



## **BREATHE NEW HAMPSHIRE RECOGNIZED FOR 100 YEARS OF SERVICE AT PRESERVATION AWARDS**

**Manchester, NH**—*At the Manchester Historic Association’s annual Preservation Awards on May 12, 2016, Breathe New Hampshire was recognized for its 100 years of public service in fighting lung disease and supporting lung health. Following is a brief history that was presented to the MHA for the Preservation Awards ceremony.*

### **A CENTURY OF PROMOTING LUNG HEALTH & FIGHTING DISEASE**

Breathe New Hampshire, under several names over the decades, is celebrating a century of supporting healthy lungs and helping to prevent lung disease in the Granite State.

It began 100 years ago, when tuberculosis (TB or “consumption”) was public health enemy #1. Hillsborough County Hospital charged \$7 per week to care for TB patients, and a nationwide directory of sanatoriums included these directions: “Goffstown trolley car from Manchester.”

In this environment, Dr. Robert B. Kerr founded the New Hampshire Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in 1916, at the City Mission Building in Manchester.

From 1916 through 1954, the focus was on eliminating TB. Institutes were held on disease eradication and children were educated in preventing its spread—including an anti-spitting campaign. Chest X-rays diagnosed factory workers and military recruits in the nineteen-forties and fifties.

With the discovery of streptomycin in 1943, the scourge began to subside.

Then the Journal of the American Medical Association published the first major study definitively linking smoking to lung cancer in 1950.

Dr. Kerr, Manchester’s 1957 Citizen of the Year, retired in 1966 and Breathe’s mission shifted to a wider range of lung diseases including asthma and COPD (chronic obstructive lung disease), and smoking prevention and advocating for clean air.

Today, the only nonprofit public health agency in the state dedicated to lung health operates in the restored Amoskeag Locomotive Works building at the corner of Canal and Hollis. Embodying its mission, the office was LEED certified as “green” in 2014.