



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

BELLINGHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION



ESTABLISHED 1973

PUBLISHER OF THE CRIMPVILLE COMMENTS

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE!

Leadership

At the May meeting of the Commission, the Commission members voted in officers. Rick Marcoux was voted Chair, Steve Joanis, Vice-Chair and Bernadette Rivard, Secretary. Other members are Marjorie Turner Hollman, Pamela Johnson, and Franco Tocchi.



Museum Reopened!

For the Historical Commission 2021 was a banner year. We reopened the newly renovated and organized Ernest A. Taft Jr. Historical Museum after over two years of closure during the pandemic. The museum is a repository for artifacts, documents, photographs and personal collections that help others to envision and understand the lifestyle and concerns of the citizens of Bellingham since the incorporation in 1719.

On May 22, 2022 the Commission welcomed family members of former Commission leadership to cut the ribbon to open the museum to the public. Joanne Arcand (Ernie Taft's sister), Janet Hendrickson (Marcia Crooks' sister) and Judy Cox (Florence McCracken's daughter), cut the ribbon at the Grand Opening.

The Commission thanks the local vendors (Carl Deiseo of Carl-Leo Flooring of Milford), Doug Bulman (Imperial Cleaning of Franklin), Gary Remillard (G&L Electric), Seaport Masonry, Victory HVAC, and Victory Packaging for their work on the project.

The Commission also thanks the Town Staff and Volunteers who made the renovation and reorganization possible: Denis Fraine, Town Administrator; Ronald Paulus, Town Carpenter; Ken Hoyt, Carpenter; Roger Hogue & Jack Hamilton, Painters; Avery & Susan Osgood; Curt Chambers, Town Hall Custodian; Jesse Reidle, Assistant DPW Director; George Bernard, Bellingham Parks Department; Tim Aicardi, Building Inspector; Hilarie Allie, BOS Administrative Assistant; Lauren Hummel, Senior Tax Work Off Program; and the BHS 2020 Football Team!

Hours

The Commission has announced regular open hours for the museum for the foreseeable future:

Wednesdays from 9 am to 1 pm

2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

3rd Monday of the month from 6-7 pm

And by appointment

Visitors

Since the grand opening, scores of Bellingham residents and history enthusiasts have visited the museum. In addition to the successful grand opening, we have partnered with Sam Cowell, a teacher at Bellingham Memorial School to arrange tours for the Memorial School students. In the fall of 2022, approximately 60 school children visited the museum to learn more about Bellingham History.

Planning and Organizing for the Future

In 2022 we continued planning and organizing for the future. We continue to expand our online presence. Board meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Historical Commission's page on the town website. We have an electronic newsletter where we share periodic Commission news to our over 200 subscribers. In 2022 we published two issues of the Crimpville Comments. The summer issue focused on the museum reopening and highlighting some of the museum collections. The fall issue highlighted the Commission's participation in the Mass. Memories Road Show, a partnership between the Commission and the Bellingham Library to digitize the photos and memories of Bellingham residents. The Mass. Memories Road Show is a statewide program of the Healey Library at UMass Boston.

2022 Events



Boston Post Cane Awarded to Rolande Dubois

On September 19, 2022 Commission Chair Steve Joanis and Secretary Bernadette Rivard presented Rolande (Cartier) Dubois, Bellingham's eldest resident, with a replica of Bellingham's Boston Post Cane, Rolande turned 100 in 2022!

Boston Post Canes were created by the Boston Post newspaper in 1909. The gold-headed canes were presented to 700 New England towns with the request that they be presented to the eldest citizen of each community. The cane was intended as a tribute to honored and useful lives, to thrift, temperance and right living; and above all to the superb vigor of New England personhood.

Closing of the 300th Anniversary Time Capsule

On August 11th members of the Historical Commission were joined by members of the town's 300th Anniversary Committee to close a time capsule with memorabilia from Bellingham's 300th year. The capsule was closed during the town's Bellingham Days Celebration. The event was originally scheduled for April of 2020 and was long delayed due to the global pandemic caused by Covid-19.



Coming in 2023

The Commission is hosting its first Bellingham History Discussion Group in January and hope that this will become a quarterly event.

We are also looking forward to participating in the town's Memorial Day events as well as an event during Bellingham Days in August.

Digital archive of photos from the Mass. Memories Road Show event will be posted online at archives.umb.edu

Website: <https://www.bellinghamma.org/historical-commission>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BellinghamHistoricalCommissionMA>

Email: history@bellinghamma.org