

Franklin Historical Society

February 2022

The first real nor'easter blew through over the weekend, leaving enough drifted snow on the roof of the Society's back porch to warrant clearing, considering the forecast of rain followed by freezing conditions later in the week. The weight of laden, frozen snow adds stress to any structure, so a prophylactic approach of removal is always the most prudent approach. And considering that the winter is still in its infancy, considerably more accumulation is most certainly in the future. With frigid conditions being the rule of late, the Webster/Tay has also been checked on a regular basis for any loss of heat or damage, and has stood up admirably. Come April, the building should be in top shape to welcome the members back for another season of new exhibits, educational meetings, and stimulating interactions.

This month, on Thursday the 10th, the board of directors and officers will meet at Thompson Hall, beginning at 7 pm. This is an open meeting, so anyone wishing to attend is welcome to observe. This invitation is particularly extended to any member interested in exploring the possibility of becoming an officer or director on the board at any time in the future. Topics of discussion include assembling a list of candidates for the annual election in May, possible speakers at regular meetings, assigning dates to upcoming activities, and determining the best way to recruit volunteers and new members.

Since the closing of the treatment center, a line of communication has been kept open between the Society and a Vice President at Easter Seals. The Society has been apprised of gatherings scheduled on the property, and in return, the Society has offered to help in keeping the property secure or in any way requested. In that regard, a question has been raised about a large tank (5,000+ gallons?) lying on its side, behind what has been called a "root cellar".



This Quonset hut shaped buried structure is situated directly behind (north of) the side parking lot of what is now called the Ray House (during the Orphanage's tenure, known as the Bartlett Cottage). For what purpose was this tank

used? What might it have contained? The cellar actually held Civil Defense stores in the 1960's (there were still boxes of toilet paper stacked inside in 2005), and was designated a fallout shelter during the cold war and rising tensions between atomic powers. Since then, it has been largely unused and ignored. Should anyone have information about how this tank was used and what it might have contained, please contact Leigh Webb at 603-934-8222, by contact through the Society's website, or by replying to this e-newsletter. Easter Seals as property owner would love to know.



While walking in very deep snow in seeking out the tank, another object of interest was discovered near the locked entrance to the cellar/shelter. Come spring, the Society has received permission to investigate and recover this rusted cylindrical object, which is believed to be a metal hose reel maintained for fire protection by the Home for Orphans. Laying on its side, there are visible large spoked wheels on either end to accommodate the hose's deployment. The original shed and hose reel from the Orphanage reside at the Firefighters Museum behind the Franklin Fire Station, so this might have been a later replacement or served as additional protection.

More on this when the snow abates, the surrounding brush cleared, and a closer inspection is made possible.

As is the usual practice, the following recent donor is gratefully acknowledged for her generosity and welcome gifts: Gail Brophy Barry sent the Society a packet of articles, photos, newspaper articles and genealogical information specifically about her grandfather, mother, and other antecedents, including an 8 x 10 photo of

her grandfather Leslie Buchanan standing next to Alan Shepard Sr. (the father of the first American in space) during WWII service. Gail has donated material about her mother Genevieve Buchanan Brophy and her grandfather Leslie Buchanan previously, and their portrait photos grace the Society's display of those who proudly served in the military from Franklin. Gail also came across the most fascinating flyer (see below) touting the talents of a great

grandparent who Anglicized his name from Rousseau to “Brooks”, and her mother’s mother Lillian at age 5, a driver of a dog racing sulky. What amazing things can be discovered when researching a family’s history!

PROF. BROOKS

Champion St. Bernard **SULKY RACING DOG OF THE WORLD**
and the only DOG ACT of this kind in Existence.

GEORGIE BROOKS
 DRIVER
 AGE 6.

LILLIAN BROOKS
 DRIVER
 AGE 5.

THE REAL NOVELTY
 This Act is One of the Greatest OUT-DOOR ATTRACTIONS for FAIRS, CELEBRATIONS, ETC., and is even more Entertaining than the Horse Racing.

42 FOOT LADDER CLIPPING LADDER BY HERRICK

THE ONLY HIGH DIVING DOG IN THE WORLD

For Information regarding engagements, dates, terms, etc., address, PROF. M. J. BROOKS, Franklin Falls, N. H.

REX, The Champion HIGH DIVING DOG of the World
 Dives from a 42 foot Ladder into a net below.

April will be the first meeting of the 2022 season, barring any unforeseen complications further arising from the pandemic. Until then, stay safe, well, and warm, caring for yourself and those around you.