

THE BALLARDVALE GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARDVALE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Vbl. 8, No. 1

BallardVale , Massachusetts

March 2008

Endangered Windows Need Saving

Original and old windows are critically important character-defining features of historic buildings. Sadly, they are one of the most threatened elements in the historic built environment today, as evidenced by their inclusion on the endangered lists of preservation organizations nationwide.

The removal and replacement of old and original windows with factory-made models destroys the detail and texture that makes an historic building unique. The loss of original windows detracts from a building's appearance, compromises its historic authenticity, and devalues it irreversibly. Historic windows possess aesthetic and material attributes that simply cannot be replaced by modern replacement windows.

The replacement window industry is extremely aggressive in promoting the durability, energy efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of its products. In reality, there is no more durable, energy efficient, or cost-effective window than a sound, weatherized wood window with an interior or exterior storm.

A professionally restored wood window will outlast any modern replacement window several times over, in large part because the first growth lumber used in period construction is far more stable, dense and rot resistant than any wood now available, at any price. It makes no sense to replace a beautiful, historic window that can last another century with a modern replacement window that will last only 15 (most vinyl) to 25 (medium quality wood) years. There is a reason replacement windows are called "replacement" windows – they ultimately fail and need to be replaced.

According to a Honeywell Corporation energy audit engineer*, there are only two valid reasons for replacing windows – noise and ease of use. This same engineer states that:

- The energy payback for replacement windows is 15 years (the life span of most vinyl replacement windows)
- Refurbished windows with weather stripping and storms (interior or exterior) are equivalent or superior in energy savings to replacement windows
- The majority of a building's heat loss (80%) is through the roof; insulating the attic for \$1,200 achieves the same energy savings as replacing all the windows in a house

Retention of original and old wood windows conserves both building character and the environment. It is the sustainable choice, requiring no energy for new window fabrication and generating no salvage for the landfill.

Replacement Windows:

If historic windows must be replaced, the replacement windows should be historically appropriate — true to the original windows and true to the character of the house. The Commission offers the following guidelines for replacement windows.

- It is almost never necessary to replace all the windows in a house; assess the condition of each window individually (see illustration next page)
- Consider replacement of the window sash only (the framework holding the windowpanes) versus total window replacement
- Windows should be wood or aluminum-clad wood in an historically appropriate color
- Window style should remain the same as the original (eg., double-hung, casement)
- Window opening should be identical to original window (no spacers to allow for installation of a stock-size window)

- Sash area should be substantially similar to the original window (no reduction in glass area)
- The lower sash must rest upon the sill, as in the original window
- Multi-light configurations should match the original windows or be historically appropriate
 - true divided lights are preferred
 - grids (muntins = strips of wood separating glass panes) should be substantially similar to the original in width/depth
 - grids should be permanently attached to the window exterior

REFERENCES and RESOURCES

*Timothy Galvin

1. Lynch, Michael. "Caring for Your Old Windows", Historic New England Magazine, June 2000
2. Sedovic, Walter & Gotthelf, Jill. "What Replacement Windows Can't Replace: The Real Cost of Removing Historic Windows", APT Bulletin Journal of Preservation Technology/36:4, 2005
3. Window Replacement Guidelines, Springfield Historical Commission, Springfield, MA
4. Cambridge Historical Commission's Window Information Guide, Cambridge, MA
<http://www.cambridgema.gov/~Historic/windowguide.html>

--- Written by Lynn Smiledge

The BallardVale Historic District Commission can provide guidance regarding window repair and other window resources.

Energy Audits Available

Bay State Gas wants to help you save money and energy. Through free, no-obligation home energy assessments, the Partners in Energy Program provides energy-saving tips and incentives to increase the energy efficiency of your home. A contracted engineer will evaluate several energy-specific areas in your home, including attic and wall insulation, heating pipe and duct insulation,

thermostat installations, windows, water heaters, showerheads and faucets. There are cost-sharing incentives, rebates and discounts on materials and services available.

Several simple ways you can save energy on your own are:

Lower your thermostat to 55 when you are going away for several days.

Avoid running water continuously while doing dishes, washing, brushing teeth and shaving.

Wrap hot water pipes coming out of your water heater with insulation.

Don't peek in the oven as you cook. A lot of heat escapes each time the oven door is opened.

Check for open fireplace dampers.

Reduce the time that lights are on and replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.

Visit www.baystategas.com/forhome/eneraudit.htm for more information or call Bay State Gas to arrange for an energy audit this spring. Be prepared for next year's energy-using season.

Town Elections

Town elections will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008. In addition to voting for Town Moderator, Selectmen and School Committee members, the Community Preservation Act is on the ballot. For more information about the Community Preservation Act, please visit the website at www.andovercpa.org/. To view the March 25, 2008 election ballot, please visit www.andoverma.gov/news/images/townelection08.pdf.

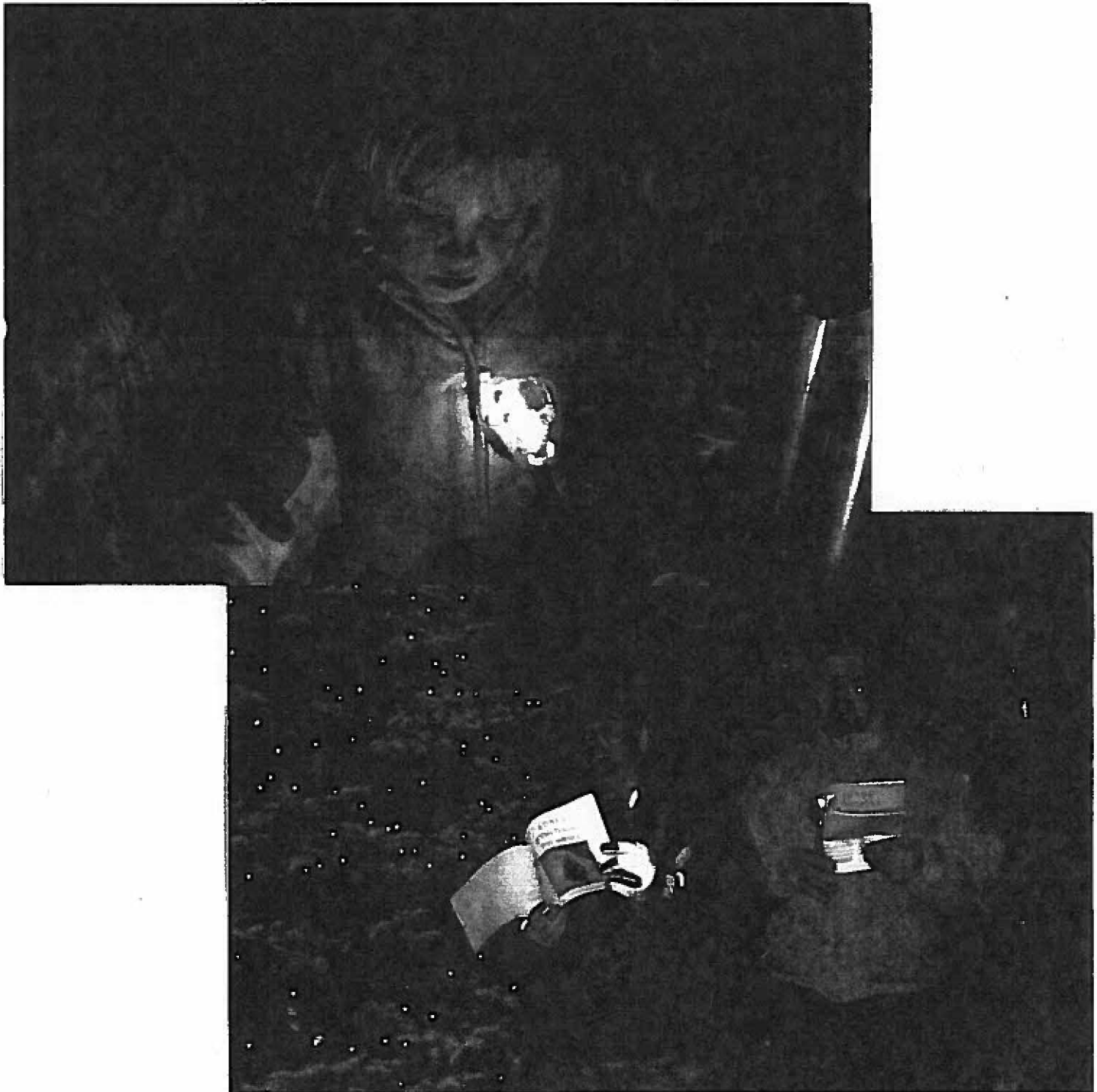
New Member Needed

The BallardVale Historic District Commission is looking for a new member. If you are interested in helping to guide architectural additions and changes so that the beautiful and historic character of BallardVale is preserved while it grows, please contact Jim Sheldon or Diane Derby. You can also fill out a Talent Bank Form available at www.andoverma.gov/boards/talentbank.php.

Current Commission members include joined James Sheldon, Chair; Diane Derby, Vice-Chair; Ron Abraham; David DiAntonio; David Hart; Sherry Kirby; Mike Ristuccia Jr.; Lynn Smiledge; and Bruce Taylor. The Gazette Editor is Mary (M.P.) Bogan. If you have questions about the historic district or the Commission, please contact James Sheldon at jlsheldon@verizon.net; Diane Derby at derbv01@comcast.net; or any other Commission member. Please direct comments or articles for inclusion in the Gazette to Mary Bogan at mpbogan@comcast.net.

Tree Lighting

BallardVale's annual tree lighting festivities were held on the BallardVale Green on Sunday, December 2. Many were on hand to enjoy steaming hot chocolate and holiday treats, hear Richard Bowen's history of the Green, and sing Christmas carols led by Selectman Brian Major and Pastor Ed Deyton of the BallardVale United Church (pictured below). Remember that the tree lighting is always held on Sunday in December.



BallardVale Historic District Commission

*Andover Town Offices
36 Bartlet Street
Andover, MA 01810*

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CALENDAR

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| Mar. 5 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm |
| Mar. 25 (Tuesday) | Town Elections
Collins Fieldhouse, Andover High School – 7 am to 8 pm |
| Apr. 2 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm |
| Apr. 30 and May 1 | (Wednesday and Thursday) Annual Town Meeting
Andover High School – 7:00 pm |
| May 5 and 6 (Monday and Tuesday) | Annual Town Meeting, if necessary
Andover High School – 7:00 pm |
| May 7 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm |



Blanche, one of BallardVale's
white squirrels