

## Heritage Commission

**“...It may not be the oldest or the largest, but the historic Belmont bandstand is certainly the most beautiful ...”** *James L. Garvin, former New Hampshire State Architectural Historian - September 28, 2014*

Those kind words from an eminent author, teacher and preservation expert were the capstone of the 1908 Bandstand restoration project. Dr. Garvin was among distinguished guests including Executive Councilor Colin Van Ostern, leaders from the NH Division of Historical Resources (DHR), New Hampshire Preservation Alliance (NHPA), Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), local and state elected officials offering congratulations at an afternoon “Community Salute.”

Memories of the day included an impressive Presentation of the Colors by Boy and Girl Scouts with Troop leaders, spirited patriotic songs by the combined chorus of Belmont Middle School and Canterbury Elementary School directed by Carlos Martinez, tours of the 1928 Public Library and seasonal refreshments. Special Heritage Commission and Historical Society recognition was made to the outstanding area craftsmen, Northfield restoration contractor JR Graton, and painter John Thompson of Alexandria for their project handiwork, funded in part by LCHIP.

The landmark Victorian-era bandstand is now stabilized, resplendent in its original colors and will have final touches completed for a series of programs and activities beginning in the late spring. A new website [www.historicbelmontbandstand.org](http://www.historicbelmontbandstand.org) was launched to tell the project story and thank an extensive list of people, businesses and organizations for their contributions.



Photo courtesy of Vicki Donovan

# Heritage Commission

## TENTH ANNIVERSARY

The year marked a Heritage Commission milestone, as the 2004 Town Meeting established the Selectmen-appointed Land Use Board, authorized by law RSA 674:44-b. We are encouraged by support and accomplishments, in our work to promote “the proper recognition, use and protection of the unique historic and cultural resources of Belmont”, and also integrate preservation planning as a partnership with individuals, businesses, Town boards and other groups.

Education is one avenue to those goals, highlighted this year by presenting two “Community Heritage Workshops” on innovative planning examples, code issues and technical services from the NH Division of Historical Resources, expanded Community Revitalization Tax Credit legislation and painting techniques for historic homes and buildings. Sixty people attended from the Lakes Region and statewide, and partners included Laconia Heritage Commission, Laconia Historical Society and Museum, NH-DHR, NHPA and Lakes Region Public Access TV.

Reviewing the first 10 years of the Heritage Commission, currently one of about 50 in the state, we offer a summary, as presented to Selectmen and the Budget Committee, for your information.

### Heritage Commission 2004-2014 Summary

- ❖ Total Town Appropriations:
  - General expenses      \$11,000
  - Heritage Fund          \$41,000 (non-lapsing – established 2005 – first funded in 2006)
  - Total                      \$52,000
- ❖ Grants/other contributions procured by Heritage Commission \$142,700+
  - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - \$95,100. (*energy efficient Mill exterior lighting and Sargent Park upgrade*)
  - Bank of New Hampshire - \$3500. (*bandstand and PlanNH charrette*)
  - Land and Community Heritage Investment Program - \$15,000. challenge grant (*bandstand lead paint removal, painting and roof replacement*)
  - MetroCast – \$4000. (*equipment donation identified in 2001-2013 contract to foster public information*)
  - NH Division of Historical Resources and NH Department of Transportation - \$1800. (*historical highway marker on Route 140*)
  - NH Humanities Council - \$850. (*public programs for Belmont Historical Society*)
  - NH Preservation Alliance/field services program National Trust for Historic Preservation – \$1000. (*community assessment grant – estimated value*)
  - PlanNH charrette – \$20,000. (*estimated value*)
  - John M. Sargent Fund - \$2,450. (*2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014 – various programs*)
- ❖ Technical and Donated Professional Services
  - James Garvin, Ph.D. Architectural Historian, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen Architectural Historian, Lakes Region Community College – Culinary Arts Program, Student Hospitality Club, Lakes Region Public Access Television (LRPA-TV), Magnus McLetchie AIA, Paul Mirski AIA, David Ruell Architectural Historian, Sherwin Williams, SOS Technician, LLC, Cotton Hill Consulting

We are grateful for all support, and most importantly the continuing generosity of local business and neighbors – giving products and volunteering hundreds of hours.

## Heritage Commission



Photo courtesy of Linda Frawley

### HIGHLIGHTS

The anniversary year afforded special opportunities for celebrating heritage. Belmont has many historic buildings, homes and areas. Although an impressive number have already been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, particularly in the Factory Village District – to date only the 1928 Library has been listed. That distinction, for architecture, occurred in 1985. It was a privilege to help Trustees, staff and community install and unveil a commemorative plaque in July.



Photo courtesy of Belmont Public Library Historic Collection/Trustees

## Heritage Commission

And new traditions continued, including the fourth year presentation of “Community Heritage Awards” with the Selectmen, recognizing local excellence and applauding contributions to Belmont quality of life. Three recipients were honored during New Hampshire History Week:

- ❖ Everett W. Bailey – Outstanding Contributions to Traditional Crafts and Rural New Hampshire
- ❖ Thomas E. Garfield – Regional Leadership and Outstanding Service to Town Meeting Tradition
- ❖ Chester A. Lewandoski – Exceptional Commitment to Baseball, Belmont and Community



Photo courtesy of Tracey Leclair

The year had much community conversation about several historic buildings and their futures. An ordinance creating a historic demolition review committee was proposed, using established federal and state criteria for what constitutes “historic”. The measures, which would not stop demolition if public safety was a risk and effectively only provided a short delay for historic review, failed to receive Planning Board or sufficient voter support. We hope a positive outcome was more awareness of opportunities for federal and other tax credits for preservation projects, and resources – including the Heritage Commission – with experience and/or training with federal section 106 requirements and more.



Photo courtesy of Linda Frawley

## Heritage Commission

The Belmont Mill was once more, a headline topic in 2014. We salute Wallace P. Rhodes, Town Historian, a founder of the Belmont Historical Society in 1969, author of *Reminiscences of a New Hampshire Town*, first Belmont Heritage Commission Chairman and current Vice Chairman, and leader and benefactor of the 1990s effort to “Save the Mill”. The 1998 Belmont Town Report dedication read, in part:

*“...As many of you know, Wallace has worked very hard over the past five years to bring about the renovation of the Belmont Mill. Wallace has spent a considerable amount of time and personal resources in support of this endeavor. At each and every turn of events Wallace has stepped forward to ensure the preservation of this cultural and historic treasure. It is with great honor that the Belmont Board of Selectmen dedicates this Town Report to Wallace Rhodes.”*

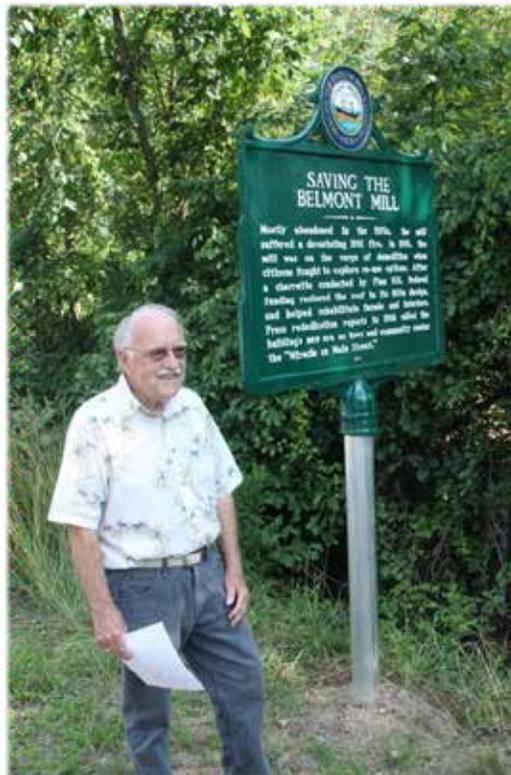


Photo Courtesy of Vicki Donovan

Thank you, Wallace. You remain our inspiration – and many others - for preserving Belmont heritage.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda*

Linda Frawley

Linda Frawley, Chairman  
Wallace Rhodes, Vice Chairman  
Priscilla Annis, Secretary  
Shayne Duggan – Alyce Jewell – Vicki Donovan  
Ronald Cormier, representing Selectmen