Belmont Historical Society 2018

The purpose of the Belmont Historical Society, which was established in 1969 is to bring together those who have an interest in preserving and recording the history of our area.

The Belmont Historical Society is a non-profit, 501 C(3) organization run by volunteers and funded by annual membership dues, donations and proceeds from various fund raisers.

Belmont Historical Society programs are free and open to the public. Visitors are always welcome and donations to help offset program costs are appreciated.

The Society’s main project currently is to restore and preserve the Province Road Meeting House. In July 1979 the society voted to accept the structure from the Third Free Will Baptist Meeting House Society to be preserved and used for the purposes of the Belmont Historical Society. The 215 year old building is one of the oldest in the area.

A 2001 gift of land from the RAED HERTEL FAMILY TRUST insures space for parking and other improvements while retaining the Meeting House's continuing presence as a gathering place and neighborhood landmark.

Membership dues are used to support programs and expenses. Monetary donations to the society are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

Annual Membership Dues are as follows:

- **Individuals**: $10.00
- **Family**: $15.00

Monetary Donations can be sent to:

**Belmont Historical Society**

C/o Treasurer

229 Durtle Road

Belmont, NH 03220

Any Historical Artifact Donations such as diaries, photographs, and/or other historical memorabilia are also welcome. Please send letter to:

**Belmont Historical Society**

229 Durtle Road

Belmont, NH 03220
Membership Interest Form
(Fill In or Circle those that Apply)

I am interested in becoming a member of the Belmont Historical Society.

Individual Members $10   Family Membership $15

Name: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________
Telephone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

I am not interested in becoming a member but would like an email about upcoming events. My email is ________________________________.

I would be interested in programs on the following subjects:

I would like to make a monetary donation towards saving Belmont's History. $___________ is enclosed and made out to the Belmont Historical Society.

I would like to donate an item that should be saved for others to see and for future generations. Item(s):

We thank you for your continued support and helping us keep our history alive!

1. Town Hall was constructed around 1895 by Edwin M. Bryant. The building was used for stores on the ground floor and as a hall on upper house on the second floor. In later years the upstairs was used for dances, youth event, and a place for them to play basketball.

2. The Libray was originally a wood structure used to house a collection of books donated by the townspeople. Later moved to Fuller Street and used as a court house and the Free Library. The brick structure was constructed in 1927 as a gift to the town by George & Walter Duffy principal owners of the Belmont House of Co. The library was officially dedicated on February 8, 1928, and in 1985 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. A Watering trough was originally located near the corner of Mill & Main Streets near the old “Library later known as the Nose House”, it was relocated farther up Main Street when the brick library was constructed and moved to the present site to the right of the library in 1988. Below is the rear of the original wood Library, Mill Street was on the left and since has also been moved to the right of the library.

4. The Barnstand was constructed in the 1900’s from funds gathered by subscription. It originally stood closer to the library. In 2014 through the efforts of the Belmont Heritage Commission it was completely restored to its original condition and original paint colors. The Barnstand has been cited for outstanding restoration and rehabilitation in 2015 with the Elizabeth Dunfee Henson Award from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance.

5. The Mill was originally constructed as a cotton mill in 1833, it was the Town’s primary economic entity for a century and a half. It was originally a cotton and wooden weaving mill then converted to knitting in the 1860’s. In 1998 when the structure was on the verge of being torn down it was saved by funds through a Community Development Block Grant, and citizen volunteer efforts. Town Historian Wallace Rhodes was instrumental in leading these efforts. (see cover photos)

6. Mill Houses were constructed by the Mill Company when owned by Amos A. Lawrence. These rows of houses were for the use of the mill workers to rent as housing. (below)

7. South Road School was originally a country schoolhouse located to the west of the South Road Cemetery. The school was moved to its present location in 1888 due to the consolidation of outlying schools with the village schools. It was later used for Catholic church Services & eventually converted to a dwelling.

8. The Badger House was probably constructed as part of the Joseph Badger Jr. homestead on Hackett Road. It is said to have moved aside when Governor William Badger built the main house in 1818. It was placed on this site in 1856. (right)

9. The Gale School was built in 1894 with funds donated by Napoleon B. Gale. It served as the village school until the 1920’s when the Memorial School was built and then used for educational support services until the mid 1980’s. (left)

10. Dearborn Homestead. This home dates from the 1800’s. Owned in 1835 by the first known Doctor in the Upper Parish of Gilmanstown (now Belmont). Dr. Joseph andolly Gould moved here in 1836, and left the area by 1850. The property was later owned by Patch and Eliza Welles Dearborn. Eliza became librarian and held the position for 20 years. In 1951, Harold and Isabellie Reed purchased the property. Harold was the Town Road Agent for 26 years from 1957 to 1983. (right)
11. Advent Christian Church. Organized in 1890 as the Advent Christian Church. Constructed in 1900, and dedicated the same year. Prior to the construction members met in Hall’s store for a short period of time. In 1904, Reverend David Jack was called to the church, and on May 20, 1931, the name of the church was changed to Belmont Hall Gospel Assembly. Today this building is owned by the Town of Belmont, and is called the Corner Meeting House. Currently it is used for town purposes and community organizations as a meeting spot. (left)

12. Fuller House was one of the earlier dwellings in the village probably dating from the 1830’s. (right)

13. The Rose House was moved from the present location of the library in 1927. The ground floor housed the “Rose house” (a hand pump which was dragged by firemen to a fire.) The upper floor housed a combination of library & selectmen’s office. The building was eventually torn down in 2002, and is now a municipal parking lot. (see #2 Library)

14. The Canal is very likely the remains of a canal which supplied water power to the cotton mill. At the present village stone was located a small pond which held back the water of the brook as well as water directed from the mill dam. The water flowed across the street to the mill where it powered a large overshot wheel located on the river bank. (right)

15. Typical Original Village Houses of the 1830s.

16. St. Joseph’s Church this site has had many uses over the years. The first village stone was constructed near the corner in the 1820’s. The site was later occupied by a building constructed in 1874 which housed a store & post office on the ground floor, apartments on the second floor & a hall on the top floor. Now where the present church stands was located the church usually referred to as the South Church built in 1890 & later replaced by a newer structure in 1868 after the original burned. The first St. Joseph’s Church was constructed in 1907.

17. Veterans Monument is a monument honoring Belmont War Veterans and was presented to the town by Moses Sargent in 1919. The site was earlier occupied by a platform used as a bandstand.

18. The Site of the Joseph Fellowes House was first occupied here in the 1790s. Joseph Fellowes was considered to be the founder of Belmont Village and is said to have constructed a single dwelling on the site. In 1839 the present structure was constructed by Iras Money for the use as the village hotel. Directly across the right was located the second village store & post office. The upper floor contained a hall at which the first Belmont (Upper Belmont) town meeting was held. This structure burned in the 1890s.

19. Fellowes Dam was the first dam constructed on this site in the 1790s & used for the village grist mill which was owned and operated by Joseph Fellowes. In 1825, William Twelker acquired the site and continued to operate the grist mill for the village & surrounding areas. During the 1830s when the village sawmill (20) was removed to make way for the dam of the cotton mill, a sawmill was constructed on the west bank of the river opposite the grist mill. In 1903 the dam was breached by the State of New Hampshire.
20. Baptist Church: Organized in 1810, and first known as "The Third Monthly Meeting". A meeting house was erected in 1811, possibly of brick, but it was removed in 1832 when the structure above was built. In 1860, the parsonage was constructed and by 1889 the church had been raised to accommodate a vestry and the installation of new memorial windows. The postcard below shows the Baptist Church stables to the left of the building. By 1907 the Baptist Church added the organ loft, and in 1917 a pipe organ installed as a gift from Moses Sergeant, John W. Sergeant, the son of the donor organ donated the chimes in 1946. The first minister was Elder Peter Clark 1810 to 1841. Since the church has had approximately 25 pastors, the longest being a tenure of 42 years. This being Reverend Frederick W. Fitzpatrick. This building burned in December 19, 1973, and was rebuilt in 1976.

21. Joseph Fellows & 21a. Thomas Fellows Houses: The first house over the bridge was probably constructed by Joseph Fellows Sr., as it is listed in the inventory of his estate. It passed on to his son Joseph Jr. who occupied the site until it was sold to Gilmanton Village Manufacturing Co. prior to the construction of the cotton mill in 1833. The second two story house was constructed by Thomas Fellows around 1824 & sold to Samuel Cate in 1832 who operated the village tavern (Cate’s Tavern see inside 2017 photo) here in the 1830’s. Following Cate’s death it was operated by his widow & later by her second husband John S. Mill.

22. Village Blacksmith Shop: In 1819 Joseph Fellows Jr. deeded this site to William Moody who built a blacksmith shop equipped with a trip hammer which was used to flatten iron.

23. Historic Mill Pond Site: In the 1790’s Joseph Fellows built his sawmill here & later Gilmanton Village Manufacturing Co. built a mill pond so water could be directed through a canal across Main St. to the mill. In the 1880’s the dam was removed & a penstock was constructed from Fellows Dam to the mill. The steel penstock which replaced the original wooden one are still visible today.

24. The Foot Bridge was located between the Belmont Mill and the Belmont Railroad station off Depot Street, this footbridge was significant shortly from the station and from Depot Street to the mill. Since most employees of the mill traveled by foot a day, it was undeniably appreciated by many. The bridge foundation on the mill side of the bridge still existing as well as the steps up the hill. In October 2013, a covered bridge was purchased for $1, and was cut into half & placed in this location in 2015. In 2017, the second half of the covered bridge was placed approximately one half mile further down stream following the trail bed where it had originally crossed the stream. These bridges were placed by Mark Matthew, Jeffrey Robbets, Kenneth Knowlton, and Woodley Fagg who have diligently volunteered to put this now known as the Village Spur Trail.

Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others. Rosa Parks