

Dear Members and Friends,

June, 2014

The officers and trustees of the Plainfield Historical Society invite you to attend our annual meeting which will be held on Tuesday, July 29, 2014 at the Plainfield Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. A talk by historian, Rachel Cleves will be followed by a short business meeting. Rachel's recently published book entitled Charity and Sylvia describes the relationship between Charity Bryant, William Cullen Bryant's aunt, and Sylvia Drake. There is a chapter in the book entitled Charity and Lydia that describes the relationship between Plainfield's Lydia Richards and Charity Bryant. From the age of 16 to 43 and from the years 1798-1825 Lydia wrote to Charity who was living in Vermont near Middlebury College. The Plainfield Historical Society has copies of all of those letters that were archived in the Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History in Middlebury. William Hosley, historical consultant, who created an excellent power point program on Plainfield's Shaw Hudson House studied those letters while he was a student at Middlebury College. He has had an abiding interest in Plainfield's history since that time. Copies of some of those letters, William Hosley's power point presentation on the Shaw Hudson House, and numerous other documents of historic interest to Plainfield can be viewed at the Plainfield Historical Society's website <http://plainfieldmahistory.com>

This has been an active year for the Plainfield Historical Society. On Saturday, October 12, Rich Potter led a tour of three barns: the first a three story 1880 barn owned by Hugh Hawkins; the second circa 1780 is a hand hewn English-style barn owned by the Keller family; the third a circa 1830 barn built by Leavitt Hallock. Plainfield has over thirty-five old "timber framed" barns that were built in the years from 1780 through 1910.

On Sunday, Oct. 27 the Shaw Hudson House came alive with reenactors of significant Plainfield historical figures. Jim Feeley portrayed Dr. Samuel Shaw, Rebecca Mlynarczyk represented Clara Hudson, Bettie Briggs was Elizabeth Clark, Ann Kohn was Sarah Bryant, and Judy Williams was Lydia Richards. Adding to the festive atmosphere was Joan Timberlake's jazz band. Anna Hathaway was so moved by the music that she began dancing in the hallway of the Shaw Hudson House.

On a bitterly cold Sunday, Nov. 24 Dario Coletta led a tour entitled Plainfield's History Through Hidden Landmarks. Fortunately the first site was a cave used for tanning hides which was much more comfortable than the outside weather. Dario recently repeated the tour on a pleasant spring day in May.

As Lori Austin so aptly described, the members of the Plainfield Historical Society continue to offer a Memorial Day feast that harkens back to a much loved tradition. This year's dinner and pie auction was a tremendous success with ample amounts of food, and award winning pies to eat and to auction. Joan Timberlake's Expandable Brass Band added to the gaiety of the parade to the cemetery.

Pleun Bouricius, Curator of the Plainfield Historical Society, received a grant from the State Historical Records Advisory Board for an Archivist to advise us on how to preserve and conserve our collection of papers, letters, and maps. Six members of the Historical Society met at the Shaw Hudson House for a workshop with the archivist, Rachel Onuf, on Saturday, June 7. With Pleun's guidance several members of the Plainfield Historical Society worked diligently to transfer hand written records of the collection to a computer based format.

The Plainfield Historic District nomination is being reviewed by members of the MA Historic Commission. We have been advised that the nomination will go to the state review board in December.

The Plainfield Historical Society lost a treasured member when Nancy Allen, daughter of Priscilla Allen and niece of Arvilla Dyer, passed away on Saturday, May 31, 2014.

This letter serves as a reminder to send your annual dues of \$20 or your donation, payable to the Plainfield Historical Society to Judith Bryan Williams, President, 525 West Main Street, Plainfield, MA 01070. Your support enables the Plainfield Historical Society to continue to preserve the history and traditions of our town. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Judith Bryan Williams  
President Plainfield Historical Society