

Sandown Heritage Commission Annual Report 2018

The Sandown Heritage Commission is pleased to submit its first ever official annual report for the year 2018.

Newly established this year, after the town voted to pass the Citizen's Petitioned Warrant Articles #18 and #19, to establish a Heritage Commission and Heritage Fund respectively. Members were appointed by the Board of Selectman on August 27, 2018 and the first meeting was held on September 20, 2018. Members quickly established a regular meeting schedule to be held the first Thursday of every month, and in the three subsequent meetings before the year's end, the commission has been very busy getting operations and projects underway.

The Heritage Commission does not currently have an operating budget. The commission will have to rely on donations, grants and fundraising to fund its operation and carry out its objectives. To that end, the commission is planning to host community activities and future events to raise funds for its projects as well as operating expenses.

The commission quickly established its mission statement, rules and operating procedures and elected officers. It also initiated a list of projects and goals to begin serving its purpose for the town. Some of the projects include:

- 1) The Red Barn project - The commission applied for and secured a grant from the state Preservation Alliance to assess the red barn, which is owned by the town (Sandown Conservation Commission). The barn is currently used by several town organizations, mainly for storage, but the Heritage Commission would like to find out if the barn could be placed on the National Registry of Historic Places, and perhaps explore additional use beyond storage. The assessment will help establish the historical value or significance and what repairs or improvements it may need.
- 2) Video Interviews - As a window in time, the Commission, partnering with Chris Donnellan and Sandown Cable, wants to preserve for posterity many of the colorful tales told by some of the more 'vintage' members of our community. Some of the best stories come from the elders of our community and we are working to compile some of those that have already been recorded, record more and make them available for the entire community to enjoy.
- 3) Ancient Stone Structures- Sandown has many ancient man-made stone structures that pre date those constructed during the establishment of early colonial life. Some of the structures may be as old as five to seven thousand years, comparable to the stone structure worldwide like both Britain's and America's Stonehenge, Ireland's New Grange, and the Mayan Pyramids in Georgia. The commission has been investigating, recording locations and photographing these structures in hopes to get them identified, and perhaps even learn who built them, when they were constructed and for what purposes. We may discover even more Sandown history than is currently written in our history books. The

state archeologists and other experts in the field have seen a number of our sites and concur they are indeed ancient man-made structures are worth investigating.

4) The Old Meeting House and Depot- The Commission is working with members of the Sandown Historical Society and the Trustees of the Old Meeting House, two of Sandown's most unique and treasured historic structures, to raise funds for much needed repairs to both. Both amazing town buildings are on the National Registry of Historic Places and are extraordinarily unique.

In summary, the Heritage Commission was created to serve the town, its residents and its organizations. Its mission is to identify, investigate, protect and preserve our rich historical resources; those people, places and things in Sandown that embody the character, culture and traditions handed down for generations to all of us who now reside in Sandown. The Commission also endeavors to educate the public about the importance of our rich history, raise awareness about new and yet to be discovered historical resources, and to engage residents to explore the town's history. One of the Commissions duties is to make recommendations for preservation of the town's historic structures, sites and structures. The Commission may also assist other boards, like the Planning Board, with matters that involve the town's historic resources, such as updating the Master Plan.

The Sandown Heritage Commission is very excited to continue serving Sandown in the coming year, which will be our first full year serving Sandown.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela M Gaudreau, Chair