



# Belmont Library named to National Register of Historic Places

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BELMONT — As the bell above the historic Belmont Mill rang out through the village last Thursday evening, trustees, town officials, and residents gathered on the lawn of the Belmont Public Library for the unveiling of a bronze plaque proclaiming the building's distinction of being included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The plaque was a gift of the Belmont Heritage Commission to honor of its significance in the town's history.

The Belmont Library dates back to the 1890's, when their book collection was housed in a



COURTESY

After the Heritage Commission unveiled a plaque proclaiming the Belmont Library's listing on the National Register of Historic Places (in rear of photo), local artist Polly Murphy and clock maker Denis Carignan displayed her newly painted face for a 100-year-old clock that sits inside the building and announced that Carignan will soon have the antique timepiece up and running once more.

few different locations over its initial years, including a room that sat above the town's former fire department on Main Street.

According to records, George E. Duffy of Worcester, Mass. and Walter E. Duffy of Frank-

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lin, who were the owners of the Belmont Hosiery Company, offered to give the generous gift of a permanent library to the town, which was accepted by voters later that year. The Colonial Revival-style library building was then designed by architects Harry A. Wells and Archer E. Hudson of Hanover and was constructed by local masons.

## K9

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weeks of in house training with his new partner.

"We'll get dual certified in narcotics and tracking then I'll bring the dog back to meet everyone, be sworn in and get its badge," he said.

The completed library was formally dedicated 86 years ago on Feb. 4, 1928 with a catalog of nearly 4,000 books. Since that day the library has grown to nearly 16,000 volumes along with numerous audio books and other services available to the public.

"That generous community spirit still exists today as the Heritage Commission has gifted us with a National Regis-

will be gratefully accepted.

Anyone wishing to support the upcoming K-9 program can mail their donations to the Town of Belmont, with the notation of "K-9 Fund" on the memo line.

ter plaque," said Library Trustee chair Mary Charnley.

Charnley noted that the Belmont Public Library today serves 1,500 registered patrons and offers numerous programs for residents of all ages.

As part of her presentation she also formally welcomed Library Director Rebecca Albert who joined the staff last October. Albert brings with her many years of experience at both the State Library and the Tilton School library and has readily embraced the history and importance of the library in the Town of Belmont.

Selectman Ruth Mooney took a few moments to recount her fond memories of going to the library as a child

that encouraged her to read and express how a library can make a difference in people's lives.

"This is an important dedication today for (a service) that has been here in Belmont for more than a century," Mooney said.

State Sen. Andrew Hosmer also presented the town with congratulations from the senate and Peter Michaud of the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources called the library a "jewel box of a building."

"There are 800 buildings on the National Register in New Hampshire, and 40 of them are libraries," Michaud said.

He added that its cornice, portico and brickwork are subtle features in the building that cre-

ate a "wonderful exterior."

Local clock maker Denis Carignan was joined by local resident and artist, Polly Murphy, for another surprise for residents and town officials. The historic, 100-year-old clock inside the building, he said, is also getting a makeover that will be completed in the near future.

"The whole time I was growing up, this clock hasn't run," said Carignan. "I thought this would be a good time to restore it."

While he has been busy with the mechanical workings of the large wood encased timepiece, Murphy has been creating a new look for the face of the clock that had faded over the years.

"Denis said to do what I wanted to do, so I went

with roses. He later told me it might have had flowers on it to begin with so that worked out well," she said.

Heritage Commission chair Linda Frawley thanked the members of the commission who gifted the plaque to the library so all would know of its historic significance in Belmont Village.

"I'm sure somewhere George and Walter Duffy are having a big chortle and loving all of this today," she said.

The Belmont Public Library was originally listed on the National Register of Historic Places on Sept. 12, 1985, thanks to research done by historian David Ruell of Ashland and the successful application made

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to the Department of the Interior by the Lakes Region Planning Commission. In their application the commission recommended the library's ac-

ceptance to the registry because it is "significant architecturally, both as one of the best small libraries in the Lakes Region and as one of the region's best examples of the Colonial Revival style."