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North Branch Construction's renovation of Newbury Center Meeting House honored; Preservation Achievement Award from the N.H. Preservation Alliance

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The recently completed renovations by North Branch Construction to the Newbury Center Meeting House were among ten projects honored by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance with a Preservation Achievement Award this year. The nearly two century-old building, constructed in 1832, served as a central hub welcoming community members to meet, regardless of their religions. Due to a significant decline in the town's population, funds, and subsequently fewer efforts to maintain the Meeting House, the building fell into disrepair.

In 2005, citizens of Newbury led by Dan Wolf, along with the board of trustees responsible for the Meeting House, came together and decided it was time to repair their town's piece of history before it would be lost forever.

A board of directors was formed and joined forces with North Branch Const. to bring the Newbury Center Meeting House back to life.

The 4-phase restoration project began with raising the building to replace the foundation, which proved to be no small feat itself. Once the building was lifted, it was discovered that the supporting timbers were in serious stages of potential failure and North Branch had to work quickly to provide corrective measures to ensure structural integrity before lowering the building back onto the new concrete foundation.

The remaining phases included removal and repair of the bell tower and steeple, roof repairs, extensive exterior and interior renovations, and site work. Old photographs were utilized to make sure the building remained as historically accurate as possible throughout construction.

Funding for the \$1.4 million restoration was made possible by almost 270 donors including pew sponsors, private donations, and grants from the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP).

Wolf accepted the award on behalf of the town of Newbury and North Branch Const. and thanked everyone that played a part in restoring Newbury's "crown jewel" for being able to "preserve the past, teach future generations, and provide a center for life changing events." The new meetinghouse will be re-dedicated to the community on June 18.

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