

*The following is a SHS 'Timeline' documenting the organization's original historic place in the Dowse Memorial Library at 4 No. Main Street, the two relocations within the Sherborn Town Office/ Town Hall Building at 19 Washington Street and subsequent plans for a proposed move to the Sherborn Library.*

- 1911 Organizational meeting agrees to establish Sherborn Historical Society
- 1913 *July 26, 1913.* The Sherborn Historical Society incorporated
- 1914 The Dowse Memorial Library, established, and property conveyed to the Town Benefactor William Bradford Homer Dowse confirmed his wish at the dedication that the Library Building be constantly open as a center of education and sociability, and his specific request that the Sherborn Historical Society be allowed the use of the Library Hall. The first SHS meeting was held on July 14, 1914
- 1938 Annual Town Meeting, article 14, vote specifically acknowledges the Town's debt of gratitude to the late W.B.H. Dowse for the gift of the library, and reaffirms that the intent of the donor William Bradford Homer Dowse was to have space in the Sherborn Library continue to be designated to the SHS.
- 1971 Completion of new Sherborn Library building on Sanger St.
- 1971 The Dowse Memorial Library building became the Sherborn Town Office building The SHS remained in their designated space in the lower level of the building until 1984
- 1983 Renovation of former Center School to accommodate the Sherborn Town Hall begun
- 1983 Annual Town Meeting, Article 4, confirms that space for the SHS will continue to be provided<sup>1</sup>
- 1984 Collections of the SHS relocated<sup>2</sup> to the 2nd floor of the renovated Town Hall into space which had not been refurbished.
- 1985 Sherborn Rural Land Fund /Hildreth Family donated the auction proceeds of the contents of Hildreth home and barn @ 46 Pleasant St to benefit SHS. Auction realizes approx. \$11,000 \$10,000 was used to augment the refurbishing (re-painting, lighting, carpeting, draperies) of the new SHS location on the 2nd floor in the Town Hall building. Additional storage space was provided with the utilization of 2 former bathrooms. In addition to the new location, the SHS was given the opportunity to place furnishings, display cases and artwork, throughout the newly renovated building.
- 1985 The former Dowse Memorial Library/Sherborn Town Office building was sold to the Life Experience School. This complicated town-building sale was contingent on the decision of the Sherborn Historical Society's vote to relinquish its claim to its designated space in the Dowse

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<sup>1</sup> p. 17 "a room of approximately 700 square feet of space in a Town building be provided for use by the Historical Society along with additional space for Society meetings as available." The indication in 1983 was that this space would be in the Town Office Building.

The SHS Minutes of November 14, 1982, state: They (Municipal Building Study Comm.) propose to relocate the Society exhibits to a room of about 787sq.ft in Center School and to allow us the use of the proposed meeting room of 1334 sq. feet for our meetings.

<sup>2</sup> by Sherborn Highway Department personnel

- Memorial Library/ Sherborn Town Offices. Proceeds of the sale of the building went to the Sherborn Library and established the Dowse Memorial Library Fund.
- 1994 Town Office/Police Station Study Committee Minutes (June 29, 1994) confirms that the town did indeed convey a portion of the present Town Office Building to the Sherborn Historical Society.<sup>3</sup> This research was done by Attorney John Burke (Chairman of Study Comm.) in anticipation of renovating the Town Office Building.
- 1997 SHS receives \$5000 grant from IMLS Conservation Assessment Program<sup>4</sup>  
In collaboration with the Town Office Building Committee, an architectural assessment of the building and proposed space in the lower level was carried out at the same time by Allen Charles Hill, AIA, Historic Preservation and Architecture. Recommendations were made to the building committee regarding HVAC, lighting, etc.
- 2000 SHS collections placed in Sherborn Library and secure off-site storage for duration of Town Hall building renovations
- 2005 SHS collections moved to the Ground Level of the renovated Town Hall building. Six display cases throughout the building designated for SHS use. Selectmen recommended one be permanently designated for school history display.
- 2020 The Selectboard notified the SHS that they were required to vacate their designated space to allow Town to comply with space requirements resulting from ongoing COVID-19 crisis and overcrowded building.  
*June:* Museum and archival collections packed and moved by/to Gentle Giant’s secure, climate-controlled storage facility at the Town’s expense. The SHS paid the “suggested gratuity.”
- 2020 Working group of members of the Library Board of Trustees and the board of directors of the SHS begin discussion of space options within the library
- 2021 *March 16, 2021.* Library Board of Trustees approve a motion “to allow the SHS to occupy up to 1,800 square feet in the Lower Level of the Library”
- 2022 *February.* 194 boxes of archival documents retrieved from storage and rehoused in donated office space at 20 North Main Street. Town paid for the move. SHS paid “suggested gratuities”. Gratuity payments for the 2 moves cost the SHS approx. \$500.
- 2023 *January.* Previously mislaid shelving finally returned from Gentle Giant storage and installed.
- 2023 *February.* Dr. Martha Mahard<sup>5</sup> appointed Curator.
- 2023-24 David Fixler, Preservation Planning Architect, hired to develop conceptual plans for our new space in the library. Fee: \$12,850
- 2024 Town Meeting voted for money (\$100,000) to hire an architectural firm to complete detail drawings to bid out the project for the space. RFP issued after the beginning of the new fiscal year  
Architect hired: TSKP x ikd enters into agreement with the Town in the fall to perform the development of detailed drawings

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<sup>3</sup> “Chair, Attorney John Burke reported that further checking appears to confirm that the town did indeed convey a portion of the present Town Office Building to the Sherborn Historical Society. The trail begins in 1914 when property was conveyed for the purpose of establishing a Library. As recently as 1983, Town Meeting voted to dedicate 700 sq. feet in the present Town Office Building to the Society.”

<sup>4</sup> This effort was administered by The National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property by Rika Smith McNally, FAIC, Conservator of Objects and Sculpture.

<sup>5</sup> Retired Professor of Practice, Graduate School of Library & Information Science, Simmons University; former Curator of Historical Photographs, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University