

Around New Hampshire

The Discover Portsmouth Center celebrated three years of successful operation in the former historic public library buildings, which date back to the early 1800s. Since opening in May 2008, the center has helped nearly 30,000 visitors, directing them to 20 partner sites, museums and performances relating to the arts, history and culture of Portsmouth. The Portsmouth Historical Society, which runs this unique preservation project, is seeking \$1 million to carry out energy efficiency measures and install new roofs, among other items. The city won a \$140,000 energy grant from the state toward this work and the Society is pursuing additional grants and loans.

Memorial Bridge in Portsmouth will be replaced rather than removed thanks to a \$20 million U.S. Department of Transportation grant to New Hampshire and Maine that was announced in October. Last spring, the N.H. Legislature approved \$45 million in bonding for replacing Memorial Bridge. A Bi-State Funding Task Force, created by Govs. Baldacci and Lynch, will determine the exact funding mechanisms for both Memorial Bridge and repairs to the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge, which also connects Kittery and Portsmouth.

Credit for the award goes to both the Maine and New Hampshire governors, congressional delegations, and the citizens' advocacy group Save Our Bridges, which was formed after the Portsmouth Historical Society successfully nominated Memorial Bridge to the National Trust's 11 Most Endangered list in 2009.

This fall, celebrations at historic places around the state drew attention to rehabilitation and adaptive re-use stories. Ashland's



The Tri-County Community Action Program recently celebrated its successful renovation and adaptive use of the Ashland School (shown here with construction nearing completion).

historic school was re-dedicated in October after extensive rehabilitation of the three-story, French Second Empire landmark. The school was named to the Alliance's *Seven to Save* list of endangered properties in 2007. Tri-County Community Action Program purchased the building in 2008 and adapted it to house Head Start, Community Housing Services, other non-profit offices and meeting space. Architect Tom Samyn and Milestone Engineering & Construction preserved much of the building's historic character while maximizing energy efficiency and meeting building codes.

The Hooksett Heritage Commission re-dedicated Head School amid festivities that included costumed



Hooksett Heritage Commission recently re-dedicated the Head School after a successful preservation campaign.

school marms, children sharing songs and poems, and the unveiling of a historical marker. Kathie Northrup, chair of the Heritage Commission, organized a diverse program to celebrate the six-year effort to save the Head School. The Head School Society, a group of retired teachers and other volunteers, is now offering on-site programs that give school groups an experience of what education was like in a historic one-room brick school house.

The Arch Bridge Beautification and Preservation Society in Chesterfield re-named the Vermont-New Hampshire bridge on Route 9 spanning the Connecticut River the Justice Harlan Fiske Stone Bridge. The Society also unveiled a plaque commemorating the life achievements of Justice Stone, a Chesterfield native who served as the 12th Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Since 2003, an adjacent new bridge has carried vehicular traffic, while the historic bridge is used for bicycles and pedestrians.

North Country Field Service Representative, Yvonne Nanasi is on the road helping local leaders identify resources for landmark building rescue, renovation and revitalization projects. Among the tools available for this work are designation on the State Register of Historic Places as well as information and referrals on weatherization of old buildings. Nanasi has helped with a window repair workshop in Franconia, staffed a booth at the Colebrook Energy and Wellness Expo, and coordinated a moisture management workshop in Haverhill, giving homeowners and the stewards of community landmarks solid strategies to protect their properties. Resource materials are available at www.nhpreservation.org.