



The Old Stone Wall
E-Newsletter of the NH Division of Historical Resources

Spring 2009 - Vol 1, Issue 2

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Breaking Historic News



Wendy Nicholas, Director of the Northeast Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation joins Maine and New Hampshire officials as she talks about the importance of saving the Memorial and Sarah Mildred Long bridges. *Rich Beauchesne photo for the Portsmouth Herald, used by permission.*

Breaking national news this week highlighted New Hampshire's Memorial Bridge in Portsmouth, as the National Trust for Historic Preservation added the 1923 bridge to this year's list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. On Tuesday, more than 300 bridge supporters cheered as Wendy Nicholas, director of the Northeast Regional Trust office, announced the listing. The Trust's recognition of the bridge's historical and cultural importance, as well as the challenges of maintaining it, comes at a terrific time. State officials in New Hampshire are working hard to find funding and support to rehabilitate the bridge, bolstered by a clear message from the public that keeping the Memorial Bridge in operation is best for the communities that depend on it. Two earlier endangered properties from New Hampshire - the

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Wentworth Hotel in New Castle and Webster Farm in Franklin - have been successfully rehabilitated since the designations provided stepped-up public interest and advocacy. For more information on this year's listings, check the [Trust's web site](#). To voice your thoughts on the bridge project, visit [the new project website](#).

This issue of our e-newsletter issues also announces two other great new initiatives: preservation's contributions to the *New Hampshire Climate Action Plan* and a newly published handbook on neighborhood heritage districts--a planning tool that protects what residents care about most in their neighborhoods and communities.

The *New Hampshire Climate Change Action Plan* condenses a tremendous amount of effort and thought by the governor's office and Policy Task Force, working subgroups, state agencies and concerned citizens across the state. The final report recommends 67 actions--think of them as opportunities--with the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting natural resources, educating the public and our workforce, and adapting to the impacts that climate change may present to our state. The voice of preservation is strong throughout the document, whether specifically addressing the value of the embodied energy present in our historic buildings, or recommending more general actions that reuse what we already have, promote densely built communities, and protect our historic natural landscapes.

In that light, neighborhood heritage districts may also help slow climate change. If residents gather together to plan for maintaining their neighborhood, reusing its infrastructure, and increasing its value, that may mean less commercial development and fewer subdivisions on undeveloped land and less miles driven by all of us. For a full explanation of the benefits of neighborhood heritage districts, visit [our web site](#) and download the new handbook. While you're there, be sure to check out all of our new online information, including a page devoted to Project Archaeology, our latest PowerPoint presentations on weatherization and Section 106, updates on the economic stimulus funding coming into New Hampshire, and our new brochure.

Things are changing rapidly in New Hampshire in 2009. Through all of these changes, opportunities and challenges, the Division of Historical Resources is here to answer your questions and offer assistance and advice for your preservation projects. Please be in touch, and thanks for your support of our programs as well.

[Elizabeth H. Muzzey](#)

*Director, NH Division of Historical Resources
NH State Historic Preservation Officer*

In This Issue



[Click for DHR economic recovery program information](#)

The DHR is a state service agency, 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 U.S. 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.



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May is National Historic Preservation Month

Historic Preservation Month is celebrated each year in May, the month of green rebirth. In partnership with citizens, communities, organizations and public agencies, the National Trust for Historic Preservation sponsors the annual observance and provides tips, examples, teaching aids and shared stories so that anyone, anywhere can join in. This year's theme is "This Place Matters" (see related news item). We will be watching the [Preservation Month web site](#) for New

Hampshire events and reports. Be sure to notify your local print and broadcast media, too, and please share your news with the DHR and the NH Preservation Alliance.

We are Part of the Climate Change Solution

[Mary Kate Ryan](#), State Survey Coordinator

Following a December 2007 Executive Order from Governor John Lynch, the New Hampshire Climate Change Policy Task Force began studying ways that New Hampshire could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The results of its year-long study have been released and may be found on the state's [website](#).

Why is this preservation news? Because "the operation of buildings accounts for 48% of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States" (Pew Center on Climate Change). In New Hampshire alone, in 2005, 69% of energy consumed was used for generating heat and electricity. Historic buildings and preservation could easily become a scapegoat in this fight against climate change, but preservation actually is part of the solution.

The Division of Historical Resources worked with one of the report's working groups to develop an action item addressing embodied energy, life-cycle analysis and the value of historic buildings (see Winter 2008-2009 Old Stone Wall, at [this link](#)).

[RCI Action 1.8, \(pg 40, pdf\)](#), Conserve Embodied Energy in Existing Building Stock, recommends that state-wide policies be developed that "recognize, quantify, and encourage the conservation of the energy embodied in New Hampshire's older building stock." We envision programs that promote preservation best practices for increasing energy efficiency in historic buildings, education for property owners and local officials on existing passive efficiency features that should be maintained, and education for contractors in how to marry preservation and energy efficiency.

The "green revolution" often seems centered on new technologies, but our progenitors pioneered many non-technological solutions to our modern climate change issues. Because building materials and fuels were renewable in the past out of necessity, we can learn from these historic examples and apply these lessons to our modern lives. Beyond this one action item, though, preservation has a crucial role to play. New Hampshire is the fastest growing state in New England, and these development pressures sometimes result in poor planning, sprawl, more vehicles on the roads traveling more miles and less forested land. Through preservation practices and principles, the DHR has been promoting care of our traditional New Hampshire communities since before the last energy crisis. Traditional New Hampshire village designs promoted dense, walkable, mixed commercial and residential districts surrounded by natural lands. While the balance of forest and agriculture has changed over time -- and is different in different regions of the state -- these mostly self-sustaining units, connected by mass transit (a.k.a. railroads) are what is now considered modern green planning. We already have it.

Traditional village center planning will help to reduce vehicle miles traveled (strategy 5) by promoting walkable communities. It will also protect natural resources (strategy 7), which sequester carbon and promote healthy eco-systems. Preservation work generates more skilled local jobs than new construction (see Donovan Rypkema's *The Economics of Historic Preservation*, studies in New Mexico, New Jersey, and Michigan) (strategy 10).

Preservation education (strategy 10) will help us incorporate new-old solutions into our overall efforts to solve current problems. Examples could include using smaller, more efficient

residential and commercial spaces, which use less power; using hydro-power dams for small-scale electrical generation; using wood, a natural renewable resource, in a responsible, sustainable way to build and heat our houses; using managed forests to help maintain clean air and environment, and promoting local agriculture to reduce food miles and create a more sustainable and stable local economy. Preservation has a role to play in all of these solutions, and has an impact far beyond individual buildings and owners.

Historic preservation is not the answer to climate change, but it is clearly part of the solution. As preservationists, we have responsibilities as educators, reaching out to correct myths about the energy efficiency of our historic buildings. We can remind our fellow citizens of the lessons our historic architecture has to teach us, paramount that there are many ways to adapt to New Hampshire's sometimes harsh climatic extremes that do not require continual expenditures of costly energy.

NH's Climate Action Plan is an amazing visioning document, but we need not wait on official implementation of these actions to speak up and help our communities recognize the "green" potential that resides in the existing buildings and planning.

Neighborhood Heritage Districts: A New Tool for New Hampshire Communities [Nadine Miller Peterson](#), Preservation Planner



Neighborhood Heritage Districts (also known as Conservation Districts) are found throughout the country, but until recently New Hampshire lacked information to help municipalities establish them. The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources was honored to receive a Johanna Favrot grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, matched in-kind by funds from the DHR and the National Park Service, to develop a legal framework and to prepare a citizen handbook for establishing and administering these districts. The DHR is pleased to announce the availability of *Neighborhood Heritage Districts: A*

Handbook for New Hampshire Municipalities available for [download on our web site](#).

Photo: Atlantic Heights, Portsmouth. DHR file photo

A neighborhood heritage district is a land use mechanism that focuses on protecting the key character of an area. The term "neighborhood" is significant: it reinforces that these districts are established as a result of direct citizen input and opportunities for the future of their own neighborhood. It also emphasizes the key objective -- to protect neighborhood character and the shared features of buildings located there -- rather than details, such as window sash, doors and trim pertaining to individual buildings. The term "character" implies that rather than overseeing minor alterations to individual buildings, the district will protect those significant features that

Neighborhood heritage districts are not new. They have been in use elsewhere in the country since the early 1980s. More than thirty municipalities across the country have programs that employ the concept to achieve a variety of goals, some of which are:

- to control demolition
- to increase or preserve the supply of affordable housing
- to revitalize neighborhoods close to downtowns
- to prevent commercial development that is out of scale with the district and incompatible with existing uses
- to guide small business expansion into residential areas
- to prevent larger commercial encroachment.

There is a high degree of citizen participation in creating and administering a neighborhood heritage district. They are established because property owners are seeking solutions to planning issues. Residents initiate the designation process and participate in drafting the neighborhood plan. At least one resident must also serve on the district's advisory committee.

The potential purposes of a neighborhood heritage district are wide and varied and should be tailored to meet the goals of the community and the district in question. They can be used to protect the distinctive characteristics of the district's setting, buildings, structures, landscape features and public spaces in a manner that is supported by the Master Plan; discourage demolition of significant buildings and structures or removal of character-defining landscape features; guide change, reuse and reinvestment in the district, and retain the diversity of uses that have traditionally existed in the district.

One of the benefits of a neighborhood heritage district is that there are many different types of areas that citizens can designate. A district can consist of a handful of buildings, such as a small rural village center or a crossroads anchored by old farmhouses and surrounding fields. Or it could include a large urban neighborhood with a wide range of resources. Or it could include buildings that are linked by a common natural feature, such as a lake.

Because a neighborhood heritage district is not tied to traditional preservation planning, buildings and resources that are managed through this program do not need to be more than fifty years old. Also, because it is a less rigid type of designation than a local historic district, the area can have less overall integrity. However, remember that one of the operative words is "heritage." Thus, the designated area must convey some aspect of the community's historical, architectural or cultural heritage. Ultimately, what determines the size and type of a district is its identifiable cohesiveness.

Information in this article is based in part on *Neighborhood Heritage Districts: A Handbook for New Hampshire Municipalities*, prepared by Elizabeth Durfee Hengen with Carolyn Baldwin, Esq. (December 2008). Hear more from Nadine Peterson on neighborhood heritage districts at the NH Office of Energy and Planning's annual conference on May 2, 2009.

Want to Know More About Preservation?

The Historic Preservation Certificate Program at Plymouth State University is offering several courses this summer, including a field school in prehistoric archaeology in the town of Randolph. Classes continue in the fall at the university's Plymouth and Concord campuses. For more information on the program, current offerings and registration, visit the [Plymouth State historic preservation program](#) site.

2009 Project Archaeology Teacher Workshop Was a Success!

[Tanya E. Kress](#), Historical Archaeologist / Cultural Resources Records Coordinator / Project Archaeology



Eleven New Hampshire educators gathered at Manchester Historic Association's Millyard Museum for the workshop on April 3, 2009. The teachers spent the day doing hands-on activities from the Project Archaeology Teacher's Activity Guide. The activities presented fundamental concepts in

archaeology, with lessons such as "Why is the Past Important?" "Culture Everywhere," and "Chronology: The Time of My Life." Participants were treated to a presentation on archaeology in New Hampshire by State Archaeologist Richard Boisvert, as well as a guided tour of the Millyard Museum.

The participants left the workshop with a wealth of

information on how to properly introduce students to archaeology, with everything they needed to launch this interdisciplinary and interactive subject in their classrooms. In addition to lessons about incorporating archaeology into social studies, math, science,

art, communication and language arts, participants learned how to increase environmental awareness, higher level thinking skills, stewardship values and multi-cultural appreciation.

The [Manchester Historic Association](#) and [SCRAP](#), a long-standing avocational archaeology training program within the NH Division of Historical Resources, are proud sponsors of this award winning program.

The workshop was led by New Hampshire's Project Archaeology coordinators, Sheila Charles, Archaeologist and Educator, and Tanya Kress, Historical Archaeologist with the DHR.

Project Archaeology is a comprehensive archaeology and heritage education program sponsored by the United States Department of the Interior. Bureau of Land Management. The



Archaeology includes publications, professional development for educators, networking opportunities and continuing support for participants. Using an innovative hands-on approach to history, Project Archaeology teaches scientific inquiry, citizenship, personal ethics and character, and cultural understanding. For additional information on Project Archaeology visit the DHR's [Project Archaeology](#) webpage or contact Tanya Kress at 603-271-6568.

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Photo: The Eureka Moment, Courtesy photograph

New Additions to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places

[Mary Kate Ryan](#), State Survey Coordinator

[Shelly Angers](#), Communications Coordinator, Department of Cultural Resources

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources is pleased to announce that the State Historical Resources Council has added four individual properties to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places. In addition, one property was added to the Bennington Village Historic District, and one property was added to the Francestown Main Street Historic District.



The Register recognizes and encourages public and private efforts to identify and protect historically significant properties throughout the state. In order to be eligible for the Register, properties must be at least 50 years old and retain the unique qualities that make them irreplaceable.

Click [here](#) for the most recent additions to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places.

Photo: Stoddard Town Hall, DHR file photo

This Place Matters

It's up to all of us to make sure our favorite landmarks get their due. Start now by sharing your own story about a place that matters to you. Help spread the word and get even more people involved in the preservation movement. It's all part of the [This Place Matters campaign](#), a nationwide initiative by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Sharing your story is easy:

1. Have a photo taken at your favorite place. Make sure you or someone in the photo holds the This Place Matters sign. [Download the sign and more information.](#)
2. [Upload your photo and short story.](#)
3. Tell your family and friends to view your special place online - and submit their own.

Save Our History Grants Available

History (formerly known as The History Channel) is awarding grants of up to \$10,000 for the 2009-2010 school year to historical organizations for hands-on experiential education projects that teach students about their local history and actively engage them in preservation. Applications are due June 5, 2009. Guidelines, important dates and information to apply are available at the [Save Our History](#) web site. (*Thanks to Joan Antonson of the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology for this reminder!*)

Download the New DHR Brochure

The new, colorful [DHR trifold brochure](#) is now online, free of charge, at the DHR's "About Us" web site. Download it for distribution -- or save paper and historic places by sharing the web link widely!

Save These Dates

CELEBRATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH IN MAY (see related story above)

NH Office of Energy and Planning Conference

Saturday, May 2, Center of NH, Radisson Hotel, Manchester

Nadine Peterson of the DHR is a presenter for the "Neighborhood Heritage Districts" session at the OEP conference, which will also feature "Heritage Commissions: Why Your Town Needs One!"

[More information](#)

Town-wide Barn Survey Workshop

Saturday, May 9, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, Bedford Public Library, 3 Meetinghouse Rd

Mary Kate Ryan of the DHR will explain requirements for the DHR's statewide barn survey database at the NH Preservation Alliance workshop. Also included are an illustrated lecture on NH barn architecture and a tour of an 18th century barn.

[More information](#)

2009 Annual Preservation Achievement Awards

Tuesday, May 12, 4:30 pm, Concord City Auditorium, Concord

Join the NH Preservation Alliance its 20th year of celebrating outstanding preservation efforts in New Hampshire.

[More information](#)

Painting Your Historic Home

Saturday, May 30, 10:00 am-12:00 noon, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Concord

John Thompson, of JLT Painting, Laconia, will offer guidance for homeowners on how to tackle a do-it-yourself paint job for a historic home. He will cover a brief history of architectural styles and their common color palettes, lead paint safety practices, proper preparation techniques and choice of paint products.

[More information](#)

Upstairs Downtown

Thursday, June 4, 8:00 am-7:30 pm

NH Historical Society Library, Concord

Peter Michaud will speak about federal rehab tax incentives at the Downtown Resource Center's (NH CDFA) Upstairs Downtown award-winning workshop developed for the IL Main Street

program. The workshop will focus on how to turn vacant upper floors into income-producing properties. RSVP by Friday, May 29.

[More information](#)

Other DHR appearances

Richard A. Boisvert, State Archaeologist, will be presenting "Paleo-Indian in New Hampshire" at the 28th Annual Meeting of the Association of Quebec Archaeologists, on Saturday, May 2, at the Museum of Nature and Sciences, Sherbrooke, Quebec.

[More information](#)

He will also be presenting a lecture titled "Cold Comfort - Life in the Whites 12,000 Years Ago," at the Primex Annual Meeting at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, on Wednesday, May 20.

[More information](#)

James L. Garvin, State Architectural Historian, will speak on eighteenth-century New England architecture at Historic New England's Program in New England Studies at 9:00 am on Tuesday, June 16, at the Langdon House in Portsmouth.

[More information](#)

Historical Archaeologists Edna Feighner, Review and Compliance Coordinator, and Tanya Kress, Cultural Resources Records and Project Archaeology Coordinator, will give a presentation on the SCRAP Historical Archaeology Sites Survey training program at the Croydon Historical Society in Croydon on Wednesday, June 24.

[More information](#)

Check the [NH Preservation Alliance "Events" web site](#) at for more information on these and other preservation activities.

*Staff members of the
New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources
have prepared this newsletter.*

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