

North Brookfield Historical Society – Excerpt from December 10, 2012 Minutes

Bates Observatory – Linda Grace explained the purpose of the Bates Observatory project she was reviewing for the town, and a request for certain town departments and interested parties, including the Historical Society, to respond to a series of questions to prepare for a town-wide presentation in the spring. The group discussed the following points that will be submitted for consideration:

- **Is \$90,000 enough to restore and maintain the Observatory?** No, it has been neglected to the point it would need to be rebuilt with up-to-date code and security, costs that are well beyond the amount of the bequest. Additional funds would be necessary to complete the restoration and maintain it into perpetuity. More money would be required, there is no demand for the facility, and we would not recommend adjusting the landscape (steep hills, stairs) or removing trees to accommodate use.
- **Who would be responsible for future maintenance and supervision?** This would be the responsibility of a town department if the decision to restore was made by the town.
- **Are there any alternatives that might serve as a measure to memorialize Mr. Doane's gift at Bell Hill or elsewhere?** An idea from Darrell Hyder was considered the most appropriate and the members in attendance agreed it was a good compromise:
 - Perpetuate the Observatory and Theodore Bates' contribution through historical documentation in the form of a contracted independent film to include the Water Works, Doane and Horse Pond Reservoirs and Theodore Bates.
 - Use the funds to have the building disassembled and preserve the bricks for a future use.
 - Erect an historical marker with appropriate ceremony and historical presentation (example: like Oliver Ward project with public presentation, brochure, posters, notices, invitations and include Water Works and Theodore Bates)
 - If this alternative is considered favorably by the town, Florine Martel suggested the Historical Society consider contracting the design of a "Cat's Meow" figure to support historical programming.