

The Old Stone Wall

E-Newsletter of the NH Division of Historical Resources

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Window Success Stories

Preservationists are already sold on the wisdom of keeping historic windows. Not only are they character-defining in most buildings, but they also have a proven track record of 50 or 100 or 150 (or more!) years. What modern replacement window has that kind of guarantee? What we need to have, though, are strategies for dragging doubters onto this bandwagon.

One of the best ways to do this is often money. We may hear that "new windows are so much more energy efficient," but a number of studies (see the links below) have proven that properly maintained historic wood windows, fitted with good storm windows, can be just as energy efficient as new

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The DHR, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources, is supported by the State of New Hampshire, by the federal Historic Preservation Fund (through a matching grant administered by the National Park Service of the US Department of the Interior), and by donated funds and services. In addition to its state functions, the DHR is also responsible for administering the federal preservation program in New Hampshire.



NH Department of Cultural Resources

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windows -- and they can cost less up front. Wood windows built before WWII are often old growth timber, an irreplaceable resource that is sustainable and almost infinitely repairable. Most new windows are not repairable. When one part wears out, the whole sash must be replaced. Up to 30% of replacement windows require replacement in less than 10 years; few last 30 years. Yet it can take more than 200 years to recoup the cost of new ones through energy savings.

More and more towns and cities are taking the long view with their public buildings, and the Division of Historical Resources has seen this in an increasing number of Conservation License Plate Grant Program applications for window rehabilitation. With this money -- funded through the sales and renewals of Conservation License Plates -- communities are making long-term investments in their town halls, libraries and schools, preserving history and saving energy in important local buildings that will be enjoyed both today and by future generations.

Here is a list of projects receiving Moose Plate grants through the DHR for window rehabilitation:

2004 - Jaffrey Meetinghouse window rehabilitation

2005 - New Hampton Town House window rehabilitation

2006, 2007 & 2009 - Laconia Public Library stained glass window repair

2008 - Epsom Meetinghouse stained glass window repair

2010 & 2011 - Pittsfield Public Library window rehabilitation

2010 - Wilton P.L. Gregg Free Library window rehabilitation

2011 - Dorchester Historic District School House window and door frame restoration

2011 & 2013 - Chichester Town House window

rehabilitation

2012 - Bow Bog Meeting House window
rehabilitation

2013 - Nelson Town Hall window rehabilitation

2014 & 2015 - Plainfield Town Hall window
rehabilitation

2015 - Gorham Town Hall window rehabilitation

2015 - Portsmouth Academy Building window
rehabilitation

2015 - Wakefield Town Hall / Opera House window
rehabilitation

If you have historic wood windows in your house or in a local building, how can you make them winter-ready? Check the locks and weather-stripping to make sure the windows close tightly. Make sure the storm windows are installed correctly and are fully closed. If you have condensation issues, these can tell you where the problem is: moisture on the inside of the window, facing the room, indicates cold air leaking through the storm window is the likely problem. Moisture on the outside of the window, facing the storm, indicates warm air leaking from the interior of the house out. With basic maintenance, many historic wood windows can last another century.

To find out more about repairing historic windows, contact one of the communities listed above or check out these other resources:

- New England Window Restoration Alliance (NEWRA):
<http://windowrestorationne.org/>
- Window Basics, from the National Trust for Historic Preservation:
<http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/weatherization/windows/>
- "The Vermont Window Study," a classic early (1996) study on energy performance:
<https://ncptt.nps.gov/blog/testing-the-energy-performance-of-wood-windows-in-cold-climates-a-report-to-the-state-of-vermont-division-for-historic-preservation-agency-of-commerce-and-community-development-1996-08/>
- "Saving Windows, Saving Money," a more recent (2012) version of the same type of study from the Preservation Green Lab: <https://ncptt.nps.gov/blog/saving-windows-saving-money/>
- The Evolution of Window Sashes:
http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/publications/documents/window_sash_handout.pdf

DHR Our Summer in the Field 2015

The NH Agricultural Historic Structures Advisory Committee, also known as the “Barn Committee,” offered assistance to Ten Rod Farm in Rochester in July.



The State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology field school spent six weeks investigating an archaeological site in Holderness. This summer’s youngest participants, the landowners’ children, were regulars at the dig site.



DHR visited Castle in the Clouds in Moultonborough to review needed repairs to Lake Shannon Dam, damaged during Superstorm Sandy.

Edna Feighner (right) and Tanya Krajcik reviewed locations for boom deployment along the Piscataqua River with the Geographic Response Strategy Committee of the Portsmouth Oil Spill Response Workgroup.



DHR staff members joined the New Hampshire State Historical Resources Council for its summer quarterly meeting in Jaffrey. Highlights of the day included tours of the Jaffrey Meetinghouse and cemetery and the nearby one-room Little Red Schoolhouse.



George E. Burgess School added to the National Register of Historic Places

The Division of Historical Resources is proud to announce that the **George E. Burgess School / Notre Dame High School** in **Berlin** has been honored by the United States Secretary of the Interior with placement on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is significant both as a center of education and for its architecture.



Originally constructed as the George E. Burgess School in 1905, rebuilt after a fire in 1917 and added on to in 1949 and 1953-54, the building is an example of an early-twentieth-century urban public elementary school that was adapted and expanded for use as a Catholic high school and

Closed during the Depression when enrollment at all Berlin schools dropped, the Burgess School was leased to the Diocese and opened again, this time as Notre Dame High School, in 1942. It was sold to the Diocese in 1946 and remained in operation as a high school until 1972.

Additions allowed standard high school curriculum to expand to include constitutional history, religion, economics, bookkeeping, stenography and more. Chemistry was taught in the science laboratory, and a food and nutrition laboratory was located in the basement. A convent was added to accommodate the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, who taught at the school.

Until the opening of Notre Dame High School, the only option for education beyond grade eight in Berlin was through the public school system. Many of the students attending Notre Dame came from the three parochial schools in Berlin that had large French Canadian student populations. French remained an important part of the curriculum, with some classes taught in French.

The school's architecture has features considered essential for school design when it was built, rebuilt and when additions were added. These include a raised basement, expansive banks of windows that provide sufficient sunlight, and good ventilation. The building also retains many of its interior features: a central corridor and front cross corridor; original beaded board wainscoting, door and window trim; and an original staircase that rises from the basement to the top floor.

Recently, the school was modified into a senior housing facility with 33 apartments and several common spaces.

For more information on the National Register program in New Hampshire, please visit http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/programs/national_register.html or contact [Peter Michaud](#) at the Division of Historical Resources at 603-271-3483.

DHR awards 2015 Moose Plate Grants

The Conservation License Plate Grant Program at the Division of Historical Resources is funded through the sales and renewals of Conservation License Plates, popularly known as "Moose Plates." This year, the program received 23 applications for grants from throughout New Hampshire, requesting \$220,720 in funds for repairs to historic publicly-owned buildings. This year's grant recipients are:

Gorham: The Town of Gorham -- \$10,000 to rehabilitate 22 windows in Gorham Town Hall. Funds will be used to remove the windows, repair missing or rotting wood, replace the jamb-liners and re-install the windows.

Kingston: Nichols Memorial Library -- \$10,000 toward the repair of the copper roof over the front entryway. The town of Kingston has committed funds for the remainder of the cost to complete the roof project.

Grafton: The Grafton Historical Society -- \$10,000 toward needed repairs to the foundation and undercarriage of the East Grafton Union Church in Grafton. This grant will match a NH Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) grant, making it possible for the community to use the building again.

Langdon: The Town of Langdon -- \$10,000 to address life safety code issues in the Langdon Meetinghouse; the grant improvements will help provide more public space for the community.

Plainfield: The Town of Plainfield will receive \$10,000 to rehabilitate the front doors and windows in Meriden Town Hall. Built in 1895, the building is home to the Plainfield Town Offices and Police Department.

Portsmouth: The Portsmouth Historical Society will receive \$10,000 toward repair of the windows in the Academy Building at the Discover Portsmouth Center (a former library building owned by the city).

Wakefield: The Town of Wakefield will receive \$9,900 to repair 25 windows in the Wakefield Town Hall / Opera House. The building was designed and built in 1895 to serve as the primary civic and cultural meeting place for the town, a role that continues today.



More information about the Moose Plate grant program is available on the DHR's website, <http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr>. For additional information on grant programs, contact **Amy Dixon** at 603-271-3485 or

Deb Gagne at 603-271-3559.

New Hampshire's Historic and Scenic Landscapes

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the country's largest preservation non-profit organization, recently named the historic and scenic landscape of New Hampshire as

one of its "National Treasures." The National Treasure Program recognizes highly-significant historic places throughout the country where the National Trust makes a long-term commitment to find the best preservation solutions. The recognition confirms what many in New Hampshire have long valued and worked to preserve: farms, forests, scenic views, hiking trails, parks and recreational areas, in addition to historic villages, towns, neighborhoods and cities.

For more information on the National Treasures Program, visit <https://savingplaces.org/> or contact [Rebecca Harris](#) at the National Trust's Boston office, 617-388-1417.

A Call for Interest at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

The [Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site](#) in Cornish, one of the state's 23 National Historic Landmarks, expanded its holdings in 2010 by acquiring the adjacent Blow-Me-Down Farm. The farm was the home of attorney and arts patron Charles Beaman, who first invited sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens to the area in 1885. Now the Park Service is working to create an entirely new concept at the farm, called a National Park for the Arts. Echoing the collaborative environment of the historic Cornish Arts Colony, the Park Service is seeking the help of interested organizations and individuals to revitalize the 42 acres and buildings at the farm, which is along the banks of the Connecticut River.



The barn at Blow-Me-Down Farm

The Park Service's vision for the National Park for the Arts at Blow-Me-Down is broad, but focuses on activities such as artist educational programs, art studio space, art schools, museum displays and education space, venues for performances and other artistic, educational or historic preservation uses. The project's 36-page Call for Interest provides details on the guiding principles for the property's reuse and on how to submit a preliminary concept for participating in the project. For more information, email SAGA_Superintendent@nps.gov or review the [Call for Interest](#). Responses are due by November 30, 2015.

Learn more about preservation programs

To learn more about historic preservation programs and activities on the horizon, visit the [News and Events](#) web page of the NH Division of Historical Resources, the [NH Preservation Alliance Events web site](#), and the "history" section of nh365.org. Also visit

PreservationDirectory.com, a national portal with links to a wide and expanding range of preservation events, sources and resources.

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