

Belmont Heritage Commission Annual Report 2006

The third year of Belmont's newest commission focused on three priorities: continued research, building awareness of our special heritage, and developing future strategies. Our goals primarily benefited from the initiatives of individual members. At the July 18 meeting the Commission met with Shaker Regional School District Superintendent Michael Cozort who updated the members on the efforts of the school board to resolve the question of what to do with the Gale School.

The key issue not only for the Gale School building but also for other desirable preservation initiatives is funding. The Commission's functions are currently limited to discussion and exploring for grants and free services. There is limited incentive to promote projects for which there is no funding available. It would be desirable if some form of recurring funding was available which could be added to the Heritage Fund for eventual use by the Commission.

One individual initiative undertaken by member Diane Marden was the publication of a book of Belmont post cards which provides a readily available collection of pictures of Belmont as it was in the past.

In addition to serving on the Heritage Commission three members are actively involved along with other members of the Belmont Historical Society in efforts to preserve and rehabilitate the Province Road Meeting House. The town appropriated \$15,000 several years ago to be used toward the project which is still being held by the Trustees of Trust Funds. The proposed project is currently listed by Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) as being prioritized for protection in the next two years. Under the program LCHIP would provide up to 50% of the funding of the project. The project is dependent on meeting the funding criteria and further dependent upon the amount of funding provided by the legislature. In addition to the town's appropriation the historical society has accumulated approximately \$25,000 toward their 50% of the costs estimated at \$250,000.

We encourage citizens of Belmont to participate in our efforts by expressing their concerns about historic and cultural sites anywhere in Belmont which are threatened or which lack documentation or recognition. The web site www.belmontnh.net contains much information about the history of our town.

Sincerely,

Wallace Rhodes, Chairman

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Linda Frawley, Vice Chairman

Ronald Cormier, Selectmen's Representative

Diane Marden

Margaret Normandin

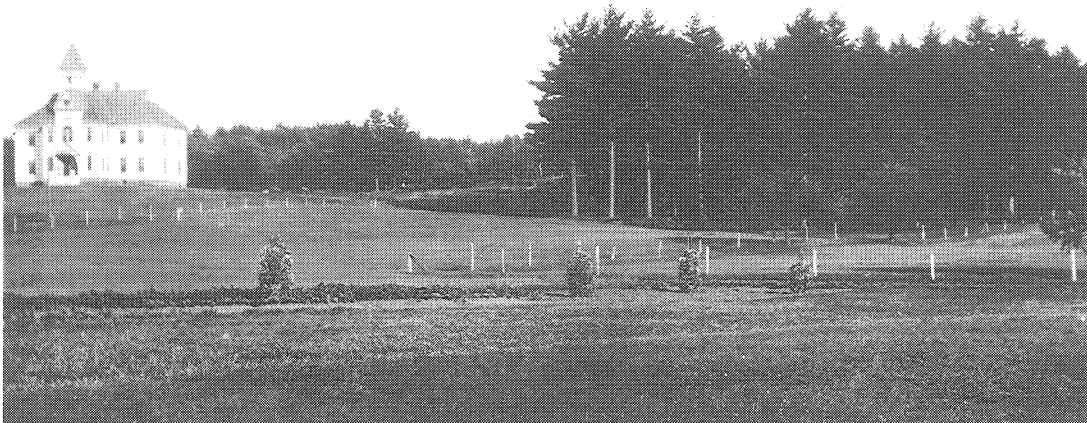


Photo Courtesy of Wallace Rhodes