

The Historical Society presented its new book *Reflections*, to the public on Saturday, October 8th, 2022, at the Sherman Playhouse. We appreciate all who came to listen and to buy.

The authors each gave short recaps of their entries for this collaborative effort that grew out of several members sitting around talking of their childhood memories at a time when a number of influential artists and writers had taken up residence in Sherman. When it became clear that these “ordinary” recollections of “just” friends and neighbors—and even family—were anything but, the idea for *Reflections* was born, spearheaded by Society Curator Gloria Thorne and artist/dancer/teacher/Board member Ginny Zellner. To put those interactions into context, these authors needed to write their own stories as well—and what an additional treasure trove of discovery that was!

Book contributors were: Bill Braislin, Laura Castro, Pat Endress, Jeanne McRoberts, Ann Lund Price, the late Betsy Ward Scholze, Gloria Allen Thorne, Doris Tomaselli, Frank Weddell and Ginny Zellner. Most are names quite familiar to Sherman and their stories are quite compelling and surprising both. You may have only thought you knew them....

Besides being talented writers all, these current and former Shermanites are all multi-talented artists in their own right. Among them are actors, artists, dancers, designers, musicians, poets, reporters, songwriters and teachers. The list is diverse and goes on.

This group wrote of a time in Sherman—their childhoods—during the Depression when a number of creative folk from NYC took up part-time residence in what they thought of as relaxing “country retreats.” They may have come to the country but they didn’t altogether leave their citified lives behind. For some town residents, it was absolute culture shock to encounter these *avant-garde* “Bohemians.” For others, including our team of authors, there was inspiration and creative influence that they themselves tapped into.

These penned memories have made for intimate portraits of some acclaimed names from that previous generation. Stories the general public might not know but a friend, neighbor, or inquisitive child would be privy to. These talents included: poet Hart Crane, artists Arshile Gorky and Peter Blume, author/model/dancer Maguerite Agniel, award-winning dancer/choreographer Martha Clarke, cartoonist George Wunder, biographical writers and translators Matthew and Hannah Josephson, New Yorker art critic Robert Coates, respected authors Robert Cantwell and Lillian J. Bragdon, legendary composer/musician Eric Simon, and internationally-recognized Egyptologist and poet Henry Fischer. Yes, the list goes on.

Some came as friends of Eleanor “Fitzi” Fitzgerald, who bought a home on Coburn Road. Fitzi was the executive director of the Provincetown Playhouse—an influential theatre group that launched the careers of many including playwright Eugene O’Neill. Among her guests were photographer Paul Lund, Sue Jenkins Brown and William Slater Brown, Peter Blume and Malcolm Cowley, all of whom set down their own roots here. (Slater Brown’s nephew, award-winning writer James Lincoln Collier now owns their former home). Paul Lund, as the story goes, fell for and married nearby resident and artist Margaret Wilson.

And Sherman was not devoid of its own talent at the time (Margaret, for example) and several of those creative people have been profiled as well, among them: award-winning author Pierre Sichel, illustrator and architect Wilson Ware (Ruth, his wife, also an author), philanthropist and theater-lover Alice Evans and her actress daughter Marianne Ward, artists and actors Ed and Alpha Castro, naturalist and Timber Trails organizer Colvin Farley, artist/entrepreneur DeWolfe Hotchkiss, artist Jean Chapman, artist/collector Charles Czap and

dancer wife Kita, non-fiction writer Philip Hillyer Smith, boarding house owner/craftsperson Edna Barnes, and artist/jewelry designer Edna Anderson—all contributing much to Sherman, to the *Sentinel*, the Playhouse, to education and the cultural arts. And again, you may have thought you knew them....

The book is a unique history of Sherman's creative side and worth a read for anyone who knows/knew these folks, and for those newcomers to Sherman. It's a legacy of these two generations that will live on as part of Sherman's history. Just as *Sentinel Houses & Barns* gave the rich history of the homes and properties of Sherman, *Reflections* offers intimate portraits of some talents who lived here.

The book is \$30 and is available at The Old Store (and remember the store will close for the season after December 24th). All proceeds support the Society's programming and properties, as we are a volunteer-based non-profit organization.