

BOSTON POST CANE AWARD

JOHN “JACK” SHERBURNE

DATE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2018

PLACE: GEORGE B. WHITE BUILDING

TIME: 5:30

Please come share this Deerfield tradition with a well-known community member who has been a part of Deerfield for many years.

The Board of Selectmen is inviting the community to share in this event with Jack and his family. A presentation of the Boston Post Cane Award will occur at the beginning of the Board of Selectmen's meeting held on the lower level of the George B. White Building.



The cane-presenting tradition dates back to the turn of the 20th century when 431 canes were made. The stylish walking sticks were made available to numerous northeastern municipalities by the former Boston Post newspaper.

The publisher of the Boston Post established this tradition in 1909. He had 700 canes manufactured and distributed to the Board of Selectmen of towns in MA, ME, NH & RI who were to be the Trustees of the cane and keep it always in the hands of the oldest citizen. It was originally only awarded to men but after considerable controversy, women were included for eligibility in 1930.

The idea of having New England's selectmen and mayors pay tribute to their eldest citizen by ceremoniously awarding them the canes was originally conceived as an advertising gimmick by the then Post Editor Edward A. Grozier. Barring no expense, Grozier reportedly hired a leading cane manufacturer in New York to craft the canes out of African-imported wood and to gild the tips of each with 14 carat gold. Grozier also specified that only the finest French varnish be used to coat the Post canes, each of which took nearly a year to produce from start to finish.

Since the Deerfield cane was lost, a replica was made and put in a display case to be kept permanently at the Town Hall with a listing of prior recipients.