



News from the Stow Historical Society

*A newsletter for all friends of Stow history.
Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!*

December 2011

SHS's 50th Anniversary Dinner – Historic!

All in all, the Stow Historical Society's 50th Anniversary celebration was one big "Standing O." Specifically, it was a standing ovation for outgoing president Barbara Sipler, who stepped down after 21 years leading the Society. Some 60 members, guests and "friends of Stow history" attended the November 12th event at Town Hall.

Beginning with a country harvest supper prepared by caterer Amanda Howland, the evening also saw the election of Ralph Fuller as the Society's new president, State Rep. Kate Hogan's presentation of citations marking the 50th from Governor Deval Patrick and the General Assembly, an introduction of the Stow Time Capsule and a viewing of the new Stow West School Museum video produced by Stow scout Jack Slattery.



Barbara ended her tenure with a review of the Society's accomplishments over the past half-century, from the memoirs and "white papers" developed by its members in the early years to its more recent work emphasizing education and awareness about Stow's 300-plus years of history. Following his election, Ralph's first act as president was to express everyone's thanks and appreciation for Barbara's service, which prompted the spontaneous standing ovation.

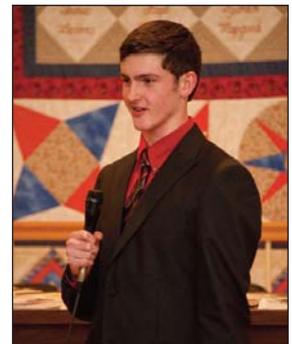
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The country harvest supper was prepared principally with ingredients from Small Farm.



Skip Warren, Marcia Rising, Betty Holly and Don Rising were honored as charter members of the Society.



Jack Slattery wrote and produced the West School video as part of his Eagle Scout program.

Dwight Sipler photos



Stow's Dan Hnatio, whose Active Communications is based on Great Road, was recognized at the dinner for donating his services to film and produce the video, which recreated an 1800s class at the West School. Kids from several Stow families played the students.



In assuming the role of president, Ralph pledged to continue an active agenda, and emphasized that he welcomed suggestions for future programs. He noted that as a writer with a background in marketing, he has a predilection for mass media (such as this newsletter). But he said that he hopes to create a board of directors to provide input and to develop a program of quarterly Society meetings.

To express appreciation to Barbara for her services, a committee consisting of Karen Gray, Linda Stokes, Dorothy Sonnichsen and Ralph Fuller created a "signing frame," a photo of the 1830s painting of the Lower Common with a broad mat to be signed by everyone present. Several long-deceased Stowites had already signed it: "Crazy Ben Whitcomb" – who in the mid-1800s had a penchant for galloping around town on a big brown horse with a sword and clanging cowbells, screaming his head off – summed up Sipler's tenure: "It's been a great ride!"



Time Capsule to be Sealed December 17th

The Stow Time Capsule, stuffed with books, newspaper, maps, town reports, brochures, third-grade student essays, DVDs, alpaca wool, and many other documents and artifacts reflecting life in Stow in 2011, will be officially and finally sealed in a session at Randall Library at 11 am on Saturday, December 17.

The Historical Society decided to mark its 50th anniversary with creation of the time capsule, to be placed in the Library's SHS museum cases and opened at the 100th anniversary in 2061. The sealing event is envisioned as an informal work-session. All interested persons are welcome to attend. The time capsule and its contents were assembled by a working group consisting of Nancy Aresnault, Ralph Fuller, Karen Gray, Barbara Sipler, Linda Stokes and Dorothy Sonnichsen.

A Book Signing: Maynard historian David Mark – a staunch friend of Stow history – is the author of a new book, MAYNARD: History and Life Outdoors, published by History Press. The book, based on his "Life Outdoors" columns in the Beacon-Villager, addresses topics as diverse as the presence of coyotes in New England, Assabet River floods and the rise and demise of the Concord, Maynard and Hudson Street Trolley. The book is available at The Paper Store, but David will be signing copies at a reading at the Maynard Library on Tuesday, December 6 beginning at 7 pm.