

# Franklin NH Historical Society News

**March, 2015**

February certainly proved to be a boon to skiers, those who profit from plowing or selling snow removal equipment, and a bane to the rest of us. Once again it became prudent to remove accumulated ice and snow from the Historical Society's porch roofs (twice), a task necessary but hardly enjoyable. This is especially true when gusty winds kick up, coating glasses, face, and whiskers with a light patina of cold, white, flakes. Not to mention trying to remove the icicles from the moustache in an attempt to return to normal once the job is done... Ah, the joys of New England winter, which can only exist to the rational mind so that we truly appreciate the other three seasons...

More gifts came to the Society in January and February, some which reflected the true value of resource material now organized and available through the Society's archives. At the end of the immensely enjoyed casserole supper at the Veteran's Memorial Recreation Area as part of the 2015 Franklin Outing Club Winter Carnival, Kathy Fuller donated four trophies, silver plated cups from 1924-1930, for winning motorcycle hill climbs in four of those years. They had been discovered in an old barn which had been moved to the recreation area years ago, the source of which was unknown.

At the Society the next day and using the dates of two specific Franklin events, articles were found in the Society's collection of original Journal Transcripts divulging that the name of the recipient was Ernest Melendy. Utilizing the 1929 city directory owned by the Society, it was determined that Mr. Melendy had a shop on Central Street, not far from city hall, which dealt with "motorcycles and vulcanizing". The satisfaction derived from being able to determine the back-story to artifacts donated to the Society is considerable, and obviously adds to the historic value of the items. Unfortunately, not all mysteries are readily solved. A broadside detailing safety regulations in the Franklin Mills came from Ross W. Beales in Fitchburg, MA, signed in print by Treasurer D.J. Daniels and Superintendent John Piper, but the year in which this document appeared is still in question.

Other donations came from: Fay Mahoney sent us a copy of the Franklin Telegram, Oct. 1, 1998, with photos of the Stevens Mill fire, images the Society did not have. Kay Judkins Spratt contributed some 1892 newspapers, but alas, having suffered greatly over time, were in pieces and so fragile as to be unsalvageable as resource material. Lastly, and as a reminder that this possibility certainly exists, Rita Norander allowed the Society to borrow a 1913 photo album, rescued from Ebay (!) by her cousin, Lucy Hersey Twombly, so that certain significant photos could be scanned and retained digitally. The pictures included snapshots taken during the 1913 dedication of the cabin at the Webster Birthplace, a lake steamer of the Boston and Maine RR, and city hall decked out with American flags, a sign declaring "Hello Bill!", and a poster advertising the Elks Carnival, April 14, 15, 16, and 17 (no year, but the flags have 45 stars, meaning that the period was between 1896-1907). Anyone who can pinpoint the exact year, and who "Bill" was, can enjoy a free year's membership in the Society. Just contact president Leigh Webb at 934-8222. The Society through its president and curator extends its heartfelt gratitude to all

those who consider the Society when discovering historical objects, ephemera, and photos from Franklin's past. Thank you, one and all.

As winter, and the biting cold that it has brought, begins to wind down, stay warm, stay safe, and think about how rewarding it would be to become part of the Society this spring.

To check on events and news of the Society, please visit our website regularly at [www.franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org).



This month's photo is off the four "Hill Climb" trophies, won by the "notorious" Ernest Melendy (check out comments about this person on Facebook, begging the question: what is fact, and what is legend? Donated by Kathy Fuller.