

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The purpose of the Historical Commission is to plan and implement programs for identifying, evaluating and protecting our town's historic resources. We work with other Town boards and commissions to achieve our goals. We are responsible for commenting on environmental review issues at the local level and are mandated to alert state and federal agencies to local preservation issues.

This year we received a no match grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The grant is valued between \$10,000.00 and \$15,000.00 and it is being used for both a survey of historic resources and a preservation plan. We are working on these projects with the assistance of Christopher Skelly, Director of Local Government Programs for the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

We also received a grant from Community Preservation Act funds for \$6,990.00 for preservation of gravestones and the holding tomb at Old Cemetery. Work will begin in the spring as weather permits. The preservation of Old Cemetery is part of an ongoing public/private project entitled ADOPT A PLOT that our commission has been working on for close to three years. ADOPT A PLOT is a great way for people to get to know more people in town than you ever imagined – even if they are all dead! Won't you volunteer to clean a gravestone or place flowers on a veteran's grave this Memorial Day? It's easy, it's fun and the whole family can help. For information call 566-8327 or 566-8930.

This year we made history when our exhibit, "Puritan Gravestone Art", traveled to the Storrs Library in Longmeadow where it enjoyed a popular two-month run. The exhibit was designed, researched and arranged by our intern Amelia Bagnall of Wilbraham.

We continue to comment on matters concerning historic preservation to the proper local, state and federal agencies; answer questions on local history and architecture from Hampden residents and others and address preservation issues from Hampden residents.

We would like to thank the many Town boards and departments for their contributions to the ADOPT A PLOT program and Eva Wiseman, Town Clerk and Bill Meuse, volunteer.

Our concerns are not just old buildings and archaeological sites. We are also concerned about maintaining our rural heritage through preservation of farmlands, scenic roads, conservation and smart growth.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Chapin Witt, Chairman
Noreen Couture, CPC representative

Chrissie Cesan, Archaeology Coordinator
Melissa Lail -Trecker, Publicity