

# In thrall to Scarborough's rich history



## Karen's Corner

by  
Karen Vachon

volunteer on the 350th anniversary committee. The first few meetings I was asking myself: What am I doing here? Do I really even care? I hung with it, making new friends. I wondered what value I would actually bring to the committee. Shortly after joining, my friend moved away. Thanks a lot, I thought.

As town historians and history buffs gathered around the table, the enthusiastic energy of telling the story and reliving Scarborough's history became real. They visualized how the history would be reenacted in a fun way. I was immensely intimidated. One of the members handed me a very rare book of Scarborough's history. "You can have a lot of fun with that," he said.

I could feel the sweat gathering in my pores. Oh, no, I thought, they're giving me a job. Not only must I care for this book, but also they are asking me to tell the story. I don't even like history.

But I liked the people, and I realized there was another side of Scarborough that I didn't know. The vision of the 350th anniversary celebration was to unite the diverse population of

the town and celebrate the past and present. Being on this committee begged me to see the town more fully.

Next came the questions: How do we raise the money for the celebration? And how do we get people excited to plan their summer around this great event? Committee member Sylvia Most was inspired by a book about the town of York. This beautiful coffee-table book was a treasure of historic stories that captured the people, the places and the times.

The committee loved the idea, and knew who to call - Susan Dudley Gold, who had grown up in Scarborough. Gold now lives in Saco and owns a desktop publishing company. The committee and Gold envisioned a book in the style similar to the York book, as a treasured keepsake for the residents of Scarborough.

To spend time with Gold is to become passionate about history along with her. As volunteers were sought to contribute historic pieces, I volunteered to write the history of Scarborough Downs. Once involved in the project, I couldn't stop. Rather, it had me asking more questions.

These days, every direction I turn in town, history jumps out at me. I'm bombarded with the past. When I learned that Scarborough Downs was built in 1950, my eyes caught pictures hanging on either side of

the door at Big 20 Bowling. To my surprise, Big 20 was also built in 1950. I began to envision what that looked like to our town back then as two recreation/entertainment businesses opened that year. What did Scarborough's Route 1 look like back then? I couldn't stop at writing one feature. I had to learn more.

When people ask me what I'm up to, I share that I'm contributing history stories for the book. Each time I tell the stories, more stories come out. Lying in bed each night I feel so responsible - these stories must be told. And I can't stop writing.

But the publishing date is drawing near. Reserve your copy now! Special numbered limited edition books are available and make great gifts: birthday, anniversary, holiday and graduation. Pick up an order form at Freaky Bean, town hall or visit the Web site, [www.scarborough350.org](http://www.scarborough350.org).

As plans for the celebration fall into place, it has become clear that, like the book, the historic celebration will be presented in a fun way. From Duck Tours to symphonies to historic reenactments, a parade, fireworks and lots more, there will be something for everyone, and an opportunity for all to come to know Scarborough more fully.

Save the date - July 11-14, 2008 - purchase the book and join the committee.