

Belmont Heritage Commission 2008 Annual Report

“...It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future ...” *William Murtaugh 1923-2004*

The Heritage Commission had a successful year, in large part due to collaboration with others. We continued a close alliance with the Belmont Historical Society, assisting by securing two grants from the New Hampshire Humanities Council for free cultural events.

Among highlights were:

- Addition of Belmont Village landmarks to the National Trust for Historic Preservation website
- Production of an educational program for LRPA-TV, featuring local agricultural heritage at Weeks Farm
- Development of a first *“Belmont Heritage Briefing”* newsletter, supporting the Rotary Bandstand event
- Continued archival work, establishing digital files of historic photographs
- Coordination and marketing of two new volunteer initiatives, *“Make A Difference Day”* and *“Deck the Village”* to help beautify some of our Town’s special places
- Renewed advocacy for “Historic Road” sign from State, marking Belmont Mill
- Reviewed an historic barn, recommending an easement to Selectmen, to help save our rural character

Funding requests were written for preservation consulting services (New Hampshire Preservation Alliance NHPA), bandstand restoration (State of New Hampshire), and a public art project (Franklin Savings Bank, Community Advancement Fund.) The NHPA and New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources visited our community twice, sharing expertise on repair and reuse challenges. Application for a “Moose Plate” grant to help assess, repair and preserve our famous 100 year-old bandstand will be resubmitted for 2009 support. Notification on the “Belmont Special Places” multi-generational effort is expected by March, 2009.

We thank this year’s many partners for interest and participation, both remembering our heritage – and keeping it for the future. They included youth from the Girl Scouts and Belknap County Restorative Justice program, Belmont Rotary, Library Trustees and staff, Belmont Historical Society, Province Road area neighborhood, and Community Arts Resources for Education (CARE), among others. And we remain grateful for the encouragement from citizens throughout the community, and of course, taxpayer support.

Milestones for 2009 include the Centennial of Belmont’s beautiful Victorian bandstand and 40th year of the Belmont Historical Society. We invite and encourage all to join celebrations and events for these landmarks throughout the next seasons.

Cordially,

Wallace Rhodes – Chairman, **Linda Frawley** – Vice Chairman, **Margaret Normandin** – Secretary, **Diane Marden** – Member through February 2008, **Shayne Duggan** – Member appointed November 2008, **Ronald Cormier** – representing Board of Selectmen