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Harvest Fair 2024

A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST FAIR

The Harvest Fair held at the WHM in late September was a wonderful community event. This year we orchestrated an old-time theme with carnival games, wagon rides and a live cake auction. A stilt walker, a juggler, a 1920's newsboy selling papers, a photo booth, fortune tellers, along with traditional folk music from our local group Rosin the Beaux all made our signature fundraiser a unique celebration of Williamstown's history.

The *Butterfly Swing Band* played in the Dolan-Jenks Barn and all ages loved dancing in the beautiful 1850's post and beam "dancehall" to the contagious rhythm from the 1940s.

Pony rides and animals representing New England farming history were a big attraction, and time-honored crafts such as spinning and weaving were represented. Looking ahead to 2025, we hope to include more historical crafts, perhaps a blacksmith, wheelwright, and even a cooper!

Our Harvest Fair is a great way to reach out to families and bring history alive. It is also a program that benefits local teenage volunteers who can experience and enjoy a fun engaging day immersed in history.

Thank you to the many helpers who made the fair a great success.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that we are learning, speaking, and gathering on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land.

Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community.

We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.



DOLAN-JENKS BARN UPDATE

Earlier this fall, a spirited group of WHM volunteers spent a day helping transfer some exciting new additions to the museum's collection. Highlights of the day's efforts include 19th-century agricultural equipment, antique tools, horse tackle and haying machinery from local farms. Thank you, volunteers, for your hard work; and to our donors, thank you for your generous support of Williamstown Historical Museum!



A HISTORIC HOUSE WARMING

THE 1753 HOUSE BECOMES PART OF WHM



At its October 2024 meeting, the Board of the Williamstown Historical Museum voted unanimously to assume responsibility for and oversight of the 1753 House located on Field Park, Williamstown. For the current Board, this action acknowledges a natural extension of the Museum's mission, bringing a piece of WHM back to the heart of our community.

Thanks to the leadership of Hank Flynt and others, the 'regulation house' was constructed by volunteers in 1953 in celebration of the town's Bicentennial. Early European settlers to this region were required by legal contract to build a house at least 15 by 18 feet and 7 feet high and to clear 5 acres of land to gain a title to their lot.

A volunteer sub-committee will be formed to focus on this important opportunity for the purpose of overseeing the maintenance, upkeep, volunteer staffing, and programming of the structure. As referenced in the house's dedication back in 1953, and in collaboration with the town, the committee's duties will include 'maintaining the House, opening it for weekends seasonally, hosting school groups, and laying a fire in the fireplace for an annual carol sing'.

Please contact the museum if you are interested in participating in this worthy endeavor.

Annual Carol Sing

Join us for this year's
1753 House Carol Sing
Sunday, December 22,
at 7pm. Dress warmly!



MEET THE BOARD

CASSIE PELTIER

What's your favorite piece of Williamstown history?

The local history of the Stockbridge-Munsee community. When I was little, I learned about the Wampanoag and the Abenaki from surrounding areas, but when I asked "who was here in Williamstown before Ephraim Williams?" no one seemed to know. Well, now we know, and their Historic Preservation office is on Spring Street!

Why do you support the museum?

Firstly, because I am a history nerd with personal and family history in Williamstown. Secondly, because I believe the museum has a solid foundation, but a long way to grow to fully reflect and support local communities both past and present. Thirdly, the ways people engage with history are changing, and we need to become as dynamic as the world around us to effectively share and learn with people in and connected to Williamstown. I am excited to work with the WHM team to develop new ways of "doing history!"



HISTORIC ARTI (FACTS)

This 19th-century wagon jack was most likely made by a local carpenter, unsigned and a bit rustic, and the stairstep castings were made by a blacksmith. There were many types of jacks back in the day, but we believe our jack uses a lever causing the moving structure, that is pivoted to the stationary structure, to vertically slide up and down. Old time artisans: do we have that correct?

FROM EXHIBIT HALL

The 1845 Opera House

Come to WHM in South Williamstown! During your visit you will enjoy a number of wonderful displays that capture the rich history of our community. From the town's founding right up to the present day, our Exhibit Hall holds a full timeline of the many chapters of Williamstown's past. To entice you further, we invite you to the opera!

One of the many displays in our Exhibit Hall at Little Red Schoolhouse, this booth brings back the memories of a place that was vital to our community for more than 125 years. Built in 1845 as the Methodist Church, the wood framed building was moved south to become the Waterman and Moore Opera House when the new brick church was built on the corner in 1877. It was a center for traveling shows, college drama productions and town social activities and also housed the town offices and fire department. In its last years from 1889 to 1992, it was a lumberyard. The building was demolished in 1992 for a new studio art building for Williams College.



OLD PHOTOS QUIZ

*Where is this building today?
Part of this house still stands
on Spring Street. Hint: It was
the old Sigma Phi Williams
College fraternity house.*

"Bring us your old photos of local history!"

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

WHM, your rich repository for local history, is a non-profit organization that relies on volunteers to achieve its mission. Our Board seeks to engage community members in the following opportunities:

Presenters: If you have ideas or a skill to share, or a story to tell that celebrates our local culture, let us know!

Treasurer: We seek a volunteer experienced in budgets, payroll, accounting software and tax preparation.

HELP US MAKE HISTORY!

Volunteers: From cataloging and curating our Collections, to imagining and organizing educational and entertaining Programs, to lickin' and stickin' our Fundraising efforts, there's a place for you at WHM!

If any of these opportunities intrigue you, please contact our director Michael Nixon at (413) 458-2160 or michael@williamstownhistoricalmuseum.org. Help us make history come alive! Thank You!

The Williamstown Historical Museum is committed to the collecting and sharing of stories and artifacts of all residents of our community from across the centuries.

Williamstown Historical Museum

P.O.Box 422

Williamstown, MA 01267



WHM volunteers staffed a table at this winter's Holiday Walk Penny Social.

Questions? New email or address?

Please contact Michael Nixon, WHM Director:
michael@williamstownhistoricalmuseum.org

Year-End Appeal

WHM By The Numbers

Annual Budget: \$45,000

Harvest Fair: \$8,500

Outside Grants: \$7,500

Endowment Income: \$4,000

Annual Membership Appeal: \$19,872 towards \$25,000 goal

Donations, payable to "Williamstown Historical Museum," may be sent to: PO Box 422, Williamstown, MA 01267.

Help Us Finish Strong!! Thank You!!



Scan Here to Venmo:



@whmuseum-1765

Thank you for supporting the
Williamstown Historical Museum!