

# Belmont bandstand named to state Historical Register

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By GAIL OBER, LACONIA DAILY SUN

BELMONT — The newly restored bandstand has been named to the New Hampshire State Register of Historical Places by the state Historical Resources Council, and the town is ready to celebrate.

The bandstand was constructed in 1908 near the Belmont Mill, which is also listed on the state register, at the height of the popularity of the outdoor brass band era.

Built in the latter part of the Victorian Era, historian Wallace Rhodes said high level color- and paint-chip imaging determined that its original colors were the rusts and greens as one sees it today. Rhodes speculated that it was likely painted while during the Colonial Revivalist period that followed and in which many houses were painted white.

The roof of the bandstand was reshingled using cedar shingles in the same diamond patterns, as were the originals. Rhodes said part of the restoration was replacing a ball that sat on top and which he thinks blew away in a storm at some point.

Restoring the bandstand was a largely volunteer effort offset with some taxpayer dollars, a Land and Heritage Community Investment Program or L-Chip grant and money raised by the Belmont Heritage Commission for the project.

Before it could be restored, it needed to be relocated to a different spot in the village during the revitalization project and in 2012, Mark Roberts of Leslie E Roberts LLC moved the bandstand in one piece while the foundation was back and returned it one piece.

Once back in place, the bandstand was rehabilitated on site by J.R. Graton, who specializes in historical renovation, beginning in October of 2013.

To celebrate the recent designation, the Belmont Public Library and the Belmont Heritage Commission will celebrate with a Heritage and Preservation Fair on May 21.

Events begin at 10:30 a.m. at the library with a welcoming by Selectmen's Chairman Ruth Mooney. Attendees are invited to stroll through the village and take advantage of the walking trails and the new sites.

During this time, there will be displays, activities and refreshments; and booths by the Belmont Historical Society, Friends of the Bandstand, Bratt/Winni Trail, the Save Our Gale School Committee and others.

The library will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with some special exhibits. Guests will be allowed to see and use the Ancestry Library Edition.

People are encouraged to bring their old Belmont photos and postcards for scanning and adding to the Belmont Historical Society and Library Collections.

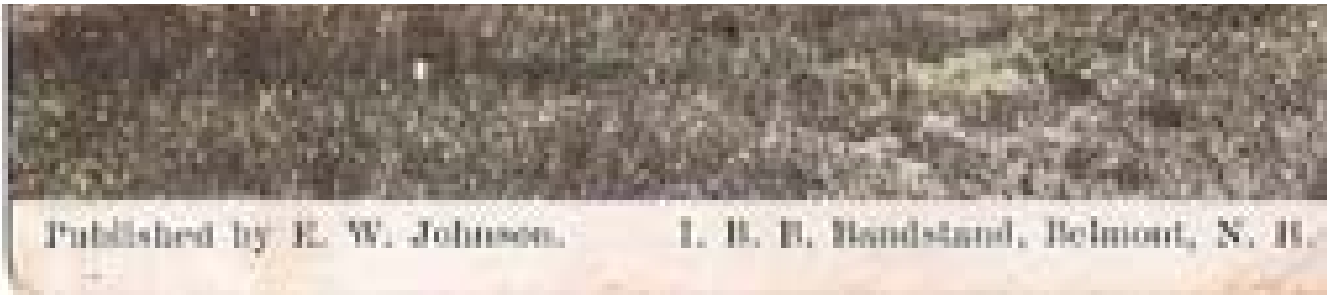
People can learn to research their historic homes and family trees. There will be some resources for barn preservation.





The bandstand last year, fresh from renovation.





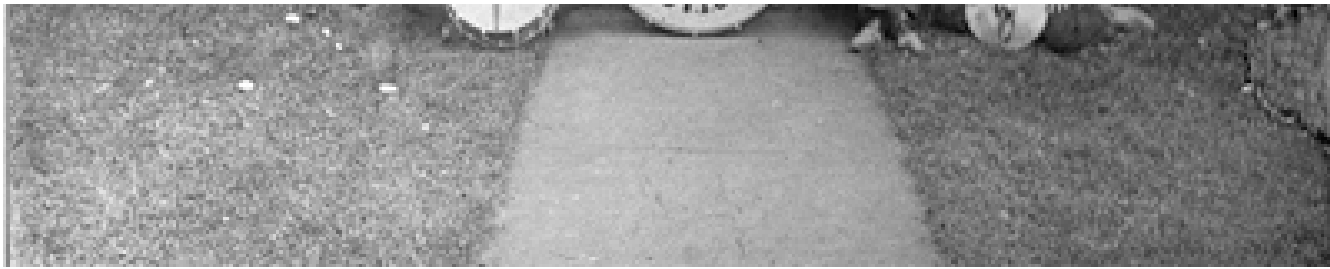
A 1908 postcard shows the bandstand as a village landmark.



CHILDREN'S PLAY GROUNDS, BELMONT, N. H.

Another historic postcard shows the bandstand as part of a playground.





One of the bands that may have played in the bandstand in the past.

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