

# Michael M. Dunn – Introduction

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Heritage Commission  
ATTN: Mr. Thomas J. Aspell, Jr.  
City Manager, City Hall  
41 Green St.  
Concord, NH 03301



## MY INTEREST IN CONCORD'S HISTORY & THE HERITAGE COMMISSION:

Good morning, Mr. Aspell, Jr. This is my Introduction letter discussing my areas of interest around Concord History and other related interests that may support the work of the Heritage Commission.

I like to research through maps, photos and documents. In 1948, my family moved to Concord, NH when I was a year old. My mom (Dr. Gladys Ward-Dunn) accepted a job in the NH State Hospital as clinical director for outpatients. We lived on the state hospital grounds for 20 years. During my last two years of high school, I worked in the Admissions ward every day after school, 3 to 11 shift.

Here are my current areas of interest: NH State Hospital's life span, as linked to treatment and legislation. The progression of treatment philosophy, building expansions and the need for food sources by expanding to offsite state farm production — and life around Long Pond Colony and the Cottage Asylum. I am also interested in the need to provide more fresh water for the growing population. Including fire protection, since the state hospital had 40 open heating units before central steam was installed.

Other points of interest: in 1814, the Merrimack Boating Company brought the first shipment of supplies over water to Concord. By using new locks and canals built to deliver food, and industrial needs, from Quincy Market. The Mills of Penacook had changing evolutions in power technology (water, steam, DC and now AC electricity) and issues like floods and fire. Recently, I found a map that shows the locations of canals that were in place, and used for transport, in Penacook and lower Boscawen. In 1842, the first train's impact on Concord, and all other supply transport services, started to fade away.

We bought our first home as a young family on Greenwich Street, near the airport. In 1972, I purchased my second home — it was the Harris Hill Home of Mr. Harris. He owned the Mill below his house on the river with a canal and Railroad Service. (See pictures, page 3). That primed my early interest in commercial history. Main St. in Penacook also has deep historical roots with a lot of interesting stories. We operated Duncraft on Main St. for our first 25 years. Other points of interest are the Contoocook River Park, West Concord Park and property around Long Pond. I also have folders of information on the Concord State Fair, Concord Regional Airport, Mary Baker Eddy, Swenson Granite Works, Penacook Indians and Concord Cemeteries.

In the mid 1990's, I moved my family to 117 School St. — the house built by Armenia White, the widow of Nathaniel White. Nathaniel White founded the American Express Company. White's Opera House was next to the Capitol Building and their 1st home was on Capitol St., facing the State House. The School St. house was designed by architect Charles Eliot, who also designed White's Park and the housing for the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. Their 2nd home was White's Farm at 144 Clinton St. — from that location Armenia and Nathaniel were active abolitionist and members of the Anti-Slavery Society. What a pleasure to live in history ...

## **WORK HISTORY**

### **Chairman, Owner | Duncraft, Inc. | 1971 to PRESENT**

- Duncraft Wild Bird Solutions started in 1952 in Penacook — now in its 66th Year.
- Our Channels of Marketing: Bird Feeders, Houses, Baths, Seeds, Foods, Accessories, Bird Motif Gifts, Garden, Pets and Backyard Solutions.
- Current and Past Divisions: G. M. Dunn Trust, Duncraft, Inc., Dunn Associates, Duncraft Media Graphics, Duncraft Properties, Concord Construction Inc., Saymore Trophy, Duncraft.com, BirdFeeder.com, BirdSeedExpress.com, WildBirdFeeding.com.

## **SALES**

- In 1971, Duncraft's database was on 3 x 5 inch index cards, generated on a old Royal Typewriter. Today, we are fortunate to have a computerized Cloud-Based System to serve our needs 24 hours a day.
- Over the years, we have kept in-step with technology by expanding from index cards into direct mail with a focus on growth through increased print circulation — with minimal processing.
- Growth Drivers: one-page B&W space ads to Color Catalogs, Bind-in Order Forms, Faxed Orders and then 1-800 phone systems, followed shortly after by the early years of dot-com online growth.
- In the 90's with a fully staffed national sales team, we introduced 50 products with color boxing and expanded our in-line manufacturing to provide products wholesale for: Dealers, Distributors, Regional Retailers, Co-ops and Big Box Stores.
- Today with China, India and Amazon as major factors and market disruptors, we focus mainly on Exclusive New Product Development. We now have 900 exclusive Duncraft Branded products — which we sell only Direct-to-Consumers online. We market in-print to our buyer's list and market online through email promotions, circ. 40,000,000 emails each year. By adjusting to the current market conditions, with longer margins, sales have continued to be rewarding and a great "Blue Ocean" experience.

## **COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

- I am currently working with the New Hampshire Hospital Cemetery Preservation Project, it has been a learning experience. I have been serving on this project for two years. We have signed non-disclosure agreements with the State to keep all information confidential. All I can say is it has been a history lesson for me and I have met some great people.
- Rotarian since 1977. Participation in the Capital City Sunrise Rotary Club (CCSRC) as past Treasurer, Sargent at Arms and Opening Invocation. Paul Harris Fellow and member of the Paul Harris Society.
- I enjoy writing Rotary District Grants for local projects. My finished projects include the Merrimack Valley School District (MVSD) Batting House and the Open Door Community Kitchen. This year's project is the Backpack Program, by supplying food to fill in the week-end meal gap, through the Friends of Forgotten Children and the MVSD.
- I am a member of the monthly Beta Group for active and retired Concord business owners.
- Duncraft, Inc. is an active supporter for children's causes in our community and the YMCA Camp Spaulding is our top annual project.
- My longest term project with the greatest community impact: The Rotary Bird Seed Wreath Fundraiser, since 2009. Duncraft manufactures and donates all costs to the Rotary Bird Seed Wreaths that sell for \$15.00 each. The proceeds are split 50/50 between CCSRC and other Rotary Clubs selling our wreaths.

This year, we made 4,000 wreaths and generated \$60,000.00 for local charities. Over the past few years, the total funding now exceeds \$150,000.00 to benefit charity.

With my extensive knowledge about the history of Concord and local culture, it would be an honor to speak with you further about a potential role with the Heritage Commission and how I can help. I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Michael M. Dunn, Chairman

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Harris Hill House – Twin Covered Bridges – My house is top center of this picture, overlooking the Mill.



Harris Mill by the river in lower Boscawen – Harris house is top of the hill – left of center Steam Chimney.