

How Old Are We, Anyway?

We deserve a birthday party – so let's start planning now!

Look at Shutesbury's town seal, and you'll see 1735 -- the date of the *founding* of Roadtown, after the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony granted land to people building a road from eastern Massachusetts to the Connecticut River.

But you'll also see 1761 – the year that Roadtown was officially *incorporated* as Shutesbury.



That's why in the spring of 2009, the Select Board appointed a steering committee to prepare and recommend a program of festivities to mark the 250th anniversary of Shutesbury's incorporation. And we hope to make 2011 a year you'll remember 'til at least 2061!

Shutesbury has celebrated the anniversaries of its founding and incorporation before – with picnics, pageants, photographs and parades. We're looking forward to a closer reading of the celebration books from years past (going back to 1911!) to find more marvelous ideas.

In 2011, our goal is to celebrate all year long, with nature-oriented, historical and art/cultural activities every month. Our focus is to celebrate not just Shutesbury as a whole, but to recognize and nourish the diversity and talents of the many vibrant, smaller communities within our town.

We're fortunate that quite a number of social events already exist throughout the year, thanks to some of those communities. For example, we already know about:

- **January's** Christmas Tree Bonfire, hosted by our Volunteer Fire Department
- **February's** Fire Department Pancake Breakfast
- **April's** Friends of the Library Egg Hunt
- **May's** Spaghetti Supper and Silent Auction at the Shutesbury Elementary School (sometimes in April), and more recently, the opening of our Saturday Farmer's Market behind Town Hall
- **June's** Roadside Swap Week and Bulky Waste Day, the Lake Wyola Association's Road Race, and the kickoff of the M. N. Spear Library's Summer Reading Program
- **July's** Independence Day events at Lake Wyola, and the Fire Department's Bonfire
- **August's** Summer Reading Party at the library, with entertainment for all ages
- **September's** *Celebrate Shutesbury*, with bicycle parades, antique car shows and more
- **October's** open houses by the Historical Commission at Old Town Hall and West School, Halloween's cider and donuts at the Fire Station, and of course the awesome decorations put up by many generous Town Center residents to delight Trick-or-Treaters
- **December's** Arts & Crafts Marketplace at the elementary school.

Do you belong to a group (The Athletic Club, Sirius Community or Temenos, to name a few) that has annual events that we haven't listed? We want to hear from you – for we want this to be your party, too! (And what should we plan for **March** and **November**?)

In 2011, it'd be fun to flavor these and other activities with a 250th Anniversary theme – and we hope to include the widest possible inclusion of ideas. How about:

- An old-fashioned firefighters' muster, representing departments from many towns? (Hey, we could invite folks from towns listed on the signpost on the Common – at least from the towns that still exist!)
- “Then and Now” photo exhibits? (Do you have historic photos of your house or property that you're willing to share? Let us know!)
- Nature and history hikes?
- A talent show?
- An original musical?
- Lighthearted softball games between different communities in town (such as the AC vs. Friends of the Library)?
- Lectures or other presentations on local history, flora and fauna, and lots more?
- A town barbecue?
- A “cemetery walk” (where some interesting residents of the past could come to life by their graves)?

And we'd love to borrow yet another page from the past: to gather everyone in town for a “family photo,” just as our counterparts did at anniversary celebrations gone by. Of course, in 2011 we'll need an even higher ladder and a wide-angle lens!

So come join us at a meeting! Or, share your ideas by:

- an email to 250th@shutesbury.org
- a note to 250th Steering Committee at P.O. Box 264, Shutesbury MA 01072
- by phone at 259-1584 (Janis Gray) or 259-1551 (Maryélise Lamet).

Let's get the party started!