



# STEPHENTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

May - 2024

## 2023 Annual Report

2023 was certainly a busy and “eventful” year for us at the Heritage Center. We held more events than ever: Strawberry Festival (thanks to a new pie program we didn’t run out of pies this year!), SHS’ 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SHS combined with the summer picnic, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Car Wash, Road Challenge Revival and the Annual Holiday Potluck Party. We also interacted with other organizations: the Hoosick History & Heritage Fair, the Veterans’ group’s “Wreaths Across America”, and the Stephentown Memorial Library’s “Welcome to Stephentown” affair where we handed out Welcome Bags to new folks. Fortunately, most of these events were fairly successful financially – (special mention and thanks to our generous local sponsors) -- because we put the proceeds to good use:

- Thanks to Joe Darcy and his crew, as well as our own highway department, our parking lot is smooth, level, and not so prone to puddles. Much safer for everyone.
- The back stairs were replaced – now they are safer (new handrails) and easier to navigate.
- The front doors are a sight to behold now, after much sanding and staining, and sanding and staining, and, well you get the idea. Thanks to Alan and to David Flint for their help.
- We have a new email account: [info@stephentown-historical.org](mailto:info@stephentown-historical.org)
- We continue to post our monthly programs on YouTube for those folks unable to attend in person.
- We sponsored a Veteran’s Banner for Rachel Williams, who served in WWII.

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- We were gifted a camera and sound bar to possibly stream programs in the future.
- Purchases include a projector, computer system, an updated Family Tree Maker, and mics to improve sound quality at monthly program meetings.
- Board Officers now have Microsoft 365 Outlook accounts at no charge, greatly improving communication and sharing of information.
- We continue to support genealogy requests and have updated many records at SHS.
- Thanks to the services of an intern – Brad Bink – the curator has been able to scan and save many records to the Cloud. Brad is now working on updating our Family Tree Maker files.
- Our store was updated to a “Gift Shoppe” and to showcase our “Only Stephentown on Earth” T-shirts, as well as lots of memorabilia and albums featuring our little town.
- We were able to donate to other organizations: the Cemetery of the Evergreens in New Lebanon and the RR depot restoration project, also in New Lebanon.
- We continue to partner with Meissner’s Auction House as members donate goods for auction.

We welcomed new Life Members Carolyn Hourihan, Chris Hoffman and Jonathan Koepf. Looking ahead, we continue to plan for a Pole Barn/Shed-type building to showcase the hundreds of artifacts, equipment and machinery that have been donated to us over the years. Stay tuned! We may have a solution in the works! We also hope to own a much-needed tripod soon for restoration use in the 80+ cemeteries in town.

A special shout-out to all volunteers and members – we appreciate you! Thank you for your support! Looking forward to a happy, healthy and prosperous 2024!

*Respectfully submitted January 2024, Arlene Longo, President, SHS.*

## **IN MEMORIAM**

**JANICE GRANT**

**ISABEL KREBS \***

**NEIL KREBS**

**SYLVIA LEIBENSPERGER \***

**MARY LINTON**

**EVERETT MADDEN**

**JEANETTE O'BRIEN**

**NANCY ZIMMERMAN**

*(\* Former Board Member)*

## PHOTOS FROM THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM

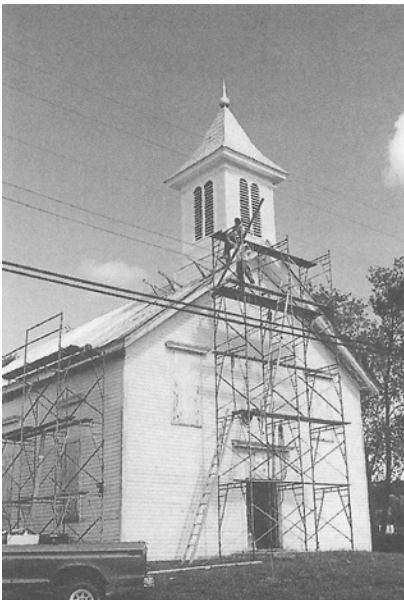
Our featured Album this month, the 25th Anniversary Album, compiled in 1998, is an excellent retrospect of the first 25 years of the Society, starting from a meeting held November 8, 1973. "Those in attendance at that first meeting were Greer Fitting, Donna Sidor, Susie Cooper, Janet Atwater, Helen Lapp, Gladys R. Howe, Mrs. Kenneth James, Thelma O. Tomlinson, Frances G. Rathbun, Sally Fox, Edward A. Fox, Calvin J. Kenyon, Ann Gantz, Margo Andsch, Edwin Wheeler, Ulysses Sweeney, Harold Hager, Albert J. Silvernail. Irene Silvernail. Cynthia Pease and Agnes Coates."



*Jane Dwyer, Henry Zwack (attorney), Ellen Lewis and Betty Feathers at the signing of the transfer of deeds May 11, 1988*



*Al Silvernail examining an old radio at the Communications Exhibit of 1994*



*Stabilizing the Steeple. The Steeple was askew, causing the roof to leak. Correction of this problem became the first priority. In 1989 the Babcock brothers replaced three of the four corner supports, removed the chimney and repaired the roof.*



*As part of Stepentown's Bicentennial celebration, Victor Lewin's 5th Grade class compiled items typical of 1984 to put into a Time Capsule which will be opened by these same students in 2034.*

## Stephentown Historical Society

4 Staples Road—PO Box 11  
Stephentown, NY 12168

**Email:** [info@stephentown-historical.org](mailto:info@stephentown-historical.org)

**Website:** [www.stephentown-historical.org](http://www.stephentown-historical.org)

**Facebook:** Stephentown Historical Society

**Phone:** 518-733-6070

Fridays 1pm—4 pm

### Board of Directors

#### President

Vacant

#### Vice President

Carolyn Hourihan

#### Treasurer

Alan Stuart

#### Recording Secretary

Victoria Kosakowski

#### Corresponding Secretary

Diana Clark

#### Administrator

Brad McClave

#### Trustees

Jean Bolen

Chris Hoffman

Joe Hogan

Ellen Jennings

Josie Madison

Laurenne Teachout

**Town Historian**—Pat Flint

**Curator**—Bev McClave

**Genealogist**—Bill Zimmerman

**Email:** Do we have your correct email address?

We send out program information, reminders and newsletters via email. Please reach out to Carolyn @ [vicepresident@stephentown-historical.org](mailto:vicepresident@stephentown-historical.org) to update our contact list so you don't miss out!

## TOWN HISTORIAN'S CORNER

*Pat Flint*

### This is how reporting was done 120 years ago:

#### Saturday, July 23, 1904.

The Troy Police are waiting for a Stephentown hotel owner to turn himself in for shooting a customer this afternoon, *The Record* reports, but the suspect is running suspiciously late.

A.B. Barnbury is the proprietor of Barnbury's Hotel. A bar is a popular part of his business, particularly for 35-year-old George Fisher. Tending the bar this afternoon, Barnbury decides at one point that Fisher has had enough and refuses to



*Vanderbilt House in 1907*

serve him any more drinks. Fisher disagrees, and fighting words are spoken. During the scuffle, "Barnbury drew a revolver in self-defense, as he alleges, and fired", our reporter writes.

Fisher is hospitalized in Pittsfield in serious condition. Barnbury surrenders himself to the Stephentown authorities, who order him to report to Troy for incarceration.

“From the facts that the one who committed the shooting gave himself up to the Stephentown authorities and also that he alleged that the deed was committed in self-defense, it was deemed not necessary to escort him to Troy with an officer,” our writer reports. This shows remarkable trust on the part of local law enforcement. Early reports are unclear about Foster’s condition, and for all he knows, he may end up facing murder charges, yet Barnbury is expected dutifully to report to jail.

Barnbury is advised to drive himself to the nearest railroad station and take the next train to Troy. Collar City authorities expect him to arrive at 10:00p.m., but by mid night it becomes clear that he’s not going to show up. What looked like an orderly arrest will almost certainly turn into a manhunt tomorrow.

[Editor’s Note: The name of the Proprietor of the **Vanderbilt House** in 1904 was Andrew Deory Dernberg, not A.B. Barnbury. Dernberg appears in another newspaper article:]

In 1907 Dernberg was selling liquor in a no-license town. Edward J Gibson and John Zimmer, Jr. of the Empire Detective Agency of Albany testified that Dernberg gave them whiskey over the bar at the Hotel on October 11th. Dernberg called it the “good old stuff”.

The defense in the case of Andrew Deory Dernberg, proprietor of the Vanderbilt House at Stephentown, indicted for selling liquor in a no-license town, was continued yesterday in County court at Troy, N.Y. Deory Dernberg testified in his own defense Thursday afternoon and denied the testimony of Edward J. Gibson and

John Zimmer, Jr., of the Empire Detective Agency of Albany, who testified that Dernberg gave them whiskey over the bar at his hotel, October 11 last. They had testified that Dernberg call it the “good old stuff” but he testified yesterday that it was Uno, a non-intoxicating drink sold in no-licensed communities.

A sample of the drink which the detectives secured and declare is whiskey was presented in evidence and passed among the Jurors to smell of. The detectives were employed by Rev. Alfred D. Hooper of the Baptist Church at Stephentown, President of the local Anti-Saloon League

On cross-examination by the district attorney Dernberg admitted that he had been in the hands of the law several times. The district attorney showed that he was arrested for assault with intent to kill S. Edgar Reynolds; at another time for assault

on Fred Budd of West Lebanon, also upon Belle Smith In Troy, assault with a gun on George Fisher at Stephentown and another upon Arba Williams and that he was sent to prison for two years and four months for assault with a stone on a boy named Keller, who died subsequently in an asylum. Dernberg admitted that he was fined and sent to prison.

**WE’RE ON YOUTUBE!**

We have been recording our monthly programs (with the speakers’ permission of course) and posting them on YouTube. So if you are unable to attend in person, you can still enjoy our programs. You can access the site from our webpage—[www.stephentown-historical.org](http://www.stephentown-historical.org) or go directly to YouTube and search @Stephentownhistorical233.

**PROGRAMS & EVENTS MAY TO SEPTEMBER 2024**

Programs are free the first Sunday of the month at 2 PM. Donations are always welcome.

**Sunday, May 5****Sarah Rudd**

*by Katie Brownell, Hoosic Falls Teacher  
Heritage Center, 2 pm*

**Sunday, May 19****Car Wash [& Bake Sale/Plant Sale/Book Sale]**

*New Scrub Board Laundromat & Car Wash, 11-3*

**Sunday, June 2****The Transcontinental Railroad**

*by Michael Barrett,  
Director (ret.) Mohawk Industrial Gateway*

**Sunday, June 23****42nd Annual Strawberry Festival**

*Gardner's Coffee Shop, 11 am - 3 pm*

**Saturday, Sunday, Sept 28, 29****Field Trip to Harvest Festival**

*Knickerbocker Mansion, Schaghticoke*

**SHS Historic Road Challenge****10/21/2023**

On a very overcast threatening day after receiving at least 2 inches of rain the day before and overnight, 16 intrepid competing teams gathered to participate in the Historic (and Nautical thanks to the rain) Road Challenge. The Challenge was to drive a fixed itinerary (about 40 miles) on the local roads and answer quiz questions on the route. This tour will take about 2 hours to complete.

Teams started arriving at about 12:45. Once all the teams were checked in, Ellen Jennings, Co-chair made impromptu opening remarks. We had not planned on having a built-in Cheer Squad, but Carolyn Edwards Hourihan and Chris Hoffman carved out their role quite enthusiastically.

Alan Stuart the Reluctant Treasurer and his sidekick Joe Hogan prepared each team in turn for their departure on a staggered start. Alan and Joe provided the Quiz when it was time to GO. The

Cheer Squad sent each of the 16 teams off with rousing cheers of encouragement. That added the perfect touch of enthusiasm and the remaining teams jumped right on that raucous bandwagon.

The first team left at 1:10. The last team headed out the door about 2:00. The teams started returning around 3:00. As the quizzes were handed in the grading was begun by Bev McClave co-chair, Bill Zimmerman helper extraordinaire and Ellen. The participants enjoyed cider donuts and apple cider from Golden Harvest Farms in Valatie, NY as they waited for the results to be tabulated. Once all the quizzes were checked and re-checked and the winners were determined, it was time to make the big announcement. The losing teams graciously cheered those who won.

Third prize of \$50 went to Carole Stuart and Walt Lutsch and Molly the Doodle.

Second prize of \$100 was awarded to Fred and Helen Wallbank.

The Grand Prize of \$250 went to Don Leab and Kate Beach. *(Donated back to SHS. Thank you, Don and Kate for your generosity!)*

Teams enjoyed their tour of Stephentown. The committee was thrilled that none of the roads travelled had washed out in the rain. While this may not have been a big revenue maker, it was more than made up for in community support. Everyone raved about how much fun they had despite the nasty weather.

*by Ellen Jennings*



### Barbara Peterson Art Work

"A recent donation was made to the Stephentown Historical Society of one of Barbara Peterson's rug hooking works of art entitled 'Two Doves'. Barbara was a nationally known artisan and teacher of rug hooking. This elegantly framed artwork is being offered as a prize in a raffle to be drawn at the Annual Holiday Party on December 1st. This beautiful piece of craft work by a well-known local artisan would be a prized possession in any home." Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20.

### Volunteers:

*Interested in volunteering? You can email us and tell us what you're interested in such as program refreshments, Special Events, program ideas, etc. The sky is the limit! Thank you in advance for your continued support! You are appreciated!*



### Joan Curtin Carving

We also have a raffle for a horse head carving from Joan Curtin of Woodcrafts, Etc, a new SHS sponsor. You can visit her shop at 924 Route 43 - Fiske Lumber. Tickets for this item are \$1.

Tickets for either of these raffles can be purchased on our website, at any program or Special Event, or at SHS on Fridays 1-4 pm. Cash, check or charge can be accepted.

### Please Support Our Sponsors!

Gardner's Coffee Shoppe  
Scrub Board Laundromat & Car Wash  
Stewart's Shops  
Hannaford  
Averill Park Septic Service LLC  
Four Fat Fowl  
Atlantis Equipment Corporation  
The Eastwick Press  
XCA Composites LLC

### Welcome, New Sponsors

Valley Energy (formerly Larabee Fuel)  
SKZ Excavating  
Woodcrafts, Etc  
MK Electric  
Zema's Nursery, Inc.  
Morse Fuels  
Senter Farm  
Kinderhook Farms

**Stephentown Historical Society Membership**

(If you are a current member, a renewal notice will be sent to you in January.)

**NEW MEMBERS**

Please complete the form below and return it to:

(Check made out to:)

**Stephentown Historical Society**

**PO Box 11**

**Stephentown, NY 12168**

**OR—go to [www.stephentown-historical.org](http://www.stephentown-historical.org) membership tab and renew online!**

**Membership Categories**

Please check one:

- Individual Member — \$15.00       Supporting Member —\$50.00
- Family Membership — \$25.00       Life Member (Individual) — \$200.00
- Life Member (2 Person) — \$300       Business/Corporate — \$75.00

**(Annual Membership is January—December)**

Dues enclosed\_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible Donation\_\_\_\_\_ [ 501(c)(3) Organization ]

I'd like to volunteer—please contact me: **YES** [  ]

