

Preservation Goes Green

You're probably the type of person who pays close attention to their gas mileage, but have you also considered how old buildings and sustainability are intertwined? Did you know that in many parts of the world historic preservation is called "heritage conservation," paralleling environmental conservation and energy conservation?

Environmental forces, such as wind and heat, were key considerations in designing and constructing most buildings before the mid-20th century. Buildings were sited to take advantage of the sun or prevailing winds. Houses were built close to the road and barns were connected to the house to reduce energy use. Shutters and awnings kept out the sun's heat and high ceilings allowed heat to rise during the summer. Renovating old buildings offers the opportunity to maximize the practical features of the original design.

Preservationist Patrice Frey has written, "As the antithesis of disposability, preservation encompasses two things that are essential to any sustainable society: valuing what we have and planning for the future. Preservationists inherently place value on what has been handed down to us from the past, and plan so that these resources can be enjoyed now and protected by future generations. That's the very definition of sustainability."

Don't be a passive preservationist when it comes to sustainability. Take these steps to make your preservation efforts green.

- Hire preservation- and energy-friendly designers and contractors. New Hampshire firms such as Bruss Construction are recognized nationally as leaders in the "green building" field.
- Before making changes to your historic home, consider the fundamental qualities of brick, stone, slate, and other original building materials. Original materials contain embodied energy, an environmental benefit destroyed by modern replacement.
- Repair, rather than replace, windows. Compare the value of a window that has to be replaced in 10 years to one that's been in place for 50 or 100 years. Replacement windows seldom compare aesthetically or economically to the originals. Historic wooden windows are simple to repair, and when properly maintained or restored will generally outlast replacements.
- Buy locally-produced buildings materials. When replacing a sill in your barn, consider a local sawyer and lumberyard instead of a chain store that ships its wood from afar. Transportation is costly in both energy use and in generating pollution.
- Audit your home for energy use. Keep records of your energy consumption and compare them from year-to-year to monitor

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Grants Preserve the Irreplaceable

Preservation Services Grants help communities and nonprofit organizations plan for preserving, restoring, and rehabilitating historic places, often serving as the catalyst for launching a project or helping it move forward to the next level.

Recent grants include:

West Chesterfield, for a building assessment for the Unitarian Church.

Hillsborough, to hire a consultant to discuss preservation strategies for the area surrounding Union Chapel.

Shelburne, for a conditions assessment of the Peabody Farmhouse, owned by the Shelburne Heritage Commission.

Gilmanton, for a building assessment of the Kelley Schoolhouse.

Tilton, for masonry assessment of the Bank Block.

Alton, for a building assessment of the East Alton Meetinghouse.

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DHR Grants in Action
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funding. If your community applied for this round or is considering it in the future, please don't be discouraged.

My advice to everyone is to get the word out that the amount of funding is dependent on the number of Conservation License Plates sold in the State of New Hampshire every year.

Please display the information about the program in town offices where people come in to renew their plates.

Projects awarded 2007 Moose Plate Funds are the Haverhill-Bath Covered Bridge, to replace the existing metal roof with a new standing seam metal roof; the Laconia Public Library for its stained glass window restoration project; Center Sandwich for the cleaning of painted decorative door panels on the historic Sandwich Coach; the Danville Town House for its second-floor heating, air conditioning & electrical systems; Chester's Stevens Memorial Hall for repairs to copper gutters and leaders; and restoration and cleaning of headstones at the Mt. Washington Cemetery in Bethlehem.

On June 1, 2007 all applications for this year's Certified Local Government Grant awards were received. There were eight applications from CLG communities for a variety of projects. This year's awardees for Priority I applications are Hollis for its historical and architectural survey of pre-1960 structures; Jaffrey for its web-based historical and cultural resources interactive database; Concord for a survey of farmsteads, barns and agricultural outbuildings; and

Wakefield's first project, as a new CLG community, for the historical resources survey of Union Village. There are now 15 CLG communities in New Hampshire. We want to welcome Londonderry as our newest Certified Local Government.

Deborah J. Gagne
 Grants Coordinator

Scrap Views
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"Field" work at the Webster Farm.

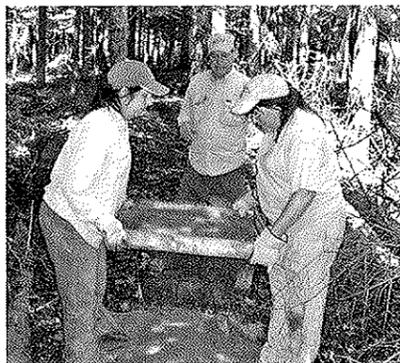
L to R: (background) Allan Robertson, Sunet Rubalcava, Principal Investigator Edna Feighner; (foreground) Brooke Nicholson, Dawn Lassman, Rebecca Courser.

PSU Announces Certificate in Historic Preservation
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University to enrich and strengthen Plymouth's new historic preservation concentration."

More information about the certificate program can be found at: http://www.plymouth.edu/graduate/heritage/historic_preservation.html.

James L. Garvin
 State Architectural Historian



SCRAP volunteers Linda Feuderer (L) and Laura Jefferson (R), sifting under the supervision of Claude Chapdelaine, Professor, Dept. D'Anthropologie, Université de Montréal (C).

COME AND SEE US!
 The NH Division of Historical Resources, NH Preservation Alliance, and NH Historical Agricultural Structures Advisory Committee will have a booth at the
LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTER/NH MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE TRADE SHOW
 Radisson Hotel • Manchester, New Hampshire • November 7-8, 2007

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Old House Tip Insulation Can Pay Dividends

Although putting on a jacket is a tried and true solution to keeping warm in your old home, replacing or installing insulation may be a welcome supplement when the weather turns cold—and, it may even cut heating costs by 20%-30%.

Consider these tips and resources before you begin insulating:

- Find out if and where your old home has insulation. This ought to be easy in the attic, where the insulation will likely be exposed. Patched holes in a wall may suggest the presence of blown-in insulation. Also, consider drafty spots, and keep in mind that because heat rises, roofs are prime spots for heat loss and ought to be a top priority.
- It's generally a good idea to keep the existing insulation. Before the 20th century, homes were often insulated with scraps of newspaper, corn cobs, or wood shavings. Later historic homes may have insulation that contains asbestos, but the asbestos will

only create a problem if it is airborne. Because completely removing insulation containing asbestos is difficult in most situations, it should be encapsulated to prevent it from becoming airborne.

- There are a number of new insulation options, including loose fill, batts, rigid board, and expanding spray insulation. Expanding spray is often used in old homes because it is minimally invasive. Loose fill is also less invasive and is ideal for stuffing into small spaces. Rigid board and batts are a better choice when completely rebuilding a wall or insulating an attic.
- Avoid insulation treated with ammonium or aluminum sulfates. These can react with moisture to create sulfuric acid that can damage most metals, stone, brick, and wood. Insulation treated with borates is a wiser option when dealing with old homes.

- When installing the insulation, take care not to cover vents, ridges and soffits in order to avoid moisture build-up. Also, if your insulation has a vapor barrier, it should face into the heated space to prevent moisture, as a result of cooking, bathing, and heating, from accumulating in the insulation.
- The appropriate amount of insulation in a home varies from region to region and from house to house, for obvious reasons. There is no sense in over insulating. The U.S. Department of Energy offers a Web site, <http://www.ornl.gov/~roofs/Zip/ZipHome.html>, which considers a region's climate, how a home is built, and the heating and cooling systems in a home to help calculate the amount of insulation necessary.

For more information about old house issues, visit the Old House and Barn section at www.nhpreservation.org.

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trends and identify waste. Buy more efficient replacement appliances, lights, and etc., to take advantage of developing technology.

- Activate your community. For example, in 2000 Keene signed onto the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP) administered by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. Since then, Keene has developed and implemented a local action climate plan to identify ways that the community can help lower greenhouse gas emissions by 10%.

- Contribute a question to a national study on sustainability and historic preservation now underway by our partner, the National Trust for Historic Preservation. E-mail us at jg@nhpreservation.org and we'll pass it along.
- Ask a presidential candidate a question about how his or her environmental policy relates to historic preservation goals.

Sustainability and historic preservation go hand-in-hand. Visit www.nhpreservation.org for ongoing updates on steps you can take to make your preservation green.

Preservation Resources

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to new uses or programming approaches. For more details, visit www.nhpreservation.org.

Every day the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance helps direct people to resources that will help them preserve their historic buildings. Successful project teams know that grant-writing is only a small fraction of the overall success story, along with many individual donors. They also recognize that the discipline involved in preparing a grant application often pays off in increased credibility and visibility for their efforts. See the Resources section of www.nhpreservation.org for more information.