

Today, the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance touches every community in the Granite State and works with more than 5,000 individuals, businesses and organizations through a variety of program offerings.

When the organization emerged in 1985, it was called Inherit New Hampshire. Many landmarks were threatened and rapid growth was beginning to erode New Hampshire communities and landscapes. A task force of business and civic leaders saw the need for an active, statewide force to advance preservation policy and address the needs of local communities and individuals, and created Inherit New Hampshire (INH) with a "common goal of encouraging respect for the special character of New Hampshire vested in its buildings, towns, landscapes and local history." Similar to other statewide organizations that formed around this time, it was buoyed by national historic preservation legislation in the 1960s and a growing environmental awareness and the nation's bicentennial in the 1970s.

While it is difficult not to acknowledge each individually, all agree that the early years owe much to INH's first board chair Chick Colony, the first Executive Director John Page and to Martha Fuller Clark who has remained a steadfast supporter, advisor and champion.

Inherit New Hampshire immediately supported local efforts to avert demolition of the Wentworth-by-the-Sea Hotel, helped to secure financial support for a feasibility study for the Portsmouth Music Hall to guide its revitalization, and worked to build alliances during the 1987 legislative session, which helped to nearly double the budget of the State Historic Preservation Office, which remains an active partner of the Alliance today. Highly successful statewide "town meeting" conferences in 1988 and 1989, "Preserving Community Character," brought together leaders in the field and concerned individuals to discuss emergent preservation issues, to provide valuable resources to communities and to advocate for policies to protect New Hampshire's quality of life.

The 1989 conference featured the first Preservation Awards and highlighted the efforts of the Lyme Horse Sheds Restoration Committee, engraver Randy Miller and Keene preservationist and philanthropist David Putnam. Their work provided inspiring examples of efforts throughout the state to protect important institutions and to encourage appreciation of New Hampshire's traditions.

Working with the limited resources of a nonprofit, largely volunteer effort, INH continued to champion the cause of preservation in the early 1990s with statewide town meetings, Preservation Awards, tours and organizational development efforts. By the mid-1990s, with full-time staffing in place, INH was actively building partnerships throughout the state and nationally. During this time, INH worked to bring the National Main Street Center to New Hampshire to conduct four regional workshops on downtown revitalization; today the Granite State boasts two Great American Main Street Award winners in Littleton and Milford and nineteen Main Street communities sponsored and supported by the New Hampshire Main Street Center. INH also sponsored and promoted the national Save Outdoor Sculpture! Project and conducted a number of forums across

the state which helped several towns enact heritage commissions and new preservation ordinances.

On the national level, a new partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation propelled the Preservation Alliance to a new level of effectiveness. Core support from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and key board members positioned the organization to become a partner in the Trust's Statewide Initiatives Program in 1998. New Hampshire was the 6th state to be selected in this highly competitive process and is now a part of a network of 44 Statewide Partners. This program connects the Alliance and its constituents to legal, marketing and policy experts at the National Trust.

As INH approached the new millennium, it had raised its profile throughout the state, professionalized operations and grown its membership considerably. At this time, Inherit New Hampshire became the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance to underscore both its historic preservation mission and alliance function. As the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance membership base grew, so too did the organization's impact with programs and services to serve constituent needs.

Every day New Hampshire communities and individuals seek assistance from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. The Alliance believes the best way to help preserve New Hampshire's character is by "being there" for people and communities: with technical expertise, financial assistance, supportive policies and by lending our support on a myriad of issues. Whether it is supporting a walking tour or conducting a local workshop or developing the nationally-recognized Barn Program or advocating for funding of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) - the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance has been an integral part of many success stories.

In 1999, our membership told us they needed help saving barns. Two months later, the Alliance held a standing-room-only workshop and the phones didn't stop ringing for weeks with calls from people who needed help. Our citizenry expressed a critical need, and the Preservation Alliance moved quickly to establish services that could help: disseminating information to thousands of barn enthusiasts, creating a grant program to conduct barn assessments, connecting people to qualified contractors and working to secure a new barn tax incentive and build awareness of its advantages and procedures.

A barn grant from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance prompted Ruby Wallace and her brother-in-law Robert Young to commit to the stewardship of the barn of Pioneer Farm, a Colebrook landmark, which has been in the same family since 1787. The detailed report from a Preservation Alliance barn assessment grant provided the plan for preserving the barn and helped the family secure a competitive construction grant from the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources. Wallace and Young recall, "Had we not gotten the grant when we did, we might never have invested our own assets in the barn, and most certainly wouldn't have gotten it listed on the National Register of Historic Places without your assistance." Their work also resulted in the town's first barn preservation tax abatement - rounding out an impressive preservation story for Colebrook.

The Preservation Alliance gives a wide range of assistance to community organizations, historical organizations and "friends groups," providing valuable advice, information and encouragement. The Preservation Alliance served this role for a group of highly committed civic and business leaders in Newport during the rescue of Eagle Block, considered to be one of the Granite State's greatest preservation stories of this generation. Constructed in 1825 as one of New Hampshire's most fashionable hotels, Eagle Block had long anchored Newport's Main Street and it possessed an important identity for the town. A demolition permit had been in effect since 1993 until the Sturm, Ruger Company, Inc., and the Economic Corporation of Newport (ECON) agreed to an exchange of properties in April, 1999. The Preservation Alliance worked to garner support from the National Trust, which in turn helped to leverage ECON's fundraising efforts. Ultimately, Eagle Block received funding from the state's LCHIP for its restoration efforts; money that would not have been available without the Preservation Alliance's leading role in securing, designing and reviving funding for preservation. Today, Eagle Block is a shining example of the marriage of historic preservation and economic development, operating the Eagle Neighborhood Tavern and Grill and a teaching center for precision machining tools within its walls.

Two other landmarks have been important saves for the Preservation Alliance and state of New Hampshire: Monson Village and Webster Farm. Their stories highlight the strength and importance of forging alliances with land conservation groups and other partners. Monson Village, a hidden gem near Wilton and a significant historical and archaeological site, was saved from destruction by the combined efforts of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, and the Preservation Alliance and an ad hoc group of local citizens. The "Save Monson Village" campaign quickly raised the \$300,000 needed to buy the land. The Dickermans, who owned the adjacent property, donated 125 acres to secure the site's future interpreting New England's inland pioneer settlement featuring nature walks, a restored colonial home and museum and numerous archaeological treasures.

In 2005, its 20th anniversary year, the Preservation Alliance again found the importance of "being there;" this time for local advocates in Franklin concerned with development plans for Daniel Webster Farm that put prime agricultural land and historic buildings at risk. Daniel Webster, one of America's foremost statesmen and most dynamic orators, maintained his family's farm as a retreat, model stock farm and meeting place until his death in 1852. In 1871, the farm became the site of a home and school for children orphaned in the Civil War. Working with the Franklin Historical Society, the Preservation Alliance brought concern for Webster Farm to the National Trust and the Farm was placed on its prestigious national "Eleven Most Endangered" list. The national attention, a re-use study funded and led by the Alliance and other advocacy efforts supported the work of the Webster Farm Preservation Association and the Trust for Public Land and helped secure major funding from LCHIP. Alex Ray, owner of the Common Man Restaurants, has recently adapted the buildings for a new use, and the Society for the Protection of N.H. Forest and the Preservation Alliance hold easements on portions of the 141-acre farm.

"It has been exhilarating to be part of this organization since its infancy, through the awkward pre-teen years, to see it blossom into this mature, professional and effective alliance, doing so much for preservation in our state. I think of the barns saved, the vibrant historic Main Streets, the picturesque farmhouses - still here because of the work of the Preservation Alliance - and I smile, said Lynne Emerson Monroe, Incorporator and Alliance Board Member and Owner of the Preservation Company

The last seven years illustrate tremendous growth for the Preservation Alliance, both in terms of the needs of Granite State communities to secure their landmarks and in terms of services the Alliance provides. Focused now into two, core areas - Preservation Services and Preservation Policy - Alliance programs are reaching more communities and making long-term impact by protecting the character of New Hampshire vested in its landmarks.

As our history reflects, the Preservation Alliance has been made stronger by those involved. Today, a talented board of directors of leaders in preservation as well as law, banking, real estate and community development guides the Alliance. The staff has grown to include a full-time director, with extensive preservation and nonprofit experience, and full-time program support for constituent services as well as development and membership efforts. The fiscal health of the Alliance is strong, with a balanced budget in each of the last five years and low administrative costs.

The board and staff are currently working to expand partnerships with land conservation and housing interests, support cultural tourism initiatives that promote New Hampshire's special places and plan enhanced services. The successful Irreplaceable Assets Campaign established the Alliance's first endowment and will secure funding for Preservation Services Fund grants and new preservation policy initiatives and provide working capital for new ventures. A shared field service program, with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has greatly enhanced our effectiveness in coaching local community groups to success.

There is much work to do to ensure that New Hampshire remains a special place. The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance will be there - you can count on us to protect and preserve.