



Sherman Historical Society 2023

2022 – 2023 FISCAL YEAR



The Sherman Historical Society was founded in 1975 with the purpose:

- To bring together people interested in the town's history.
- To collect and preserve objects which help to establish or illustrate its history.
- To acquire and manage any property available to the Society.
- To interest young people in their town's heritage.
- To publish historical information, and to maintain a library of historical materials.

Officers:

Elizabeth M. Haney – President
Allyson McFerren Mard – Vice President
Susan Lang – Treasurer
Lori Finck - Secretary

Presented at Annual Membership Meeting

September 28, 2023
10 Route 37 Center
Sherman, Connecticut 06784

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING – 2023

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Agenda

Date: Thursday, September 28, 2023
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: SHS – Northrop House, 10 Route 37 Center Sherman, CT

Agenda: Approval of 2022 SHS Annual Meeting Minutes
President's Report highlights
Election of Directors for Class of 2025
Membership Comments or New Business
Adjourn Meeting

Guest Speaker - John Pawolski,
Curator, Connecticut Museum of Mining & Mineral Science, Kent, CT.
Connecticut: The Cradle of American Mining

Thank you all for your generous support!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Minutes 9/20/2022 for approval

Sherman Historical Society Annual Meeting Minutes 9-20-2022

Northrop House and Zoom

7pm

Present:

President Liz Haney, Secretary Lori Finck, Treasurer Susan Lang, Directors Allyson Mard, Lisa Cilio, Lisa Keller, Sue Moga and Ginnie Zellner, Honorary Director Gloria Thorne, Member Doris Tomaselli

Absent: Director Jan Desiato

President Mard called the meeting to order at 7:07pm

A quorum was present.

The minutes of the 9-22-2021 annual meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: as of 8-31-2022

Endowment Checking	\$22,012.80
Endowment CD	10,103.58
Janney Checking	12,157.12
Janney CD	14,985.93
Old Store Checking	73,915.23
Operating	1,493.20
Special Savings	6,216.82
Total	\$140,884.68

Treasurer's Comments:

We have more cash than last year

Interest is about the same

Operating account is less than 2021

The Old Store and Endowment supported the Operating budget as needed

President Haney gave the President's report(attached)

As of this meeting \$925 in membership and \$500 for Endowment has been received with 20 envelopes still needed in to be processed.

Packet of Officers' and Committee chairs' reports were distributed to all in attendance.(attached)

Doris Tomaselli was welcomed as the Society's Jack of All Trades . She will work for the Society as an independent contractor and conduct various publishing, advertising and office functions. As of this meeting she is working on a new mailing list and letter for the new people in town to see if they wish to join the SHS and contribute.

continued...

Northrop House:

Volunteer and member Cara Kaufmann cut down the overgrown shrub climbing up the front of Northrop House and trimmed other shrubs.

Motion to amend the Articles of Incorporation and amendments to the Bylaws and Rules were adopted unanimously. (attached). Allyson Mard will take care of filing the changes to the Articles of Incorporation with the CT Secretary of State.

Barn Dedication Party:

75 RSVP'd. Food for 125 was ordered. Set up will start at 10am the morning of the event.

Writer's Group:

The book launch will be held at the Sherman Playhouse at 2pm on 10-8-2022 with light refreshments. with The authors will be present and the book will be sold and autographed by the authors, publisher and organizers. It will be dedicated to Betsy Scholze. The book will be also sold in the Old Store .

Treasurer Susan Lang entered the meeting at 7:24pm

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm

Loretta Lang Finck

Secretary

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SHS Board of Directors and SHS Members:

The fiscal year for Sherman Historical Society ending 9/30/2023 was a solid year of progress for our 152 members and the many friends of the Sherman Historical Society (SHS). The Society has clearly been busy preserving and promoting the history of Sherman and its surrounding communities. Through the careful management of our endowment by the Endowment committee, our SHS Treasurer, our fund-raising efforts, and the overwhelming support of the community with SHS events, activities and supporting The Old Store, the Sherman Historical Society is financially sound.

I would like to highlight a few of the 2023 activities our volunteers have been involved in:

We published the book, *Reflections* in October 2022, an authors' comments and book signing event was held, which was well attended and was a wonderful way to celebrate and document the influx of artists, writers, dancers, and performers in Sherman during the 1920s to '50s. (Reflections is available for sale at the Old Store.)

The traditional **Holiday Open House** held in early December was dedicated to the late **Joan Burke Taylor**. Joni was a wonderful spirit and member volunteer of SHS. It was a heart-warming event coupled with the lighting of the outside Christmas tree, menorah, caroling, treats, and activities around the Northrop House created a festive atmosphere.

In March, we collaborated with the Institute for American Indian Studies located in Washington, CT by hosting *Darlene Kacak* from the Institute and a member of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation. She presented "Quinnetukut - Stories Of Survival," at the Senior Center, educating us on the rich history of American Indian studies. It was a lovely afternoon of educational and cultural exchange.

We engaged with the Sherman School students through our **annual Second Grade visit** to the Northrop House and The Old Store. The **4th & 5th Grades** created a **Colonial Days/Mini Sturbridge event** in June under the guidance of Sherman School teacher, **Bernadette Linero**. It was an excellent opportunity to educate young minds about colonial history and crafts.

The **Annual Barn Sale**, a Memorial Day Weekend tradition did not disappoint. Donations were overwhelming and the sale days were quite brisk. This is one of our largest annual fund-raising events and is crucial for supporting society's operations.

In partnership with the Sherman Library, we presented a program, "Arshile Gorky: Could he be the last Surrealist and the first Abstract Expressionist?", an illustrated talk with **John Cilio**, author, historian and lecturer. It was well attended by the community and the Arshile Gorky Foundation representatives.

Finally, we can resume our more normal activities like Northrop House tours, during **Open House weekends** or by appointment, which is a positive step towards engaging with the community.

continued...

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Old Store continues to thrive, serving as a destination for visitors and contributing to the Society's mission.

Late last fall we received a **Connecticut Humanities Grant** to upgrade our office equipment. Over the winter our office equipment and connectivity were upgraded along with adding WI-FI capability out to the Barn.

In August we awarded the **Gloria Thorne Scholarship** to three deserving high school graduates, who not only meet but exceeded our criteria, **Domenic Le Rose, Philip Ostrosky,** and **Helen Seda**. We wish them every success in their field of study and beyond.

We also received a **generous donation** from a member who specifically requested we use the donation to make necessary renovations/maintenance activities needed for the Northrop House. We are in the process of renovating the upstairs bedroom and once this is completed, we will look to the next most pressing issue for renovation/maintenance.

All these events and other more mundane activities, like organizing, cleaning, planning, fund-raising activities would not happen without the dedicated efforts of our **Board of Directors, staff,** and **volunteers**. Their dedication to SHS plays a crucial role in the success of the Sherman Historical Society.

As we enter 2024, our 49th year, we look forward to expanding our existing programs and to continue to add new and exciting events to our schedule each year.

SHS is grateful for your continued support and enthusiasm. Together, we can create a brighter future for our community and beyond while remembering Sherman's place in history by keeping it alive.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Haney
SHS President

TREASURER'S REPORT

Sherman Historical Society, Inc			09/28/2023
Cash & Investments			Cash Basis
August 31, 2023 and 2022			
		Aug 31, 2023	Aug 31, 2022
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
	Endowment Fund Checking	\$ 20,162	\$ 21,311
	Endowment Fund CD	10,358	10,104
	Janney Advantage	18,018	14,986
	Janney CD	10,598	10,429
	The Old Store Checking	10,380	73,915
	The Old Store Money Market	49,436	-
	The Old Store CD	25,261	-
	The Old Store Savings	(2)	-
	Operations Checking	18,689	814
	Special Savings Account	53,770	6,217
	Total Checking/Savings	\$ 216,669	\$ 137,775
Other Assets			
Investments			
	Janney Equities	\$ 450,567	\$ 442,202
	Janney Fixed Income	282,371	250,123
	Total Investments	\$ 732,939	\$ 692,325

Respectfully Submitted by

Susan Lang

Susan Lang

Treasurer

ENDOWMENT REPORT

Report of the Endowment Committee to the Annual Meeting of the Sherman Historical Society
September 28, 2023

September 28, 2023 7pm Northrop House/Barn

The Endowment Committee meets quarterly with our financial advisor and our portfolio manager to review our investment portfolio, discuss any large projects that may be funded by the Endowment and to subsidize any operating expenses, if needed.

As of August 31, 2023 the value of our investment portfolio is \$749,558 and we are +7.74% YTD and the yield is 2.39%.

Endowment Committee Members:

Lori Finck(Chairman)

President Liz Haney(ex officio)

Treasurer Susan Lang(ex officio)

John Allan

Ashleigh Blake

Hal Clark

Respectfully Submitted by

Loretta Lang Finck

Loretta Lang Finck

Endowment Chair

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Report of the Secretary to the Sherman Historical Society Annual Meeting
September 28, 2023

Zoom and Northrop House/Barn

7pm

The Secretary attended all Zoom and physical meetings of the Board of Directors.

She wrote minutes for all meetings.

She helped with the Holiday Open House, the Native American event, the Cornstalks and Cock-tails event and the Barn Sale.

She thanks the Society for allowing her to serve as your Secretary.

Respectfully Submitted by

Loretta Lang Finck

Loretta Lang Finck

Secretary

THE OLD STORE REPORT

The fiscal year ending in 2023 was an exceptional year for The Old Store Museum and Gift Shop (TOS). Looking back, we were able to use advertising to our advantage which resulted in new customers as well as informed and happy customers.

In November, Channel 12 produced a video of Sherman through our connections with the author of the book Connecticut 169 Club. The video highlighted The Old Store, The American Pie Company and The White Silo Farm and Winery, bringing new customers from all over Connecticut, New York, and as far away as Pennsylvania. How special to be highlighted and the producer, Lori, remains a customer. We have seen many return customers!

Our postcards showing a photo of TOS with antique cars parked in front and a photo of the inside of the store on the reverse continue to bring in new customers too. These are given out to customers to pass on to friends and family. Visitors love passing on our information.

Facebook advertising is handled by a dedicated volunteer throughout the year. She highlights new products, special events, and answers customer questions. Her running commentaries are informative as well as so much fun to read!

Google, along with Facebook, was instrumental in “getting the word out” when the winter storm was arriving the week of Christmas, 2022. Each day had a highlight of when we would be open, what our plans were for the day and caution for hours the remainder of the week. We stayed open until 7:00 pm just in case the worst happened. Many in Sherman lost power, but TOS did not and was even used as a heating center for a few customers. No problem for us!

Highlighting the above is done in an effort to show that while TOS has become such an integral part of Sherman, TOS is bringing in people from far and wide and they are very interested in Sherman and the surrounding areas. Our volunteers act as ambassadors of Sherman and the area helping visitors to find new destinations and landmarks. We enjoy interacting with the customers, and taking just a little extra time brings benefits to all.

We are pleased to report all financial responsibilities for the fiscal year 2023 were met. Our fiscal responsibilities include providing full maintenance and operational expenses for the 200 plus year old building for The Old Store. These expenses include:

- inventory and packaging
- ongoing routine maintenance and repairs
- utilities
- insurance
- annual endowment contribution
- funding 50 percent of the SHS Scholarships

We continue to be grateful for the enthusiasm of the Sherman community, which helps to support The Old Store, and therefore SHS. We thank you for being our ambassadors and telling friends about us and, best of all, bringing in your visiting families. It truly makes The Old Store a happy place!

And for those that stood in the line at the cash register when our phone service went out on the busiest weekend of December, thank you. Thank you for your patience and trusting us as we truly became The Old Store as we wrote down your credit card information on credit card slips we have not had to use in more than 20 years. Having older volunteers to remember the old times comes in handy!

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Cilio

Lisa Cilio, Old Store Manager

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We currently have 152 active memberships and life members.

We sent out membership renewals in late August this year alongwith the annual printed newsletter to current, life and lapsed members. Working on getting membership letters out to new residents.

We have had 29 renewals, with some upping their level of membership, thus far totaling \$2,995.00. There have been 13 donations, some made by life members and matching gifts, plus others, such as the \$5,000 pledged for the Gloria Thorne Scholarship, totalling: \$7,810.00, that will go into endowment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doris Tomaselli

Doris Tomaselli
Membership pro tem

PROPERTY REPORT

During this past year I performed the following:

1. Repaired window sill of loading dock window of The Old Store
2. Replaced batten & diagonal brace to shutter for the above noted window
3. Installed wire mesh over attic vent of The Old Store to keep the birds out
4. Contracted painter & floor refinisher for restoration of the upstairs West wall bedroom of Northrop House
5. Continue to make necessary carpentry repairs to woodwork in bedroom
6. Remove 20th c. board & batten door on West wall of bedroom & replace with period correct door & frame

Respectfully Submitted,

Jan Desiato

Jan Desiato
Property Manager/Chair

IN ADDITION:

OFFICE: Grant money awarded to pay for computer upgrades in the office, which included two new PCs and monitors, battery backups, printer, and connective hardware. This also covered the installation of wiring to connect Wi-Fi to the barn, which was completed in August.

PROGRAM & EVENTS REPORT

1. Memorial Service September 10, 2022 2:00. Sherman Playhouse

Elizabeth Ward Scholze was remembered. The Sherman Playhouse hosted a beautiful tribute for Betsy. Betsy had recently contributed to *Reflections*, our newly published SHS book. She was a great friend who generously contributed her talents and time to the Sherman community.

2. *Reflections* October 8, 2022, 2 - 4. SHS Book Launch

Presented at the Sherman Playhouse. The authors onstage each gave their own take on their personal time with artists and writers of the '30s, '40s and '50s.

3. Holiday Open House Oct. 13, 2022, 9:30 - 12:00

Began scheduled meetings for planning and installations. Volunteers: Cara Kaufman, Phyllis McGoldrick, Gail Turro, Eileen O'Connell, Ginny Zellner.

4. *News Times* Interview Oct. 25, 2022

Gloria Thorne, Ginny Zellner, (both *Reflections* editors and project coordinators) and Doris Tomaselli (book designer), had a phone interview with a *News Times* reporter for *Reflections* book promotion.

5. Halloween SHS Town Participation Oct. 30, 2022, 4 - 7

6. Holiday Open House Preparation. Nov. 28 - Dec. 2, 2022

Final week of details. Theme 2022 year is 'Peace by Piece'. We dedicated the Open House to the late Joan Burke Taylor or Joni, as she was known. Joni was a wonderful spirit and member volunteer of SHS. She kept us all laughing. Joni was a talented quilter. Her daughter, Colleen allowed us to borrow many of her quilts for display at this year's Open House. Added to the final installation were a few of our SHS antique quilts and a few from the Schneckenburger estate.

7. *Peace By Piece*. Holiday Open House. Dec. 3, & 4, 2022, 1:00 - 4:00

Sue Moga showcased the barn adding to the Open House theme. The tree was decorated with all things Irish to honor Joni. Santa visited and was overcome with the Irish tribute and knelt on Joan's behalf. Photos were taken with all the children and Santa. The outside tree was lit, caroling took place, cookies and cocoa were served. Our volunteers were busy both inside and outside. The house hearth was up and running baking in the dutch oven and mulled cider was served in the dining room.

8. Senior Visit Dec. 6, 2022, 12:00 - 1:30

The annual Senior visit is more popular each year. The room is full. The quilt exhibit drew wonderful attention and commentary. Sue Moga offered a story and refreshments were served. I believe the audience would have stayed longer if not for the pending card game at the Center!

9. American Indian Studies Presentation. March 5, 2023, 2 -4

Preparation for the exhibit began in February 4, 9, 11, 16, 18. With the help of Helen Seda and Sarah Bollacke, New Fairfield H.S. volunteers, the SHS Indian artifact collection was transported from The Old Store to the Gallery. It was then organized into the final exhibit to accompany the presentation at the Senior Center. Lori Finck was the contact with IAIS for this event.

The IAIS presentation, *Quinnetukut - Stories Of Survival*, was delivered by Darlene Kacak. She is the Education Coordinator for The Institute for American Indian Studies, Washington, Ct. She is a member of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation.

Following the presentation the audience was invited to the Northrop House exhibit for refreshments, courtesy of Allyson Mard and Helen Seda.

continued...

PROGRAM & EVENTS REPORT

10. Second Grade Visit, Sherman School. April 25, 2023, 9 - 12

The visit included a tour of the house and The Old Store. **Sue Moga** conducted the two groups through the OS museum and I took them through the house. Both groups then met together in the ballroom and built mouse houses for Thomas, the Northrop House Mouse.

11. Research Visit, Prof. Hans Bak. May 23 - 24, 2023, 1:30

Professor of American Literature & American Studies at Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands visited SHS to research Malcolm Cowley. He has published two previous books on Cowley's earlier career. **Doris Tomaselli** worked with him to research our archives of *Sentinel* articles for his third book on Cowley, focusing on his later Sherman years. Then authors from our book *Reflections* also met with him in a roundtable discussion to give their perspectives as they remembered the the Cowleys, having personally known them.

12. Drop off days for Barn Sale. May 6, 13, 26, 2023, 9:30 - 12:30

Volunteers received and priced and packed donations. Preceding Thursdays, 13, 20, 27, volunteers priced items already in barn. Frank Weddell picked up larger donated items.

13. Barn Sale. May 27, 2023, 9 - 3, and May 28, 2023, 9 - 12:30

Pre-sale preparations included tent and table set up and carrying out of items and setting up displays. (**Susan Lang, Helen Anne Ostrosky, Ginny Zellner** on the half day Barn sale) A team of volunteers worked the sale both days.

14. Memorial Parade. May 28, 2023, 1:00

"Historic" parade participants included: our two student volunteers **Helen Seda** and **Sarah Bollacke**, plus **Lucy Seda, Bernadette Linero** and daughter, **Cara Kaufman**, and **Jan Desiato**! Great hand of appreciation from the crowd.

15. Barn Sale Clean up May 31 to June 2, 2023

Sue Moga, Ginny Zellner, Frank Weddell

16. "Colonial Days" Mini Sturbridge June 12, 2023, All day

Sherman teacher **Bernadette Linero** set up her colonial village. Sherman School 4 -5 grade students demonstrated their craft and explained it to visitors. **Sue Moga** was the SHS liaison with Bernadette. Excellent presentations. Parents proud. Community proud. Teachers proud. SHS proud.

17. Arshile Gorky Presentation. June 17. 2:00

Sherman Historical Society co-sponsored **John Cilio's** research lecture on Arshile Gorky. John's talk about Gorky was informative and much in keeping with John's historian point of view. There was a full house, including members of the Arshile Gorky Foundation. One of our own *Reflections'* authors, **Ann Price**, was able to add to the followup conversation as Arshile's children's babysitter!

18. Meeting with Mr. Henry Renard. June 15. 11:00

Mr. Renard met with me at the Northrop house to retrieve an Audubon art piece which he had donated to the Barn Sale. The piece had a reserve on it which was not met during our sale. I gave Henry a tour of the first floor of the house. He enjoyed his visit and especially was fascinated by the tools in the buttry!

continued...

PROGRAM & EVENTS REPORT

19. Gallery Installation. June 23, 10:30

Lucy Seda, Helen Seda, Doris Tomaselli and I put the gallery furniture back in place. I installed a new exhibit for the summer. Based on SHS book *Reflections*, it uses books by the artists and writers included in *Reflections*, which are presently housed in our library as well as a few new donations of books by these same writers and artists.

20. SHS Tour. June 24, 2:30 - 4:00

This was a tour requested ahead of time by a couple visiting from MA. They have signed our visitor's book. I took them through the Northrop House, visited the Barn and the Cobbler's Shop. I believe they may have visited The Old Store first.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ginny Zellner

Ginny Zellner

Programs Committee Chair

COLLECTIONS/ACCESSIONS REPORT

CURATOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

This has been mostly a literary year for the Society.

We received the following donations:

May 2023: From **Erica Dakin Voolich**, a copy of her new book, *Remember the Women!* about the women's branch of her family tree. It joins her other book in our library.

May 2023: From **Prof. Hans Bak**, Em. Professor of American Literature & American Studies at Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands, two of his published books on Malcolm Cowley, *Malcolm Cowley: The Formative Years*, and *The Long Voyage*, that cover Cowley's early career and his correspondence respectively. The professor visited the Society to research his third book on Malcolm Cowley, which will cover his later years, predominantly in Sherman.

May 2023: From **Christopher Burnett and the Estate of Ellen Burnett**, her collection of books (23 titles) by local authors, plus a New Yorker magazine 1969, as well as a box of Playhouse memorabilia.

July 2023: From **Grace Schneckenberger Parker**, from her mother Alice Schneckenberger's family history, 7 mini-leather bound notebooks dated 1864, 1877, 1890, 1892, 1896, 1903, 1908, 1916.

July 2023: From **Thea E. Smith**, granddaughter of Philip Hillyer Smith, copies of his two books, *Perennial Harvest* and *Wheels within Wheels — A Short History of American Motor Car Manufacturing*.

August 2023: From **Amie Suhee**, a story she'd written for the Town Tribune about her great-great granddaughter J.M. Vail, plus a digital, transcribed copy of his **daily diary of 1907**, where he writes about many things, but most touchingly about the loss of his wife Almira Wanzer Vail, as well as her mother Samantha Wanzer Dean.

August 2023: From **Pamela Poole Ross and Shawn Cunningham** (via Roberta Linkletter), 12 large wood panels featuring full-color painted quilt squares that were associated with the Underground Railroad.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doris Tomaselli

Doris Tomaselli
for Gloria A. Thorne
Curator/Accessions Committee Chair

REPORT OF THE SHERMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO THE ANNUAL MEETING 2023

The Nominating Committee are putting forward the following candidates for election to the Board of Directors at this Annual Meeting:

Class of 2026

Renee Collins

Jan Desiato

Elizabeth M. Haney

Lisa Keller

Helen Ann Ostrosky

Lucy Seda

Sue Moga will be taking Honorary Director status at the end of her 2023. We thank her for all the tremendous work she has done for the Society.

The election of officers will take place after the Annual Meeting at a Board of Directors Meeting

Respectfully Submitted,

Loretta Lang Finck

Loretta Lang Finck

Nominating Committee Chair