

# CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

## ARLINGTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Arlington Cultural Council (ACC) is a local council of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency, consisting of resident volunteers appointed by the Board of Selectmen for three-year terms. Council members, who may serve for as many as two consecutive terms, are charged with the responsibility of supporting and encouraging the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in Arlington, primarily through the annual distribution of state allocated funds to applicants through a competitive grant process.

Though much of the Council's business is related to grant cycle activities, occurring September through December, it is active year-round. Each year, the Council participates in the annual Town Day celebration. This year the Council sponsored a community art project, *Paint the Town*, that will be exhibited in the spring of 2009. Town Day also provides the ACC with important opportunities to distribute information, including grant applications and guidelines.

On May 6, 2008, about sixty guests, including awardees and Arlington residents, gathered for a reception at the Arlington Center for the Arts to honor the year's grant recipients and to celebrate the cultural life of our Town.



Public mural at the bus depot in Arlington Heights.

One particular highlight from 2008 was the unveiling of a new public mural at the bus depot in Arlington Heights during October. Led by artists Tova Speter and Anyahlee Suderman, a group of young people from Town designed and painted the large-scale work, paying tribute to the history and spirit of Arlington. The work has been enthusiastically received by community members.

Arlington Cultural Council Grants 2008	
Recipient/Project	Amount
Alan Hovhanness Commemorative	\$ 1,500
Arlington Center for the Arts	\$ 300
Baynard, John	\$ 750
Berkshire Hills Music Academy	\$ 400
Berry, Rick	\$ 1,000
C.E. Dalin Art Museum	\$ 525
Chase, Linda	\$ 750
Clark, Richard	\$ 350
Delvena Theatre Company	\$ 200
Fox, Dan	\$ 375
Frenkel, Yetti	\$ 250
O'Connor, Kate	\$ 200
Ricciotti, Marie Elena	\$ 300
Smith, Teryl Aldern	\$ 1,000
Snodgrass, Joseph	\$ 600
Sudanese Education Fund	\$ 2,000
Thompson Elementary School	\$ 1,000

The most recent ACC application deadline was October 15, 2008. Two coaching sessions were conducted at Robbins Library for those seeking help in completing their applications. Following the deadline, applicants were invited to two public sessions that provided an opportunity for them to elaborate on their projects. Soon thereafter, the Council held a voting meeting to decide which applications would be funded. Applicants not receiving funds were notified in November, and those receiving funds will be notified in February 2009 (as directed by the MCC).

In this most recently completed grant cycle, 27 applications were received from schools, individual artists, and cultural groups. Requests for funds totaled \$43,730. Proposals were received from residents of Arlington as well as other towns and cities in Massachusetts. Following deliberations, the Council awarded 17 applicants a total of \$11,500 allocated by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

The ACC generally meets on the second Monday of each month at the Robbins Library. All meetings are announced in advance and are open to the general public. The Council regularly submits articles to the Arlington Advocate -- soliciting grant applications, publicizing funded projects, encouraging participation in Council activities, and sharing general information about meetings and events.

During 2008, Tom Formicola continued to serve as Chairman. There was only one departing member -- Emmanuela Maurice. Two new members joined the ACC; David Fechter and Suzanne McLeod.

Those who are interested in the council's activities may contact the Arlington Cultural Council at the following email address: [arlingtonculturalcouncil@yahoo.com](mailto:arlingtonculturalcouncil@yahoo.com) or by calling Tom Formicola directly at (781) 648-4205.

# CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

## ARLINGTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Arlington Historical Commission (AHC) was established in 1970 to preserve and protect significant buildings within the Town that constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town. This work is described in the By-Laws of the Town of Arlington, Title VI, Article 6. To accomplish these goals, the Commission maintains an *Inventory of Historically and/or Architecturally Significant Properties* and administers the demolition delay bylaw through formal public hearings and informal meetings with owners of inventoried properties. The Commission is an advocate for historic preservation in Arlington. The AHC usually meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the Whittemore-Robbins House and all meetings are open to the public.

### Hearings and Property Monitoring

The Commission conducted formal hearings on eleven inventoried properties in 2008: 21 Appleton St., 3 Brantwood Rd., 25 Hayes St., 90 Jason St., 40 Lake St., 5 Lincoln St., 43-45 Massachusetts Ave., 821 Massachusetts Ave., 88 Orvis Rd., 11-13 Peirce St., and 18 Water St. Two hearings involved changes in the scope of the proposed projects for 25 Hayes Street and 821 Massachusetts Avenue.

Oversight on the properties from 2005-7 hearings continued throughout the year. Monitored properties included the ones listed above plus 27, 41, and 44 Brantwood Rd., 3-5 Brattle St., 45 Fairview Ave, 197 Lake St., 22 Pleasant St., 77 Warren St., 82 Wollaston Ave., and the former Symmes Hospital.

Co-Chairman Richard Duffy continues to monitor the meetings of the Redevelopment Board regarding the proposals for a new CVS on the site of the former Hodgen-Noyes car dealership and the preservation of the Atwood House at 821 Massachusetts Ave.

### Historic Markers

The Commission managed the historic house marker program for all Arlington properties on the *Inventory*. Eight signs were distributed in 2008. Requests for the distinctive blue oval plaque remain strong. Each plaque displays the year the property was built and a historic house name, if any.

### Education and Outreach

The Commission joined with the Arlington Historic Preservation Fund to mail a formal notification to the owners of properties on the *Inventory of Architecturally Significant Properties* under the jurisdiction of the AHC and AHDC. Every few years the Commission sends notifications to owners and distributes information about the Commission to increase awareness of, and compliance with, the Demolition Delay By-Law.

The Commission continues to maintain and improve its own web site [www.arlingtonhistoricalcommission.org](http://www.arlingtonhistoricalcommission.org) that provides a copy of the *Inventory of Historically and/or Architecturally Significant Properties* and describes the process for hearings before the Commission as well as listing our publications and projects.

### Other Activities

Throughout the year, Commissioners participate in activities that educate and inform citizens about historic preservation. The AHC participated in Town Day with a booth. The Commission continues to work with other Town agencies on the maintenance and restoration of the Whittemore-Robbins House and its outbuildings, the Winfield Robbins Memorial Gardens, the Town Hall and its grounds, and the Jarvis House at 50 Pleasant Street. This year the Whittemore-Robbins House required significant repairs to the gutters and soffits and Co-Chair Ms. Robinson worked closely with the Town to facilitate these repairs.

The Conditions Assessment Report for the markers, tombs and walls in Arlington's Old Burying Ground was completed, fulfilling the requirements of a Planning Grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Co-Chair JoAnn Robinson administered the grant in cooperation with the Department of Planning and Community Development. The grant work was completed in June 2008.

Commissioners represented the Historical Commission on various municipal boards and historic organizations in Arlington, including the Historic District Commissions, Zoning Bylaw Review Committee, the Arlington 200th Anniversary Planning Committee, the Arlington Preservation Fund, the Arlington Historical Society and the Old Schwamb Mill.

## HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Historic Districts Act, M.G.L. Chapter 40C, was created to protect and preserve the historic resources of the Commonwealth through a local review system that encourages and ensures compatible improvement and development. Over 100 communities across the Commonwealth have enacted local historic districts to protect their historic resources and to ensure the preservation of the character of their community.

Arlington has seven established historic districts that include 351 properties that the community has recognized as unique resources worthy of protection. The seven districts and the dates they were established or most recently enlarged are: Avon Place, 1996; Broadway, 1991; Central Street, 1982; Jason/Gray, 1998; Mount Gilboa/Crescent Hill, 1991; Pleasant Street, 2006; and Russell, 1983.

# CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

The Arlington Historic District Commission (AHDC) is required by law to review the architectural appropriateness of most proposed exterior design changes, whether they be a minor alteration, new additions, or removal of trim or structures. The Commission consists of qualified volunteers appointed by the Board of Selectmen and when available includes a property owner or resident of each District, an architect, a real estate professional, and a representative from the Arlington Historical Society.

During the year 2008 the Commission met eleven times to hold hearings for property owners seeking approval for certificates for exterior work to be conducted on their homes. Part of the regular meetings included eighteen Informal Hearings held for property owners seeking advice or resource information for work to be conducted, twenty one Formal Hearings. As a result of those meetings, twenty five Certificates of Appropriateness, and twenty one Certificates of Non-Applicability to be undertaken were granted. During the year the Commissioners worked on updating the Significant Properties Inventory Listing with the Arlington Historical Commission (AHC), a District signage inventory, an outreach program to property owners in all seven Districts, and educating the public on the role of the Historic District Commission at Town Day.

At the beginning of 2008 Jonathan Hindmarsh was sworn in as the newest at-large Commissioner and at the end of 2008 David Levy was sworn in as a new Commissioner to represent the Mt Gillboa/Crescent Hill Historic District Commission. Yvonne Logan resigned as the Real Estate representative and a Commissioner At-Large.

## CYRUS E. DALLIN ART MUSEUM

Two thousand and eight is the Tenth Anniversary of the Cyrus E. Dallin Art Museum. The October 18 "birthday" was celebrated with many trustees (past and present), Dallin Family, and other guests who came to enjoy birthday cake and other refreshments. The highlight of the gathering was the unveiling of the newly restored *Indian Head*. This sculpture was the symbol of the Indian Head Bank established in Nashua, N.H. in 1851. Dallin's rare sculpture was purchased in July 2006 from Cody Old West Auction and restored in 2008 by Skylight Studio, Woburn, MA. The restoration was supported in part by a grant from the Arlington Cultural Council (ACC), a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency.

The Dallin Art Museum is celebrating throughout 2008 and 2009 with a series of lectures occurring every other month. In December Maria DiGioia, graphic artist and board member, presented an illustrated lecture, *Cyrus E. Dallin and His Native American Works* depicting sculptures in the museum's collection.

*Walking Tours of Cyrus E. Dallin Sculptures* a 26-page guide with photographs and map, which aligns his artwork with Arlington historic sites, has been published and is available at the museum.

*The Dallins in Arlington Heights* is a collaborative effort of the Arlington Historical Society, Dallin Museum, and Old Schwamb Mill. With antique books and brochures, archival photographs, portraits in oil and plaster, historic memorabilia, and sculpture, the exhibit documents the Dallin family's civic and social life within the Town. The four-gallery exhibit at the Schwamb Mill from December '08 through March '09 is also supported in part by a grant from the Arlington Cultural Council (ACC). One gallery is dedicated to Dallin's son Arthur, who served in both World Wars. It presents color reproductions of his stained glass windows.

Crombie (Bob) Dallin donated an oil entitled "Black Rock, Great Salt Lake" painted by his grandfather Cyrus in 1892.

Our programs continue. Ongoing newsletter & newspaper articles flood the media.

*Art on the Green* has had its eighth successful year on Town Day. Lots of art; lots of fun!

An Oral History project chronicling the life of Cyrus and Vittoria Colonna Dallin through the perspective of their family, friends, and neighbors is ongoing.

Photographing of the many stained glass windows designed by Arthur Dallin has begun. These windows are installed in churches in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

Tours for adults and school children continue with several elementary schools participating. Our goal is to have all third grades from the Arlington Public School visit for a presentation.

An initiative with Arlington Community Media, Inc. (ACMI) has resulted in four segments for broadcast.

The Museum's Board of Trustees was saddened by the death of Rell G. Frances (1928-2008), noted scholar and author of two extra-ordinary books, *Cyrus E. Dallin Let Justice Be Done* (1976) and *Frontier to Fame, Cyrus E. Dallin, Sculptor* (2005). Traveling from Utah, Rell and his wife Janet attended several events in Arlington. He provided guidance and scholarship to the museum's trustees. Rell and his insight into the life and art of C.E. Dallin will be sorely missed.

All of these activities were accomplished through the encouragement and financial support of many individuals within the Town of Arlington. In addition, the museum received matching grants from companies and assistance grants from the Arlington Cultural Council. This generosity has enabled the museum to acquire and restore works of art, expand its publications, and continue its educational programs.

As always, the museum is open Tuesday through Sunday, from noon to 4:00 PM. Please call 781-641-0747 for tour reservations and to verify opening times.