

Deering Heritage Commission Minutes, January 11, 2007

The January 11th meeting of the Heritage Commission met at 6 P.M. at the town hall. Present: Joan Burke, Betty Dishong, Bev Yeaple, Don Johnson and town clerk, Nancy Cowan.

The majority of the meeting focused on a report by Nancy Cowan on the details of the Municipal Vital Records Preservation Grant (see Executive Summary). Among the recommendations, among many others, made by Betsy Hamlin-Morin and Lynn Aber, were: Move the records from their present basement storage to a drier environment; add intruder alarms to panic button service; purchase a record storage cabinet; purchase a HOBO Datalogger and BoxCar Pro Software to monitor temperature, humidity and light to storage area and establish a Municipal Records Committee.

The Commission members enthusiastically endorsed these recommendations.

Ms. Cowan also reported that the consultants explained that there were several collections of Deering records housed at the NH State Archives. These records include: Marriage and birth records 1806-1830, and Birth records from 1760s to 1840. Don Johnson reminded the group that Deering's Town Clerk records from 1774 to 1823 are also housed in the State Archives and that the missing town clerk's records from 1823 to 1900, found in Marjorie Heath's house, are presently in the town hall boxes and should be placed in the town clerk's office along with the other town clerk's records.

Ms. Cowan reminded the group that the Mormon collection of births and deaths is available on CD. She also explained that the town statistical records now housed in the state archives would eventually be available on CDs. The members discussed ways to provide a computer for the conference and library room, where researchers could access the CD collection.

The members agreed to seek volunteers to help with the on going records classification and storage. Any potential volunteers should contact Don Johnson at 5297764, e-mail djj1@nyu.edu.

The meeting concluded by electing Don Johnson as chair of the commission and a review of the commission's past decisions.

- We are continuing to collect the names of Deering's original houses and will design a suitable plaque to place on each of these old houses. We will design a tour of these old houses by marking them on a map with accompanying descriptions of the original settlers who first owned these houses. We will solicit the cooperation of the present owners of these houses to discover the original owners in the last decades of the 18th century. We are taking pictures of these houses and barns that will eventually make up a collection of materials on the first houses of Deering.
- We had been charged with writing an ordinance for one or more Deering historical districts to be approved at a future town meeting.

- We had discussed plans for a Deering “Heritage Day” for sometime in the summer of 2007. The day would include, among other possibilities, traditional crafts (quilt making, weaving, cabinet making, home made ice cream, etc.) a display of pictures and artifacts of historic Deering, enactments of historic events in Deering’s history and children’s dressing up in old time costumes.
- The members discussed the problem of communicating various town events to a wider public audience and members made several suggestions. The lack of continual posting of events on the town web site was analyzed. A consensus emerged that we ask the town to appoint or hire a part time web master to keep the web site current. Betty Dishong volunteered to serve in such a capacity if someone would volunteer to train her in this skill.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 12th at 9 A.M. in the town hall.