

Belmont Heritage & Preservation Fair was great first-time effort

To The Daily Sun,

Thank you for publicizing the Heritage and Preservation Fair last month. The Belmont Village event brought friends, neighbors and newcomers to celebrate another honor for the Bandstand, visit old and new landmarks, and learn about historic research resources.

The Belmont Public Library was pleased to join the Heritage Commission in planning the first-time effort. We salute the all-aged partners helping to make the day a success, from fourth-grade student Belmont Elementary School artists to active Laconia retiree Bob Daniels, who videotaped Corner Meeting House presentations.

Community partners also included Belknap County Restorative Justice Program, Belknap County Conservation District, Belmont Historical Society, Belmont Parks and Recreation, BRATT/Winni Trail, Friends of the Bandstand, Friends of the Library, LCHIP-Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, Save the Gale School Committee, Town of Belmont and volunteers Priscilla Annis, Barbara Binette, Vicki Donovan, Christine Fogg, Donna Hepp, Alyce Jewell, Ken Knowlton, Brian Loanes and Jeff McKillip.

Thanks to the state and county officials in attendance, including state Sen. Andrew Hosmer, Rep. Mike Sylvia and County Commissioner Dick Burchell.

We are grateful to town historian Wallace Rhodes and Diane Marden for longtime belief in saving special Belmont places, and sharing their stories about the Belmont Mill and Gale School. The contributions of Center Harbor architectural historian Mae Williams and Richard Kipphut of Plymouth State University were meaningful. Ms. Williams compiled a valuable list of specific Belmont history documentary sources and where to find them, while Mr. Kipphut reported on his recent reconnaissance survey of our Northern Village Area.

Information from the fair is on file at the Belmont Public Library, along with other resources, including the library edition of Ancestry.com for genealogical research.

In her welcome, Ruth Mooney, chairman of the Belmont Board of Selectmen, said, "Local historic preservation is an effective tool for revitalizing neighborhoods, fostering local pride and maintaining community character." She also reminded us, during a month nationally recognizing preservation, that saving the tangible aspects of the heritage that has shaped us as a people, impacts all generations that follow. We couldn't agree more.

Eileen Gilbert, Director

Belmont Public Library
Linda Frawley, Chairman

Belmont Heritage Commission