



Freedom's Way Heritage Association

Winter 2005

Volume 9 Issue 1

FWHA's 1st Annual Fall Harvest Festival at the Doyle Conservation Center November 14, 2004

Freedom's Way held its first Fall Harvest Festival at the new Doyle Conservation Center in Leominster (see page 8). Entertainment for the event featured Dillon Bustin singing poems by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Willow of the Wilderness." Musical Nostalgia, Bonnie Biocchi and Stephanie Guidetti a singing duo from our own board of directors sang "Followers of the Lamb: Shaker Music" featuring Shaker songs from the 19th Century.

The program was the result of a first fundraising initiative by the board of directors. The board plans to expand this fall event in succeeding years into a daytime family gathering.

"This was a departure for us," said FWHA president Mary Whitney. "Non profit organizations generally can't rely on membership and grant funds alone. We felt it is important to begin public fundraising to bolster our treasury."

"We're grateful to Dillon, Bonnie and Stephanie for helping us put together such an enchanting musical program for our first event. It was truly wonderful to hear such talented singers at such a beautiful setting," said Whitney.

FWHA held a brief meeting as part of the program, largely to adjust the board calendar to allow installation of board members prior to the beginning of the organization's fiscal year. The meeting was perfunctory because all board members terms continue until November 2005.



Dillon Bustin



Stephani Guidetti (l) & Bonnie Biocchi

One of Our Own Visionaries Receives FWHA Award



Milly Chandler

Mildred A. (Milly) Chandler (left) received the Freedom's Way Heritage Association Award at the FWHA annual meeting on Nov. 14 in Leominster.

Milly was a founding member of Freedom's Way in 1994. She has served the organization in many capacities in the succeeding ten years, but always, she said, "with a sense of stewardship."

Milly edited *Nashaway: A Guide to North Central Massachusetts*, with co-authors Marge Darby and Jean C. McCrosky, a book about the very region in central Massachusetts that was to serve as the

basis of the proposed national heritage area. That effort led to establishing the Freedom's Way Heritage Association to celebrate and preserve the rich natural, cultural and historic resources in the region, "...a land of uncommon beauty." The book sale receipts also gave the group its early treasury upon which they built the grass roots non-profit organization it is today.

Over past ten years, Milly has served as the secretary of the Freedom's Way board of directors and volunteered full time in the office. She is now a board member emeritus and continues to devote her skills and talents furthering FWHA's cause. Most recently she spearheaded an effort to publish an historic cookbook, *A Taste of Freedom's Way*, due out in early 2005. She has also devoted much of her energies to another FWHA project -- to establish a museum about the history of Fort Devens. The museum is now ready to become independent of FWHA, and will open to visitors at 94 Jackson Road in Devens early in 2005.

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The Heritage Landscape Inventory Project in MA and NH



What do you value most in your community?

We all have special places that connect us to our communities – a particular view across an open field, where the sun sets, where you can see the night sky best. Some places are more than a view, they hold our cultural history in ways that define us: barns, cemeteries, commons, houses, ponds and rivers, old roads, country lanes, back streets and side alleys, stone walls, Main Streets, Poor Farms, orchards, dairy and other farms, fishing places, bridges, marker oaks, mills, plants and factories. Which of these and what more would you use to describe your community?

These are your heritage landscapes – all of them, including buildings. Most communities have never documented the valued places until a particular house or farm is sold and the new use threatens the local sense of place.

This year, we held three landscape protection workshops out of which has grown some wonderful activity for long-term planning possibilities. With the volunteer assistance of Rita Walsh, consultant for ICON architecture inc., volunteers Pam Durrant of Harvard and Sue Smith of Pepperell, began their town's heritage landscape inventories. Pam has been joined by Liz Cooper and Jared Wollaston also of Harvard, and Emilie Coolidge and Sharon Garde from Boxborough are ready to begin work in their town. Littleton and Ayer have expressed interest so we hope to soon have a large contingent of Freedom's Way communities working on the same project.

And here is the best news! Jessica Rowcroft of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will be the lead program contact for the Freedom's Way Landscape Inventory Project to begin in 2005. Under the auspices of DCR and a qualified consulting team, Freedom's Way will compile an inventory of as many Massachusetts communities as we can manage within the fiscal year. Participating communities will be selected by an application process. Those of you who are ready to go will have a head start. This project needs many of you to fan out into your communities and tell us where the special places are.

If you are interested, please call you local liaison or the FHWA office and ask how you can volunteer.

All of you should visit www.WindowonHollis@hollis.nh.us/history to see what one small town has already accomplished. We will be hosting a meeting in Hollis for those of you who would like to emulate the work Evangeline (Van) Eresian of Hollis. Van will tell you how she managed to document Hollis' history and create the town's wonderful web site. While Massachusetts participants will learn much from Van, if you are from one of New Hampshire's Freedom's Way towns, this is a must see -- must do project.

Let us hear from you soon. 978-772-3654 or mail@freedomsway.org



Van Eresian, Hollis, NH Liaison to Show Town's Heritage Landscapes on Jan. 26

We can proudly point to Hollis, New Hampshire, as one town that has already accomplished a project similar to our upcoming heritage landscapes inventory. We have asked Van Eresian, the Hollis historian who spearheaded the work in that New Hampshire town, to talk to you about her project. The program will be at the Hollis, NH town hall on Wed., Jan 26th at 10:30 a.m.

Van is one of our members that embodies the mission of Freedom's Way. After living in many parts of the country with her husband and children, she finally settled in beautiful Hollis. Her love of history and education led her to the Historic District Commission, where she began to help document the history of the town by taking photographs of historic houses and matching them with DAR documentation, which helped move the compilation of historic research forward. She first became acquainted with FWHA, when she applied for a grant in the mid-90's to research one of the more interesting families in Hollis. Since then, she has developed a website with over 100 volunteers: <http://www.hollis.nh.us/windowsonhollispast>; it teaches people interested in researching the history of their town in an interactive and accessible way. You can reach her at vaneresian@tds.net.

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Mary Whitney
FWHA President

President's



Message

December 1, 2004 is a special date for Freedom's Way. Thanks to **Senator Pam Resor** and her legislative aide **Sally Schnitzer**, a Massachusetts bill was filed to create the Freedom's Way Heritage Area and Commission. The bill, docket number 862, is to recognize "the significant historic,

cultural and natural resources of the Freedom's Way Area and to preserve and interpret them for the education and inspiration of present and future generations.

We are all very excited about this effort, the hard work that went into creating the legislation and the wonderful support we're getting from our legislators. Special recognition goes to **Rep. Jamie Eldridge** for his constant encouragement of our endeavors. It is heartening to see so many of our legislators jump at the chance to support this worthy effort and we are grateful for the early support from **Senator Richard Tisei** and **Representatives Emil Goguen, Roberst S. Hargraves, Brian Knuuttilla, James Marzilli, Susan Pope, Thomas M. Stanley and Pat Walrath**, who all signed on to cosponsor the bill with Resor and Eldridge.

We've had some great conversations with many others of our legislators, who have said they will also support our bill. I know we can count on **Senators Antonioni, Brewer, Chandler, Fargo, Havern, Panagiotakos and Shannon** along with **Representatives Atkins, Ciampa, Connolly, Donato, Donovan, Evangelidis, Fallon Flanagan, Hall, Kaufman, Murphy, Naughton and Paulsen**, to sign on, if they haven't already.

Now is a good time to talk to your local legislator and ask him or her to stand beside you and Freedom's Way to get this bill passed.

Why is this bill important to you and to us?

- It provides formal public recognition of the Freedom's Way Heritage Area as an important and integral part of the region's natural, historic and cultural resources. This recognition gives Freedom's Way more stature when applying for grants from public and private funding sources and when partnering with state government, cities and towns and other public or private institutions.

- The bill opens the way for early work to present a unified historic preservation and interpretive strategy for the entire area. This includes inventorying preserving and interpreting the historic, cultural and natural resources of Freedom's Way and how they may be utilized.
- State designations encourage us to further historic preservation, cultural conservation, natural resource protection, tourism, and economic development. We are not seeking another layer of bureaucracy, but we will be able to provide educational and cultural programs that encourage appropriate use of resources.

What doesn't this bill do? This legislation in no way limits the rights of private property owners or the cities and town or state agencies to develop land, building and resources. Freedom's Way will not acquire property, but will work with property owners to enhance regional economic development.

What do we need from you? For those of us who are Internet ready, go to www.mass.gov and learn more about the Freedom's Way Act, docket number 862. Or, call our office at 978-772-3654, and we will send you a copy of the current bill.

Talk to your legislator and let him or her know you are in favor of creating a state designated Freedom's Way Heritage Area. Ask for support and speedy passage and funding. Call our office at 978-772-3654 if you need help to obtain the name, address, phone number and email address of your state representatives.

Working together we can see this bill passed and implemented. We are also beginning conversations with our New Hampshire representatives to develop a companion bill for those towns.

Many thanks for your support.

Mary H. Whitney, President

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A New Innovative and Collaborative Partnership for FWA

Freedom's Way is partnering with MassInnovation, LLC (MALL) of Fitchburg, and the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce (NVCC) on Devens to create a Cultural Heritage Institute to develop new opportunities for regional economic growth.

It is a documented fact that positive economic benefits accrue to communities that link planning with cultural heritage development. "Heritage-based development allows older communities to capitalize on their significant assets; that is: a strong history and culture that has evolved over generations," according to a 2003 Maryland heritage area report. "This preserved and enhanced heritage is far more marketable and does more than merely market heritage tourism sites with the additional benefit of improved neighborhoods and preserved resources."

The three partners have agreed on the following premises:

1. All the regional constituencies support the goals to preserve the quality of life and the sense of community that binds us together;
2. The adaptive reuse and preservation of historic buildings and heritage sites builds better neighborhoods, strengthens older communities, and reduces sprawl;
3. Heritage tourism bolsters the economy through job creation and business expansion.
4. Preserves regional culture and sense of place.

The next step is a series of workshops that will identify heritage landscapes and regional historic resources, determine the scope of the Institute and the level of participation additional partners and collaborators envision; identify a preferred regional brand or focus, and develop a list of concrete action plans and items to achieve long-term economic goals.

Each of the current partners will supply expertise directly related to their very compatible individual missions and goals. All of our regional interpretive centers, museums, auxiliary sites, historical societies, house museums, and historic places are potential additional partners. We expect the Institute to stir the imaginations of the regional collaborators so innovative product ideas will generate enthusiasm and excitement.

If you are interested call or email Freedom's Way at 978-772-3654 or mail@freedomsway.org.



Last FWA Landscape Series Held

How can you protect the quality of life in your community? Whose job is it? ...the planning board? ...the ZBA? ...the selectmen? ...the tree huggers? ...the developer? ...the neighbors and abutters?

These questions and more were addressed at the third and final landscape management workshop sponsored by Freedom's Way on Oct. 16 at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington. The half-day seminar featured Karl Kehde, founder of the Smarter Land Use Project in New Jersey. His approach brings all affected parties to cooperative discussions instead of confrontations and finger pointing.

Kehde's program appealed most to those in the audience who were planning board members or associated with town and city Zoning Boards of Appeals. Several in attendance thought that the Smarter Land Use process would be helpful with 40B projects.

The Freedom's Way library received a copy of Kehde's Guidebook and CD as a donation from a board member. If you are interested in reviewing this planning resource, call us. We can lend you the copy.

Society of the Cincinnati Funds "Paths of the Patriots"

The Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati awarded a grant to Freedom's Way to fund the design phase of the first Paths of the Patriot's Self-Guided Tour. The goal of the Society is "to promote and cherish the national honor; preserve inviolate the rights and liberties for which the founders fought and bled, and to support educational and research activities that promote the purposes of the Society and the ideals of liberty and constitutional government."

Freedom's Way works to encourage the preservation and interpretation of the area's significant historical events and stories by linking the theme-related structures and landscapes important to American history. A Paths of the Patriots Heritage Trail will help demonstrate the extent of citizen involvement in the Revolutionary War and make the story of American's fight for liberty more personal and inspiring. As an example, a family could use the self-guided tour to travel to a specific site, such as the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, and from there, follow a trail through the many FWA towns past mustering grounds, homes or sites of significance in the Revolutionary War as well as places that were sites of particular stands or events for freedom.

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*The Story of Nahum: Tracing a History of
Black Life in America*

by Elizabeth Tennessee



Nahum

In 2001, FWHA supported the research and publication of this book that tells the story of Nahum Hazard of Shirley. He was born in 1830, and grew up in the Freedom's Way area. He volunteered to join the first black infantry regiment to fight for the Union in 1864, survived the war, and lived the rest of his days in Leominster. His descendants still live in the area, the Hazard Family of Color in New England, Inc., has a membership that includes more than 39 families in Freedom's Way. Send \$13 to FWHA, and we will send you this fascinating book with a glimpse into a proud family and its history.

FWHA Board of Directors 2005

The Hon. Mary Whitney, President
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Lucy Wallace, Secretary
Sandra Lefkovits, Treasurer

Meg Bagdonas, Executive Director

Maud Ayson, Executive Director, Fruitlands Museum
James Baecker, Product Manager, Mass Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
Bonnie Biocchi, Executive Director, Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce
Gail Bloom, Art Coordinator, Fitchburg School System
Stephanie Guidetti, Marketing Director, Nashoba Valley Medical Center
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Cara Mets, Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Michael Sczerzen, President, Lancaster Historical Society
Elizabeth Tennessee, Hazard Family of Color in New England, Inc, Nipmuc Heritage
Jerrold Van Hook, PhD, Lexington Bile Trail
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FWHA Membership Information

You may send a check or money order with this form to:
Freedom's Way Heritage Association, Inc.
42 Buena Vista Street Devens, MA 01432

Renewal New Membership

Annual Membership Categories

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- Family/Non-profit \$50
- Business Roundtable \$100

- Minuteman \$250-\$499
- Thoreau Associate \$500-\$999
- Patriots Circle \$1,000-\$4,999
- Golden Eagle \$5,000 and up

Send me "*The Story of Nahum.*" I am enclosing \$13 to cover cost and shipping.

Name _____ Email _____
 Address _____ Phone _____
 Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

We also have gift memberships. Call us for more information at 978-772-3654.

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From the Director's Desk

The longer I'm involved with Freedom's Way, the more firmly I believe in our mission and goals. Nearly every day I learn something new about this beautiful area. The people I meet are knowledgeable and share the same ambitions about Freedom's Way as we do. I discover rare and unique facts, places and talents at every turn that just thrill and amaze me.

Freedom's Way has a truly compelling story to tell and yet that always seems to be the least of what we do. We serve 42 communities in two states –that's a lot of territory for a few people to cover and we accomplish a lot without much fanfare. Think about what we've been doing over the last year:

- We sponsored three landscape seminars, and we are exceedingly grateful to Bob Durand, James Eldridge, Pam Resor, Jessica Rowcroft and Lucy Wallace for their contributions as speakers and consultants.
- We supported communities who started their own heritage landscape inventory.
- We have entered into a new partnership with MassInnovation, LLC and the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce to embark on an ambitious project mentioned on page 4.
- We undertook a new oral history project on apple orchardists in the region and seek underwriting to defray project costs.
- We continued work on our new book, *A Taste of Freedom's Way*, due out early next year and we supported the sales of our current niche book titles.
- We co-sponsored a lecture by Cynthia Barton on Utopian Communities. Barton is the author of two of FWHA's book titles.
- We developed a co-branding door decal program that is about to go into production and distribution to our interpretive centers.
- We held a membership meeting at the historic Fay Club in Fitchburg with a program on historic grave markers given by Tom and Brenda Malloy of the Gardner Museum.
- We joined with local town officials, MassDevelopment, the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce to close the unsafe rest stop on Route 2 West and support the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Information Center.

- We acted as facilitators to bring together Museum representatives, Shirley Historic Commission, the Shirley Historical Society, and interested citizens to discuss the Shirley Shaker Village and night lighting.
- We're fledging the new Devens museum to their new quarters at 94 Jackson Road.
- We continue to develop and seek underwriting for our historic biking, walking, and driving tours.
- We continued lobbying on our pending federal legislation to designate Freedom's Way a national heritage area.
- We worked closely with Sen. Pam Resor's office to craft legislation designating Freedom's Way a state heritage area. By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have met with New Hampshire representatives to discuss complimentary legislation in that state.

If that's not enough, we also perform routine tasks to keep the wolf from the door – membership mailings, grant writing and fundraising, website and slide show maintenance, strategic planning, and, of course, this newsletter.

And yet we greet each new project with a fresh eye and enthusiasm. We relish the new opportunity offered by Jessica Rowcroft and the Department of Conservation and Recreation to bring a yearlong heritage landscape inventory program to the cities and towns of Freedom's Way. It's a wonderful chance for us to do something we do best: bringing new opportunities to Freedom's Way.

Save the Date!

**Sunday
October 16, 2005**

***For the FWHA Second
Annual Fall Harvest
Festival & Fundraiser!***



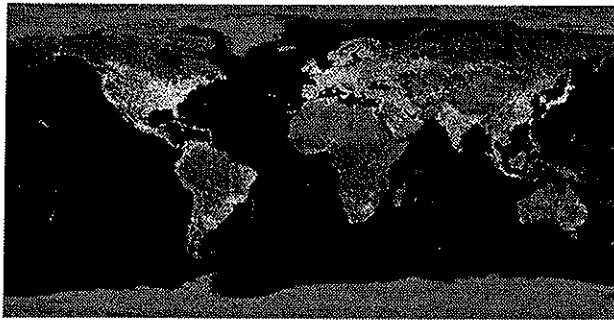
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Ask Freedom's Way

Q: What is light pollution all about?

A: Light pollution takes three forms, according to the International Dark Sky Association, a coalition of astronomers and lighting experts, based in Arizona. *Light trespass* occurs when illumination crosses property lines. *Glare* comes from overly bright lighting, especially along highways. When light spills upward from urbanized areas, "sky glow" is created, which blocks our view of the stars.



Nightsky

(Photo: C. Mayhew & R. Simmon (NASA/GSFC), NOAA/NGDC, DMSP Digital Archive)

Light pollution affects all of us, not just astronomers. "It deprives us all of one of nature's grandest wonders – the night sky," Harrell Guy Graham of the Association. "Where there were once countless stars, you can now see only an unnatural glow smearing the night sky with a haze of extraordinarily bright artificial light."

Much of this light pollution is a result of so called "security lights," said Graham. "The lights from just one of them profoundly alters nature's night environment for miles in all directions. He calls these security lights "ghetto blasters" of light that illuminate other people's property from great distance, creating light trespass.

A local example of this type of problematic lighting emanates from the MCI Correctional Complex in Shirley and the Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center located there.

Timed security lights installed in the correctional complex shine directly up into the viewshed of Fruitland's Museum on Prospect Hill in nearby Harvard. "Its astonishing how bright those prison lights are," said Maud Ayson, executive director of the museum. "People come to Fruitlands from miles away to watch the sunset, look at the stars, and enjoy our beautiful grounds and evening events. Just as the sun goes down those harsh security lights come on and their bright orange glare simply spoils the view." She said she hears complaints from visitors, particularly during the popular evening hillside concerts the museum hosts during the summer.

"Just as society requires that loud music outdoors be turned down or headphones used, it's only fair that the high-intensity outdoor security lights be shielded and directed only onto the property of persons using them," said Graham. He suggests that security lights can be modified or updated to provide shieldings to keep light only in a downward arc only onto the user's property to prevent light trespass.

Freedom's Way Heritage Association recently met with State Senator Pam Resor and representatives of Fruitlands Museum, Harvard Board of Selectmen, and the Shirley Historical Society and the Shirley Historical Commission to discuss the lighting concerns experienced at Fruitlands. The group has asked the Massachusetts Historical Commission to provide expert advice on how the MCI Correctional Complex at Shirley might modify their lighting fixtures to provide good security and prevent ongoing light trespass.

Resource: International Dark Sky, Inc. 3225 N. First Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719; 520-293-3198, www.darksky.org.

Do you have a question about the region?
Ask Freedom's Way! Call 978-772-3654
or email us at mail@freedomsway.org

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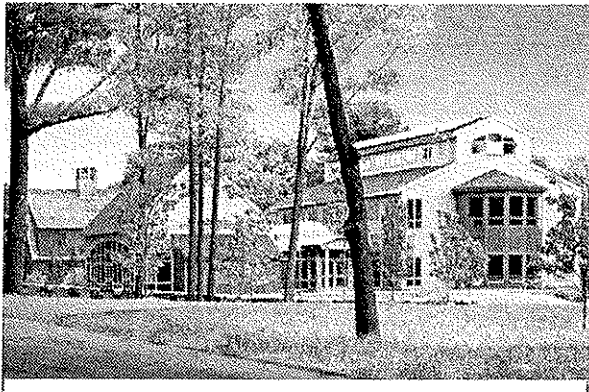
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**The Landscape of
Visionaries and
Experimenters**

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A New Regional Resource



*The Doyle Conservation Center in Leominster
Photo: Dan Gair, Blind Dog Photo, Inc, Portland, ME*

Set in a wooded area of Leominster, the Doyle Conservation Center is a "green" building constructed by The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) at the Doyle Reservation in Leominster. It is home to the Putnam Conservation Institute and the site of TTOR workshops and training seminars for conservationists around the state. Opened in June 2004, it is recognized as an innovative design through its use of sustainable, low impact or recycled building materials such as bamboo and cork flooring, desks and shelves made from sunflower seed byproducts and carpet and acoustic tiles made from recycled fibers. The building also uses energy efficient design, low impact water conservation, on-site waste composting, photovoltaic cells and geothermal wells. According to TTOR, the building was designed by HKT Architects of Somerville, a firm that specializes in green and preservation design.

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