

Historic and Cultural Resources

Introduction

A master plan tends to emphasize the future physical growth of the town. Woven into the fabric of the community, however, is the cultural element made up of individuals, groups, and institutions which work to make the community a better and more enjoyable place to live.

Antrim's History and the Historical Society

The Town of Antrim had its beginnings in the mid-18th century and, after the Revolutionary War, the population began to expand rapidly. For the next few years, the town remained a farming community of families of Scots-Irish ancestry. Four cemeteries that are no longer in use, but which are maintained by the town, provide a visual source of information about life in the early days. The oldest cemetery was established in 1785 next to the first meeting house on Meetinghouse Hill. That building no longer stands, but a plaque just south of the cemetery marks the site.



Former Town Hall, now the Antrim Grange on Route 31

In 1826, a new church was built at the base of Meetinghouse Hill on what is now Route 31, and the Center Cemetery was established across the road from the church. A year

later, the residents of East Antrim built a church and a cemetery on Elm Avenue, not far from Route 202. Part of the original meeting house was brought down to Route 31 and incorporated into a town hall. The building is now owned by the Grange. The Center and Over East churches have long since been destroyed, so the cemeteries and the Grange Hall are the main relics of Antrim's early settlement. A few residences from this period are still in use.

The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) were responsible for marking several places of historical interest, including the Town Pound on Old Pound Road. This is a small fenced-in area where lost animals were held, waiting for their owners to reclaim them. In 1922 the DAR, in response to a request made at Town Meeting, installed a marker at the top of Depot Street near the spot where Antrim's second family, the Aikens, lived. The plaque lists all the men of Antrim who met at James Aiken's home and marched to Lexington, Massachusetts, to fight in the first battle of the American Revolution in April, 1775. The memorial to that muster is on the property now owned by Edmond Hebert.

The Soldiers' Monument on the Antrim Baptist Church's common was given by the local Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post in 1892 and commemorates soldiers of all American wars up to and including the Civil War. The church unanimously voted permission to place the monument at this site.

An 8-foot high, 15-ton boulder, moved from Gregg Lake Road to the James A. Tuttle Library lawn in 1922, displays a bronze tablet with the names of Antrim's soldiers who fought in World War I. In 1953, an all-out community effort resulted in the construction of the Antrim Memorial Gymnasium on School Street. Local businesses contributed generously and citizens worked in a variety of ways for many months to create a much-needed building, dedicated to the soldiers of World War II. The gymnasium is now jointly managed by the town and the Contoocook Valley Regional School District, but it should be remembered for its original purpose as a memorial building for community use.

The bandstand in Memorial Park off Jameson Avenue, erected in 1994, is a symbol of the architectural growth of Main Street that took place a century earlier. Next to the bandstand are memorial tablets, including a tablet with the names of Antrim's soldiers who fought in World War II, which was moved from the Memorial Gym. There are also tablets for the Korean and Vietnam soldiers. These were erected by the American Legion.

Goodell Company, a cutlery manufacturing firm, was the main source of employment in the town from 1875 through much of the 20th Century. The large brick factory buildings on South Main and Water Streets are the standing reminders of this period and are now used for several small businesses.

Antrim also boasts a building listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The former Flint Estate, which was used as the administration building for the now-defunct Hawthorne College, was selected for the registry to acknowledge its historical value to the region. The building is once again a private home.

The town has a rich tradition of cultural arts. The Antrim Historical Society maintains a museum on the second floor of the James A. Tuttle Library, housing an extensive collection of artifacts, photographs, manuscripts, and print materials covering the town's 250 years history. The historical group also is planning to place a permanent marker off Route 202 near the Hillsborough town line on the site of a cabin occupied by Phillip Riley, Antrim's first settler.

Founded in 1984, the Antrim Historical Society is dedicated to:

- Researching and preserving Antrim's history, past and present.
- Presenting programs of historical interest.
- Accessing and cataloging archives and artifacts in the historical room at the James A. Tuttle Library.
- Providing historical assistance and resources for the schools.
- Preparing exhibits in conjunction with programs and community interest.

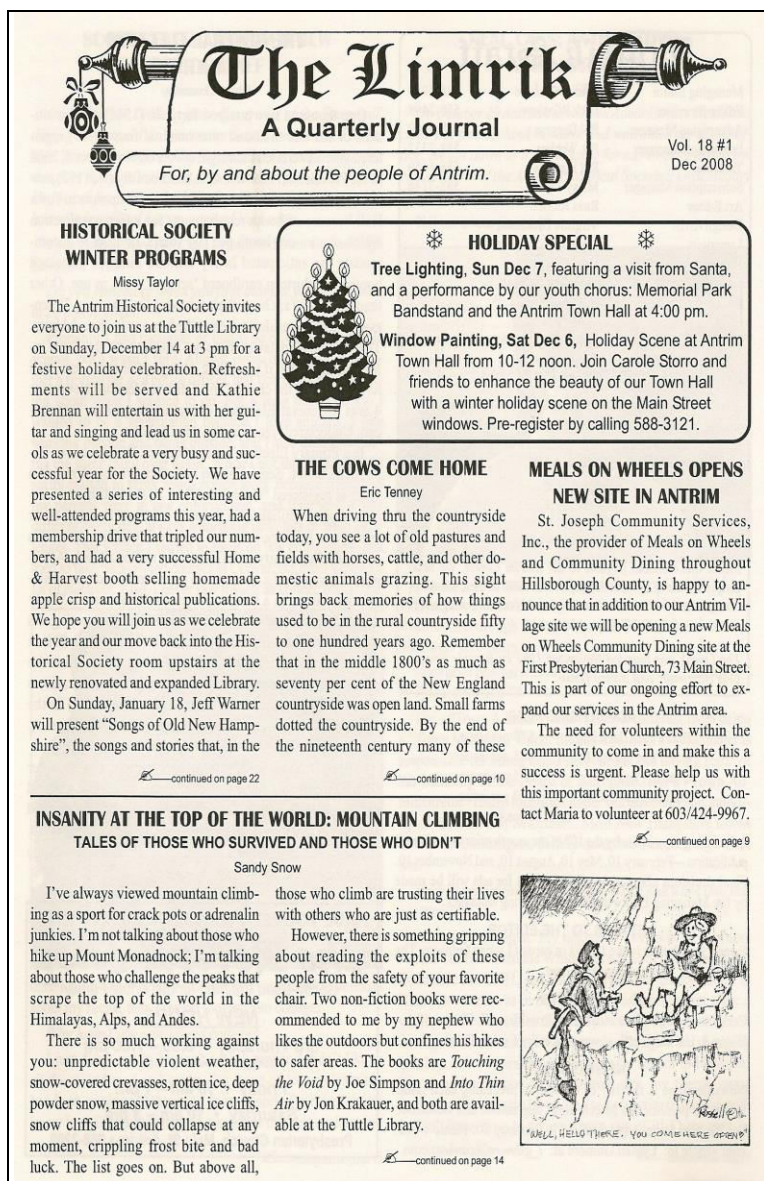
The society has presented various programs for the community concerning historical events and items of interest to Antrim residents.

The Limrik

Antrim has since 1990 maintained a quarterly journal - "For, by and about the people of Antrim" - *The Limrik*, published each March, June, September and December. Its mission is to provide a forum for creative expression as well as a running overview of what's going on in town: Town Meetings, selectmen's reports, coming events, church calendars and news, notable school and organizational unfoldings, recreation department activities, Antrim Players productions and the like. It is produced by a staff of volunteers - editors, business managers, artists and designers - and is delivered free of charge to every mail address in town, with expenses covered by selling ads as well as the gift of paper from the Monadnock Paper Mills. Issues average 28 pages. Although much material is written by editors, much is also written by the heads of organizations as well as by citizens who wish to celebrate something related to Antrim: a favorite mountain or river, an unusual trip (such as an incredible 48 hour round trip drive to Chicago and back), praise for notable achievements, reminders of events to look forward to, memories of recently-deceased friends, etc.

The Limrik, as an organization, is rigorously neutral in political matters, but encourages articles by citizens expressing their own views freely.

- Contributed by Lyman Gilmore, *The Limrik* managing editor



Front page of the December, 2008, edition of *The Limrik*

The Grapevine

The Grapevine Family and Community Resource Center is located on 4 Aiken Street, behind the Tuttle Library in Antrim and serves the people of Antrim, Hancock, Bennington, Frankestown and nearby towns. The Grapevine is a member of Family Support NH, and received the 2006 Smith Award for "Excellence in service to families" in a statewide competition sponsored by the NH Children's Trust Fund.

The Grapevine mission

The organization's mission is to promote family and community health and well-being through support, education, and the sharing of resources. Grapevine programs and services support:

- Parents and family members as the best teachers of their children;
- Children, so they will be healthy and ready to learn; and
- Our Community, as a healthy and supportive environment for all.

The Seed

In early 1996, a small group of townspeople got together and helped to form a play-and-learn group for young children and their parents. Families And Communities Together, a small nonprofit organization based in Greenfield, assisted the group in its efforts and successfully applied for a grant from the Health Care Fund Community Grant program to open a family and community resource center.



The Grapevine summer “camp” for young children

Taking Root

During the summer of 1997, The Grapevine moved from a small storefront to the Aiken House, owned by the town of Antrim. In March, 1998, the people of Antrim voted to apply for a Community Development Block Grant to renovate the Aiken House. That summer, a group of community members formed a trust to purchase the Aiken Street Barn for temporary use by The Grapevine. When it became clear that renovating the Aiken House was not feasible, the people of Antrim again supported The Grapevine at Town Meeting 2000 by voting to purchase the Aiken Street Barn. The barn was

remodeled in early 2003 and, in June, 2003, The Grapevine moved in. By this time, the original play-and-learn group had grown to three parent-child programs, a group for parents and infants, a parent-cooperative preschool, and other family support programs and resources.

Branching Out

Early in 2003, a group of citizens from Antrim, Hancock, Bennington and Francestown began meeting together with The Grapevine to take a look at the health and well-being of people in our towns. The “4-Town Citizen Group” talked about how many people - especially our elders and our young people - are isolated and are not connected to the "center" of the community. We came to the conclusion that the first step in building community health and well-being is helping people to connect with each other, and with the community. In the fall of 2003, we organized free community suppers in each of the towns, which are still going strong. When the suppers were up and running, the 4-Town Citizen Group supported The Grapevine in developing a neighbor-helping-neighbor project, “The People’s Service Exchange.”

Also in 2003, The Grapevine convened a group of representatives from Antrim’s organizations and government, including law enforcement, parks and recreation, the library, churches, the schools, scouts and civic groups. An early focus of the group, eventually named the Brown Bag Coalition, or BBC, was our youth, both the lack of childcare for young children of working families and the need to coordinate and expand community offerings for adolescents and teens. In August of 2005, the BBC opened the Before School Club at the Town Gym, in cooperation with Antrim Parks and Recreation. During the 2005-06 school year, 42 children of working families were enrolled. The BBC is now focusing its efforts on the youth center for adolescents and teens.

The 4-town Citizen Group re-convened in July, 2006, to re-examine the health and well-being of the community. “Aging in place,” community transportation, and youth activities were identified as priority community issues. The group also convened the first 4-town meeting to identify transportation needs and resources in the community, and to begin developing a plan for local community transportation.

Programs, Resources and Services

Parent-Child Programs and Family Support

- **Better Beginnings Parent-Child Program** - for children 18 months through 5 years of age and their parents/caregivers, providing children’s enrichment programs and parenting education and support - Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- **Better Beginnings for Babies** - for infants from birth to 18 months and their parents, offers parenting education, support and early childhood enrichment through informal meeting and discussion - Friday mornings.
- **The Learning Vine** - a parent-initiated cooperative preschool program. Curriculum includes hands-on activities, problem solving and conflict resolution

skills as the families explore community resources and integrate discoveries. Two mornings each week with both drop-off and cooperative options available.

- **Monday Afternoon Playtime** - offers parents and their children informal play time in our welcoming, well-equipped play areas.
- **Parenting Education and Support** - offers parenting education workshops and discussions throughout the year. Written and video resources are available to families through a lending library.
- **Home-based support and one-on-one parenting education** – by arrangement.
- **Early Home Support** - home-based support for Medicaid-eligible young mothers and their infants, in collaboration with Home Healthcare Hospice and Community Services and The Family Center, with introductions for families to center-based programs.

Community Services, Resources, and Activities:

- **Information, Referral and Assistance** - for people in need of basic services and resources such as food, shelter, clothing, transportation, health and dental care, health insurance.
- **Access to basic services** - The Grapevine provides an office for Monadnock Family Services (child and family counseling), Southern NH Services (fuel and welfare assistance), A.C.C.E.S.S. (employment support for adults with disabilities, and school-to-work transition support for students with disabilities), Milford Area Mediation (family conflict and landlord/tenant dispute resolution), SW Community Services (homeless outreach) and Home Healthcare (NH Healthy Kids insurance).
- **Classes and Workshops** - parenting education, Safe Babysitting, CPR, nutrition, money management, and other topics.
- **Community Wood Bank** - free firewood to families and individuals who use wood as their primary heat source and cannot afford to buy it.
- **Community Suppers** - in Antrim, Hancock, Bennington and Frankestown: Free, every week. Transportation provided if needed by prearrangement.
- **Strong Living** - a community-based, volunteer-driven strength training class for older adults, developed by Tufts University.
- **The People's Service Exchange** - a neighbor-helping-neighbor network based on the "Time Dollars" model, which offers people from all walks of life a community-based, coordinated structure for trading services and skills with their neighbors, including transportation, tutoring, cooking, yard work, computer support, light carpentry, singing lessons, and much more.
- **Certified Visitation Site** - a local site for supervised visitations. For parents who do not have a visitation supervisor, the Grapevine offers the services of qualified staff when possible.
- **Before School Club** - before school care for Antrim Elementary and Great Brook School students, Monday through Friday, in cooperation with the Antrim Recreation Department.
- **Group meeting space** - Many local groups hold meetings and other gatherings at The Grapevine. To contact The Grapevine Family & Community Resource Center can call 588-2620, fax 588-7154, or mail to 4 Aiken Street, P.O. Box 637, Antrim.

The email address is *thegrapevine@conknet.com*. For further information, visit The Grapevine's web pages at *www.antrimnh.com*.

**- Contributed by Kristen Vance, Director,
The Grapevine Family & Community Resource Center**



Workers cut and split wood for the Community Wood Bank

Antrim Community Grange

The Antrim Community Grange celebrated its 125th birthday in 2008. Established in 1883, the grange, located at the intersection of Rte. 31 and Meeting House Hill Road, provides an astonishing number of activities.

The Antrim Grange has also offered a \$500 scholarship to a senior in high school or a college student who also is a resident of Antrim or Bennington.

In the summer and fall of 2006, the grange entered an exhibit in four fairs portraying the changing modes of transportation. It was designed by member Liz Robertson. It received the following recognition: Cheshire Fair, red ribbon; Hopkinton State Fair, blue ribbon; Hillsborough County Fair, blue ribbon and best exhibit trophy; and Deerfield Fair, red ribbon.

A Sampler of Recent Activities

- Line dancing with the Monadnock Mavericks.

- Sixth Annual Spotlight on Community Artists in which the public voted for their favorite artists. Winners were awarded \$50 each.
- Grange Youth Night at a Swampbats Baseball Game in Concord NH.
- Annual Community Awards Night.
- Spring Garden Mini Expo.
- Square Dance & Chocolate Celebration in honor of the 125th anniversary.

A list of its recent activities can be found in the Antrim Community section of the town's web site at www.antrimnh.org.



The Antrim Grange on Route 31

Antrim Players

The Antrim Players is a locally grown group of actors, singers, and dancers who attract a full-house for its performances. Tickets are affordable and performances are professional and very enjoyable.

The Antrim Players' history goes back to the middle of World War I - 1918, to be exact. A large group of local actors, dancers, and singers joined together to produce a show for the benefit of the Red Cross.



The Antrim Players in *Dilemmas With Dinner*

Since that inaugural, the Antrim Players has frequently put on a show or play for the benefit of a local organization. Tens of thousands of dollars have been raised by the Players for groups such as the American Legion, the Woman's Club, and school projects.

The Antrim Players were instrumental in generating money for improvement of the town hall auditorium on the second floor of the town hall. Seats, window dressings, stage curtains, and ceiling fans were part of the updating.

The community theater currently has a Children's Theater and the Antrim Players for actors of all ages. The Antrim Players tries to perform at least three shows a year.

Cub Scouts

Cub Scout Pack 2 has surged in recent years. Pack 2 serves boys from 1st grade to 5th grade from the towns of Antrim, Bennington, Hancock, and Hillsborough, currently totaling 27 youth members. Pack 2 is divided into four Dens: Tiger, Wolf, Bear and Webelos. Each den meets weekly at a different location, then meets as a "pack" once every 8 weeks or so.

Pack 2 has for many years been chartered by the Antrim chapter of the International Order of the Odd Fellows, but has met in the larger Bennington Fire Department and the Grapevine. Pack 2 participates in the Scouting for Food Program, takes an annual trip to a New England museum, goes on hikes, attends district camporees and takes part in a variety of other activities throughout the year.



Cub Scouts of Pack 2

The primary source of funding for the pack is the annual popcorn sale. Boy Scout Troop 2 and Pack 2's current situation is robust, having had substantial gains in the past few years, while Scouting participation nationwide is in decline as sports and other extracurricular activities play a larger part in children's lives. It is our hope that with the commitment of parent volunteers who wish to enrich their children's character as well as their activities, Scouting in Antrim will survive into the next century. For further information about the Cub Scouts, contact Cindy Norton, cubmaster.

- Contributed by Brian Beihl, committee chairman

Girl Scouts

The Girl Scout Mission: Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.

The Antrim community has long supported the efforts and energies of its Girl Scouts. Currently there are close to 100 girls and 25 adults registered in the Great Brook service area, composed of Antrim, Bennington, Francestown, and Hancock.

Programs are offered for girls of all interests and abilities, from kindergarten through high school. Girls meet regularly in age-appropriate troops and share in community events throughout the year.

Each Girl Scout program is designed to help build girls of courage, confidence, and character. Whether learning map and compass skills, sewing a skirt, organizing a

medieval fair, or just singing “Make New Friends” with a new troop, girls are challenged to learn and explore.

In addition, the Girl Scouts are committed to making the world a better place. Leaders, by their very presence, instill in their girls the value of community service. Throughout the year you will see girls working on service projects around town - sponsoring community suppers, helping with the food bank, collecting donations for the animal shelter, and marching in the Memorial Day parade.



Snowfest time

Antrim’s Girl Scouts are part of the Swift Water Council that serves over 14,000 girls and 4,000 adult volunteers in New Hampshire and Vermont. Antrim has been recognized in recent years as having one of the highest girl participation levels in the council. Several of our local leaders also have been awarded recognitions by the council for their service.

The council also operates a residence camp on Gregg Lake in Antrim. This camp runs summer programs for girls throughout the council and is used for troop camping and council events throughout the year.

Girl Scouts of the USA is the world’s preeminent organization dedicated solely to girls - all girls - where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives, such as leadership, strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth.

Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low, Girl Scouts' membership has grown from 18 members in Savannah, Georgia, to 3.6 million members throughout the United States, including U.S. territories, and in more than 90 countries through USA Girl Scouts Overseas.

– Contributed by Jeana White, Service Area Manager

Boy Scouts

Antrim's Boy Scout Troop 2 is one of the oldest troops in the Daniel Webster Council, having been chartered since 1933 and organized since 1919. Chartered by the Prescott - Myers - Olson American Legion Post #50, Troop 2 is currently housed in the Legion/Odd Fellows hall on West Street in Antrim, where it meets on the first floor and stores its equipment on the second floor. Phil Lang, our chartering organization representative, was involved in Antrim scouting for over 60 years. Troop 2 serves boys from Antrim, Bennington, Hancock, and Hillsborough.



Boy Scouts at Hermit Island, Maine

Troop 2 is an outdoor-oriented troop, trying to have one outing per month either camping, backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, or climbing. Its service projects include cooking for a community supper, coordinating the annual "Scouting for Food" collection effort and maintenance on the Lily Pond trail. The troop is funded by its annual wreath sale.

While the outdoor activities and service projects are integral components of the program, the Troop 2 Boy Scout program is most proud of the fact that it continues to follow the founding principles of the Boy Scout movement: building character. In its history, two Troop 2 Scouts have been awarded medals for meritorious service, one most recently in 2005, and past Scoutmaster Dick Jennison was recently awarded the highest honor in the Mt. Monadnock District for his over 30 years of service to Troop 2. For further information about the Boy Scouts, contact Brian Beihl.

– Contributed by Brian Beihl, committee chairman

Churches

Antrim's churches go back to the second town meeting in 1778 when town residents voted to raise \$32 for preaching. At present, Antrim has three active churches: the Antrim Baptist Church, located at the intersection of Routes 202 and 31, the First Presbyterian Church, just south of the Baptist Church, on Route 202, and the Antrim Church of Christ, just north of the Baptist Church on Route 31.

Antrim Baptist Church

The Antrim Baptist Church began with the meeting of five men and eight women at the home of Deacon Joseph Eaton in Greenfield, NH on December 17, 1805. At that time it was known as the Peterborough and Societyland Baptist Church. It soon found a home in Bennington, NH, in 1812. Working out of a barn the church again needed to expand and moved to Antrim in 1852, meeting in Woodbury Hall on Main St. Over the next few years there were a number of attempts to raise funds to build a proper church building, but they failed. Finally in 1871, under the leadership of Rev. William Hurlin, the present church structure was built at a cost of \$6,200. It was dedicated free of debt!



The Baptist Church as it appeared on its 100th anniversary

There was a strong desire by the congregation to have a home to offer the church pastor. So, in 1879 the parsonage at 6 Concord Street was built and offered to the pastor to use. For 34 years the congregation made do for church gatherings and times of fellowship with picnics, and meeting in the church sanctuary, but in 1905 on the eve of the church's centennial, the vestry, dining room, kitchen and pastor's study was dedicated - again free from debt!

There were a number of families in the church that saw to the financial needs of the church for many years. Governor David Goodell and family, the Abbotts and family, along with the Hurlins and family, made sure that the Baptist witness in Antrim stayed true. In fact, when Rev William Hurlin served as pastor in the early 1880's he was paid the grand sum of \$500 for the year of which \$400 came from just two families.

In 1924 the church membership undertook the goal of renovating the church sanctuary and installing an Esty Pipe Organ at a cost of \$9,000 (a considerable sum of money for those days!). The Reverend Ralph Tibbals served as pastor for 23 years throughout the Great Depression and the Second World War.



The Baptist Church today

In 1962 the church again decided to expand creating new Christian Education space in the basement of the church and adding an entrance to the Route 31 side of the church. Og Mandino, the famous author and speaker who lived in Antrim, always wanted a cross atop the church and after his untimely death, the current gold leaf cross was dedicated to his memory in 2000.

The expansion of the church continued in 2006 with the purchase of the John and Barbara Shea house to the left of the church on Route 31. This building served as the former Methodist Church until the beginning of the 1900's and then was converted to apartments. The Antrim Baptist Church has totally renovated the apartments and has plans to eventually connect the two buildings together for a much larger facility.

Long range plans for the church include the total renovation of the old carriage shed to the right of the church into offices and Food Pantry space. The church has grown under the current leadership of Pastors Charlie and Cheryl Boucher and it looks forward to further growth in the future by reaching out to the community with numerous children, youth, and adult ministries.

– Contributed by Rev. Charles Boucher, pastor

First Presbyterian Church of Antrim

The First Presbyterian Church of Antrim was the first church in Antrim. It was organized in 1788. The church says that while much of its worship service remains the same since its founding, the church continues to evolve, “adopting innovative worship, music and education elements over the years.” In addition to worship services, the church offers Sunday School for children in kindergarten through grade 6; school for junior and senior high school students, adult Bible studies, and vacation Bible school.

Its missions and outreach include:

- **World Hunger.** Presbyterians throughout the world join in the One Great Hour of Sharing program, which benefits local, national, and international hunger programs.
- **International Peace.** The Presbyterian Church supports a liaison to the United Nations and funds other projects which promote peace, whether civil rights or domestic abuse.
- **Fuel Assistance.** For those in the community who can't use our Community Wood Bank, the church provides emergency fuel assistance for needy families.

Its programs include:

- **Presbyterian Women's Guild** was founded in 1857. The Guild has done everything from rolling bandages for Civil War soldiers, through hosting the Washington's Birthday suppers for almost 90 years, to recently providing blankets for babies with AIDS. Its members meet monthly and include all women in the church.
- **The Revival Shop** is one of the newest programs of the church. It is a clothing consignment shop which provides high-quality, low-cost clothing to the community. Its profits go to other local charities, such as food banks, and to capital improvement projects within the church. Over 30 volunteers participate.

- **Salvation Army program** is administered by the church for the town of Antrim. Church members ring the bell for the familiar kettle at Christmas each year. Donations go to assist fire victims, purchase hearing aids and eye glasses, and other direct assistance.



The First Presbyterian Church of Antrim

Other programs include:

- Harvest and Lenten Luncheon Lecture Series;
- Alcoholics Anonymous;
- Antrim's Food Pantry assistance;
- Hosting St. Joseph's Community Dining program;
- Providing a place for the Antrim Area Senior Center.

Antrim Church of Christ

The Antrim Church of Christ has a very active congregation. Larry and Linda Warren returned to Antrim from Texas several years ago where Larry completed preacher's school. He has taken over the ministry at the Antrim church.

Currently the congregation meets for Sunday Bible Study and services at the Grapevine because the church is too difficult to heat during colder months. Wednesday Bible study is being held in various homes. The congregation's goal is to be able to use the church year round. With a growing congregation and some time, the congregation will attain that goal.

The Church of Christ is a non-denominational Bible-believing group. The Antrim congregation purchased the church building in the late 1970's. Attendance at the church has reached a high of 75. Currently there are about 25 members. Evangelism is the congregation's main goal.



The Antrim Church of Christ

Two things that make the Church of Christ stand out from other churches is its a capella music (singing without instrument accompaniment) and baptism by immersion once a person is old enough to believe. Larry Warren and the church have plans for the church building.

– Contributed by Rick Davis, congregant

American Legion

The American Legion Myers-Prescott-Olson Post No. 50 is one of the original American Legion Posts, chartered in 1919 as William Myers Post No. 50 in honor of William Myers, the first Antrim soldier killed in France on July 18, 1918. After World War II, the Post was re-chartered as Myers-Prescott Post No. 50 to honor Paul Prescott who was killed in a bombing raid over Germany on June 7, 1943. Again, in 1953 the post was re-chartered as Myers-Prescott-Olson Post No. 50 to honor Leland Olson, killed in Korea in March 1951.

Although this post is a small one, it makes its presence felt in the community by supplying flags and booklets on flag etiquette and Americanism to the schools, sponsoring the Boy Scout troop, providing a meeting place for the scouts, and presenting The American Legion School Award to an eighth grade student from Great Brook Middle

School each year at graduation. The post also has a color guard and firing squad that participates in parades, ceremonies, and veterans' funerals.

The American Legion meets the first Tuesday of each month (except during July and August) at 7:30 p.m. at the post home on West Street. Although it appreciates active members, it realizes how busy everyone is and has members who are unable to attend meetings but show their support on Memorial Day, at funerals, or other occasions when they are able.

– Contributed by Donald L. Paige, post adjutant

Project Lift

Literacy for Today, or Project Lift, as it is better known, provides free education services to people in the Hillsborough area who have not completed high school. The service began in 1992 and is funded through a variety of charitable sources. Since 1996, local towns have been requested to contribute funds, based on the number of students served in the previous year.

Lions Club of Antrim and Bennington

Since 1917, Lions clubs have offered people the opportunity to give something back to their communities. From involving members in projects as local as cleaning up an area park or as far-reaching as bringing sight to the world's blind, Lions clubs have always embraced those committed to building a brighter future for their community.

The 21 men and women in the Antrim and Bennington Lions Club concentrate on eyesight, Operation Santa (with funds raised at the annual Christmas tree sale). It also supports youth services and development and community outreach (TV for Antrim Village, community suppers, etc.).

Today, with more than approximately 45,000 clubs in 200 countries and geographical areas, Lions have expanded their focus to help meet the ever-increasing needs of our global community. Its programs are continually changing to meet new needs and greater demands, but its mission has never wavered: "We Serve."

Lions are recognized worldwide for their service to the blind and visually impaired. This service began when Helen Keller challenged the Lions to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness" during the association's 1925 international convention. Today, in addition to its international SightFirst program, Lions extend their commitment to sight conservation through countless local efforts.

Lions are also involved in a variety of other activities to improve their communities and help people in need, such as assisting the hearing impaired, providing diabetes awareness and education materials, working on environmental projects, and developing youth programs.

Since Lions clubs were established, Lions have been dedicated to giving back to their communities. Lions clubs provide community parks, playgrounds, senior citizen programs, and medical care for those in need. Lions remain committed to improving the lives of those less fortunate—around the world and right at home.

The mission of Lions Opportunities for Youth is to provide the young people of the world with opportunities for achievement, learning, contribution and service, individually and collectively, through sponsorship of activities identified as best practices in the field of youth development. Lions Opportunities for Youth Committees are organized at the club, district, and multiple district levels. The committee includes chairpersons from all Lions youth programs.

Maharishi Vedic Medical College and Regional Peace Palace

For the past 12 years the campus of Maharishi Vedic School in Antrim has been the home for several non-profit educational and health-related programs offered by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's worldwide organization. From 1996 to 2005, the 450-acre property, formerly Hawthorne College, was the site for the global organization's national administrative office - Maharishi Vedic Education Development Corporation (MVED). In May of 2005, the Antrim campus became the regional center offering all MVED's programs for personal development and improved quality of life to the entire New England area. The current plans are to expand the facilities on the property as well as its educational programs. Construction has started on the refurbishing of existing buildings and a boarding school for boys is to open in the fall of 2009.



Aerial View of Maharishi Peace Palace of Antrim

Also planned for the future for the Antrim campus is a four-year Maharishi Vedic Medical College which will offer training programs in prevention-oriented health care. The college will include an educational facility housing students, faculty, and staff. In addition, a Maharishi Vedic Health Center will be established that will provide health services. Initial plans are for 100,000 square feet of building space.

All buildings will be built according to the ancient principles of Vedic Architecture (Maharishi Sthapatya Veda SM), architecture in harmony with Natural Law.* Homes, offices, and communities designed and built according to Maharishi Sthapatya Veda support individual and collective health and good fortune (www.sthapatyaveda.com). Individuals who live and work in these Vedic buildings believe that they think more clearly and creatively, make better decisions, feel happier, and enjoy better health. Maharishi Vedic City in Iowa has been constructed following these principles (www.maharishivediccity.net).

Building plans also include a Maharishi Regional Peace Palace SM – a new home for MVED's programs currently offered on the campus. These include the Transcendental Meditation® program, the world's leading program for stress prevention, promotion of good health, and development of consciousness. Additional programs will be offered which support the balanced functioning of mind and body.

A Rich Cultural Heritage

Antrim's cultural heritage is indeed a rich one. The groups we've highlighted above provide a smattering of the activities that go on in the town every year. The problem in attempting to provide a flavor of the groups which make our lives richer is that there are so many to choose from. For more information about groups we may not have covered, visit Antrim's website for a phone number, a contact, and possible further information about that group. Go to www.antrimnh.org.

A striking fact about the listings on the web page of all the community groups within Antrim is the number of volunteers who spend thousands of hours collectively each year to make Antrim a better place in which to live and work.

Recommendations

- Undertake a survey of the town to determine which houses, structures and locations have historic significance but which are not now identified and, with the owner's permission, post standardized plaques identifying the property with a brief description of why it is significant.
- Help entice tourism by creating a map or booklet of as many of Antrim's significant locations as possible. The map might include historic houses, historic sites, churches, trails, wildlife and conservation areas, recreation areas, fishing access, canoeing and kayaking access, scenic roads, hills, mountains, etc. Descriptions of these areas could be included in a separate section as well as a proposed driving tour for visitors who

want to see these sites. Costs of the project could be offset by advertising. The map/booklet, which could be made available at retail establishments and town hall, could, if necessary, be sold at a nominal price.

- Determine if more space is needed for community activities. For example, is there a need for a community center as well as the current teen and senior centers? Determine if the facilities of the teen and senior centers are adequate for their needs.
- Consider creating a community gardening area where residents could grow flowers or vegetables. Also consider establishing a farmer's market where residents could sell fresh produce or home-made specialties.
- Explore the possibility with neighboring towns of establishing other cooperative organizations such as a 4-H Club or other community-oriented groups.