

LANCASTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Annual Report for 2006

Michael Sczerzen chaired the Historical Commission in 2006. The members were Elizabeth Colley, William A. Kilbourn, David Knott, Joy Peach, Sally Rouleau, Michael Sczerzen, and Jean Watson.

The Commission office is open to the public every Tuesday to provide service to the public regarding historical research and genealogical information. Proceeds from research copy work were returned to the General Fund. The Historic District Study Committee appointed in 2002 has made significant progress and is working with the Town Planner for the Master Plan for presentation to the Town at the Annual Meeting in 2007. Sally Rouleau is the liaison member from the Historical Commission on the HDSC. The District Study Committee has a preliminary report ready for consideration by Massachusetts Historical Commission

The old Hose House in South Lancaster, c. 1888, has suffered interior damage due to roofing done five years ago. The Fire Department and Town Planner have presented a capital plan project for consideration by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. The second floor of the building has been condemned by the Building Commissioner, and major repairs are required to secure the bowing exterior walls. The town is applying to seek a matching grant from the Massachusetts Preservation Project Fund for these needed repairs.

Fires this year included significant damage to 57 George Hill Road, the Herbert Hosmer historic home. Arson fire destroyed the interior of the Bridge Diner and totally destroyed the Agway Building.

The Commission thanks the individuals and organizations that have adopted a town historic marker and have maintained the markers with attractive plantings during the four seasons.

The Memorial School, which has been vacant, suffered significant damage through vandalism, and had to be boarded up. The Prescott Community Building (Center School) remains vacant. The Town Green Buildings Advisory Committee submitted a report of study recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Plans to move forward with the restoration of these buildings need to be accomplished.

Significant changes to property:

The old Inn c. 1810 once known as Fisher's Inn and in the early 1900's known as the Fairbanks Inn was dismantled by Dan Shield of Spencer (18th & 19th Century Recycling company). We are awaiting information of its rebuilding in eastern Ohio. The 18th century Jonas Fairbanks House on 47 Sterling Street is being dismantled.

The historic marker at Lane's Crossing at the intersection of Harvard Road and Rt. 117 (Seven Bridge Road) damaged by vandals still has not been replaced. The Commission is waiting further word on the status of the intersection from the Sewer Department and DPW about repair of the landscape, before a new stone is placed and the bronze marker attached.

The site of the Industrial School for Girls, off Old Common Road on the location used by the RFK School has expanded its facilities by adding new dormitories and classrooms, which were completed and a dedication service held June 19, 2006. The state purchased another house on 124 Old Common Road to add to their inventory.

The Commission in coordination with the DPW has submitted a letter of intent grant to MHC for consideration of accomplishing plot plans for the Old Common and Middle Cemetery. The Eastwood Cemetery in Lancaster and Bolton has been recommended to MHC for consideration of National Register Status. Due to the considerable inventory work required to pursue the project, a professional consultant is needed to inventory the stones and markers before submission, and MHC suggests we hire a consultant to complete the required inventory information required by the National Register application.

Accessions:

Book, Mostly Horses by Me, by Natalie Thayer Hemenway
Pictures and Artifacts from Current Topics Club