

Franklin Historical Society

January 2022

The Holiday Potluck Dinner, although somewhat more sparsely attended than in former years, was still an unmitigated success. The more than twenty attendees enjoyed a hearty repast, the spirit of camaraderie, and even a few carols of inspirational quality. Thanks are extended to all, for their contributions to the meal, their gifts to the food pantry, and for their willingness to share the responsibilities of cleaning up. From one and all, the spirit of giving was pervasive, and plentiful.

Remembering the past in order to build a more informed and better future on history's foundations, is the goal of every historical society. With a new year, come new expectations, aspirations, hopes, some promises, and always challenges. In another year of Covid 19 and its variations, those challenges can be novel and unpredictable, though some will always be the same. No organization can continue to thrive and grow without the infusion of new minds, with ideas, and drive and youth (a somewhat relative term). So it is with our Society, to discover and nurture new members who will ultimately take up the mantle of leadership to keep the organization viable and vital. All members should have this on their minds as we continue to move forward into 2022, and beyond.

The Easter Seals VP for property management and development was invited for a tour of the Society's museum, an offer he accepted. Understanding the work that has gone into creating a meeting room, storage, and display space for the Society's collections, was not lost on him, and by all accounts, made a favorable impression. Whatever the future holds for the buildings under Easter Seals' control, it was made clear that the Society is willing to play a role in whatever capacity would be the most beneficial. Discussions were also had by phone with Dijit Taylor of LCHIP, and Jennifer Goodman of the NH Preservation Alliance, that the Society stands ready to participate in a positive way in the future of Webster Place. What is in store may be somewhat uncertain, but the Society's position is not. We are here to stay, and to help, whenever and however possible.

No newsletter would be complete without recognizing those who continue to make the Society's collections more meaningful every month. There are some familiar names, and one whose gifts came from a very unexpected source. Acknowledging their generosity, the Society gratefully thanks the following: **"Charlie" Annend from the Milford Historical Society**, for sending along a 1908 postcard of the Franklin Public Library; **Elise Despres, from Jay ME**, who, in her capacity of an employee of the OKS Federal Credit Union, came upon a cache of photos during a fundraiser of, and associated with, Annis Ford Leone, and recognizing their origin, saved the grouping and mailed it to the Society; **Ernie Smith** who donated two ledgers, dated 1819-1822 and 1822-1830, detailing the tanning business run by his ancestor John Hancock with listings of virtually a "Who's Who" of early 19th century Franklin (such as William Haddock, Daniel Webster's brother-in-law, who built the two story section of our building); **Kathy Fuller** who

passed along printed copies of the FaceBook dialogue between herself, Linda Pauwels, and Paul Doucette regarding the early history of the Stevens Mills with an added story of a tie-in between the Stevens Mill and Apollo 11, as well as her donations from the **Clothes Closet**: an empty whiskey decanter in the shape of the Webster Birthplace cabin, three tiny books from roughly 120 years ago, town reports from neighboring municipalities (efforts will be made to get these back to their proper “homes”), antique glass bottles, and a framed 8 x 10 photo of the famous (of which we have custody of the originals) “Welcome to Franklin” sign; **Zarne Whiting** who added a sesquicentennial pin-back button for the “Sesqui Belles” (with the bell still attached!); **Cathy H. Paris** for a complimentary copy of her wonderfully illustrated book “Irish Like Me”, which details her family’s rich history intrinsically tied to Franklin; **Sandy Marshall from Spaulding Academy** for a recently published book on the history of Spaulding Youth, which came into existence in 1958 after the Webster Home for Orphans and the Golden Rule Farm were conjoined; and finally, **Andrew Cushing**, Director of the NH Bureau of Historic Sites, who forwarded to the Society a copy of the NHDOT 1941 photo (see below) of the Sanborn Bridge, including the Esso sign of the gas station which was once where Trestle View Park is now, and the coal dump siding, from where the Paper Mill buildings which preceded the gas station, got the fuel to feed the furnace to heat the business during the cold winter months. One has to be impressed by the breadth and scope of these offerings, along with so many, month after month.



As we enter another year, with bright hopes and visions of a better, safer, healthier world, let us never forget that our collective fates rest not on one individual, but all of us *together*. The

universal wish for 2022 should be for us to care not just for ourselves, but for our neighbors, either next door or across an international border. In unified purpose, we can survive anything. Happy New Year.

[To start off the year, the mystery photo below—everyone is aware of the metal “Welcome/Goodbye” signs, but how long was this one extant, where was this photo taken, when was it replaced, and who is the gentleman posing with it? Answers can be directed to President Leigh Webb in reply to this newsletter or to Karen Darling through the Society’s FaceBook page.]

