

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

In 2006 the Stow Historical Commission continued its work of managing the Stow West School Museum, exploring restoration of the Larsen Blacksmith Shop, planning installation of a sprinkler system in Town Hall and preserving antique buildings and artifacts in Stow.

The Commission continued its stewardship of the Stow West School Museum, hosting four summer Sunday afternoon programs financed by generous grants from the Stow Cultural Council with the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Our first program, Surviving the Revolution, featured Dan and Judy Grillo discussing with visitors the principals of medicine and medicinal herbs of the Revolutionary War period. Our second program, Surviving the Depression, invited discussions of the Depression era, with examples of economies and styles of the period and toe-taping music by Ed and Louise Heztler. Surviving the Heat was our third program, in which we demonstrated means of surviving the heat before air conditioning from fans to homemade ice cream. Our final program, Going back to School, allowed our costumed school teacher, Jennifer Hofmann, to show visitors what it was like in past years to attend a one-room schoolhouse, complete with a spelling bee.

These programs brought many new visitors to the museum and the Commission looks forward to continued patronage of our 2007 programs. On several occasions, museum visitors filled to capacity the newly constructed parking area funded by proceeds collected by the town under the Community Preservation Act. Our thanks go to those who assisted the Commission with these programs and to Karen Gray, our Vice-Chair, for her hard work and dedication in making these programs successful. Grants from the Stow Cultural Council with the Massachusetts Cultural Council will permit the Commission to continue these programs in 2007.

The Commission also continued to explore possibilities for restoring the Larsen Blacksmith Shop on Great Road. To pique public interest and support for the project, the Commission retained a working blacksmith to demonstrate his trade in front of the Larsen Blacksmith Shop during Spring Fest. Visitors found the demonstration intriguing and expressed interest in our restoring the building. The Commission retained an artist to prepare a visionary sketch of the restored building and offered printed postcards of the drawing to Spring Fest attendees. The Commission continues to explore possible uses for the restored building and hopes to make significant progress on the project in 2007.

The Commission spent considerable time in 2006 planning a sprinkler system for the Town Hall, to be funded by proceeds collected by the town under the Community Preservation Act. The Commission continues to work diligently on this project and hopes for completion in 2007. The Commission further assisted the town by reviewing building permits, responding to inquiries about developments in potentially historic areas and attempting to preserve historical artifacts.

The Commission meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Commission office in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

John Makey, Chairman
Karen Gray, Vice-Chair, Recording
Secretary
Liz Painter, Treasurer, Corresponding
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