

Members and Friends

OPERATIONS :

The Board has approved a revised Mission Statement which better describes our operations:

Howland Stone Store Museum

Mission Statement

Approved by the Board of Trustees, June 10, 2020

The Howland Stone Store Museum tells the story of the Sherwood Equal Rights Historic District, a crucible for reform in the century following 1830. The Howlands and other area residents, inspired by Quaker values, were pioneers in pursuing abolition of slavery, voting rights for women, and education for all.

The Museum is housed in the 1837 Slocum Howland Cobblestone Store and in Opendore, the 1910 Isabel Howland estate. The Museum preserves historic sites and makes archival material available for study. Exhibits and programming for all ages, often in partnership with schools and other institutions, connect the cultural heritage of Southern Cayuga County to the world of today. Its collections feature nationally significant women's suffrage campaign materials and the Gutches women's history archive.

By sharing knowledge, building community, and preserving a valued past, the volunteers who power the Howland Stone Store Museum strive to inform and delight the public. The Museum inspires all who seek, as did Emily Howland, to realize themselves and to serve.

A committee is also working on reviewing our Strategic Plan and developing a Sustainability Plan.

The pandemic has had significant impact on our museum operations. While we planned to open in May, this has been significantly delayed. We are now open by appointment only, call 315-303-3145 if you wish to arrange a visit.

Our spring Open House, our August 19th Amendment centennial celebration and Opendore grand opening, and our Sunday program schedule have been postponed to 2021.

Likewise, our internal Trustee meetings and committee meetings have become virtual with good success. Work at Opendore has continued following safe guidelines.

COLLECTIONS :

We acknowledge the many years of service to HSSM of Phyllis Stanton. Starting in 2002 and thru 2014 Phyllis was a Board member and Treasurer for six of those years. Additionally, Phyllis is a long standing member of the Collections Committee where she has added great value to the group's work. Her knowledge of local families has been especially helpful in tracing connections, and she has always been willing to work on Collections Committee projects, whether checking a book inventory or developing policies or sorting piles of yearbooks



Carolyn Littlejohn, Marilyn Post and Karen Speck working on collections at Stone store

Gutchess Collection :

On July 25th Jonathan Gutchess delivered the bulk of the Elsie Gutchess collection to Opendore. The collection of Woman's history items was donated to HSSM by Elsie Gutchess in 2017 as a permanent addition to our collection. The following is excerpted from a memo from Jonathan upon the delivery :

Thanks to the volunteers to help receive my beloved mother's extensive collection of women's memorabilia, including anything she could get her hands on pertaining to her passion for suffrage and women's history. It came in from all corners of the state and later the nation and even had just begun to expand overseas very late in her long life with the help of eBay and the Internet. She began this endeavor way back in the early eighties, when she really unfurled her long "restrained" passion, rather late in her ambitious and multifaceted life. She blossomed and matured very gracefully as an "aging and humble" philanthropist which she long aspired to be, (not the aging portion so much). She was so proud to have been able to help kick off Opendore. She was relieved to find a home for one of her more important, many collections. We are grateful to have you and your community come together and get this done. ...And to allow my mother the privilege and personal satisfaction to know that a major portion of one tangent of her life's work, was not to be in vain. She wanted these "works" to be shared. It was so very important to her to find a permanent home to archive these two collections- women's history and her own mother's side of the genealogy which ironically has a connection right here between the Finger Lakes in your community. This made my mother ecstatic with joy. I recall visiting family here while growing up and coming over from Skaneateles where we lived at the time. Seems upstate NY is "home". ...and for many of us.

ORIGINS OF THE ELSIE GUTCHESS GREAT WOMEN of the U.S.A. COLLECTION :

Elsie Gutches said that there were many great women in America ignored by history because men wrote the history and it was about men and their wars. Her goal was to do a syndicated newspaper column featuring a great woman on her birthday each day of the week. Eventually she gathered names, histories and photos of enough women to run her column for 5 years times 365 days!

For twenty years (1980-2000) Elsie collected memorabilia of many aspects of American women's lives and achievements. A major focus of the collection is the women's rights movement. Included are some 1500 books, most notable a 6-volume set of the History of Women Suffrage published between 1887 and 1922 by authors E.C. Stanton, S. B. Anthony and M. Gage. There are also suffrage newspapers, postage stamps, art, statues, "Votes for Women" china, posters, political buttons and files holding biographical data of 2000 notable women.

Her research ranged far and wide. She searched the museums and historical societies of each state for names of their great women. She was an early E-Bay buyer, adding books (1500), photos and memorabilia to her collection.



Firstmuth Sculpture



Susan B. Anthony Portrait



Carrie Nation Hatchet



Votes for Women China

Across the state and beyond, Elsie shared her beloved collection of women’s history with lectures and slide presentations at conferences and with women’s groups. Like Doris Kearns Goodman, Elsie could make history come alive. She was always digging up the most fascinating pieces of history in her biographies; she was relentless in finding flattering pictures of her heroes. She even found a flattering one of Eleanor Roosevelt in her Gibson girl hair do.

THE COLLECTION FINDS IT’S HOME

In the words of Elsie, ... “We want to use these materials to help educate and inspire people, especially young people around the country about the longest civil rights movement in US history—that’s the women’s movement. In collecting these materials, I have attempted to pull women out of footnotes and dustbins of history -- to make women’s contributions and especially those of the suffragists more than a footnote or expended caption in a history book. I wanted to give those contributions a rightful place in history. With Opendore, I have found the perfect home. My maternal grandmother lived down the road from Opendore in Sherwood NY and my uncles farmed the land (Frogmore Farms) there. Now it feels like I am coming home again.”



Cataloguing Gutchess Books



Gutchess Banner

PROGRAMS :

Our Sunday programs remain cancelled due to the pandemic.

Since our planned celebration of the anniversary of the 19th Amendment in August was cancelled, we are now planning for a “Centennial plus 1” event in June 2021, along with a grand opening of Opendore.

Our Sherwood Road neighbor Jodi Baldwin is planning a suffrage “walk and tea” on October 3rd and we will participate with a “front porch speech” at the museum. Please visit Jodi’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/941742256341893/> for more information and to register.

The HSSM Website continues to be improved, please visit at www.howlandstonestore.org. Also there are several interesting YouTube videos on the museum and Opendore project, search for Howland Stone Store Museum.

EDUCATION :

The Stone Store is open for visitation by appointment on Saturday. Please call 315-303-3145 to make arrangements.

The Board recently created the position of Historian to research local history, organize historical materials, and communicate the results. Larry Bell was appointed as Historian, and would welcome any materials that members or the community may have.

Our museum has been recently featured in several publications, including the Post Standard and <https://wanderlust-onabudget.com/womens-history-sites-in-new-york/>. We also continue to improve our website Howlandstonestore.org which we invite you to visit.

OPENDORE PROJECT :

Work continues at Opendore by our dedicated group of volunteers, who have logged over 8,000 hours since Fall 2016.

Beardsley Architects + Engineers donated metal shelving, oak worktables and a second flat file that are installed in the Archive Room. We appreciate the generous support.

Recognition is given to Tryg Ager, who joined the “Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday” volunteer gang in June 2019 after attending an Open House, and has since contributed over 225 hours between knee surgeries. His experience with electrical work has been especially valuable.



Our primary focus is interior trim restoration, which involves careful reconstruction of salvage trim and recreation of new components that were not able to be salvaged. The beautiful wainscot and cornice in the 1910 north addition has been restored, including the “compo” molding (mix of chalk, resins and linseed oil pressed into a mold).



Additionally, the lovely arch and columns in the opening between the Foyer and Entry Hall have been restored and are ready for installation.



The salvaged mantel from the demolished south wing has been completely restored and relocated to the Entry Hall.



Original Urn from arch pilaster (center) and reproduction urns on sides (thanks Lorrie Butcher for hours of painstaking work)

The second floor Archive Room is complete, with the recent installation of linoleum flooring. We are currently moving our poster collection and other artifacts to this environmentally controlled space.

We have also installed the interior lighting throughout the building, consisting of period appropriate ceiling fixtures and modern track lighting for displays.



A significant effort was undertaken to complete clearing the grounds to the south and east, removing debris and junk that had accumulated over many years. The vista to the east from the building now resembles what existed in the early 20th century.



MERCHANDISE

HSSM Calendars

The 2020 HSSM Woman's Rights Centennial Calendar replicates a historic week-by-week version from our collection and are available for sale for the reduced price of \$15, with member price of \$10 for first copy. These calendars are generic (not 2020 specific) and can be used in future years. They can be purchased on our website www.howlandstonestore.org or by contacting Karen Speck at 315-303-2145.

MEMBERSHIP :

Museum renewal membership for 2020 is \$15 individual and \$25 family. The membership and donation form is attached.

Benefits of membership include :

- Support to museum
- Newsletter mailing hard copy if requested
- Reserved seating programs if requested
- 10% discount merchandise

We currently have 104 members for 2020, and would like to surpass our 2019 membership of 140.

HSSM now is on social media:

- follow HSSM on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/HowlandStoneStoreMuseum>
- follow HSSM on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/howlandstonestoremuseum/>

We recently heard from Don Culver of Flower Mound Texas, who sent the following kind note :

I do not believe I have personally met you or any of the current officers of the HSSM organization, but I am compelled to try to reach out to all of you in some manner....hence this reply.

I was brought up on the Culver Farm south of Poplar Ridge on Route 34B and attended Sherwood Central, graduating in 1956. I attended classes in the Emily Howland School building (Pat White was

a classmate) so I have been aware of the Howland family history and the Howland houses in Sherwood since childhood.

While I never lived on the farm after college, I was a regular visitor to the area up until about 8 years ago. Over that time I drove through Sherwood many, many times and almost every time I would specifically look at, with a sense of sorrow, what is now referred to as Opendore. It was always disappointing to witness the deterioration that occurred, largely, after my high school graduation.

I am now heartened and uplifted to see that Opendore is really being restored. I appreciate receiving the HSSM newsletters and pictures showing the restoration project. I do wish I lived near enough to be able to provide on-site support and to be able to personally thank you and others who are actively engaged in this effort.

I offer a big “Thank You!!” to all of you.

HISTORIAN



The DOT recently erected signs marking the Sherwood Equal Rights Historic District from all four directions into the hamlet. The Equal Rights District was placed on the National Register in 2008, and includes 28 properties; most of which have historic associations with Quakerism, African-Americans, the Underground Railroad, women’s rights, and equal access to education.

We sometimes hear the question: “Do you have any information on _____?” At times, we can quickly find the answer, but other times, our best answer is

“maybe.” No one person knows what is in all those archival boxes lining the walls of the Stone Store Museum.

In a heroic effort, Ann Mathieson has been working on a paper inventory of the collection since 2005. She has put together multiple volumes describing exactly what is in those archival boxes. But since it is on paper, it is not searchable. For some years now, Sharon Porter has been entering the information into a searchable computer database. Unfortunately, the program is no longer supported. What to do? Ann and Sharon have been doing marvelous work, but much still remains to be done. Inventory and photography of the collection are in various stages of completion, and are stored either on paper or in various home computers. The collection itself has never been completely inventoried. Though much of the collection has a paper-based inventory, we need a searchable and catalog capable database for display, research, analysis and insurance purposes.

We have received a grant from the Greater Hudson Heritage Network for tech consultant Erin Richardson to spend a half day with us and provide guidance for the next steps. We’re thankful for the grant, and look forward to knowing what is in all those boxes and being able to answer the questions that come to us.

MEMBERSHIP FORM - DUES (through Dec. 2020)

Sept 2020

YES! I/We would like to support the ongoing restoration/preservation and educational programming of the Howland Stone Store Museum. (Since HSSM's total income is from donations and fund- raisers, your contribution is really appreciated.) THANK YOU!

Name: _____ \$15 individual membership

Address: _____ \$25 family membership

City/State _____ HSSM donation

Phone: _____ Opendore project donation

E-Mail _____ TOTAL enclosed

check if e-mail Newsletters satisfactory (saves printing & mailing costs)

Make checks payable to **Howland Stone Store Museum, PO Box 124, Aurora, NY 13026**

Note : memberships and donations can be made electronically thru **PayPal**

at our website <http://howlandstonestore.org> ... scroll down near bottom

Volunteer Opportunities—want to help?

_____ assist with programs or displays _____ assist with grants/fund-raising

_____ greet visitors Friday or Sat afternoons _____ assist with collection care

_____ volunteer to help work on Opendore Project as _____

(carpentry, painting, gardening, etc.)

_____ other _____