

Franklin NH Historical Society News

March 2018

The longing for leafy trees and flower-filled gardens begins to dominate our collective imaginings as spring grows tantalizingly nearer. Trading garden hoes for snow shovels and lawn mowers for snowblowers would be a welcome change in the cyclical nature of New England weather. The Society's building at Webster Place has (knock on wood) survived the vicissitudes of a somewhat strange winter of bitter cold mixed with unusually warm days, with the challenge of more restoration lying ahead. In order to continue the removal of vinyl siding on the second and third floors and repair of negatively impacted substructures, staging would be required to create a stable platform from which to safely work ten to twenty feet above ground. Anyone knowing of free or very inexpensive parallels or scaffolding complete with leveling feet and planking, is encouraged to contact Leigh Webb at 934-8222, or, by using the "Contact" button email him through the Society's website at franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org. The Society, in order to capture some of the trail traffic on "open house" days throughout the season, is also seeking to acquire a bicycle parking rack to place in front of the building. The same contact information applies to anyone with a lead for this item, with a thank you in advance for any help rendered.

Additional donations of historical material continue to arrive at the Society, with a description of the gifts followed by the donor's name in parenthesis. No amount of emphasis on the importance of these items can be overstated, nor the thanks with which the Society has received them. In the past month the Society has added to its collections: late 19th century photos from various Franklin photographers, unfortunately unidentified except for the responsible studio's backmark or embossed name (Linda Denoncourt, Curator of the Salisbury Historical Society, as a reciprocal gift); a Greater Franklin Chamber of Commerce ball cap (a friend of the Society); a chart of all the Franklin schools' teachers from 1949 (Jane Lefebvre); several boxes of Franklin school students papers, text books, and documents, plus photographs tipped onto poster boards chronicling the Franklin Recreation Association's activities under Clem Lemire for 1950-51 (Chris Lewis); a handwritten letter from George W. Nesmith, 1879, as a letter of recommendation for William Stevens, plus an 1881 Town Report (Mary and Steve Foley); and lastly, from what CATCH is calling the Power and Light Building on Memorial Street, which had housed the Mayo and then Acme Knitting Machine and Needle Manufacturing Company, as well as the office of the last Franklin weekly newspaper, a twelve foot long sign with a partial "Montgomery Ward" sign on the one side, and the result of repurposing on the verso, "The Telegram" (thank you to Glenn Morrill, and the construction crew supervisor of the CATCH project).

A meeting was scheduled for February 22nd for the Officers and Board of Directors of the Society, held in Thompson Hall (courtesy of arrangements by Glenn Morrill) to

discuss the upcoming season. Topics included those interested in running for offices (there are two board openings), the schedule of events and speakers, the Society's presence on Facebook, building maintenance, new exhibits, suggested projects, and goals for 2018. The meeting went well, and everyone involved is looking forward to a productive and entertaining year ahead.

April will signal the start of the Society's new year, and monthly meetings will once again commence on the first Thursday of the month. If you have not come to a meeting, check out the schedule of events soon to be published on the website. Something is sure to capture your attention and imagination, and perhaps lead you to join those who believe that knowing the city's past is vital to charting a successful course to its future.

[This month's image is from the John Keegan Collection, and with some detective work, was determined because of architectural details, to have been taken in front of the old St. Mary's School. The exact year is not known, but probably a Communion Class from the early 1900's. From a donation by Kathy Keegan Malsbenden]

