

Windham Endowment Awards Community Advancement Award to Windham Historic Commission

Submitted by Stephanie Nelson Wimmer

The Windham Endowment for Community Advancement is awarding its 2010 Community Advancement Award to the Windham Historic Commission. This is the second year the Endowment is recognizing a Windham-based organization for making a recognizable improvement to the Windham community. The recipient will receive a \$1,000 endowment fund within the umbrella of the Windham Endowment.

Since its inception in 1976, the Windham Historic Commission has worked to preserve and restore the historic Searles School and Chapel. After two major building projects, including handicap accessibility adaptations, the building is now being used for town committee and organization meetings, social functions, business functions, awards events, and concerts. It is a venue for many Windham residents to commemorate important family events. Through the years, the Commission has led the way in the transformation of the building, from a deteriorating and detrimentally modified structure to a beautiful, functional, and historically accurate building that is a significant community resource.

Additionally, the Commission has organized and supported numerous events that give residents education and appreciation for the town's history. For example, in fall 2009, the Commission organized a "Cemetery Walk," where residents – young and old – played the character of some of Windham's historic figures while standing at the grave of these people. Through the years, the Commission has fostered an appreciation for the town's architectural and historic heritage. The Commission has successfully demonstrated that historic buildings can be preserved, appreciated, and useful.

The Commission will be recognized at this year's annual Endowment Fundraiser on November 5 with a Casablanca-themed dinner at Rick's Cafe Americain (Searles Castle) and Monte Carlo gaming.