

## **Franklin Historical Society**

**October 2021**

Based upon the success of the September gathering, the Society will move ahead with its regularly scheduled meeting on **Thursday, October 7th, at 7 pm, in the Webster/Tay building**. The presentation will focus on the Proctor family, with a brief history of members' contributions to the city in which they lived, and a slideshow of vintage images of the Proctors and the photos taken of their last home and property prior to its being set ablaze as a training exercise for the Franklin Fire Department in 2018. Guest speakers, and members of the Society, will be John Benham and Leigh Webb.

On Labor Day weekend, the museum was opened to the public for the final time this season on a regularly scheduled basis. It was also an opportunity to accomplish some much needed garden clean-up, for which the Society owes a huge thank you to Karen Darling. The museum was open once more after Labor Day for two hours on the day of the Franklin High School Classes of 1970 and 1971 Reunion, as a courtesy to those who wished to visit and reminisce (there is an extensive display of FHS memorabilia). Two sisters came by, and as a result, became members! So keeping the building open was certainly worth the time. The museum can be accessed by appointment in the off season by contacting president Leigh Webb at 934-8222, for visits, or to drop off donations. In the intervening month since the last newsletter, many have taken advantage of the offer of the Society to preserve documents, photos, and artifacts from Franklin's past, with promises of much more to come. The Society will be talking to the daughter of Neal Martin, who, at age 100, recently passed away. A "Martin Memorial Fund" has been established with the Society to create a lasting tribute to all the Martins who served, including Neal who was involved in the Battle of the Bulge, and his older brother Sgt. Roger S. Martin, who was MIA in WWII, the first Franklin casualty of the war, and for whom the High School football field is named. Neal kept many of Roger's belongings, as well as the original telegram sent to the family in 1942 informing them of Roger's status as missing in action, and the American flag raised during the dedication of Roger S. Martin Field. Neal's daughter, Lisa Martin, will be meeting with the Society to discuss exactly what should be displayed by us, or possibly be given to the Wright Museum, and how the donated funds from friends and family should be best spent.

Gifts of historical items in September, and from whom, are listed here with the eternal thanks of the Society. It is of incalculable importance to acknowledge those who have generously contributed to the ever-expanding knowledge of our city's past, lest anyone forget the successes and tribulations of those who came before. From **Kathy Fuller** and the Clothes Closet: two books from the USN\*, small metal dish of Danish design on which someone had attached a note "From the office of the Webster Inn 1965", two Decato's hangers and two Decato's men's ties, a Holmes & Nelson hanger, and a Loudon bicentennial booklet (which will be offered to the Loudon Historical Society); from **John Benham**: various newspapers including The Trumpeter, the Burlington Free Press, and the National Observer's final edition, and a 1963 program for the testimonial dinner honoring W. Earle Goss; from **Allison Cross**: a sesquicentennial (1978) edition of The Trumpeter; from **Jim Lewis, of NYC**: a box of weights, used to calibrate scales by Franklin's Sealer of Weights and Measures 1913-1918\*; from **Betsy Davison and Brian Jacoby**: a large steamer trunk and smaller personal trunk owned by Robert M. Leach, and a footlocker owned by Commander Conrad H. Carlson, USN, who when retired lived in the Leach House on Aiken Point; from **Steve Foley**: winter carnival booklets, a 1989 city directory, a Weirs times article on "Those Inventive Aikens" to go with the original display boards, and Steve's 1978 sesquicentennial "Brothers of the Brush" member's certificate; from **Bill Capron** via **Jo Brown**: two photos of George Gallup Clark and a Christmas greeting from him (which, with some research, it was determined to belong in Plymouth NH where he had lived and practiced law, and was sent, with the donor's permission, to the Plymouth Historical Society); from **Judy Bibbins (Franklin Planning Department)** a book found

in the Proulx Center published in 1887 on the event of Sen. John A. Logan's death, with the eulogy and speeches made at his funeral (and upon reading through the book, found a speech by Sen. Jacob Gallinger of NH, who died in Franklin, but summered in Salisbury, so this tome has been offered to the Salisbury Historical Society and accepted); and from **Bill and Lynne Burns**: a New England Family History booklet, the 1934, '35' and '39 Franklin Hospital Reports, 1908 souvenir booklet of Franklin photos published by Hunt's Department Store, the 1919 Opera House program welcoming back those who served in WWI, a 1928 Centennial Pageant booklet, a (partial, missing its cover) photo booklet from Sanborn Hall hospital, a 1913 booklet on the proceedings at the Daniel Webster Birthplace celebrating the reconstruction of the cabin in which Webster was born, a pamphlet on the Griffin Collection of Antique mortars and pestles, a compilation of photos of the Republican Bridge published by Towne & Robie, a cabinet card photo of George E. Sawyer's store as a confectioner (there is a record of a George W. Sawyer, a grocer for decades in Franklin, but no George E. Sawyer—can anyone help in identifying this store location? See below), and some 50 odd postcards of Franklin's downtown, churches, hospital, Webster Lake, Orphans Home, with some views of Tilton and Laconia.



\*Every donated item has a story to tell. Some are supplied by the donors themselves, but all too often the true story requires considerable "digging", a task made much easier these days by internet search engines. With a little loss of sleep and a large dose of computer time, satisfaction can be attained with diligence—and luck. Kathy Fuller's donation of two naval books ("The Keel, Co. 365, Recruit Training Command, USN Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois 1965" and "No. Europe USS Randolph 1966") raises the question if one of Franklin's residents is listed in either or both books, and if anyone can come forward with that information. The gift of the weights came with a note—and a mystery. The note was signed by a H.D. Edgerly and declared that the weights had been used in Franklin until its population dropped below 10,000, and that in 1937 a "city official" had given him the box containing the weights, to ultimately be purchased by the donor—in

*Hong Kong*. No H.D. Edgerly can be found to have lived in Franklin, Franklin's population never reached 10,000, and how these weights got to China is anyone's guess! With research, it was determined that Franklin *did* have a "Sealer of Weights and Measures". Edward L. Welch was appointed by the city council in 1913 and served in that capacity until he switched jobs and became the city clerk in 1918. The state of NH did not get into the regulation of weights and measures until 1919, which dovetails nicely with Mr. Welch's changing of positions. In the 1915 and 1916 annual reports, the city spent collectively \$6.73 on supplies from W&L.E. Gurley (the makers of the weights and in business since 1845). Could that have been for the weights and scale? By 1937, Mr. Welch had changed jobs again, and was the Clerk for Franklin's Municipal Court, and could easily have been the "city official" who relinquished the weights. That does not answer the question of how the weights got to Hong Kong, or how Mr. Welch may have known H.D. Edgerly, but at least a significant part of the interesting backstory can now be speculatively told. Some photos, retained by the family, but sent on to the Society in digital form, also have fascinating tales to tell.

Tim Lemire from Providence, RI, sent images associated with the Lemire family in hopes that some questions he had might find resolution. One was the exact location on Grove Street of a bakery owned by a Lemire near the turn of the last century.



It was found to be at 34 Grove Street, next to 105 Elkins, where the owners of the bakery had lived (and is now Phil's TV). The building is gone, replaced by a fenced-in yard. (Photo courtesy of Tim Lemire), but the exact location is now known.

Besides accepting and cataloging amazing pieces and images of times gone by, the Society is also engaged in other educational endeavors. The president was invited as part of a motivational seminar at Mojalaki, to speak to sales people from the Grappone Group. It was intended to be part of a downtown walking tour to discuss the history and development, now redevelopment, of

Franklin's economy. For fear that rain might put a damper on the event, the presentation became a slideshow instead. The Society is also looking to reinstate the yearly talk to the 4th graders on Daniel Webster, as a motivator for them to accomplish great things as well.

Anyone with any insight into the original ownership of the Naval books, or George E. Sawyer Confectioner, or even the identity of H.D. Edgerly, please simply respond to this newsletter or address your comments to the administrator of the Society's Facebook page. Any replies will be duly noted and acknowledged in next month's edition.

To all, stay well and safe.