

Samuel T. Sheard

Samuel T. Sheard of Sturbridge

Chairman of the Quinebaug French Rivers Manufacturers Association since mid February 1957. Mr Sheard replaced W A Stewart, AO's former president.

The association which has actively sought and supported construction of flood control facilities in the Upper Thames Basin since the disastrous flood of August 1955.

“Flood Control Funds Urged by S. T. Sheard

“On May 7, 1957, S. T Sheard spoke before the Public Works Subcommittees of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees in Washington to urge them to approve and even increase the flood control appropriation asked for by the Corps of Army Engineers.....

Obituary in The News, Southbridge Tuesday, March 18th, 1980

“Civic Leader Samuel T. Sheard Dies at Age 87”

Samuel T. Sheard, 87, of Main Street a former American Optical Corp. official and civic and community leader, died yesterday in Liberty House Nursing Home, Southbridge, after a long illness. He was the husband of Elfrida (Beck) Sheard.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, John L. Sheard of Lewiston, N.Y., a brother, Alfred Sheard of Canton, N.Y., a sister, Rebecca Sheard of Woodmere, Long Island, N.Y., four grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

He was graduated from St. Lawrence University, Canton, N.Y. where he received a bachelor of science degree.

He was a chemist and superintendent for Humboldt Fibre Co., Humboldt, Tenn. For four years, prior to joining AO in Southbridge in June, 1920.

He was special assistant to the president for one year, prior to retiring in 1958. Other positions he held at AO were supervisory trainee, superintendent for lens manufacturing , inspection and finished lens, assistant general manager for lens manufacturing, general manager for lens manufacturing, member of the president's staff heading general manager of the Mechtronoptic Division which manufactures optical machinery and electronic optics and general manager of the Picture Products Division.

He was founder and president for 32 years of the AO Mutual Benefit Association , Inc. an employee's mutual insurance plan. He also served as president of the Wellsworth Athletic Association of AO. He was a founder of the American Board of Opticianry.

From 1956-1972, Mr. Sheard was chairman of the executive committee of Quinebaug-French Rivers Manufacturers' Association. From 1959-1972, he was Chairman of Thames River Valley Flood Control Commission.

Mr. Sheard was the pioneering force for flood control in the Thames River Basin after the disastrous 1955 Flood. He was credited with helping obtain more than \$25 million to build dams and reservoirs in the Thames River Basin. These included projects at Buffumville, Hodges Village, East Brimfield, Westville and West Thompson, Conn.

For his work in flood control, he received four awards. In 1959, he received an "Appreciation Award" from the Tri Community Chamber of Commerce. In 1960, he was honored by AO through its trustees for his work in flood control. In May 1960, the U.S. Army awarded him a "Certificate of Appreciation for Patriotic Civilian Service." At the time, it was the first such award made in three years and the only one given to a civilian in the area. In 1962, the Southbridge Exchange Club gave him their "Golden Deed Award" in recognition of his outstanding service.

A 32nd Degree Mason, he was a member of the Aleppo Temple Memphis, Tenn. He was also a member of Cohasse Country Club, Southbridge.

Mr. Sheard was a member of the original Tri Community Chest and served as division leader for the annual fund drive for several years. He also served as director and president of the Tri Community Chest.

He was a member of the original Harrington Memorial Hospital, Southbridge, organization committee and was division leader for the hospital building campaign. He also served as a hospital director and as a member of the hospital's first building expansion committee.

He served as program chairman for 15 years for the Southbridge Chamber of Commerce and was president of the Southbridge Club. He also was a trustee for Worcester Country Extension Service.

Mr. Sheard was manager of the former Sturbridge Fair and served as a member of the fair committee for about 20 years.

He also served as president of the Massachusetts Agricultural Fairs Association and as a member of the Youth Fair Committee of Old Sturbridge Village.

Mr. Sheard also served the community as a selectman for seven years as a 10-year member of the Finance Committee and as town moderator for 16 years. He was a member of the Massachusetts Moderators' Association.

A trustee and corporator of Southbridge Savings Bank. Mr. Sheard served from 1959-1964 as president of the Sturbridge Tourist Information Center.

He was a founder of the Sturbridge Men's Club and served six years as its president.

He was born in Cape Vincent, N.Y. son of the Rev. Charles and Frances (Scatchard) Sheard.

Private funeral services will be held Thursday in Bullard's Funeral Home, 51 Marcy Street, Southbridge with the Revs. Ernest T. Berkeley Jr. and Jamie R Gustafson officiating. Private burial service will be held at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge.

Calling hours are 7 to 9 p.m. tomorrow at the funeral home.

EDITORIAL

The News, Southbridge Tuesday March 18, 1980

The area has lost a civic leader in Samuel T. Sheard.

He gave of himself to make a better community. Born in New York, he was a man who chose this area as his home and was willing to invest his time in its future.

Sheard's accomplishments are countless. Through his efforts the Sturbridge Men's Club and the American Optical Mutual Benefit Association were born.

He was a doer. He lent his time to the Tri-Community Chest (now the United Way), the Harrington Memorial Hospital, the Tri-Community Chamber of Commerce, the Extension Service, the Sturbridge Fair, Old Sturbridge Village, and a variety of service and professional organizations.

Sheard was recognized as a major force behind area flood control work. And, in his work he appeared before Congress testifying about the need for federal flood control funds. In recognition of his help to federal, state and municipal agencies, he was the recipient of four awards, including a rare civilian citation from the U.S. Army.

In 1959, he received an award from the Chamber of Commerce for his involvement in community affairs and in 1962 the Exchange Club honored him with its Golden Deeds Award for his contributions to the area.

Samuel T. Sheard left his mark on this area as a lasting tribute to his concern for others.
