

WINTER 2023

**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**



The Billerica Historical Society is planning a number of activities for 2023. This summer we will have a celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Clara Sexton House being built, and also the grand opening of the restored barn. The barn project is close to being completed (see article on the barn restoration elsewhere in

this newsletter.) The Board will be meeting in February to determine what display cases, electronic displays, and furniture will need to be purchased. We will use funds from the state grant obtained by Marc Lombardo to acquire those items. We expect to be displaying BHS artifacts in the barn in time for the grand opening. We have also applied for a Community Fund Grant to demolish the front concrete walkways and replace them with Boston City brick pavers. If we are awarded this grant, the work will be completed before the summer.



We held one open house in November and two in December to coincide with the Billerica's Holiday tree Lighting. We want to thank all of those who decorated the House. The Council of Aging were given a tour of the Christmas decorated house in December, as well. All of our open houses were well attended. We will be re-starting the **open houses on April 16** when the

Billerica Minute Men Re-enactors are present and will be talking about Patriots Day.

In December, Diane Douglas and Leah Cahill took Colonial artifacts into the classroom at the Locke Middle School. The students had just completed a study of Colonial America.



Diane Douglas is planning another **Vintage Tea Fundraiser on Saturday, May 20 from 3-5** at the Bennett Public Library. On February 11, we will be having a fundraiser at Mike's Chung King Restaurant, next to O'Connors Hardware. This event is described in more detail later in the newsletter.

The **Annual Meeting** will take place on **Friday, October 27 at noon**. That will be 100 years to the day since the society's time capsule was sealed. We will open it at the meeting and expect to find many letter, photos, and documents. We will then place current documents in the time capsule and re-seal it. Save the date and plan to attend.



We still have BHS t-shirts with the front having the society's insignia with Billerica's founding family names. The back has the names of the 113 Billerica Minutemen who went to fight the British at Meriam's Corner in Concord on April 19, 1775. See inside for more details.

Our costs to maintain the Clara Sexton House continue to rise. Your generous contributions are still very much needed and appreciated.

Regards,

John Bartlett, President

## BHS Barn Renovation Update

By Richard Hawes



It's ready for occupancy! After many months of planning, working through details, getting permits, cleaning, hiring and meetings with a general contractor, picking out fixtures and general supervision, the interior of the barn is ready for our artifacts and historical documents.

We began with a false start for the building permit. We would like to thank Jerry Sorensen, an architect for the government, for his generous help with drawing a set of plans reflecting our intentions. Alas, the town required a set of drawings with an engineer's stamp from the state. This was accomplished via our General Contractor (GC), Robert A Scott. The GC was able to begin the project in November and has moved steadily to complete this project.

I think you will be surprised to see all the improvements that have been made over the course of the last couple of months. The most important is the creation of a new staircase. The staircase is in the front, center of the barn and

provides a stabilizing feature as well as generous storage beneath. The floors, both first and second, have been leveled, covered with a sub-floor and a finished floor. All the original post and beam structure remains visible in order to keep the barn look we all know and love. The walls have all been insulated and covered with a black barrier and then rough barn board to complete the barn atmosphere .

You might remember how the barn frame and ceiling were painted white. This was common to many "gentlemen's" barns of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to help with the interior brightness of a structure with a minimum number of windows. We have maintained that theme on the first floor. We have installed 45 feet of LED track lighting in the display area with the option of attaching more light heads, if required. We have a generous number of electrical outlets around the perimeter of the display area all controlled by one switch. This will be primarily for the lighted display cases. All windows on both floors have been covered with clear acrylic panels to act as semi-permanent storm windows.

The second floor is designed as a storage and work area. The roof and walls have been spray foamed with R49 rated insulation. There are also 4, 8' LED fixtures to provide generous lighting on the second floor.

All of this will be temperature controlled by a mini-split HVAC system to provide heating and cooling on demand. We have already had occasions to use the heat and it provides great warmth for both floors.

In closing, I am very excited to start designing our display area. Feb 9<sup>th</sup> is the first meeting of our collection committee to begin this planning. We are on schedule for a grand opening sometime this summer. Stay tuned.



### Preservation Patron

Please consider becoming a Preservation Patron in one of the following ways:

Corner Stone \$1,000  
Landmark \$500  
Founders \$250  
Members \$100

Last year, your preservation contri-

butions raised about \$5,034. These donations allowed us work toward balancing our Sexton House operational budget and was greatly appreciated.

Monetary donations can be sent to:  
Billerica Historical Society  
PO Box 381  
Billerica, MA 01821

### 2023 Membership Drive



It is time to renew your membership in the historical society. The board has voted to raise the due to help defray the expenses of running the society.

The dues are:

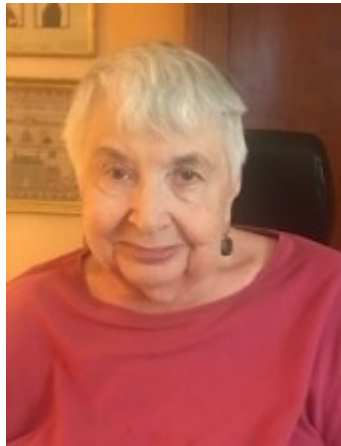
Senior is \$25  
Individual is \$30  
Family is \$50

Membership payment can be sent to:  
Billerica Historical Society  
PO Box 381  
Billerica, MA 01821

We encourage you to invite a friend to join the society.

### Shirley Barnes

The Billerica Historical Society was saddened to hear of the passing of Shirley Barnes on January 1. She had been an active volunteer at the historical society cataloging many collections, using her expertise. Shirley also wrote two books for the society: The Quest: The Adventures and Treasure of Jack Yore on the Western Frontier and The Pioneers of Billerica.



The Quest: The Adventures and Treasure of Jack Yore on the Western Frontier and The Pioneers of Billerica.

### Open Houses

We will resume our monthly open houses on April 16th. The Billerica Colonial Minute Men will be present and will be sharing about Patriots Day.

Continue reading to learn how you can buy a T-shirt for Patriots Day and support the society.

### Billerica Minute Man T-shirts



The historical society is currently selling T-shirts with the BHS logo on the front and the list of the minutemen who marched to Merriam's Corner on April 19, 1775 on the back.

Sizes include:

Men's - Medium, Large, XL - \$20  
XXL, and XXXL - \$25  
Women's V-neck - Medium, Large - \$25

To order, send request, size, number of shirts, cost of shirts plus \$5 for shipping to:  
Billerica Historical Society  
PO Box 381  
Billerica, MA 01821



### New Fundraiser

Michele DeParasis is coordinating a new fundraiser to take place on **Saturday, February 11**. Either order take out or dine in at Chung King Mike's Place in Billerica Center AND mention Billerica Historical Society, anytime on Feb. 11 and 20% of your bill will be donated to the society. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors, post it on your Facebook page. Bring a copy of the flyer below when you go to Chung King. We appreciate your support.

**Dine to Donate!**

**Saturday February 11**

\*20% of the bill will go to the Billerica Historical Society

Dine in or order out, but mention Billerica Historical Society when placing order

CHUNG KING MIKE'S PLACE

446 Boston Rd - In the O'Connors Hardware Plaza

**Clara E. Sexton Memorial  
House Museum,  
circa 1723  
Headquarters of the  
Billerica Historical Society**

36 Concord Road  
Billerica, MA 01821

(978)667-7020  
Billericahistory.org



**BHS Officers and Board 2022-2023**

**Officers:**

President	John Bartlett
Vice President	Richard Hawes
Treasurer	Ann Stadtman
Secretary	Diane Douglas

**Directors:**

Cathy Burns	Alec Ingraham
Mary Jones	Richard Kunicki
Michele DeParasis	



Follow us on Facebook:

- Billerica Historical Society
- Billerica Scrapbook

**Ways to Support the BHS**

Since COVID-19, many of you are be doing your shopping online with Amazon. If you use smile.amazon.com, instead, you can designate the Billerica Historical Society as your charity of choice. (Smile.amazon.com IS Amazon.) Place your order as you always would but a portion of your purchase will go to the BHS every time you make a purchase. The BHS has received \$180.17 as of November 2022, from purchases made by folks like you.



**Upcoming Events**

**Feb. 11:** Mike's Chung King Fundraiser

**Monthly Open Houses:**

First Sunday of the month, 1-3 PM,  
beginning in May

**Be Watching for:**

Historical Lectures at COA



**Book & Gifts:**

Hazen's History of Billerica	\$55.00
Sexton House Cookbook	\$3.00
Commemorative Spode Plate	<b>\$10.00</b>

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