

Newton Academy Report 2005

Newton Academy will be 200 years old in 2010. The building has served the town of Shoreham primarily, as an educational facility, but recent years have seen the building adapted to a Medical clinic and Pre-school as well as a meeting room for clubs and the Senior Citizens. The Newton Academy Restoration Committee's goal is to preserve the building and adapt it for use as a Community Center, while maintaining and possibly expanding the medical clinic and hopefully incorporating the town offices into the building, leaving one less building the town would have to maintain.

Our fund-raising project for 2005 was selling Shoreham baseball hats with the apple tree emblem. We have sold about 230 hats so far, raising almost \$1800, which will be used in the restoration.

Our committee members donated over 350 hours in 2005. We attended meetings, worked at developing restoration and fundraising plans, preparing grant applications, and selling hats. We also worked with the Division for Historic Preservation and the Preservation Trust of Vermont trying to figure out ways to overcome 35 years of neglect to the building. Both organizations are very interested in seeing the building restored.

In June the Town of Shoreham contracted with preservation architect Tom Keefe and Zaremba-Sopko Engineering to do a structural analysis of Newton Academy. Their report outlines repairs and restoration that need to be done to make the whole building usable and included cost estimates. Our committee is applying for grants and we have started a local fundraising initiative. It will be important in our applying for grants that local support for the project is evident, especially in individual donations.

Our committee has proposed to the Selectboard that the Town Clerk's office be located in the Newton Academy. Some Selectboard members have expressed interest in the idea. The existing building has Tri-town water, town sewer, electricity and phone service. There is room for expansion. The surrounding property can provide better access and parking than the current town office (a parking lot would be located to the south of the Pre-school and would exit near the former Wulfman property). An elevator for access to the second floor and vault for town records could be added with little difficulty.

The Newton Academy has been a part of Shoreham for 8 generations! It would be a tragedy to let the building remain in its present state. Let our generation restore and give this *landmark* another 100 years to serve the town.

From the members of the Newton Academy Restoration Committee

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