A historic context is an organizational tool for grouping properties related through their histories by theme, place, and time. The Division of Historical Resources has assembled a broad list of historic contexts most commonly uncovered in the state’s properties and history. By their nature, some of these contexts apply to only a portion of New Hampshire; more apply to the entire state, which is small enough and homogeneous enough that while certain activities are necessarily confined to certain parts, there are not significant enough differences to warrant a spatially or chronologically segmented theme. The Division maintains research files on each of the contexts and also enters surveyed properties into a database by context. This information is available to researchers investigating not only a certain theme, such as shoemaking, but also considering a single property that may relate to others with a shared history, such as shoe shops.

This list does not represent all of the historical research topics that could be pursued in New Hampshire. Instead, it reflects the historic contexts illustrated by the properties in the Division of Historical Resources’ survey files. By nature, it evolves as more survey work is completed. An updated version may be available by contacting the Division.

THE CONTEXTS

Exploration and Settlement
100. Early exploration of the NH seacoast, 1400-1630.
101. First settlements on the NH seacoast, 1623-1660.
102. Early exploration and settlement in the interior of NH, 1623-1770.
103. The granting of land and towns, 1623-1835.

Military
200. The French and Indian Wars in NH.
201. Revolutionary New Hampshire.
203. World War I in NH.
204. World War II in NH.
205. NH’s coastal defenses, 1775-present.
206. The Cold War in New Hampshire.
207. New Hampshire’s early militia and the National Guard.

Maritime History
300. Fishing on the NH Seacoast and the Isles of Shoals, 1660-present.
301. Wooden shipbuilding on the NH seacoast, 1630-1920.
302. Modern shipbuilding on the NH seacoast, 1900-present.
303. Shipwrecks in NH waters, 1620-1940. (F) (authors: Parker Potter and David Switzer)
304. New Hampshire’s inland lighthouses. (F) (authors: Parker Potter and Greg Clancey)
305. Lighthouses general

Industry
400. Locally capitalized textile mills in NH, 1720-1920.
401. NH textile mills capitalized by out-of-state interests, 1826-1920.
404. Logging, lumbering and saw mills, 1620-present.
405. Wood products mills and shops in New Hampshire.
407. Large-scale furniture production.
408. Small-scale furniture (cabinet) making.
Industry (cont.)

410. Iron smelting and founding, 1715-present.
411. Mineral mining, 1770-present.
412. Granite quarrying and stone cutting, 1790-present.
416. Localized shoemaking, 1623-1900.
417. Heavily capitalized (factory) shoemaking, 1820-1940.
418. Shoemaking outwork/home manufacture, 1830-1920.
419. Outwork/home manufacture of hats and clothing, 1870-1920.
420. Metalworking in New Hampshire for local and regional markets, 1630-present.
422. The pottery industry, 1700-1900.
423. Brewing and distilling, 1700-1920.
427. Precision machine shops, 1820-present.
428. Carriage and wagon manufacture, 1820-1900.
429. Heavy manufacturing, 1850-present.
430. Tanneries and leather board manufacturing in New Hampshire.
431. Musical instrument production in New Hampshire.
432. Tobacco pipe production in New Hampshire.
433. Industry general

Agriculture

500. Mixed agriculture and the family farm, 1630-present.
501. Summer Pasturing in New Hampshire
503. Grain farming and grist milling, 1650-present.
504. Orchards and cider production, 1650-present.
505. Maple sugar and syrup production, 1650-present.
506. Local-scale dairy farming, 1800-present.
507. Potato farming, 1800-present.
508. The sheep craze, 1820-1870.
509. Silk culture and silk production, 1840-1860.
511. Cattle raising and summer pasturing in New Hampshire, c.1850-present.
512. Meat processing and marketing in New Hampshire.
513. Creamery operations, 1860-present.
514. Poultry farming, 1870-present.
515. Dairy farming for urban markets, 1880-1940.
516. Farm revitalization by Finns in the Monadnock Region, 1880-1940.
517. Market gardening / truck farming in New Hampshire, 1900-present.
519. Flax and linen production, 1650-present.
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520. Agriculture general

Entertainment and Recreation

600. Summer resort/grand hotel tourism, 1840-1940. (P)  (author: Deborah Noble)
601. New Hampshire as artists' colony, 1870-present. (P)  (author: Lisa Mausolf)
603. Summer and vacation home tourism, 1880-present.
604. Summer colonies in New Hampshire, 1840-present.
605. Summer camps for children, 1890-present.
606. Winter recreation and the ski industry, 1890-present.
607. Parks, amusement parks, zoos and waterfront recreation in New Hampshire, 1880-present.
608. Outdoor recreation in New Hampshire.
609. Theaters, opera houses, and movie houses in New Hampshire.
610. Museums and historical sites in New Hampshire.
611. New Hampshire State Parks, Sites and Forests.
612. State fairs in NH.

Transportation

   a. First Province Road – Claremont to Boscawen
701. Taverns, inns, hotels, motels, motor courts and bed and breakfasts, 1623-present.
702. Transportation on the lakes, 1760-present.
703. River and canal navigation, 1790-1890 (P)  (author: Lisa Mausolf)
   a. Toll houses
704. The railroads in NH, 1842-1960. (F) (authors: R. Stuart Wallace and Lisa Mausolf)
   a. Railroads
706. Automobile highways and culture, 1900-present.
   a. Toll houses
707. Aviation in New Hampshire.
708. Bridge building in NH, 1623-present.
   a. Timber bridges
   b. Bridges- Wood Timber
   c. Covered bridges
   d. Bridges General
709. Culverts

Communications and Utilities

800. Water supply, distribution and treatment in New Hampshire, 1850-present.
801. Gasoline and oil distribution in New Hampshire, 1900-present.
   a. Manufactured gas and industrial works
802. Hydropower in New Hampshire.
803. Electricity generation and distribution in New Hampshire.
804. Communications in New Hampshire.

Professions

901. The practice of law in New Hampshire.
Professions (cont.)
   a. John Storrs
904. Banking and finance in New Hampshire.
905. Writing and publishing in New Hampshire.
906. The service industries in New Hampshire.
907. Social services in New Hampshire.
908. The food industry in New Hampshire.

Education
1000. Higher education, 1770-present.
1001. Elementary and secondary education, 1770-present.
1002. Libraries in New Hampshire.

Politics and Government
1100. Local government, 1630-present.
1101. County government in New Hampshire, 1771-present.
1102. State government, 1680-present.
1103. The federal government in New Hampshire, 1776-present.
1104. Fighting the Depression in New Hampshire: The CCC, WPA, and other public works programs, 1929-1940.

Social History and Political Movements
1200. Philanthropy, 1850-present.
1201. Historic preservation, 1899-present (F). (authors: James Garvin and Parker Potter).
1202. Women’s organizations and the suffrage movement in New Hampshire.
1203. Social organizations in New Hampshire.
1204. Freemasonry in New Hampshire.
1205. The anti-slavery movement in New Hampshire.
1206. The Grange in New Hampshire, 1870-present.
1207. Cultural and community traditions, practices, arts and crafts.

Religion
1301. The Shakers in NH, 1795-present.

Ethnic Heritage
1400. Post-Colonial Native American Indian Acculturation and Revitalization, 1780-present.
1402. The Scots-Irish and Ulster-Scots in New Hampshire.
1403. The French-Canadians in NH, 1840-present.
1404. The Irish in New Hampshire.
1405. European and Middle Eastern immigration to New Hampshire.

Commerce, Community Planning, Cultural Landscapes
1500. Commerce, industry and trade in New Hampshire cities, 1630-present.
1501. Commerce, industry and trade in New Hampshire village and town centers, 1630-present.
Commerce, Community Planning, Cultural Landscapes (cont.)
1504. Town and county planning and surveying.
1505. Landscapes and their designs in New Hampshire.
1506. The land conservation movement in New Hampshire.
1507. Public and private cemeteries and burials.
1508. Urban renewal

Archaeology
2000. Post-Colonial Native American Indian Acculturation and Revitalization, 1780-present
2002. First (Paleo-Indian) occupations.
2003. Native American Indian lithic technology (P) (author: Richard Boisvert)
2004. Pre-Columbian European exploration and settlement.
2006. Native American Indian agriculture.
2012. Post-Columbian Native American Indian contact with Europeans.
2013. Native American Indian lacustrine adaptation.
2014. Pre-Columbian Native American Indian cultures.
2015. Pre-Columbian cultural chronology.
2016. Archaeology general