

Belmont Heritage Commission recognizes efforts of many

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BELMONT — Individuals, businesses and organizations were recognized by the Belmont Heritage Commission during Monday's selectmen's meeting, for their continuing efforts toward beautifying the village over the past year.

This recognition marked the first year that the Heritage Commission handed out its Community Heritage Excellence Awards.

Ron Cormier, vice-chairman of the Belmont Board of Selectmen, has also been the selectman's representative to the Heritage Commission for the past year. He wanted to thank everyone on the commission for putting on town events in an effort to rejuvenate the area.

"The town has undergone a lot of projects lately (aimed) at revitalizing the village," said Cormier. "We've really done a lot over the years to bring back the downtown area. Hopefully we'll keep going down this path, which I think has been good, for the next couple years. This has really made a difference."

A total of five awards in five different categories were handed out on Monday evening.

Belmont High School sophomore Holly Smith was presented with the Youth Leadership Award, and she was also named by the State last week as one of New Hampshire's "Young Preservationists."

Smith accepted the award from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance on the occasion of its 25th anniversary year at the University of New Hampshire, for aiding the celebration and preservation of Belmont Village.

The Renovation Excellence Award was given to the Ferguson Family, Robert and Susan Ferguson have owned the historic village residence at 17 Fuller Street since 1991. Robert participated in the 2010 PlanNH charrette and served on the 2010 Village Revitalization Committee.

In 1841, the house was constructed by Jonathan Fuller and occupied by his descendants into the early 1900s.

The Ferguson family has restored and landscaped the house, located across from the Corner Meeting House.

The Business Leadership Award for municipal beautification was presented to Garden Artisans, which was founded by Belmont resident Ginger Wells-Kay.

The garden design business opened in 2000 and has continuously given back to the New Hampshire community through conservation, education and donated time and expertise.

For her hometown, over recent years, Wells-Kay has donated plantings for the Belmont Mill, as well as daffodils and time for Make A Difference Day efforts at the Province Road Meeting House, Sargent Park, the Library and other village locations.

Resident Ken Knowlton was given the Volunteer Leadership Award for his involvement in beginning the Penstock Park project. He said the project began with an idea and is now in full swing of being a historic landmark in the village.

Penstock Park features the pipe that once brought water from the Tioga River to the mill, generating hydroelectric power for the mill and village.

Knowlton has been a consistent voice throughout, with many local initiatives including both the 1996 and 2010 PlanNH charrettes, the 2002 Master Plan update, budget committee and one of the Town Hall study committees.

Lastly, the Lakes Region Community College's Food for Thought Cafe was recognized with the Community Partners and Special Events Award. Staff and students of the Culinary Arts Program settled in the Belmont Mill after the 1998 rededication.

It provides a destination and hospitality for visitors and events held in Belmont.