

Charlestown honors history

by Lisa Tome
Contributing editor

Officials in Charlestown spent a day last week honoring their history.

They also spent an evening deciding to unload a piece of town history.

On Wednesday, the building known as the Ice House was formally dedicated in a ceremony which was a partnership between the town and long time residents Bob and Becky Phillips. The Ice House, which is located in the town's Veterans Park, was willed to the town by the late Cranford "Cran" Henry. Henry owned the building and the town leased the property as part of the park. When Henry died, the town acquired the building and found decoys inside the Ice House which were appraised at \$70,000.

The Ice House was built in 1890. It was originally a place where fish were stored. It also was used to store ice which was taken from the North East River during the winter months. It is known as the Harry Barnes Ice House and was formally dedicated last week. The Phillips' donated the plaque which was placed on the building. Becky Phillips also spoke about the history of the area.

On Tuesday night at the town meeting, town officials moved forward with a plan to sell the Cecil House, an historic town property.

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Bob and Becky Phillips of Charlestown donated a plaque to the memory of Cran Henry who willed an historic building to the town.

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Charlestown town board member Bruce Hechmer explained the decision to sell the property which the town acquired in 2008.

"It was a tough decision but in the best interest of the town it was the right decision. That building is in the Historic Trust. Whoever buys it, has to restore it. The town does not have the resources. Our goal is to find someone who wants to restore it," said Hechmer.

He also said the town is committed to finding the right owner and helping however it can.

"The town will do whatever it can to help it thrive and prosper like in its glory days. I love history. The Cecil Inn is part of the town history. That's why we made the decision we did," said Hechmer.

The Cecil Inn/Cecil House property includes the building a .56 acre parcel of land.