, lives down in Maryland, who is a blacksmith's daughter. I'll call her Louise, because that is her name. When she was a little girl, and when her mother wasn't watching, she would sneak down to the blacksmith shop to watch her father at work. Now her father was a good smith, but not exactly a pillar of the community. More like a rough hewn post. And the shop seemed to attract other rough men, "men with bark on" as Teddy Roosevelt was wont to call them. These men would pay little Louise a nickel to hear her litany of "blacksmith language".

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"Blacksmith language" is not to be repeated, but the "language of the blacksmith" is recited daily, almost without thought to its origins. Opportunity encourages us to "strike while the iron is hot". Sometimes we go after something "hammer and tongs" as we forge ahead. The blacksmith often would work on several items concurrently, shaping one while the others heated. This was particularly true when making nails. But if he wasn't diligent the irons could overheat and burn, ruining them beyond repair. Sometimes today we find we have "too many irons in the fire". "Burned out" may or may not have a similar origin. But other times, we can sure "make the sparks fly!"

So much for the language we have retained, what about the words and phrases we have forgotten? Words like fellow and butteris, flatten and creaser, and swages, fullers and hardies. Or pritchel, mandrel, traveler and upsetter. They have disappeared, like coals down the clean-out hole. Perhaps the makings of another article!

Mill Restoration

Tom Chavis

The work under the mill slowed somewhat during the last quarter due to the cold, wet weather and the high water level in the mill pond. Also, during that period Don Davis and Charles Bakley shifted some of their effort to construction of the textiles room on the second floor of the mill.

Nevertheless, one third of the turbine cribbing under the mill has been removed. One turbine shaft has been disconnected to take pressure off the grinding platform support beams. Excavation is completed to the bottom of the turbine water box and the foundation to the grinding platform is now exposed. A 10 square foot section of metal was blown off the mill. The metal roof has not been patched nor painted for more than 10 years and is badly in need of maintenance, therefore, we have asked for bids for patching and painting the roof. Charles Bakley and Don Davis have restored a very large hand powered lathe which required extensive painstaking work. It is a superior piece of craftsmanship.

Kirby's Mill Bridge - The archeology study and land survey have begun on the Kirby's Mill Bridge #D4.57. The Burlington County Engineer estimates actual work on the bridge extension will start in late spring/early summer. Construction entails closing Church Road. However, detours will be arranged to cause minimum interference with the June Quilt Show.

Refreshments for Quilt Show (Baked Goods) - Our goal is to have each M.H.S. member bring at least one baked item for the Quilt Show Bake Sale on either Saturday or Sunday during the show. We also need volunteers to work the refreshment stand. Volunteers report to Tom Chavis, 654-0768.

"School Days, School Days..."

Robert Crankshaw

A few Saturdays ago it was my privilege to be escorted through the Cross Keys School House on Mill Street by Tom Chavis. What an experience! What a building! The school building has flourished under the care of Tom Chavis and Bob Healey. These two gentlemen are to be commended.

As the new curator of the Cross Keys School, seasonal care and maintenance will be part of my job description. Any suggestions or ideas concerning projects for the school that you might have squirreled away would be of great interest to me.

What does the future hold? Maybe specialty exhibits highlighting certain historical events, lectures or classes held within the building, special programs or concerts held outside on the school grounds. A project has been proposed by the Eagle Scouts to paint the exterior of the building under supervision.

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Work on our displays is progressing nicely. The General Store is nearing completion, possibly in the month of June. I want to thank Don Davis and Charles Bakley for all their hard work.

I am currently occupied with locating the accessories that will add special interest to our store, i.e. oil lamps, product packages and advertisements of the 1870-1890 era. If you have any of the above items and would care to contribute or loan them to our project, please contact either myself, John Hines or Don Davis.

The Dressmaker's Shop is slated for completion sometime in the early summer. This exhibit will be the backdrop for our textiles and costume displays. The fireplace is almost finished and the wallpaper has been delivered and is waiting to be installed.

We have, in the Society's collection, some wonderful old tintypes that will add a personal family touch to our "Dressmaker's home". We have located in the Mill a lovely gilded mirror for over the mantle. We welcome any suggestions or ideas you may have. Why not drop by some Saturday for a visit. Take a peek at what has been accomplished thus far.

I want to thank Betty Wendt for all her past work. My job as Curator of Textiles would have been much harder had Betty not been so diligent in putting all the things contributed in boxes and labeling them. Thank you, Betty.

The MHS has accumulated a fine Costume Collection and is one we all may be proud of. I have been to visit other Societies and have inspected their textile collections. The Medford Historical Society compares favorably. Incidentally, we have some things the other Societies don't have - a very complete Quaker Collection, everything from bonnets to funeral invitations ("Thee and thy family are requested..."). In the future, we will be exhibiting these fine pieces for the public. Our collection of wedding dresses is outstanding. A special "Brides Exhibit" is currently being planned. There are three new exhibits currently on display on the second floor of the Mill.

In the meantime, work goes on with restoration and cataloging all the textiles and costumes in the collection. Each fan, shoe and button must be accounted for and recorded for future study. If anyone has information pertaining to Anne Wills Haines I would be very interested in having it. One of our exhibits depends greatly on how complete a history we can accumulate.

Exciting Things at the Mill

John Hines

Something new is in the works to kick off the opening of Kirby's Mill on Sunday afternoons (1-4 pm) during July and August. "A Country Day at Kirby's Mill" is planned for the first Sunday, July 2 as an open house to spotlight the Mill complex and museum. The blacksmith shop will be open with the forge working. Demonstrations of various historic crafts are planned. New exhibits and displays in the museum will be open. A Civil War group, Historical Military Impressions will have an encampment on the grounds. A working steam tractor will also be on display. Plan to attend and bring along some friends.

There is an interesting footnote in the history of Kirby's Mill regarding a steam tractor. It seems the last time a steam tractor came through the area in 1907 it collapsed the wooden bridge at the Mill and ended up at the bottom of the creek. The County replaced the wooden structure with an iron truss bridge which allowed Church Road to carry 20th Century traffic. Sixty-five years later that same bridge had to be replaced by a concrete structure when a bulldozer collapsed the iron bridge. A display is in the Museum noting this "footnote" in local history.

On Saturday, May 13th there will be a spring clean up of the Mill to prepare for the summer activities. Come out and lend a hand.