**SHAF Annual Meeting Minutes**

**April 26. 2025**

SHAF’s annual meeting was held on April 26, 2025 at the Boonsboro Library, beginning at 12:30 PM. Fifteen SHAF members were present.

Perry Jamieson donated three Civil War prints to SHAF to be sold as a fundraiser.

President Tom Clemens provided a summary of SHAF activities for the past year:

Gloss-Boyer House, 111 East Chapline Street

* Preservation Maryland is preparing a draft easement document for the property. The cost for this, plus managing the easement is $10,000.
* When the easement is in place, the property will be sold. It will be offered first to SHAF members, then, if there is no interest, it will be listed for sale to the public with Flo Wise, realtor.
* SHAF paid $3,000 to have the house cleaned out.

SHAF held two workdays in the past year, fall and spring. The focus was on clearing brush and scrub in the central section of the East Woods.

SHAF maintained a table at both Antietam Institute events.

The Katy Poffenberger House, a post-Civil War property near the Visitor Center has been removed. ABT transferred this property to the NPS, and still owns two others along the MD Route 65 bypass, which are also to be removed. There are three utility poles on this tract that no longer carry service to these two properties and can be removed. Tom will look into this.

SHAF also would like to have the utility poles in central battlefield area removed. Tom met with Superintendent Andrew Banasik concerning the utility poles. SHAF has proposed rerouting the power lines along the Route 65 bypass, which would be a future project. The goal is to get power lines out of the central Battlefield area.

Nancy Keefauver, who passed away several months ago owned a historic farm on Mansfield Road, the site of a large hospital at the time of the battle. She also owned a 12-acre property on Smoketown Road on the Battlefield, with and early 20th century house. Both SHAF and ABT have sent letters to the Keefauver estate concerning these properties and future plans for them, but all have been returned unopened.

Financial Report – Bill Maharay and Katherine Shepperd.

Katherine Sheppard will be taking over the treasurer’s duties from Bill Maharay.

SHAF for 2024 had income of $149,778.54 and expenses of $83,672.00. Total cash in bank accounts is $375,382.52. SHAF’s total assets, which include the Harpers Ferry Road, Chapline Street and Grove Farm properties is $667,057.87. Currently SHAF has no liabilities.

General Discussion

Hospital site signs and historical markers that SHAF installed many years ago may need replacement soon.

Rho Kappa of Boonsboro High School has adopted SHAF to be a recipient of their fundraising and help efforts. So far, they have raised $500 for SHAF and have provided physical help on workdays

Nominations for SHAF Board

None were submitted.

Sue Gemeny and Perry Jamieson moved and seconded that the current board be reelected. Motion passed unanimously.

Program

John Shildt, Dennis Frye and Tom Clemens reminisced about the beginnings of SHAF in 1985.

John Schildt: SHAF began with the threat to Mt. Airy, the Grove Farm. Developers were planning to create a housing development and a strip mall on the property where Abraham Lincoln visited after the battle. The property was a hospital site and descendent Louise Grove had furniture from the house that appears in photographs with Lincoln on the property. The Grove property also included the Retreat Glen that Confederates used to get to the Potomac River. “Once bulldozers get in, it’s too late.”

Dennis Frye: Tammy Baker of the *Herald Mail* newspaper informed Dennis that the County Commissioners had rezoned the Grove Farm. “We must fight this!” The zoning change was illegal, because there was no change in the character or use of the property. John Schildt, Tom Clemens and Dennis Frye planned a meeting to determine how to fight the illegal rezoning. They launched a public relations campaign to fight the illegal action. It received front page coverage and multiple letters to the editor, all opposing the rezoning. The newly formed SHAF sued the county commissioners. At that point the Town of Sharpsburg opposed preservation of the Grove Farm, as did the Sharpsburg American Legion. SHAF presented a petition with 5,000 signatures to the county commissioners and tied up the rezoning in court. Although the County appealed, and SHAF lost the case. Fortunately the developers eventually went bankrupt and the land was bought by the state and is currently zoned agricultural.

Tom Clemens: SHAF’s attorney said “Go save something. Get some cred.” The house in Sharpsburg at the corner of S. Mechanic Street and West Antietam Street was being sold at auction. SHAF bought it to protect it and then sold it. SHAF had saved something. Next, SHAF bought 40 acres of the Grove Farm that had been slated for development. SHAF placed protective easements on that property and then sold it as farmland. SHAF also bought an additional five acres of the Grove Farm in front of where the American Legion was planning to build a new meeting hall to protect that land. SHAF still owns the five-acre parcel that still protects the surrounding land.\*

SHAF is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff.

The meeting Adjourned at 2:00 PM

* Update – The Grove farm, about 30 acres and the original early 1800s house are currently listed for sale. Roger Fairbourne is the listing agent, asking price is $3.3 million.