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Belmont Public Library celebrates years of service

By TIM CAMERATO | Jul 11, 2014

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*TIM CAMERATO/CITIZEN*

BOARD OF SELECTMEN CHAIR Ruth Mooney, left, and Library Trustees Chair Mary Charnley, right, present a plaque to commemorate the listing of the Belmont Public Library on the National Register of Historic Places.

BELMONT — Belmont celebrated the public library's historic status in the village on Thursday as a plaque was dedicated to mark the building's designation on the National Register of Historic Places.

The library was first established in 1893 and housed at the Belmont Mill before moving onto the second floor of the “Hose House” at the library's current site.

George and Walter Duffy, owners of the Belmont Hosiery Company, offered to construct a new building for the library in 1927 and citizens gathered for its dedication a year later, according to Belmont Historical Society President Wallace Rhodes.

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It was entered into the National Register of Historic Places after approval of the state Historic Preservation Officer in 1985.



Ruth Mooney, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, said she can remember her mother bringing her to library during her childhood.

“Basically, the Belmont Library promoted my reading that I do everyday,” Mooney said. “I think it's one of the most beautiful buildings that we have in town.”

She said it's important that it is kept up and looking the way it is.

Peter Michaud, with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, said this is the first time he's been

invited to a dedication occurring decades after a building was named to the register. He said it is a wonderful “jewel box” of a building.

“I strongly suggest, if you have a moment, to just walk around and really admire some of the finer details on this building,” Michaud said.

Heritage Commission Chairman Linda Frawley said they just happened to be checking records and realized that the library had been added to the register on Sept. 12, 1985. She said they thought it was about time the building had a plaque.

“I think somewhere this late afternoon, George and Walter Duffy are having a big chortle somewhere and saluting our celebration,” Frawley said.

Mooney and Library Trustee Chairman Mary Charnley then revealed the plaque affixed to the front of the library.

Trustees also introduced Rebecca Albert, the new library director who took over in October, to the town.

“We cannot say enough about how much Becky has helped the children in this community with promoting literacy, with helping our community look for job skills using the computer, and bringing new technology as well to the library,” Charnley said.

Albert said she loves Belmont and could see many of her regular patrons in the dedication's audience.

“I'm really delighted at how active this library is and I'm hoping to do more to make it even more active, to have more programs for both adults and children,” Albert said.

She invited anyone to visit them online and give suggestions on what the library should be offering.

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